



Early Learning Programs

**EARLY HEAD START
CENTER BASE
PARENT HANDBOOK**

2021-2022

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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 _____ Phone #: 528-7224

Program Director Beth McManus _____ Phone # 528-7224



Early Learning Programs

Administrative Office
4629 Aicholtz Rd. - Cincinnati, OH 45244
(513) 528-7224 - Fax (513) 688-8141
Email: Info@child-focus.org

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

Child Focus Learning Center #1

528-7224
4629 Aicholtz Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
Full day option available at this location 7 am-5:30 pm
Early Head Start Hours 8:30 am-2:30 pm

Child Focus Learning Center #2

528-7224
4633 Aicholtz Road
Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
Early Head Start hours 8:30 am-2:30 pm

Emergency Evacuation Sites

Child Focus Learning Center #1

Far corner of front playground of Child Focus Learning Center #1 Building

Child Focus Learning Center #2

Exit back door to playground of Child Focus Learning Center #2 Building

Breastfeeding Locations

The following locations are available for nursing mothers to breastfeed their child:
Child Focus Learning Center Building 1 & 2: Office area located in Corporate Office or staff break room

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

SECTION (2) PROGRAM OPTIONS

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.

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. Ratios are 1:4 with group sizes of 8 or 9.

The Child Focus Early Head Start Full Day Classroom is open from 7:00 am to 5:30 pm Monday through Friday. **Early Head Start hours are 8:30am to 2:30pm.**

Parents may choose to pay for the hours outside of Early Head Start hours out of pocket. This would include signing a fee agreement authorizing automatic payment from either a credit/debit card or the authorization of an electronic funds transfer from a bank account on a weekly basis.

Or, parents may choose to pay for hours outside of the Early Head Start hours with child care vouchers. Our Early Head Start Full Day classrooms accept ***child care vouchers and payment*** from the Clermont County Department of Job and Family Services. Parents receiving child care subsidies must comply with the billing process and requirements established by the supporting agency. Child care vouchers cannot be used for more child care time than the time specified in the voucher. Children are eligible for child care services only when the parent/custodian is at work or school.

Centers will be closed LABOR DAY, THANKSGIVING, the day after THANKSGIVING, CHRISTMAS DAY, NEW YEAR'S DAY, MEMORIAL DAY and the FOURTH OF JULY; these are paid holidays for our staff. In addition, EHS centers will be closed for winter break December 24 to January 1 and West Clermont School District's spring break. The number of times child care centers are closed will be kept to a MINIMUM. Parents will be given advance notice in the event the center needs to be closed for other reasons such as staff training or agency-wide events. **In order to continue to provide you and your child the best care possible, periodically throughout the year the Child Focus Learning Centers will close to allow for staff in-service trainings.** Should a center be closed any other days and/or times, you will be given a minimum of a three (3) week notice to enable you and your family to make alternate child care arrangements.

All information regarding your family is kept confidential. Confidentiality policies are outlined for staff. All files are kept in a locked file. If you have questions or concerns about our enrollment process, please call 528-7224.

SECTION (3) PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Arrival & Departure

To ensure your child's safety, we will follow recommended guidelines regarding drop off and pick up.

- Child must be signed in when dropping off and signed out when being picked up.
- 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.**

Parents/guardians are not permitted to leave young children unattended in a vehicle during pick-up or drop-off. Child Focus staff are federally mandated reporters. As such, if staff observe children left unattended, staff must inform the local law enforcement agency.

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 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.

Snow Days

Please listen to your local radio or television station for notice of delays or closure announcements as this will be your only notice of cancellations or delays. **EHS classrooms follow West Clermont School District for snow delays or closures.**

SECTION (4) 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.
9. Agree to access follow-up care when health concerns are supported or identified.

Center-based Program Option only:

10. Participate in two home visits each year with my child's Teachers.
11. Participate in home visits with the staff assigned to my family on an as needed basis.
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 and, if in a full day program, has items for nap time.

SECTION (5) 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 (6) 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
- Allow consent for emergency transportation if necessary. Child cannot be enrolled in program if consent is not signed for emergency transportation.
- 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.

