

Community Action Program, Inc.
of Western Indiana

HEAD START And Early Head Start



STAFF HANDBOOK

Revised August, 2016

The Head Start Staff Handbook has been created to address some of the major topics that affect the Head Start program and its staff.

Please be aware that all procedures and policies are outlined in the agency's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual. This manual contains all of the procedures that affect all agency employees and should be consulted when questions or situations arise. It provides greater detail and precise information in relation to the agency's policies and procedures.

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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.

Head Start, a division of CAP, Inc. of Western Indiana, recognizes the following to be our core values for assisting low-income preschoolers and their families:

- ***Making A Difference*** - Head Start strives to make a positive difference in the lives of the children, families, and staff. We seek to make a lasting impact that encourages life-long learning and makes a positive contribution to society.
- ***High Quality*** - Head Start aims to maintain high quality in our interactions with children, families, communities, and partnering organizations. We promote standards that meet or exceed the best known practices for early childhood education, family partnering, community collaboration, and ongoing staff enhancement.
- ***Commitment and Teamwork*** - Through shared partnering and participation between program staff and families, the children will benefit from our full commitment. Head Start believes that, through hard work, we will be able to encourage, educate, and support our program participants.
- ***Accountability*** - With committed professional staff, we will provide the tools necessary to achieve positive outcomes and instill growth in our children and families.

As a result of these core values, we will be a driving force in promoting self-sufficiency in our communities.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

Confidentiality or right to privacy, for our Head Start families, children, and staff is crucial. The following is the agency policy on confidentiality as written in the personnel manual:

1. *Until a program, policy, or procedure is formally announced or published, it is considered a matter of confidentiality, and shall not be discussed outside of appropriate staff, board, or councils of Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana.*
2. *Every employee of Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana is morally and ethically bound to keep all records and conversations of participants confidential. Sharing these records and conversation of participants with other staff directly involved with the client will not be considered a breach of confidentiality. Information sharing with other service agencies directly involved with the client will also not be considered a breach of confidentiality, providing the participants authorized it and signed a Release of Information form.*
3. *Files containing confidential information concerning CAP employees or participants are to be accessible only by authorized personnel.*
4. *All personnel matters, including but not limited to disciplinary action, grievances, and supervisory decisions, are considered matters of confidentiality. Discussions of such outside the appropriate and established channels of communication will be considered a violation of confidentiality.*
5. *Any breach of confidentiality shall be considered grounds for disciplinary action and could result in termination.*

In general, please follow these guidelines:

- Do not discuss family or child situations in front of other parents, volunteers, or children.
- Do not discuss family or child situations in public places (restaurants, sporting events, community functions, grocery store)
- No information concerning Head Start matters can be given out or discussed with anyone outside of our program without a Release of Information form.
- Any information with other agencies involved with the family should be on a "Need to Know" basis.
- Facebook and other online social networks are not places to discuss any aspect of our work.

Breaking confidentiality is a serious offense and will not be taken lightly.

Don't risk your job by saying too much!

Head Start/Early Head Start 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) 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 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. Establish a "Be By Myself" area 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 the "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 Centers, "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.

Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana

Head Start and Early Head Start

Procedures for Active Supervision

Keeping Children Safe

Active Supervision is a set of strategies for supervising infants, toddlers, and preschool children in the following areas: agency classrooms, field trips, socializations (play groups), as well as on the playground and school buses.

Children learn best when they are in safe, well-supervised environments. Head Start staff can reduce the possibility of a child getting hurt when they closely observe children and respond when needed. Using redundant strategies to ensure no child is left unattended is a way of making certain that all children are safe and free to learn in the best way suited to their stage of development.

Use the resources below, in addition to training you receive, to ensure that you are providing a safe and well supervised environment for the children in your care.

Zoning to Maximize Learning

Create a daily classroom schedule

for the children and teachers to follow. This helps to keep the day predictable for all members of the classroom community.

Create a chart

that specifies which teacher is in charge of which area/ activity, as well as what individual duties are during the transitions before and after the activity. Zoning allows every member of the team to be accountable and informed.

Position your body

so you are always able to see the children. If you are on your knees in the classroom, be sure you can see over the shelving units so that you are aware of the children's whereabouts at all times.

Scan your assigned area

and the rest of the classroom at all times. This allows staff members to be constantly aware of what is happening in the classroom.

Talk to the other staff members

in the classroom throughout the day. Be sure to highlight positive behaviors you see the children engaging in, "Wow, look at these children trading toys so nicely", as well as address any issues that may arise, "Teacher Teri, I need to help Oscar wash his hands, can you cover my area?"

from the National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning

Transitions

Transitions are often the most challenging times to supervise children. To prevent children from being left unsupervised, our program has specific strategies for managing transitions throughout the day:

- Each classroom has specific plans for regular routines, such as on/off bus or pick up/drop off times, including staff assignments (who will monitor the door, etc.)
- All adults know when transitions will take place and are in position to provide constant supervision
- The teaching team will adjust to maintain appropriate adult-to-child ratio at all times.
- All staff will work to limit, or eliminate, the amount of time children are waiting in line to transition.
- All staff will reaffirm to children what adults expect during transitions
- Count heads, count heads, count heads

Specific expectations:


