

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Home Visits	Page 2
What to Send	Page 2
Confidentiality	Page 2
Photographs.....	Page 6
Discipline in Head Start	Page 6
Community and Parent Complaints.....	Page 7
Head Lice	Page 8
Transportation Services	Page 9
Health Services	Page 10
Emergency Medical and Dental Procedures.....	Page 11
Administration of Medicine	Page 11
Child Attendance Policy	Page 12
School Closings	Page 14
Tornado Safety	Page 14
In Case Of Emergency.....	Page 14
Field Trips/Parties.....	Page 15
Parent/Center Communications	Page 16
Your Rights as a Head Start Parent.....	Page 16
Your Responsibilities as a Head Start Parent.....	Page 16
Be a Volunteer.....	Page 17
Solicitation of Donations.....	Page 20
Parent Activity Funds.....	Page 20
Nondiscrimination	Page 21
Americans with Disabilities Act.....	Page 21
Personal Property.....	Page 21
Parent Committee By-Laws.....	Page 22
Smoke Free Environment	Page 23
Prevention, Identification, & Reporting Of Child Abuse & Neglect.....	Page 24
Acceptance of Gifts.....	Page 25
Standards of Conduct.....	Page 25
Notes.....	Page 26

HOME VISITS

1304.21(a)(2)(iii)

There will be two home visits and two Parent-Teacher Conferences per year with each family enrolled. The initial home visit occurs before the child enters the program. Information about the program is shared, and this opportunity allows the child to meet his or her teacher in a familiar environment. Before the program year concludes in May/June, center staff will conduct the final home visit. At this visit the staff will share progress reports, ideas for summer learning, deliver summer home activity packets, deliver folders containing important personal information, and discuss the very important aspect of transitioning the child from Head Start to public school. Parent-Teacher Conferences will be scheduled in the fall and spring to discuss the child's progress and review information.

Parents are encouraged to allow staff to make home visits. Head Start believes the extra effort involved in making two home visits per year is worthwhile in bridging the communication between the center and home.

WHAT TO SEND TO HEAD START

You will need to send a change of clothes in case your child has an accident or spill. Please be sure to replace the clothes seasonally, such as, sending warmer clothes to keep at the center as the weather turns cool, and sending cooler clothes as the weather gets warmer. For the children's safety, we ask that parents not send their children to school with sandals and/or flip flops.

Staff discourages children from bringing toys from home as these items may become lost or broken and problems may occur in sharing the toys. Teachers may occasionally invite children to bring "show and tell" items from home. Please do not send money, gum, candy, etc. to the center with your child. If items are needed for a specific purpose, the teachers will notify the parents.

CONFIDENTIALITY

1304.51(g)

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) requires a Head Start grantee establish and maintain an information and records system with adequate safeguards and security measures to preserve the confidentiality of personal and private information collected from or about Head Start families and children as a result of their participation in Head Start.

This requirement extends to persons/agencies with whom Head Start contracts for services. This puts a burden on Head Start to select those persons/agencies with care.

Head Start confidentiality policies and procedures will be furnished to consultants and service providers as part of their orientation to Head Start.

"Head Start personnel are responsible for maintaining confidentiality and protecting the privacy of personally identifiable information about children and families."

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Non-specific, unidentifiable, contains nothing that could identify child/family with reasonable certainty.

INFORMED CONSENT:

Means parent/guardian is fully informed about:

- Why is the information needed?
- Who will use the information?
- What the implications of the information will/could be?

NEED TO KNOW BASIS:

Head Start personnel directly concerned with service child/family.

PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION:

Information regarding a child or family which would make it possible to identify the family or child with reasonable certainty. This information includes the child's name; parent's name; address; telephone number, social security number, race, disability or any other data that can readily identify the child or family.

TESTIMONIAL PRIVILEGES:

Head Start staff can be court ordered to testify.

VOLUNTEERS:

Anyone who is 18 years of age and is not a Head Start paid staff person, unless mainstreaming from local school system.

Maintaining Confidential Information

Staff members will be provided training annually, New Staff Orientation and Pre-service training, on Head Start policies and procedures to ensure that children and families are protected by program policies and procedures.

Limits of Confidentiality

Staff and parents must understand there are limits to the confidentiality protection of Head Start records and information. There is no testimonial privilege in Tennessee for Head Start staff. They can be compelled to testify in a court of law as to information contained in Head Start records as well as information from their own personal knowledge. It is very important for staff to consider carefully the information included in written records to assure, it is objective, factual, accurate, and clearly relates to family/program needs and services.

Parents should also be informed that the information provided to a Head Start staff member will be shared on a need-to-know basis with other Head Start staff who works with the child or family for the purpose of service delivery. Except for court-ordered testimony and emergency circumstances

described elsewhere in this policy, parents must be assured that information provided to Head Start will be protected by its confidentiality procedures safeguards, and will not be shared outside the program, except with their informed parental consent.

In the event of a court order or subpoena for a release of Head Start records, parents may or may not be notified, of such subpoena or judicial order prior to their release.

In the event of child abuse or neglect reporting, the Family Services Manager or designee will provide requested information regarding children or the family with the Department of Children Services or other official investigative department, via hand delivery of records, mailed, or sent electronically by fax or email without parental notification. The name of the investigative officer to whom information is directed will be included on a cover letter that identifies the information as “confidential.”

Release of Information without Waiver/Informed Consent

Emergency circumstances could require the release of confidential information without the consent of parents. Information may be released without parental consent in the event of a safety or health emergency. The decision to release such information must be based on the threat to the health or safety of the child, the need of the information to adequately deal with the emergency, the capability of persons to whom information is released to meet the emergency, and the extent to which time prohibits contacting parents for information release consent.

Parents will be notified by the Head Start director or designee of such incidents as soon as possible after the occurrence.

Parent Access to Head Start Records

Parents have full review and access rights to information specifically regarding their own child (ren) that is collected and maintained by the Highland Rim Head Start program, except when the Head Start agency has been advised that the parent’s authority has been removed by applicable state laws regarding guardianships, separations, or divorce. Head Start will comply with parental requests for review of records within thirty (30) days of such request.

