

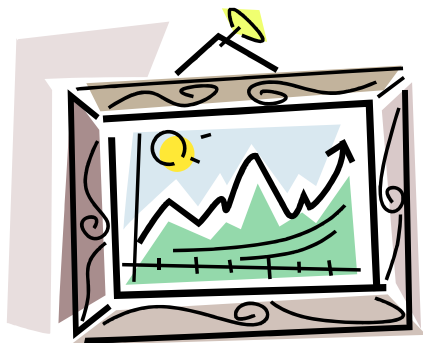
Miami-Dade County Community Action Agency Head Start / Early Head Start



Child Outcomes Plan

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page(s)</u>
I. Program Description	3
II. Program Philosophy	4
III. Child Outcomes Initiative	4
IV. Curriculum Selection and Implementation	4-8
V. Screening and Child Assessment System	8-13
VI. Training Plan	13-15
VII. Family Involvement in Children's Progress	15-16
VIII. Collection of Child Outcomes Data	16
IX. Synthesis of Child Outcomes Data	16
X. Analysis of Child Outcomes Data	17
XI. On-going Monitoring	17-18
XII. Child Outcomes Data Results	18
XIII. Reporting Data Results	18-19
XIV. Integration of Child Outcomes into Program Self-Assessment	19-20
XV. Integration of Child Outcomes into Program's Management System	20-21



I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Miami-Dade County is located on the southeastern tip of Florida. It consists of an urban core with 28 municipalities and a large unincorporated segment. Miami-Dade County is bounded on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, by Broward County's metropolitan area to the north, the Everglades and Collier County on the west, and Monroe County to the south. It consists of some 60 miles north to south and 40 miles east to west.

Miami-Dade County is a culturally diverse community with 39 different nationalities. Per the 2000 Census data, the racial configuration of the County reveals that there are 465,772 Whites, 1,291,737 Hispanics, 427,140 Blacks, 31,636 Multi-Racial, 30,537 Asian/Pacific Islanders and 6,540 other. The estimated 2006 population for Miami-Dade County was 2,402,208.

The Miami-Dade County, Community Action Agency, Head Start/Early Head Start Program provides comprehensive child development services to families with children ages birth to five years of age. The program is a Division under the umbrella of the Community Action Agency, which is a Department of Miami-Dade County Government. In this capacity, both the Head Start and Early Head Start Programs have been at the forefront of community efforts to identify problems and barriers to the delivery of high quality child care and services to pregnant women, especially among the minority and low-income populations. The organization's mission has always been to seek ways, through collaborations and partnerships, to improve the quality of services for all children and their families.

Head Start and Early Head Start

The Head Start Program has been in existence since 1965, and began as a part of one of the first pilot projects. Under the umbrella of the Community Action Agency, which is a department of Miami-Dade County Government, the Program is one of eight (8) divisions within the department. Since 1965, the program has grown to approximately 6,528 children and families. The program services approximately 6,210 Head Start and 318 Early Head Start children and their families throughout the entire Miami-Dade County geographic area. The program contracts with fifteen (15) Delegate Agencies (increased from 9 in 2006-2007 after a Request for Proposals process) and operates over 90 center-based sites. The Office of Head Start grant provides a ten-month program to 6,120 preschool children and their families. The Early Head Start Program began 15 years ago as one of the original Comprehensive Child Development Programs (CCDP) funded by a special grant received from the Department of Health and Human Services. During that time, the program successfully made the transition from CCDP to Early Head Start and established itself as one of the leaders in early childhood development for very young children. The Early Head Start Program is a full-day, full year program. The Grantee Head Start Program provides after-care and full-day Summer services to 60 disabled children as a result of a grant obtained from the Children's Trust. Head Start also receives funding for Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten for 182 4-year olds within the Grantee for part-day provision. Many Delegate Agencies also participate in VPK. During the Summer months, the Grantee is a VPK provider for approximately 120

children. This year the Division is serving an additional 76 infants and toddlers using the Early Head Start model through a grant from The Children's Trust.

II. PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The Head Start/Early Head Start Program's philosophy is to: "Put Children and Families First, Strive for Excellence, Project a Professional Image and Attitude, and Treat Everyone with Respect!" The Program's mission statement is: "To develop the social competency of young children, promote school readiness, and to serve as a catalyst to empower families for growth and change".

III. CHILD OUTCOMES INITIATIVE

The Child Outcomes Initiative is a result of legislative changes concerning program outcomes. These changes include the establishment of additional results-based education performance standards and performance measures, and the requirements that the standards and measures be adaptable for use by programs in their self-assessments and when programs are monitored.

The Child Outcomes Framework is intended to guide Head Start/Early Head Start Programs in their on-going assessment of the progress and accomplishments of children in their efforts to analyze and use data on child outcomes in program self-assessment and continuous improvement. The Framework is composed of eight (8) general domains, 27 domain elements, and 100 examples of more specific indicators of children's skills, abilities, knowledge and behaviors. The Framework is based on the Head Start Performance Standards, Head Start Program Performance Measures, provisions of the Head Start Act as amended in 1998, advice of the Head Start Bureau Technical Work Group on Outcomes, and a review of documents on assessment of young children and early childhood program accountability from a variety of state agencies and professional organizations. The eight (8) school readiness domains in the Head Start Framework also directly map onto the six (6) school readiness domains of the Florida School Readiness Performance Standards. The only difference is that the state standards include three (3) of the Head Start readiness domains, (Creative Arts, Early Math and Science) under a single umbrella domain named, "Cognitive Development & General Knowledge."

