Head Start Parent Handbook



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# Head Start

Family Involvement... It's Important!

Generally, when you ask staff why they provide family involvement opportunities, they tell you, "because it's required. " That certainly is true. The Head Start Performance Standards require the provision of a variety of opportunities for family involvement at all program levels.

However, beyond regulations, the involvement of families can have a powerful impact on the child. Research suggests that parent? involvement in their children's education can result in a variety of positive outcomes including, greater interest in school, better attendance, enhanced teacher-child relationships, and increased self-esteem.

Nearly every teacher has used the phrase "the parent is the first and most important educator of their child. " If this statement is true, then we must recognize that developing and delivering appropriate strategies for supporting the and development of children cannot occur without parents being actively involved in the process and the program designed for their children. There is also evidence that indicates the greatest impact on a child's growth and development is not time spent in the classroom. but a Lifetime spent with their family. Head Start programs need families to be genuinely involved in order to provide appropriate education experiences and support tong-term positive outcomes for children.

The architects of Head Start knew that family involvement could provide valuable opportunities for family skill building and development as well. These visionaries believed that parents had a right to shape the direction of policies and practices that affected their lives, their children, 'their families, and their community. They purposefully designed a program that encouraged family participation and understood that program decisions would have greater legitimacy when made in collaboration with those served.

Family involvement in Head Start benefits the child, the family, and the program. However, family involvement can be challenging. Programs may find that they have great success with some family involvement activities and very little with others.

Factors haying to do with "Life," such as work, school, schedules, illness, disability, as well as family disruptions, such as divorce, separation, or death are mitigating circumstances that impact participation. Life stages, such as being a teen parent or a grandparent, and the combination of work and taking care of children, are among the variety of factors that influence and impede the family's ability to become involved in program activities.

To help agencies address both program and family challenges to involvement, here are some strategies to consider that may make your family involvement activities more appropriate, more responsive to families, and hopefully more successful.

Plan for Successful Family Involvement: Significant opportunities for family involvement do not "just happen. " When you talk to staff that consistently have Head Start successful family involvement within their program, they will tell you that it takes planning, time, and preparation.

Planning helps programs identify goats for family involvement and recognize the need to budget money and time for family activities. Planning helps staff think about whether to provide an activity to a large or small group, or as individuals to accommodate the needs of family members. Planning helps staff engage community partners to assist in family involvement opportunities and activities. By being truly thoughtful and carefully planning for family involvement opportunities, programs may be able to address some of their challenges.

Recognize Family Involvement as Everyone's Job: Family involvement is too big a task to Lay on any one employee. Family involvement is everyone's job and should be a part of every staff member's responsibility. Every interaction between staff and families can communicate and reinforce the importance of family involvement. Successful family involvement takes creativity, teamwork, and the skills of the entire Head Start staff.

Build Family Partnerships: The family partnership characterizes an on-going, evolving, and integrated relationship between staff and family. Building a family partnership is an interactive process that takes time. Getting to know your families welt and understanding their desires and challenges is important for successful family involvement.

Respect the "Uniqueness" of Each Family: Diversity. in family composition and lifestyle is common in today's world. In working with families, staff must move beyond a traditional definition of family to one that recognizes that each family is unique, and that a broad and inclusive definition of family embraces all family ties and variation in composition and Lifestyle. Respecting and responding to the cultures, religions, and preferences of Head Stan children and families supports successful family involvement.

Individualize Opportunities: Staff must recognize that there is no "cookie cutter approach" to working with families. Because the interests and needs of each family will vary, programs need to individualize family Involvement opportunities. An inviting and accessible opportunity or activity for one family may not be so for another. This means that programs must consider not only what opportunities to provide. but, also how to provide them.