The parental rights to inspect and review Head Start records include the right to a response from the Head Start agency to reasonable requests for explanation and interpretation of data, test results, documentation, etc.

When a record includes information about more than one child, parents may review only the portion regarding their own child.

Upon request, parents may obtain a list of types and locations of personally identifiable information regarding their child/family maintained by Head Start.

When parents, after review of their child’s record, are not in agreement with information maintained in the records, they may request in writing to have the record corrected/amended. If the parent and the Head Start director are unable to agree to the requested amendment(s), the parents’ request and all explanations will be maintained with and become a part of the permanent record.

Foster children are considered a ward of the state and not of the host family. The child's social worker has the legal authority to sign forms for release of information and permission to inspect the child's educational records.

Members of self-assessment teams have access to children's records only if they are Head Start employees. Policy Council members, HREC Board of Director members, Parent Committee members, parents and community members of the self-assessment team do not have access to children's files.

Release of Confidential Information

Confidential information will be released to other agencies and/or persons only with informed parental consent in writing and only for purposes of securing needed services for Head Start children and families.

Examples of the kinds of situations where confidential information would be released with parental written consent are as follows:

- Providing important background information and screening results to professional diagnosticians under consultant contract for diagnostic services.
- Providing information to multi-disciplinary teams for development of an IEP for a child with a diagnosed disability.
- Providing information to other agencies/persons from whom Head Start is securing special services to supplement regular Head Start program services.
- Providing health and education assessment data and appropriate program information to subsequent placement of a Head Start child (public school, other preschool program, etc.).

“Informed consent” for release of information requires, for the consent to be effective, the parent to be fully informed regarding:

- Specific information/record to be shared.
- Person/agency to receive the information.
- Purpose/use to be made of the information.
- Reasonable consequences of the release of the information, or of the refusal to consent to the release of the information.

A copy of the signed, dated consent release form, including the information identified above, will be furnished along with the information to be released and a copy will remain in the Head Start record.

Volunteers

Classroom volunteers do not have access to classroom files. When a volunteer is assigned to a specific child to work with, the classroom staff (teacher or aide) will review the child's file to determine what specific objectives the volunteer is to do with the child. Classroom staff can then give this information to the volunteer as to what task should be worked on and how to do it.

Recording child information into the classroom records IS NOT to be assigned to a volunteer.

In NO CASE will a volunteer be allowed access to the classroom files of children other than his/her own child?

PHOTOGRAPHS

Any and all photographic material (portraits, pictures, videos, etc.) of Head Start children can not be published in any manner without the written permission of the child's parent/guardian.

In the event a child's picture, portrait, etc. is taken and may be published in the newspaper or other publications, the permission to publish form must be completed.

DISCIPLINE IN HEAD START

1304.21(a)(3)(1)(c)

The use of spanking or other forms of physical punishment, or verbal abuse are not consistent with the program's goals of enhanced self-competence, self-confidence, and self-esteem and are therefore prohibited. Similarly, isolation of a child for misbehavior is not allowed.

Discipline involves teaching. We believe that the following approaches in disciplining preschool children are effective in the center and in the home:

1. Praising the child for appropriate behavior consistently and sincerely.
2. Redirecting the child from inappropriate behavior to another activity, guiding them from the area where their actions are not acceptable into another setting and getting them involved in another, acceptable activity.
3. Talking one on one with the child. Children participate in developing classroom rules with the teacher's guidance. Often a brief one on one discussion about the rule(s) and how the rule applies will serve to remind the child.
4. Time-out. Time-out is the removal of a child from an activity/setting only when his or her behavior is harmful to others or possibly harmful to self. Time-out is seldom used, and is a last resort, because the more often time-out is used; the less likely it will be effective.

Children who frequently display behavior management problems may be having emotional or physical problems that the program must address. Close communication with parents is important. If you have concerns about behavior and/or discipline techniques you use, discuss these with your child's teacher. It is most helpful to establish consistent discipline rules in the home and in the center. Children need consistency.

When a child with a behavior problem so severe the safety of that child, other children, or adults are put at risk, a child may be sent home for the day.

COMMUNITY/PARENT COMPLAINTS

1304.50(h)

Employees of Head Start are expected to treat parents, community volunteers, suppliers, and the general public in a respectful and professional manner at all times. Employees shall refrain from making judgmental or condescending statements concerning families.

If client services are initiated prior to the end of the workday, he/she shall receive full and complete services until the need has been met.

When an individual parent or community member approaches an employee with a concern/complaint, the employee should attempt to resolve the concern/complaint at the lowest level. All concerns should be documented on a family contact form and be sent to the Family Service Manager for follow-up. A company-shared folder will be created on the server for the Family Service Manager to enter into the Parent/Community Complaint Tracking Form the name, date, center, and resolution of each concern/complaint. This will be monitored by the Family Service Manager and reported on at the monthly staff meetings. The Family Service Manager will forward this report to the Head Start Director as well as the Executive Director before filing in a confidential locked file. If the discussion becomes argumentative or accusatory, the employee should refer the individual to the Family Service Manager.

Grievance Definition

A grievance is a circumstance thought to be unjust and ground for complaint.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

1. All concerns/complaints will be forwarded to the Family Service Manager. The Family Service Manager will document on the Complaint Tracking Form indicating: who made the complaint, what the issue was, and what steps were taken to resolve the situation. The Family Service Manager will confer with the appropriate manager for resolution if necessary. The complaint will be fully investigated by the Family Service Manager who will provide a written response within five (5) working days to the complainant. The Family Service Manager will forward a copy of the Complaint Tracking Form, via email, to the appropriate manager, Head Start Director and Executive Director.
2. If unresolved, the complainant may file a written complaint with the Head Start Director. The Head Start Director shall review the concerns/complaint and written response of the Family Service Manager and investigate further. The Head Start Director will provide a written response to the complainant within five (5) working days. If more time is needed to completely resolve the matter, the Director will call the complainant to request more time to investigate the situation thoroughly. The Director will note the progress of the investigation on the Complaint Tracking Form and forward the form to the appropriate manager, Family Service Manager, and Executive Director.

