

Community Action Program, Inc.  
of Western Indiana

[www.capwi.org](http://www.capwi.org)

2024-2025

# Head Start Division Parent Handbook

A Parent's Guide for  
Home-Based & Center-Based Head Start  
Early Head Start  
And  
Full Day/Full Year Childcare (CAP Kids)



*Helping People Since 1966*



All services are provided without regard to race, age, color, religion, sex, disability, national origin, ancestry, or status as a veteran

Teacher's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Center Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

## Table of Contents

Mission Statement	2
Introduction	3
Confidentiality	4
Attendance	5
Child Discipline	6
Corporal Punishment/Suspension & Expulsion	7-8
Child Abuse & Neglect	9
Child Custody	9
Transportation	9
Field Trips/Outdoor Time	10
School Closings	11
Release for Children	12
Health Related Issues	12
Exams/Screenings/Immunizations	13
Medications/Child Illness	14
Exclusion Policy & Procedure	15
Miscellaneous	16
Food Service	16
Celebrations	16
General Information/Head Start Curriculum	17
Parents Get Involved!!!	18
P.A.W.S. Parents Active with School	19
Ready Rosie	20
Paid-Aide Training	20
In-Kind	20
Family Partnership Agreement	21
Referrals	21
Performance Standards	21
Guiding Principles	22
Program Option Section	23
Head Start	24
How to Make Your Visit Go More Smoothly	25
Sample Schedules	26-27
CAP Kids	28-29
Early Head Start	30
How to make your Home Visit go smoothly	30
Transitions	31

## Mission Statement

The mission of Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana, Head Start Division is to provide a wide variety of services concentrating on minimum income level families with infants, toddlers, and preschool-aged children. The program operates, through shared partnerships, with other agencies, qualified staff, and dedicated parents by providing a high-quality early learning environment, giving information, and offering encouragement so that families can accomplish positive outcomes through learning and growth.

## Introduction

Welcome to the Head Start programs; Head Start Home-Based and Center-Based, Early Head Start, and CAP Kids childcare. These programs are federally funded and income-based for preschool aged children, toddlers, infants, and expectant parents.

The Head Start programs are part of our grantee agency of Community Action Program, Inc., of Western Indiana. These programs serve children and their families in seven counties: Benton, Boone, Fountain, Montgomery, Parke, Vermillion, and Warren.

CAP Kids childcare is only available in Montgomery County.

If you have any questions about any of our programs, please feel free to contact your local Head Start Center or Home Visitor.  
The Central Office is located at

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## Confidentiality

- 1) All records and information pertaining to your child and family will be kept in a safe and secure place. These records will only be viewed by Head Start staff and yourself.
- 2) We will ask for your written permission before sharing pertinent records, with the exception of agencies we have formal agreements with (i.e. CHIRP, WIC, Health Departments). However, records will automatically be sent to your child's elementary school before they enter kindergarten.
- 3) Please be conscious of the fact that we may not discuss any other families or children with you. Please refrain from asking questions regarding such.
- 4) If you witness something involving another child or family while at school, please keep that information between yourself and the classroom teacher or management team.



## Attendance

### Center-Based:

- 1) Your child is expected to attend every day class is in session unless ill. (Please see the Exclusion Policy for more specific guidelines).
- 2) If your child will be absent, please contact your bus driver and/or local center within one hour of start time. If we do not hear from you, a staff member will be contacting you to ensure your child's well-being.
- 3) A home visit or other direct contact will be conducted if your child has unexplained absences. Supportive services are available if needed.
- 4) The Head Start program requires children to attend at least 85% of the time. This is equivalent to missing no more than 2 times per month. This is a perfect time to create good school attendance habits! If your child has excessive absences, you will be expected to create an Attendance Improvement Action Plan.
- 5) If your child's attendance falls below 65% for 4 consecutive months or if your child fails to attend the first 10 days after enrollment, a meeting will be held by the ERSEA Coordinator, Family Services Specialist, Health Services Specialist, Family Advocate, and Head Start Director to determine the status of your child's enrollment in the program. Transition to home-based services will be offered where available.