- A classroom roster and emergency forms are with staff whenever they are away from the center (field trips)
- Children are counted and attendance is taken every time they enter or leave the bus.
- Bus drivers check each seat at the end of each stop before deactivating the child reminder system
- Count heads, count heads, count heads at multiple points throughout the day

Hazard Mapping

Hazard mapping offers a process for reducing environmental child injuries within the classroom/center setting. This involves a four step process:

- 1) Identify high risk injury locations
- 2) Pinpoint systems and services that need to be strengthened
- 3) Develop a corrective action plan
- 4) Incorporate hazard mapping in to ongoing-monitoring activities

More information about hazard mapping can be found at <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/safety-injury-prevention/safe-healthy-environments/hazard-mapping.html>




ACTIVE SUPERVISION AT-A-GLANCE

SIX STRATEGIES TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

The following strategies allow children to explore their environments safely. Injury, toddlers, and preschoolers must be directly supervised at all times. Programs that use active supervision take advantage of all available learning opportunities and never leave children unsupervised.

Set Up the Environment Staff will optimize environments that they can supervise children at all times. When activities are grouped together and furniture is arranged in a way that adults are always able to see and hear children, great spaces are kept clutter free and big spaces are set up so that children have clear play spaces that staff can observe.	Position Staff Staff carefully plan where they will position themselves in the environment to observe children from behind. They place themselves so that they can see and hear all children in their care. They make sure there are always clear paths to where children are playing, sleeping, or resting so they can reach quickly when necessary. Staff stay close to children who are most at risk of injury. Staff position help to provide support if necessary.
Scan and Count Staff are always able to account for the children in their care. They continually scan the entire environment to know where everyone is and what they are doing. They count the children frequently. This is especially important during transitions, when children are moving from one location to another.	Listen Specific sounds or the absence of them may signify reason for concern. Staff who are listening closely to children immediately identify signs of potential danger. Programs that think proactively implement additional strategies to safeguard children. For example, bells added to doors help alert staff when a child leaves or enters the room.
Anticipate Children's Behavior Staff use what they know about each child's individual interests and skills to predict what he or she will do. They create challenges that children are ready for and support them in succeeding. But they also recognize when children might wander, get upset, or take a dangerous risk. Information from the daily health check, focus times, stories, book-reading or free, and informal staff observations and helps them anticipate children's behavior. Staff who know what to expect are better able to protect children from harm.	Engage and Redirect Staff use active supervision skills to know when to offer children support. Staff work with children who are unable to solve problems on their own to get involved. They may offer different levels of assistance or redirection depending on each individual child's needs.

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/safety-injury-prevention/active-supervision.html>





ACTIVE SUPERVISION

SIX STRATEGIES TO KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

 Set Up the Environment	 Position Staff
 Scan and Count	 Listen
 Anticipate Children's Behavior	 Engage and Redirect

Everyone has a responsibility to keep children safe!
 To learn more about Active Supervision visit the SHS website
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/safety-injury-prevention/active-supervision.html>



**COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM
OF
WESTERN INDIANA
HEAD START
PROCEDURE FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

The purpose of this child abuse and neglect policy is three-fold:

1. To aid in the prevention and elimination of child abuse and neglect.
2. To establish a close working relationship with our protective service agencies.
3. To assist our program to be as knowledgeable as possible about the problem of child abuse and neglect.

PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING SUSPECTED ABUSE AND NEGLECT

The Family Services Specialist is the central coordinator for all child abuse and neglect activities, including training, reporting and follow-up procedures.

I. If a child is in immediate danger or requires immediate medical attention:

- a. **Call 911**
- b. Complete FS 16 Head Start Child Abuse Report Documentation,
- c. **Notify the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-800-5556**
- d. Contact the Head Start Health Services Specialist for instruction on how to proceed.
- e. Contact the Family Services Specialist to update on the report and call to Indiana Child Abuse Hotline.
- f. Document observations and CPS contact on Head Start Family Service Log/Head Start Child's Health Chart.

II. If child is not in immediate danger or doesn't require immediate medical attention:

- a. Complete FS 16 Head Start Child Abuse Report Documentation
- b. **Notify the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-800-5556**
- c. Contact the Family Services Specialist to update on the report and call to Indiana Child Abuse Hotline.
- d. The Family Service Specialist will determine whether the parent should be notified of the report. If parent or guardian is to be notified, determine when, how and by whom.
- e. Document observations and CPS contact on Head Start Family Service Log/Head Start Child's Health Chart.

III. If behavioral or physical observations lead you to be concerned that abuse/neglect may be occurring:

- a. Discuss your observations with the Family Service Specialist who will decide if there is enough information to warrant making a report.
- b. Document concerns and observations on the Family Service/Health Observation log. Be sure to include dates, times, persons involved, description of incident, etc. You may be requested to begin an anecdotal record of your observations on that child. Anecdotal records are factual, objective accounts of the incident.
- c. Complete FS 16 Head Start Child Abuse Report Documentation
- d. Notify the Indiana Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-800-5556.
- e. Family Service Specialist will discuss with you any actions that need to be taken with the family.