Within the first 60 days of enrollment in the program, Family Advocate and Teachers will identify children that missed 10% of attendance and reach out to the families to complete an Attendance Success Plan to help the family identify those barriers that are affecting their regular participation in the classroom and help them to have a successful school year.

If a child will be **absent or tardy**, the parent or guardian must contact **the center staff immediately** to explain the reason. If a child is **unexpectedly absent and no contact** has been made within one hour of class start time, Head Start staff must attempt to contact the parent /guardian to ensure the child's safety and well-being. If a child has been **absent for three (3) consecutive days** with no explanation from parent/guardian, **the Teacher is required to contact the parent/guardian with a call or home visit to complete an Attendance Agreement**. If four (4) **consecutive unexpected absences** occur within a 30-day period, your child may be placed back on the Reconsider List. If the situation changes and consistent attendance can be expected, you may call center for next available opening.

We want to work with parent/guardians to remove barriers causing a child to be absent or tardy, so that children can benefit from the program and their Early Head Start enrollment can be maintained.

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 Early Head Start is not the most appropriate placement for your child we will work with you to facilitate the transition to a more appropriate placement.

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

Lost, Misplaced or Damaged Personal Items Policy

Please be advised that Child Focus, Inc. will not assume responsibility for any lost, misplaced or damaged personal items brought to the center. Child Focus, Inc. will make every effort to keep these items from getting lost or broken but we will not offer any kind of reimbursement for lost or damaged property. Please label your child's possessions properly to help us keep track of individual belongings and minimize the number of personal items brought to the center.

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 Early 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 Head Start. We ask that all formal complaints be put in writing (on form provided or by email) and sent to Asst. Director. 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.

Diapering and Toileting Policy

- Child Focus provide diapers, wipes, and/or pull-ups for potty training.
- The program policy is to check diapers every 2 hours. Parents may request more frequent changes at the time of enrollment.
- Children birth to 3 will begin toilet training no later than 2 years 6 months and based on child's individual development. Parents will receive a packet of helpful hint.

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.

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. Child Focus will provide blankets for naptime and launder them weekly.

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 25°F (including wind chill) or above 90°, 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.

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

The Early Head Start staff 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.

Consents, Authorizations & Releases

Thank you for allowing Child Focus, Early Learning Programs to provide educational services to your child. Our quality programming works to assure children reach their full potential and are ready for success. We value the critical role parents' play in the lives of their children. We look forward to a promising partnership with you.

Through participation in our program, your child will receive educational screenings and assessments. The results of these will be used to design the best approach in maximizing your child's learning opportunities. Educational staff will discuss assessment results with you. You will be provided strategies to continue learning opportunities at home. Periodic updates will let you know how your child is doing throughout the program year.

Social-emotional well-being also plays a critical role in a child's ability to be successful. Our program is fortunate to have the expertise of early childhood mental health intervention specialists in assuring classrooms are nurturing and responsive to the social-emotional needs of all children. These specialists conduct classroom observations, providing ongoing support to staff. When children demonstrate difficulties in the classroom, these specialists work with staff and parents to outline an intervention plan designed to promote social emotional development and eliminate barriers that may interfere with learning.

Optimal health is vital to a child's ability to reach their full potential. As such, we are required to assure children are up-to-date on a schedule of age-appropriate well child care including dental care. Documentation from your child's physician and dentist allows us to track your child's health status. When health screenings are not completed by your child's physician, our program will complete screenings needed to bring your child up-to-date. These screenings may include vision, hearing, blood pressure, hemoglobin and lead screenings (requires simple finger stick procedure). You will receive written results of all screenings. Health staff will contact you to discuss any abnormal results.

Child Focus works with local public schools and others to help ensure your child's successful transition to Kindergarten or another placement. Child Focus will exchange information with (release to and receive from) public schools, other placement or consulting physicians, when indicated. Such information may include but is not limited to health records, registration information, educational assessments, standardized test scores, testing/screening results, Individual Education Plan (IEP), and/or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). This permission remains valid until children complete Grade 3. If you choose to revoke permission in the future, contact Child Focus, your child's school and any other professional or agency to which permission is no longer granted.