### Home-Based:

- 1) Head Start standards require Early Head Start home-based programs to complete 46 visits per year. Head Start home-based programs are required to complete 32 visits per year. It is important to keep the home visit appointment arranged by you and your Home Visitor. Children benefit from a regular routine. If you are unable to keep your scheduled appointment, please contact your Home Visitor to notify him/her of the cancellation. Canceled visits need to be made up within two weeks of the missed visit.
- 2) If you are unable to attend a field trip or play group, please contact your child's Home Visitor.
- 3) A pop-in home visit or other direct contact will be conducted if your Home Visitor is unable to make contact after a missed visit.
- 4) If your family's attendance falls below 65% for 4 consecutive months or if your family misses the first 2 visits after enrollment, a meeting will be held by the ERSEA Coordinator, Family Services Specialist, Health Services Specialist, Family Advocate, and Head Start Director to determine the status of your child's enrollment in the program.

## Child Discipline Policy

- 1) All forms of discipline are viewed as part of a comprehensive approach to behavior support designed to teach, nurture, and encourage positive social behavior.
- 2) Children will be respectfully guided by using POSITIVE correction first. This will be done by using statements such as: “Use your indoor voice” or “Let’s use our walking feet.”
- 3) During a home visit, Home Visitors and parents will guide children in learning: problem solving, cause and effect reasoning, negotiation skills, and logical and natural consequences while interacting with other children.
- 4) Children will be re-directed from unacceptable activities/behaviors to ones that are appropriate. Example: “It’s not okay to pull Tommy off the bike. What can we do until it’s your turn to ride?”
- 5) The “Be By Myself” area is available for children to go to at any time and it will be used when a child’s behavior indicates harm to him/herself, others or to the classroom environment. At the beginning of the school year, the “Be By Myself” area is introduced to the children in each classroom. This is also explained to parents at the first home visit or parent group.
  - a) A “Be By Myself” area is established in the classroom that can be easily supervised by teaching staff.
  - b) The teaching staff will refrain from lecturing or commenting to the child about the behavior on the way to “Be By Myself” area.
  - c) A child will remain in the “Be By Myself” area until he/she is calmed and ready to resume normal classroom activities.
  - d) Once the child is ready to resume classroom activities, the staff will accompany the child and remain with him/her until he/she is engaged in an activity and comfortable.
  - e) Any discussion regarding the incident may occur during a positive conversation as a form of support and problem solving to teach new skills.

**Please note:** As stated in the Indiana Rules for Licensing Child Care Center, “Discipline means the on-going process of helping children to develop self-control for self-management while protecting and maintaining the integrity of the child.” The “Be By Myself” area should be used for preschool-aged children only. Early Head Start children may be re-directed as their highest level of discipline.

**Corporal punishment** such as spanking, hitting, or any physical discipline is not allowed under any circumstances in the Head Start programs, or at any Head Start sponsored activities.

## Suspension and Expulsion Policy

The Administration of Children and Families in their policy statement on Expulsion and Suspension Policies in Early Childhood Settings state the following:

*The beginning years of any child's life are critical for building the early foundation of learning, health and wellness needed for success in school and later in life. During these years, children's brains are developing rapidly, influenced by the experiences, both positive and negative, that they share with their families, caregivers, teachers, peers, and in their communities. A child's early years set the trajectory for the relationships and successes they will experience for the rest of their lives, making it crucial that children's earliest experiences truly foster - and never harm - their development. As such, expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings, two stressful and negative experiences young children and their families may encounter in early childhood programs, should be prevented, severely limited, and eventually eliminated. High quality early childhood programs provide the positive experiences that nurture positive learning and development.*

For this reason, CAPWI, Head Start Division, supports children, families, and staff by promoting policies that support the social and emotional growth of children in a twofold manner.

First by implementing a trauma informed approach throughout our program by promoting resilience for children, families and staff.

Secondly through policies which should limit, or eliminate altogether the use of expulsion, suspension and other disciplinary practices that center on excluding children.

Our Program and Individual Positive Behavior Support Plan includes the following practices:

- Our staff will provide purposeful, engaging environments and promote teaching practices that align with The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL).
- CSEFEL is designed to build the capacity of teachers and parents to support the social-emotional development of young children. Within the CSEFEL pyramid the classrooms, home visits, and parent educational opportunities teach and support children, families, and staff by building from the foundation upward:
  - Nurturing and responsive relationships,
  - High quality supportive environments,
  - Targeted social and emotional supports, and
  - Intensive interventions.
- Family engagement regarding a child's behavior is ensured through relationships as the parent is the first and most important teacher. We seek the parent/guardian's input in defining the meaning of a child's behavior, and form positive strategies for both home and school.
- At the point in which further resources are found to be needed, we support the child and family by advocating and referring to local resources, such as but not limited to, our agency's mental health partner, outside mental health providers, and/or the Special Education Cooperative or Early Intervention.
- Our plan includes a step-by-step approach to behavioral support which does include, as a last resort in the case of severe behavior after all typical means of support have been exhausted, the temporary removal of a child from a classroom until a behavioral conference can be held with the parents in attendance.