IV. In the event that a HS employee is suspected of an act of abuse or neglect

- a. The HS Director will take appropriate action according to the personnel policy.
- b. A report will be filed with Indiana Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-800-5556
- c. A report will be filed with FSSA Office of Early Childhood and Out of School Learning Individual Child Care Center Licensing Consultant
- d. The Director will meet with the child's parents or guardians.

V. Orientation and training of HS staff:

- a. All staff members will receive a basic orientation during the first 2 weeks of employment focusing on identifying and reporting child abuse and neglect.
- b. Additional training specifically relating to individual roles and responsibilities will be offered annually for the employees.

VI. Orientation and Training for Head Start Parents and Guardians:

- a. Parents and guardians will receive a basic orientation during their initial enrollment process in which they will be informed of the following:
 1. Head Start's role in reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.
 2. Head Start's role in serving as an advocate for Head Start families.
 3. Parent training activities that will assist them in improving their child-rearing practices and increase their knowledge of child development.
 4. This information will be found in written form in the Parent Handbook.
- b. Parents may attend all staff training sessions relating to child abuse and neglect.
- c. The Child Abuse and Neglect Program Policy will be made available to all parents.
- d. Further training on the subject of child abuse and neglect will be made available for parents on request.

VII. Confidentiality

- a. All records relating to suspected child abuse or neglect will be kept in locked files.
- b. Persons wishing to review the records will need to follow the Head Start confidentiality policy.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN FROM THE CENTER OR OTHER HEAD START ACTIVITIES

DEPARTURE

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 any child be permitted to leave with anyone other than those people designated in writing on the proper authorization form. Anyone picking up a child who is not familiar to you should be asked to show a photo ID to assure that they are able to take the child.

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 activity and their condition raises concerns, other authorized adults should be contacted to assure that the child leaves the center under appropriate care.

LATE PICK-UP

For Children Who Ride Head Start Buses: When returning the child home on the school bus, the bus should not leave until a parent or person listed on the emergency contact form is visible. If a parent or responsible adult is not home to receive the child, the child will be returned to the center. Children cannot be dropped off with other individuals unless they are listed on the emergency list.

If any child is not picked up by 4:30pm at our Head Start center (or 5:30pm for CAP Kids), the Division of Children's Services should be contacted and the child should be taken to the local police department.

DRESS CODE

Your appearance during working hours serves as a direct reflection of the Agency, our specific program, and yourself. For many of our families, we serve as a role-model that they may try to emulate. As stated in the agency personnel policies:

Appropriate dress and personal grooming create a favorable image for Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana. We expect employees to use good judgment and to maintain high standards in their personal cleanliness and attire.

Please keep your dress as follow:

- Clothes should be comfortable and appropriate for sitting on the floor with children
- Skirts or dress shorts may not be higher than mid-thigh.
- Sweatshirts or t-shirts should not have writing, statements, etc. Logos are okay.
- Jeans are not appropriate for teaching/social service staff. Cooks and bus drivers may wear jeans that are in good condition. No tattered edged, rips, etc.
- Flip flops are not safe footwear and are not allowed.

Agency personnel policies state:

Community Action Program, Inc. of Western Indiana reserves the right to determine that particular attire is inappropriate for its business and to inform and instruct employees to change inappropriate attire.



STAFF ATTENDANCE POLICY

PTO (Paid Time Off) is accrued at the beginning of each month.

All time away from work must be requested through your immediate supervisor. These requests must be discussed or submitted to your supervisor **at least FIVE days** in advance of the day you wish to request. If you are requesting leave for an emergency, call your supervisor as soon as you know you will be away from work. Complete the time off request from on <https://landing.paychex.com> as soon as possible.

Request for intermittent leave without pay should be reserved for unusual or unavoidable situations that necessitate a reduced work day or work week. Requests must be on the proper form (green leave request sheet) and approved by the immediate supervisor, program director, and Executive Director. Leave without pay requests will be approved on a case-by-case basis. Frequent absenteeism without good cause may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

For Head Start Academic Year staff: Excessive absenteeism has been defined as four or more days missed without pay in a school year for reasons other than extreme emergency, illness, or death in the immediate family. Excessive absenteeism may deem an employee ineligible for recall from summer layoff.

Please keep in mind that your request for leave can be denied.

- If you know that you will be missing work, it is YOUR responsibility to secure a replacement while you are gone. Each center should keep a list of potential paid aides and substitute bus drivers to assist in this process.
- In cases of emergency, you must contact your immediate supervisor, as well as your coworkers, as soon as you realize that you will be absent from work. This will allow sufficient plans to be made to cover your duties during your absence.
- You must make sure to notify any individuals who you were scheduled to meet with to cancel appointments and to them aware of your absence (ie. home visits, business meetings, etc.)

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT

Please see the agency Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual for a detailed explanation of Employee Expenses and Reimbursement.

Head Start Center-Based Employees are reimbursed for any travel from their first work related stop (either the center or first visit of the day) to their last work-related stop of the day (either the center or home visit).

