

HOME-BASED OPTION

Introduction

Grantees may choose to provide GSRP services through a Home-Based model. The Home-Based option serves families of four-year-old children primarily in families' homes. The visiting staff person (home visitor), facilitates learning experiences with the primary adult and child enrolled in the program. The focus of activity in the Home-Based option is to provide the parent/guardian with information, skills, and resources necessary to nurture the growth and development of the enrolled child. Research shows the more child-focused the home visits are in content, the higher the levels of the child's cognitive and language development. This option leads to an increase in the parent/guardian's understanding of child development, as well as leads to a more stimulating home environment, e.g., provision of play materials, age-appropriate children's books, etc. Programs utilizing the Home-Based option also provide opportunities for group experiences (i.e., cluster activities) for their families (parent and child) on a regular basis. The per-slot allocation is the same as Part-Day, Center-Based GSRP.

Developmental screening is required of all children upon entry into the program. Ongoing assessment of children enrolled in GSRP must provide information across all domains identified in the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten* (ECSQ-PK). Grantees must use research-validated tools for child assessment. Child assessment must be authentic, reflected on in a systematic way, and ongoing assessment data should be collected three times per year. Developmental profiles are shared individually with parents to inform adult-child interactions. Data are also aggregated program-wide to provide information for program improvement and accountability. For more information, please refer to the Child Assessment Section.

Home-Based Option Criteria

The following criteria serve as the guidelines for the operation of this option and were approved by the Michigan State Board of Education in April 1996.

Home visits must be conducted with a parent, guardian, or primary caregiver, not a "babysitter" or child care provider. Programs may occasionally find it most appropriate to work with a primary caregiver who is making decisions about a child, and who will profit most from the parent training, such as a grandparent, aunt, or soon-to-be legal guardian. Programs should consider flexible scheduling of visits in order to include parents who would otherwise not be able to participate in the visit. An Individualized Service Plan, including goals and objectives, must be developed and maintained for each enrolled child and family. It is suggested that goals in the areas of child development, parenting education, and interactive parent-child literacy be written with each family.

Services provided by programs must include:

- A minimum of 20 home visits to each family during the first program year and 30 visits for each continuing year.
- Home visits must be conducted for a minimum of 60 minutes excluding transportation time.
- Ten cluster activities the first program year and 15 cluster activities each continuing year.

- Each cluster activity must include two components, one for children and one for adults. Each activity must be conducted for a minimum of two hours.

Staff

GSRP Home-Based staff requirements:

Early Childhood/Adult Education Specialist

An early childhood/adult education specialist must be identified to administer or consult with the program and must minimally have:

- a graduate degree with a background in early childhood education, child development, family life education, adult education, or a related field; and
- interdisciplinary training in working with young children and adult family members.

Home Visitor

The home visitor must minimally have either:

- an associate's or bachelor's degree in child or human development, early childhood education, family life education, parenting, social work, or a related field; **or**
- a valid Home-Visitor CDA.

Training

Each grantee must develop and maintain a yearly training plan that minimally includes:

- A program orientation plan for new staff members.
- Plans for in-service training in community resources and services to which staff may need to refer families.
- A description of the interdisciplinary training opportunities that will be offered to staff during the program year, either as local or in-district training, or through regional conferences.

Training must be planned for in at least two of the following areas for each staff person (programs are responsible for maintaining records showing attainment of the training plan):

- child development;
- developmentally-appropriate practice;
- family centered services; and
- adult education.

Caseload and job responsibilities for home visiting staff must be developed within the following guidelines:

- Maximum caseload size is 16 families per home visitor, over a minimum period of 20 weeks for the first year, and 30 weeks for continuing years.
- Each week, time must be allotted in a home visiting schedule for planning and record keeping of visits.
- Time must be allotted for planning, carrying out, and record keeping of the cluster activities.

Cluster Meetings

Cluster activities may include:

- Workshops (guest speakers could be provided).
- Sharing of information about parenting issues and child development.
- Providing an opportunity for parents to observe their children with other children.
- Providing an opportunity for parents to practice parenting skills.
- Field trips, e.g., local library.
- Transition activities.

