

Teenage Parent Programs

Student Handbook



**POLK COUNTY
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

STUDENTS FIRST

Introduction

The Teenage Parent Program is designed to meet the needs of pregnant or parenting students and their children. This voluntary program is designed to provide participating students educational and ancillary services to facilitate the completion of high school. The program includes the following services:

- Academics
- Childcare
- Coordinated Health Care and Social Services
- Parenting Education
- Transportation

Student Eligibility Criteria

Pregnant and parenting students who are enrolled in a K-12 Polk County Public School are eligible to participate in the Teenage Parent Programs. Pregnant students must present a medically documented proof of pregnancy. Parenting student **must** present the child's birth certificate or other **official** medical record(s) of the child's birth.

Teenage fathers, who are currently enrolled students, are also encouraged to participate in the TAP programs. Documentation of fatherhood **must** also be presented. A child's birth certificate, with the father's name documented or a notarized affidavit of fatherhood is acceptable.

Application and Student Admission Procedures

The decision to attend the TAP program is based on a voluntary agreement between the student, the home school guidance counselor, and the students' parent/guardian. An appointment is then made with the appropriate TAP program to continue the enrollment process. Programs are located at the following locations:

- Traviss Teen Parent Program, located at Traviss Career Center, 3225 Winter Lake Road, Lakeland, FL 33803
- Ridge Teen Parent Program, located at Ridge Career Center, 7700 State Road 544, Winter Haven, Florida 33881
- Haines City High School Pilot Teen Parent Program, located on the campus of Haines City High School, 2800 Hornet Drive, Haines City, Florida 33844.
- Kathleen Sr. High School Teen Parent Program, located on the campus of Kathleen Sr. High School, 1100 Red Devil Way, Lakeland, Florida 33815

Exceptional Student Education

Exceptional Students' (ESE) who meet the program eligibility criteria will be considered for placement. However, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) review will occur prior to placement in the TAP program. A TAP staff member will be present at the review (if requested).

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who meet program eligibility criteria shall have equal access to the TAP program. When an LEP student is served in the program, the curriculum and related services will be designed to appropriately address the needs of the LEP student.

The TAP program provides students with the option of remaining enrolled in the TAP program, or returning to their home school after a minimum of one semester and/or successful completion of the parenting curriculum requirements described in this handbook or the TAP program brochure. Students who successfully complete the parenting curriculum requirements will continue to receive ancillary services.

The HEARTH Project and Polk County Public Schools are dedicated to assisting homeless and in-transition families and children by eliminating barriers to school enrollment, attendance, stability, and overall academic success. We work to ensure that children experiencing homelessness have the same opportunities for educational success as housed students in Polk County.

The Mission of Polk County Public Schools is to provide a high quality education for all students.

Name:	Title:	Phone:
Dee Dee Wright	Homeless Liaison	534-0755
Amy Beascochea	Technician	534-0801
Karen Mehler	Homeless Advocate	534-0629
Ben Ruch	Homeless Advocate	534-7254
Nakita Scott	School Social Worker	534-0202
Jessica Victory	College Clerk	

To find out which HEARTH staff member is assigned to your school, speak with guidance counselor or social worker on your campus.

Meals

Breakfast and lunch are served to students enrolled in the TAP program. All TAP students must complete a free/reduced lunch form.

Breast Feeding

Students who wish to breast feed their babies will work with administrators, child care staff, and the school nurse to establish a schedule for breast feeding. The schedule should not interfere with the delivery of core or academic instruction.

Returning to the Home School

Students will meet with TAP Administration and Senior Coordinator, Teen Parent Program/Childcare to make the necessary arrangements to return to their home schools. Contracted child care and transportation arrangements **must** be arranged prior to leaving the TAP program. Students who have successfully completed the TAP program requirements may continue to receive the ancillary TAP services, provided they remain in school working toward a high school diploma. Students who withdraw from school for any reason, or students who withdraw to attend adult school, and Charter schools are no longer entitled to TAP program services. Students are not permitted to withdraw themselves from school or the TAP program, unless they are of legal age, emancipated by the courts, or married and living on their own. A parent or guardian **must** withdraw the student.

Curriculum

In addition to the academic curriculum, students **must** successfully complete at least one parenting/child development course which minimally includes instruction in pre and post natal health care, parenting skills, the benefits of sexual abstinence, and consequences of subsequent pregnancies. TAP programs offer academic courses, preferred access to Polk County Virtual School, and access to Florida Virtual School. Students who attend the Ridge and Traviss TAP programs also have access to vocational courses and training.

Ancillary Services

Students who are successfully completing, or have completed the TAP program are eligible for support services to facilitate the students' attainment of a high school diploma. These services include.