Head Start Home-Based Employees are reimbursed for travel between home visits and work-related stops throughout the day. Mileage reimbursement to and from the home visits will be determined based on one way travel to the closest destination:

1. If a home visit is closer to your residence than the distance between the residence and the county center, no mileage will be paid.
2. On home visit days (Mon, Tues, Weds.), it is not typical for visitors to start or end their day from the Head Start center. Mileage will be reimbursed for travel from the closest distance: from the county center to the home visit, or from the residence to the home visit (unless #1 above applies)

For home visitors who live outside of the county they serve, mileage reimbursement decisions should be discussed with your immediate supervisor. Travel will not be reimbursed for start or end at HS center sites or county CAP offices.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT FORM

The mileage sheet is an Excel document that should be saved to your office computers. Each entry should begin with 'from' and list all areas you traveled to. The purpose of your travels must also be included. Mileage should be counted from your first stop or base station to your last work-related stop of the day. You must use actual odometer readings.

Complete name, program, odometer readings, etc. The total miles traveled will automatically calculate and total the entire mileage sheet. Complete reimbursement rate. The current reimbursement rate is 50 cents a mile. You should also enter travel expenses, when applicable (normally parking for a conference). You will need to submit those receipts either by scan or regular mail. **Make sure you do that immediately. And write your name on the receipt.**

Submission of Mileage Sheet:

You will notice at the signature section it states this is an electronic signature, in lieu of the employee's and supervisor's written signature. You will also note a section that says "email verified by".

1. Type in your name and date

2. Forward as an attachment to your supervisor for signature
3. SUPERVISOR – it is YOUR responsibility to forward the document on to Kelly Mitchell at kmitchell@capwi.org. To Central Office supervisors, print mileage and give to HS Director for approval.
4. **The mileage sheet must be received by Kelly by 2:00 p.m. on Monday following the end of the pay period.**
5. Kelly will verify that the document actually came from **your supervisor's email address.**
6. If your mileage sheet is received after 2:00 p.m. on Monday, it will be processed with the next pay period.
7. You may still submit a paper mileage sheet. However, if it isn't received by Monday at 2:00 p.m., it will be processed the following pay period.

TIMESHEETS

- Timesheets are done online through the website of <https://landing.paychex.com> in two week increments.
- Timesheets should be completed and entered before 9:00 am on Monday following the end of the pay period.
- Remember to mark 'save all' and the small file emblem in order to correctly submit your timesheet.
- The system is designed to request a new password occasionally. This is a standard practice and should not alarm you.
- Timesheets should reflect exact hours worked each day (ie. PAWS night may show you worked 10 hours and then you work only 6 the following day).
- No employee can work over 40 hours on agency business without prior permission from the Head Start Director.

Personal Cellular Phone Usage

Most staff members have personal cellular telephones that they utilize during working hours. The following procedures will be used when accessing personal cellular phones while at work:

1. Personal cell phones may not be turned on or utilized during times when staff members are working within the classrooms, playground, etc. (Phones should not be in classrooms/playgrounds during hours that children are present)
2. Home visitors, family facilitators, and other similarly employed staff may utilize personal cellular phones while out of the offices for work related matters.
3. Cell phones may not be taken into the home during visits. They should be left in the vehicle and staff can check for messages when returning to their car.
4. No staff member may have cellular phones turned on during any type of staff training, meeting, or other community event in which you are representing the agency. It is disruptive to others in attendance and rude to the presenters.
5. Personal cellular phones may be utilized during designated break times for any staff member.

Misuse of personal cellular phones during working hours is disruptive to our children and families. It can also lead to disruptions to the working environment. Please remember that we are responsible for the well-being of our Head Start children and families during working hours and need to have our focus on the tasks at hand. Failure to adhere to cellular phone policies can result in disciplinary action.

Drink/Snack Rules for the Classrooms

As adults in the Head Start classroom, our role is to model appropriate behaviors for both the children in our care and the adult parents/volunteers. In order to do this most effectively, while still meeting the guidelines and regulations of Head Start and Indiana Child Care Licensing, the following will be followed:

1. No outside foods or drinks are allowed in the classrooms during times when children are present. This means that staff or volunteers cannot bring in their own drinks during class time. All adults are encouraged to use the water fountains if they are in need of a drink. Any snacks can be consumed during your scheduled break time.
2. Classroom staff members are to sit and eat with the children at meal times. If you do not care for the foods being served, you are still expected to place the servings onto your plate and act as if you are enjoying the meal. (It is really no different than being a guest in someone's home and using proper etiquette.)
3. Meals are prepared for the children following the menus and guidelines of our Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) contract. Although changes are made to meet the food needs of our children, there are no changes to meet the food needs of staff or other adults. If you have special food or dietary requirements, those will need to be addressed during your scheduled break times.

HEAD START CELLULAR PHONE POLICIES

CAP Vehicle Cellular Phones

The following procedures will be used when accessing the cellular phones while operating vehicles with the Head Start program:

1. The center drivers will contact the Head Start center to relay messages for emergency calls. All center staff must have access to emergency authorization numbers in order to assist the drivers in relaying messages or information.
2. Drivers may access cellular phones for these purposes:
 - A. Child illness - emergency only
 - B. Bus problems
 - C. Parents not home
 - Before 4:30 - call center so they can make contact
 - After 4:30 - call emergency numbers of child
 - D. Route changes (ex: tree down, bridge closed)
 - E. Weather (flooding, snow)
3. Cellular numbers are **NOT** to be given to Head Start families or anyone else. They should be encouraged to contact the center.
4. Buses must be off of the road in order for a cellular phone to be in use.

