

# Blue Valley Community Action Head Start 0-5

## Parent Handbook

• PRENATAL SERVICES • FAMILY ENGAGEMENT • SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL • PHYSICAL • COGNITIVE • LANGUAGE •

### The **FACES** of BVCA Children Services

Families And Children Engage Successfully!

**F** We recognize the **FAMILY** as the child's first teacher.


**A** We honor the family **AND** the child with individualized supports.

**C** We value and enhance the development of each **CHILD** as a whole.

**E** We actively **ENGAGE** with children, families, and communities.

**S** We **SUCCESSFULLY** empower staff to promote positive outcomes for all.

• PRENATAL SERVICES • FAMILY ENGAGEMENT • SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL • PHYSICAL • COGNITIVE • LANGUAGE •



620 5th Street, PO Box 273

Fairbury, NE 68352

(402) 729-2278

## Table of Contents

Welcome	3
Program Options	3
0-5 Head Start Philosophy	3
Services Provided	4-6
Health	
Social-Emotional/Mental Health	
Screenings	
Physical Examination	
Dental Examination	
Nutrition	
Attendance Procedures	6
Birthday Celebrations	6
Education	6
School Readiness Goal	6
Special Education	7
Social Services	7
Parent Engagement	7-10
Transportation	10
Parent and Child Safety	11-12
Toys	13
Child Abuse	13
Inkind	13
Father Involvement	13
Career Development Training	13-14
Social Media	14
What does all this mean?	14
Attachment: Health Related Guidelines	15

## Welcome to Blue Valley Community Action Partnership!

The staff would like to welcome you to our program. We are looking forward to working with you and your family in the days to come.

“Blue” represents our 0-3 Homebased Early Head Start Program

“Red” represents our 3-5 Head Start Program

“Black” represents both 0-3 and 3-5 Program

### Blue Valley Community Action 0-5 Programs Available:

Fillmore County 0-5	402-759-3699
Gage County	
Beatrice 0-5	402-223-6035
Wymore 3-5	402-645-3441
Jefferson County 0-5	402-729-2278
Saline County 0-5	402-826-5221
Seward County 3-5	402-643-6272
Thayer County 0-5	402-768-7287
York County 0-5	402-362-4299

### BVCA Head Start Birth to Five Philosophy:

#### Families and Children Engage Successfully

- F- We recognize the **FAMILY** as the child’s first teacher.
- A- We honor the family **AND** the child with individualized supports.
- C- We value and enhance the development of each **CHILD** as a whole.
- E- We actively **ENGAGE** with children, families and communities.
- S- We **SUCCESSFULLY** empower staff to promote positive outcomes for all.

## 0 – 5 HEAD START WILL PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING SERVICES:

### HEALTH

The overall goal of the 0 - 5 Head Start program is to help the child develop skills to deal effectively with both the present environment and later responsibilities in school and life. When you enroll your child in 0 - 5 Head Start, you will be asked to answer questions concerning your pregnancy, your child's health history, and your child's development history. This involves every area of a child's cognitive and intellectual development, nutritional, physical, and social-emotional health and mental health. This information helps us to understand your child's background and gives you a chance to discuss any health need(s) you feel your child may have.

#### Social-Emotional Health and Mental Health

Social-Emotional health and mental health is an important part of 0 - 5 Head Start as it intertwines with every aspect of the program and affects every participant from the administrator to staff, to parent, to child, and on to the community.

0 -5 Head Start approaches social-emotional health and mental health from a positive perspective, thinking of wellness, helping the child to feel good about him/herself. Our approach addresses all of an individual's needs: physical, emotional, and social.

Everyone in 0 -5 Head Start contributes to our social-emotional health and mental health program. We look forward to working with our families as we build the ability in children to get along with others and feel good about themselves.

### SCREENINGS

**Screening-** Health services include vision, speech, hearing, and developmental screenings. Your medical care provider completes some of these screenings during the Well Child Checkup. 0-5 Head Start staff completes other screenings. If the results from these screenings show concern, it may be an indication that he/she needs to be tested by a specialist. You will be notified of the screening results and you will be assisted in finding a specialist if needed.

#### **What is a developmental screening?**

Screening is a way of having a quick look at your child to see where she/he is developmentally and to give us an idea of what we can do next to promote the child's developmental progress.

