

# Lynchburg Community Action Group, Inc.



## Head Start Program

Parent Handbook  
2023- 2024 SCHOOL YEAR

### HEAD START CENTER LOCATIONS

<b>AMHERST ELEMENTARY</b> 156 Davis Street Amherst, VA 24521	<b>BEDFORD</b> 1364 American Way Bedford, VA 24523 (540) 660-9843
<b>BIG ISLAND</b> 1114 Schooldays Road Big Island, VA 24526	<b>MADISON HEIGHTS</b> 287 Learning Lane Madison Heights, VA 24572 (434) 610-6296
<b>LYNCHBURG</b> 701 Thomas Road Lynchburg, VA 24502 (434) 660-9256	<b>STEWARTSVILLE</b> 1138 Wild Cat Road Goodview, VA 24095 (540) 874-3666

*"Teaching Children-Reaching Families"*  
Stanley Cobbs, Executive Director





# **Parents & Guardians**

We encourage you, your family members, and friends to visit your child's Head Start Center at any time. You are always welcome! Please remember to sign in at the main office.

**Thank You!**

# Mission Statement

*Lyn-CAG Head Start Program is in the business of shaping and preparing today's children to succeed in tomorrow's world. All participating children will enter school ready to learn and will become successful learners. We will accomplish this mission one child and one family at a time. Provided services will be of the highest quality and will be modified constantly to meet the needs of the families we serve. The Lyn-CAG Head Start Program will be part of a comprehensive system of integrated community services for young children in our service areas. We value families and children in all we do.*

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**Lyn-CAG Head Start Telephone Numbers**

701 Thomas Road, Lynchburg, VA 24502

(434) 849-7542

**PHONE NUMBER**

Executive Director	(434) 846-3174
Chief Financial Officer	(434) 846-3174 ext.203
Practice-Based Coach	(434) 849-7542
Ramp Site Supervisor	(434) 849-7542
Education Administrator	(434) 849-7542 ext. 109
Nutrition & Health	(434) 665-6727
Enrollment	(434) 849-7542 ext. 108
Senior Family Advocate	(434) 849-7542 ext. 111
Data Input	(434) 849-7542 ext. 112
Parent & Family Engagement	(434) 849-7542 ext. 115
Program Fidelity	(434) 849-7542 ext. 117

# **CHILD DAY PROGRAMS LICENSING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS**

The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child day programs that assume the responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exemptions to licensure, licensed programs include child day centers, family day homes, child day center systems, and family day systems the state may also voluntarily register family day homes that are not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child day centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, child per staff ratios, equipment, and record keeping. Criminal record checks and specific qualifications for staff and most volunteers working directly with the children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff within the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program that will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licenses may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license can be issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operating without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor. Which, upon conviction, can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation?

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child day programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you or email – [www.dssvirginia.gov](http://www.dssvirginia.gov).

**Piedmont Regional Office**  
Commonwealth of Virginia Building  
210 Church Street, SW  
Roanoke, VA 24011-1779  
(540) 857-7971

## **THE PURPOSE OF THE LYNCHBURG COMMUNITY ACTION GROUP HEAD START PROGRAM**

Our purpose is to provide enriching educational, health, and social experiences for preschool children, primarily for low-income families. This will prepare them for entry into the public school systems.

Two collateral purposes are to provide related parent involvement and family learning experiences as well as learning opportunities for Head Start parents. The entire community benefits from the developmental experiences provided by our agency.

Lynchburg Community Action Group, (**Lyn-CAG**) Head Start Program's philosophy is based on the premise that all children share certain needs and those children from low-income families, in particular, can benefit from a comprehensive developmental program designed to meet those needs.

All of our centers provide a broad range of services that include preschool readiness instruction, medical/dental care, nutrition, parent involvement, and family services. These services are offered to all of the enrolled children and their families.



## **Introduction to Head Start**

Let us give your child a “Head Start”. The value of the Head Start Program for your child will depend on your involvement in the program. The way a child grows and learns depends on the support, help, and understanding of his/her family.

At Head Start, we have strict guidelines, which we must follow. These guidelines ensure that your child receives the quality of service that he/she deserves. Our Performance Standards outline what the Head Start Program will provide for your child. Our Licensing Standards ensure that your child is in a safe and healthy environment. During orientation, you are given copies of important papers and a copy of this Parent Handbook to help you understand the operations of our program better. It is very important that you read the papers and this book thoroughly.

If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, feel free to contact us. We are always looking for ways to serve you better along with ways of improving our Head Start Program.

**Remember: the Head Start Program exists to assist you with the development of your child. Without your help, our results will be limited. So get involved and give your child a “HEAD START” in life!**

## **Head Start’s Funding Source**

Head Start’s main funding source is the Department of Health and Human Services. Our Regional Office is located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Funds are also received from United Way of Central Virginia. Services that are provided to you and your child are free including enrollment into the Head Start Program.

## **Learning Environment/Center Based**

We provide a rich learning environment with curricula that are developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible daily routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

## **Home-Based Education**

Children enrolled in our Home-based education will receive the same services as the children in our Head Start program. Our Mobile classrooms will offer math, science, literacy skills, parent engagement, social and emotional skills, physical education, music, and art. Teachers will work with your child each week to help prepare them for kindergarten in their own community. This new hybrid classroom design will combine home-based visitation with classroom instruction through a brand-new design.

## Center Closing Dates

1. For those Head Start Centers that are housed on the premises of the school system, whenever the schools are closed due to inclement weather, Head Start Centers will be closed also.
2. The Head Start Centers will be closed on the dates indicated on the Yearly Calendar unless otherwise indicated on the Monthly Calendar.
3. All Head Start Centers will be closed for the following holidays:
  - New Year's Day
  - Martin Luther King Jr's Birthday (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in January)
  - Presidents Day
  - Good Friday and the Monday after Easter
  - Spring Break (when school systems are closed)
  - Memorial Day
  - Columbus Day
  - Veteran's Day
  - The day before, Thanksgiving Day, and the Friday after
  - Christmas Day
  - Winter Break (when the school systems are closed)
  - **As a reminder of school closing dates, a Monthly Calendar will be sent home.**

## **Enrollment of your Child into Head Start**

The Head Start Program will provide your child with the opportunity to learn and socialize with children of the same age group. Interacting with children within the same age range allows him/her to develop the necessary understanding of how to establish meaningful relationships with peers and family members.

Each class is designed with an atmosphere best conducive to nurturing, growing, and learning so that the transition into the public school system is easily accomplished. Your child will learn at his/her own pace through hands-on experiences.

What you and your child get out of Head Start is how much time you invest in your child's Head Start experience. As a parent, you are a very important part of your child's learning experience. By taking an active role in your child's education, you can help him/her grow. We invite you to visit or volunteer in your child's classroom at any time. We would like to encourage you to become a paid employee of the Head Start Program by signing up to become a substitute or apply for a position in the Head Start Program when positions become available.

We provide services to 290 children ages three and four throughout Amherst County, Lynchburg City, and Bedford County.

In Lynchburg, we operate on Thomas Rd. The center operates on the same school calendar as the Lynchburg School system.

The Bedford County Head Start Centers are located at American Way Court, Big Island Elementary, and Stewartsville Elementary. The centers operate on the same school calendar schedule as the Bedford County School system.

Amherst County Head Start Centers are located on the school premises of Amherst Elementary and Madison Heights Elementary. Amherst County Head Start Centers operate on the same school calendar schedule as the Amherst County School system.

All of the Head Start Centers operate 5 days per week. A monthly calendar will be sent to you informing you of each center's openings and closings. Parents provide transportation to all Head Start Centers.

**Enrollment and re-enrollment**

A Head Start grantee must maintain its funded enrollment of 290 children. When a program determines that a vacancy exists, no more than 30 calendar days may elapse before the vacancy is filled.