IV. CURRICULUM SELECTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Head Start

Curriculum Used and the Process Used for Selection

Currently, our Head Start program is using the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum, based on Jean Piaget's theory of child development that outlines the organization of the environment, the foundation of the daily routine, and the interactions among children and adults. In addition, many of the activities that the teachers do in the classroom can be done at home. The teachers help the parents listen, talk and play with their children in ways that nurture their children's development. Through parent visits to their

child/children's classroom, and teacher visits to the child's home, both parents and teachers learn from one another and become partners in their child's success. The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum provides hands-on opportunities for children to develop cognitive skills, number concepts, social, emotional, and physical development, language and literacy, decision making and problem solving skills.

In 1971, the Program began planning, reviewing and discussing the need to have a unified curriculum that would provide unity and consistency for the education component and the children that we serve. During program year 1971-1972, teaching staff, parents, curriculum specialists, and several persons representing local early childhood professional organizations/agencies were given presentations on various educational programs such as, Bank Street, Montessori, High Reach, High/Scope, etc. As a result of input from the teaching staff, parents and the education committee, the High/Scope Open Framework Model was recommended. In January 1972, the Policy Council approved of the High/Scope Open Framework Model (now High/Scope Preschool Curriculum). Since that approval, the selected curriculum has been revisited in regards to its continued impact and use. The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum is periodically reviewed and compared to other research-based, valid curriculum models.

Rationale for Curriculum Selection

The High/Scope Open Framework Model (High/Scope Preschool Curriculum) is an educational approach that was selected because there are various methods of teaching strategies and techniques that can be used by teachers to facilitate children's learning process. This curriculum model (or educational approach) provides key developmental indicators to children's learning, classroom environment, teacher-child interaction and parent involvement. These are important elements, which support the goals of our program. In addition, this curriculum model provides an opportunity for the teaching staff to integrate various aspects of our Service Areas (i.e. health, nutrition, disabilities, parent involvement and mental health) into the daily routine and lesson plan.

Major Goals of the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum

The major goals of this Curriculum are to provide opportunities for the children to become independent, responsible, and confident - ready for success in Head Start and later school experiences (kindergarten). Children:

- Plan many of their own activities, carry them out, and talk with other children and their teachers about what they have done;
- Become actively involved with people, materials, events and express ideas; and
- Gain knowledge and skills in creative representation, language and literacy, initiative and social relations, movement, music, classification, seriation, numbers, space and time.

Implementation of the High/Scope Curriculum

Each center or preschool classroom schedule is created to meet the needs of the children and families served. These schedules are the basic “building blocks” of a High/Scope daily routine. Each classroom follows a similar consistent Daily Routine:

1. Plan - Do - Review
2. Small Group Time
3. Large Group Time
4. Outside Time
5. Transition and Clean-up

High/Scope is an “active learning” educational approach. The key elements for the implementation of the curriculum are:

- **Active Participatory Learning** – Children directly and immediately experience of objects, people, ideas, and events. In this process, teachers and students are partners in shaping the learning experience. In an active learning environment, young children learn concepts, form ideas, and create their own symbols or abstractions through self-initiated activity - moving, listening, searching, feeling, and manipulating.
- **Child Interaction** - Teachers observe and interact with the children at their level to discover how each child thinks and reasons. Teachers interact with children in ways that empower children to take control of their own learning.
- **Learning Environment** - Classroom furniture, materials and equipment are arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about the world and their environment.
- **Daily Routine** - Each day follows a similar schedule of events, providing consistency for both children and adults. A daily plan-do-review process is at the core of the High/Scope routine and gives children an opportunity to pursue their own interests, make plans, follow through on them, and reflect on their experiences with peers and teachers.
- **Adult Scaffolding** - Adults recognize and encourage each child’s current level of reasoning, problem solving, and creativity and challenge the child to advance to the next stage. In this way, adults help to gain knowledge and develop creative problem-solving skills.

Early Head Start

Curriculum Used and the Process Used for Selection

The Early Head Start program is currently using the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos as the primary curriculum model for center based educational and developmental services to infants and toddlers. The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos rests on a solid foundation of theory and research. The following five

components of the curriculum allow Caregivers to make good decisions about the routines and experiences provided for infants, toddlers, and twos:

- Knowing Infants, Toddlers, and Twos
- Creating a Responsive Environment
- What Children Are Learning
- Caring and Teaching
- Building Partnerships with Families

In 1997, the program transitioned from a combination home based/center based model to entirely center based. When this transition occurred, the Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers was adopted as the primary curriculum model. This decision was reached by researching several infant/toddler curriculum models, consulting with training and technical assistance providers and discussions with other Early Head Start programs currently implementing the curriculum. Since that approval, the selected curriculum has been revisited in regards to its continued impact and use. The Creative Curriculum is periodically reviewed and compared to other research-based, valid curriculum models.

