

2015-2016

# Child Focus Early Head Start Parent Handbook



*The mission of Child Focus is to join with communities in strengthening families and improving the quality of life for children.*



# Table of Contents

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|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>SECTION (1) CENTER LOCATIONS, DAYS &amp; HOURS OF OPERATION .....</b> | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>SECTION (2) PROGRAM OPTIONS .....</b>                                 | <b>7</b>  |
| Early Head Start Home Based Program .....                                | 5         |
| Home Based Socializations .....  | 5         |
| Early Head Start Center Based Program .....                              | 6         |
| <b>SECTION (3) PARENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.....</b>               | <b>6</b>  |
| Parent Rights.....   | 6         |
| Parent Responsibilities.....   | 7         |
| <b>SECTION (4) PHILOSOPHY &amp; GOALS .....</b>                          | <b>8</b>  |
| Philosophy .....   | 8         |
| Goals .....  | 8         |
| <b>SECTION (5) GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES.....</b>                  | <b>8</b>  |
| Enrollment Process .....   | 8         |
| Attendance Policy .....  | 9         |
| Disenrollment Policy .....   | 9         |
| Non-Custodial Parent.....  | 9         |
| Statement of Confidentiality.....  | 10        |
| Release of Confidential Information .....                                | 10        |
| Grievance Procedure.....   | 10        |
| USDA Nondiscrimination Statement .....                                   | 10        |
| Babysitting/Party Policy .....   | 11        |
| Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect .....                        | 11        |
| Parent Communication .....   | 11        |
| Positive Discipline and Guidance Policy for Children.....                | 12        |
| Unacceptable Discipline Methods .....                                    | 13        |
| Transition Process.....  | 14        |
| Transportation.....  | 14        |
| <b>SECTION (6) HEALTH.....</b>   | <b>14</b> |
| Physical Exam Requirements .....   | 14        |
| General Anesthesia .....   | 15        |
| Dental Exam Requirements .....   | 15        |
| Injury Procedures.....   | 16        |
| <b>SECTION (7) SAFETY .....</b>  | <b>16</b> |



**SECTION (8) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT ..... 17**

Family Engagement in Early Head Start ..... 17

Volunteer Opportunities ..... 18

    Parent Committee ..... 18

    Advisory Committee ..... 18

    Policy Council ..... 18

    Special Classroom Activities and Field Trips ..... 19

    Regular Classroom Volunteering ..... 19

    Parent Meetings and Trainings ..... 19

Teacher Conferences and Home Visits ..... 20

Family Engagement Home Visits ..... 20

**CENTER PARENT INFORMATION REQUIRED BY OHIO**

**ADMINISTRATIVE CODE ..... 21**

My child's center/home based is \_\_\_\_\_

Class time \_\_\_\_\_

Center phone \_\_\_\_\_ Administrative Office 528-7224

Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Classroom Aide \_\_\_\_\_

Home Visitor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Program Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Assistant Director Kevin DePew Phone # 528-7224

Program Director Berta Velilla Phone # 528-7224



SECTION (1) CENTER LOCATIONS, DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION

**Child Focus, Inc. Early Learning Programs  
Administrative Office  
555 CINCINNATI-BATAVIA PIKE - CINCINNATI, OHIO 45244  
(513) 528-7224 - Fax (513) 688-8141**

**Early Head Start Centers (ages 0-3 yrs.)**

**Child Focus Learning Center #1**

555 Building  
528-7224  
555 Cincinnati-Batavia Pike  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244  
*Full day option available at this location 6am-6pm*

**Child Focus Learning Center #2**

551 Building  
528-7224  
551 Cincinnati-Batavia Pike  
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244  
*Full day option available at this location 8am-2pm*



Child Focus, Inc. is a non-profit organization and an Equal Opportunity Provider.