#### **Is the screening an IQ test?**

No. Screening is a way of checking your child's development to see that she/he is acquiring the skills necessary for further learning.

#### **What are the differences in screening, diagnostic evaluation, and readiness testing?**

Screening is a quick overview of your child to help us work with your child individually. If we are concerned that certain skills are not developing or need further evaluation, we will work with you to obtain further evaluation if that is what you want. We know that you know your child best. We do not use the screen as a "readiness" test for eligibility.

### How will I find out how my child did?

Parents will receive results of the child's developmental screening. We will talk to you about your child's strengths. We will use the screening results to see what we need to work on next with your child. We will discuss with you if there may be skills that need further evaluation and help you through that process.

## PHYSICAL EXAMINATION

0-3 Head Start is required to "follow the schedule of well childcare utilized by the Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, Treatment (EPSDT) program of the Medicaid agency of the State in which they operate, and the latest immunization recommendations issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention." Parents will be given copies of Well Child Checkup and Dental Exam forms. Please take this along on the child's visit and have the medical professional fill it out. Then bring the completed form home and give it to your Family Advocate at the next Home Visit. The Well Child/Well Baby physical examination is to be completed by a local physician at the age(s) recommended on the Early Periodic Screening and Diagnostic Treatment (EPSDT) schedule, which is determined by the State of Nebraska. In 0-3 Head Start, prenatal mothers need to schedule and receive prenatal examinations by a local physician, and according to their recommendations for regularly scheduled prenatal examinations

**3-5 Head Start physical examination is to be completed by a local physician annually. The doctor will assess your child's general health and recommend any follow-up treatment that may be needed. Please make sure the health form is thoroughly completed by the doctor.**

0 - 5 Head Start will be responsible for the payment of this examination ***if Medicaid or insurance does not cover the child or examination.*** Please give your Medicaid/insurance number to the doctor's office.

## DENTAL EXAMINATION

0-3 Head Start children who reach the age of 3 years before the end of the program year, and Prenatal mothers in their first 45 days of enrolling must see a dentist as part of the enrollment process. If your child or the Prenatal mother needs follow-up work done, we will assist you in getting this work done to the fullest extent possible—such as transportation, and explore options for payments. **Please give your Medicaid/insurance number to the dentist's office.**

**3 – 5 Head Start children must see a dentist as part of the enrollment process every year. If your child needs follow-up work done, we will assist you in getting this work done to the fullest extent possible-such as transportation and exploring options for payments. Please give your Medicaid/insurance number to the dentist's office.**

## NUTRITION

A nutrition assessment is completed on each child to determine allergies, types of foods eaten, and family eating habits. Children enrolled in a center based option receive nutritional meals that meet the USDA standards. Families enrolled in the home based option will be offered at least one nutritional food activity for every month they are enrolled.

**\*\*SEE ATTACHMENT #1 Health-Related Guidelines\*\***

## ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

**0-3 EARLY HEAD START HOME-BASED:** Home visits (90 minutes each) are required to be held every week for the Early Head Start program. Your Family Advocate will work with you to schedule these home visits at a time that is convenient for your family. If a home visit must be cancelled, please notify your Family Advocate as soon as possible to reschedule the visit. If you are unable to hold weekly visits for a short period of time (due to circumstances such as: extended illness, surgery, travel, or custody arrangements) your Family Advocate, in coordination with Management Team members, will write an attendance plan with you. The goal of this plan will be to resume weekly home visits to ensure your family receives the full benefit from the Early Head Start program.

**3-5 HEAD START:** Regular attendance is so important for your child's learning. Blue Valley Community Action Head Start program is required to maintain 100% of its current enrollment at all times. The child must be in attendance according to the performance standards. Please notify center staff if your child will be absent each day that your child is gone. If child is absent without contact from the parent/guardian, the staff will contact the parent to determine the reason for the absence. If your child consistently misses class, your Family Advocate will contact Management Team members and they will determine if an Attendance Plan is necessary. The attendance plan will be written with parent assistance and frequently followed up by your Family Advocate. The goal is to have your child attend regularly.

## BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays will be celebrated once a month. All children with birthdays that month will be recognized at this time. There will be a specific date chosen each month. Our cook will prepare a snack to be shared during the celebration. Families will NOT bring items (food, non-food items) to be given out in honor of their child's birthday.