Rationale for Curriculum Selection

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos provides a vision of where developmentally appropriate practice will take very young children. The curriculum includes goals and objectives for children's learning in all areas of development: social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language. The goals and objectives show where the Caregiver wants to go, and the curriculum tells the Caregiver how to get there. The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos explains all aspects of a developmentally appropriate program and leads the Caregiver through the process of planning and implementing every aspect of caring for and teaching infants, toddlers, and twos.

Major Goals of the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos

Certain fundamental beliefs underlie the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos. These beliefs are reflected throughout all components of the Curriculum as the following programmatic and individual goals:

- Building a trusting relationship with each child
- Providing responsive, individualized care
- Creating environments that support and encourage exploration
- Ensuring children's safety and health
- Developing partnerships with families
- Observing and documenting children's development in order to plan for each child and the group
- Recognizing the importance of social/emotional development
- Appreciating cultural, family, and individual differences
- Taking advantage of every opportunity to build a foundation for lifelong learning
- Supporting dual language learners
- Including children with disabilities in all aspects of the program.

Implementation of the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos offers choices and encourages flexibility. The curriculum helps Caregivers be intentional about the experiences they offer infants, toddlers, and twos while still having the flexibility to respond to their changing interests and abilities. It also emphasizes the importance of daily routines as a part of the curriculum and important times to put research and theory into practice.

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos is implemented through routines and experiences that are responsive to individual children's cultural background, home language, life experiences, temperament, developmental level, and disabilities.

Routines are seen as opportunities to build relationships with children that promote the development of trust. Routines such as hellos and good-byes, diapering and toileting, feeding, dressing, and sleeping are used to assist in the development of children's sense of security, self-competence, and curiosity.

Meaningful experiences are planned by selecting materials that match children's growing abilities and interests, by observing what children do, and by thinking about what is learned by watching children. Because the Caregiver can never predict exactly how children will react and what will capture their attention, Caregivers plan for possibilities. Positive interactions make children's experiences opportunities for building relationships and promoting learning.

V. SCREENING AND CHILD ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Selected Assessment Instrument

Prior to selecting the Galileo Assessment Instrument in 2001, the teaching staff was using our locally designed Developmental Summary. This assessment tool was a part of the curriculum model known as "Giraffe Series", which included the Curriculum Guide, Developmental Summary and Prescriptive Activities Booklet.

Galileo Preschool, by Assessment Technologies, Inc., is educational management software for early childhood programs that helps to promote the development of children, the professionalism of staff, the empowerment of families, and the decision-making capability of administrators. Galileo has indicators in all of the eight (8) domain areas specified in the Head Start Framework: Social Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Physical Health Practices, Early Math, Nature and Science, Creative Arts, Approaches to Learning, and Fine and Gross Motor Development.

Selected Child Screening Instruments

The ACUSCREEN, a part of the Galileo educational assessment system software, is a screening tool designed to assess the developmental skills of preschool-age children. This instrument is used to identify children who may have learning disabilities, handicapping conditions or who may be at-risk for developmental delays. ACUSCREEN address the areas of cognitive development, perceptual/motor skill, language

development and social skills. The computerized results of ACUSCREEN are fully integrated into the Galileo assessment allowing a seamless system of screening and assessment. ACUSCREEN software identifies children with potential developmental concerns by rating children's performance as "No Risk of Developmental Delay", "Mild Risk of Delay", "Moderate Risk of Delay", and "High Risk of Delay".

In addition to ACUSCREEN, an articulation screen developed by the Miami-Dade County Public Schools, is administered by the teacher to aid in the identification of children with potential speech problems. This instrument screens English, Spanish, and Creole languages at the one word level. Sensory screening (vision and hearing) is also part of the physical exam for all children. Although behavioral issues are addressed in the ACUSCREEN, Head Start teaching staff also screen for behavioral concerns using the Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA) through classroom observation.

In the Spring of 2001, 25 teaching teams piloted the Galileo Assessment Instrument and the ACUSCREEN from the Galileo software while the remaining teaching staff used the Brigance Screening instrument. Prior to the Program piloting the ACUSCREEN, it had been validated on over 3,000 children from various parts of the United States reflecting cultural and regional diversity. Since September 2002, all classrooms are using the ACUSCREEN as the screening instrument for all of the children. All screenings are completed within the first 45 days of enrollment. The results of the screening are analyzed and referrals are made to the LEA for further assessment, as needed.

For infants and toddlers in Early Head Start, screening is conducted using the Denver II instrument. The results of the screening are analyzed and referrals are made to Early Steps, Part C, as needed.