## SECTION (2) PROGRAM OPTIONS

### Early Head Start Home Based Program

The Early Head Start Home Based option is a child development program serving children birth to age three and pregnant moms. This program is delivered in the child's primary learning environment, their home. By recognizing the parent as the child's first teacher; the Home Visitor supports the child and their family through weekly, 90 minute home visits, providing activities promoting development in all areas. The Home Visitor and the parent work as a team to identify the child's strengths and needs. The Home Visitor will share their knowledge of child development and provide training to parents as they begin to set individual and family goals. Socializations are held twice a month in the home based option to provide an opportunity for children to interact and engage socially with other children. The Home Visitor will seek input from parents when planning socials.

### Home Based Socializations

Socializations are designed to support child development by strengthening the **parent-child relationship**. Early Head Start Home Visitors provide two socializations per month consisting of parent meetings, PIWI play groups and/or community events.

- **Parent Meetings** provide parents the opportunity to partner with us as we work together in preparing your child to succeed in school.
- **Parents Interacting with Infants (PIWI)** play groups provide an environment for positive parent-child interactions to naturally occur.
- **Community Events** provide families an opportunity to attend local events held in their neighborhood to support child development and strengthen parent-child relationships.

The overall **goal** for all socializations is to...

- Recognize and build upon the strengths in both children and parents
- Enhance and strengthen parent-child relationships
- Provide parents with new knowledge of their child's development in order to help them observe, interpret, and support their child's emerging skills and confidence

All home based socializations provided by Child Focus, Inc. require parents to abide by the following regulations.

- Parents maintain constant supervision of the child/children
- Smoking and drinking alcohol or soda is prohibited
- Eating foods other than what is provided at the socialization is prohibited



### **Early Head Start Center Based Program**

The Center Based option provides children age 0-3 with classroom experiences planned by qualified staff to promote developmental growth in all areas. Individualized planning ensures that the specific needs of each child are met in a safe, nurturing learning environment. Teachers and parents will meet four times per year to set and update goals for their child. Children in a Center based program attend class Monday through Friday 8am to 2pm.

Parent Meetings are also a part of the center based program. Parent meetings provide parents the opportunity to partner with us as we work together in preparing your child to succeed in school.

## SECTION (3) PARENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent and family participation and involvement are essential to the success of the Early Head Start program. We believe that parents and family members are their child's first teachers and are valuable contributors to our program. For this reason, we have very high expectations for families.

### **Parent Rights**

My rights as a parent or guardian in the program include:

1. To be recognized as my child's primary educator.
2. To be treated with respect by the Early Head Start program.
3. To be welcomed in my child's classroom. There is an open-door policy, and I may visit the center at any time during its hours of operation (without advance notice).
4. To receive information and guidance from the Early Head Start program about my child's progress and development, including regular progress reports from my child's teacher.
5. To participate in discussions about my child's progress and setting goals for my child's learning and development.
6. To be supported as an advocate for my child. In the event that my child has a diagnosed disability or has been referred for a concern; I will be involved by the local school district in creating an Individualized Education Plan, and will be kept informed on my child's progress in meeting his/her goals.
7. To take part in decisions regarding my child's center and the Early Head Start program. My ideas and suggestions will be valued, and I will have opportunities to share them with staff and other parents. Opportunities include Parent Center Committee Meetings, Policy Council meetings.
8. To be informed about resources within the community related to education, health, social services, employment, etc.
9. To review and ask for clarification on policies and procedures.

10. To submit any concerns regarding the center's alleged violation of the licensing requirements to the state Child Care Licensing office.
11. To report any concerns about child abuse or neglect occurring at the center to the state Child Care Licensing office.

### **Parent Responsibilities**

My responsibilities as a parent/guardian in the Early Head Start program includes:

1. Ensure my child attends the program consistently and on time to support his/her development.
2. Participate actively in the program and take advantage of the opportunities that the program offers.
3. Work with teachers, faculty, and other families in a cooperative manner.
4. Be open to new ideas and experiences that can benefit me and my children.
5. Help make the Early Head Start program better by offering my opinions, constructive criticism, and suggestions.
6. Ask questions of my child's teacher, home visitor and the Program Coordinator or other members of the staff.
7. Reinforce what my child learns at the program by working with my child at home.
8. Ensure that my child is up-to-date on all required medical and dental needs.

