PARENTS’ RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Public Law 94-142 is a federal law, which provides a free and appropriate public education to all handicapped children. This law requires the school to provide parents with every opportunity to become involved in their child’s education program and to document that involvement. These rights place responsibility on parents to become actively involved in the education of their child.

All children who enter the Head Start Program receive physical and other health screening tests to make sure they are healthy and are developing normally. Some children will need additional or special services from Head Start to help meet any needs which are covered by these physicals and screenings.

In order to give children the right kind of help, a multidisciplinary team will meet to review the child’s strengths and needs, and to plan exactly the right services and activities for him/her.

Before the Team meets, you will get a letter from the Head Start program, letting you know that the Team would like to review and plan a special program for your child and asking for your permission in writing.

Before the Team meets, they will also need as much information as possible about your child. They may want to talk to doctors, nurses, teachers, social workers, or other agencies which have seen your child.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:
To give your written permission before any of this information is shared with the Head Start Program, and before Head Start gives other agencies any information on your child.

The Team will most likely be made up of Head Start teachers, doctors, co-op, and other specialists who have seen your child, and Head Start health, education, and other staff members. The people who are on the team are there because they know something about your child, or about other teaching or giving other services to your child. The Team will also need information from you, the parent, who know your child better than anyone else in the world. They will need your help in deciding on the best services to meet your child’s needs.
YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:
to meet with the Multidisciplinary Team and give your observations and information about your child. If you like, you may bring someone with you to speak for you or help you in the meeting.
The Team should not take too long to finish its planning so that the Program can begin giving the right services to your child as early in the school year as possible.

YOU HAVE THE RIGHT:
To have your child’s review finished in a timely manner. You will be shown the Team’s written plans for your child. You have the right to give or not to give your written permission for these plans.

To ensure that this involvement occurs, several rights to which parents entitled were included in Public Law 94-142, the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. These rights are referred to as “procedural safeguards”. The following is a summary of specific areas addressed in these “procedural safeguards”.

1. **Notice:** Parents must receive written notice before their child is identified, evaluated or placed in any specialized educational program. Written notice is also required before any change in program.

2. **Consent:** Parental consent must be obtained before conducting a pre-placement evaluation and before initial placement of a handicapped child in a program providing special education and related services.

3. **Evaluation:** Parents have a right to a full evaluation of their child’s individual educational needs. Parents may obtain evaluations independent of the school.

4. **Records:** Parents have a right to know that records are kept on their child and the right to see them.

5. **Confidentiality of Information:** With the exception of certain individuals, (school officials, for example, and teachers with legitimate educational interests), no one may see a child’s records unless parents give their written permission.

6. **Least Restrictive Environment:** Parents have a right to have their child educated with non-handicapped children to the maximum extent appropriate.

7. **Hearings:** If at any point during identification, evaluation, or placement, parents do not agree with the educational decisions made concerning their child, they have the right to request a hearing. The right to appeal the findings and decisions of the hearing is also assured.
Parent’s Rights and Responsibilities

I _________________________________ acknowledge that I have received a copy of parent’s rights and responsibilities.

My rights have been orally explained and are understood.

_______________________________
Signature of Parent or Guardian

______________________________
Date

_______________________________
Signature of Staff

______________________________
Date

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