Plan with Families: Being involved in the planning process creates a feeling ownership, builds a sense of pride supports family strengths, and encourages families to become more involved. Staff must give up

'control" and allow families to be actively involved in the planning and delivery of family involvement activities. Staff must work as partners with parents and provide guidance, support, and encouragement. Positively Reinforce Family Involvement: When families are involved in program activities, it is not only important for the experience to be positive, but also for staff to acknowledge and reinforce the participation of each family individually. Positive reinforcement encourages family involvement. Family Involvement

Parent Involvement

Parent Involvement is very important to Head Start. As a parent you are the most important person in your child's life. We encourage parents to try new activities and challenge themselves Head Stan offers four primary areas for the parent/guardian to participation:

* Parents join in making decisions process
* Parent participate in the classroom in the classroom as volunteers and observers • Parents participate in adult activities, which they have planned
* Parents, prime educators, work with their own children with the support of the Head start staff
* Parent/guardian can participate in our Male Involvement activities

We need your help in many areas of the program. Twenty percent (200 0) of the Head Stan grant must be matched in order to continue the program. this is made possible by parents volunteering in the classroom, attending workshop; attending monthly Parent events and sewing on different sub-committees. For each hour you volunteer, you are helping us match the mandated twenty percent (200 0).

Anemia Screening - (Hemoglobin)

Well-Child Health Care Fact Sheet

Dear Parent:

What is Anemia?

Our bodies need oxygen for energy and growth. Red blood cells, hemoglobin, and iron carry oxygen through the blood to the body. Anemia is when the body does not have enough red blood cells, iron or hemoglobin. It can slow a child's energy, growth, and development.

How' Do You Screen for Anemia?

Anemia screening is a blood test, usually a finger-prick, to check the amount of hemoglobin in the blood. It is done by a trained health professional at a clinic, doctor's office, health department, lab or Head Start. All Head Start children must have an annual anemia screening.

What Might I Observe?

Many children with anemia have no symptoms at all. You might notice:

* Pale skin.
* Tiredness.
* Lack of appetite.
* Frequent illness.
* Slow growth and development.

Follow-Up to Anemia Screening

If the screening is done at Head Start and it shows a hemoglobin level of 10.5 or below, the child will be referred to his/her primary health care provider for follow-up evaluation and treatment. The child's primary health care provider must fill out the back of the screening results form. The screening results form, completed by the child's primary health care provider must be returned to the Family Service Worker within one month from the date of the hemoglobin screening.

Causes of anemia might include:

* Not eating enough iron-rich foods.
* Drinking too much milk in place of iron-rich foods. • Sickle cell disease.
* Intestinal parasites.
* Lead poisoning.
* Severe illness.
* Loss of blood.

Treatment may include:

* Nutrition counseling and diet changes.
* Iron supplements or iron-enriched vitamins.
* Treatment of other conditions causing anemia.

Anemia can delay a child's growth and development Early diagnosis and treatment of anemia can help improve the child's health and development.

Dental Screening and Examination

Well-Child Health Care Fact Sheet

Dear Parent:

What is Dental Screening?

Dental screening is a quick cheek of a child's mouth to find out if he/she needs a prompt examination and treatment. It can be done by a dental professional or trained Head Start staff member or volunteer. All Head Start children need a complete dental examination.

What is the Dental Examination?

The dental examination is a full check-up by a dental professional. All Head Stan children are required to have yearly dental examinations.

It includes:

* Discussion of diet, blushing of teeth, use of bottles, and thumb-sucking.
* Examination of the mouth for tooth decay, bite, and gum infections. Dental equipment such as mouth minors, dental picks, and high intensity lights are used. X-rays may be taken.
* Information on good oral hygiene and nutrition.
* Fluoride may be applied to the child's teeth and/or prescribed in liquid or tablets to prevent tooth decay.

What Might I Observe?

* Mouth pain and sensitivity too hot, cold, or sweets. • Discolored, broken, or missing teeth.
* Red, swollen, or bleeding gums.
* Swollen face.
* Bad breath.

Follow-Up to Dental Screening.

If dental problems are found, the child needs follow-up evaluation and treatment by a dentist.

Treatment may include:

* Filling cavities, capping, or pulling teeth.
* Education on improved diet, bottle use, brushing of teeth, flossing, and fluoride
* Referral to an orthodontist or other specialist.

Dental problems can cause pain and difficulty eating and speaking. Treatment for dental problems can improve a child's health and well-being.

Vision Screening

Well-Child Health Care Fact Sheet

Dear Parent:

What is Vision Screening?

Vision screening cheeks how well a child can see and how well the eyes move together.