**Hours of Operation by Center****AM & PM Departure Times**

<b>Center</b>	<b>Hours of Operation</b>	<b>AM Arrival</b>	<b>PM Departure</b>
Amherst Elementary	7:30 – 3:00	7:30-8:00	2:30
Bedford	7:30-3:00	7:30-8:00	2:45
Big Island	7:45-2:45	7:45-8:00	2:35
Madison Heights	7:30 – 3:00	7:30-8:00	2:30
Stewartsville	7:45-2:45	7:45-8:00	2:35
Thomas Rd (Even numbers 20 & 40)	7:30-3:00	7:30-8:00	3:00
Thomas Rd (Odd numbers 10 & 30)	8:00-3:30	8:00-8:30	3:30

**TRANSFERRING OF STUDENTS**

Students can only be transferred to another center if space is available in that center.

**ELIGIBILITY POLICY**

**Related Performance Standard:** Section1302.12

**Performances Objective:** The program determines, verifies, and documents eligibility in accordance with the regulations.

### **Determining, Verifying, and Documenting Eligibility**

Intake Coordinator must conduct an in-person application interview with each family, unless impossible or not convenient for the family. In which they can interview the family over the phone.

Staff must verify county residency, age, and eligibility.

Intake Coordinator must file a signed copy of the **Verification of Eligibility Form** to indicate they have examined all forms of income and have confirmed the child's eligibility.

Enrollment must enter the child/family onto the appropriate waiting list(s) requested by the family within 2 business days of receiving all required application documentation.

### **Age Requirements**

For Head Start, a Child must be at least three years of age or, turn three years old by September 30, the date used to determine eligibility for public schools in the community and be no older than the age required to attend school.

Enrollment must confirm the child's age eligibility by obtaining a copy of the child's official birth record or birth certificate, official medical forms such as immunization records, health insurance card, or physical. The program cannot require families to provide documents that confirm a child's age if doing so creates a barrier for the family to enroll the child. If the family does not have immediate access to a birth certificate or birth record, staff will assist the family in obtaining such records.

### **Eligibility Requirements**

A child is eligible if:

1. The family's income is equal to or below the federal poverty line; or
2. The family is eligible for or, in the absence of childcare, would be potentially eligible for public assistance; including TANF, SNAP & SSI benefits; or
3. The child is homeless; or
4. The child is in foster care.

If a family does not meet a criterion listed above, the program may enroll a child who will benefit from services, provided that the participants only make up to 10% of the program's actual enrollment. At the time that the program reaches its 10% over-income limitation, the program will evaluate whether or not to implement the 101-130% allowance as described below.

### **101-130% Allowance**

A program may enroll an additional 35 percent of participants whose family's incomes are 101-130% of the federal poverty guidelines if the program:

1. Priority is placed for children to remain in Head Start until they are eligible for kindergarten. First-year Head Start children are rolled over from their initial year to the current program year.
2. Head start selections are made based on selection criteria points (highest) determined at the family's initial application meeting. Once the program has reached its 10% over income limitation, the program will consider using the 101-130% allowance and will continue selections based on the new allowance. After the program has reached its 10% over income allowance, over income children will not be eligible for enrollment.

## **EDUCATION SERVICE AREA**

The Education Service Area is designed to meet your child's individual needs. Our educational goal is to help your child gain the skills and confidence necessary to be prepared to succeed in their environment, in school, and later in life. To help reach this goal, a safe, healthy, and inviting classroom with a variety of materials and activities are provided.

Your child will be screened and assessed within 45 days of enrollment in the program. The assessment, Teaching Strategies Gold (TSG) determines strengths and developmental goals for your child. The screening (LAP-D and ASQ:SE) will determine if your child may need to be referred for further testing by an outside source. The teachers will share the results of these findings with you, and together, you will develop an Individual Development Plan (IDP) for your child. All children will be assessed on readiness skills using the VLP, EMAS, CRES, and the VKRP.

## **HOME VISITS**

Teachers will make two home visits per year. The first one will be prior to your child's first day in school and the second prior to the end of school. The purpose of the first home visit is for the teacher and you to become acquainted. Teachers

will share information about the program and goals for your child. At the second home visit, teachers and parents can share accomplishments. If your child will be enrolling in kindergarten the following year, you will be provided with suggestions to continue growth during the transition period between Head Start and public school.

## **PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent/Teacher conferences are conducted twice during the school year. These conferences will provide you with the opportunity to discuss your child's progress and any concerns you might have. Notices will be sent home to you when conferences are scheduled. We strongly encourage you to attend and learn more about your child's development and progress.

## **SAMPLE DAILY SCHEDULE**

(This is a sample daily schedule. All classrooms have their own schedule)

7:30-7:45	Children arrive/ Health Inspection
7:45-8:00	Bathroom & Wash Hands
8:00-8:30	Breakfast
8:30-8:45	Bathroom & Wash Hands/ Brush Teeth
8:45-9:00	Circle Time/Large Group/ Story Time
9:00-9:45	Center Time/Small Groups
9:45-10:30	Outdoor Play
10:30-10:45	Bathroom & Wash Hands
10:45-11:15	Lunch
11:15-11:30	Bathroom & Wash Hands
11:30-12:45	Naptime
12:45-1:00	Bathroom & Wash Hands
1:00-1:20	Snack
1:20 -1:30	Bathroom & Wash Hands
1:30-2:00	Small Groups/Journals
2:00-2:30	Outdoor Play
2:30-2:45	Bathroom and Wash Hands
2:45-3:00	Children Depart

## **MONTHLY COMMUNICATION**

Monthly communications are sent home at the end of each month. These communications will inform you of the skills your child has been working to accomplish during large group and small group times and individually with the



teacher. These monthly communications will summarize the events of the previous month, what is planned for the current month and will note your child's individual progress. If you have questions about your child's progress, please contact your child's teacher and schedule a time when the teacher is not actively involved with the children.

## **Dress Code for Head Start Children**

To promote an orderly and safe learning environment while preparing students for success in school, dress guidelines have been established. Head Start parents are expected to pay special attention to the Head Start child's cleanliness and to dress the child appropriately for school. As the parent, you are asked and expected to dress the Head Start child appropriately according to the weather. The most appropriate dress for a Head Start child is jeans/pants, a top/shirt, and tennis shoes. All footwear must have closed-toe shoes. No sandals or flip-flops are allowed for safety purposes. Please keep in mind children will get dirty from a variety of items (paint, glue, dirt, etc.) Dress them with this in mind.

## **Dress Code for Head Start Parents**

When visiting your child's Center, we are asking parents to follow the following dress code.

### **Women**

- Your dress must be appropriate and not disruptive. Administrators will determine the appropriateness of your dress on Head Start's premises. If you are not dressed according to Head Start's dress code listed below and your dress is distracting and revealing too much of your body or undergarments, you will be asked to leave the premises.
- Women's necklines on their tops shall be modest, not revealing, and shall come within three (3) inches of the lower part of the collar bone.
- Your top should cover the mid-section and your back at all times. Including when you are standing and or sitting.
- The following tops are inappropriate:
  - Tops with large arm holes such as tank tops, basketball jerseys, mesh shirts, athletic undershirts, and cut-out shirts-these types of shirts may be worn over a shirt with sleeves.
- Tops that reveal lingerie

- Belly shirts
- Women are not to wear their pants sagging.
- Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses shall come to within 5 inches of the top of the knee when standing.
- Slits, splits, cuts, and holes in clothing shall not exceed 5 inches above the top of the knee.
- Lingerie should not be worn as dress clothes on Head Start’s premises.

## Men

Men must also abide by the Head Start Adult dress code.

- Shirts must be worn on Head Start premises at all times.
- If a T-shirt is worn, there should be no tobacco products, alcoholic beverages, or drug paraphernalia logos on the shirt.
- Sagging of pants will be prohibited on Head Start premises. At no time should staff, children, or other parents be able to see your undergarments.

## Dispositions:

- Parents will be contacted by phone, mail, text, or email.

