

Orientation Outline

The purpose of Head Start is to provide comprehensive services to pre-school and infant/toddler age children and their families, to better prepare the child for school and their parents in their role as the primary educator of their children. Participation in Head Start is voluntary. However, Head start is a federally funded program with Performance Standards, or expectation that our program must meet in order to maintain our funding and continue providing these services. This outline explains what you can expect from our program and what the program expects of our families in order for us to maintain the program as the Federal government requires.

1. Program Design:

- Combination – 2 or 3 day/wk, 9-18 (1 ½ hour) Home Visits per year.
- Center Base - 4 day/wk, 2 ed HV/yr, 2 Conferences/3 SS HV
- Home Base - HV each week - 2/mo. Socialization time
- Full Day - 5 day/wk, 2 Ed HV/yr, 2 Conferences 3 SS HV- with monthly follow up contact (Requirements for full day program, to include co-pays)
- Full Day-Part Year , 5 day/wk Sept-June; 2 Ed HV/yr, 2 Conferences 3 SS HV- with monthly follow up contact (Requirements for full day program, to include co-pays)

2. Developmentally Appropriate Practices:

Although there is a guide to show what children should be able to accomplish at any certain age, children learn at their own pace, in a variety of styles and manners. Head Start supports that and ensures that there are a variety of activities and materials covering a wide range of skill development.

3. Meal Service in the Classroom:

- Children are served USDA meals/snacks
- Meals are served family style
- Children serve themselves, set & clear tables, pass serving dishes to their peers, developing fine and gross motor skills used in pouring, cutting, spreading, etc.

4. Anti-Bias Curriculum:

- Respect to the diversity of the families we serve
- Lessons planned around 4 seasons of the year
- Celebrations around holidays, birthdays & special days are encouraged and incorporated into activities that are planned on home visits with their family.

5. Transportation and Bus Policy:

Head Start provides bus services for all part day centers for families living within the service area. (Explain more on policy)

6. Home Visits:

(see program design) Discuss purpose of home visits and the fact that in some options a family may have two home visitors (Education and Social Services)

7. Screening/Assessments—Completed by Head Start Staff on site or with parents:

- Hearing
- Vision
- Developmental screen (ASQ)
- Behavioral screen (ASQ-SE)-as needed
- DECA
- With parent permission, informal observations to determine need for evaluation of possible special needs

8. Screens - Parent responsibility within 90 days:

- Well Child Exam
- Dental Exam/Screen
- WIC Nutrition Assessment
- Importance of Good Health in child development

9. Mental Health/Disabilities:

Children with special needs, whether physical, emotional or developmental are welcome at Head Start. We believe that integration with typical peers is the best practice for development of children with special needs and disabilities. Children identified and receiving special services receive specialist's assistance in the Head Start Classroom. Children are also identified and referred for evaluation - based on parent concerns or staff observations.

10. Parent Involvement:

- Classroom Volunteer
- Parent Center Officer
- Policy Council Representative
- Parent Education/Support Groups
- Community Involvement(Focus on Leadership, Walkability, Neighborhood Revitalization)
- Career Ladder

11. Review Policies:

- Attendance (both classroom and Home visit for part day);
- Child Abuse & Neglect - to include releasing children to adults under the influence of alcohol/drugs;
- Confidentiality policy – Parent's written consent required

Contact Person _____ Phone _____