How is Vision Screening Done?

Vision screening is typically done during a well-child visit by a licensed medical professional. If a vision screening is not done during the well-child visit, children enrolled in Montgomery County Head Start will have a vision screening by a VNA-CS Registered Nurse.

Vision screening done by a VNA-CS Registered Nurse involves:

* Having the child identify letters shapes, or figures on a standard eye chart. • Observing the child's eye movements ("strabismus testing").
* Observing for other eye abnormalities (e.g., redness, swelling, discharge).

What Might I Observe?

* Eyes that cross or point outward.
* Frequent blinking, squinting, or rubbing eyes.
* Difficulty picking up small objects, catching balls, or seeing distant objects. • Holding books and objects unusually close.
* Short attention for visual activities.
* Frequent complaints of eye discomfort, headaches, or dizziness.

Follow-Up to Vision Screening A child "fails" the vision screening if:

* He she is unable to identify more than half the symbols on the 20/40 line.
* There is more than a two-line difference in vision between one eye and the other, even if the worse eye is 20 40 or better.

If a child "fails" the vision screening given by a VNA-CS Registered Nurse, the child will be referred to his/her primary health care provider for evaluation and treatment. The child's primary health care provider must fill out the back of the screening results form. The screening results form, completed by the child's primary health care provider, must be returned to the Family Service Worker within one month from the date of the vision screening. Children with eye infections should be retested after treatment. If a child "fails" the vision screening by his/her primary health care provider, the child may be referred to an optometrist or an ophthalmologist for further treatment.

Treatment may include:

* Antibiotics to treat eye infections.
* Eye patch.
* Eyeglasses.
* Eye muscle surgery.
* Special education or early intervention services.

Vision is important for development, physical activity, and social interactions. Early identification and treatment of vision problems can help promote a child's development.

Medical I Physical Examination

Well-Child Health Care Fact Sheet

Dear Parent:

What is the Medical Examination?

The medical examination is a thorough check-up of the child's overall health and development. It is done by a licensed physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant, All Head Stan children are required to have a yearly medical examination.

How is the Medical Examination Done?

The medical professional:

* Discusses with the parent the child's medical history, development, pertinent family history, and any special concerns. • Measures the child's height, weight, and head circumference (for infants). • Measures blood pressure with an ann cuff.
* Observes the child's appearance, behavior, speech, and motor skills.
* Examines the child closely from head to toe: skin, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth, heart, lungs, abdomen, genitalia, and limbs. • Conducts and/or assesses other screening tests (e.g., development, vision, hearing, hemoglobin, tuberculosis, urine).

What Might 1 Notice?

You might not notice any signs or symptoms, or you might notice a child who: • Appears pale, fatigued, feverish, or in pain.

* Coughs or has problems breathing.
* Has vomiting, diarrhea, or little appetite.
* Has difficulty doing things expected of most children at a given age.

Follow-Up to the Medical Examination.

If the medical examination identifies any problems, the health care provider might recommend further evaluation, treatment, and follow-up.

This might include:

* Laboratory tests or X-rays.
* Referral for evaluation by a health or educational specialist. • Medication or other therapy.
* Education and counseling for the family and staff.

The medical /physical examination assesses overall health and development. It can lead to early identification and treatment of health problems.

PREPARING CHILD FOR A VISIT TO THE PRIMARY CARE PROVIDER AND/OR DENTIST

Yearly physical and dental exams are required for all children attending Head Stan. You can prepare your child by explaining the purpose of the visit to your child. Explain to him/her that the visit is a well-child check in which the health care professional checks his/her growth and development. Explain that the health care professional examines him/her to make sure his/her body is healthy. Explain to your child that all children go to the health care professional for these visits.

Tell your child what to expect when he/she visits the health care professional. You can read a book to your child about going to the doctor or dentist. You can use a doll or a teddy bear to show your child how the health care professional will measure and weigh him/her. Explain how the health care professional will look in his/her mouth, look in his/her eyes and ears, and listen to his/her chest and back with a stethoscope. Explain that the health care professional may press on his/her tummy and listen and feel what's inside, may tap on his/her knee, and may look quickly to see that his/her "private area" is healthy. Above all be sure to let the child know that you are comfortable with what will happen to him/her while they visit the health care professional, and that you will be right there with him/her.