## EDUCATION

Our program believes that PLAY is the way children learn best. Our definition is that play is not a random activity, but involves parents/children in choosing their activities and directing their own attention and efforts into examining and manipulating objects, practicing their own body skills, and enacting their own ideas in the process. We utilize curriculum that is developmentally appropriate and research-based, including additional curricular enhancements specific to social-emotional learning. Our learning materials and equipment are appropriate for children enrolled. Assessments of each child are ongoing to provide an individualized child development program.

## BVCA 0-5 HEAD START SCHOOL READINESS GOAL

Children will be at or above what is considered typical for their age in their approaches to learning and in social, emotional, cognitive, language, literacy, and physical development.

\*A more detailed list of indicators for school readiness is available in the Parent Information center. A copy may be requested at any time.

## SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

Children who need special support services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, etc, will be provided those services from their local school districts or Educational Service Units (ESUs) in the classroom or in the home. You will be an advocate for decisions or plans involving services your child may need. If you choose to pursue an evaluation for your child, staff will support you and your family in any way possible. 0-5 Head Start offers inclusive educational settings for children with special needs to be educated with their typically developing peers.

## SOCIAL SERVICES

A variety of services are available to assist families in meeting goals they may have. 0 - 5 Head Start staff will help assess your individual family's strengths and needs by completing a Family Partnership Plan at the beginning of the program year and reviewing it often. If needed, referrals may be made to meet those identified needs. Staff will assist parents in seeking out services. There are Resource Lists and other information available to families on a wide variety of topics to assist in meeting their needs. Please check with your Family Advocate for a list of resources.

## PARENT ENGAGEMENT

0-5 Head Start believes that parents are an integral part of our program. Fathers and mothers are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's education, volunteer in the center, attend parent meetings, parent/teacher conferences, participate in decision making about the program operations, participate in activities they have helped develop, Policy Council, and community activities.

Parent and family engagement in Head Start/Early Head Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children. The Parent, Family and Community Engagement Framework is a research-based approach to program change that shows how an agency can work together as a whole to promote parent and family engagement and children's learning and development. Parent and Family Engagement will support promising child outcomes such as enhanced school readiness skills, sustained learning, and developmental gains across early childhood education and into elementary school.

0 - 5 Head Start has a Parent Group made up of the parents from each program option. At the beginning of each year, the site supervisor coordinates with the parents in each of the program options in their county. **The group has 1 Parent Meeting at the beginning of the year and at least 2 Family Events/Parent Meetings to enjoy some type of educational program and/or fun activities.**

**0-3 Early Head Start parents in each county may choose to meet with other parent groups in their county or meet separately.**

Each parent group selects two parents and one community representative to serve on the Policy Council. The counties that have both 0-3 and 3-5 Head Start select one parent from each group to serve on Policy Council. This Council is the policy making body of the 0 - 5 Head Start Program. Some of the duties

are to review and approve the grant application, the budget, the location of centers, and be involved in the recruitment of staff and children.

**0-3 Home Based Option:** Families receive 0-3 Head Start services in the comfort of their own home which is the natural learning environment for young children. Once a week, a Family Advocate will come into the home for a minimum of 1½ hours and work with the parent and child on activities that will help stimulate their knowledge and development. Family Advocates will guide families on their way to self-sufficiency, including assistance in accomplishing long term and short term goals.

**3-5 Home Visits:** Families enrolled in Head Start option receive monthly home visits with their Family Advocate. As your Family Advocate gets to know your family, she will assist you with goals you have for your child and family.

**What can I expect from a home visit?** Your Family Advocate will work with you and your child on a number of issues including child and family development. Because parents are the child's primary teacher, most of our activities will revolve around the home using everyday household materials. Parents may choose activities which focus on social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, math, science, social studies, art exploration, or nutrition. Families will also work with their Family Advocate setting short and long term goals, follow-up activities to do between visits and planning for the next home visit.

**Please be prepared for the home visit by:**

1. Being awake and out of bed.
2. Turning off television.
3. Having your child dressed.
4. Encouraging your child, mother, father and other family members to participate.
5. Asking other non-family members to come back later.
6. Making sure your child is not ill.
7. Silencing your cell phone.

**What if I can't make a scheduled home visit?** Please notify your Family Advocate if you are unable to meet at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled home visit time. This will save a trip for our Family Advocates and allow them to reschedule your home visit at a time that is more convenient for your family.

