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**COMPONENT: DISABILITIES**

**SUBJECT: NUTRITION SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

**PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE:** To ensure that children with special needs are provided with adequate nutrition resources.

**OPERATIONAL PROCEDURE:**

The Health and Disability Manager must work with staff to ensure that provisions to meet special needs are incorporated into the nutrition program.

Appropriate professionals such as physical therapists, speech therapists, occupational therapists, nutritionists or dietitians must be consulted on ways to assist Head Start staff and parents of children with severe disabilities with problems of chewing, swallowing, and feeding themselves.

Children’s skills can be enhanced during meal time through conversation and acceptable manners.

The Health and Disability Manager should work with family services staff to help families access nutritional resources and services for children who are not able to learn or develop normally because of malnutrition.

Special utensils will be provided whenever necessary for children who require such accommodations.

In cases of allergies, Head Start staff will work closely with the child’s physician or a medical consultant, and documentation will be maintained in the child’s permanent file located at Head Start Central Office.