Transportation

Students and their children who attend Ridge, Traviss, Haines City and Kathleen Teen Parent Program are provided transportation to and from school via a Polk County school bus **must** adherence to school bus rules and regulations, including eating and drinking on the bus, will be strictly enforced by the administration at each site. Students who voluntarily do not wish to receive transportation services provided by the school bus **must** provide their own transportation.

Students who drive to school must park in the designated student parking lots at each site, and adhere to each site's rules and regulations governing students who drive to school.

Child Care Services

On-site child care is provided at all of the TAP program sites. The following paperwork is required:

- 1) Birth Certificate ***
- 2) Immunization Card (**blue card**)
- 3) Well Baby Physical
- 4) Baby's Social Security Card or Social Security Form
- 5) 2 proofs of residence
- 6) Completed Student Entry Form Packet for designated location (provided in office)

All forms **must** be completed prior to the child's admission to the child care facility. Teen mothers are expected to safely escort their child to the designated child care classroom. Students' **must** follow the rules and regulations set forth at each child care facility.

****** Hospital record with footprints is accepted until Birth Certificate is issued.***

Coordinated Health and Social Services

These services will be coordinated by the school nurse, school social worker, or other TAP personnel. Services may include teaching preparation for childbirth, aftercare for the student and new baby, nutrition counseling and information, assessing students' complaints and determining if medical evaluation is indicated.

Social work services may include individual or group counseling, home visits, social skills training, and referrals to appropriate community resources for students and families in need.

Student Expectations

One important aspect of the TAP programs is to create a safe and non-disruptive environment in which an equitable education can be extended to all students. Acceptable student behavior is a key expectation to achieving such an environment. All TAP students are expected to adhere to the Polk County Code of Student Conduct, including behavior, conduct, class preparedness, such as having adequate school supplies, use of appropriate language, and dress code policies. Participants and successful completers of the TAP program are expected to follow school board policies and procedures. In addition, the following policies **must** be observed.

Dress Code

TAP students are expected to wear clothing that does not expose skin, except for above the base of the neck, arms and legs. Student dress should be clean and neat. Tank tops, midriff and crop tops, strapless tops, off the shoulder tops, tops with plunging necklines, or those that expose undergarments are not permitted. Skirt and dress hemlines should be no shorter than mid-thigh. Students may wear hemmed walking shorts, Bermuda shorts, or skirts that are not shorter than mid-thigh. **(Students at the Ridge and Traviss Teen Parent Programs need to check with the site administrator about required program uniforms).** Pajamas are not permitted under any circumstances. Clothing or jewelry with markings that are offensive, suggestive, indecent, associated with gangs, drugs, alcohol, sex or violence, or support discrimination (on the basis of age, color, handicap, national origin, marital status, race, religion, or sexual orientation) **are prohibited**. Improperly fitting clothes, including those that are too tight or too loose, are also **not** allowed.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited on all school board property.

Telephone /wireless communication devices

Wireless communication devices shall not be activated or used during school hours or on school buses which is clearly outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.

Violations will be addressed by the site administrator in accordance with the guidelines set forth in the Code of Student Conduct.

Repeated violations may result in the student being withdrawn from the TAP program and the loss of all program ancillary services, including child care.

Attendance Policy

Students participating in teenage parent programs are exempt from minimum attendance requirements for absences related to pregnancy or parenting, but are required to make up work missed due to absence. Florida Statute 1003.54

TAP programs are designed to accommodate absences made necessary by pregnancy and parenting, good attendance is the cornerstone to academic success and responsible parenthood. Students are expected to be in attendance daily, by the start of first period. When it is time for the birth of the baby, with a normal delivery, the mother is allowed to be out of school for two (2) weeks. If a Cesarean Section delivery is necessary, the mother is allowed to be out for four (4) weeks. Births that occur during holiday breaks, or over the summer, do not generate additional two or four weeks of absence. If it is medically necessary for a mother to be out more than the allowed time, a doctor's note **must** be provided to the TAP administrators.

Absences associated with the illness of a child **must** be called into the TAP site before 10:00 a.m. daily. A doctor's note **must** be presented for a child's illness lasting three (3) days or longer. Students who will be absent from school due to an appointment **must** notify the site in writing prior to such an appointment. In order for an absence to be considered excused, a parent or legal guardian of record (listed on the student's emergency card) **must** write a note, stating the name of the student, the dates the student was absent, the reason, and include a working telephone number where the parent or guardian can be reached. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the absence being unexcused.

When the student is absent, it is the responsibility of the student to request and complete their makeup work. Teachers and staff have 48 hours to prepare the makeup work if the absence is more than three days. Students with extended absences may request school work to be completed at home. The work must be completed and returned before additional assignments can be given.