3. If the decision rendered by the Head Start Director is not satisfactory to the complainant or if the response was not provided within five (5) working days, the complainant may file the complaint with the Executive Director. The Executive Director will notify the Head Start Director of receipt of the concern/complaint and obtain copies of written responses. The Head Start Director will note the progress of the investigation on the Complaint Tracking Form and forward the form to the appropriate managers.

4. If the decision rendered by the Executive Director is not satisfactory to the complainant or if the response was not provided within five (5) working days, the complainant may file the complaint with the Policy Council. The Policy Council will notify the Executive Director of receipt of the concern/complaint and obtain copies of written responses. The Chairperson will mail grievance committee members copies of the concern/complaint and responses with notification of a meeting, to be scheduled within ten (10) working days from receipt of the concern/complaint. Involved parties will be notified of the date, time and location of the meeting. Each party of the complaint may be represented by their attorneys and witnesses may attend the grievance committee meeting. Recesses or continuances may be granted by a majority vote of the grievance committee. The grievance committee shall make a written recommendation within three (3) working days following completion of the hearing. The recommendation of the grievance committee shall be presented to the Policy Council for vote at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The Family Service Manager shall update the Complaint Tracking Form with the decision of the Policy Council and forward to all involved managers, The Head Start Director, and the Executive Director.

5. If the decision rendered by the Policy Council is not satisfactory to the complainant or if the response was not provided within five (5) working days, the complainant may file the complaint with the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors will notify the Policy Council of receipt of the concern/complaint and obtain copies of written responses. The Chairperson will mail grievance committee members copies of the concern/complaint and responses with notification of a meeting, to be scheduled within ten (10) working days from receipt of the concern/complaint. Involved parties will be notified of the date, time and location of the meeting. Each party of the complaint may be represented by their attorneys and witnesses may attend the grievance committee meeting. Recesses or continuances may be granted by a majority vote of the grievance committee. The grievance committee shall make a written recommendation within three (3) working days following completion of the hearing. The recommendation of the grievance committee shall be presented to the Board of Directors for vote at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The decision of the Board of Directors shall be final regarding the concern/complaint. The Family Service Manager shall update the Complaint Tracking Form with the decision of the Board of Directors and forwarded to all involved managers, The Head Start Director, and the Executive Director.

HEAD LICE

Each Monday morning children will be examined for lice, more often if deemed necessary. Gloves will be worn when touching or looking for head lice and nits. Gloves will be changed between each child and exposure.

If lice are found student may return to school the day after treatment, including the removal of all nits from the hair. An adult must accompany the child upon return to school. The child will be checked by Head Start staff, and readmitted if no lice or nits are found. Nits on the hair shaft that are farther than ¼ inch from the scalp are considered to be unviable (dead or already hatched). If the child is found to still be infested with lice or nits, he/she may not return to school until they are lice and nit free.

If a child continues to become infested with head lice, the family service worker may perform a home visit to discuss treatment and prevention with the parent. Child Protective Services may be called if it appears that the child is becoming infested due to parental neglect.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

1310.10(g); 1310.17(b)(6)

In the areas where Head Start operates buses, parents and staff share responsibility for the safe transportation of children. Children in Regular Head Start classrooms are not to be brought in earlier than 7:45 a.m., but no later than 8:00 a.m.

Full-Day Option

A full-day option is only for the children of parents who are working or in job training and a child whose parent does not meet the above criteria should not be enrolled in a full-day model.

Transportation Safety: Personal Vehicle

The safety of your child is of utmost importance. Please follow the State of Tennessee laws for the safe transportation of Head Start age children.

Children ages 4 through 8, and less than 4' 9" tall, must ride in a belt-positioning booster seat in the back seat of the vehicle. They must use both lap and shoulder belts.

Siblings shall not be left unattended in a vehicle parked outside the Head Start facilities. Negligent behavior will be reported to the Department of Children Services.

PARENT BUS RULES

1. Head Start children will be returned to the place from where they were picked up. If there is to be a change in pick-up or drop-off location, notice must be given in WRITING at least five days in advance.
2. Parents should notify the Head Start center when their child will be absent.
3. Parents should notify Head Start a week in advance of moving.
4. Children should be dressed and ready when the bus arrives. The driver will not go to the door. If your child misses the bus, it will be the parents' responsibility to take the child to the Head Start center.
5. When a child is picked up or delivered home, the parent or designated person MUST sign the child on and off the bus.
6. If no one is at home, the child will be returned to the center, and the parent will be responsible for coming to the center and getting the child. The child will not be transported again until the parent confers with the Head Start Marketing Manager.

7. If a child has to cross the street to get on or off the bus, they must be accompanied by an adult. The child must cross in front of the bus.
8. Only Head Start children and monitor/volunteer will ride the bus to and from the Head Start Center.
9. There is NO EATING, DRINKING, OR SMOKING on the bus.
10. Toys should not be sent with the child.
11. We will ensure two adults to on the bus at all times to meet Daycare Licensing Mandate.
12. All bus passengers will wear seatbelts, and appropriate height & weight restraints.
13. Parents who transport their child to the Head Start center must accompany their child into the building and sign them in. Children must not arrive at the center more than 15 minutes before class begins.
14. The bus driver may determine if a child is ill at the time they board the bus. A sick child will not be transported.
15. Bus transportation is a privilege. If a child is disruptive or putting others at risk, a child can lose their bus privilege.
16. Parents should be prepared to give the bus driver 15 minutes lead way either at pick-up or drop-off each day.
17. These are the offenses if your child is not at the bus point and/or bus rules are not followed throughout the year.

HEALTH SERVICES

1304.20

Parent or guardian permission will be obtained prior to the delivery of health services. For each child enrolled in the Head Start program, a complete medical, dental and developmental history will be obtained and recorded, a thorough health screening will be given, and medical and dental examinations will be performed.