## **Student Dress Code at Special Activities**

Administrators may suspend portions of the dress code and allow students to wear other appropriate attire at special activities. Such activities include but are not limited to field days, field trips, athletic and physical education. Administrators may also declare certain school days as “theme” days and suspend portions of the dress code at their discretion.

**\*\*\*Administrators have the authority to determine the appropriateness of any apparel or accessory. \*\*\***

## **Reminders to Parents**

- Dress your child appropriately for the weather. If the weather is cold or cool, your child should wear long-sleeved shirts or a sweater and long pants. Some children have to go from one building to another for breakfast and lunch.

- The most appropriate type of shoes for children to wear is rubber-soled sneakers/tennis shoes or other athletic footwear. **This policy will be strictly enforced.**
- Do not allow your child to bring toys, money, or food to school.
- Each morning before the child leaves for Head Start, check his/her backpack.
- When your child's class is going on a field trip, you will be notified in advance. The notice will inform you of where your child will be going and other pertinent information.
- **Read all papers sent home with your child.** Some may need your signature or may need you to provide us with some time-sensitive information.
- However, children should bring a sheet to cover the mat and a blanket to leave at the Head Start Center for naptime. If you choose to send a pillow, a pillowcase must be on the pillow. Please do not send stuff toys.
- All children need an extra set of clothes at the center in case of an accident. Place an extra set of labeled clothes in a plastic bag and put your child's name on the bag. When the seasons change, replace the extra set of clothes with weather appropriate clothes.
- At the end of the school year, your child's class may have a fun day celebration. Certificates will be awarded to your child during the celebration.
- Head Start children may not be photographed or videotaped without written consent from the parents.

## **HELPING YOUR CHILD LEARN AT HOME**

Your child's experiences at home are just as important as learning at Head Start. You can help your child develop curiosity, self-confidence, and enjoyment of learning by simply practicing a few healthy habits at home.

- Talking to your child and encouraging him/her to talk to you. Look at your child and show an interest in what they are saying. Get on eye level with your child, he/she will know you are interested and they will listen better.
- Get involved in your child's education, and set up an appointment with your child's teacher to discuss his/her progress and developmental needs. Ask for suggestions and activities that you can do at home.
- Work together on your child's homework calendar and return it to his/her teacher.
- Help your child plant a seed, water it and watch it grow.

- Be very patient, young children often need new ideas and concepts repeated to them many times.
- Teach your child to say his/her name, age, and address.
- Teach your child about responsibility by giving him/her small “jobs”
- Encourage your older children to help with your preschooler.
- Use old magazines to teach the names of animals, foods, and other objects.
- Teach your child to wash his/her hands before & after meals and after using the toilet and teach them to brush their teeth after meals. These are important, healthy habits that your child will be practicing at Head Start.
- Encourage your child to color, draw and tell you about their picture.
- Sing simple songs/nursery rhymes with your child.
- Remind your child to use his/her manners.
- Provide a time to read and talk about the stories read with your child.
- Remember to always praise your child. This helps your child build self-esteem and confidence. By saying, “I like it when you set the table”, you will be encouraging your child to succeed and try new things.

## **GET INVOLVED IN YOUR CHILD’S EDUCATION**

You can contribute a great deal to your child’s education and be a helpful resource to our program by:

- Visiting your child at the center and volunteering with the classroom activities.
- Helping teachers implement the lesson plans.
- Attending Parent Committee Meetings.
- Providing feedback to the staff about the program and program activities.
- Working with your child at home to enhance the skills learned at school.

# **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

## **PURPOSE**

Lyn-CAG Head Start Program set forth policies to guide staff members in the discipline of children enrolled in our program.

## **DEFINITION**

Discipline is the helpful guidance, encouragement, and support that caregivers use to influence children as they learn and grow. Discipline is more than punishment, obedience, control, and instruction. It is a way of helping children to learn the appropriate skills that they need to get along with others and develop self-control. Behavioral guidance shall be constructive in nature, age, and stage appropriate, and shall be intended to redirect children to appropriate behavior and resolve conflicts.

## **POLICIES**

- Children may be removed from a group (i.e. time-out) but must remain facing classroom activities and within sight and sound of staff at all times. Isolation in which the child is left unattended is forbidden.
- Withholding or forcing of food or rest is forbidden.
- Detention of children in the classroom when other children go outside for activities is minimal.
- Physical punishment is forbidden. This includes striking a child, roughly handling or shaking a child, restricting movement through binding or tying, forcing a child to assume an uncomfortable position, exercise as punishment, jerking, pulling hair or arms, pinching, shoving, spanking, etc.
- Verbal remarks, which are demeaning to the child, are forbidden. This includes abusive language, yelling, screaming, sarcasm, teasing, shouting, nagging, belittling, and embarrassing or threatening remarks.
- Enclosure in a small confined space or any space that the child cannot freely exit himself is forbidden. This does not apply to the safety gates when used with preschool-age children for their intended purpose.
- Punishment for toileting accidents is forbidden.

- Punishment by another child is forbidden.
- Punishment by applying unpleasant or harmful substances is forbidden.

Teachers are to set limits that will reflect realistic expectations for the age and development of each child.

## **SPECIFIC BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES**

- Children are not allowed to climb on the furniture. Adults should refrain from sitting on tables, cubbies, cabinets, etc. Set good examples for the children to follow.
- Running in the room or hallways is not allowed.
- When eating, children are to remain seated until they are finished.
- Guns or other weapons such as knives are not allowed at the centers or on the buses. If a look-alike toy is brought to the school, the parent will be asked to come pick it up. Children may not pretend to use guns or knives at any time.
- Children may not spit, hit, kick, or otherwise hurt others. Threatening behavior or words directed towards other children or Head Start staff will result in a staff member contacting the parent.
- Children will not be allowed in areas where they cannot be observed by the staff.
- Children may not leave the playground or go outside of the fence for any reason without an adult.
- Toys should not be thrown or pushed down the slide or from any other piece of equipment.
- Rough pushing, shoving, or wrestling on the playground or on the playground equipment is not allowed. Teachers and aides will supervise all areas of the playground and playground equipment.
- Children may not climb on the fences.
- Children may not run into the parking lot, even to greet their parents. Children should wait inside the building or on the playground until a parent picks them up.
- Rulers and yardsticks are not to be used in the centers for behavior management purposes.
- Children are expected to comply with directions when asked. Directions will reflect realistic expectations for the age and development of each child.

## **BITING POLICY**

Some toddlers go through a “biting stage”. This is a very normal, although undesirable, developmental process. Teachers try to eliminate the biting before it occurs through close supervision of the children. If a child does bite, we remove him/her from the other children for a short time and tell the child “no biting” or “biting hurts”.

In order to protect the rights and privacy of **all** children, we will not release information to any parent regarding the identity of a child in a biting incident. We will advise you of your child’s involvement in such an incident through a standard accident report. Please do not ask our staff to violate another child’s right of privacy by asking who bit your child, or who your child bit.

Lyn-CAG Head Start Program may consider dismissal of children who become habitual biters and may present a direct threat to the safety of other children and staff. Lyn-CAG Head Start Program will carefully consider each situation and determine if dismissal would violate the child’s rights. While we understand that a biting incident may have been traumatic for you and your child, Lyn-CAG will not acquiesce to your demand of dismissing a biter.

## **BEHAVIOR POLICY**

All children have periods where their behavior is not appropriate for a classroom setting. Teachers attempt to deal with behavior problems by utilizing standard acceptable practices in early childhood education settings. You will be informed if your child’s behavior becomes problematic by the education staff. They will offer suggestions to you for methods of correction for undesirable behavior. On occasion, the child’s behavior may require that classroom service privileges be affected.

Lyn-CAG Head Start Program may consider suspension of children who present a direct threat to the safety of themselves or other children and staff. However,

some children may not be dismissed from the program even when their behavior is undesirable due to the child's legal rights. Lyn-CAG Head Start Program carefully considers each situation to determine if the dismissal would violate the child's rights. Your child may be affected by the behavior of another child and the staff will inform you of any incident or injury.

