

**Interagency Agreement between  
Northwest Indiana First Steps Cluster**  
*(11045 Broadway, Ste. F, Crown Point, IN 46307)*  
And  
**Geminus Head Start XXI**  
*(8400 Louisiana Street, Merrillville, IN 46410)*

This agreement is between Northwest Indiana First Steps and Geminus Head Start XXI for the period of 1 June 2009 to 31 May 2011.

## **I. Purpose**

The Purpose of this agreement is to establish working procedures between Northwest Indiana First Steps and Geminus Head Start XXI in the provision of services to children, birth through five years of age in Lake and Porter Counties. It is developed in response to requirements of the Individuals Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the federal early intervention/special education legislation and title 511 article #7, Indiana State special education laws and Head Start Program Performance Standards 1304.41 (A) (2) (IV).

## **II. Program Descriptions**

Northwest Indiana First Steps is a family-centered, coordinated early intervention system designed to serve children and their families from birth to age three in Lake, Porter, LaPorte, Newton and Jasper counties in Indiana who have disabilities and/or who are developmentally delayed or vulnerable.

Geminus Head Start XXI is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary child development program currently designed to serve eligible children three to five years of age and their families in Lake and Porter counties in Indiana. See attached program location listing.

## **III. Child Find and Referral Activities**

### First Steps will:

- Refer to Geminus Head Start XXI with parental consent children who are three years of age prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> and for whom Head Start is deemed as an appropriate placement.
- Refer children who are three years of age after August 1<sup>st</sup> with a diagnosed disability (defined by acceptance into the Local Education Agency's Special Education program with a written Individualized Education Plan), and for whom Head Start is deemed as an appropriate placement.
- With written parental consent, upon transition, provide to Head Start the IFSP, evaluation reports and results.
- To the greatest extent possible, invite Head Start staff to transition meetings or provide Head Start information to parents for children whom Head Start may be an appropriate placement.

### Head Start will:

- Provide First Steps with the opportunity to be involved in Parental and Staff trainings to educate all involved about the First Steps Early Intervention System.
- Refer, with parental consent, any siblings of enrolled children from birth through three years of age, who may have a suspected disability and / or developmental delay.
- Consider age eligible children who are three years of age with a diagnosed disability defined by acceptance into the Local Education Agency's Special Education program with a written Individualized Education Plan), and for whom Head Start is deemed as an appropriate placement

## **IV. Transition**

The primary purpose of the Transition Meeting is to discuss future options for the child turning three and to identify the steps, persons responsible, and timelines that must occur between the meeting and the conclusion of early intervention services in preparation for what will be implemented at age three. This meeting will be convened between 90 and 180 days prior to the child's third birthday.

### First Steps will with written parental consent:

1. Convene with approval of the family a transition planning meeting. To the greatest extent possible, Head Start staff will be invited to the transition meeting or Head Start information will be provided to the parents of children for whom Head Start may be an appropriate placement.
2. Provide to Geminus Head Start XXI a current IFSP (Individualized Family Service Plan), social history and most current eligibility documentation.

### Head Start will:

1. When invited, Head Start staff will participate in the transition planning meeting or provide information to be given to parents regarding Head Start for children for whom Head Start may be an appropriate placement.
2. Make the Coordinator of Disability and Mental Health Services available to parents for further information and clarification.
3. Include the current IFSP in program development for any child enrolled in Head Start

## **V. Implementation of Agreement**

Two original copies will be developed and maintained. One copy will be maintained at the First Steps office and the other at the Geminus Head Start office. The document will be available on the State of Indiana Transition website.

### First Steps will:

1. Make the document available on the local First Steps website.
2. Make the document available electronically

### Head Start will:

1. Make the document available on the corporation intra-net system
2. Make the document available electronically

## **VI. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Agreement**

Agreement will be reviewed annually prior to the June submission to the State with required signatures by designated representatives from each agency.

## **VII. Confidentiality**

Northwest Indiana First Steps and Geminus Head Start XXI shall follow the requirements outlined in the Family Education Right to Privacy Act (FERPA) and Health Information Portability and Privacy Act (HIPPA), governing the confidentiality of records, as appropriate.

## VIII. Training and Technical Assistance

### First Steps will:

- Inform Geminus Head Start XXI of disability and / or Head Start related training and technical assistance opportunities.

### Head Start will:

- Inform Northwest Indiana First Steps of disability and / or First Steps related training and technical assistance opportunities.

## IX. Participation on Committees

### First Steps will:

- Provide First Steps representation at the Geminus Head Start Health Services Advisory Committee (health, safety, nutrition, disability and mental health services).

### Head Start will:

- Provide Head Start representation at Lake and Porter counties Local Planning and Coordinating Committees and at the Northwest Indiana First Steps Oversight Council as requested.

## X. Termination / Review

This interagency agreement will be reviewed and revised by Northwest Indiana First Steps and Geminus Head Start XXI on an as needed basis or at least on an annual basis. Either party upon thirty days prior written notice may terminate this agreement.

## XI. Signatures

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Leonard Jozwiak  
*Vice President Geminus Head Start XXI*

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Date

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Clara M. Mann  
*Northwest Indiana First Steps, Director*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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Jillian Condon  
*Northwest Indiana First Steps, Lead LPCC Coordinator*

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Date