

2014-2015

Child Focus 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

TABLE OF CONTENTS	2
SECTION (1) CENTER LOCATIONS, DAYS & HOURS OF OPERATION	4
SECTION (2) PROGRAM OPTIONS, SCHEDULE AND RATIOS	5
SECTION (3) PARENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES	6
SECTION (4) PHILSOPHY & GOALS	8
SECTION (5) GENERAL POLICIES & PROCEDURES	9
Head Start Enrollment Process	9
Attendance Policy	9
Disenrollment Policy	9
Kindergarten Policy	9
Non-Custodial Parent	10
Inclement Weather and Program Closing	10
Statement of Confidentiality	10
Release of Confidential Information	10
Grievance Procedure	10
Babysitting/Party Policy	11
USDA Nondiscrimination Statement	11
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect	11
Parent Communication	11
Positive Discipline and Guidance Policy for Children	12
Unacceptable Discipline Methods:	13
SECTION (6) CENTER & CLASSROOM OPERATIONS	14
Meal Times	14
Special Diets	14
Treat Policy	14
Parent Roster	14
What to Send to School with Your Child	15
Backpacks	15
Toileting Policy	15
Transition Process	15
Outside Play Policy	15
Field Trips	16
SECTION (7) ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE, TRANSPORTATION	17
Arrival & Departure	17
Emergency Contact Information	17
Release of Child	17
Arrival & Departure	17
Transportation Services	18
Place of Safety	19
Routes	19
Transportation Services Withdrawn	20

SECTION (8) HEALTH	20
Physical Requirements	20
General Anesthesia	20
Dental Exam Requirements	21
Medication Policy	21
Ill Child	22
Serious Incident, Illness or Injury	23
Incident Report Procedures	23
SECTION (9) SAFETY	24
General Emergency and Safety Procedures	24
Emergency Evacuation Sites	25
SECTION (10) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	26
Family Engagement in Head Start	26
Volunteer Opportunities	26
Parent Committee	26
Advisory Committee	26
Policy Council	27
Special Classroom Activities & Field Trips	27
Regular Classroom Volunteering	27
Parent Meetings & Trainings	27
Teacher Conferences & Home Visits	28
Family Engagement Home Visits	28
CENTER PARENT INFORMATION	29

My child's center/home base is _____

Class time _____

Center phone _____ Administrative Office 528-7224

Teacher _____

Assistant Teacher _____

Bus Driver _____

Classroom Aide _____

SNOW DAY CANCELLATION: My center will be closed when _____ is closed.
(school district)

Family Advocate _____ Phone # _____

Home Visitor _____ Phone # _____

Program Coordinator _____ Phone # _____

Assistant Director Beth McManus 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**

Head Start Centers (ages 3-5 yrs.)

Amelia Center (DS)

943-3859
Amelia Elementary
5 E. Main Street
Amelia, Ohio 45102
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:30-4:00)

Bethel Center (DS)

734-4025
William Bick Elementary
101 Fossyl Drive
Bethel, Ohio 45106
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:30-4:00)

CNE Center #1 (DS)

985-5094
CNE Owensville Building
463 S. Broadway
Owensville, Ohio 45160
M-TH (7:45-11:15/12:15-3:45)

CNE Center #2 (DS)

685-5373
CNE Owensville Building
463 S. Broadway
Owensville, Ohio 45160
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:45-4:15)

Felicity Center (SS)

876-2113
Felicity Elementary
415 Washington
Felicity, Ohio 45120
M-F (9:15-1:15)

Goshen Center (DS)

722-4120
Marr Cook Elementary
6696 Goshen Road
Goshen, Ohio 45122
M-TH (7:45-11:15/12:30-4:00)

Laurel Center (DS)

553-2616 Ext. 14224
Monroe Elementary
21117 Laurel-Lindale Road
New Richmond, Ohio 45151
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:30-4:00)

Milford Center (DS)

262-1393
Milford Preschool & Extended Day
1039 Hwy. 28
Milford, Ohio 45150
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:30-4:00)