Any student who has accumulated five or more unexcused absences in a 9-week grading period will be required to have an attendance meeting. The parent, student, site administrator, and district level TAP personnel will address the concerns and draft a plan to improve attendance. ***Excessive absences may result in the student being withdrawn from the TAP program and the loss of all program ancillary services.***

Tardiness Policy

Students who are tardy **must** submit a written note from the parent or guardian of record stating the student's name and reason for being tardy. The note **must** also include a working telephone number where the parent or guardian can be reached.

Leaving Campus

Students will **not** be allowed to leave school without proper authorization from the site administrator and the students' parent or guardian. That student must also check out their child/ren from the childcare classroom.

Dismissal/Withdrawal

A student may be withdrawn from any TAP Program for unsatisfactory conduct, excessive absences, excessive tardiness or lack of progress.

Re-Entry

A TAP student may re-enter any TAP program in a different semester upon Sr. Coordinator, Teen Parent Program and site administrator approval, if unsatisfactory conduct, progress, excessive absences or excessive tardiness has been resolved. Students re-entering under these conditions will sign a behavior/attendance contract. The student's parent/guardian must also sign the contract.

Medications

Medication policies are also stringently enforced. Teen mothers may bring medication to school for use with their child/ren, provided it is accompanied by a physician's statement. Students will not be allowed to go to the childcare classroom and administer medication without a doctor's authorization, stating amount to be dispensed, and the times to be administered. This information **must** be documented on the School Board's *Authorization for Medication Form*. This form **must** be given to each on-site nurse/medical designee. Students are **not** allowed personal possession of any medication while at school.

Exception: Students and/or babies requiring asthma or Epi-pens/Ana-kits may carry their inhaler/Epi-pen if the physician documents it on the Authorization for Medication form. Additional requests will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Lip balm, sunscreen, and saline for contact lenses are not considered to be medications and may be carried by the student without an Authorization for Medication form.

DRIVER LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Any TAP student who is eligible (age 15, 16, or 17) to obtain a restricted or regular Florida driver license must also be in compliance with school attendance requirements of Section 322.091, Florida Statutes, prior to applying for a Florida driver license. Please **SEE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS SECTION 2.04** outlines in the Code of Student Conduct.

CHILD ABUSE

When child abuse and/or neglect is suspected by school personnel, the law requires that the suspected child abuse and/or neglect be reported immediately to the Florida Abuse Registry, 1-800-962-2873

**For additional information contact:
Teen Parent Programs
Multiple Pathways
On the Campus of Ridge Technical College
Winter Haven, FL 33881
863-419-3001**

**LaTonnja Key, M.A.
Senior Coordinator, Teen Parent Program
Childcare Services
Teen Parent Programs
863-419-3001**

**Raquel Rodriguez
Secretary II, Teen Parent Program
Childcare Services
Teen Parent Programs 863-419-3001**

POLK COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Catholic Charities – Lakeland686-7153
Winter Haven299-7983
Church Service Center533-5822
Dept of Children & Families – Access Florida
(WAGES, Food Stamps, Medicaid) 866-762-2237
Family Emer. Service Ctr. of WH.....294-1939
Frostproof Care Center..... 635-5555
Help of Fort Meade..... 285-6600
H.O.P.E. Center.....683-8182
Lake Wales Care Center.....676-6678
Lighthouse Ministries687-3705
Mulberry Community Service Center.....425-1523
Polk Co. Social Services534-5387
Salvation Army – Lakeland682-8179
Winter Haven.....291-5107
Haines City.....287-4342
SHARE Program..... 800-536-3379
Talbot House Ministries..... 687-8475
WIC (Women, Infants & Children).....519-7542/519-7543
Women’s Resource Center294-5318
Agricultural & Labor Program (ALPI) 956-3491
Toll Free 800-330-3491
Angel Food Ministry – Bartow 533-0007
Lakeland 859-3577
Lake Wales 676-2516

Wauchula	773-5794
Winter Haven	605-1577
Auburndale Relief Association	967-9711
Vital Statistics (Birth Records).....	519-7900

Polk County Health Department Clinics

Auburndale.....	965-5400
Bartow.....	519-7916
Haines City.....	421-3204
Lakeland.....	413-2620
Lake Wales.....	678-4144
Polk County Health Plan	533-1111

HOUSING – Emergency

Lighthouse Ministries	687-3705
Talbot House Ministries.....	687-8475
Salvation Army – Lakeland	682-8179
Winter Haven (Women & Children).....	291-5109
Women's Care Ctr (Women & Children).....	534-3844

MIGRANT SERVICES

Agricultural & Labor Program (ALPI)	956-3491
Immigration Services.....	800-375-5283
Migrant Education	534-0655
Social Security Administration.....	800-772-1213
Safe Haven.....	800-799-7233

For more information on the statewide Safe Haven program, visit www.asafehavenfornewborns.com, call 305-882-1304, ext. 103, or e-mail safehaven@asafehavenfornewborns.com.