Tell your child what to expect when he/she visits the dentist. Explain how the dentist checks his/her teeth to see if they are healthy. Explain how the dentist will look into his/her mouth with a light and a mirror.

Head Staff's goal is to assure that your child is healthy and ready to learn. You will be asked to take your child for a physical and dental exam before school begins. Head Start staff can provide you with physical/dental forms for your health care professional to fill out.

Within 90 days of enrollment, each child enrolled in the Head Start program should have an up-to-date immunization record.

CARE OF CHILDREN WITH ILLNESS

The decision to phone a parent and ask them to have their ill child removed from the classroom is based on both the needs of the ill child and the need to protect the other children in the classroom from any exposure.

Parents will be phoned to pick up their child if:

* Fever of 101 degrees or above orally or 100 degrees or above under the arm
* Nausea, vomiting, loose or watery stools
* Unusual drowsiness or tiredness
* Sore throat, acute cold, persistent cough or earache
* Red inflamed eyes; any discharge from the eyes
* Swollen glands around jaws, ear or neck
* Suspected impetigo, skin sore oozing fluid or having an odor • Any symptoms suggesting an acute illness

Reason to keep a child home from school:

* Fever of 101 degrees or above orally or 100 degrees or above under the arm
* Nausea, vomiting, loose or watery stools
* Unusual drowsiness or tiredness
* Sore throat, acute cold, persistent cough or earache

. -Red inflamed eyes; any discharge from the eyes

* Swollen glands around jaws, ear or neck
* Suspected impetigo, head or body lice, skin sore oozing fluid or having an odor
* Any symptoms suggesting an acute illness

Release of-Children

Authorized Persons (must be at least 18 years of age)

You must provide us with the names of people who can bring your child to the Center in the morning and pick up your child at dismissal time We will release your child only to the person(s) you have listed. We may ask for photo identification, if we are unfamiliar with the adult, before your child is released.

Unauthorized Persons

In the event of an emergency, please notify the Center, by way of telephone or in writing, that an unauthorized person (someone whose name is not on our authorized list) will bringing/picking up your child. Photo identification will be requested and required.

We WILL NOT release your child, under any circumstances, if the procedure, outlined above, is not followed. This is for your child's safety.

Legal Documentation I Court Order

Copies of legal document (custody orders, PFA's) must be forwarded to the Center before any staff person can actively prevent non-custodial parents from picking up their child. It is your responsibility to inform us of any changes in the Court Order,

Sign-In/Sign-Out Procedure:

Care giving adults who bring the child to, or remove the child from, the facility will sign children in and out of the facility. This policy will be provided to families at the time of enrollment and will be strictly enforced.

Policy for Handling an Unauthorized Person Seeking Custody:

1. The head teacher will contact the custodial parent or legal guardian named on the Application for Child Care Services.
2. Telephone authorization to release a child to someone who does not usually pick up the child will be accepted only in concern with prior written authorization from the custodial parent or legal guardian for such an exceptional release. The staff person who accepts such authorization will call the previously documented phone number of the parent to view that the parent is activating a phone authorization for release of the child. The staff person will document the results of this call in the child's record, as well as the time and to whom the custodial parent or legal guardian gave telephone authorization for release of the child.
3. No child will be released without the presence or permission of the custodial parent or legal guardian.
4. Any authorized person who is not recognized by the staff will be required to provide photo identification such as a driver's license, work or school before the child is released. The custodial parent or legal guardian may provide a photograph of authorized persons for pick up of the child which will be kept in the child's record at the facility.
5. The director head teacher will notify the police if an unauthorized person seeks custody of the child Policy for Handling Persons Who May Pose a Safety Risk:
6. (Includes abusive parents or legal guardians and any adults who cannot take the child safely from the facility).
7. The child will not be released to anyone who cannot safely care for the child.
8. The director will notify the police by calling to manage an adult under the apparent influence of drugs/alcohol or an individual who poses a safety risk.
9. The director will contact the emergency contact person to make arrangements for the child's transport to a place of safety. If no one is available to care for the child, the director will contact child protective services for guidance.