Rationale for Selection of Screening and Assessment Instruments

In January 2001, the Head Start/Early Head Start grantee and delegate agency staff attended a general session on Outcomes and Measurement. The focus was on what was currently in place and the changes that had to occur in order to fully meet the mandate. On February 14, 2001, a group of Florida Head Start Directors, consultants, and the Quality Improvement Team from Region IV attended a meeting in Tampa, Florida. The purpose of the meeting was to evaluate various assessment tools that could be used for the Miami-Dade County, CAA Head Start/Early Head Start Program. Based on the presentations from the various vendors, Assessment Technology (Galileo) was the only tool that met the criteria based on the eight (8) domains from the Child Outcomes.

In April 2001, the Program's Management Team selected the Galileo software management tool as their assessment tool for Head Start. On April 9, 2001, 25 classrooms (grantee and delegates) began to pilot the Galileo assessment tool. In June and July of 2001, additional staff were trained in order to phase-in another 25 classrooms. On-going training took place during the 2001-2002 school year. Full implementation of 326 classrooms and continuous training of staff took place starting in September of program year 2002-2003. Early Head Start utilizes ATI's Galileo for Birth to Three Assessment system, based on the Florida Birth to Three Early Learning Standards. Since

Early Head Start programs throughout Florida are currently pilot testing this new system, information and documentation for this new plan is currently unavailable.

The ACUSCREEN data integrates with the Galileo assessment data to provide a seamless and comprehensive system of initial screening and ongoing assessment for each child enrolled in the program. As a result, children in need of immediate services are identified, and the progress of all children in the program is monitored both to improve classroom practices and maximize each child's growth and development in all eight (8) school readiness domains across the Head Start school year.

Curriculum Alignment to Screening and Assessment Instruments

The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum works in conjunction with the ACUSCREEN and Galileo. All three focus on the developmental level of children, child observation, and support from staff and parents. The Disability Services Unit provides the support of internal and external services whenever the results of a child's screening is below his/her chronological age or if additional screening/classroom observation is requested by the teaching staff.

Ongoing assessment using Galileo assists teaching staff in determining the abilities and needs of the children with whom they teach. In Head Start/Early Head Start, staff use the curriculum model and results from the Galileo Explorer to help achieve this goal in several ways by enhancing our ability to:

- Plan appropriate activities;
- Create a learning environment that will maximize the children's development collectively and individually;
- Observe and understand how children develop;
- Gather data showing how the Program makes a difference in the lives of children; and
- Implement the curriculum and communicate with parents about their children.

Three times during the school year (Head Start - November, February, and May, EHS – November, March, and July), the teaching staff are required to complete home visits with parents of the children in their classroom. In addition, in Head Start parent-teacher conferences are held during the school year as needed, with a minimum of two completed by the end of the program year. In Early Head Start, parent-teacher conferences are held every other month. During each of these times, the teaching staff is able to discuss the development of each child. Parents are given the opportunity to discuss matters pertaining to their child's development based on their observations and/or interactions.

Sharing of assessment information with families occurs at three defined time periods. The first observation period is from September to November. During this time, the first home visit occurs. Teachers are able to discuss screening results and individual plans with parents. This first home visit's focus is on education and the curriculum, on social issues, such as separation, on transition into Head Start or first steps to Public School, and on any other topics of interest to the parent. The second observation period is

December to February. During the second home visit, the primary focus is on parent input. The parents and teaching staff as a team are able to share what progress children have made and what areas need improvements. The third home visit focuses on transition and on the growth that both the parent and the Teacher have observed during the year. These will also be discussed after the third observation period March – May (EHS April – July). Teachers and Curriculum Specialists review the children’s profile, individual profile, and individual plan and progress report. Galileo assists teachers in assessing children’s cognitive, physical and social development using continuous developmental scales. Goals are linked directly to activities reflecting the learning opportunities included in the teacher’s lesson plans.

Galileo is based on program research that has been carried out for more than 20 years. Galileo can be linked to any curriculum. Galileo links each child’s level of development to setting purposeful goals. Galileo is designed to assess the capabilities of all children including those with disabilities.

Procedures, Techniques and Tools for On-going Assessment of Children

The assessment process begins at the time the child enters the classroom. The initial assessment that is recorded on a child is the child’s baseline assessment. A baseline assessment is an educated estimate a teacher makes as to what a child knows when he/she first enters the program. Research indicates that teachers are very accurate in their baseline assessments, and these assessments provide a strong initial understanding of each child. As the program year unfolds, information sources and opportunities for observation expand, leading to an ever deepening and refined understanding of each child’s development.

The following procedures are used to input and retrieve data on each child in a specific classroom or center:

- Establish a baseline for each child in each of the eight (8) school readiness domains based on initial observations in the classroom.
- Establish a baseline with pathfinder based on initial observations in the classroom.
- Create a data source (where information about the children is derived) from input received from the parent(s), Service Area Coordinators, direct observations, work samples and so on. Teachers and Curriculum Specialists review the children’s profile, individual plan, and progress report. Based upon the findings, areas of training are identified and resources are provided in the classroom.
- Continue to observe each child in all eight (8) readiness domains throughout the year, using the Galileo system to record and track each child’s progress and to plan classroom experiences accordingly.

Finally, the Galileo Assessment serves as a guide for planning of on-going activities and experiences. These activities are suited to the children’s developmental needs and are utilized to evaluate progress over an extended period of time.