Health screenings shall include growth assessments, vision and hearing tests, hemoglobin or hematocrit determination, tuberculin testing where indicated, assessment of current immunization and necessary immunizations, speech, language and developmental assessments, and based on local standards, other selected screenings such as sickle cell, lead poisoning, parasites, etc.

Medical examinations for children include examination of all systems that are made suspect by history or screening results and the skin, eye, ear, nose, throat, heart, lungs and groin area. Neurological/social areas examined include gross motor and fine motor coordination, communication skills, cognitive, self-help, social skills and muscular coordination.

Dental examinations for children may include a thorough examination of a child's oral health, topical fluoride treatment, x-rays, and treatment if necessary by a licensed dentist.

Screening and examination results will be shared with the parents or guardian. The program shall assist parents in the delivery of all necessary medical and dental follow-up treatment, including assisting parents in making appointments for services, finding funds to pay for these services (when insurance is not available), and transportation. If all medical and dental services are not complete prior to the end of the school year, a plan will be implemented to ensure that all services continue after the child leaves the program.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL AND DENTAL PROCEDURES

1304.22(a)(2)

Upon enrollment, parents are asked to give written permission for staff to secure emergency treatment if a parent cannot be contacted. All staff is expected to make efforts to contact parents or legal guardians in the event of a medical or dental emergency.

Current phone numbers are very important. At least three emergency phone numbers are required for every child. The persons listed, along with their phone number, should be family members or family friends who are most likely to be able to reach the parent or guardian in case of an emergency. Numbers must be kept current. (Rule 1240-4-3-.10 of Day Care Licensure)

If a medical or dental emergency occurs, the center staff has instructions for dealing with particular types of emergencies, such as first aid treatment, until medical help can be secured. The lead teacher will deal with the child's immediate need, and the assistant teacher will make parent contact. The Health and Disability Manager is also notified. In most cases, the parent will be asked to come to the center for the child. If a parent, guardian, or other adult family member cannot be reached, the center may transport the child to secure treatment at the local hospital or dentist's office, while continuing to attempt to locate the child's parents or legal guardian.

Your cooperation in keeping emergency phone numbers current is appreciated. If you have a change in your child's contact numbers, please notify the center teacher as soon as possible. Include the child's name, name of contact person, telephone number and relationship to the child.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

1304.22(c) (Rule 1240-04-03-.10 of Day Care Licensure)

For the safety of your child and others, and to provide legal procedures whereby children needing medication may receive the same while participating in Head Start Program activities, the following procedure is to be followed:

1. **WHENEVER POSSIBLE**, arrangements should be made with the family and physician to schedule administration of medication during times when the child is under parent supervision.
2. Parents/Guardians are responsible for obtaining proper forms from teaching staff and for having it completed by child's physician for permission to administer any medication during Head Start program hours.
3. The Health and Disability Manager is to be notified by parents/guardians, and/or teaching staff if a child requires medication to be administered during Head Start hours. In addition, notification is required again, once the proper medical form is completed and medication is to begin.
4. **ONLY** Head Start staff is to administer medications.
5. All medication must be properly labeled.

6. Doctor's written orders as to the time and amount of dosage must be on file, along with signed parental consent forms.
7. Documentation of administration of medication must be kept on the Medication Control Sheet by the person administering the medication.
8. Medications must be stored out of reach of children in a locked area.

CHILD ATTENDANCE POLICY

Head Start recognizes the importance of teaching children and parents to establish good school attendance habits and believes this attitude can be successfully established in the program. There is a requirement to maintain a minimum daily attendance of 85% of enrollment. Parents are asked to notify their child's teacher when the child must be absent.

Excused absences include:

- Head Lice
- Hospitalization
- Incapacitated due to serious illness/injury
- Death in the family
- Receiving medical treatment or therapy at a time when class is in session
- Temporary family situations (Ex: Transportation, Parent/Guardian Illness, Temporary Relocation, and Inclement Weather)
- Court Ordered Visitations and arrangements between custodial and non-custodial parent/guardian

Program staff will work with families on problems of irregular attendance. A Family Service Worker will contact the parent to discuss the child's irregular attendance. **CONTINUAL UNEXCUSED ABSENCES WILL LEAD TO TERMINATION.**

Exclusion Due To Illness

Children **MUST** be kept home if he/she has had any of the following within the past 24 hours:

- Upset stomach (diarrhea or vomiting)
- Runny nose, sniffles, unusual cough – The Common Cold
- Fever (101° or higher)
- Complaints of unusual pain
- Indications or signs of a communicable disease (i.e. measles, chicken pox, etc.)

The parent/guardian should contact the center and discuss signs of illness with the teacher when calling to report an absence. The Family Service Worker must be contacted on the third (3rd) day of unexcused absence and the Family Service Manager notified. If unable to contact the parent by phone, a home visit will be made by a Family Service Worker and another Head Start staff member.

- **First Offense:** The teacher will fill out an extended absence report. They will notify the FSW responsible for their classroom immediately. The FSW will make a phone call to the parent to see if there is a problem and ask if we can assist them in any way

to get the child back into school. They will remind the parent of our attendance policy.

- **Second Offense:** Unexcused absenteeism – FSW notified on the third (3) DAY. The FSW along with another staff person will attempt to make a home visit and the parent told at that time if the child is not back in school on a regular basis starting the next day, the child will be dropped. If no contact is made, a certified letter will be sent notifying them if their child is not back in school on a regular basis within five (5) days of the receipt of the letter they will be dropped from our program. This serves as a second offense warning.
- **Third Offense:** Unexcused absenteeism – A letter will be sent, by the FSW, to the parent/guardian notifying them their child has been dropped from the program.

If no contact is made at the home, a certified letter will be mailed to the parent with a reminder of the attendance policy and the date the child will be disenrolled if the Central Office or Family Service Worker is not contacted. This date will be five (5) working days from the mailing date of the certified letter.

Tardiness and Late Pick-Up

Children being brought to school should arrive no later than 8:00 a.m. If for some reason you know you will be late call the center and let them know. This information is needed in order to plan lunches.