# Communication with Parents

Head Staff: Teachers, Assistants and Family Service Workers will be available to answer questions or give parent support. Because teachers are busy with children at drop-off or pick-up time. please schedule an appointment if there are questions. Family service Workers are available during drop-off/pick-up times.

Notes and Flyers: These will be distributed many times during the year notifying families of activities, calendar and etc. Cheek the designated area in the classroom for information.

Newsletters: The I-lead Start Sites will publish a monthly newsletter with ideas to use with your child along with other useful information. All news, letters will include: Monthly menu calendar & Parent Committee minutes.

Parent Information Board: Cheek the board at your site for Head Stan news and other information such as:

* Community Agency information
* Job openings with the Head Start program

Home Visits: Classroom staff will manage for a home visit (2) times per year, once before the (l s) day of school and the (2') at the end of the school year. The purpose of the home visits is to ensure that the transition from home to school is a smooth one. The last home visit would be to share the progress the student had made throughout the entire year.

Parent/Classroom Team Conference: Conferences will be conducted (2) twice yearly, with the first accruing in October and the second taking place in February. At these conferences, the staff will share information pertaining to the progress of the students.

Hearing Parent/Community Concerns

If you are concerned that things are not going as well as you would like in the program there is a process called, Conflict Resolution, which is to be used to address your concern once the Conflict Resolution policy has been followed. Once you have addressed the concern and you are unable rectify the situation follow the Grievances System (Please follow the guidelines). Remember that your opinion and viewpoint is important and we would like to hear and give suggestions that might be help fill in improving the program.

All Staff/Parents in Head Start Facility Appropriate Behaviors

The following behaviors are considered appropriate for use by staff and parents in an HS facility

* A gentle hug, touch or pat on the back is considered acceptable physical contact with child

Explain what is expected of the child/adult, so that s/he can comply with adult's wishes Gently guide/lead child to area desire

* Speak in a normal tone of voice. If you are upset, explain the reason/s why. If you find yourself getting too upset, utilize the other adult(s) in the classroom Speak to child/ren or adult with respect and courtesy
* Establish eye contact; put your arm around child or place a hand gently on his/her back, shoulder or arm Gently escort or lead a child to a chair; explain what needs to be done.
* Time Out
* Time out means time out from POSITIVE REINFORCERS
* Child must sit no more than one minute per year of age (i.e. if child is four, time out may last no more than 4 minutes)
* Discuss why child is being sent to time out
* Discuss how offense could have been handled
* Use a timer to signal when time out is over

My signature below testifies to the fact that I have read and understand the above Policy. One copy will remain and one copy will be given to me.

Staff Signature Date

Parent SignatureDate\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Procedure for Extreme Behavior

In cases where the child's behavior becomes a danger to him/herself or to others, or is continually, excessively disruptive, specified actions must take place.

* Staff (teacher, Assistant Teacher or Family Service Worker) will separate the child from the environment in which Extreme Behavior is occurring
* Center staff will contact his/her Education Manager or the Early Intervention/Mental Health Specialist
* The Education Manager and/or EIAIHS will determine whether or not the child needs to go home
* Incidents will be documented; documentation will be on-going
* A staff member will contact the parent/guardian to come to temporarily remove the child from the school setting
* A parent/guardian (or someone on the child's emergency pick-up list) is expected to come for the child within 1 hour of the request being made by staff.
* Utilizing staff input, the Education Manager and/or the Early Intervention/Mental Health Specialist will determine whether a meeting with the parent/guardian is necessary prior to the child returning to school.

At a meeting, staff will:

* Discuss incidents regarding behaviors and recommend strategies for dealing with behaviors of child. Recommend return date at the meeting, staff may recommend: psychological referral to additional services from outside agencies for alternative placement.

When a child returns to school, his/her behavior will be monitored closely • Follow up meetings will be held as needed.

My signature below testifies to the fact that I have read and understand the above PAHS Policy One copy will remain with PAHS and one copy will be given to me.