The capabilities that children acquire when they are young have a profound effect on their future. The experiences provided to them at this time have a tremendous influence on the development of these capabilities. For these two reasons, it is vital that teachers and parents are provided with information that will enable them to understand how children learn and develop. The most effective way to gather this information is through developmental assessment. Developmental assessment is the process of discovering what children can do and how they do it. It is used to:

- Document growth in terms of a child’s level of development, interest, needs, strengths, and pace of learning.
- Provide a portrait of the whole child with regard to his/her social, cognitive, and physical development.
- Help develop curriculum and plan learning opportunities and experiences with purposeful goals.
- Share a child’s accomplishments and readiness for new opportunities and experiences with parents and families.

The Scales in Galileo use Path-Referenced Assessment

Path Finder is a tool used to record baseline information. It is only used once (per child, per scale) at the beginning of the program year or at the time a child enters the program during the year. Path Finder helps teachers record their initial or baseline observations of their children after about a 2-3 week period of getting to know them. It does this by helping the teacher answer a fundamental and highly important question: “What is the child already capable of doing?” Path Finder helps answer this question by transforming a teacher’s general knowledge about a child into specific information about current accomplishments and readiness for new learning opportunities. Although Path Finder automatically records some basic skills that the child is likely to have mastered, teachers must still review the Path Finder results to determine which skills each child has actually mastered and uncheck skills that have not been mastered.

Path-referenced assessment helps us to view the child in terms of his/her progress along a developmental path. The path can be language, math, science, art, motor, social or emotional development. The construction of each path in Galileo is based upon research about how children construct knowledge.

Each path in Galileo is like a map, displaying capabilities from concrete to abstract and simple to complex. Staff can look at each developmentally sequenced map and scale and tell where the child is currently, and what skills he/she needs to learn next to advance and how to get there.

Setting Scale Selection Options

When using Galileo, staff choose a particular school readiness domain scale to assess the children in their classroom. Galileo provides eight (8) scales which outline the sequential development of preschool children. These sequences were compiled for the knowledge areas of Literacy & Language, Early Math, Nature & Science, Social & Emotional Development, Fine and Gross Motor Development, Health Practices, Creative Arts, and

Approaches to Learning. These scales were compiled through extensive educational research.

With Galileo, instead of using a preset level of assessment based on the child's age, each child is assessed on each scale based on where the child falls along a developmentally sequenced continuum. Such an approach is better suited to the needs of each child because it is child-focused not age-focused. . Choosing an assessment approach that reflects the children's actual skill level helps to:

- Individualize learning experiences for the child;
- Communicate better with families;
- Increase the child's self-esteem and feelings of success; and
- Create effective lesson plans.

What is a Developmental Level Score?

Path Finder provides a developmental level score, which indicates the position of a child on a developmental path (e.g., language and literacy). Developmental Level Scores are measured on the same scale for all eight (8) school readiness domains. In addition, these scales have the property of interval level of measurement. This is identical to how we would measure children's height. For example, a child's height will be the same regardless of the particular ruler that is used as all rulers are calibrated the same. In addition two children who have gained five (5) inches have gained identical amounts of height, regardless of which ruler was used to measure this and regardless of how tall each child was before they gained the five (5) inches. Similarly a developmental score of 500 means the same for all eight (8) school readiness domains and a 30 point increase is the same amount of gain on all eight (8) readiness domains. In addition, a child who begins the year with a developmental score of 450 in language and literacy, for example, has fewer skills than a child who begins the year with a developmental score of 480 in language and literacy. If both children gain 50 points across the school year, both have shown equal amounts of gain, even though they started the year with different skill levels (e.g, 450 versus 480).

There are important advantages to using developmental level scores which have the same meaning for all eight (8) school readiness domains and have interval level of measurement properties. When staff knows a child's developmental level, they know the kinds of things that the child has already learned and the things that he/she is ready to learn next. Staff can also directly compare each child's profile of strengths and needs throughout the school year, target areas where improvement is needed, and monitor how much gain is occurring. This information provides the basis for planning effective learning opportunities and individualizing instruction to maximize each child's growth and development in all eight (8) school readiness domains.

VI. TRAINING PLAN

Training on the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum

In January 1972, the Policy Council approved of the High/Scope educational approach.

The Education and Curriculum Specialists visited the Perry Pre-School Project in Ypsilanti, Michigan for training. In addition, representatives from the High/Scope Foundation visited the program to provide training to the teaching staff and follow-up training for the Curriculum and Education Specialists. Consultants from High/Scope completed a Program Quality Assessment for grantee and delegate agency classrooms in 2000. During the summer of 2000, staff from both the grantee and delegate agencies received a week of intensive training on the High/Scope curriculum approach. In-service training was provided by High/Scope Consultants for both Grantee and Delegate Agency curriculum specialists and teaching staff during the months of August, October and November 2004. Consultants provided observation at targeted sites as well as hands-on training. During 2006-2007 program year, all Grantee Curriculum Specialists completed the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum Course with a locally-based certified High/Scope Consultant.

