

**BUTLER COUNTY
CHILDREN'S CENTER, INC.
HEAD START/
EARLY HEAD START
PROGRAMS**



**PARENT MANUAL
2010 - 2011**

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**WELCOME TO
BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTER, INC.
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM**

Welcome to Butler County Children's Center, Inc. We are delighted to have you as one of our families and hope that your time with us is a pleasant one.

The Children's Center, a private non-profit United Way Agency and academic school, has been providing a variety of children's programs since 1973. The Center is governed by a voluntary Board of Directors composed of community members, and the Head Start and Early Head Start programs are also governed by a Policy Council. The Center provides child care and is the grantee agency for the Head start and Early Head Start programs, the Pre-K Counts program, and the Child Care Information Services Agency in Butler County.

Head Start is designed to foster healthy development in children by delivering a range of services, responsive and appropriate to each child and family's heritage. Head Start offers an experience that encompasses all aspects of a child's development and learning.

Early Head Start has a triple mission. It promotes healthy prenatal outcomes, enhances the development of infants and toddlers and promotes healthy family functioning.

The MISSION of the Children's Center is to provide a variety of children's programs and quality services designed to meet the comprehensive needs of families.

Again, WELCOME and please feel free to contact me at any time if I can help with your Head Start/Early Head Start experience in any way.

Sincerely,

Alice Nunes
Chief Executive Officer

BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTER HEAD START PROGRAMS

- (1) Children who are in the **Center Based Head Start** program come to a Head Start classroom for 128 days during the school year. Parents are given a schedule of class days. Families in the center based program will be visited by the teacher and Family Service Worker at least four times during the year. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom and to attend trainings or workshops.

All programs are designed to meet the needs of each child. Children will have learning experiences in Head Start that help them to think, to get along with other children and their teachers, to feel good about themselves and to express their feelings. Children will take part in indoor and outdoor play and will practice pre-reading, writing, and math skills. Each classroom has been divided into several "learning centers". Each area has special toys and materials. The seven areas are:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Block Area | 2. Dramatic Play Center | 3. Creative Expression (Art) |
| 4. Quiet Area (Library, Literacy) | 5. Sand/Water Table | 6. Science Area |
| 7. Manipulative Area: a. Table Games/Toys b. Puzzles | | |

Children also have large motor activities outside, in the gym, or in the classroom. These include climbing, throwing, bike riding, running, etc. Children learn through play, with the help of caring teachers and parents.

- (2) Parents who work or attend school can enroll their Head Start/Early Head Start children in our **Head Start/Child Care Program** located at our Bon Aire Site. Parents should talk with their Family Service Worker/Parent Educator who can assist them in finding resources to help pay for the cost of child care.
- (3) Families enrolled in the **Home Based Head Start** Program (3 – 5 year olds) have a weekly 1 ½ hour visit from a Parent Educator. The Parent Educator plans a variety of educational activities for the child and provides materials and supplies to support the activities. In addition, the Parent Educator provides a nutritious snack. Families in the **Home Based** Program also have opportunities to participate in a preschool classroom experience two times each month. While the children are learning with other children parents are provided with trainings and workshops, or they may act as a classroom volunteer.
- (4) **Early Head Start** is a program that is available for pregnant women and for families of children ages birth to three years of age. *Two options are offered:*
 - a) Early Head Start/Home Based is an in-home parent education program designed to offer parents principles of child development that promote positive growth and development. During each weekly 1 ½ hour the Parent Educator guides parents through infant and toddler development by providing ideas and materials for age-appropriate education activities as well as support and guidance in the areas of health, safety and nutrition. Parent/Child Playgroups, offered twice each month provide parents with opportunities to meet, share with and learn from other parents in the program.
 - b) Working parents who need child care should discuss their needs with their Parent Educator.

CHILD CARE DO YOU, AS A PARENT, NEED CHILD CARE?

The child care program at Butler County Children's Center, Inc. uses the same educational program as the Head Start and Early Head Start Program. Children enrolled in both child care and Head Start rarely have difficulty adjusting to a new way of doing things in the classroom.

Parents who are working or going to school may be able to get financial help for the cost of child care.

Flex child care is available on a limited basis. Families who need child care one or two days may apply for flex care. Cost for this service ranges from \$24.00/day to \$31.00/day per child. This service is only available if the child care classrooms have space. Families interested in this service would need to sign up by noon the day before the service.