Parent Signature Date

All Staff/Parents in HS Facility Inappropriate Behaviors

The following behaviors are considered inappropriate:

* Pulling at a child's arm, shoulders, clothing, etc., unless the child is immediate danger (i.e.: running into the street, standing under a falling tree, etc.)
* Loud, punitive voices, at anytime; a raised voice might be appropriate if the child is in immediate danger or about to cause a dangerous incident, including hitting another child with a heavy or dangerous object.
* Pushing/shoving a child to "make" him/her move or comply with adult's wishes
* Speaking sarcastically or down to a child (or another adult), which could create a lack of self esteem / worth
* Holding or squeezing a child's face or body by the fingers to ensure compliance • Pushing or roughly placing a child on a chair to comply

Possible Consequences: For HS Staff

* Receipt of warning, verbal or written • Loss of Pay  Child Abuse report
* Possible immediate termination

For Parents:

* Immediate request to leave the premises in an orderly manner; refusal to comply would result in contacting local authorities
* A meeting may be held prior to parent being permitted to return to the center, to discuss the incident; at that time, a determination would be made as to whether the adult would be allowed volunteer at the center again  Child Abuse report
* Possible denial of parent from entering the building
* The child would still be expected to come to school daily, with a responsible adult

My signature below testifies to the fact that I have read and understand the above PAHS Policy. One copy will remain with PAHS and one copy will be given to me.

Staff Signature Date

Parent Signature Date

Child Abuse Reporting

PA law encourages everyone to report suspicions of child abuse and neglect in order to protect children Certain professionals, including teachers, assistant teachers and others who, in the course of their profession, come in contact with children, MUST, by law, report suspicion of child abuse and neglect. They are called MANDATED REPORTERS. A mandated reporter's failure to report is a violation of the law.

As parents, you are notified at intake that we are mandated reporters, and that, as such, may find ourselves in a situation where we are, by law, required to report concerns to our MCHS designated reporter. This is someone who has had additional training in the field of mandated reporting. She is charged with calling all reports in to the PA Child Line in Harrisburg, at: 1-800-932-0318

Child Line will then contact the county Office of Children and Youth. This office has, as its main function, the protection of our children. They Will go to great lengths to work with families to help them understand the nature of the reported offense and ways to interact more appropriately and effectively with their children. The Office of Children and Youth, only as a last resort, will remove children from their homes. That is NOT their intended goal.

It is important to remember that you do not need proof of child abuse or neglect, but a suspicion of child abuse or neglect to make a report. We cannot make a report for you, but as parents, should you have suspicions of child abuse or neglect, feel free to contact Child Line on your own. Your name will not be given to the person you are reporting. If you make a report in good faith, even if the report is unfounded, you will not be in trouble.

We must all aim to err on the side of caution and protect our children!

Emergency Numbers:

Reporting child abuse neglect Child Line 1-800-932-0313

If you feel you are at risk of hutting your child Parent's Anonymous

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parents Anonymous | 1-800-448-4906 |
| Parent's Anonymous Web site | www.parentsanonymousofpa.orh |
| If you are a victim of domestic violence: | 911 |

Confidentiality

Parents are a part of the classroom team. Like Head Start staff, Head Start parents may not talk about Head Staff children or families or Head Start business or classroom incidents, including other children or other parents. A parent with a question or concern about a child, parent, or event should discuss it with the Head Start teacher and not with anyone else.

Staff/Children's health, education, and social service records are confidential and are open only to Head Start staff and consultants. Parents may not see Head Stan records for any child other than their own. Every classroom parent and interim will be required to sign our Confidentiality Statement form before visiting the classroom. A signature on the form indicates that the volunteer promises to keep confidential any information learned about Head Start children and families.

Safety

Program wide, each classroom implements these tree rules:

* We keep children safe
* We keep ourselves safe
* We keep the environment safe

## Family/Community Partnership Area

The primary role of the Family Services in Head Start is to offer families opportunities and support for growth. All families need support systems at various times in life Head Staff Family Service Worker staff is here to provide families with information about the Head Stan program and support services available in the community. The Family Service Workers will assist families in locating and securing needed services and to serve as advocates for Head Start and families.

Head Start Family Service Workers provide referral services to families.