High/Scope training is on-going. The Curriculum Specialists and other mentors facilitate training on an on-going basis as the need arises. The program also contracts with the High/Scope Foundation for training.

Training on the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos

In July of 2000, the Infant/Toddler Coordinator attended a week long training on the Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers and immediately came back and trained the existing staff on the curriculum. Curriculum Specialists and Caregivers received ongoing training on the curriculum for the next several years from both the Infant/Toddler Coordinator and contracted consultants. In 2006 a major revision was done to the curriculum. It is now known as the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos. It is the intention of the program for Curriculum Specialists to receive intensive train the trainer instruction in the new version of the curriculum. Those Curriculum Specialists will then be responsible for providing the training for the Caregiving staff.

Training on Galileo

In April 2001, the Program trained 50 staff (grantee and delegates). The group included teachers, teacher assistants, curriculum specialists, center directors, and management staff. At that time, Galileo was being implemented in 25 Head Start classrooms. On-going training was conducted on a monthly basis. During the 2001-2002 school year, additional staff was trained and 25 more classrooms began using the instrument. Monthly training and monitoring continued. Full implementation of Galileo was initiated in the 2002-2003 school term with 326 classrooms now using the assessment tool. In November 2005, a training specialist from Assessment Technologies, Inc. provided a two-day Lead Teacher Training to all Curriculum Specialists. Currently, training is provided to new teaching staff on an as needed basis by Cluster Curriculum Specialists. Curriculum Specialists are provided with training that they then conduct at the Center and classroom levels for ongoing growth and maintenance of the system.

Parent Trainings

Training opportunities are made available to parents to enhance their parenting skills, knowledge, and understanding of the educational and developmental needs and activities of their children and to share concerns about their children with program staff. Parent training is held at the beginning of the year to introduce parents to the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum and the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos and other enhancement programs. The Head Start/EHS Policy Council receives training annually on the education aspects of the program. In addition, the Curriculum Specialists provide training regarding screenings and assessment to the parents at their parent committee meetings.

VII. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT IN CHILDREN'S PROGRESS

Families Involvement in Social Competencies and School Readiness

Parents have an opportunity to make suggestions on the parent survey form regarding the curriculum and provide in-put into the daily lesson plan. Parents also have the opportunity to participate/serve on the Education Advisory Committee and attend curriculum revision meetings at both the center level and management level. Parents approve all curricula and enhancement programs. Parents are provided opportunities to enhance their parenting skills, knowledge, and understanding of the education and developmental needs of their children and to share their concerns with program staff. A parent survey form is distributed to parents to make suggestions, individually and in groups, on issues relevant to the curriculum and the culture and language of families. As volunteers, parents become knowledgeable about the curriculum through participation in the daily classroom schedule and center activities.

Parents are encouraged to use home materials, family routines, and conversations to help children learn concepts, develop language and other skills, and to explore feelings. They are invited to attend all workshops and trainings provided for teaching staff. Curriculum staff and teachers provide monthly mini-workshops on the growth and development of children. During the trainings, parents are encouraged to find opportunities to spend quality time with their children during meals, bath, bed times, travel, and on weekends.

Parent Conferences and Home Visits

Parents are encouraged to spend quality time with their children to promote language development, cognitive concepts, and self-help and exploration skills. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom in order to learn more about the curriculum, the daily classroom routine, and center activities.

The teaching staff completes three (3) home visits per program year to discuss with parents each child's development and educational status. Parent conferences are conducted on an as needed basis for Head Start children and every other month for Early Head Start children. Parent Conferences focus on issues and/or successes related to the care and development of the children. The Social Services staff are available to conduct home visits monthly as a follow up to the teaching staff's home visits and the Family Partnership process. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns that they have

regarding the services that their child receives during parent conferences and home visits. Staff is available to parents to provide support on a one-on-one basis, as needed.

Parent Workshops

Parent workshop opportunities are provided on a group basis at Parent Orientation and early in the program year and individually throughout the program year to introduce parents to the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum for Head Start, the Creative Curriculum for Infants Toddlers, and Twos for Early Head Start, and other educational enhancement programs. Special 'Family Nights' are conducted with a few of the enhancement projects for family participation.

Partnership Agreements

All Miami-Dade Head Start/Early Head Start centers are open to parents during program operating hours. Parents and all family members are always welcome to the program as visitors, volunteers, and observers. Parents are informed of the different parent involvement opportunities available during individual and group meetings. Parents will be encouraged to spend time observing children in the classroom and to participate in group activities with children. Parents will also be encouraged to support center operations by preparing materials at home and chaperoning field trips. The participation of parents in any program activity is voluntary and will not be required as a condition of their child's enrollment. All parents are provided with an opportunity to develop a Family Partnership Agreement.

VIII. COLLECTION OF CHILD OUTCOMES DATA

In order to meet the requirements of the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), data are collected on the children three (3) times a year. The majority of Head Start centers are currently using an online web based system, so once data are entered into this system, they are available to the program staff to review to meet ACF requirements. In centers where online access is not yet available, the Curriculum Specialists must collect these data with support from the Facilities/Technology Unit and upload the data into the web based system.