Please remember that the bus cellular phones are available in order to ensure the safety of the children we are transporting. It is not appropriate for drivers to be spending time on phones when the job of transporting our active preschoolers is such a great responsibility.

The key point is that our cellular phones are for emergency use only.

As stated in CAP Employee Handbook

“Driver distraction can be defined as the voluntary or involuntary diversion of attention from the primary driving tasks due to an object, event, or person that shifts the attention away from the fundamental driving task. The diversion reduces a driver’s situational awareness, decision making, or performance; and it may result in a crash, near-crash, or unintended lane departure by the driver.

Therefore, the use of cell phones, texting, or other forms of wireless communication devices while driving are prohibited while transporting clients, children, or other staff. Violation of this policy may include termination.”

CAP, Inc. of Western Indiana
Head Start Division
Tobacco-Free Policy for Facilities/Functions

Because there is considerable evidence that environmental tobacco smoke is harmful to children and adults,--and because Head Start has the mission of promoting the healthy development of the children and families it serves, it is imperative that all Head Start programs create smoke-free environments.

The Head Start Division abides by a tobacco-free policy within all Head Start facilities, on any grounds utilized by the Head Start facility or for Head Start activities, and in the homes of any clients. These stringent limitations are the results of what is best practice for the young children and their families that we serve.

These policies are inclusive of any group socialization activities (which include field trips, neighborhood walks or other outdoor group activities). It is our intent to have parents and staff refrain from smoking when Head Start activities are taking place. Parents and staff should recognize that they serve as role models for the children and should not smoke or use tobacco products in front of them.

Our CAP Policy states that all buildings and vehicles owned, leased or utilized by the agency will be tobacco free. This policy will be in effect both during and after working hours in all agency-utilized buildings and vehicles.

The 5-Star Environmental Program guidelines state that our centers must implement a 100% tobacco free facility and grounds.

This policy will be strictly enforced.



CHILD ATTENDANCE POLICY

Center Base

All children are expected to maintain an attendance rate of 85% or higher for daily center-based attendance.

1. Attendance is recorded daily by bus drivers and teachers who report to the Center Facilitator and/or ERSEA Coordinator if a child has been absent for three consecutive days.
2. The Center Facilitator or Teacher/Family Facilitator contacts families of absent children to determine the cause of absenteeism and completes the daily entry of attendance on ChildPlus, **specifying the cause of absences in 'attendance notes'**.
3. If needed, the family can be referred to the Family Services Coordinator for support services.
4. If a child is absent for 3 consecutive days or in a pattern (a particular day of the week or time of the month), report the absences to the ERSEA Coordinator and appropriate area managers.
5. Excessive absences will need to be addressed. The family may need support services in addition to an Attendance Improvement Action Plan to determine continued enrollment.
6. Consult the Policy and Procedure Manual for more detailed information.

Home Base

1. Attendance is recorded at each home visit, playgroup, and field trip, **specifying the cause of absences in 'attendance notes.'**
2. Cancellations due to staff absences are to be made up within two weeks.
3. If a family is absent for 3 consecutive home visits, the Home Visitor will consult with the ERSEA Coordinator and appropriate area managers, as needed, for support services and to determine continued enrollment.
5. Consult the Policy and Procedure Manual for more detailed information.

Excused Absences for Home and Center Base

A child's absences will be reviewed with parents/guardians. The child will be excused from the program providing absences fall into one of the following categories:

1. Child has illness or serious injury
2. Child is hospitalized
3. Child has communicable disease
4. Death in child's family
5. Child is receiving medical treatment or therapy
6. Temporary family situation
7. Hazardous driving conditions
8. Cultural and/or religious family activities

Consult the Exclusion Policies and Procedures to determine whether an absence due to illness is excusable.

HEAD START EXCLUSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Condition	Return When
Chicken Pox	Until six days after the start of rash or when the lesions are scabbed over
Colds and Flu	Children with colds or flu can attend school as long as they feel well enough to participate.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	Until 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment, and until there is no discharge from the eyes.
Cytomegalovirus (CMV)	A child with CMV does not need to stay home.
Fever	Until 24 hours after temperature has returned to normal.
Fifth Disease ("Slap Cheek")	Children with fifth disease do not need to stay home as long as they feel well enough to participate.
Giardiasis	If child has diarrhea, child can return to the program after treatment and when diarrhea is resolved.
Hand, Foot and Mouth Syndrome (Coxsackie Virus)	Children can attend school as long as they feel well enough to participate.
Head Lice	After treatment is completed, and he or she is free of nits.
Hepatitis A	One week after the start of jaundice and until the child feels well enough to participate in activities.
Hepatitis B	Until one month after the start of jaundice and until he or she feels well enough to participate. "Chronic Carrier" can attend as long as they don't have uncontrolled biting or oozing skin lesions that can't be covered.
Herpes	Until the mouth sores are healed or can be covered.
HIV/AIDS (Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome)	Children with HIV/AIDS can attend school as long as they feel well enough to participate. Keep them home if they are too sick to participate, have oozing skin lesions that can't be covered, or other contagious conditions.
Impetigo	Until 24 hours after the start of antibiotics treatment.
Infectious Diarrhea	Until the Diarrhea is resolved. If it's a bacterial or parasite infection the child must have received the appropriate treatment.
Measles	Until six days after rash appears and until he or she feels well enough to participate
Meningitis	Until symptoms resolve and until he or she feels well enough to participate the health provider says it's not contagious.
Mumps	Until nine days after the start of swelling glands.
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Until five days after the start of antibiotics treatment and until he or she feels well enough to participate.
Pinworms	Your child can return to school after treatment is started
Ringworm (Tinea)	The child can return to school after treatment is started
Roseola	Children can attend when they feel well enough to participate.
Rubella (German Measles)	Until six days after the rash appears and he or she feels well enough to participate.
Scabies	After treatment is completed.
Streptococcal Infection (Strep throat, Scarlet Fever)	Until 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment and until the fever is gone and the child feels well enough to participate.
Tuberculosis	Until the doctor and/or health department determine that he is not contagious.