## Child Abuse and Neglect

The employees of the Head Start programs of CAP, Inc. of Western Indiana are mandated, by law, to report all cases of suspected abuse and neglect to the appropriate agency: Department of Child Services or law enforcement.

**By Indiana statute, a child is being abused or neglected when:**

- 1) His/her physical or mental condition is seriously impaired or seriously endangered as a result of the inability, refusal or neglect of his/her parents, guardians, or custodian, to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education or supervision.
- 2) His/Her physical or mental health is seriously endangered due to injury by the act or omission of his/her parent, guardian, or custodian.
- 3) He/she is a victim of rape, deviant conduct, child molestation, exploitation, public indecency, prostitution or incest.
- 4) His/her parent, guardian, or custodian allows him/her to participate in obscene performance.
- 5) His/her parent, guardian, or custodian allows him/her to commit a sex offense.

*It is our mission to make every effort to assist in the elimination and prevention of either suspected or identified abuse or neglect among our Head Start programs children.*

## Child Custody

Legal decisions regarding issues of child custody will be respected. In fairness to parents and children, documentation of the rights of each parent is required in order to restrict visitations where necessary.

## Transportation

### Center-Based

- 1) For your child's safety, the bus schedule needs to remain consistent.
- 2) Parents must have children ready on time so the bus may keep on schedule.
- 3) An adult must bring the child out to the bus and buckle his/her seat belt. This will cut down on the time the driver holds up traffic.
- 4) When returning the child home, the driver will not leave until a parent or person listed on the **emergency contact form** is visible. If a parent or emergency contact adult is not at home at the time of drop-off, the child will be returned to the center. If this situation reoccurs, a home visit will be made by a staff member to reinforce the bus rules.
- 5) Drivers will not leave the bus.
- 6) Children must be seated and have seat belts on at all times while on the bus.

- 7) Rough-housing and/or foul language is not acceptable. If your child is creating problems on the bus, the driver will discuss the situation with you. If the problem persists, the Teacher or Center Manager will make a home visit to find an appropriate solution.
- 8) Parents may ride the Head Start bus to the centers, if space allows. We encourage you to “buckle up” also.
- 9) Leave toys at home. Children playing with toys on the bus are a safety hazard.
- 10) There is no eating or drinking allowed on the bus.

## Field Trips

Field trips are arranged by the staff and approved by the Child Development Services Specialist with your child’s safety and learning enjoyment in mind. Parents are encouraged to attend field trips. Seating on the bus is limited and if you choose to go with your child’s class on the field trip, you may have to drive on your own. If possible, you may be asked to transport other parents as well. Please remember that other children (ex: siblings) may NOT attend field trips. The only exception would be an infant in a carrier.

## Outdoor Time

Each of our centers is equipped with playgrounds. The children look forward to climbing, sliding, and riding tricycles with their classmates. They will be spending time outdoors for play whenever the temperature is 25 degrees or above. Please send your child to school appropriately dressed so they can enjoy their outdoor time. If your child has a medical reason and cannot go outside, we must have a note signed by their doctor stating the reason and duration.



## School Closings Due to Bad Weather

When a public school district served by the center is closed, *play groups, field trips, and parent groups* will not be held (if scheduled).

- 1) Your Home Visitor may hold a home visit *or* reschedule, depending on road conditions in your area. All missed home visits must be made up within 30 days.
- 2) **CHECK YOUR LOCAL MEDIA!**
  - a) If the public school district served by the center is CLOSED, Head Start is CLOSED. No buses will run.  
Public School in your district: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b) If there is a two-hour DELAY for public school district served by the center, Extended day Head Start will operate on a 2-hour delay. Traditional Head Start AM class will cancel.
  - c) If there is an EARLY DISMISSAL for public school district served by the center, Traditional Head Start PM Session is CLOSED (Boone County only). Extended day Head Start will operate under the discretion of the Head Start Director. Parents will be notified of early dismissal.
- 3) The Head Start Director has the final decision on all closings.
- 4) If the public school district served by the center is open, but the Head Start bus driver has determined that the route is too dangerous, or if your home cannot be reached due to poor road conditions, the driver will attempt to notify you.
- 5) Please help us by calling if the road conditions in your area are too bad for the bus.