**Socializations:**

Parents and families are offered Socialization experiences twice each month. The purpose of socialization experiences for infants and toddlers is to support child development by strengthening the parent-child relationship. The content of the group experience reflects this emphasis and incorporates the goals of the program and participating families such as: helping parents to better understand child development; encouraging parents to share their parenting challenges and joys with one another; providing activities for parents and children to enjoy together; offering structured and unstructured learning opportunities for both children and parents; and modeling successful strategies for engaging children and supporting their development.

**Cooperation between the Program and the Family in the following ways will ensure a successful Program:**



- Attend Parent Orientation before your child attends school to complete enrollment forms, meet staff, and find out more about your child's classroom schedule.
- Hold Home Visits on a weekly basis. If you need to reschedule a home visit, please call your Family Advocate at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled start time.
- Send your child to school on a regular basis. **Please notify center staff if your child will be absent.** If a child is absent without contact from the parent/guardian, the staff will contact the parent to determine the reason for the absence. Regular attendance is important. There is an "Attendance Procedure" to ensure this occurs.
- Please sign up to volunteer in the center once a month, and if for any reason you cannot volunteer on your day, you may find a friend or relative to take your place. If you are in a school collaboration; please check with the school for their guidelines.
- Attend the Parent Meeting held in the month of September. Parent Meetings/**Family Events** are then held at least 2 times a year. This is a great time to meet the other enrolled families, learn about community resources, educational programs, and learn how you can support your child, your 0 - 5 Head Start program, and your community.
- Attend the Socializations that are held twice a month. This is a wonderful opportunity to meet and interact with other parents and children. A nutritional meal or snack will be served. Please make the necessary arrangements with the Family Advocates to keep baby food or bottles in the refrigerator during the socializations.

Also, during the socializations, please notify staff of any medications brought with you. This will be locked up and put in the refrigerator if needed. Diapers, baby food, private nursing areas, and formula are available at every socialization. Please let your Family Advocate know if you would like to use these items.

- Provide input on program operation, personal needs, goals, and community needs. Parents are encouraged to provide input on lesson plans, observations, Family Partnership Plan, Policy Council and Parent Meetings, Health Advisory Board, and **Socializations**.
- Children learn through play. Dress your child in play clothes to give him/her complete freedom to learn.
- Children need 10-12 hours of sleep each night.
- If you or your child becomes ill, please notify your Family Advocate in order to reschedule your visit. For Socializations, if signs of illness appear, keep your child home for his/her protection and the protection of others. Remember to call your Family Advocate if transportation for Socialization was arranged with them.
- If signs of illness appear, keep your child home from the center for his/her protection and the protection of others. If a child becomes ill while at the center, he/she will be isolated with a staff member until the parent or legal guardian can be notified that the child needs to be picked up or brought home. (See "Health-Related Guidelines".)
- Notify the center early of any changes in where your child goes after school.

- Do not hesitate to come in or call if anything is bothering you. If after talking to staff about a concern, and you don't feel the concern is addressed, there is a complaint procedure and form available.
- Medications will not be administered by the 0-3 Home-Based Early Head Start staff.
- No medications will be administered by the staff except for timed scheduled medications that may alter the child's behavior (like Ritalin) and inhalers for asthmatic children for the prevention of asthma attacks. Along with this, we will need a written permission slip from the child's parent or guardian to allow staff to administer medications. The Health Officer must approve all medications with primary health provider's written directions.
- No child will be left at the center prior to the agreed upon time. Parents will escort the child into the center and make their presence known to the center staff.
- Staff use different prevention and intervention techniques to guide children's behaviors. BVCA 0 - 5 Head Start has a Positive Guidance & Discipline Policy. Every center has a copy of this policy available upon request.
- If the center is open during a public school holiday, prior permission must be given by the supervisor before school age children (while parent is volunteering) can visit the center. This is due to the size of the center and the number of adult to children ratio requirements from state regulations.
- 3-5 Head Start Center Based sessions will be held four or five days a week. Teaching staff will make two home visits a year to discuss your child's development. There also will be two parent-teacher conferences held at the Center. Staff will notify parents of appointments.
- Staff will notify all parents when children have been exposed to a communicable disease. Please do not attend Socializations or send your child to the center if your child has symptoms of a communicable disease. Please notify your Family Advocate before they arrive at your home if your child has symptoms of a communicable disease.
- When inclement weather occurs, your Family Advocate will call to reschedule your Home Visit or cancel a Socialization.
- When inclement weather occurs, parents should listen to the local radio and TV stations for announcements of schools closing. Most centers close when the school in their community closes because of inclement weather. Check with your local center on dismissal procedures and where to listen for information.
- Schedule and keep medical appointments for Dental Exams, Physicals, Immunizations, Lead and Hemoglobin Tests. Remember to take the needed forms to the appointments with you. Be sure the doctor or dentist fills out the form completely before leaving their office.