Child/Adult Ratios

All Head Start and Early Head Start classrooms and playgroups must follow the adult/child ratios established by Indiana Child Licensing and/or the Head Start Performance Standards. We are mandated to follow whichever regulation is most stringent. Our program operates with the following ratios:

	Infant	Toddler	Preschool
Class Size	1:4 (no more than 8 in one group)	1:4 (no more than 8 in one group)	1:10 (no more than 20 in one group. Double-session classrooms can have 17).

Methods for Maintaining Ratios:

- Be prepared! Assure that you have needed and extra supplies, materials, paperwork, etc. in the classroom so that both staff members can be present at all times.
- If a staff member must leave the classroom, they need to take children with them to assure that proper ratios are met.
- If outdoors and a child must use the restroom, the staff member will need to take the number of children along in order to meet ratios.
- Have volunteers!! These individuals can run errands and perform other duties that leave our paid staff members with the children.
- Please note that our Head Start regulations also state that two staff members must be with the children at all times. You cannot allow a staff member to leave when there are less than ten children in attendance.
- Access the walkie-talkie systems that are available in our larger centers to communicate with others in the building.
- Divide and conquer! For busy children, it might work to have $\frac{1}{2}$ of the children outdoors while the other $\frac{1}{2}$ are at freeplay.
- In cases of emergency or illness of the caregiver, another staff member must be placed into the classroom until an appropriate substitute caregiver can be contacted and arrives at the classroom.
- Children can never be left unattended or in situations where the ratio would rise above 1:10.

FIELD TRIPS

Head Start (preschool-aged)

Our Head Start field trips are a social and fun event for our children. We want all of our parents to participate as volunteers during our outings but these activities are not established to be attended by siblings. These guidelines are to be followed by all Head Start staff and are outlined for parents in the parent handbook (see page 11).

1. Only infants (6 months and under) are allowed to come with the parents on field trips. If parents bring the infant, he/she must provide transportation for that infant. Head Start staff are not to transport siblings on field trips.
2. No other siblings may attend field trips.
3. Please encourage the parent to provide a babysitter for all siblings.
4. No smoking is allowed by staff or parents during any Head Start function.
5. No weapons are allowed by staff or parents during any Head Start function.
6. Occasionally, a field trip may involve Head Start paying admission fees. The following ratio system has been developed for such trips:
Head Start will pay parent admission fees for:
1 adult to every 3 center-based children attending
1 adult to every 1 home-based child attending

Early Head Start

The Early Head Start program may take occasional field trips based on the ages of the children on the caseload. These guidelines are to be followed by EHS staff and parents:

1. All children must be in proper car seat restraint systems in order to participate.
2. No smoking is allowed by staff or parents during any EHS function.
3. No weapons are allowed by staff or parents during any EHS function.

PLEASE NOTE: All fieldtrips must be requested following the procedures directed by the Child Development Services Specialist.

Staff may not bring their own children/relatives on field trips.

WEATHER CLOSINGS

During inclement weather, it may be unsafe to expect our young children to be transported to and from school. The guidelines for weather closings are as follows:

Center Based

If a public school district served by the center is closed, Head Start buses will not operate and Head Start preschool classes will be cancelled. Staff will be expected to report to work as usual.

If a public school district served by the center delays opening, Head Start preschool morning classes will be on a one-hour delay (children should arrive at 9:30) but staff will be expected to report to work as usual.

If a public school district served by the center dismisses early, Head Start preschool classes will be dismissed after parents or emergency contacts have been notified. Staff will be expected to work as usual.

If a center is closed at the discretion of the Head Start Director, children will not attend but all staff will be required to report to work at the center.

If a center opens late or closes early at the discretion of the Head Start Director, staff will be expected to work as usual.

- ☒ No center can close at their own discretion. Closings must be approved by the Head Start Director.
- ☒ If staff leave prior to close of business (unless CAP has closed), they will be expected to use their leave credit.

PLEASE NOTE: CAP KIDS Head Start will only close when the CAP office is closed!

Home Base/Home Visits

If public school in the service area of your caseload is closed, the home visit can be cancelled but you may make contact with the family to proceed as scheduled. All home visits cancelled due to weather must be rescheduled within a two week period.