These services include:

* Community Outreach
* Recruitment and Enrollment of Children
* Family Assessment
* Provide information About Available Community Resources  Referrals
* Emergency Assistance and for crisis intervention
* Assist the family to develop Family Partnership Agreement
* Follow-up
* Advocacy

The Family Serves area of Head Start serves as a link between the family, the programs and the community.

Family/Community Partnership Area

Parent Policy Council

The Policy Council is made up of parents of Head Stan students who are elected to the position by the other parents in each center. Each site shall elect (1) delegate and (1) alternate from their Parent

Committee. There shall also be representatives from the community. These should not exceed forty-nine percent (49%) of the total Policy Council.

The Policy Council shall:

1. Serve as a link between Head start and the community
2. Have the opportunity to initiate suggestions and ideas for program improvements, and to receive a report on action taken in regard to their recommendations
3. Plan, coordinate and organize activities for parents with assistance of staff
4. Recruit volunteer services from parents and community
5. Administer of the Parent Activity funds
6. All parents may attend Policy Council meetings, but only one (1) representative may vote
7. Approve/Disapprove all funding applications and amendments

Precious Angels Head Start

Duties of Officers - Systems

President

1. Keep meeting moving, keep speakers on topic.
2. Ensure that members understand what is going on.
3. Allow fill discussion so that people are clear about the issues.
4. Protect the minority. Allow someone to speak for the motion then alternate with
5. the person opposed to it.
6. Serve as a moderator. Only take sides to vote in case of a tie. This position
7. should not be used to push a particular position against the will of the group.
8. Policy Council Representative must give a monthly written report to go in the center newsletter. It should then be given to the classroom teacher.
9. Serve as the Parent Representative at the monthly team meeting. Team Meeting shall consist of the Teacher, Teacher Assistant, Family Service Worker, and Center Director.

Vice President

1. Substitute for the President when he she is absent.
2. Assist President when needed.

Treasurer

1. Keep accurate records, explain finances to parents and present a report each month.
2. Read reports of expenditures for approval.
3. Meet with the Family Service Worker to do monthly bank reconciliation.

Secretary

1. Take minutes of the meeting and prepare them for presentation.

2.

1. Follow agenda, write down and read motion when needed.
2. Record all votes and summarize all reports briefly each month.

Your duties are, but not limited to, those listed above and you may be called upon to perform additional duties.

Attendance/Lateness Policy

It is very important that your child attend class everyday possible. It is just as important that he she gets to school on time and that you pick your child up on time. Please see the Teachers/FSW for this information and read the notices you get for other information. A calendar and newsletter will be sent home every month noting special trips, class projects and possible school closings.

### Absences

You must send a note whenever your child is absent for any reason. It must be given to the Teacher/FSW the day the child returns to school. You must also call the classroom by 8:45 am to inform the Teacher/FSW that your child will be absent. For illnesses that may result in absences lasting more than one day, informs the Teacher/FSW of his/her possible return date.

Please note the following policy:

### Excused Absences

The following are examples of excused absences:

1. Illness, cold, flue, etc.
2. A child is hospitalized
3. A child is incapacitated due to a serious illness or injuries.
4. A child contracts a communicable disease. (Must have doctor's note to return)
5. A child has other health ailments which temporarily prevents attendance.
6. There is a death in child's family.
7. A child cannot attend class because he she has to receive medical treatment or therapy at the time when the class is being held.
8. The child's attendance is affected by temporary family situations.
9. Transportation problems - temporary.

### Excused Lateness

1. Car trouble
2. Family emergency
3. Occasional over sleeping
4. Doctor's appointment

Classroom starting times vary in all Head Start classrooms. There is a 15-minute grace period each day. You must follow the procedure outlined above. If the procedure is not followed, the classroom staff has the discretion not to accept any child, with the approval of the immediate supervisor. Keep in mind we are preparing you and your child to go to public school which has a specific arrival time.

### Important

After four days of consecutive absence due to illness, a doctor's note is strongly preferred permitting the child's return to school. In the event the child is not seen by a Doctor, he/she must have a note from parent guardian.

