

**Friends of Children of Mississippi, Inc. Head Start and Early Head Start
Child Mental Health
Policy on Limitations on Suspension and Prohibition on Expulsion**

POLICY/APPROACH:

FCMI will not expel any child from our Head Start or Early Head Start programs due to that child's behavior. Temporary suspension of a child for persistent and challenging behaviors will be severely limited and implemented as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. This determination will not be made prior to engaging the mental health consultant collaborating with the child's parents/guardians, providing reasonable modifications, and identifying/accessing community resources. The ECDHS Director will give the recommendation for temporary suspension after consultation with the Mental Health Consultant and Mental Health Coordinator.

If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, FCMI Head Start/Early Head Start will support the child's return to full services as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by continuing to engage with parents and the mental health consultant, continuing to utilize identified community resources, providing home visits and making a determination for an (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act) IDEA referral. A written plan will be developed to document the action steps and supports needed to promote the child's successful return to full services. In the event that the child's behavior continues to present a serious safety threat to the child or the other children in the classroom, and all parties determine that the Head Start and Early Head Start programs are not the appropriate placement, FCMI will comply with IDEA and the Rehabilitation Act, work with appropriate agencies, consultants and the child's family to determine best placement and directly facilitate transition for the child to the most appropriate placement.

Children eligible for services under Part B or C are entitled to protections under Title II and Title III of the ADA (American Disabilities Act). FCMI Head Start/Early Head Start has made reasonable modifications to their practices and procedures to ensure that children with disabilities are not suspended or expelled because of their disability-related behaviors. Time Out and Corporal Punishment is not allowed in the program as a means of discipline or guidance.

HSPPS 1302.17 has required the program to severely limit suspension or interruption of services, and prohibit expulsion of a child for the display of atypical or challenging behaviors.