## TRANSPORTATION

- 0-3 Head Start provides transportation on an as needed basis. Ask your Family Advocate for more information. Examples include: Socializations: doctor, dentist, WIC, and Immunization appointments; and Policy Council and Health Advisory meetings. **Please confirm your transportation needs with your Family Advocate before scheduling any non-0-3 Head Start appointments.**
- If you have arranged transportation to a 0-3 event, please be ready to leave at the scheduled time. Please have diaper bags/items needed for the outing packed in advance. **Please watch for the 0-3 Head Start vehicle and promptly bring yourselves out to the vehicle.**
- Parents are encouraged to buckle their children safely into the car seat. Family Advocates will check to make sure all children and adults are properly buckled into their seats before moving the vehicle.
- Notify your Family Advocate ahead of time if you know you will not need transportation that was previously arranged.
- All passengers must be seated and using a safety belt/car seat when the vehicle is in motion.

## PARENT AND CHILD SAFETY/PEDESTRIAN EDUCATION

**We are required to provide Pedestrian Safety Education to you and your child.** You and your child will learn Safe Riding Practices including car seat and auto safety, safely loading and unloading in vehicles, crossing the street safely, danger zones around vehicles, and safely evacuating vehicles.

- When you bring your child to school please make sure you use a car seat.
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their child's safety during travel.
- Using a car seat is the best protection you can give your child when traveling by car.
- Every state in the United States requires that an infant or small child be restrained.
- When choosing any car seat the following are some general guidelines will help ensure your child's safety. Your Family Advocate will provide information on car seats.
  - **Infants** – Use a rear-facing car seat to at least age 1 and 20 lbs. It is suggested until age 2.
  - **Toddlers** – Use a forward-facing car seat (convertible or combo seat) until the harness no longer fits.
  - **Boosters** – Use a booster seat with the vehicle lap and shoulder safety belts until your child passes the Safety Belt Fit Test.
- Key tips to keep your children safe in your vehicle at all times:
  - Do not leave your children unattended in the car. **It is unsafe and illegal to leave your child in a vehicle for any amount of time.**
  - Ensure your children use a seatbelt every time they are in the car.
  - Any child car seat that has been involved in a collision must be discarded.
  - **Do NOT** allow children under the age of 12 to sit in the front seat especially if there is a passenger side air bag.
  - Do not allow your children to eat small food items, play with balloons or small toys that represent a choking hazard in the car.
  - Do not store any containers involving fumes or fuels in your vehicle.
  - Keep your keys in a safe place where your child can not get to them.
- Teach your children the basic rule of never playing around or near a parked or moving vehicle.
  - Always walk around your parked vehicle before you put the key in the ignition.

- When it comes to child driveway safety, nothing will replace the value of parental or adult supervision.
- Traffic Safety Tips
  - You should hold your child’s hand as you cross the road, teaching them to be aware of vehicles around them.
  - Set a good example by always following the traffic safety rules yourself.
  - Always look both ways before crossing the street.
  - Cross in the crosswalks at the corner, not in the middle of the block.
  - Be careful in parking lots – look out for the cars as they may not be able to see you. Never walk or run in front of cars.
  - Teach children the meaning of traffic signs. Stop at all stop signs, red lights, and obey traffic signals.
- **You and your child’s safety are very important to us.**

3-5 Parents are to transport their child to and from the center. If requested, staff will assist families in exploring transportation resources in their community if needed.

## ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

When arriving at the center each day, please bring your child into the classroom. It is important that you walk your child to the classroom so that your child’s teacher is aware that your child is in his/her care. Children’s safety is our first concern.