Be aware of your classroom opening and closing times. Habitual tardiness or picking up children late can lead to reporting of such to the Department of Children Service (DCS).

Drop-offs/Pick-ups

To ensure **all** children are accounted for:

Any child who is brought into the center must be signed in by the parent/ guardian/ authorized person on the SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT log.

Any child who is picked up from the center must be signed out by the parent/guardian/authorized person on the SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT log before the child is released to that person. Only persons authorized in writing by parent/guardian will be allowed to sign a child out to leave the premises. Identification may be requested. The SIGN-IN/SIGN-OUT log will be visible in each classroom for your use.

Be aware of your classroom opening and closing times. **Habitually picking up children late can lead to Department of Children Services being called and/or a report of child abandonment being placed.**

SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

Head Start centers will follow the county public school system schedule for closing centers during inclement weather. Parents are instructed to listen to local radio or area television station announcements of system closures in order to know whether to expect center operation during inclement weather. Extended care will be open on a daily basis unless otherwise deemed necessary by management.

TORNADO SAFETY

Be Prepared

It is important that you find a safe shelter to go to in the event of a tornado. Once you've determined where your shelter is going to be, you should practice getting there. Practice sessions/drills should be held by each Head Start center once a month. The more you practice, the faster and more safely you will get to your shelter. A Tornado Drill sheet should be posted in the center and filled out at the time of the tornado drill.

Watch/Warning

A **Tornado Watch** means that tornado development is possible. Keep a watchful eye on the sky for threatening weather, and keep tuned to radio or television for the latest weather information. When you hear the watch, review the procedures you would follow if a tornado approaches.

A **Tornado Warning** means a tornado has been sighted or indicated by weather radar. Persons in the path of the storm should seek shelter immediately.

Outdoors and Motor Vehicles

Buses WILL NOT leave the center if a tornado warning is in effect. Every effort will be made to contact the parents to notify them the bus route will proceed when the warning is lifted. If the bus route has not started and there is a tornado warning, the bus will pick the children up after the warning is lifted.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

When it is necessary to evacuate off-site, Head Start staff and children will go to the following evacuation destinations:

Dickson County Centers (Dickson Complex, Burns Center and Charlotte Center):

Evacuation Sites: All Dickson County Schools are designated as evacuation sites. A specific site for a given emergency would vary depending upon the proximity of the school to the disaster site.

- Burns Elementary School, (615) 446-2791
- Centennial Elementary, (615) 446-0355
- Charlotte Elementary School, (615) 740-5803
- Charlotte Middle School, (615) 740-6060
- Creekwood High School (615) 740-6000
- Dickson Elementary School, (615) 740-5837
- Dickson Middle School, (615) 446-2273
- Dickson County Senior High School, (615) 446-9003

Discovery School, (615) 441-4163
Oakmont Elementary, (615) 446-2435
Vanleer Elementary School, (615) 740-5760
White Bluff Elementary (615) 797-3971
William James Middle School (615) 797-3201

Waverly Center

Evacuation Site # 1: Waverly First Baptist Church, (931) 296-2348

Evacuation Site # 2: Waverly Church of Christ, (931) 296-3213

Evacuation Site # 3: Waverly Central High School, (931) 296-3911

McEwen Center:

Evacuation Site # 1: McEwen High School, (931) 582-6913

Evacuation Site #2: McEwen United Methodist Church, (931) 582-6287

Houston Complex:

Evacuation Site: Highland Rim Head Start Resource Center, (931) 206-5917

Stewart Complex:

Evacuation Site # 1: North Stewart Elementary School, (931) 232-5505

Evacuation Site # 2: Stewart County High School, (931) 232-5179

FIELD TRIPS/PARTIES

1304.21(a)(1)(iii)

Monthly field trips are planned to local events and places representing the cultures of children served. Teaching staff, with parent input, plan field trips to provide an exciting and educational out-of-classroom experience for the children. Parents are needed on field trips to provide the necessary additional adult supervision. In addition to monthly field trips, special field trips will be planned to events and places in surrounding areas.

Each child MUST have a permission slip before he/she is allowed to go on the field trip.

Parties are encouraged for children to experience the joy of celebration. Parties are not to be used to have an abbreviated daily schedule. They must be integrated into the regular daily curriculum as a learning experience, and will be noted on the lesson plans.

Food for parties/celebration must be store bought with ingredients clearly labeled on the container or be prepared by head start staff, in the head start kitchen. This is to ensure that the food has been prepared in the safest environment, and licensed through the Health Department.

Parents who attend parties may wish to carry their children home with them at the conclusion of a party. Parents who are unable to attend will not be asked to make arrangements for their child to be picked up early. The daily schedule, including the bus route, will be followed.

PARENT/CENTER COMMUNICATIONS

Each center conducts monthly parent meetings. It is beneficial to the child to be represented by a parent at these meetings. Parent meetings are the time to be informed of upcoming events and for YOU to have input in making decisions about the center's activities.

Parents and adult family members are invited and encouraged to visit the centers. Advanced permission is not necessary to come to the center. Our program is open to the parents and the public at all times. Your participation in the program is very important to your child's developmental progress, so please.....GET INVOLVED!!!

YOUR RIGHTS AS A HEAD START PARENT

1304.50(d)(2)(ii)

1. To take part in major policy decisions affecting the planning and operation of the program.
2. To help develop adult programs that will improve daily living for your family.
3. To be welcomed in the classrooms.
4. To choose whether or not you participate without fear of endangering your child's right to be in the program.
5. To be informed regularly about your child's progress in Head Start.
6. To always be treated with respect and dignity.
7. To expect guidance for your child from Head Start teachers and staff, in order to enhance your child's total individual development.
8. To be able to learn about the operation of the program, including the budget and level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.
9. To take part in planning and carrying out of programs designed to increase your skill in areas of possible employment.
10. To be informed about all community resources concerned with health education and the improvement of family life.

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES AS A HEAD START PARENT

1. To learn as much as possible about the program and to take part in major policy decisions.
2. To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which you can improve your life and your children's lives.
3. To take part in the classroom as an observer, a volunteer worker, or a paid employee, and to contribute services in whatever way you can.
4. To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, to explain the program to other parents and encourage their full participation.