## **HEALTH SERVICE AREA**

The Head Start Program provides comprehensive healthcare services to all enrolled children. These services include medical, dental, mental health, nutrition, speech, vision, and hearing screenings to promote preventative health services and early intervention. We help to provide knowledge of services and skills necessary to parents allowing them to continue the comprehensive care of their children during their enrollment in Head Start and after they leave the program.

- Children entering the Head Start Program for the first time may be accepted, but may not begin the Program until an up-to-date immunization record is submitted and approved. For any child that does not have a completed immunization record, the parents will be notified.
- Each child is required to have a complete and up-to-date physical examination within 30 calendar days of enrollment. Any child that has not submitted a complete and up-to-date physical to the enrollment team member within 30 days will be excluded from school until the complete and up-to-date physical is turned in to Enrollment. The physical submitted must not be more than 1 year old at the enrollment start date.
- Vision, speech, hearing screenings, and growth assessments will be done on each Head Start child. Treatment, follow-up, and referrals will be given if necessary.
- If your child has medication allergies, it must be reported to your Family Advocate and the child's teacher.
- You will be asked to sign a release form allowing the Head Start staff to take action in a medical emergency.



## HEAD START HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

**After admission into the Head Start Program, the following health policies will apply:**

- To ensure the health and safety of all children and staff, each child will be inspected daily by the teacher upon arrival. Before being admitted to the group, the teacher will look for the following: **fever, open wounds, vomiting, diarrhea, rashes, symptoms of pink eye, ringworm, head lice, sore or red throat, coughing, any type of lesions or blisters, unusual fatigue, irritability, or listlessness.**
- If you as a parent notice any of these symptoms in the morning, please do not bring or send your child to school that day. If these symptoms are noticed by your child's teacher, you will be asked to pick your child up immediately.

**If your child is sent home due to the following:**

- **Fever**  
Your child can return to school when he/she is fever-free for over **24 hours** and that's **fever-free** without the use of medication (Tylenol or Ibuprofen).
- **Vomiting**  
Your child can return to school after **24 hours free** of symptoms.
- **Head Lice**  
Head Start has a "No Nit" policy that indicates any child found to have head lice or their nits (eggs) will be excluded from the classroom until proper shampooing has been done and nits removed. Please be sure to have removed all "Nits" from your child's hair, if your child is brought back to school and he/she is determined to still have "Nits" the child will be sent home.

If your child is sent home with symptoms that could be contagious to other children or symptoms of any communicable diseases such as but not limited to: Diarrhea, Rashes, Pinkeye, Ring Worm, Sore or Red Throat, Whooping Cough, Lesions or Blisters, Unusual Fatigue.

**YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO TAKE YOUR CHILD TO THE DOCTOR AND BRING A DOCTOR'S NOTE TO THE SCHOOL ALLOWING YOUR CHILD TO RETURN.**

To help control communicable diseases, there are certain policies and procedures that are set by the Virginia Department of Health and the Center for Disease Control. Head Start will enforce these policies and procedures.

- If your child has been knowingly exposed to any communicable disease, you must notify the Health Specialist, your Family Advocate, and your child's teacher. You must include what disease your child was exposed to and how your child was exposed to the disease.
- **Based on the Virginia Department of Health School Safety guidelines, a child thought to have or have been exposed to any communicable disease must be diagnosed, treated, and cleared by a Physician before returning to school. A doctor's note must be brought in giving the diagnosis and return to school date. Even if the diagnosis is NOT a communicable disease, we must have documentation of this as well.**
- If a documented case of a communicable disease occurs at your child's center, you as a parent will be notified of POSSIBLE exposure. The notice will include the signs and symptoms to look for in your child of the specified disease.

## **HEALTH SERVICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Head Start Program has a Health Service Advisory Committee that will meet as necessary during the program year. This committee is comprised of Head Start parents, Professionals, Head Start staff, and other volunteers from the community. The Health Service Advisory Committee gives the Head Start Program advice on addressing program issues in the dental, medical, mental health, nutrition, and human service fields. If you would like to be a part of this committee, you can contact your Family Advocate, the Health and Nutrition Specialist, or the Mental Health and Disabilities Specialist for more information.

## **GUIDELINES FOR ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION**

If your child is taking medication, we ask that it be given to your child at home. When this not possible, the following guidelines will apply.

The program only administers oral liquids and tablets, inhaler and nebulizer, ear and eye medications, topical medications and EpiPen epinephrine auto injector. Only staff that have a current MAT (Medication Authorization Training) certificate are allowed to administer medication.

Medication may only be transported to school by an adult

Prescription medication is only administered:

- with written authorization from the parent/guardian
- with written physician's order on appropriate paperwork
- medication is dispensed from a pharmacy in the original labeled container and include the child's name, name of medicine, date medication was filled, prescriber's instructions for dosage amount, and frequency/times to be given. Instructions should also include how the medication is to be given (ie. With food, glass of water).
- All medications will be kept under lock and key and out of children's reach and according to the directions on the pharmacy label. (This includes refrigeration).
- A record of medication given to children is kept and includes: child's name, date and time medication was given, amount and type of medication, staff name that administered medication and any side effects or error.
- Parents will be notified immediately of any adverse reactions to medications administered or any medication error.

Non Prescription medication/OTC that is given orally (by mouth) will follow the same guidelines as prescription medication.

Over the Counter (OTC) skin products including sunscreen, ointment, cream, insect repellent are only used:

- With parent authorization and noting any known adverse reactions
- In the original container and labeled with the child's name
- In accordance with the manufacturer's recommendations
- A record is kept including the child's name, date of use, time of application and any adverse reactions noted.
- All medications will be kept under lock and key and out of children's reach and according to the manufacturer's directions.

When a medication or authorization for medication expires, the parent will be notified that the medication must be picked up within 14 days or it will be disposed of by the center.

**THESE AND ALL OTHER POLICIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE**

## **MENTAL HEALTH/DISABILITIES AND TRANSITIONING SERVICE AREAS**

Mental wellness enhances your child's emotional and social development. A Mental Health staff person is available to provide assistance to you and staff members regarding the special needs of children and their families.

## **CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Some of the children who attend Head Start have special needs. These children receive a full range of Head Start services and some extra individual services. Our staff works closely with community services to provide resources and special services for these children and their families. Parents are encouraged to assist the teachers in completing the Ages and Stages Questionnaires within 45 calendar days of enrollment. This screening will assist staff and parents in recognizing children who **MAY** need special services in the area of behavior or development.

Some enrolled children are identified with special needs before they attend Head Start and some may be referred to other agencies that can provide appropriate services.

All children with special needs will have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) developed by the parent, teacher, Disabilities Specialist, and other appropriate persons. The IEP will discuss how the staff will work to meet the needs of this child.

It may even be necessary to move a child to another classroom to give them the best services or support. Please be patient during this process. It can be difficult to accept change but we always are working on ways to improve the children's educational success.

## **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE**

Our largest areas of special needs are the children that require speech and/or language therapy. Speech therapy deals mainly with the sounds and pronunciation of words and language therapy deals with the vocabulary of a child and their understanding of words.

All of the Head Start children will be screened within 45 days of enrollment. If your child needs further evaluation, you will be notified and appropriate forms will be sent home for your signature.

## **MENTAL HEALTH**

Some children have difficulty adjusting to the classroom setting. Teachers will send home behavior notices or discuss concerns by phone and keep documentation of these calls in that child's folder. After three (3) behavior notices have been issued, the teacher will then make a referral to the Mental Health Manager who will contact the parent for a meeting.

Parents having difficulty with their children and would like assistance can also make a referral.

