



HERNANDO
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Learn it. Love it. Live it.

TEENAGE PARENT PROGRAM GUIDE 2023-2024



Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act

“It is the policy of the Hernando County School Board not to illegally discriminate or to allow its employees to illegally discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex (including sexual orientation, transgender status or gender identity), marital status, disability, pregnancy, military status, ancestry, or Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act of 2008 (GINA) in its educational programs or employment practice.” For questions regarding equity within the school system, please contact Matthew Goldrick - goldrick_m@hcsb.k12.fl.us phone 352-797-7019 919 N. Broad St. Brooksville, FL 34601.

Introduction

Section 1003.54, Florida Statutes (F.S.) requires that each district school board establish and implement a teenage parent program which is defined as an educational program designed to provide a specialized curriculum and other services to meet the needs of students who are either pregnant or are already parenting, and the children of these students. Rule 6A-6.0525, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) establishes that pregnant and parenting students and their children shall be entitled to participate in programs designed to provide comprehensive educational and ancillary services to facilitate the parents' completion of high school.

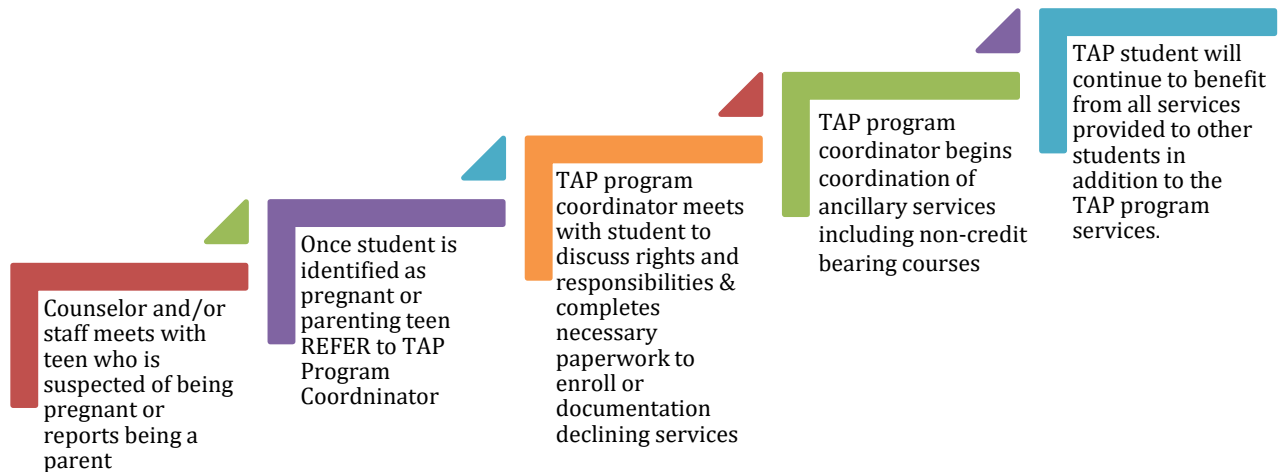
Pregnant and parenting students enrolled in HCSD attending any of the education platforms (e-school, traditional school or a combination of these); and are working towards the completion of high school are eligible to participate in the TAP program. In addition to the Teenage Parent Program services available, pregnant and parenting students in HCSD will continue to benefit from existing school-based services provided to all students such as, crisis and academic support not related to pregnancy/parenting through the same system of delivery as their non-pregnant or parenting peers.

Florida Statute 1003.54(3)(c) states that, “Provision for necessary child care, health care, social services, parent education, and transportation shall be ancillary service components of teenage parent programs.

TAP Program Goals

- Support the overall health and well-being of teenage mothers, fathers and their infants, through the provision of educational and ancillary services.
- Educate TAP program students in prenatal and postnatal healthcare, parenting skills, benefits of sexual abstinence, and the consequences of subsequent pregnancies, without increasing their academic disadvantage.
- Promote the completion of graduation requirements by identifying alternative academic arrangements
- Advocate for and connect TAP program students with school support staff and community agencies for the provision of ancillary services.
- Provide mentoring and experiential learning opportunities to coach teenage mothers and/or fathers to promote positive self-care and parent-child interaction.

Referral Process & Eligibility Criteria



As a district, we **MUST** perform our due diligence to **REFER** pregnant and/or parenting teens so that they can be informed of the rights and services they are entitled to by law.

Once a student is identified as a pregnant or parenting teen, and referred to the TAP program, the coordinator will provide the student and family with information related to their educational rights, services and resources related to their needs. Pregnant or parenting students and their children shall not be assigned to the program without annual consent from the student's parent or guardian or by direct consent from the adult student. To document eligibility the TAP coordinator will request a copy of:

- a county public health unit certification of pregnancy **OR**
 - private physician's certification of pregnancy,
- a child's birth certificate **OR**
 - copy of application for birth certificate **OR**
 - hospital records,
- notarized affidavit of fatherhood signed by mother and father **OR**
 - evidence of parent's program completion (if applicable)
 - documentation of child's birth upon delivery

The decision to attend the TAP program is voluntary; and the opportunity to decline services is provided by TAP program coordinator.