Home Base/Playgroup or Field Trips

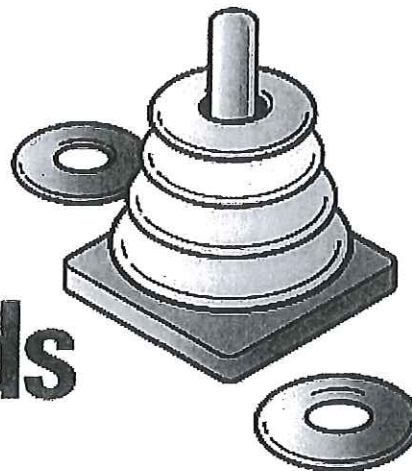
If the public schools in your caseload's service area are closed, any playgroup or field trip will be cancelled. Field trips will need to be rescheduled. The first missed playgroup will be excused, any others will need to be rescheduled.

Home Visitor Safety

There may be occasions that, as a home visitor, you feel that you may be at risk when traveling in inclement weather. Home Visitors will need to contact their supervisor and caseload families to notify them of their decision. Any missed home visits must be rescheduled within a two week period.

****Note: A public school area served by the center is defined as a school district within the county where at least 20% of the center's children are residing.***

Clean Daycares for Healthy Kids



Clean Toys

- Clean non-absorbent toys with soapy water, then rinse with clear water
- Wipe dry with disposable paper towels
- Sanitize by applying a chlorine bleach solution
- Air dry

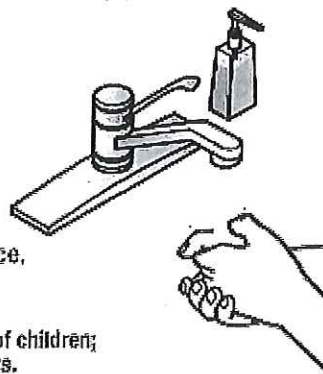


Clean Hands

Wash hands carefully and frequently with soapy water, especially:

- After going to the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning body fluids
- Before preparing foods or beverages

Wash hands for as long as it takes to hum the "Happy Birthday" song twice.
Dry hands thoroughly using disposable paper towels.



**Make bleach solutions fresh daily; keep out of reach of children;
never mix bleach solution with other cleaners.*



www.cd.somerset.nj.us/health



www.waterandhealth.org



www.americanchemistry.com

www.disinfect-for-health.org

Our Head Start Program relies heavily on documentation for tracking and relaying information. It is the staff's responsibility to get these forms in to the Central Office as needed.

MONTHLY FORMS

*	Food Service Daily Meals Worksheet	Yellow
*	Food Service Expense/Bills	Yellow
*	Bus Logs and Bills	Blue
*	Mechanic's Monthly Inspection (every other month)	Blue
*	Bus Daily Safety Checklist	Blue
	Child's Attendance	Online on ChildPlus
	Child's Meal Checklist	Online on ChildPlus
	Parent Volunteer/In-Kind Report	Green

EVERY OTHER WEEK

Time Sheet	Online on PayChex
Mileage	Online with excel document
Bi-Weekly Time Planner	White

IMMEDIATELY WHEN ACTION IS TAKEN **(THESE SHOULD BE MAILED IN EACH FRIDAY)**

	Payment Vouchers/Bills	White
	Dental Form	White
*	Paid Aide Payment Form	White
	Referral Form	White
	Parent Mileage (same as staff)	Blue
	Parent Babysitting Voucher	Pink
	Field Trip Request	Salmon or Online
	Physical Form	White
	Any Health Permission Slip	Grey
	Child Abuse Mandated Report	Green
	Intakes (COMPLETE)	All Copies

IMMEDIATELY WHEN ACTION IS TAKEN

Change of Status (completed on ChildPlus)
 Leave Request (Online on PayChex)
 Absence Documentation (completed on ChildPlus)

All forms marked with a (*) indicate center-base only.

CONTINUITY OF CARE/TRANSITION

PRENATAL TO NEWBORN:

- Home Visitor will visit mom and baby in hospital.
- Home Visitor will complete a new application on newborn as well as documentation that is available.
- Home Visitor will complete Change of Status.

LEAVING EARLY HEAD START:

At 30 Months

- Home visitor/teacher will discuss up-coming Transition with parents.
- Home Visitor/teacher will contact First Steps Coordinator to obtain transition information (if applicable.)
- Home visitor/teacher will attend transition conference (if applicable.)
- Home visitor/teacher will deliver all conference information to Child Development Services Specialist (if applicable.)
- Home visitor/teacher will encourage parents not interested in or income eligible to research other preschool placements in the community.

At 33 Months

- Home visitor/teacher will turn in a completed application for Head Start
- Home visitor/teacher will make certain all documentation is current, Health, Education, and Family Service.

At 35-36 Months

- Home visitor/teacher will encourage parents to visit the Head Start classroom or community preschool.
- For children transitioning from FD/FY toddler room to the FD/FY preschool room, staff will allow for a transitioning period of at least 2 weeks whereas the child visits the preschool classroom for lengthening periods of time.
- For children receiving First Steps services the home visitor/teacher will obtain conference information for enrolled child to verify eligibility for further services.
- Home visitor/teacher will turn in all transition files to the Central Office making certain to include: transition date and reason for, first and last names of child and parent on all forms.
- Home visitor/teacher will complete Change of Status.