Transition Process

Transitions from one center or classroom to another may be difficult for children. Individual transition plans and meetings are developed for each child's transition to be successful. This allows time for the child and parent to adjust to new staff or centers.

- ◆ Transition from **infant/toddler to preschool** programs will begin at 2 years 6 months when the child is ready to advance to the next developmentally appropriate level. This plan will include staff from both programs and the child's parent/guardian. A written transition agreement is signed by parent and placed in the file.
- ◆ Transition from **preschool programs to kindergarten** begins within 30 days of enrollment and is ongoing throughout the year. Centers distribute transition information to families, and share specific registration information for their school district.

SECTION (7) HEALTH

- ◆ **Transition to other CFI centers or other early childhood programs** begin as soon as possible (if time permits) and are based on the needs of the child and/or family.

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.
- Children must provide up to date immunizations at enrollment. Parents may decline immunizations for cultural/personal reasons in writing. Children who are medically exempt from immunizations must provide statement from medical provider.

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, Hearing, Blood Pressure, Measurements- Height & Weight
- Lead & Iron Screening (We monitor these screenings but we do not perform them)

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 Advocate or Home Visitor can help you find a doctor or dentist in your area, access health coverage, make appointments, and provide transportation as needed.

Health Conditions and Medication Procedures

Our centers follow state and federal regulations in meeting the health needs of children in our program. We must follow these regulations. There can be **NO** exceptions.

If your child has a health condition or disability, we will make every effort to meet your child's needs. You must note any health condition, dietary restriction, need for medication or disability in the enrollment packet. The Health Manager will review the information you provide and contact you. If the condition requires medical procedures or special care when your child is attending our program, the Health Manager will arrange a meeting to complete the care plan. Your child will not be permitted to attend center or socializations until this has been completed. This will allow us to be sure we are prepared to meet the needs of your child.

If your child has a condition that requires *rescue medication*, the Health Manager will include procedures for medication administration in the care plan. ***NO medication is permitted to be at the center without the appropriate plan and documentation.*** There are **NO** exceptions to this rule. Parents are **NOT** permitted to give medication to staff, give it to the bus driver or send it to the center with the child.

If changes in your child's health occur during the school year, you must call the Health Manager to discuss the health issue. This will allow us to address the change in your child's health status and complete or update care plans.

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 aid parents and staff on strategies to address challenging behaviors.

Ill 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 100.4 degrees F when in combination with any other sign or symptom of illness. Temperature shall be taken by a non-contact 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 **24 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.

COVID 19

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.

- Shortness of breath
- Fever 100.4 F or greater

- Cough

As best practices evolve our policy and procedures will evolve. We will follow the guidance from the Health Department. If your child is ill please do not send them to school. Please contact the local health department and/or your health care provider if your child or anyone in the home is experiencing symptoms of COVID 19. If you child has attended school recently please contact the Health Manager with this information. The local Health Department/provider will decide if your child needs to be tested or not. They will also give you guidance on whether you and your child need to quarantine. We will follow guidance from the local Health Department to determine when your child may return back to school.