## **TRANSITION SERVICE AREA**

The Education Service Area is responsible for ensuring that everyone has a smooth transition into Head Start as well as into public school. To provide a smooth transition into Head Start we will at the point of entry, conduct a one-on-one Pre-admission interview with each new parent. We will have an orientation informing the parents of their roles and responsibilities as well as the Policies and Procedures of the Head Start Program. Prior to the child starting school on the first day, you and your child will be given the opportunity to attend an open house where you will visit your child's classroom and meet his/her teacher. In the spring, we will start a Kindergarten Readiness Transition for the children and their parents. The children will start participating in activities and with prior written permission, the children and parents from Thomas Road Head Start will be transported to Lynchburg City Schools to visit the kindergarten in which they will be attending in the fall. The Bedford and Amherst County Head Start Centers' children's transitional activities are planned with the individual schools. The topic for the

March Monthly Parent Center Committee Meetings will be about Transitioning from Head Start to Kindergarten and the Pre-K Programs in the public schools. At this time, we will discuss Kindergarten Pre-registration needs, Registration Dates and a “Readiness Skills” packet will be distributed to all the parents who have children entering kindergarten in the fall.

## **NUTRITION SERVICE AREA**

Nutrition is one of the founding principles of Head Start programs. Good nutrition supports a child’s ability to grow, develop, and to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Our goal is to assist families in meeting each child’s nutritional needs while establishing healthy eating habits that promote life-long well-being.

The program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program to provide nutritious meals that meet USDA requirements which include breakfast, lunch, and snack (for full-day enrollees). More information can be found on the following page including requirements for each meal type that is served. Menus will be sent home each month with your child.

Menu substitutions are made only when documented by a physician for allergies/intolerance, disability, medical, or special dietary reasons. Please obtain the approved form “Special Dietary Prescription Form” and return the completed paperwork as soon as possible. Substitutions requested for religious reasons are accommodated when reasonable and with a written statement from the parent/guardian.

Please do not bring foods prepared at home or non store-bought food to the center. Foods for celebrations/birthdays need prior approval from the Area Supervisor due to possible food allergies.

**Good nutrition today means a stronger tomorrow!**

# Building for the Future with CACFP

This day care receives support from the Child and Adult Care Food Program to serve healthy meals to your children.

**Meals served here must meet USDA's nutrition standards.**

## **Questions? Concerns?**

Sponsor Name: Lynchburg Community Action Group, Inc.

1010 Main Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Lynchburg, VA 24504

434-846-3174

Special Nutrition Programs:  
CACFP

Virginia Department of Health  
Division of Community Nutrition  
109 Governor Street 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Richmond, VA 23219  
1-877-618-7282



Learn more about CACFP at USDA's website:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/>

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender.

United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service FNS-317  
November 2019

## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT SERVICE AREA**

Parent Engagement is one of the most important Service Areas in the Head Start Program. As the parent, you have the most influence on your child's development. Without your participation your child's learning experience at Head Start is limited and our program will lack your input.

Parents can choose to serve as volunteers and may also be eligible for employment opportunities within our program. Serving on committees such as the Policy Council, Health Advisory and Parent Committee gives you the opportunity to have an input into the decisions being made in our program.

## **FAMILY ADVOCATES**

The Head Start Program has a staff of Family Advocates. The role of the Family Advocate is to assist the entire family of an enrolled child to utilize all community resources to their fullest potential.

During the course of the Program year, the Family Advocates will make visits to your home when necessary. He or she will visit your home sometime during the month of October to develop a Family Partnership Agreement. When you are contacted by your Family Advocates, please keep your appointment. If you would prefer to meet somewhere other than your home, please make your Family Advocates aware of this. During this home visit the Family Advocates will discuss goals you have for your family and individual goals each of your family members might have. They will assist you in locating the resources to help you and your family members meet your long-term and short-term goals. Whatever your needs may be, from buying a home, getting out of debt, or getting your GED, your Family Advocate will help find the resources to accomplish your goals.



## WHAT HEAD START OFFERS THE FAMILY

By participating in the Head Start Program, parents and family members can gain so much information and knowledge.

You will:

- Learn how to recognize the potential and qualities your child possesses and how to build upon them.
- Learn how to appreciate and understand your child's development and how the educational experience can be extended into the home.
- Become a more confident parent and help build your child's self-esteem.
- Gather knowledge on how to become more involved in your community.
- Learn how to use the resources within your community to improve your quality of living.
- Discover the importance of parent participation in the school.
- Have the opportunity to work with a variety of social, racial, and ethnic groups.
- Learn the importance of family time together and receive ideas for family projects and activities.
- Be given the opportunity to further your own education if you wish to do so. Whether you wish to get your GED or to attend a Community College, Head Start believes parent education is just as important as your child's education.
- Have the opportunity to attend training on a variety of subjects such as:  
Child Development    Basic First Aid    Domestic Violence  
Budgeting              Dental Care              Parenting Skills  
Nutrition                Substance Abuse  
Parliamentary        Child Abuse
- Head Start also offers a workshop on substance abuse and offers substance abuse assistance for parents in need. Substance abuse can be defined as any misuse or over-indulgence of alcohol or a drug, prescribed or not. If you find that you or someone in your family needs assistance, contact your Family Advocate. Please be reminded that your Family Advocate keeps all information given to them completely confidential, however, you may feel more comfortable contacting Horizon Behavior Health at (434) 948-4831.

*Parents/guardians and family members have many opportunities within the Head Start Program, the only way to explore them all is to become involved!*

## GETTING INVOLVED

Parents are our greatest resource. With your cooperation and involvement, the Head Start Program can help develop your child to their fullest potential. By getting involved, you expand on and develop your parenting skills. There are several areas in which parents can become involved in the Head Start Program.

- 1. Helping in the classroom as a volunteer, observer, or as paid employee.** Many of the parents visit the classroom to observe their children in their learning environment. Parents will learn activities to teach at home and will become more familiar with child development. Volunteers help arrange field trips and room activities. They can assist the Family Advocates in taking children to the dentist or doctor.
- 2. Parent Center Meetings.** These meetings are held on a monthly basis at each center or a designated location near the center. During these meetings, you will discuss ways you can get involved, ways to get more parents involved, and ways to improve the program. There will also be informative lectures/workshops held. As a committee member, you will be able to assist members of the Policy Council or serve as a representative.
- 3. Male Involvement.** Male involvement in the Head Start Program is strongly encouraged. It is very important to have males in the Program to project positive images and be role models to the children. We encourage you to ask males in your life to get involved with the center and the Program. Special programs will be planned for Head Start fathers who are of a single household setting.
- 4. Fatherhood Initiative.** The biological father of the Head Start child will be encouraged to participate in the growth and development of the Head Start child. Activities will be planned for both father and child. Stepfathers will also be encouraged to participate with the father and child in many of these activities.
- 5. Being a room parent.** The room parent will meet monthly and work closely with the teachers to plan activities for the class, plan ways for parents to get involved, and volunteer in the classroom.
- 6. Policy Council.** The Policy Council is one of the governing bodies of the Head Start Program. Representatives of the Policy Council are elected during the first center meeting and they suggest ways to improve the Program. Representation of the Policy Council is determined by the number of classrooms in each of the centers, there are two parent representatives per classroom. The Policy Council also consists of representatives from the community to serve on the council, these representatives are also voted onto the council.

7. **Health Advisory Committee.** This committee is made up of Head Start staff, Health professionals, parents, and representatives from the communities. This committee meets three times per year to review Service Plans, make suggestions concerning the needs of children and families, and acts as an advocacy group in obtaining the resources for these services.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS (CODE OF CONDUCT)**

It is the role of Head Start to treat staff, families, and children with respect and dignity. Therefore, we hold our parents to the same standards while visiting the centers and expect them to conduct themselves in a responsible and mature fashion. It is an expectation that all adults in Head Start must conduct themselves in the following manner:

- With courtesy
- With respect
- With patience
- Treating others the way you expect to be treated
- Acknowledging and celebrating our cultural diversity, respecting the practices of others
- Being a positive role model for the children
- Dressing appropriately

Under no circumstances will the following behavior be tolerated:

- Physical/Verbal punishment of the children
- Threats to staff members or other visiting parents/guardians
- Swearing or cursing
- Smoking
- Quarreling, arguing, or raising voices with staff or visiting parents/guardians
- Bringing any weapons, drugs, or alcohol onto the property of Head Start

If any of these behaviors do occur, the person will be asked to stop any inappropriate behavior. If the behavior continues, police or local enforcement officers may be called. If a parent is inappropriately dressed, they will be asked to leave the premises.