IX. SYNTHESIS OF CHILD OUTCOMES DATA

Galileo electronically aggregates all child outcomes data. This data provides timely and critical report information about where children stand on developmental continuums. Appropriate and meaningful changes in curriculum design may be considered. Since curriculum design and lesson planning are directly linked within Galileo, implementing enhancements becomes a purposeful and relatively simple process. After the compilation of data, information is housed in a database for further evaluation.

X. ANALYSIS OF CHILD OUTCOMES DATA

A Data Source is information gathered through the developmental assessment. This information must be reliable, credible, and verifiable. Reliable means that it is accurate. Credible means that it is believable. Verifiable means that it is supported by facts. Galileo's Data Source is utilized for this. It is used to record the source of information to support the documentation that a capability has been learned. It is a way of indicating, 'how' the teacher knows that the child has learned something.

Data are analyzed by the Head Start/Early Head Start's Management Team, Regional Managers, Center Directors, Curriculum Specialists, Teaching staff and outside consultants. These analyses aid in the planning of large group, small group and individualized instruction at the classroom level as well as inform how to improve and enhance program practices at the center and agency levels.

XI. ON-GOING MONITORING

Curriculum Monitoring

The Curriculum Specialists monitor each classroom on at least a monthly basis. During this time they check room arrangement, lesson plans, observe teacher/child interaction and the implementation of the curriculum. All of these areas make up the High/Scope wheel of learning. Feedback is provided to the staff and follow up visits are scheduled to check on corrections to problem areas. The Miami-Dade County, Community Action Agency, Head Start/Early Head Start Program uses Galileo to assess the children, leading to the development of individual plans and activities to carry out the curriculum. The Curriculum Specialists review the assessment information, observations, and children's individual plans to ensure accuracy of completion and that individual activities link back to the lesson plans. This system of monitoring gives the Specialists an idea of when children are observed, the frequency of the observations, and what levels the individual children have achieved at various points during the year.

Monitoring of Instruments and Techniques for Child Assessment

Galileo maps the assessment scale. Curriculum Specialists review anecdotal notes on each child. The developmental process of the child is checked under the maps assessment scale of Galileo. Follow-up lessons are encouraged to bring the child to his/her fullest capabilities.

The Head Start Child Outcomes Framework aligns with the Galileo maps scales and serve as a framework for interpreting child development based on child observation, developmental theory and research. They are organized into the domains of: 1) language and literacy; 2) social/emotional; 3) creative arts; 4) physical health; 5) early math; 6) nature and science; 7) approaches to learning; and 8) fine and gross motor.

Finally, the High/Scope Preschool Curriculum and Galileo maps observation scales serve as a guide for planning and on-going activities, which are suited to the children's developmental needs and interests.

XII. CHILD OUTCOMES DATA RESULTS

Use of Data Analysis and Results

Galileo electronically links the domain areas to the on-going assessment, planning, and reporting of children's progress. This unique linking provides the Program with immediate access to information about children's learning, progress, and development. As a result, the Program can easily aggregate and document child outcomes and incorporate data.

Baseline data are collected when the children enter Head Start or Early Head Start. This baseline data are compared with data obtained at the midpoint of the program year and when the children complete the program year. Since Galileo electronically aggregates all child outcomes data, the Head Start/Early Head Start's Management Team has an important tool available to them in enhancing program quality. For example, since Galileo provides timely data and critical report information about where the children stand on developmental continuums, appropriate and meaningful changes in curriculum design may be considered. The data are also used to show what training will be needed for staff and what materials need to be purchased and placed in the classrooms.

Use of Data Results to meet Performance Standards Goals and Objectives

An objective of the Miami-Dade County Head Start / Early Head Start is to provide children with varied experiences to support a continuum of growth and development. This includes the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child. The curriculum, screening, and assessment process are aligned with the 27 domain elements of the Child Outcomes Framework.

The lesson plan is based on the developmentally appropriate needs and interests of each child. Curriculum Specialists and Center Directors observe each classroom to ensure that activities and strategies are taking place that correspond with the planned lessons. Children's cultures and special needs are also taken into consideration.

XIII. REPORTING DATA RESULTS

Data Reporting

The Galileo System includes two reporting tools that are useful in helping Administrators gain information about what children currently know. These reports document children's learning with respect to specific goals in a given developmental area. Timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of information are critical to the monitoring and implementation of the curriculum. Curriculum Specialists and administrators use the Data Checking tools provided in the system to identify children who have not been assessed or who had missing information. Use of these reports and tools allows the program to monitor progress towards goals and to make timely adjustments when learning is not occurring as expected.

Galileo provides a variety of reports to document learning outcomes in class and at the center and management levels.

1. Knowledge Area Proficiency Profile – This report shows the number and percentage of skills rated at the proficient level for each knowledge area within a scale.

2. Developmental Profiles –This profile documents learning and the readiness levels of all the capabilities on a scale for a given developmental area.
3. Milestone Report – This report documents the learning selected capabilities in a given developmental area.
4. Development Summary – This summary gives a series of four scores that summarize a child’s development.
5. Progress Report – This report is an indicator of the change that has occurred in the children’s development from an initial observation period to a subsequent observation period.