LEAVING HEAD START

- Children take field trips to their local kindergartens
- Children use milk cartons at mealtime in order to learn how to open the containers
- Packets are prepared and sent to schools with pertinent transition information.
- Kindergarten teachers or principals come and speak to parent groups.

Communication Plan and Systems For the Head Start and Early Head Start Program

The systems used for communication within our Head Start program are listed in the Program Design and Management Area Plan. This will serve to enhance the language available within the plan.

Communication is a key element in the success of the program with the families, community, and staff. The following plan outlines how the program will utilize systems, both formal and informal, to ensure that this level of communication works:

Communication with families:

Parent-staff interactions will be carried out in an effort to discuss program activities and policies through:

- Parent orientation which covers Head Start goals, procedures, expectations, etc. Staff review all forms and elements of Initial Home Visit packets (Week 0 and 1) during this orientation.
- Parents receive a parent handbook which outlines the Head Start program as well as information that will allow them, as well as their children, to receive the highest possible benefit from the program.
- Open House events are held at each site to allow the staff to communicate classroom happenings to the parent and for the parent to ask questions regarding educational programming.
- Families receive quarterly newsletters and a monthly calendar.
- Center-based families receive visits within their home several times each year. Topics regarding the program activities, family goals, and child progress are topics that may be discussed.
- All efforts are made to provide written and verbal communication to families in their primary language.

Communication with governing bodies and policy groups.

Policy Council:

- Members receive an orientation packet of performance standards, by-laws, established local policies and guidelines, and materials concerning the conduct of Policy Council business.

- Members receive monthly financial reports of expenditures of HS grant and policy council funds and local contributions.
- Members receive information each meeting concerning issues such as personnel policies, work plans, grant applications, community assessment, etc.

CAP Board:

- Members receive updates of Head Start activities during each Board Meeting.
- Members receive financial reports for the agency, including Head Start during each Board meeting.

Communication with staff:

- Staff members receive information through staff meetings, staff newsletters, weekly mailings from the central office, continual and ongoing telephone and email communication, monthly center visits by administrative staff.

Record-Keeping systems

Record keeping is done through multiple sources such as:

ChildPlus Tracking
 CACFP Food Service System
 Health Care Tracking Systems
 IFSP or IEP
 Completed Family Referrals
 On-going Monitoring
 Family Partnership Agreement
 In-Kind Documentation
 Professional Development Plans
 Bi-Annual Reports to Regional Office
 PIR
 Self-Assessment
 Child/Family Records
 Teaching Strategies GOLD

Each of these tools tends to represent a different aspect of the program although all of them relate together to create a system of comprehensive tracking services.

HEAD START BI-WEEKLY PLANNING CALENDAR

Name _____

Month _____

This Week ____ / ____ / ____		Next Week ____ / ____ / ____	
Mon: List names of appointments, times, and phone (or address)			Priority items carried over Keep in mind that this lets your supervisor know what you will be working on, if you are on target, etc. Make this your 'work chart' so it truly reflects what you are doing.
Tues:		Each day must reflect the actual hours worked. This should match your timesheet for that date.	
Wed:			
Thurs:			
Fri:		This should be turned in at the beginning of each pay period.	
			Waiting for:
			On Deadline:

SPECIALISTS/COORDINATORS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Child Development Services (Education/Disabilities)

Kim Swinson

classroom issues
child behavior issues
educational supplies
anything regarding disabilities (suspected or diagnosed)
communications with LEA
transition/case conferences
early educational information for parents
field trips
Education/Transition Committee

Family Partnership Services (Social Services)

Maria Gonzalez-Blacketer

issues of child abuse/neglect
parent concerns
in-kind
volunteer information
mental health for families
home visiting general information
parent awareness
FSAC (Family Services Advisory Committee)

Health Services (Health/Nutrition)

Lori Brewer

child health concerns
health screenings
food service
licensing
physical/dental examinations
immunizations
communications with health care professionals
physician, dentist, Medicaid concerns
HSAC (Health Services Advisory Committee)

ERSEA

(Enrollment, Recruitment, Selection, Eligibility, & Attendance)

Julie Pettit

change of status for children/families
recruitment information
intakes/documentation
enrollment
all tracking input
class rosters/ChildPlus reports
office supply purchasing

SPECIALISTS/COORDINATORS AND THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent Resource

Kim Crowder

adult literacy information
parent group issues and information
communications with literacy programs
transitioning to public school information
sib sitter information
family literacy issues
paid aide issues

Director

Robin Curry-Shumaker

program concerns
communication for facility agreements
Policy Council
grant/budget

Immediate Supervisor Role

timesheet and mileage approval
PTO approval
assuring that job description is being met
overall job performance
job performance assessment

CAP, Inc. of Western Indiana
Head Start and Early Head Start

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM
HEAD START STAFF HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Head Start and Early Head Start Staff Handbook. I understand that it is my responsibility to read this handbook and to comply with all policies contained within.

I further acknowledge that this Agency has the right, without prior notice, to modify, amend or terminate policies and practices within the limits and requirements imposed by law.

I understand that no statement contained in this handbook creates a guarantee of continued employment or an obligation, contractual or otherwise, on the part of Community Action Program. I understand that my employment is conditional based on my being able to perform the essential functions of the position with any necessary, appropriate, or reasonable accommodations.

Employee Signature: _____

Date: _____