## Release for Children from School, Bus, or Other Activities

### Departure

For your child's protection, only persons authorized by the parent/guardian are permitted to take a child from the center. Parents must list the names of all those who might escort the child on the Emergency Contact form. Under no circumstances will your child be permitted to leave with anyone other than those people designated in writing on the proper authorization form. Anyone picking up a child may be asked for a photo ID. Please make sure that anyone you assign to pick up your child has an ID available in case they are asked to provide it.

Additionally, no child will be released to anyone, even the parent or guardian, whose appearance or behavior indicates that they are intoxicated or impaired. In cases where adults come into the Center or other Head Start activities and their condition raises concerns, other authorized adults will be contacted to assure that the child leaves the center under appropriate care.

### Late Pick-Up

Your child's school day ends at 3:30 pm. Head Start staff members will NOT be responsible for children after school hours. If you are unable to consistently pick up your child on time, staff will reach to help you establish a plan. If your child is not picked up by 4:30 PM from your local Head Start center (or 5:30 PM for CAP Kids) the Department of Child Services will be contacted and the child will be taken to the local Police Department.

### Health Related Policies

All of the Head Start programs operate in a manner to ensure a secure, healthy, and safe environment for the children and staff. All procedures are designed to meet the best practices for State Child Care Licensing and Head Start Performance Standards.

## Examinations and Screenings

All children in the Head Start programs must have a physical and dental examination within 45 days of enrollment. Children must also receive a range of other health related screenings for vision, hearing, height/weight, blood pressure, lead and hemoglobin. Each child will also participate in a developmental and social/emotional screening. All screenings must be completed within the first 45 days of enrollment. These tools help the staff to assess the current status of each child and assist in determining any needed services as soon as possible. Any additional follow-up required following these screenings must be completed within 90 days of enrollment.

A date and time has been set for screenings at a location near you that your child must attend. Your teacher/home visitor will give you that information during your first home visit or initial contact. In case of an emergency, and you are not able to attend your county's scheduled screening day, you will be directed to another county so that the screenings can be completed. All Head Start programs are required to have each enrolled child complete a series of screenings. These are performed to track your child's health and social/emotional development.

## Immunizations

A copy of your child's original immunization record was required to complete their application for a Head Start program. Based on that information, the best dates for your child's next series of immunizations will be determined. Throughout the year, immunization clinics will be scheduled with the local health department. Your child will be required to attend if he/she is determined to need any immunizations. Please talk with your Family Advocate or the Center Manager if you have any questions about keeping your child's immunizations up-to-date.

## Medications

Head Start programs must have two forms; "Medication Parental Permission" & "Permission to Administer Medication" forms, filled out by the doctor prescribing the medication for the child. Over-the-counter medications, recommended by a doctor, are treated the same as prescription medications. Forms for medication must be completed before Head Start Staff can administer medications to child. If possible, please administer medication to your child at home. If that is not possible, prescriptions **MUST** be in the original container with a prescription label attached containing: the doctor's name, child's name, dosage, and medication name. We cannot give a child prescription medication that belongs to someone else. Please make sure to hand the medication directly to the child's teacher.

## Child Illness

We expect children to attend every day. If your child is ill, please call your local center so staff will know that he/she will not be attending. Please refer to the *Head Start Exclusion Policies and Procedures* to determine when your child is ready to return to school. If your child becomes ill at the center, we will contact you or an emergency contact to come and pick up your child. The child will be placed in the supervised isolation room until an authorized adult is able to take them home.



## HEAD START EXCLUSION POLICIES & PROCEDURES

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## Miscellaneous

Smoking (including Vaping/Electric Cigarettes) is never permitted in any Head Start building or vehicle or when children are present.

No alcoholic beverages may be served at any Head Start function.

No illegal drugs or weapons of any type are allowed in any Head Start building or at a Head Start function or when children are present.

## Food Service

Our on-site kitchen staff is committed to serving nutritious meals and snacks to your child. All of our menus are approved by Indiana child care licensing.