*Center-based Program Option only:*

9. Participate in two home visits each year with my child's Teachers.
10. Participate in home visits with the staff assigned to my family on an as needed basis.
11. Participate in two Parent/Teacher Conferences per year.
12. Volunteer with my child's program. I will sign a Family Involvement Agreement indicating how many volunteer hours I hope to do during the year and how I can be involved.
13. Ensure that my child has extra clothing at the center and, if in a full day program, has items for nap time.

*Home-Based Program Option only:*

14. Participate in one home visit each week with my child's Home-Based Visitor.
15. Participate in monthly group socialization activities with my child.



## SECTION (4) PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

### Philosophy

Our curriculum approach is based on the following philosophy:

1. Parents are their children's first and most important teacher.
2. The early years of a child's life are critical for optimal development and provide the foundation for success in school and life
3. Parents and educators work together as *partners* to close the achievement gap
4. All young children and families deserve the same opportunities to succeed regardless of demographic, geographic, or economic considerations
5. An understanding and appreciation of the history and traditions of diverse cultures is essential in serving families.

### Goals

We believe every child can learn and succeed at the highest levels. As we develop relationships with parents we will provide them with the research based knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to build a better future for our children, families, and community.

There are four specific goals we will focus on with your family as we partner together in preparing your child to succeed in school.

1. **Use Positive Discipline:** Praise your child when he or she is behaving well. Tell your child why you like what he is doing. "I like when you hold my hand; it keeps you safe."
2. **Provide Language-rich Experiences:** Talk to your child often. Talking to children as they experience the world teaches children vocabulary and shows them how to share thoughts and ideas.
3. **Establish Family Routines:** Consistent family routines strengthen relationships and help children learn to regulate their behavior. Eat meals together so you can talk and visit. Keeping to a night time schedule is good for you, and good for your child!
4. **Read with your child:** Cultivate a love of reading and literacy. Read to your child every day! Limit your child's "screen" time to help develop imagination and engage in self-directed play.

## SECTION (5) GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Enrollment Process

Our program follows Federal Head Start enrollment guidelines. To enroll in our program you must:

- Be eligible (foster children, receiving TANF or SSI, homeless, or have income below the Federal Income Guidelines)
- Complete all health and enrollment forms in the application packet
- Provide an up-to-date shot record for the child



- Provide proof of eligibility/income (pay stubs, 1040 tax statement, W2 forms, unemployment forms, public assistance forms, etc.) for the past 12 months or previous year.
- There are no tuition/fees for enrolling and attending the Early Head Start program.

### **Attendance Policy**

Good attendance assures that your child will receive the greatest benefit from our program. We want your child to experience all the learning activities planned on a daily basis. Mildly ill children are able to attend center. See “Ill Child” about symptoms that prevent your child from attending. Children are expected to attend at least 85% of the time each month, only missing one or two days for specific reasons.

If a child will be absent or will miss a home visit, parent is to **call the center staff or home visitor immediately** and explain the reason for absence. If we do not hear from you, the absence will be unexcused and staff will call to determine the reason. After three (3) unexcused absences, the teacher or home visitor will conduct a home visit with an Attendance Agreement for you to sign. If four (4) unexcused absences occur within a 30-day period, a child will be placed back on the Reconsider List. If the situation changes and consistent attendance can be expected, parent may call center or home visitor for next available opening.

It is unfair to children on a waiting list for us to attempt to provide services to children with irregular attendance. We ask for your cooperation to help your child maintain good attendance and receive a head start as they prepare for kindergarten.

### **Disenrollment Policy**

Child Focus will make every effort to continue your child’s successful enrollment in our programs. Examples of issues that may result in disenrollment:

- Extremely harmful behavior of child to staff or other children
- Extremely harmful behavior of parents to staff or other program participants including inappropriate language and/or verbal threats.