5. To welcome new ideas with which parents can help their children's development at home.
6. To work with the teacher, staff, and other parents in a cooperative way.
7. To guide your child with firmness that is both loving and protective.
8. To offer constructive criticism and suggestions to improve the program.
9. To take advantage of programs designed to increase your skills and knowledge.
10. To become involved in community programs which help to improve health, education, and recreation for all.

BE A VOLUNTEER

Volunteers should be 18 years of age, unless they are mainstreaming from the county school system or to receive credit for a course that he/she may be taking. Volunteers may be used to provide services and supplement the required caregivers or substitutes without payment, but are not counted to meet the adult/child ratios. If counted in the adult/child ratio, or provide services for more than twenty (20) hours per week, volunteers shall meet the qualifications for substitutes. (1240-04-03-.07)

Siblings not enrolled in the Head Start program should not be present in the center unless an emergency situation warrants it, and even then, it should be cleared through the Head Start Central Office. This also applies to the time a parent spends at a Head Start party. Center Committee Meetings are the only exception to siblings being present in the center

Being involved with the Head Start program is not only rewarding to you and your child but is greatly appreciated. Time spent in the classroom providing various services, riding the bus as a monitor, being a field trip assistant, attending parent meetings or workshops, being on the Policy Council or parent advisory committees are ALL important activities in which you can participate.

Donating your time is important, but there are other ways to be involved with your child and his/her classroom, such as making or donating items for the classroom. You will be asked to fill out in-kind forms for the various services and goods you donate to the program; this is because 25 percent of the Head Start program is funded locally through volunteer services and donations, called In-Kind.

Each classroom recognizes a "Volunteer of the Month." The volunteer who has accumulated the most HOURS volunteering is recognized as the "Volunteer of the Month" and will receive a Volunteer Certificate. Each parent may not be available to volunteer in the classroom. With that in mind, a take-home in-kind sheet is available for parents who complete tasks at home. Every hour spent with your child is a special reward as you and your child build memories together.

Classroom Volunteer

Some General Guidelines:

1. Become familiar with the teacher's classroom rules and daily schedule.
2. Learn children's names and use them. Tell them your name and encourage them to use it.
3. Talk with the children! Ask them questions that require more than just a yes or no answer. Answer their questions.
4. Set a good example for children by speaking clearly to them. Show them your good manners at the table and in the way you talk respectfully to them and others, using such words as "please" and "thank you."
5. When talking with children, stoop to their eye level.
6. Expect the children to treat you as another teacher. Act like one. Should you feel insecure about your role:
 - Watch the other teachers and model your behavior after them.
 - Ask the teacher for guidance if you need it.
7. We do not expect or want you to correct the children except by reminding children who need it of the behavior required (i.e. walking inside, using inside voices, treating each other nicely, speaking nicely to each other, using materials safely, and using good table manners). Refer to the classroom rules for further guidelines. Should you feel a child's behavior needs correcting beyond these reminders, please talk immediately with the teacher regarding what appropriate action needs to be taken.
8. Be as positive with children as possible. Praise them often for good manners and behavior. When you have to remind a child of inappropriate behavior, try to do so positively. Example: "Please walk, Mary." Or "Johnny, blocks are for building things. What are you going to build?" If Mary slows down to a walk, say, "Thank you for walking, Mary." And later in the day when Mary is walking say, "I like the way you are walking to the table, Mary." If Johnny quits throwing blocks, you might say, "Johnny, you are building a very nice _____." or "I like the way you are using the blocks to build." Often if you praise the behavior of some children, others will change their behavior. You need to watch for a change and then praise them for it.
9. If you have agreed to do a task or be responsible for an activity and/or group of children, but for some reason must leave the task or the children, please let the teacher know before you leave so that someone else can be assigned to be in charge of the children or task. Children should never be left unsupervised.
10. Please:

- Do not ever frighten children by threatening them with spanking, the boogey man, devil, God, no Christmas presents, isolation, or anything else that they may fear. We teach children to feel safe and secure with us.
 - Do not ever say anything to children to make them feel bad about themselves such as they are bad, a sissy, a baby, a scaredy cat, to shut up, etc. Help us to teach the children not to do this to each other. We teach children that they are wonderful, lovable people and that we sometimes do not like what they do but we always like them.
 - Do not ever physically hit a child or allow children to hit or hurt each other. We teach children that we will never hurt them and will not allow them to hurt other children, or other children to hurt them.
 - Do not ever eat or drink anything in front of the children that they are not allowed to have or there isn't enough of for everyone.
 - Do not ever curse, chew gum, or smoke in the presence of the children.
 - Do not ever talk negatively to anyone about a child in the presence of that child or other children.
 - Do not ever talk negatively about someone else's child to anyone other than that child's teacher. What you see or hear as a classroom volunteer you must keep to yourself. Should you feel that you have obtained knowledge about which the child's teacher should be aware, please go to the teacher for appropriate action to be taken.
11. If you have agreed in advance to be a classroom volunteer on a specific day and then find you can not make it, please get in touch with the teacher or center as soon as possible. Teachers make plans for volunteers and need to make other plans if you can not be there. We would very much appreciate you letting us know you can't come if we're expecting you.
 12. No matter what activity you're doing with children, talk with them all the time. Encourage them to talk with you by asking them questions about themselves or what they are doing. Be friendly! Smile a lot, laugh with them. Listen carefully to what they say.
 13. Touch and hug children often. Pre-school children need and want this attention. Sometimes it is a real temptation to pick up and carry the smaller children. Please do not do this unless there is a specific reason for it. We encourage children to be independent.
 14. Please encourage children to do things for themselves at every opportunity (buttoning, zipping, tying shoe laces, opening milk cartons, etc.) then praise them for their effort even if they are not very successful. Practice and lots of it often brings success.
 15. When in the center as a volunteer, you must carry gloves on your person. Ask the teacher for these supplies.