Childcare Regulations state the following guidelines must be followed:

- 1) We cannot accept any food prepared at home. Any food brought into the center must be in the original store packaging.
- 2) No one is allowed in the kitchen, except authorized food service personnel.
- 3) Any food allergies must be documented by a physician and posted in the kitchen. Please speak to your child's teacher or the Center Manager if your child has any food allergies.
- 4) No treats, candies or special snacks may be brought into the center

## Celebrations

Our Head Start Division staff make each day with your child special and fun. As a program, we have chosen to minimize the celebration of special holidays and events. Your classroom teacher or home visitor will keep you informed of any special happenings so that you are always aware of what is occurring. Please refer to your PAWS calendar for special events. No treats, candies or special snacks may be brought into the center

## No Idling Policy

We have committed to reduce vehicle idling at our facilities. Please help us meet our commitments. Please turn your vehicles off when in our parking lot. This will help reduce exposure of our children to exhaust fumes that can enter our building and could prevent accidents as well.

*-Thank you for your commitment to reducing vehicle emissions around our children!*

# General Information

## Head Start Curriculum

CAPWI Head Start uses a research-based curriculum called the Creative Curriculum.

The Creative Curriculum Goals and Objectives are divided into nine areas of development and learning:

- \* Social Emotional
- \* Literacy
- \* Social Studies
- \* Physical
- \* Mathematics
- \* Language
- \* Science and Technology
- \* Cognitive
- \* The Arts

A tenth area, English Language Acquisition, follows a child's progress acquiring both receptive and expressive skills in English.

The program promotes full inclusion of all children including those with a diagnosed disability. Accommodations are made to schedules, equipment, activities, etc. based on individual children's needs. The instrument for monitoring ongoing progress is inclusive of all children and their abilities. Books, puzzles, dolls, etc. are used to expose children to other children and adults with varying abilities.





## How Parents Can Be Involved

Head Start and Early Head Start offers many opportunities for parents to become involved with their child's education. We want to encourage you to volunteer in your child's classroom, it is always nice to have an extra pair of hands! If your child is in the home-based program, attending play groups is a great time for them to play with other children their age. There will be opportunities to provide parenting tips, too.

Family events are held throughout the year for parents, grandparents, or other adults in your child's life as an opportunity to interact with your child in the classroom, play group, and other activities. We ask that when participating in classroom activities or parent events, that you please dress appropriately, keeping in mind that it is a child friendly atmosphere.

Each week, your child will bring home their folder on Monday, which needs to be returned on Friday. One side will be things to keep at home and the other side will be things that need to be returned to school. In the folder, there will always be an activity sheet for you to complete with your child that will help support them in their learning. In addition, there will be a nightly reading log to help your child develop the love of reading. Also, you will receive a monthly calendar with ideas to try at home and upcoming events.

What a great opportunity for you to take advantage of being involved in your child's preschool experience. We believe that "You are your child's first and most important teacher."



## P.A.W.S. Parents Active With School

Monthly P.A.W.S. meetings provide support, curriculum on variety of topics, and opportunities for sharing with other parents. At the end of each meeting, we will follow up with a parent/child activity to help support to connect home to school.

At the beginning of the school year, we will elect officers to help facilitate the meetings and select one representative and alternate to serve on our Policy Council.

**Chairperson:** The Chairperson will preside over the meetings. You do not vote, except when it is necessary to break a tie. You will work directly and cooperatively with the Parent Resource Coordinator and Center Manager.

**Vice-Chairperson:** The Vice-Chairperson will preside over the parent group meetings when the Chairperson is absent. You may vote on all issues and motions, except when acting as the Chairperson.

**Secretary:** The Secretary will record minutes for all the meetings.

**Policy Council:** Policy Council is a group of parents that represent each of our seven counties we serve, a community representative from each county, and the Management Team from the Central Office. The group helps lead the program's work and assures our children and their families are receiving the best services. Policy Council members are elected by the parents during our first P.A.W.S. meeting.

**Policy Council Representative:** The Policy Council Representative will need to be able to attend monthly Policy Council meetings in Covington or via Zoom. The representative will come back to share what they learned with the other parents at their PAWS meeting. If unable to attend, the Representative must contact the alternate. We do provide a reimbursement for mileage and babysitting expenses. The babysitter has to be someone out of the household.

**Policy Council Alternate:** The Policy Council Alternate will be the one to attend Policy Council when the Representative is unable to as a voting member. The alternate is welcome to attend the monthly meetings as a non-voting member if the representative is there. Reimbursement applies to you also.



This program helps support families with a mobile-friendly ReadyRosie Modeled Moments videos, which are filmed in English and Spanish. It shows real families modeling fun activities that support classroom learning from home. They too believe that parents are central to a child's health, well-being, and academic success. All children need access to opportunities and rich learning experiences that build their cognitive and social skills so they are ready to learn and thrive. When we partner together to make connections between learning in the classroom and learning at home, every child benefits.