If a parent wishes to disenroll their child, the parent must notify the center of the child’s last day of service.

### **Non-Custodial Parent**

Non-custodial parents not listed on the ODJFS enrollment form or the escort form must provide written documentation from the court indicating that they have permission to access child’s records or have access to child.

If there are court documents in the child’s center file that deny/limit the non-custodial parent/guardian’s right to visitation we **CAN NOT** release the child. The staff will call the custodial parent and report the circumstances.

If the parent insists or is threatening, staff will call 911 immediately.

### **Statement of Confidentiality**

All files and information recorded in Head Start regarding children and families in the program are kept strictly confidential. Staff members are the only people who have access to these files, including Family Advocates, Home-Based Visitors, Classroom Teachers, and other staff and consultants as needed (e.g. in the case of a specific health concern). Access to files is on a “Need to Know Basis”; only staff members that are involved with your child/family will have access to the records.

### **Release of Confidential Information**

Our program will not release information from a child’s record or file without the consent of a parent/guardian. If the program receives a request for information on your child and/or our program would like to obtain information from an outside entity we will request that the parent/guardian sign a consent form that includes what kind of information we would like to release/receive and to/from whom. Parents/guardians have the right not to sign this release consent form.

All Child Focus centers are licensed by the Ohio Department of Jobs & Family Services; therefore all child/family information is available to them without parental consent and prior notification.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Child Focus, Inc. is required to comply with all state and federal regulations. If for any reason complaints arise, parents or members of the community should speak with center staff and/or call the Program Coordinator. They will be happy to help. If the situation is not resolved, please call the office at 528-7224 and ask to speak to the Assistant Director of Early Head Start. Each complaint is documented and addressed. If the results are not satisfactory to you, you may contact the Early Learning Director. If after exhausting all channels the problem still remains unresolved, the issue may be brought before Policy Council by the appropriate representative. Policy Council will attempt to satisfy the grievance for all parties concerned.

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

### **Babysitting/Party Policy**

Staff is prohibited from babysitting, attending social functions and social networking via technology of families enrolled in the program. Please do not ask staff to baby sit, attend a social event or request to social network with them. We request that you respect our professional boundaries.

### **Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

Our staff is responsible for the health and welfare of all children participating in the program, and as such are **mandatory reporters** of any suspected child abuse or neglect. If necessary Head Start staff will provide the following information to Child Protective Services (CPS) office on the child:

- Child's name, birth date, home address
- Parent's full name and phone number
- Time of incident and where it took place
- Any other relevant detail

**\* If an allegation of child abuse and/or neglect is substantiated against any Head Start staff member, his/her employment will immediately be terminated.**

### **Parent Communication**

The decision to notify parents that a report was made to CPS will be determined on a case by case basis. If, after an investigation, a determination is made that corrective action is necessary to protect the child, Early Head Start will carry out the recommendation from CPS for corrective action.

In addition, staff shall advise parents of any unusual incident that occurred at the center and that might indicate possible abuse and/or neglect involving the child, such as unusual sexual activity; violent or destructive behavior; withdrawal or passivity; or significant changes in the child's personality, behavior or habits. Such notification shall be made on the same day on which the incident occurred, and documentation of the incident and of parent notification kept on file.



### **Positive Discipline and Guidance Policy for Children**

The Early Head Start program uses an approach to discipline and guidance that emphasizes respect for each child; developmentally appropriate expectations of children's behavior; and the use of positive discipline and guidance strategies.

Our staff members strive to create a relaxed, positive environment that enables children to explore and experiment while remaining safe and feeling well-supported. Through positive guidance strategies and modeling social skills, staff helps children learn pro-social behaviors, build confidence and self-esteem, and develop greater respect for others' rights and feelings, as well as a sense that they are themselves respected.

Discipline concerns are handled by staff in a way that encourages children to solve problems and develop a sense of inner self-control. Children are given authentic choices and the opportunity to be an active part of decision-making in their environment, thus fostering a sense of personal responsibility. Staff helps children to understand the reasons for rules and limits and to feel good about the choices they make.