**It is expected of all staff members, parents/guardians, or other visitors to the center to abide by the Policies and Safety practices of Head Start.**

## **POLICY FOR TERMINATING HEAD START SERVICES**

Head Start's policy is that we do not terminate services for any child or family unless there are extreme situations. Typically, services are suspended until assistance for the child or family can be put in place. The last result is the termination of services for the following:

- Conduct by parents towards staff, parents, or a child resulting in their removal by Law enforcement or the Principal from the Head Start site or school site where Head Start is housed.
- Weapons on school property at any time.
- If a child misses 30 consecutive unexcused days from school.
- A letter will be sent home explaining the reasons for termination.

## **BASIC HEAD START POLICIES**

- **Sending money to school.** Do not send any money to school under any circumstance. All of the services at Head Start are provided to you and your child free of charge.
- **Fund Raisers.** Head Start does not promote or approve of any fundraising activities.
- **Outside Food.** All foods must be store bought and served in original wrapper.
- **Parties and celebrations.** Head Start serves children from diverse cultures and practices. Because of these diversities, it is important to respect other cultures and beliefs. Therefore, please share any information with your child's teacher if your culture/belief prohibits your child from participating in any Head Start activities.
- **End of the Year Activities.** At the end of the school year, your child's class may have a fun day celebration and a simple group activity. Certificates will be rewarded to your child during these planned events.
- **Suggestion Boxes.** These are placed in all Head Start centers as a means of expressing your opinions or concerns. To protect your privacy, we ask that you do not sign your name. All submitted concerns, questions, or opinions will be addressed in either the parent newsletter or calendar.
- **Yearly Surveys.**
- **Communication.** Being able to communicate with parents/guardians and families is extremely important to us at Head Start. If English is not your primary language, or your child's primary language, please inform your Family Service Worker. They will also need to know if an interpreter is needed to assist in the classroom to communicate with your child. Your Family Advocate

will also need to know if you are unable to read, this will be kept confidential and they will assist in finding another means of communicating with you. The following are the forms of communication you will receive throughout the Program year:

- Monthly Communication
- Field trip notifications
- Notices for Home visits and Teacher conferences.
- Monthly Parent Activity Calendars
- Monthly menus
- Notices of Committee Meetings and workshops
- Notices of your child's dental appointments
- Accident reports
- Newsletters
- School closings
- Letters offering various services

## **DONATIONS**

Donations of classroom supplies are always needed and appreciated at our centers. Make sure you fill out and sign a donation In-kind slip for these items and remember- receipts must be included for new items.

# FAMILY LITERACY

## Head Start Family Literacy Goals

- To assist families in understanding the literacy services our program provides.
- To assist and encourage parents/guardians to research ways to develop early literacy and language development in their children.
- To provide parents/guardians with the essential information they need on how to use community programs to support their family literacy goals.
- To encourage parents/guardians to read to their children daily.
- To encourage parents/guardians to further their education and to encourage them to utilize English as a Second Language programs.
- To support programs that integrate family literacy, including adult education, into a partnership for the whole family.

## SOCIAL SERVICE AREA

The Social Service area covers recruitment, enrollment, attendance, child abuse/neglect, and the Social Service needs of the Head Start families.

- **Recruiting and Enrollment:** All Head Start Staff is responsible for recruiting children and ensuring that all Head Start centers are filled with eligible children. Parents play an important role in the recruitment process by referring other parents of eligible children to our program.
- **Social Services:** Any services that Head Start is not able to directly provide for you or your family, the Family Advocate will help you find the available resources within your community.
- **Child Abuse and Neglect:** Head Start provides training and information on child abuse and neglect. You will be notified of the workshops offered and we ask that you attend.

**ALL Head Start staff are required by law to report any suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. We are all reporting officers. We make reports, check the child, and file the complaint with the Child Protective Services (CPS) when necessary.**

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Head Start must keep an average daily attendance of 85%. When the monthly average daily attendance rate in a center-based program falls below 85%, a Head Start Program must analyze the causes of absenteeism. The analysis must include a study of the pattern of absences for each child including the reasons for absences as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days.

If absences are a result of illness or if they are well-documented absences for other reasons, no special action is required. If, however, the absences result from other factors, including temporary family problems that affect a child's regular attendance, the Program must initiate appropriate family support procedures for all children with three or more consecutive unexcused absences. These procedures must include home visits or other direct contact with the child's parents. Contacts with the family must emphasize the benefits of regular attendance while at the same time remain sensitive to any special family circumstances influencing attendance patterns. All contacts with the child's family, as well as special family support service activities provided by the Program staff, must be documented.

In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists, and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option, the child's slot must be considered an enrollment vacancy. The child will then be dropped from the Head Start Program.

## **TARDINESS**

Students arriving fifteen minutes after the start time are considered tardy. Parent/guardian(s) are required to contact their Family Advocate when their child will be tardy from school. If there are excessive instances of tardiness for the child, it will be considered that the family needs the services of Head Start to insure the child will arrive at school on time.

## **MOVING**

If you move out of the Lyn-CAG Head Start Service Area, your child will be dropped. Lyn-CAG Head Start Program does not service Appomattox or Campbell County. If you move out of your center's service area, we will try to find space for your child at a center in the area to which you moved. If space is not available, and you would like for your child to continue in the Program, you will have to provide transportation to and from the center in which your child was originally enrolled.

## **WITHDRAWAL OF A HEAD START CHILD**

Any time you would like to withdraw your child from the Head Start Program, we request that you submit a letter to your Family Advocate informing them of the withdrawal.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER/CLOSING & DELAYS**

- If you transport your child in the morning due to inclement weather or road conditions, please make arrangements to pick up your child in the afternoon.
- We close the center whenever the road conditions warrant the closing of the public schools in your area. **For inclement weather closing & delay information, listen to WJJS or WYYD radio stations and WSET-TV 13 television.**

### **Car Riders**

- Parents/Caretakers/Emergency Contacts must pick children up by your center's pick-up time on page 41. If your child is not picked up within 30 minutes, Lyn-CAG Head Start is required to turn the child(ren) over to Child Protective Services.

***Authorized adults must be on the authorized adult list prior to picking a child up and bring photo identification with them. Do not call the center to add or change names. Any changes made on the authorized adult list must be done in person and in writing.***

## **PROCEDURES FOR CHILDREN TRANSPORTED BY PARENTS**

When you are providing transportation for your child to their center, these are the procedures to follow:

- Your child must arrive to the center **at** the times listed below. If your child will be a car rider in the afternoon, you must pick your child up on or before the pick-up times.
- Children are not allowed to stay beyond their scheduled pick-up time for **any** reason.



<b>CENTER</b>	<b>Drop off By</b>	<b>Pick Up By</b>
Amherst	8:15	2:45
Bedford	7:45	3:30
Big Island	7:30	3:30
Madison Heights	8:15	2:45
Stewartsville	7:45	3:30
Thomas Rd	7:30/8:00	3:00/3:30

- **If your child will be arriving at the center late, you must call the center before the above Drop-off time. You have 30 minutes to arrive after calling. Third unexcused arrivals require a meeting with the Family Advocate.**

### **PROCEDURES FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

- For your child’s safety, it is the policy of Head Start not to take any changes in pick-up or drop-off addresses over the phone.

### **WRITTEN PROCEDURES PROCEDURES FOR AN INJURED CHILD**

- Head Start Education Staff or Family Advocate will notify the parent/emergency contact person of the injured child.
- The administrator of the center notifies the Head Start Health Specialist.
- Stabilize the injured child until emergency help arrives.
- Transportation, if necessary, will be provided by the local emergency services.
- For precautionary reasons, the child will be taken to the local healthcare facility for further evaluation.
- Head Start Education staff will fill out an Accident Report documenting the injuries.
- Head Start Director will be notified of the injuries.