## Paid Aide Training

The Paid Aide position is an opportunity for parents to make some extra money while being involved with their child's school. Paid Aides are used at the center when a staff member is absent or a need arises at the center. Each Head Start center conducts a Paid Aide training at the beginning of the traditional Head Start school year. In order to be considered for a Paid Aide position, you must:

- 1) Participate in Paid Aide training
- 2) Provide a current physical
- 3) Provide a current Mantoux (TB) test result
- 4) Pass criminal history check

The current wage rate is \$9.00 an hour. If you are interested in becoming a Paid Aide, talk to your child's Teacher, Home Visitor, or Center Manager to find out how to get started.

## In-Kind

In-kind is a donation of time or property that would normally be paid for with Head Start (federal) funds. Time spent in the classroom, in your home or at the center for a Head Start or Early Head Start function, is documented and calculated on a monthly basis. As a program granted federal dollars to run the Head Start programs, we are expected to meet 25% of our total grant money in in-kind dollars. This is another reason for our families to fully participate in their child's preschool. Not only would your child benefit from having you involved in their education, expanding your knowledge as a teaching parent, but you are also helping these programs meet their financial goals. How can you help? Well...attending Screening Days, Open House, P.A.W.S., share a special skill... volunteering in the classroom, taking classroom projects home and working there...helping with field trips, all add up for the Head Start programs In-kind! Please help us out...Volunteer, Volunteer, and Volunteer!!!

## Family Partnership Agreement

The Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) is completed by each family and a Head Start/Early Head Start staff member. Working together, they identify the family's strengths and goals. By creating steps, based on their strengths, the family and staff member develop a plan to assist the family in reaching their short term and long-term goals. This is an ongoing project for the family of an enrolled child and will be reviewed weekly or monthly by staff.

## Referrals

The direct outcome of the screenings performed may result in a referral. This could be instructions on continuing doctor or dentist visits, or meeting with a mental wellness provider. Referrals may also be given to families with a need or a goal (Examples: Hoosier Healthwise, Energy Assistance Program, emergency food/clothing, GED, or scholarship application). It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to follow-up on referrals with the support of our staff. As a part of our program, we require that all families apply for WIC and Hoosier Healthwise, if not already enrolled. A denial letter from Hoosier Healthwise is necessary for our records if you are not accepted into that program.

## Performance Standards

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Office of Head Start requires all Head Start programs to fulfill Performance Standards (set of rules) that encompass Education, Health, Family Service, and Management. All screenings, health or mental wellness, curriculums, family partnerships, recruitment, and selection are all developed to meet or exceed the expectation of the Head Start Performance Standards. It is the intention of the Head Start Division of Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana to provide the best service in the classroom and to the homes for our children and their families.

Ongoing Monitoring systems help us to assess program operations and ensure that necessary steps are taken to meet federal regulations, program goals and objectives and to ensure that appropriate interventions are taken in a timely manner. The Office of Head Start (OHS) assesses grantee compliance through a monitoring system that is aligned with a comprehensive five-year continuous oversight plan that include the following core areas:

- Environmental Health and Safety
- Management Systems and Program Governance
- Fiscal Integrity
- Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance (ERSEA)
- Comprehensive Services and School Readiness
- Teacher-Child Interactions, as addressed through the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS™) observation instrument

The Head Start Program Performance Standards require grantees to implement programs and teaching practices that are aligned with the Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF). The framework is designed to show the continuum of learning for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. It is grounded in comprehensive research around what young children should know and be able to do during their early years.

### **The Frameworks Guiding Principles**

1. Each child is unique and can succeed.
2. Learning occurs within the context of relationships.
3. Families are children’s first and most important caregivers, teachers and advocates.
4. Children learn best when they are emotionally and physically safe and secure.
5. Areas of development are integrated, and children learn many concepts and skills at the same time.
6. Teaching must be intentional and focused on how children learn and grow.
7. Every child has diverse strengths rooted in their family’s culture, background, language, and beliefs.



# Program Options

Head Start

Early Head Start

CAP Kids



## Head Start

Head Start is offered to children who are 3 or 4 years old before the kindergarten cut off for your local school district. Income guidelines set by Department of Health and Human Services are followed. These programs run from July through May, with winter and spring breaks. Our staff is committed to serve not only the children entrusted to our care, but also their families; educationally, physically, and emotionally.