Our staff will use a variety of strategies for positive discipline and guidance in the classroom, including the following:

- Plan ahead in order to anticipate problems.
- Limit expectations to what is realistic for the developmental level of each child (and make these expectations clear to children). E.g. understand that young children are not ready to share yet; model and encourage sharing, but do not insist on it.
- Create a "yes" environment: rather than telling children what they cannot do, give them choices of the things they can do.
- Talk about children's positive behavior: "Thank you for giving the truck to Daniel when you were finished with it."
- Set a few simple, clear rules, focused around health and well being, safety, respect for property, and respect for others.
- State rules positively rather than negatively: "Please walk" instead of "Don't run."
- Offer reasons for rules: "I know you really want to paint, but it is not safe to run inside the classroom. I don't want you to slip and fall. Please use your walking feet when you are inside."
- Model behaviors that we wish children to use, e.g. always being courteous and attentive.
- Give children clear, simple directions and positive reminders.
- Pay close attention to children in order to prevent and/or intervene in challenging behaviors. (Especially important with children who are likely to escalate, hit or bite.)
- Redirect children from unacceptable to acceptable behavior: "I am going to help you stop kicking. We'll find something else for you to do."
- Share our own feelings about certain behaviors: "I get worried when you climb on the bookshelf."



- Help children deal with frustration and anger through words or pretend play.
- Focus on the child's behavior, not on the child's value as a person.
- Help children understand the consequences of their actions, and use problem-solving skills to develop solutions.
- Encourage children's growing sense of independence and acknowledge when children show self control.
- Help children refrain from dwelling on mistakes, so they can learn to move on.
- Some of the above strategies adapted from the Creative Curriculum® (Teaching Strategies, Inc.).

Time away from an activity can allow a child the chance to cool off and regain control; however, this strategy is used only rarely, for very objectionable, out-of-control or repeated antisocial behavior.

### **Unacceptable Discipline Methods**

The following methods are prohibited by staff at all times, under any circumstances:

- Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, squeezing and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear
- Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or use of the bathroom
- Use of food as reward
- Abusive or profane language
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment or emotional abuse, including shaming, humiliating, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child
- Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet
- Bribes, false threats or false choices
- Retaliating or doing to the child what s/he did to someone else
- Labeling a child as "bad" or otherwise implying that s/he is a problem, rather than the behavior

In the home, the Early Head Start Home Visitor must respect the parents' method of disciplining their children. However, one of our purposes is to help parents find more effective means of discipline. Child Focus, Inc./Early Childhood Division does not condone parents physically disciplining (spanking, etc.) or verbally abusing (calling names, etc.) children. This destroys the positive atmosphere that we attempt to encourage.

If a child exhibits a consistent challenging behavior, efforts will be made to understand why the behavior is happening. Staff and parent conferences are held to talk about ways to change behaviors, if necessary. It is important that staff and parents use a **consistent** approach to the problem both at the center and at home. If the child does not show improvement, we may refer the child and parents to our Early Childhood Mental Health Therapist and/or other qualified professionals for further evaluation.

All staff will:

- discuss topics such as: child management, guidance, discipline, techniques to modify behavior.
- distribute literature on discipline, child management, stress.
- inform parents of agency workshops on stress, discipline and behavior management techniques.
- make referrals to mental health services when needed.

All children will be supervised at all times. The requirements of ODJFS Rule 22 of the Administrative Code apply to all employees.

### **Transition Process**

Transitions from one center or option to another may be difficult for children. Transition plans are developed for each child as needed. This allows time for the child to adjust to new staff or centers.

- Transition from infant/toddler to preschool options will begin when the child is 2½ years old. Their plan will include staff from both options and the child's parent/guardian. A written transition agreement is signed by the parent and staff and placed in the child's file.
- Transition from home-based to center-based options begins within 30 days of the anticipated start in the center. A written transition plan will be developed by the Head Start home visitor and the child's parent, and will include the center-based teacher and a visit to the center prior to the child's start there.

### **Transportation**

- A family can be transported in a van by a home visitor. Child Focus car seats must be used.
- We will strive to accommodate parent's transportation needs. However, there are times parents must transport themselves to events.
- Eating and smoking is prohibited in the company vans.

## SECTION (6) HEALTH

### **Physical Exam Requirements**

All enrolled children must meet Federal requirements of the Office of Head Start. You must:

- Obtain a physical examination by a licensed physician for your child **within 30 days of enrollment** or **provide a copy of a physical that has been completed within the past year**. Early Head Start requires physicals follow the well child check schedule.
- If the physical is not obtained within 30 days of enrollment, the child will not be permitted to attend the center. Once the physical is obtained, the child may resume attending. If the physical is not obtained, the child will be withdrawn and placed on the reconsider list.

Health problems treated early may prevent long term problems later in life. Let your child's

doctor know the screenings listed here are **required by Early Head Start** and must be completed. If health screenings are not done by the doctor, with your consent, we will complete missing screenings.

- Vision
- Iron Screening
- Blood Pressure
- Hearing
- Measurements – Height & Weight
- Lead

Age appropriate screening tools are used. If you have any questions about how screenings are done, please call the Health & Special Education Manager at 528-7224. You will receive written results of screenings conducted. If there are any concerns noted during these screenings, you will be notified. We are available to help you locate providers for further testing as needed. Remember, if you do not want health screenings completed by our staff, you **must** have these screenings done by your child's physician and provide us with those written results.

### **General Anesthesia**

Children who have been given general anesthesia are not permitted to attend center or socials without parent present until 24 hours after anesthesia has been administered.

### **Dental Exam Requirements**

All enrolled children must meet Federal requirements of the Office of Head Start. You must:

- Obtain a **dental examination** by a licensed dentist within **30 days** of enrollment and after first birthday.
- If your child needs any follow-up treatment, you must be sure your child gets the needed treatment.
- Your Home Visitor can help you find a doctor or dentist in your area, access health coverage, make appointments, and provide transportation as needed.

If your child has a health condition or disability, we will make every effort to meet your child's needs. The Health & Special Education Manager and EHS staff will meet with you to discuss the condition. A Medical/Physical Care Plan will be developed to outline a plan of care for your child while attending the center.

Head checks will be done monthly in all centers, including staff and volunteers. If your child is found to have lice/nits, you will be called to pick up your child. If staff are not able to contact you, the emergency contact will be called to pick up your child. You will be given information on how to get rid of the lice/nits. Once you have treated the lice and removed all the nits, you can bring your child back to the center for a recheck. You must stay with your child until the head check is done. If no lice/nits are found, your child may stay at the center. If lice/nits are still present, your child will be sent home for the day so you can remove remaining nits. This process will be repeated as needed. If you have questions about when your child may return or getting rid of lice, please contact the Lead Teacher or the Health & Special Education Manager.



### Injury Procedures

- ◆ Incident Reports in triplicate will be completed to document any injury to a child as soon after the incident as is feasible.
- ◆ Incident Reports contain child's name, center location, name of parent, brief, accurate description of incident with good detail, and names of witnesses if any and center staff completing the report.
- ◆ An incident report will be completed by the child care staff member in charge of the child when:
  - An illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment.
  - A bump or blow to the head.
  - Emergency transporting.
  - An unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of children or staff.
- ◆ Incident Report will be signed by the parent/guardian and a copy sent home the day of the incident occurs.
- ◆ Center staff will inform the Health Manager immediately if any of the following incidents/injuries/situations occur:
  - Death of a child at center.
  - Serious incident, injury, or illness to a child including an incident or injury that requires emergency medical treatment or professional consultation or transportation for emergency treatment. Emergency transportation will be provided by local authorities or the person indicated on the Emergency Transportation Form.
  - An unusual event that jeopardizes the safety of children at the center.
- ◆ The Health Manager reviews all incident reports for any follow-up indicated with staff or parents.
- ◆ Copies of all Incident Reports are kept on file for one year and archived for reference as needed.