Advisory Committee

Parents are represented on program advisory and/or policy making committees. There must be one parent for every 18 children enrolled in the program, with a minimum of two parent/guardian representatives. The Advisory Committee must:

- Ensure the ongoing articulation of early childhood, kindergarten, and first grade programs offered by the school district/PSA.
- Review the mechanisms and criteria used to determine participation in the early childhood program.
- Review the health screening program for all participants.
- Review the nutritional services provided to program participants.
- Review the mechanisms in place for the referral of families to community school social service agencies, as appropriate.
- Review the collaboration with and the involvement of appropriate community, volunteer, social service agencies and organizations in addressing all aspects of educational disadvantage.
- Review, evaluate, and make recommendations to a local school readiness program(s) for changes to the school readiness program.

Note: A GSRP participating in a county or interagency advisory committee is required to also have a local Advisory Committee with parents having full representation and input in establishing program policies.

Home-Based Option Program Model

The selection of the program model is crucial to the success of the Home-Based option. The program model selected must meet not only the Michigan State Board of Education criteria, and be aligned with the ECSQ-PK, but should directly address the goals that have been established by the individual program for the participating families and child.

Home Instruction Program for Parents of Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)

www.hippyusa.org

- Hippy is a Home-Based, family-focused program that helps parents provide educational enrichment.
- Curriculum focuses on the development of cognitive skills, including language development, problem solving, logical thinking, and perceptual skills. It also promotes the development of social/emotional, fine, and gross motor skills.
- Curriculum is written in a structured format with 30 weekly activity packets for the home visitor, nine story books, and a set of 20 manipulative shapes.

- Skills and concepts are developed through a variety of developmentally-appropriate activities such as reading, writing, drawing, listening, singing, playing games, puppetry, cooking, etc.
- The program is delivered by home visitors who are members of the participating communities and parents in the program.
- Home visitors must have one of the following:
 - associate's or bachelor's degree in child or human development;
 - early childhood education;
 - family life education;
 - parenting;
 - social work; or
 - a related field.

Home visitors role-play activities with the parents during visits lasting a minimum of 30 minutes (GSRP requires home visits be conducted for a minimum of 60 minutes, excluding transportation time). Materials are available in English and Spanish.

Parents as Teachers (PAT)

www.parentsasteachers.org

- Personal visits are the major service delivery component. During these visits, parent educators:
 - share age-appropriate child development information with parents;
 - help them to observe their own child;
 - address their parenting concerns; and
 - involve parents in age-appropriate activities with the child.
- Parent group meetings provide opportunities to share information about parenting issues and child development.
- Periodic screening for early identification of developmental delays and/or health/vision/hearing problems. The curriculum also provides regular review of each child's developmental progress, identifies strengths and abilities, as well as areas of concern that may require referral for follow-up services, and increases parents' understanding of their child's development.
- Parent educators help families identify and connect with needed resources and overcome barriers to accessing services.
- Each parent educator must attend specific training.

The Parent-Child Home Program (PCHP)

www.parent-child.org

The goals of PCHP are to help families who have not had access to educational opportunities, to create language-rich home environments, and develop quality parent-child verbal interaction to promote cognitive and social-emotional development.

- A home visitor visits the family for 30 minutes, twice weekly (GSRP requires home visits be conducted for a minimum of 60 minutes, excluding transportation time).
- The family is given a recommended book or educational toy on the first visit and the home visitor models verbal interaction, reading and play activities, utilizing the book or toy.
- Lesson plans are detailed and clear.
- The site coordinator must be trained.

Portage Project

www.portageproject.org

A functional, easy to understand and format used for working with children and their families, and is packaged into two age categories:

- infant/toddler; birth to 36 months
- preschooler; three to six years

Each set includes:

- a tool for observation with sample forms for weekly planning and family partnerships;
- spiral bound set of activity and routines resource book;
- user's guide;
- wall chart showing developmental areas and strands across all age ranges; and
- group summary form.

Kindergarten Transition: Suggestions for Home-Based Option Program Models

Possible transition activities might include (see Transition Section for more suggestions):

- The kindergarten teacher visits the child and family at the family home giving the parent the chance to ask questions, and to give the child the opportunity to meet the teacher prior to school starting.
- The child, parent, and home visitor visit the local kindergarten classroom during a regular kindergarten day. The child and parent are given the opportunity to participate in activities taking place in the classroom.