Lice Policy and Procedures

Lice/Nit Policy

- Head checks will be conducted in a brightly-lit area for all center-based programs monthly and if child observed excessively scratching his/her head.
- Head checks will be done in a private location by Head Start staff.
- If evidence of lice/nits noted on a child, the parent will be called to pick the child up at his/her earliest convenience. Since lice is not a medical emergency, parent will not be required to leave work or school to pick up the child.
- The child will not be isolated from other children while waiting for the parent to arrive.
- Steps to prevent the spread of lice to other children will be taken i.e. no head-to-head contact, dramatic play clothes removed from area, no sharing of hats/combs/brushes, etc.
- Upon parent's arrival, staff will take the child and parent to a private location and staff will show parents where lice/nits were seen.
- Parents will be informed the child may not return to the center until properly treated.
- Parents will be offered a home visit by Head Start health staff to offer support in effectively ridding the lice infestation.
- Once treated, the parent may bring the child to the center and must remain with the child while the head check is conducted. If parent does not have transportation, a center staff person may go to the home to conduct the head check.
- If evidence of lice/nits continues to be present, the child must again be sent home.
- If evidence of lice/nits is no longer present, the child may remain at the center. The child will not be rechecked unless child demonstrates signs of continued infestation (excessive scratching).
- When repeat lice infestations occur, a lice kit will be provided in addition to another home visit to offer continued support in getting rid of the infestation.
- If the child is lice/nit free for two (2) consecutive weeks, the infestation will be considered cleared up. Any recurrence within this 2-week period will be considered the same infestation
- Home base programs conducting socializations will follow the above policy.

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 Assistant Director for their region 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.

Meal Times

Family style meal service is used in child care 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.

SECTION (8) NUTRITION

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 insures 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.

Meal times are: Breakfast 8:00-8:30 a.m., Lunch 11:00-11:30 a.m. and Snack 2:30-3:00 p.m.

Special Diets

All meals served in our program meet USDA guidelines for children. If your child cannot eat certain foods, menu adjustments are 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.

Sending Food or Treats

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.

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, 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. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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.

No blankets shall be in the crib for infants under 12 months old. A one-piece sleeper or wearable blanket is permitted. Only children that are not yet able to roll over are permitted to be swaddled with a wearable swaddling blanket.

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
- ◆ before infants and toddlers use wading pools

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 stick, 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 under Section (1) Center Locations, Days & Hours of Operation. 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.

SECTION (10) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FAMILY

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 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.

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



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.

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. You are welcome and encouraged to observe and become involved in the program. There are training and learning experiences offered to parents throughout the year.

Child Focus strongly encourages parents to be involved with their child/children's experience in our program. Parent/guardians are permitted to visit our centers at any time during hours of operation. This allows parents to meet staff and learn about their child/children's day and activities.

Volunteer Opportunities

Parent Committee

Participate in the leadership of your child's center/home base 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 Engagement Manager at 528-7224.

Special Classroom Activities

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.
- Siblings are not permitted to attend during regular classroom times when parent/guardian is volunteering.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Completed Non-conviction Statement
- BCII and FBI background check

Parent Meetings and Trainings

Head Start centers and home bases will hold Parent Planning/Family Engagement Network meetings. As a regular part of these meetings, staff will provide the opportunity to share center/home base information, Policy Council reports and current events and to allow parent input.

If necessary, staff may need to review parent planning ideas with the Program Coordinator and/or Family Engagement Manager for final approval.

- Each center will have a family engagement budget 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 will schedule a home visit at the beginning of the program year to review/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 Family Advocates 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 center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

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

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

The administrator's hours of availability and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center of 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.

It is unlawful for the center 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.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://ifs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>.

This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in Appendix C to rule 5101: 2-12-07 of the Ohio Administrative Code.

12/6/2016



Child Focus Learning Center
4629 Aicholtz Road • Cincinnati, Ohio 45244
(513) 528-7224 • Fax (513) 688-8141

WIC RELEASE/ PRE-ENROLLMENT FORM

My child/I receive WIC Services Yes No

My child/I want to receive WIC Services Yes No

Child or Participants Name Age DOB

#1

Parent/Guardian Name:

Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Phone:

WIC has my permission to release the requested information to Child Focus Early Learning Programs.

Child/children

Hgb./Hct. Date: Hgb./Hct. Results:

Signature: Date:

WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and supplemental foods, which include milk, cereal, eggs, fruits and vegetables, whole grains, peanut butter, beans, juice and infant formula.

WIC services are available to pregnant women, breastfeeding, and postpartum women, infants and children birth to 5 years of age.

OHIO WIC PROGRAM INCOME GUIDELINES EFFECTIVE July 1, 2021

Table with 2 columns: Household Size, Monthly. Rows 1-5 with corresponding income values.

This institution is an equal opportunity program.