## RELEASING CHILDREN

The parent(s) or guardian will complete an Emergency Information form. [In a Home-based 0-3 Head Start program option parents/guardians are always present with the child. However, there could be a time, such as an accident or medical emergency, wherein the parent/guardian becomes incapacitated.](#) If this happens, your child will not be released to anyone who is not listed on the form.

When someone who is not the parent attempts to pick up the child, staff will ask the person’s name and check to see if the name is on the “release list”. The employee may ask the person to present some form of identification such as a driver’s license. In the event that the person’s name is not on the “release list”, or if the person cannot or will not present identification on request, the child will not be released. The child will remain with the 0 - 5 Head Start employee.

ANYONE NOT LISTED ON THE FORM MAY NOT PICK UP THE CHILD UNLESS THE PARENT HAS GIVEN US A NOTE SAYING THIS IS OKAY. **It is very important that parents keep the “Emergency Information” form current.**

If a child is left at the center without notice from a parent or guardian of being late, staff will wait 10 minutes, then begin calling parents or guardians and emergency contacts. If no one is available to pick up the child, after ½ hour of dismissal, local authorities will be notified of possible abandonment.

If parents or guardians or anyone listed on the Emergency Contacts list are not at the drop off point, the monitor will notify the center. Parents or guardians and emergency contacts will be called. If no one is available, the child will be returned to the center. Authorities will be notified after ½ hour of attempted drop off of the child or upon return to the center.

When Head Start is in collaboration with a local school district, please discuss the school's policy regarding drop off/pick up of children and releasing children with your child's teacher and/or Family Advocate.

## TOYS

Please keep personal toys at home. We make every effort to equip the classroom with a variety of developmentally appropriate toys so children have ample opportunity to play with many items daily. Toys may get lost or broken. Show and tell days are exceptions to this policy and parents will receive notice when this occurs.

## CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

ALL STAFF are required by law to report **suspected** cases of child abuse and neglect. Staff will contact the Child Abuse Hotline AND local law enforcement.

If you ask if we have reported you, our protocol is that we do not disclose whether or not we have. If you have a question regarding a child abuse report, you may call the Children Services Director, 402-729-2278.

If parents or volunteers feel they need assistance in reporting suspected child abuse, staff will assist them in the process.

Child abuse/neglect hurts children physically and emotionally. By reporting suspected abuse or neglect, we may be saving a child from future abuse or neglect. Everyone is responsible for protecting children from any abuse by reporting. **Remember, leaving a child alone in a vehicle is considered neglect. Not using child restraints is also neglect.** Please help protect all children from any harm!

## INKIND

"Inkind" is a word you will hear quite often. Inkind is a requirement of our grant. Inkind is *donated services*, by parents and the community. Inkind is necessary to maintain funding for our program. This can include time (volunteers in the center, buses, home visits, **or field trips**) or items (donated articles, crafts, etc.). We need volunteers *every day*.

Inkind includes time parents spend working on activities with their children at home if the activities are part of a plan written by the program and parents. These activities must be completed in an appropriate time frame for children, and verified by a staff person on the Inkind Sheet.

## FATHER INVOLVEMENT

Male involvement makes a difference in children's lives! Our program recognizes fathers as very important contributors to the well-being of their children. Being a father is the greatest privilege you will ever be given! We look forward to having fathers involved in the program, home visits, and socializations, as well as mothers.

## CAREER DEVELOPMENT/TRAINING

Parents may take part in regularly scheduled staff in-service and training opportunities throughout the year. Fathers and mothers are encouraged to attend these trainings. Many topics apply to parents who are the primary teachers of their children. Parents are also given the opportunity to receive training through parent meetings and Policy Council meetings. Parents are also encouraged to attend GED classes. Discuss your goals with your local staff.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA**

We may post center events on Facebook, Twitter, blogs, BVCA and school websites or newspaper (other social media). At this time because of safety concerns and confidentiality, scheduling of appointments with your Family Advocate should be done in person or by phone.

## **WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN?**

It means that we are always striving for your involvement in whatever we do. This is YOUR program and is specifically designed for you and your family to help you on your way to self-sufficiency and prepare your child for success in school and life.