## Center-Based

The extended center-based program in Benton, Fountain/Warren, Parke, Montgomery, and Vermillion is open five days a week, Monday through Friday. The full day classrooms serve breakfast, lunch and a snack. The Boone traditional center-based program is open four days a week, Monday through Thursday and two sessions are available, morning and afternoon. The morning classes are served breakfast and lunch, and the afternoon classes are served lunch and a snack.

The teachers plan field trips for the children throughout the year. Your Teacher/Family Advocate will do regular visits with you in your home. Parent/Teacher conferences will be held three times a year. Staff will give you a date and time prior to the conference. Bus transportation is provided for those families living where bus service is available.

## Home Based

The home-based program is designed to allow a Home Visitor to come to your home, one time a week, for 1 ½ hours, to work with you and your child. Playgroups are held twice a month, where the children have a socialization experience similar to preschool. The children also have the opportunity to attend field trips.

## How to Make Your Home Visit Go More Smoothly

Families and children benefit more from the program if they participate in every scheduled home visit. It is important that your child attend the scheduled playgroups in order to experience the entire program. If you are unable to make your appointment or playgroup, please call your home visitor. **All missed home visits must be made-up within a 30-day period.**

- 1) Since you are your child's most important teacher, please plan to participate with your child in each home visit.
- 2) Your home visit should be with you and your child without distractions (ex: visitors, TV, cellphones, etc).
- 3) Please schedule other appointments around your weekly time with your child's Home Visitor. If this cannot be avoided, please call your Home Visitor a day in advance so their schedule can be adjusted accordingly and you can set up a time for a make-up visit.



To maintain the teacher/student ratio, two paid staff are in the classroom at all times. Schedules are flexible to change

## Sample Schedule (Extended Head Start and CAP Kids)

8:30	Arrival/Greet Children and Families
8:35-8:45	Group Meeting
8:45-9:00	Handwashing/Transition to Breakfast
9:00-9:30	Breakfast
9:30-9:40	Toothbrushing/Quiet Reading
9:40-9:50	Group Meeting
9:50-10:50	Choice Time
10:50-11:00	Transition to Outdoors
11:00-11:30	Outdoors/Gross Motor Play
11:30-11:45	Read Aloud/Transition to Lunch
11:45-12:15	Lunch
12:15-12:30	Toothbrushing
12:30-2:00	Rest Time
2:00- 2:15	Transition to Snack Time
2:15-2:45	Snack time
2:45 - 3:00	Transition to Outdoors
3:00 - 3:30	Outdoors/Gross Motor Play and prepare for departure

## Sample AM/PM Schedule (Traditional Head Start)

8:30 - 8:45	Arrival/Greet Children/Prepare for Breakfast
8:45 - 9:15	Breakfast
9:15 - 9:30	Group Gathering
9:30 - 10:30	Choice Time/Small Groups
10:30 - 11:00	Gross Motor/Outdoor Play
11:00 - 11:15	Group Meeting/Read Aloud/Prepare for Lunch
11:15 - 11:45	Lunch
11:45 - 12:00	Group Meeting and Prepare for Departure

12:00 Transition time between AM and PM sessions. PM children will exit the bus and enter the classroom, AM children enter the bus to depart.

12:00 - 12:15	Arrival/Greet Children/Prepare for Lunch
12:15 - 12:45	Lunch
12:45 - 1:00	Group Meeting
1:00 - 2:00	Choice Time/Small Groups
2:00 - 2:30	Gross Motor/Outdoor Play
2:30 - 2:45	Group Meeting/Read Aloud/Prepare for Snack
2:45 - 3:15	Snack
3:15 - 3:30	Group Meeting and Prepare for Departure

## Sample Head Start Home Visit Schedule

Warm and Positive Greeting  
Follow-up/Review  
Story Time or Language Activity  
Brush Teeth/Wash Hands  
Play Time & Learning Activities  
Family Service Time  
Good-bye



# CAP KIDS

## Available in Montgomery County Only

CAP Kids is a full day/full year program designed to serve Head Start eligible families that are working and/or attending school full time. This program combines Head Start educational classes, health services, and family service with wrap around childcare. Parent/Teacher conferences are held throughout the year.

**Hours of Operation:** Cap Kids is open from 6:00 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday.

**Determining Child Care Hours:** The specific child care hours for your child will be determined by you and the Center Manager. This is based on your work hours or school schedule, plus a reasonable driving time. Parents will be asked to provide a work schedule from your employer and/or an admissions office receipt of classes scheduled for the semester.

