



HSU Course Outline

Communicating with Families: *Listening, Observing, Speaking and Writing*

CWF09

6 weeks

Description

This 6 weeks online course is designed for Head Start staffs that are in day-to-day contact with parents refine their communication skills. It will help you reflect on the values of authentic, positive communications and provides activities for staff to practice and use in their daily communications. Students will be able to focus on the concrete communication skills of listening and observing as well as speaking and writing. You will go through the process of planning at the personal and program level to ensure that overall communication in your Head Start program works toward the purpose of furthering quality services to families.

Prerequisites

- None

Who Should Take This Course?

This course is designed for all Head Start staff. It is beneficial to managers that use communication to plan activities for joint participation of parents and staff, for teachers, parent involvement staff and family services staff in planning formal and informal parent interactions, and other staff who need to communicate program goals and expectation to parents.

Objectives

- ✓ Provide effective two-way communication on program services, activities, policies and resources
- ✓ Create methods for enhancing parents' knowledge and understanding of their children's needs in terms of education, development, nutrition, health and disabilities
- ✓ Communicate with parents about community resources and other agencies that can better serve the needs of Head Start families
- ✓ Involve parents in the design and implementation of the communication process within the Head Start program in order to further their involvement in the program
- ✓ Work with other community agencies to develop strategies for improving services to Head Start families

Outline

Understanding Head Start Communication

What is effective communication in HS?

Role of communication

Creating positive relationships

Maintaining positive relationships

Skills for Working with Families

Family/Staff Partnering

Influences between Staff/Family

Strategies needed to partner

Positive statements

Positive staff and parent communication

Meaningful Messages

Clarity

Relevance

Giving Attention

What attracts your attention?

Speaking and Listening with Respect

Elements of successful communication

Successful conversations with parents

Showing respect

Keeping conversation open and moving forward

Blocking progress of a conversation

Cultural and personal factors

Conversation Techniques

Using communication helpers

Listening well

Giving appropriate feedback

Using "I" messages

Using Plain Language Writing

The Readability Factor

Readability Formulas

What do readability formulas do?

The value of a readability formula

How do readability formulas work?

Analyzing Writing

Plain Language Writing

Sentence structure

Restating sentences

Rewriting

Evaluation of passages

Using the Fog Index

Making Simpler Sentences

Commonly used words or phrases

Jargon and academic language

Improving Messages

Parent materials

Auditing Communication Efforts

Agency materials

Conducting communication audits

Communication Process

Effective communication

Overall Communication

Messages parents send to staff

Staff characteristics

Strategies parents use to convey
messages

Communication Environment

Communication Styles

Creating a Climate of Communication

Establishing a System for Sharing