TB Screening/Fingerprinting For Volunteers

1304.52(j)(2) Day Care License 1240-4-3-07 (7,8,9)

Volunteers (parents/guardians, grandparents, community volunteers) who are in contact with the children twenty (20) hour or more per week must provide Head Start evidence of a negative TB skin test or chest x-ray.

Volunteers may be used to provide services and supplement the required caregiver substitutes without payment, but are not counted to meet the adult:child ratios. If counted in the adult:child ratio, or provide services for more than twenty (20) hours per calendar week, volunteers shall meet the qualifications for substitutes as set forth in paragraph 1240-4-3-.07(7)

SOLICITATION OF DONATIONS

- Parents or other volunteers are not endorsed as program representatives to solicit donations from local area residents or businesses.
- Any staff solicitations for donations must be coordinated with the Family Service Manager. The Head Start Director will provide a letter of introduction for any program participants, volunteers or staff who is authorized to solicit donations, along with an in-kind donation form to document the donations received.

PARENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

Funds are budgeted in the Head Start grant application each year to provide parents with opportunities and experience in planning, developing and implementing projects initiated by them. The budget presently allocates ten dollars (\$10.00) per child for the Parent Activity Fund. The following steps are to be followed for parents to access these funds:

- The Parent Committee members should be made aware of the availability of and allowable uses for Parent Activity Funds at the beginning of the school year and discuss plans for their use during the year. Once approved by majority vote, the Request for Parent Activity Funds should be submitted to the Family Service Manager who will present it to Policy Council for approval. This request must be accompanied by Parent Committee minutes that reflect the vote.
- After the Policy Council approval is received, the Family Service Manager will submit the request to the Head Start Bookkeeper. Checks will be cut for the amount of the request and returned to the Family Service Manager for distribution to the centers, or sent to the specified vendor.
- Teachers MUST submit receipts for all monies to the Head Start Bookkeeper at the Highland Rim Economic Corporation Office, as they are spent. Lost or misplaced receipts are the responsibility of the teacher and he/she shall be held liable for the amount spent. Any unspent funds will be returned to HREC. Any tax or shipping and handling paid by these must be refunded to HREC. Taxes and shipping and handling are the responsibility of the parents.

Parent Activity Funds are to be used to enhance the educational lives of the PARENTS. Some examples of appropriate uses of the Parent Activity Funds can be, but are not limited to, historic trips, awards banquets with speakers, theater tickets, books on parenting or related subjects, children's portraits, etc. The events sponsored with Parent Activity Funds shall be open to all parents of children enrolled in the Head Start classroom.

All Parent Activity Funds must be spent and accounted for by the closing date of center operations.

45 CFR PART 84-NONDISCRIMINATION

45 CFR part 84, "Nondiscrimination of the Basis of Handicap," implements the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Section 504 requires that "no otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance." Subpart A states administrative requirements employers must meet, including assurances of compliance, self-evaluation, grievance procedures, etc. Subpart B deals with nondiscrimination in employment and requires employers to institute reasonable accommodation. Subpart C sets forth requirements for program accessibility. Subpart D requires a free, appropriate educational setting in the least restrictive environment. Subpart E is similar to Subpart D but deals with postsecondary educational settings. Subpart F deals with nondiscrimination in health, welfare, and social services settings.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)

The law signifies a commitment to fairness and equal opportunity for persons with special needs. Working together, people with disabilities, their families and advocates must use the ADA to make integration a reality for all individuals with disabilities in the United States.

The local Head Start program works with the ADA to provide services and facilities as required. If you are an individual with a disability, a family member or an advocate, do not hesitate to contact the Parent and Training Information Center in your geographic area or the Head Starts Health and Disability Manager. Support and Training for Exceptional Parents (STEP) workshops will be offered during the program year. These workshops are offered at no charge to the parents.

Tennessee Parent and Training Information Center

STEP

712 Professional Plaza

Greenville, TN 37745

Toll Free: 800-280-STEP

www.tnstep.org

PERSONAL PROPERTY

Personal property of staff and volunteers must be safeguarded in a manner to protect child access to potentially dangerous materials, such as medications, and to discourage theft. This includes, but is not limited to, purses, wallets, briefcases, or backpacks. Adults participating in the program are strongly discouraged from bringing bottles of medicine, over-the-counter medications, or sizable sums of cash to the center. Medication should be brought in a labeled container and should only be the amount needed while at the center.

Center staff are responsible for placing their own personal property in a locked filing cabinet or storage closet and directing volunteers to do so, as well, if they do not wish to keep these items with them at all times. Another option may be to leave these items locked in their personal vehicle and take only keys into classroom. Even with a permit to carry a concealed weapon, fire-arms are prohibited on Head Start property.

PARENT COMMITTEE BY-LAWS

ARTICLE 1 NAME

The name of this organization shall be the _____ Head Start Parent Committee.

ARTICLE 2 PURPOSE AND FUNCTION

1. Assist the center staff in the development and operation of component services, including the curriculum.
2. Work closely with the classroom staff in carrying out the daily activities.
3. Plan and conduct formal and informal activities and programs for parents in the center.
4. Assists program staff in the recruitment of in-kind services.
5. Makes recommendations to the Policy Council concerning expenditures of the Parent Activity Fund.
6. Communicates with all parents of children currently enrolled and encourage their full participation in the program.
7. Assists program staff in the conduct of the program's annual self-assessment.
8. Organizes and holds monthly meetings of the Parent Committee.
9. Serves as a link between the Head Start center and public and community organizations.

ARTICLE 3 MEMBERSHIP

1. This Head Start Parent Committee shall be composed of all the parents with a child currently enrolled in the center. In centers with several classes, parents may also establish parent class committees.
2. Members of this committee shall serve a term of one year and may continue to serve additional terms as long as they have a child currently enrolled in the Head Start center.
3. Each member of this Parent Committee shall have one vote. There shall be no proxy vote by or for any member.
4. All members of this Parent Committee should attend meetings regularly, arrive on time for meetings, actively participate in discussion of matters to be considered, keep informed of the Committee's plans and progress, report to absent parents concerning any actions taken, and accept and support any final decisions of the Parent Committee.
5. Each Parent Committee (parent class committee in centers with more than one class) will select a parent member to represent them on the Policy Council.