Union Twp. #7 Center (DS)

528-7224
Child Focus Learning Center II
555 Cincinnati-Batavia Pike
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:30-4:00)

Union Twp. #8 Center (DS)

528-7224
Child Focus Learning Center II
555 Cincinnati-Batavia Pike
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
M-TH (8:15-11:45/12:45-4:15)

Union Twp. #9 Center (SS)

528-7224
Child Focus Learning Center II
555 Cincinnati-Batavia Pike
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
M-F (9:00 – 1:00)

Williamsburg Center (DS)

724-2241
Williamsburg Elementary
839 Spring Street
Williamsburg, Ohio 45176
M-Th (9:00-12:30/1:00-4:30)

WT Elementary Center (DS)

943-6933
Withamsville-Tabasco Elementary
3950 Britton Boulevard
Cincinnati, Ohio 45245
M-TH (8:00-11:30/12:30-4:00)



DS: Double Session
SS: Single Session

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

SECTION (2) PROGRAM OPTIONS

Head Start Home Based Program

The Head Start home based option is a child development program serving children age three to five 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 (classroom visits) are held twice a month to provide an opportunity for children to interact and engage socially in a classroom setting. The Home Visitor will seek input from parents when planning socials. Parents are encouraged to attend socials to meet other parents and learn about social behaviors of children and behavior management.

Head Start Part-Day Center Program

The center program option provides children age three to five 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 base program attend class Monday through Thursday with some occasional Fridays. Morning and afternoon classes are available.

Sample Daily Schedule for Part Day Center & Home Based Socializations

AM Session	PM Session	Schedule
8:00 AM	12:30 PM	<i>Arrival, health check, large group activity</i>
Early Morning	Early Afternoon	<i>Breakfast/Lunch, free choice, toothbrushing</i>
Mid Morning	Mid Afternoon	<i>Gross motor activity/ small group planned activities</i>
Late Morning	Late Afternoon	<i>AM – Lunch or PM – snack, toothbrushing</i>
11:30 AM	4:00 PM	<i>Group activity (music, story time, review of day), departure</i>

Our agency will maintain the following adult-child ratios and maximum group sizes in all Head Start programs. Each center is licensed to serve these maximum group sizes:

Age	Adult/Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
3 years – 5 years	1:10	20



SECTION (3) PARENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

Parent and family participation and involvement are essential to the success of the 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 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 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 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 Head Start program include:

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, staff, 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 Head Start program better by offering my opinions, constructive criticism, and suggestions.
6. Ask questions of my child's teacher, our Family Advocate, 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 Program Option only:

9. Participate in orientation process to assist my child with transitioning into the school year at his/her center. This process occurs with all "new" children throughout the program year.
10. Participate in two home visits each year with my child's Teachers.
11. Participate in home visits with the Family Advocate assigned to my family.
12. Participate in two Parent/Teacher Conferences per year.
13. 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.
14. Ensure that my child has extra clothing at the center.

Home-Based Program Option only:

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



SECTION (4) PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

Our program philosophy is every child can learn and succeed at the highest levels. We recognize that there is a substantial achievement gap between children from low income families and their higher income peers. Our curriculum plans are designed to reduce the achievement gap by providing age appropriate experiences that build the skills necessary for a positive transition to kindergarten and future success in school and in life.

Our Goals...

Focus on the entire family as a unit. At Child Focus, we believe each parent is their child's first and most important teacher. Our Family Engagement plan highlights the parent's role in achieving the best outcomes for their child in achieving school success and establishing family life practices that impact not only the child's life during their head start years, but throughout their school career.

Consider assessment and evaluation results in making appropriate decisions to support children's learning, improve their performance and realize their individual potential.

Plan and deliver age appropriate environments, activities and experiences focused on school readiness plan goals.

Value the differences in children, building upon diversity rather than stressing conformity.

Provide intentional, purposeful age appropriate activities and experiences that engage children, interest them and meet their needs across all learning domains. Provide learning experiences that promote school readiness and the development of social and emotional, cognitive, language and literacy skills.

Encourage children to engage and interact with their learning experiences through many and varied opportunities for exploration by providing children the time and opportunity to explore and investigate their world creatively with an understanding that children learn through active involvement and play in a safe, healthy, caring and stimulating environment.

Incorporate appropriate special education strategies to maximize success in the classroom setting.

Collaborate with local school districts to foster best practice in meeting the educational needs of children in the least restrictive environment.



SECTION (5) GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Head Start 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.
- Income must be verified every two years, and when a child transfers from Early Head Start to Head Start.
- There are no tuition/fees for enrolling and attending the 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, parent is to **call the center staff 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 Family Advocate 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 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.

Kindergarten Policy

A child that is 5 years old by the kindergarten eligibility date set by his/her local school district will not be eligible for enrollment in Head Start, unless:

- The child has a Local Education Agency (LEA) administered Individualized Education Program (IEP) plan and the evaluation team determines that the child would benefit from an additional year of Head Start. Documentation in the form of the revised IEP with Head Start as the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) or a letter containing the decision and reason from an IEP team member must be received prior to re-enrollment.

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.

Inclement Weather & Center Closings

Our centers will be closed when the public schools in the area of the center are closed due to bad weather. This will apply to both AM and PM sessions. If the public school is on delay only, AM sessions will be cancelled but PM sessions will be open. Please listen to your local radio or television station for these announcements as they will be your only notice of cancellations.

If the center is closed for other reasons, families will be notified by a recorded message that will be sent to the contact numbers that the families provided in the enrollment packet. **Families need to ensure that the centers have all updated information.** Home based services will be cancelled if local travel conditions are too dangerous.

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 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 Head Start centers are licensed by the Ohio Department of Jobs & Family Services; therefore all child/family information is available to the licensing specialist 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 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.

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.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited basis will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

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, 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 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 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.

SECTION (6) CENTER & CLASSROOM OPERATIONS

Meal Times

Family style meal service is used in the Head Start program. Children are encouraged to taste all foods, but they are never forced to eat anything they do not want. One goal of the program is to introduce the children to a wide variety of foods.

Teachers will sit with the children during meal times, model appropriate eating behavior, and initiate conversations, similar to a home setting. Teachers will also use this time for learning so that nutrition education is incorporated into the routine of meals.

The menus for the program are designed by a Registered Dietitian. She ensures that the meals are nutritious, attractive and tasty at the same time providing 1/3 of the Recommended Daily Allowance for nutrients for preschoolers. Copies of menus are available to parents on request. Menus are posted at each center. The menus follow the guidelines for CACFP (Child and Adult Food Program) and are generally as follows:

Breakfast (3 menu items)

1. 6 oz. 1% Milk
2. ½ cup fruit or fruit juice
3. 1/3 cup cereal, 1 pancake, small bagel, or Muffin

Lunch (5 menu items)

1. 6 oz. 1% Milk
2. 1.5 oz meat, cheese or eggs
3. ¼ cup rice or pasta, or ½ slice bread
4. ¼ cup vegetables
5. ¼ cup fruit

Snack (2 menu items)

1. ½ cup fruit or fruit juice
2. Pretzels, Crackers, Yogurt, or Granola Bar. etc

Necessary adaptations will be made for any children with special needs. If a child arrives late to an AM session, they will be offered a nutritious breakfast.

Special Diets

All meals served in our program meet USDA guidelines for children. If your child cannot eat certain foods, menu adjustments may be made. Parents may request a certain food item is restricted for cultural or religious reasons. If a diet must restrict an entire food group, we must have a doctor's note to restrict the food group. Center will provide food supplements, as needed, for children on special diets.

Treat Policy

Our agency serves children with food allergies. To reduce the risk of accidental exposure, **parents are not permitted to send/bring any food items to centers.**

Children love to celebrate their birthday and other special events. We very much want to allow them to do so. Parents may celebrate the occasion by sending in a gift for the classroom. Appropriate items include a new book or art materials. Be sure all items are non-toxic and do not have small parts that could cause choking. Your teacher will have suggestions for you.

Parent Roster

Rosters of other parent/guardians' names and phone numbers by center or home base are available upon request. Only those parents who agree to allow their name and phone number to be included on the roster by checking the appropriate box on the ODJFS Child Enrollment Form are included.

What to Send to School with Your Child

Appropriate Clothing

In our Head Start program, children are involved in active play every day – both inside and outside. It is important that children come to school dressed appropriately. This includes:

- Comfortable clothing, which is easy to put on and take off (for easier toileting)
- Comfortable shoes, preferably sneakers. Open-toed or backless shoes are not permitted.
- Please send your child to school with clothing appropriate for the weather/season:
 - Coat, mittens, hat in winter
 - Boots for rain or snow
 - Note: Sun screen to be applied prior to child coming to the center.
- Children must have **at least one complete change of clothing (labeled with child's name or initials)** at all times in case of messy play or a bathroom accident. This includes:
 - Shirt & Pants
 - Underwear & Socks

Backpacks

Backpacks are not permitted. Unfortunately, we do not have the space to accommodate storing a backpack for each child. Children's artwork and classroom notes will be sent home once a week.

Toileting Policy

Parents will be asked to provide information about the child's toileting practices to assist us in making program placement decisions. Staff will work with parent(s)/guardian(s) to meet goals of toilet training. Parents will receive a packet of helpful tips. Staff and parents will work to ensure that children will reach milestones in toilet training (1. muscle control, 2. emotional readiness and willingness to cooperate, and 3. ability to communicate toileting needs)

Head Start will provide wipes and pull-ups/diapers for non-toilet trained children during program hours.

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 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.
- Transition from preschool programs to kindergarten begins within 30 days of enrollment and is ongoing throughout the year. Centers schedule a field trip to a local kindergarten class in the spring, distribute transition information to families, and share specific registration information for their school district.

Outdoor Play Policy

Outdoor play is provided in suitable weather for every child attending center for more than four (4) consecutive day light hours. Outdoor play **will not** occur if temperature falls below 32°F (including wind chill), poor air quality conditions exist (including ozone levels), or if there is a heat advisory in effect. Outdoor play areas are arranged to prevent children from leaving the area. Fences or natural barriers are used to ensure that children are not exposed to vehicular traffic and animals.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled at various times throughout the year based on funding and educational value. In order for field trips to remain well organized, safe and fun for everyone participating (children, families and teaching staff) the following guidelines are in place:

- Length of travel distance, time, cost, educational value, developmental appropriateness and availability of transportation will be considered in the approval/disapproval of all field trips.
- All funding for field trips is provided by the agency and covers the cost of the enrolled child and his/her parents/guardians. However, based on the location and cost of field trip and type of experience, it may be necessary to limit one (1) adult per family or the number of chaperones that can attend.
- Each child must have field trip permission slips signed by parent/guardian.
- Siblings may attend field trips; however, we cannot provide transportation or cover the cost of siblings. Teaching staff are not responsible for siblings attending field trip and must be supervised at all times by parent/guardian.
- Food, such as sack lunches, will be provided for anyone attending the field trip unless the sibling is using baby food.
- **All** field trip participants are required to eat and drink the same meals that are provided to the enrolled children. Head Start Performance Standards have very specific rules regarding the meals we provide our children, therefore **all adults** are asked to refrain from buying the “goodies”.
- Smoking is not permitted on field trips.

Transportation:

- Enrolled children will ride the bus, even if the parent or other adult is planning to attend the field trip.
- If parents do not want the enrolled child to ride the bus, the parent will notify the teacher in advance, provide their own transportation and meet the class at the field trip location.
- If parents wish to leave early or remain longer at the field trip location, the parent must notify the teacher in advance, provide their own transportation, and sign their child out with the teacher. This signature releases the teaching staff from responsibility for your child. Parents are not permitted to transport other enrolled children.

Supervision Plan:

- Each child will wear field trip I.D. or t-shirt containing the following:
 - Agency name, address, and phone number
- Staff will complete child counts:
 - When leaving center
 - On bus going to field trip site
 - When leaving bus at field trip site
 - Entering field trip site
 - Lunch/snack time
 - Restroom breaks
 - On bus leaving field trip site
 - Upon arrival back to center
- Staff will take Escort forms, Medical/Physical Care Plans (including medication as noted in plan) and attendance sheet with them for the duration of the field trip.



SECTION (7) ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE, TRANSPORTATION

Arrival & Departure

To ensure your child's safety,

- Parent/guardian or adult must accompany their child to and from his or her classroom when dropping off and picking up.
- Child must be signed in when dropping off and signed out when being picked up.
- Parent/guardian or adult must stay with child until the program starts and notify staff of arrival and departure.
- Children must be picked up promptly at the program's closing time.

Parents must pick up and drop off children on time. After 3 occurrences of being picked up more than 15 minutes late, parents will be required to sign an agreement to pick child up on time. If child continues to be picked up late, services will be withdrawn and child will be put on the reconsider waiting list. If emergencies arise, parents must notify the center. If there is no notification and parent is more than 1 hour late, and no one is available who is listed on the escort or emergency contact form, the local police department and Children's Protective Services will be called.

We thank you for your cooperation in this matter, and we know you understand that for the safety and well being of your children, it is essential that children are picked up on time by the appropriate people and that a responsible adult is available to receive the children from the center. **At no time will staff hold the child responsible for the situation or discuss the issue with the child.**

Emergency Contact Information

During the Enrollment Process, parents will provide Emergency Contact information as part of the ODJFS Child Enrollment form and on the Escort form. This form is updated at least annually for all families.

- The center/program must have at least one phone number by which we can reach the parent/guardian. Temporary exclusion may occur if the center does not have a phone number to reach the parent/guardian.
- We recommend there must be at least three emergency contacts (authorized persons that can pick up and transport the child home in the parent/guardian's absence).
- If contact information changes at any time, the center must be contacted immediately.
*Parents/guardians must ensure that the form is kept current at all times:
- Changes or additions to the Escort form or emergency contacts listed must be made in writing.

Release of Child

Our program is deeply committed to the safety of the children we serve. The following will be strictly enforced.

- Children will only be released to parents/guardians and authorized persons designated as Emergency Contacts on the ODJFS Child Enrollment form and/or Escort form.
- The program recommends that these "Emergency Contacts" be adults of 18 years of age or older, however, if due to the family's needs a person of a younger age is needed to pick the child up from the center this request will be considered on a case by case basis following state Child Care Licensing guidelines.

- All persons picking up the child from the center must have proper identification at all times, this includes parents/guardians. **A picture ID must be presented for verification (preferably a driver's license).** Staff will refer to the child's ODJFS Child Enrollment Form and Escort form and requests persons to show photo identification as needed.
- **We must have parent/guardian signed and dated written permission in order to release child.**
- If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access to the child by a court order, we will secure documentation to this effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the documentation.
- If a parent or another designee fails to pick up a child at the time of the center's daily closing, Head Start staff will attempt to contact parent/guardian or authorized person's listed on Escort Form or listed as an Emergency Contact. If no authorized person is available after 1 hour past the expected time, the local police department and Children's Protective Services will be notified.
- If the parent picking up the child, or the person authorized by the parents to do so, is physically and/or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the staff on site, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, we will not release the child. In this event, staff will attempt to contact the child's other parent/guardian or an alternative persons authorized by the parents/guardian.

Transportation Services

Due to limited transportation resources, bus service is only offered at some centers and may not be available for every child.

There are no substitute Drivers for regular routes. If a Driver is unable to drive, transportation will be cancelled. Unfortunately, if a Driver is out for an extended period of time, transportation service will be suspended until the Driver is able to return. In some cases, it might be necessary to share a Driver between centers and alternate when transportation is offered. Parents should have alternate arrangements for transportation in the event that it is cancelled. Notice will be provided through the "One Call" system as soon as possible.

At centers where transportation is provided, our Drivers meet all CDL licensing requirements. The Ohio State Highway Patrol inspects all buses two times per year. Children are transported in school buses in the appropriate child safety restraint for the child's age/weight according to Ohio State law. The center will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires emergency transportation, the parent/guardian or the emergency squad will provide transportation.

Safety is our primary concern when transporting children. Failure to follow safety rules will result in suspension or termination of transportation services. By using Head Start transportation services, parents agree to comply with the following rules:

- When getting on and off the bus, children must use the hand rail.
- Children must keep safety restraint system buckled at all times. The Driver will tell them when it's okay to unbuckle.
- There will be **no** eating, drinking or smoking while on the bus.

- Parents are not permitted to board the bus during pick-up and drop-off. The monitor will assist each child into their seat.

Place of Safety – State Law

- The Driver will designate a **Place of Safety** for each child.
- State law requires that parent and child must wait in their designated **Place of Safety** prior to the bus arrival for pick-up and after signing your child off the bus at drop-off.
- Inside a house or a car cannot be designated as a **Place of Safety**.
- Parents should allow 5 minutes before and after scheduled pick-up and drop-off times.
- Remember, we are transporting preschoolers and sometimes delays in the route may occur due to unforeseen circumstances. We appreciate your understanding.
- Drivers will come to a complete stop at each designated bus stop. If no one is at the **Place of Safety**, the Driver will continue the route. Drivers are not permitted to wait on the road if no one is at the **Place of Safety**.
- Never approach the bus until the bus has stopped and the Driver has opened the door, and given the hand signal.
- Stay out of the DANGER ZONE - 10 feet all around the bus is the danger zone. The Driver may not be able to see a person standing in the danger zone.
- As soon as children get off the bus they need to take 20 giant steps away from the bus and go to **Place of Safety** while the bus drives off.
- Drivers are allowed no more than 2 minutes for loading and unloading passengers at each bus stop. Please call your child's teacher or home visitor if you have something to discuss.
- Failure to follow the **Place of Safety** rules will result in termination of bus services.

Routes

- Children will only be picked up and dropped off at assigned bus stops.
- The Driver must have all of the necessary forms and route updated before a new pick-up/drop-off bus stop will be assigned. Please allow at least 1 week for this to occur.
- **Community pick-up and drop-off points will be used at most apartment complexes and mobile home parks. It may also be necessary for a designated pick-up/drop-off point based on location of home, length of route and ability to offer transportation to as many children as possible.**
- Pick-up/drop off points are established at the discretion of the Driver and Transportation Supervisor.
- Each child must have at least one person in the immediate area on their Escort Form.
- Inform the Driver and center of any changes in name, phone number and address of parent, child and persons on the Escort Form.
- **We must have parent/guardian signed and dated written permission in order to release child.**
- Parents who have a working schedule that varies from week to week are required to furnish center staff with a weekly schedule on Monday, informing staff where their child will be picked up and dropped off. Pick up and drop off points must be on the bus route and approved by the Transportation Supervisor. Due to limited transportation services and length of routes, working schedules may not always be able to be accommodated.

There must be an authorized person at the bus stop to receive your child and they must be 16 years old or older except when a parent or guardian has a written permission form on file for authorized people ages 12-15 years old. Written permission must be signed and dated by parent/guardian and administrator. If no authorized person is there to receive your preschooler, Child Focus, Inc. staff:

- Will not release your child.

- Will notify the front office to attempt to contact parent/guardian or authorized person's listed on Escort Form or listed as an Emergency Contact.
- Will return to the center with your child. If no authorized person is available after 1 hour past the expected drop-off time, the local police department and Children's Protective Services will be notified.

Child Focus, reserves the right to withdraw transportation services if:

- The address where the child is to be picked up or delivered is outside the transportation route.
- Child repeatedly ignores instructions to remain seated and buckled in the seat belt or does not follow safety rules.
- Parents/escorts verbally abuse (i.e. cursing, screaming, threatening) the driver or any other staff.
- Three or more occurrences of no authorized person to receive child when dropping off.
- Failure to comply with safety regulations and Place of Safety.
- Transportation services are not utilized regularly.
- Changes in number of students utilizing transportation for a particular bus route.