### **PROCEDURES FOR INJURY PREVENTION**

- Staff will be provided training in safety, first aid, CPR, playground safety, and emergency evacuation plans.

- Staff will be encouraged to check equipment, classrooms, and playground before allowing children to use the area.
- Appropriate staff/child ratios will be maintained at all times.
- Staff will ensure that children are within sight and sound of authorized adults at all times.
- The Health Specialist and Family Advocate will review documents of injuries on an annual basis to ensure the safety of the children.

## **PROCEDURES FOR LOST/MISSING CHILD**

- Staff will search the center and play area as well as the nearby surroundings for the child.
- The administrator of the center will contact the Central Office concerning the missing child.
- The director or designee will contact the parents/legal guardian of the child.
- The director or designee will contact the appropriate authority and inform them of the missing child.
- Local authorities will take over the search.
- Head Start will remain in contact with the parent/legal guardian and provide support as needed.

## **PROCEDURES FOR IDENTIFYING WHERE CHILDREN ARE AT ALL TIMES**

- The administrator of the center is to provide appropriate staff/child ratios at all times./1
- There will be at least two adults with the child/children at all times. **The only exception to this policy is in an event of a life or death situation.** The remaining adult may leave the child/children to get emergency assistance from the closest available source and return immediately.
- When children are on field trips, a head count is to be taken before, during, and after the trip.
- When at the dentist and other related health services, the person responsible for the care of the child/children will be notified before removal from the classroom or center.
- When a parent/guardian is to pick a child up early, a note or a phone call to the Teacher or general office will be made prior to the child being picked up.

- When another family member or friend is to pick a child up early, a note is to be sent prior to the child being picked up.
- Photo identification is to be provided upon pick up of a child and that person must be on the **Authorized Pick-Up List**.

## **ENSURING THE SAFETY OF HEAD START CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES**

To ensure the safety of a Head Start child at all times, **no child** will be given to anyone unless that person's name is on the authorization to pick up list and can show a photo ID.

All Head Start parents/guardians will be advised during their Pre-admission Interview and Orientation that they are to come into the Head Start Center where their child attends and update information as changes occur. Parents/Guardians **must** come to the school in person and notify their Family Advocate when there is a change in authorization of who may or may not pick up their child. Persons authorized to pick up your child **must** have a photo ID. (ID will be copied and attached to the child's information). Person's authorized to pick the child up or get the child off of the bus **must** be 16 years of age or older.

### **Signing Child Out**

- Parents/Guardians **must** sign the child out in the sign-out log. Authorized staff persons will release the child to the parent/guardian. ID will be required before a child is released to an unknown person. (ID will be copied and attached to the child's information).

#### **Procedures:**

1. During registration, parents/guardians will be asked to complete Emergency Information Forms. Information requested on these forms will be the names of 2 persons to contact, other than the parent/guardian, in case of an emergency, or pick up from the Head Start Center. (person must be 16 years or older) Provide as many names as possible.
2. In cases where the parent wishes to deny access to the non-custodial parent, the parent/guardian will be required to provide the Head Start Program with appropriate legal documentation (custody decree, restraining order, and or termination of parental rights).

3. In cases where potential kidnapping or violence is an issue, photographs of said person should be provided for the family file to assist staff in identifying that individual.
4. In cases where a parent has been convicted of a felony, child abuse, or sexual abuse of a child or an adult that parents **will not** be allowed on the premises of Head Start.
5. In cases where there is a concern on the part of the custodial parent concerning the non-custodial parent taking the child without permission, the custodial parent will be advised by his or her Family Advocate to seek legal counsel.
6. If an adult that is not listed on the emergency or transportation information form shows up at a Head Start site to pick a child up, the child **will not** be released to that person. Parents will be advised that before a child is released to anyone the parent **must** come to the Head Start site and put that person's name on the authorized pick-up list, no telephone calls will be accepted for making changes or additions. No exceptions will be made when it comes to the safety of a Head Start child.
7. In cases where the authorized adult comes to pick up the child and appears to have been drinking, the child **will not** be released and the parent/guardian will be notified.
8. In the event that an unauthorized adult refuses to leave the Head Start premises:
  - a. The Head Start staff person will inform that person that they will call the police.
  - b. If the unauthorized adult continues to refuse to leave the police will be called.
  - c. The parent/guardian **will be** notified of the incident along with the Head Start Director.

## **PROCEDURES FOR AN ABSENT CHILD**

- If a child is not in attendance on a specific day he/she is counted absent.
- Within an hour of being absent, your teacher/advocate will contact you to determine why the child is absent.
- If absentee patterns are being developed, your Family Advocate will contact you to determine the reason the child is not at the center.
- The Family Advocate will assist you if possible, to ensure regular attendance.
- Excessive absenteeism may result in your child being returned to the waiting list.

## **PROCEDURES FOR STORING PERSONAL BELONGINGS OF CHILDREN**

- During registration, you are asked to make sure your child does not bring personal toys or belongings to the center unless requested by the teacher to do so.
- All Children's clothing must be clearly labeled with your child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, shoes, boots, etc. Lost items will be in a central location at each center. **The Program is not responsible for damage to or loss of any articles of clothing, personal items, or eyeglasses.**
- A place is established for each child to store his/her belongings. This place may be a cubby, locker, or hook. Each child will have his/her name on the place of storage to identify it.
- Any item that has been set aside for an individual child is to have that child's name clearly written on it, such as glasses, toothbrushes, and toothpaste.

## **WRITTEN PROCEDURES FOR NATURAL DISASTERS**

In the event of any natural disaster listed below the following will apply:

- Call the center to verify if the children are still on-site or if they have moved to an off-site location. If phone lines are down, please come to the center.
- Children will remain with staff members at the center or the off-site location until an authorized adult picks the child up.

### **EARTHQUAKES**

- If you are indoors, duck or drop down to the floor. Take cover under a sturdy desk, table, or other furniture. Hold on to it and be prepared to move with it. Hold the position until the ground stops shaking and it is safe to move. Stay clear of windows, heavy furniture, or appliances. Stay inside.
- If you are in a crowded area such as the lunchroom, take cover and stay where you are.
- If you are outside, get into the open, away from buildings and power lines.

- If you are driving, stop if it is safe, but stay inside your vehicle. Stay away from bridges, overpasses, and tunnels. Move your vehicle as far out of the normal traffic pattern as possible. If possible, avoid stopping under trees, light posts, power lines, or signs.
- Stay calm and encourage the children to stay calm.
- Check for injuries. Do not move a seriously injured person unless they are in immediate danger of further injuries.
- Check for hazards.
- Check for fire or fire hazards.
- Check for gas leaks.
- Damaged electrical wiring. Shut off power at the control box.
- Downed or damaged utility lines. Stay away from downed lines, even if power appears to be off.
- Make sure each phone is on its receiver. Telephones off the hook tie up the telephone network unnecessarily.
- Expect aftershocks. Most of these are smaller than the main earthquake. Some may be large enough to do additional damage to weakened structures

## **FIRES**

- Discuss what to do in a fire situation.
- Practice the escape plan every month.
- Follow the procedures posted in each classroom.
- Choose a monitor to close the windows and door.  
Test the door prior to opening.
- Stay low in smoke, heat and smoke will rise and good air is at the floor.
- Maintain constant contact with the walls.
- If you become trapped, put closed doors between you and the smoke.  
Stuff cracks to keep smoke out.  
Signal from a window with a flashlight or sheet.
- Go to the designated area after the evacuation.  
Never go back into the building, once out stay out.
- Provide special plans for disabled people or children.