TAP PROGRAM Course Requirements

TAP program students must successfully complete (earning a grade of "C" or better) **at least** one (credit bearing) pregnancy and/or parenting courses which minimally includes instruction in pre and post-natal health care, parenting skills, the benefits of sexual abstinence, and consequences of subsequent pregnancies. TAP program students have preferred access to enroll in Hernando E-school courses that satisfy this requirement;

- a. Parenting Skills
- b. Health for Expectant Parents
- c. Parenting I
- d. Parenting II
- e. Child Development

Sometimes it may be difficult for a pregnant or parenting teen to receive pregnancy and parenting instruction through a credit-bearing course **without increasing their academic disadvantage**. In these cases, consult with the TAP program coordinator to evaluate other options.

Non-credit bearing curriculum will be specifically tailored to address the pregnant or parenting students' needs. Non-credit bearing instruction is provided by mentors and community partners under the supervision of the TAP Program coordinator. Non-credit bearing pregnancy/parenting topics may be provided using periodic pullout. The instructor will maintain a log of topics covered and submit to the TAP program coordinator. Non-credit bearing parenting curriculum will be used by the DCF certified nursery staff. The nursery staff will provide mentoring and experiential learning opportunities to coach the teenage mothers and/or fathers while recognizing the challenges of being a teenage parent. The goal is to promote positive self-care and parent-child interaction.

TAP program completers retain their entitlement rights to the ancillary 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 education school, and/or 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.

Childcare

On-site HCSD childcare facility, licensed by the Department of Children & Families, for the children of TAP program students is located at Nature Coast Technical High School. TAP program coordinator will provide the student and family with information regarding services and options pertaining to ancillary services, including coordination of childcare. The Department of Children & Families requires the following documents:

- Birth Certificate (Hospital record with footprints is accepted until Birth Certificate is issued)
- Immunizations Card (Blue Card)
- Well Baby Physical (Florida Department of Health Form)

Teen parent's babies cannot be enrolled in the TAP program childcare center until the teen (student)

has all of the required documentation in file, including the TAP program consent form. **All forms must be completed prior to the child's admission to the childcare facility**. Teen mothers and/or fathers are expected to safely escort their child to the TAP Program Enrichment Center. Students' must follow the rules and regulations set forth in the TAP Program Childcare Expectations (appendix) and the HCSD Student Code of Conduct.

Transportation

Transportation to the TAP Program Enrichment Center located at Nature Coast Technical High School is provided for TAP program students and their babies, regardless of distance from home.

TAP program participants and completers are expected to follow all school board policies and procedures, including school bus rules and regulations.

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

Coordination of transportation services may be arranged when a student is unable to access health and social services due to transportation constraints. TAP program students in need of transportation must notify the TAP program coordinator at least 10 days in advance.

Health & Social Services

TAP program coordinator will facilitate the coordination of health, social services, and non-credit bearing education through partnerships with community agencies and mentors. Services may include referrals for childbirth preparation, nutrition counseling and information, assessing students' complaints and referral to appropriate community agencies.

ELL & Students with Exceptionalities

Exceptional Students' (ESE) who meet the program eligibility criteria may participate in the TAP program. However, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) review will occur prior to participation in the TAP program. TAP program coordinator or designee must be invited to the review.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who meet program eligibility criteria shall have equal access to the TAP program. The curriculum and related services are designed to appropriately address the needs of the LEP student.

TAP PROGRAM Student's Expectations

One important aspect of the TAP program 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 program students are expected to adhere to the Hernando County Code of Student Conduct, including behavior, conduct, class preparedness, use of appropriate language, and dress code policies. TAP program participants and completers are expected to follow all school board policies and procedures.

Attendance

Participation in a teenage parent program is voluntary; however, students enrolled in such a program are expected to attend school regularly. 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)

Good attendance is the cornerstone to academic success and responsible parenthood. Students are **expected to be in attendance daily**. Students are encouraged to schedule medical appointments after school. Students who will be absent from school due to pregnancy and/or parenting related reasons must notify the TAP PROGRAM coordinator in writing, preferably prior to such an appointment. Absences associated with the illness of a child must be called in before 7:45 a.m. daily to

the TAP program coordinator. When the student is absent, it is the responsibility of the student to request and complete their makeup work. The goal is to empower the teens by providing them with opportunities to develop skills to function optimally within a system. TAP program participants and completers are expected to follow the HCSD attendance policies and procedures.

Extended Leave & Other Circumstances

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 requires schools to provide the same special services to a pregnant student that it provides to students with temporary medical conditions. Same requirements apply; medical documentation is needed. Pregnancy on its own does not constitute a medical condition that would qualify students automatically. Consult with the TAP program coordinator to evaluate options to ensure that student's rights are upheld to the best of our abilities.

Students who wish to breast-feed their babies must notify the TAP program coordinator so that accommodations are put in place.

Child Abuse/Neglect

When child abuse and/or neglect is suspected by any school personnel, the law requires that the suspected child abuse and/or neglect be reported immediately to:

Florida Abuse Registry 1-800-962-2873.

TEENAGE PARENT PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Jill Kolasa – Director of Student Services

Sophia Watson – Director of Adult & Technical Education

Teresa Estrada – Teenage Parent Program & Dropout Prevention Coordinator

Shanika Figueroa – Coordinator of Students & Families in Transition Program

Nicole Rooney – Coordinator of Medicaid

Michele Hann – E-School Parenting Instructor

Yulonda Miller – Head of Nursery/Mentor

Patricia Natiello – Nursery Assistant/Mentor

Sharon Warthen – Substance Use Prevention Educator