SECTION (8) 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**. Head Start requires physicals be updated every 12 months.
- If the physical is not obtained within 30 days of enrollment, the child will not be permitted to attend the center or socializations. 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 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 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.
- If your child needs any follow-up treatment, you must be sure your child gets the needed treatment.
- Your Family Support Specialist or 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 Manager and center 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.

Medication Policy

Our centers follow state and federal regulations regarding medication. We must follow these regulations. There can be **NO** exceptions. Staff is not permitted to give the first dose of any medication. If medication can be given at home, it must be given at home.

We will administer **rescue medications** to your child while in attendance at centers when needed.

You must follow these procedures regarding medication:

- The Medical Physical Care Plan outlining the plan of care, including instructions for medication administration, must be completed when a health condition requires rescue medication to be given.
- You must bring the rescue medication to the center. You may not send medication to the center on the bus or put medication in your child's backpack. It must be hand-delivered to the teacher.
- You must complete the Request for Administration of Medication form at the time you bring in the medication. No medication will be accepted in the center without this completed form.
 - The Request for Administration of Medication outlines specific guidelines when written instructions from the physician must be obtained.
 - Medications other than rescue medication will be considered for administration at the center **only** after review and approval by the Health Manager. When the Health Manager is not available, a designee will be assigned.

When medication is left at the center at the time the child leaves the program, staff will make every effort to contact you. Staff will keep the medication for a period of **one (1) week**. If you do not pick up the medication, staff will contact the Health Manager. The Health Manager will make one (1) final attempt to contact you. If the Health Manager is unable to reach you, the **medication will be discarded**.

If your child has a suspected disability, we will meet with you to discuss referral and resource options. With your consent, your child will be referred to a local agency or your school district for further testing.

If your child qualifies for services, we will work together with you and the referral agency. A plan will be developed to meet your child's educational and developmental needs, set goals for your child, and monitor progress.

Classroom observations are conducted at least two times per year. These observations look at the environment of the center, social interactions between children and their peers, and offer support in

making any needed changes. If concerns regarding your child's behavior are noted, you will be informed. We will provide assistance to parents and staff on strategies to address challenging behaviors.

III Child

We are very concerned about the health of children in our care. We follow Ohio Department of Health guidelines in determining if children must be sent home. Children with any of the symptoms below will be made comfortable on a cot in an area away from other children and monitored closely by staff. The parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up the child. If we cannot reach the parent/guardian, the designated emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child.

Symptoms include:

- Temperature of at least one hundred (100) degrees F when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness. Temperature shall be taken by the auxiliary (arm pit) method with a digital thermometer. The thermometer shall be sanitized after each use.
- Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four (24) hour period)
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Redness of the eye or eye lid, thick and purulent (puss) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
- Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations.
- Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
- Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness

Your child may return to the center when:

- Cleared by the doctor to return and/or
- Free of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea for at least 12 hours
- Effective medical treatment of the illness has been obtained
- As directed by the Ohio Department of Health Communicable Disease chart and instructions.

Parents will receive written notification when a communicable illness has occurred in their child's classroom.

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 is 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 Manager.

Serious Incident, Illness or Injury

In the event of a serious incident, illness or injury, the following procedures will be followed:

- Staff will stay with the injured/ill child at all times and summon additional help if needed to supervise the rest of the children.
- Staff will quickly complete an assessment: Appearance, Breathing, Circulation.
- Staff will summon a staff member trained in First Aid/Communicable Disease/CPR if they are not trained.
- Staff will determine whether EMS needs to be contacted. The Health Manager may be contacted for guidance when needed.
- Check child's health information to determine if a Medical/Physical Health Care Plan has been completed for the child.
- Contact parent/guardian.
- Provide basic first aid until EMS or parent arrives. Staff will accompany child to the hospital with all available health records if the parent is not available.
- Complete an incident report for parents.