ARTICLE 4 OFFICERS

1. Officers of the Parent Committee shall be: President, Vice-President, and Secretary.
2. Any officer of this Parent Committee who fails to perform his or her duties as outlined below can be removed by a majority vote of the members present.

3. The President shall preside at all meetings, talk no more than necessary when presiding, have an understanding of the Parent Committee's By-Laws, shall extend every courtesy to the discussions of the motions, shall call meetings to order and formally close them, prepare an agenda for each regular meeting with the coordination and cooperation of the Lead Teacher, shall call special meetings and notify parents; appoint chairpersons to all sub-committees, explain each motion before it is voted upon, and may vote only to break a tie.
4. The Vice-President shall preside in the absence of the President or during the temporary vacancy in the office of President until a President is elected.
5. The Secretary shall record the minutes of every Parent Committee meeting, shall maintain the By-Laws, list of members, a list of unfinished business, a copy of the agenda and minutes, and see that a copy of the minutes is provided to the Head Start Family Service Manager.

ARTICLE 5 SUB-COMMITTEES

1. The President may appoint special sub-committees as the need arises.

ARTICLE 6 MEETINGS

1. Regular meetings of this Parent Committee shall be held monthly. There will be special meetings of this Parent Committee only when the Parent Committee sees a need. The President should call all special meetings at least 36 hours in advance.
2. Members of the Parent Committee will be notified of meeting dates and times at least three days prior to the date of the meeting. Follow-up phone calls by the Secretary may be in order. Meetings shall last no more than one hour.
3. Actions may be approved or disapproved by a majority vote of the members who are present.

ARTICLE 7 AMENDMENTS

1. These By-Laws may be amended by sending a copy of the proposed amendment to each Parent Committee member at least one week before the regularly scheduled meeting. The Parent Committee may debate an amendment before adoption.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

To help enrolled children achieve their full potential, Head Start programs provide comprehensive health, nutritional, educational, social and other services. Current national policy requires that Head Start grantees create a smoke-free environment and to eliminate exposure to tobacco smoke by children, staff and parents in the Head Start Program.

Smoking is prohibited at all times in all spaces utilized by the program. This includes classrooms, staff offices, kitchens, restrooms, parent and staff meeting rooms (used in the evening as well as the days), hallways, outdoor play areas, and vehicles used for transporting children. Any designated smoking area should be outdoors. However, under no circumstances should smoking occur in the presence of children.

PREVENTION, IDENTIFICATION, AND REPORTING OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Prevention

Head Start will provide annual orientation to parents concerning the prevention of child abuse and neglect, the need to provide protection for abused and neglected children. Personal safety curriculum is taught to the children throughout the program year. The curriculum currently used is *"Keeping Kids Safe."* Trainer resources include personnel from the licensing unit of the State Department of Human Services, private consultants, and personnel from the Department of Corrections. The program's Mental Health Consultant will provide individual consultation for parents and staff. The Family Services Manager will be the primary staff member responsible for coordinating orientation and training efforts. Consultation services will be provided by the Head Start Mental Health Consultant.

The enrollment selection criteria system approved by the Policy Council offers priority for children who have been abused or neglected, and every effort will be made to identify those families. Head Start will also make attempts to retain in the program children allegedly abused or neglected, recognizing the child's participation in Head Start may be essential in assisting families with abuse or neglect history.

Mandatory Reporting

Tennessee law requires any person who knows or has reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been abused to report such knowledge or suspicion to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services. Any person required to report known or suspected child abuse that knowingly and willfully fails to do so or prevents another person from doing so is guilty of a misdemeanor.

Head Start staff will work with the local child protective service agency that deals with abuse and neglect. Staff is not to become a primary treatment program or undertake treatment on their own.

Reporting Procedures-Child Abuse/Neglect

If a staff member suspects a child is the victim of child abuse or neglect, the following reporting procedures will be followed as soon as possible:

1. The staff member will contact the Department of Children's Services immediately and request to speak to a caseworker about suspected child abuse or neglect or corporal punishment. The staff member will also contact the Family Services Manager by phone and advise him or her of the incident.
2. The center staff member who reported the incident will prepare a Department of Human Service Accident/Injury Report (HS-2548) and forward the report in a sealed envelope marked "Confidential" to the Family Service Manager within a twenty-four (24) hour time frame of making referral.
3. The Family Service Manager will ensure that a Tennessee Department of Human Services Accident/Injury Report is received from the appropriate center staff member.

4. All Tennessee Department of Children's Services Accident/Injury Reports will be maintained in a locked file by the Family Service Manager. The sharing of information with the Department of Human Services or other official investigative departments will be permitted through hand delivery of records, via mail or electronic FAX. The name of the investigative officer to whom information is directed will be included on a cover letter which identifies the information as "CONFIDENTIAL."
5. If the parent/guardian of the child concerned contacts the center staff concerning this incident, the staff member will not discuss the incident with the parent, but will refer them to the Family Service Manager at the Central Office.

ACCEPTANCE OF GIFTS

Highland Rim Economic Corporation policy concerning gifts is to establish a guideline for central office staff and center staff. HREC has established a code of conduct for all employees. This code extends to the Highland Rim Head Start Central Office and teaching staff. Any employee engaged in the award and administration of contracts which require that officers, employees or agents of the Highland Rim Head Start shall not solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value from contractors or potential contractors.

Highland Rim Head Start Staff may not solicit or accept gratuities, favors or anything of monetary value. This includes Christmas gifts, birthday gifts and end of the year gifts. Cards are the exception.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

All staff, consultants and volunteers must adhere to the standard of conduct set down in the Head Start Performance Standards (1304.52(h) (1)). Those regulations are as follows:

1. They will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability;
2. They will follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and other staff members;
3. No child will be left alone or unsupervised while under their care
4. Staff will use positive methods of child guidance and WILL NOT engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition, they will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

NOTES: