

COMPONENT I: FULL DAY/FULL YEAR

DEFINITION:

Children who participate in Judy Center Partnerships are provided access to a high-quality early care and education programs that meet the year-round needs of children and families. This is necessary in order to provide the consistency of learning experiences for children and to maintain the continuity of early learning opportunities provided to families.

Judy Center Partnerships **are required to provide access** to early care and education services that operate 7 to 12 hours a day, year round with the exception of 11 holidays. (*New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's birthday, President's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving and, the day after Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.*) Child Care services are available and operate on staff development days and during winter and spring break, and summer vacation.

BACKGROUND:

The need for full-day and full-year services has grown not only as a result of the changes required by welfare reform beginning in 1996, but also as single parents and dual-parent families have sought additional education or training so that they may qualify for better paying jobs.

Many children often are cared for at home or in the home of a relative or unrelated adult in unregulated child care. Research indicates that a lack of dependable, affordable, high quality child care impacts the economically disadvantaged parent's ability to successfully maintain a job or to permanently transition from welfare to work. Further, research shows that structure, consistency, and routine in a child's daily schedule helps to develop healthy emotional well-being and improves readiness for learning.

In order to accommodate working parents, there is a need to extend services to siblings of children who participate in formalized early childhood programs, and to maintain service during non-traditional hours. Working parents frequently occupy entry-level jobs or are employed in shift work and do not qualify for leave benefits. Thus, services are needed not only for extra hours each day, but also on staff development days, winter and spring breaks, and over the summer.

The Judith P. Hoyer legislation requires the Judy Center Partnerships to provide 7 to 12 hours of service a day for the full year.

<i>Challenges/Strategies/Solutions:</i>	
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<p>Funding, Policy and Capacity Issues may differ between programs and funding streams. Policies related to staff – child ratios and eligibility requirements are not consistent between programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judy Centers may provide funding for additional staff on staff development or inclement weather days. • Procedures need to be established to cover situations in which a parent loses eligibility for child care subsidy. • This is an opportunity for local and state agencies and leaders to plan methods of combining funding sources. • At Judy Centers, stakeholders may need to be flexible and creative with work schedules to provide adequate coverage.
<p>Attitudinal/Process Issues may arise due to staff perceptions about work hours and collaborating with other programs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and technical assistance may be necessary to work through the attitudinal and process challenges. • Develop emergency plans and funding to cover unusual situations that may arise. • Find ways to provide incentives or flexible schedules that support staff. • Convene forums and support networks to build relationships, bring problems to the surface, and highlight success.
<p>Logistics- A. Transportation to the local provider. B. Food Services during inclement weather, winter and spring break, or when additional children are present due to staff development days.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the local school system to assure effective bus routes. • Check with other partners to determine if any of them have transportation that may jointly be utilized. • Contract with the local school system’s food services department. • Contract with outside vendors for services. • Check with Child /Adult Food Program.

STRATEGIES:

- Several Judy Centers have child care on site, while others are helping families to pay for child care at nearby centers.
- It is important that families, who qualify, apply for Purchase of Care (POC). If a subsidy is provided to assist the families who do not qualify for POC, it is important that it should not cover the full cost of care. This helps to build a sense of responsibility and empowerment in families.
- Each Judy Center Partnership should build relationships with licensed family child care providers and child care centers in the surrounding area, inviting them to become partners in the effort to provide full-day, year round quality care and education services.

BIBLIOGRAPHY:

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Quilt – "Barriers to Meeting the Need for Full-Day, Full-Year Head Start Services.

The Cost and Quality of Full Day, Year – Round Early Care and Education in Massachusetts: Preschool Classrooms. An Executive Summary of a report on the findings from The Massachusetts Cost and Quality Study funded by The Massachusetts Department of Education
<http://www.wcwonline.org/earlycare/executivenm.pdf>