## SECTION (7) SAFETY

Our agency takes the responsibility of caring for your children very seriously. Children are never left alone or unattended. Staff is trained in safety policies and procedures. Emergency response phone numbers are posted in all locations. Parent/guardian emergency contact information for every child is kept on file. You must notify staff if your contact information changes. This will assure we can reach you in the event of an emergency. In the case of serious injury that requires medical treatment, staff will call 911. Parent/guardians are notified immediately if this occurs. Again, you must provide current contact information so you can always be reached in an emergency.

Centers are designed to meet all health, safety and developmental needs of children. Only age-appropriate non-toxic materials are used in our centers. All centers meet licensing regulations regarding safety procedures. Adequate temperatures in centers are maintained. We will not hold center session if the temperature in the center falls below 65 degrees. If the temperature



goes above 85 degrees, ventilation to provide air movement is used. Center staff inspect the centers and playgrounds daily. Any safety hazards, damaged materials, or other potential hazards are removed, repaired, or replaced.

Centers are inspected by licensing and fire personnel regularly to make sure we are meeting safety guidelines. Emergency fire, tornado, and evacuation plans are posted in each center. Tornado and fire drills are conducted regularly so children are familiar with procedures for evacuation. All center areas including bathrooms, closets, under desks, etc. are checked before leaving the building to make sure all children are out of the building. A head count is checked against the attendance sheet to make sure all children are accounted for.

## SECTION (8) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

### **Family Engagement in Early Head Start**

Child Focus Early Head Start strives to bring a relentless focus on positive child and family outcomes to close the achievement gap and build a better future for children, families and communities. As parents/guardians you will want your child to build upon the good start you have given them in your home. Parent involvement is the basis for your child's success.

Child Focus, Inc. strongly encourages parent involvement in their child's education by asking all parents to partner with us through a **Family Involvement Contract** which includes:

- Bringing child to class on time and every day because attendance is key to success.
- Reading to child every night to encourage a love of learning and build their vocabulary.
- Participate in orientation, parent meetings, home visits, parent/teacher conferences, and events.
- Volunteer at least 24 hours during the program year.
- Keeping all medical and dental appointments.

#### Home Based Only:

- Ensure that you and your child are at home, dressed and ready to participate at the start of every scheduled visit because consistent attendance in the home based program is key to success
- Actively participate in the entire home visit to develop skills as child's primary educator.
- Attend Group Socialization activities with child to emphasize peer group interaction through age-appropriate activities.
- Utilize only positive discipline techniques during home visits to promote my child's healthy development.
- Follow the guidelines for a successful home visit.
  - Designate a clear working space for home visit activities
  - Engage with child and Home Visitor in the learning activity
  - Eliminate distractions from visit including: TV, radio and cell phone
  - Safely secure pets in another room or outside
  - Refrain from smoking or drinking alcoholic beverages during visit

- Assist child with toileting and other personal hygiene matters during visit

We are excited about the opportunity to partner with you. Here's what Child Focus will do as part of the contract:

- Provide an excellent education program for all students in the centers, on home visits and during socializations.
- Work with you to set goals that will support your child's education.
- Help identify your strengths and skills and work with you to reach your own goals.
- Deliver or coordinate comprehensive services for your child and family, including education, family services, health, nutrition, mental health, and special needs; if applicable.
- Offer many ways for you to participate and volunteer at child Focus Head Start

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

#### **Parent Committee**

Participate in the leadership of your child's center/homebase by attending meetings and discussing issues.

#### **Advisory Committee**

Service on a committee that focuses on specific issues affecting the program, such as health or social services.

#### **Policy Council**

Represent your child's center or home base as the elected representative by attending monthly meetings and voting on many of the important decisions affecting the entire Child Focus Head Start program.