#### Unexcused Absences

An unexcused absence means an absence for any reason where there is no written excuse as to why a child was not at the Head Start center. Head Start regulations say we must have 85 0 0 attendance every day. If your child is not in school on a regular basis, the following will apply:

a. FIRST WARNING WILL BE ISSUED TO PARENTS:

1. After 5 calendar days of unexcused absence a written warning will be issued to parents.
2. Parents must attend a meeting with classroom Teacher FSW.
3. Child will be placed on probation for 30 days with attendance closely monitored by classroom staff.

b. SECOND WARNING/POSSIBLE TERMINATION WILL BE ISSUED TO PARENTS WHEN :

1. Parents fail to upgrade the child's attendance during the probation period 30 days. 2. Parents will be notified in writing that their child has been formally dropped due to poor attendance.

1. Child's slot will be filled immediately following termination date.
2. A waiting list of eligible children is maintained by your center for this purpose.

#### Unexcused Lateness

1. If a parent does not call in by 8:45 am, child may be sent back home with parent and is considered absent that day.
2. For chronic lateness:
	1. Verbal warning
	2. Home Visit completed by 2 staff members
	3. Written warning
	4. Termination letter

A home visit will be conducted by the Family Service Worker after 3 days of absent within that month. I understand the Attendance/Lateness Procedures.

Parent or Guardian Signature Date



# My Rights as a Head Start Parent

1. To Be Recognized as my child's primary educator and as such make decisions regarding his/her education. To Be Welcomed in the classroom anytime.
2. To Help Develop parent programs that will improve daily living for my family and me.
3. To Decide how I will participate in the head Stan program.
4. To Be Informed regularly about my child's progress in Head Stan.
5. To Expect guidance for my child from Head Start teacher and staff that will help his/her total individual development.
6. To Be Able to learn about the operation of the Head Stan program, including the level of education and experience required to fill various positions.
7. To Be Informed about all community resources concerned with employment, health, education and the improvement of family life.
8. To Be Treated with respect by staff and other parents.
9. To Express my concerns by following the Conflict Resolution Procedure
10. To Share my culture in developmentally appropriate ways.
11. My Responsibilities as a Head Start Parent
12. To Follow Head Start procedures and have my child dropped off and picked up at assigned times.

To Set a pattern of regular school attendance and bling my child to school every day.

1. To Accept Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and the lives of my children.
2. To Take Part in the classroom as an observer, a volunteer worker and to contribute my services in whatever way can toward enrichment of the total program.
3. To Provide parent support and encourage others in a cooperative way. To Work with the teachers, staff and others in cooperative ways.
4. To Guide my child with love and respect
5. To Take Advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge.
6. To Become Involved in community programs that help to improve health, education and recreation for all. To Show respect and courtesy to staff members and other parents.
7. To Participate in parent meetings and to be informed about activities in the classroom.
8. To Attend volunteer training and follow the procedures outlined.
9. To Obtain Head Start health requirements from child, which include: TB test, physical.

PERSON(S) TO WHOM CHILD MAY BE RELEASED



Head Start Parent/Community Grievance Procedure Form

Person filing the complaint Date

Name:

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_City State Zip:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:

Center:

Details of complaint:

|  |
| --- |
| To: All ParentsFrom: Director of Operations Subject: Food ProgramEffective Date: September 01, 2017 Due to children with allergies Precious Angels will no longer be able to allow outside food. We offer children Breakfast, lunch, and a snack daily. Children do NOT need to bring outside food for any meals. Water is available all day long. Breakfast is over at 8:30 daily. If you are going to be late Please feed your child (ren) at home or on the way so no outside food will be brought into the center. Please put away all outside food before entering the center. We appreciate your help in keeping our center in compliance with the new state guidelines.We are encouraging the children to make great choices with eating nutritional snacks. If you would like to celebrate your child’s birthday with classmates please provide a healthy snack, for Example a fresh fruit tray purchased at the grocery store. Birthday celebrations will be celebrated on the last Friday of each month for all children whose birthday fall in that month. If you feel the need to bring cupcakes, please make sure it is store brought with the label of ingredient from a peanut free factory. If you need suggestions about a healthy celebration, please ask the teacher for a handout with current suggestions.Thank you,Lawrence FaisonDirector of Operations |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Parent Signature | Date |

*By my signature I acknowledge receipt of this document*