If child is ill, staff will isolate child away from other children, reference the ODH Communicable Disease Chart and follow instructions. Staff will determine whether illness needs to be reported to ODH. If blood or bodily fluids are involved, staff will wear vinyl or non-latex gloves and follow standard precautions for cleanup. Children must be supervised at all times. Children in the group must be kept within sight and hearing until additional staff are available to take control of children. Staff shall stay with children until the parent arrives.

Incident Report 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 staff member in charge of the child when any of the following occurs:
 - 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 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.
 - 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 (9) 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.

All swimming sites will meet state and local guidelines. Ratios of children per staff member and lifeguards per child when indicated will be maintained at all times. Activities in bodies of water two or more feet in depth shall be supervised by lifeguards or certified water safety instructors.

Adults actively supervise children and are able to clearly see all parts of the swimming area including the bottom of pools. Wading pools shall be emptied, filtered, and/or sanitized at least daily and/or as needed. Staff members will review water safety rules with children each time they participate in water activities.

Child Focus, Inc. requires written permission from the parent or guardian before the child:

- swims in or is near water two or more feet in depth
- This written permission shall be signed and dated by the parent or guardian, and be on file for review.

Parents will sign "Walking Permits" upon enrollment for their child to participate in short walks within the surrounding area of the center. Signed "Walking Permits" will be filed in his/her center file. Teachers may plan short walks for days the playground is too wet for safe play.

For the safety of all children, please do not send your child to school with small objects like beaded jewelry, chap sticks, make-up, etc.

General Emergency and Safety Procedures

The safety of your child is a top priority for our agency. We have outlined procedures for emergencies that are posted near the phone in every center to follow in the event that an emergency would occur while in our care. In the event of a fire or tornado, staff would follow the written instructions posted in

each classroom, describing emergency evacuation routes, and the procedures to be followed to assure that children have arrived at the designated spot. Staff will take attendance roster, first aid kit and emergency contact information for children. All children will be accounted for with a name to face check off.

In order to prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the center does conduct monthly fire drills and weather emergency drills in the months March-September. Should we need to evacuate due to fire or weather conditions, or the loss of power, heat or water to the center, the emergency destination for each center is listed on the next page. A sign will be posted in front of the center indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. Parents will be contacted immediately. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contacts as listed on your child's enrollment information.

In the unlikely event there would be an environmental threat or a threat of violence, staff will; secure the children in the safest location possible, contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities and contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would also be provided to the parents.

In the event a "Shelter In Place" order from authorities should occur, procedures are in place to assure the safety of children and staff. Supplies that may be needed are available in all centers. Your child will be cared for by their routine caregivers whenever possible to promote continuity of care. Once the "Shelter In Place" order is lifted by authorities, you may pick up your child. No child will be released to any parent/guardian until this order is lifted.

In the event of orders to evacuate a center, we will contact local authorities for evacuation instructions. Once at the evacuation site, parents/guardians will be contacted to pick up their child/children or that child will be transported home on Head Start bus.

[Emergency Evacuation Sites](#)

Amelia Elementary

Playground behind building

CNE Center #1 & #2

Playground behind building center

Goshen Center

Playground behind building

Milford Center

Back of school building

Williamsburg Elementary Center

Playground behind building

Bethel Center

Hill Intermediate School

Felicity Center

Public library across the street from

Laurel Center

Outdoor playground behind school

Union Twp. #7, #8, #9 Center

Far corner of front parking lot

WT Center

Playground behind building

SECTION (10) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Family Engagement in Head Start

Child Focus 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 Program 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 by attending meetings and discussing issues.

Advisory Committee

Serve 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, Head Start Home Visitor, or Family Advocate 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 Family Advocate 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
- BCI and FBI background check

Parent Meetings and Trainings

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 base information, Policy Council reports and current events and to allow parent input into your child's classroom/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, 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

Family Advocates 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.

Family Advocates and Head Start 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.