## **FLOODS**

- Don't try to outrun a flood on foot. If you see or hear it coming, move to higher ground immediately.
- Be familiar with the land features. It may be in a low area, or near a drainage ditch.
- Stay tuned to the radio for the latest statements, watches, and warnings concerning heavy rain and flash flooding in the area.
- The National Weather Service will issue a Flash Flood Watch when heavy rains may result in flash flooding in a specific area. In this case, be alert and prepare for the possibility of a flood emergency which will require immediate action. A Flash Flood Warning will be issued when flash flooding is occurring or is imminent in a specified area. If your locale is placed under a warning, you should move to safe ground immediately.

## **HURRICANES**

- Listen to the radio or watch television for communication with emergency preparedness. Have a battery-operated radio with extra battery.
- Secure objects that may be blown by the wind.
- To keep the wind out, secure and cover windows. If you cannot cover windows use a windowless room as a refuge.
- Shut off electrical power.
- Emergency supply items: flashlights, batteries, first-aid kit, and radio.
- Remain inside. Listen to the radio for the all-clear. Do not go outside, it may be the eye of the storm passing.
- Use the telephone for emergencies only.
- Avoid electric shock. Don't touch wires of any kind or objects in contact with them.
- Watch for falling objects weakened tree limbs or structural debris that may collapse and cause serious injury.

## **THUNDERSTORMS**

- Thunderstorms are dangerous because they bring the dangers of lightning, high winds, floods, and flash floods from extremely heavy rainfall.
- Lightning often strikes outside of heavy rainfall and may occur as far as 10 miles from the rain.
- If you are outside during a lightning storm, seek inside shelter immediately and stay off of the telephone.
- Heavy rains from thunderstorms can lead to flash flooding. The power of flowing water can easily sweep away trees, buildings, automobiles, and people
- If lightning threatens, move indoors. Once inside, avoid doors, windows, and metal objects. Avoid using electrical appliances. Use the telephone only in an emergency.
- If driving, stay in your automobile. An enclosed automobile offers reasonably good protection from lightning.
- If outdoors, stay away from isolated trees. If your hair stands on end or your skin tingles, lightning may be about to strike. Crouch down quickly to make a low target.

## **TORNADOS**

### **IN SCHOOL:**

- Move to designated shelter areas. Interior hallways on the lowest level are usually best.
- Stay away from windows and out of auditoriums, gymnasiums, or other structures with large free span roofs.
- Cover your head

### **IN VEHICLES:**

- Do not try to outrun a tornado.
- Abandon your vehicle and hide in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head.



## **BOMB THREAT**

1. Remain calm.
2. Do NOT touch, tamper with, or move the package, bag, or item.
3. Notify authorities immediately: ...
4. Follow instructions. ...
5. If no guidance is provided and you feel you are in immediate danger, calmly evacuate the area. Move into a secure area (shelter in place, center specific)...
6. Be aware.
7. Wait for “ALL CLEAR” from authorities.

## **ACTIVE SHOOTER**

1. Report incident by calling 911.
2. Evacuate if possible. Move quickly to a safe place and take cover. Remain there until the police arrive and give instructions.
3. Shelter if necessary. Lock the door. If the door doesn't lock, barricade the door with heavy furniture and cut off the lights, covering the windows. Keep silent and out of sight.
4. Do not open the doors until law enforcement advises it is safe to evacuate. Remain calm and follow the officer's instructions.
5. When leaving do NOT run. Do NOT make quick movements. Avoid screaming.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the case of emergencies, the following will apply:

- The Family Advocates will notify the parent/guardian by phone and the type of emergency.
- If the child is taken to the hospital or Physician's Treatment Center, the Family Service Worker will accompany the child and remain with the child until the parent/guardian arrives.

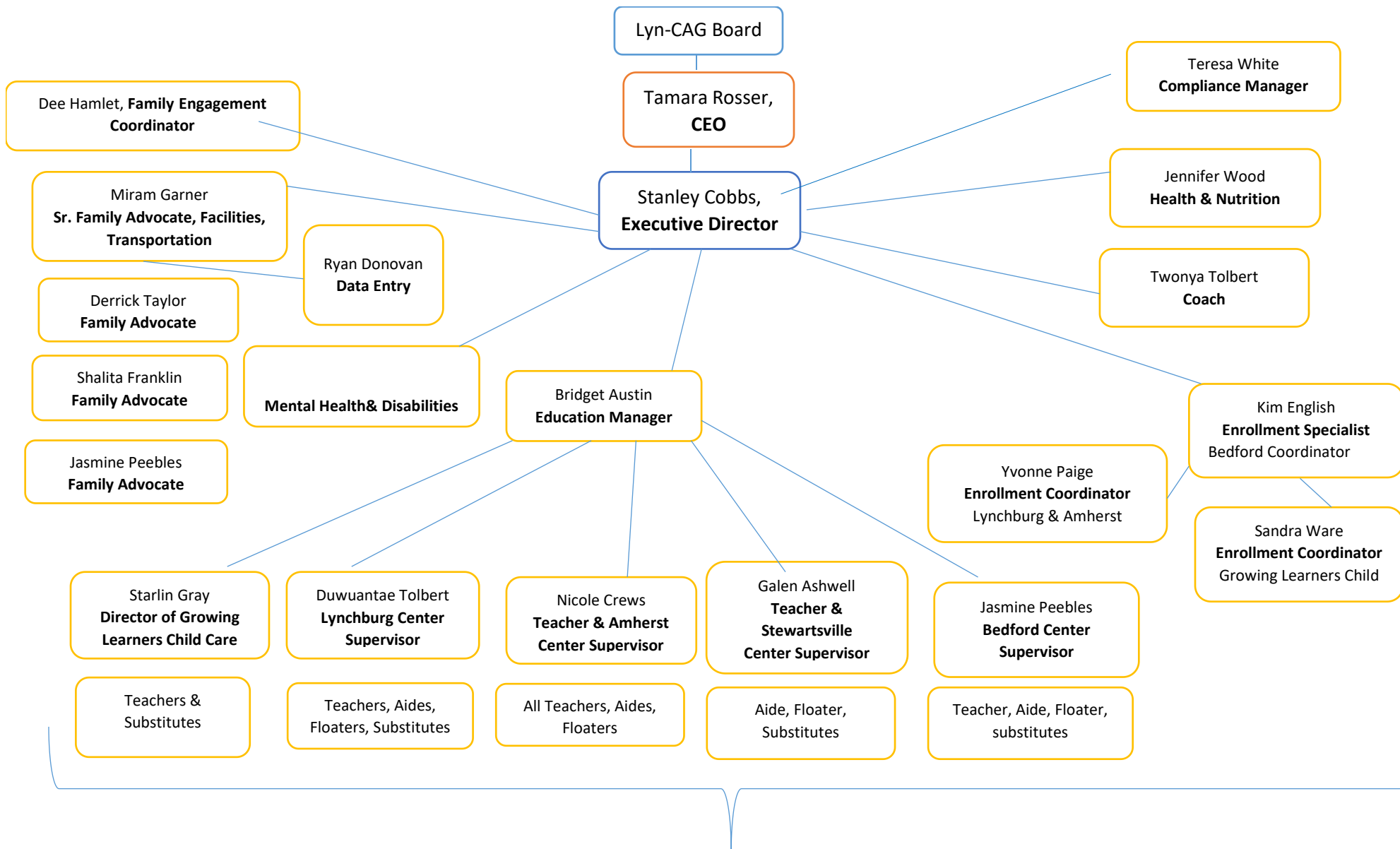
## **What Your Child Will Need the First Day of School**

- **Name tag** (Masking tape or something with your child's first & last name.)
- **Extra set of clothes** (Please provide socks, underwear, shorts, and a t-shirt-remember to send warmer clothes as seasons change.)
- **Book bag** (or another bag that communications can be sent home with your child.)
- **Full-Day Students** Send a large bath towel or blanket for naptime as a cover. Please send a sheet (crib sized sheet) to be used as a bottom. You can send a pillow but it has to have a pillowcase or cover.)

**Always label any personal items sent to school.**

**Head Start is not responsible for any lost or damaged items.**

# LYN-CAG HEAD START ORGANIZATION TABLE



Policy Council