Some functions of Policy Council include:

- Serve as the link between center/home base to Policy Council bringing updated information to the parent meetings so other parents will be informed of current changes, grants, and strategic plans for the future.
- Serve as a link between public and private organizations, neighborhood councils, the Board of Directors and the community it serves.
- Have the opportunity to initiate suggestions and ideas for program improvement and to receive a report on action taken by the administering agency with regard to its recommendations.
- Plan, coordinate and organize agency-wide activities for parents with the assistance of staff.
- Recruit volunteer services from parents, community residents and organizations, and mobilize community resources to meet identified needs.

Agendas and minutes of Policy Council and parent meetings are available at each center or through your Home Visitor. If you are interested in more information about Policy Council, please contact the Family & Community Partnerships Manager at 528-7224.

### **Special Classroom Activities and Field Trips**

Share your interest with children by leading an age appropriate activity, sharing your musical talent or leading an art activity or helping on a field trip.

### **Regular Classroom Volunteering**

The success of our program requires parent volunteers. We invite you to talk to your child's Teacher about becoming a regular volunteer in your child's classroom or during socializations. You will be able to work with children on art activities, read to individual children or small groups, help during meals or transitions, etc.

All parent volunteers who volunteer four (4) or more times a month or who have regularly scheduled volunteer hours must complete a Volunteer Orientation and comply with the Ohio Department of Job and Family Service requirements. Orientations are scheduled with the Family and Community Partnerships Manager as needed. Your Teacher or Home Visitor can assist in scheduling the orientation.

- Volunteers must be at least 12 years of age.
- All regular volunteers 15 years of age or older must comply with ODJFS requirements.

#### **REQUIREMENTS:**

- Completed Nonconviction Statement
- BCII and FBI background check

### **Parent Meetings and Trainings**

Early Head Start centers and home bases will hold parent committee meetings and trainings throughout the program year. Transportation and child care will be provided if needed. These meetings will provide the opportunity to share center/home based information, Policy Council reports and current events and to allow parent input into your child's classroom/homebase curriculum.

All parents who have children enrolled in a particular center or home based program are members of the parent committee. Staff will review parent committee ideas with the Program Coordinator and Family & Community Partnerships Manager before final approval is given.

- Officers are elected and parents and staff use these meetings to exchange ideas and to work together to develop programs.
- Parents receive an agenda announcing the upcoming meeting/training time, place, and topics to be covered at the meeting. A copy of the minutes from the previous meeting will be available.
- Each parent committee will have a parent activity fund to spend as the group decides within certain guidelines. The amount of this fund will be determined yearly according to the budget.
- There will be **no** individual Parent Fund Raisers.

### **Teacher Conferences and Home Visits**

All centers will offer two conferences at the school and two home visits during the program year to meet with your child's Teacher or Asst. Teacher. During Parent/Teacher conferences and home visits, Teachers will share information about the center, educational screenings, your child's progress, individual goals developed and home activities discussed. Parents can request an additional meeting with the Teacher if needed.

### **Family Engagement Home Visits**

Teachers and Home Visitors will schedule a home visit at the beginning of the program year to complete a Family Strengths Assessment. After the Family Strengths Assessment has been completed, staff will schedule another home visit to develop a Family Partnership Agreement in which families may choose goals they would like to accomplish to prepare their child for success in kindergarten.

Teachers and Home Visitors are also available to assist families with:

- crisis intervention
- support and referral to appropriate community resources
- a linkage with state and federal benefits
- medical and dental resources
- housing resources
- parent education

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services  
**CENTER PARENT INFORMATION**  
**REQUIRED BY OHIO ADMINISTRATIVE CODE**

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a conspicuous place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the facility's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing child care are available for review at the facility upon request.

The administrator and each employee of the facility is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

Contact information for parents/guardians of the children attending the facility is available upon request. This information will not include the name, telephone number or email of any parent/guardian who requests that his/her name, telephone number or email not be included.

Recent licensing inspection reports and any substantiated complaint investigation reports for the past two years are posted in a conspicuous place in the facility for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The center's licensing inspection reports for the past two years are also available for review on the Child Care in Ohio website. The website is: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm>.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

***This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in 5101: 2-12-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code.***