## Health-Related Guidelines

In order to insure the safety and health of our children, staff, or other adults, below is a list of conditions that may result in keeping your child home:

1. Temperature 100.4° or higher for 3-year-olds and up. Temperature of 101 degrees or higher for ages 0-2.
2. A painful, red throat, even if no fever is present.
3. A deep, hacking cough.
4. Difficulty breathing or untreated wheezing (call or see your doctor).
5. An unexplained rash. (Call or see your doctor).
6. Vomiting (within the last 24 hours).
7. Diarrhea (runny, watery or bloody stools).
8. Complaints of a stiff neck and headache with one or more of the above symptoms (call or see your doctor).
9. Thick green drainage from the nose along with sinus pressure, fever or tiredness.
10. Yellow discharge from the eyes.
11. Unusual yellow colorings to the skin or eyes (call or see your doctor).
12. Cuts or openings on the skin that are pus-filled or oozing (bring a note from doctor and keep sores covered).
13. Parents of students suspected of having head lice will be notified and advised to treat. The child can return the next day after a single treatment of over the counter medication.

**The recommended treatment is any type of over the counter lice shampoo such as RID, CLEAR, NIX, or generic equivalent. Follow the recommended product directions for treatment. Then retreat according to directions on the product label.**

14. A contagious disease: If you know or suspect your child has a contagious disease, please call your child's teacher or the Family Advocate (see your doctor to confirm the disease and receive medication/s if needed).
15. Parents who feel their child is too ill to participate in outdoor activities should be advised by staff to keep them home an extra day to insure a complete recovery. If a chronic health condition limits participation in outdoor activities, a note from medical partner must be provided. If staff is unsure about a child's condition or a child is brought in to the site that they suspect is ill, they should first discuss the issue with the parent. If the parent and staff are not in agreement about the need for the child to stay home, the staff should contact the Health Officer for advisement.

**The child may return to the program when they meet the appropriate criteria. Local health providers may need to be consulted regarding some conditions.**

### **HEALTH SERVICES UNDERSTANDING**

***Change of Address and Phone*** – Please tell Head Start 0-5 when you have a change of address or phone number so that we can easily reach you in case of emergency.

***Medication*** – Usually children in a part day program will not need to receive medications at Head Start or at socialization activities, as medication can usually be given at home before and after school or activities. If it is necessary for a child to be given medication at Head Start or at a socialization activity, a written order is needed from a physician, and written permission is needed from the parent/guardian. The primary care physician and the Health Officer will develop an Individual plan of care to assist Head Start staff and parent/guardian with Medication Administration. The medication must be in a labeled container from the pharmacy. (See the Medication Administration Procedure)

***Accidents*** – If your child is injured at a socialization the parent or a staff member will administer first aid. If your child is injured at Head Start, a trained staff member will administer first aid. Staff will complete an Injury Report and parents will be notified. However, if the child seems to need medical care, you will be called immediately. EMS will be called in case of a severe life or limb emergency. If your child needs to go to the emergency room, and you are not available to go with the child, a staff member will accompany the child and stay with him/her until you arrive.

***Chronic Illness or Serious Health Condition*** – If a child has a severe on-going health condition, such as severe asthma or diabetes, plans must be made for dealing with the health condition before the child enters the classroom. The parent, Health Officer, and staff will meet to plan exactly how to manage the child's condition while in our program. Appropriate training will be provided by the Health Officer using the information from primary health provider.

## **Immunization Procedure**

- 1.** No student will start classes until an immunization record or waiver has been received. All children will have proof of immunizations or a waiver before entering Head Start. Needed immunizations must be obtained after enrollment to begin catching up on behind immunizations. This will not be in effect regarding the “four year booster series.” Technically the child is not over due until after the sixth birthday. This series is however considered a required immunization for the Head Start Program and should be encouraged and recommended as soon as the child is four years old.
- 2.** Center staff will assist parents, as needed to obtain their child’s immunization record. Parents not having a current immunization record for their child should be advised that records might possibly be obtained from the physician office or public immunization office where their child received immunizations.
- 3.** Parents may sign a notarized waiver or have a letter from their religious affiliate, indicating that Immunizations are contrary to their religious beliefs.
- 4.** If a health provider refuses immunizations because of a child’s illness or physical condition, a signed statement by the health provider, must be on file before the child enters the class or continues attendance.
- 5.** Parents will be offered transportation assistance services as needed to immunization appointments.
- 6.** If a child has had chicken pox the parent needs to sign the bottom section of the immunization form stating that their child has had the disease. A copy of this needs to be sent to the Health Officer.