Data Report Sharing

Data are collected three (3) times a year and are shared with the Head Start/Early Head Start’s Management Team, regional managers, center directors, curriculum specialists and teaching staff.

Information is shared via Management, Service Area and General staff meetings as well as at the annual Pre-Service Training Conference. In addition, team planning meetings with the curriculum specialists and teaching teams are also conducted to share critical information that is vital to the children’s learning process.

XIV. INTEGRATION OF CHILD OUTCOMES INTO PROGRAM SELF-ASSESSMENT

The program self-assessment has been reviewed to ensure conclusion of the following elements:

- Teachers are assessing the children in the eight(8) domains;
- Lesson plans include activities in the eight(8) domains;
- Children are observed at least weekly in one of the eight domains and thirteen(13) required elements and information recorded in Galileo;
- Children’s individualization activities include the eight(8) domains;
- Children’s individual progress which includes the eight(8) domains is reported to parents and reviewed by teachers and administrators;
- Data on children’s learning are analyzed by supervisors and management at the classroom, center, and program levels in order to make curriculum adjustments and to provide training to staff;
- Curriculum staff are monitoring teachers to ensure that they are tracking the progress of individual children and groups of children; and
- Management staff utilizes consolidated data on children to monitor and make program adjustments.

XV. INTEGRATION OF CHILD OUTCOMES INTO PROGRAM’S MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Governance

The plan for the Positive Outcomes for Children was presented to the Policy Council and Governing board. Training on the plan will be held when the information is presented to the Policy Council and to the Community Action Agency Board. When the Program compiles data (three times a year), reports will be provided to the Policy Council and the Community Action Board with interpretations and discussions. Action plans will be developed based on the results of the reports.

Planning

The Positive Outcomes for Children is a part of the strategic plan for the program. Currently, the majority of the classrooms utilize the web-based, online version of the Galileo assessment, which is used to gather data on the children and to provide information for individual and classroom planning. A plan is currently in the process of being developed to provide on-line service to all remaining classrooms without on-line service, which will give the program the ability to have instant information at any point in time. The delegate agencies are part of the plan.

Communication

Several meetings have been held to inform and train staff on the use of Galileo as a part of the Positive Outcomes for Children's initiative. Teachers share information on each child with the parent during the three home visits scheduled yearly. When the information is compiled for the program and delegate agencies, results are discussed with management staff, service areas staff and the Policy Council and governing board.

Record keeping

The Galileo Assessment system provides reports on various levels (individual child, classroom, center, and program). Classroom teachers use individual information to plan for the children and to report to the parents. Hard copies are kept in the children's education folder and center files. Curriculum staff use the classroom and center reports to monitor the teachers' work, to plan training for staff, and to decide on what additional materials are needed for the classroom. Compiled, aggregated reports (Agency Developmental Profiles and Milestone reports) at the separate Agency and total Program levels, from the online assessment tool are used by the Education Services Manager as a representative sampling to evaluate learning outcomes, set data driven educational goals, make goal-directed plans and implement monitor plans. Three times a year, these reports will be provided to the Policy Council and to the Governing Board. Currently, Curriculum Specialists are assigned to collect the information from the centers using the stand alone version and upload to Assessment Technology Inc. for the generation of compiled reports at the center and program levels.

Monitoring

A system has been put into place to ensure that the information gathered through the assessment process is utilized for the benefit of the children and families served. Curriculum Specialists review the assessment information, observation, and children's

individual plans to ensure accuracy of completion and that individual activities link back to the lesson plans on a monthly basis. Home visits are checked to ensure that information on the child's progress is shared with the parents. The Monitoring Unit monitors classroom assessment information and establishes an action plan and follow-up as needed.

Self-Assessment

The self assessment tool for use in the 2007-2008 program year includes Child Outcomes review. Classrooms will be reviewed to ensure that the children are assessing in the thirteen(13) mandates and eight(8) domains. Information will also be checked to ensure that teachers are using the information to plan individual and classroom activities, which are tied to the lesson plans. Home Visits will be checked to ensure that outcome information is shared with parents. The administrative self-assessment will include items to check so that the results of the child outcomes measures are used in program planning and that information is shared with appropriate staff and boards.

Human Resources

The program has identified the Galileo assessment instrument as the tool to gather information on each individual child. Initial training was completed during the 2001-2002 program year with full implementation beginning in 2002-2003. A staff person has been identified to coordinate the program and to conduct training. The teacher, teacher assistant, curriculum specialist and education manager job descriptions included assessment measures and are in the process of being revised to include information directly related to the Positive Child Outcomes initiative.

Fiscal

Implementation of the Positive Child Outcomes has had significant impact on the program budget over the past two years. Computers had to be purchased and placed in each Head Start Classroom. The software has been purchased and money has been budgeted for the renewal of licenses each year. Internet access has been installed in approximately 90% of Grantee and Delegate Agencies. A portion of the training money is used to provide onsite training. Money for staff to support the program has been included in each year's budget.