**Pick-up & Drop-off:** You will need to sign your child in and out of the center each day. Please be sure your child's teacher is aware of your child's arrival. Feel free to spend a few moments in the classroom at pick up and drop off. For your child's protection, they will only be able to leave with persons listed on the Intake Agreement.

**Late Pick Up:** You need to make every effort to pick up your child on time. If lateness cannot be avoided, notify the center immediately so that a staff member is made available to supervise your child and minimize any fears your child may have. A late fee of \$5.00 for each five minutes will be charged when a child is picked up after closing time. If your child is not picked up by 5:30 PM and the center has not been notified, the Montgomery County DCS will be contacted and the child will be taken to the Crawfordsville Police Department. Head Start Staff will NOT be responsible for children after business hours.

## General Expectations:

- 1) Children should be in attendance every day unless they are ill. Please refer to the *Exclusion Policy and Procedures* for information regarding when the child may be too ill to attend school.
- 2) All children enrolled in CAP Kids are required to participate in a variety of medical and educational services that are mandated by Head Start. Children will need a physical and dental examination, as well as various other general health screenings.
- 3) All child care fees will be paid each Friday. There will be a late fee of \$10.00 added to payments not received by the close of business on Fridays. There will also be a charge of \$40.00 for returned checks. Prompt payment is expected.

## Child Care Fee:

- 1) CAP Kids operates with the assumption that many of our families will be eligible to receive child care vouchers. This is a program offered through the state assisting low-income families to pay for the cost of child care. For families that do not receive these services, the program operates from a sliding fee scale based on family income that best reflects the family's current income level.
- 2) All parents will be responsible for paying fees as determined by our child care sliding fee scale for one month following their child's enrollment. During this month, every parent is expected to meet with the local child care voucher agent to determine eligibility to receive child care vouchers. You must apply for child care vouchers in the county that you are currently living. The Montgomery County child care voucher agency is Firefly Children & Family Alliance, Child Care Developmental Fund (CCDF) Region 1, 50 Professional Court, Suite A, Lafayette, IN 47905. (T) 812-870-8638 (F) 833-903-2331  
[ccdfnorth@fireflyin.org](mailto:ccdfnorth@fireflyin.org).
- 3) For families who have written documentation that they will not be receiving vouchers, the cost for child care will remain at the amount determined by the sliding fee scale.

*The Montgomery County Childcare contact information is available online and by region.*

<https://earlyedconnect.fssa.in.gov/onlineApp/home><https://fireflyin.org/programs-services/child-abuse-prevention/child-care-and-development-fund-ccdf/>

## Early Head Start

The Early Head Start program serves expecting parents, and infants and toddlers who are 0 - 3 years of age. This weekly home-based program provides education and family support services year-round. Playgroups are held twice a month for children to have a socialization experience. The goal for the parent is to take the lead and the home visitor is there for guidance only.

## Sample Early Head Start Home Visit Schedule

Warm and Positive Greeting  
Follow-up/Review  
Story Time or Language Activity  
Brush Teeth/Wash Hands  
Play Time & Learning Activities  
Family Service Time  
Good-bye

## How to Make Your Home Visit Go More Smoothly

Families and children benefit most from the program if they participate in every scheduled home visit. It is important that your child attend the scheduled playgroups in order to experience the entire program. If you are unable to make your appointment or playgroup, please call your home visitor. **All missed home visits should be made-up within a 30-day period.**

- 1) Since you are your child's most important teacher, please plan to participate with your child in the home visit.
- 2) Your home visit should be with you and your child without distractions (ex: visitors, TV, cellphones, etc.).
- 3) Please schedule other appointments around your weekly time with your child's Home Visitor. If this cannot be avoided, please contact your Home Visitor a day in advance so their schedule can be adjusted accordingly and you can set up a time for a make-up visit.

## Transitions

There are three transitions that are possible in the Head Start Programs:

**Prenatal woman:** After the baby is born, the parents have the option to enroll the infant in the Early Head Start Program.

**Early Head Start to Head Start:** When your child turns 33 months, the parent can complete the Head Start application and if eligible, the child will transition into Head Start.

**Head Start to Kindergarten:** Children that turn 5 years old before their local school's kindergarten cut-off date will transition out of Head Start and may transition to kindergarten. The Child Development Services Specialist will provide all relevant information to the receiving school.



**We appreciate you, your family and your participation!  
Thank you!**