CONFIDENTIALITY

AS PART OF THE ENROLLMENT PROCESS AND THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, ALL HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START FAMILIES PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THEIR CHILD'S AND FAMILY'S MEDICAL HISTORY, EDUCATION, DEVELOPMENTAL, ECONOMIC HISTORY AND BACKGROUND. THIS INFORMATION WILL ONLY BE USED TO HELP PLAN FOR EACH CHILD AND TO ASSIST YOUR FAMILY. **(ALL INFORMATION WILL BE STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND ONLY INFORMATION NEEDED TO PROVIDE THE SERVICES MENTIONED ABOVE WILL BE PASSED ON TO OTHER HEAD START STAFF.)** PARENTS MAY AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF INFORMATION TO SPECIFIC AGENCIES BY SIGNING A RELEASE FORM.

THE STAFF OF HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START AND VOLUNTEERS, INCLUDING PARENTS, FOSTER GRANDPARENTS OR COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS, MUST KEEP INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL. **CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION ABOUT PARENTS, STAFF OR CHILDREN WHICH IS LEARNED IN THE CLASSROOM, AT POLICY COUNCIL OR IN OTHER MEETINGS MUST NOT BE TALKED ABOUT. GOSSIP WILL NOT BE TOLERATED. PARENTS WHO DO NOT FOLLOW THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY COULD BE EXCUSED FROM POLICY COUNCIL AND OTHER HEAD START FUNCTIONS.**

PICTURES AND VIDEOS OF THE HEAD START CLASSROOM AND FUNCTION ARE NOT PERMITTED.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals of clients shall be made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age or sex.

Program services shall be made accessible to eligible persons with disabilities through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. These methods include, but are not limited to, equipment redesign, the provision of aides, and use of alternative service delivery locations. Structural modifications shall be considered only as a last resort among available methods.

Any individual/client/patient/student (and/or their guardian) who believes they have been discriminated against may file a complaint of discrimination with:

Butler County Children's Center, Inc.
139 Rieger Rd.
Butler, PA 16001

Department of Public Welfare
Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Room 223, Health & Welfare Building
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17105

PA Human Relations Commission
301 Fifth Avenue
Suite 390, Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

U. S. Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Civil Rights
Suite 372, Public Ledger Bldg
150 South Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111

Bureau of Equal Opportunity
Department of Public Welfare
Western Field Office
301 Fifth Avenue
Suite 410, Piatt Place
Pittsburgh, PA 15222



CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY/MANDATED REPORTING

- A. At Head Start, we strongly believe that children should grow up in a community where adults care about them and keep them safe. Providing this safe community takes the determination and commitment on the part of everyone involved in your child's life.
- B. Employees of Butler County Children's Center, Inc. are mandated reporters as required by state law. Direct care staff is required to attend child abuse training every three years. Butler County Children's Center, Inc. will maintain confidentiality of records concerning child abuse and neglect at all times. Butler County Children's Center, Inc. will work closely with the Child Protective Services as well as with parents in order to help play a preventative role in relation to child abuse and neglect.

Abusing parents need help not punishment. The Butler County Children's Center, Inc. plays a major role in preventing child abuse and neglect, and we can support efforts to bring families the help they need. Here are a few places that can assist families:

- A. **Children and Youth Agency: 724-284-5156** – Provides assistance to children and families in an abusive situation
- B. **VOICE: 724-283-8700** – Provides domestic violence assistance
- C. **Warmline: 1-800-641-4546** – helpline for parents
- D. **Center for Community Resources: 724-431-0095 or 1-800-292-3866** – Provides mental health services in the community

CRISIS INTERVENTION PLAN

- 1. Whenever parents know of a crisis situation (a crisis situation is any situation that happens suddenly and could harm the safety, health, or welfare of a child or family) they should immediately call the Head Start Family Service Staff or Parent Educator. A crisis could include housing, lack of food, health problem, injury, death in a family, spouse abuse, or child abuse, etc.
- 2. If the crisis were to happen in the evening or on a weekend, parents should call 9-1-1.
- 3. 9-1-1 should be called for all life threatening emergencies!

FAMILY LITERACY

Having children become readers and writers and be successful in school is a dream most parents have for their children. To help parents make this "dream come true", Butler County Children's Center takes the following steps:

- 1. Head Start/Early Head Start believes in the important role parents play as their child's first and most important teacher.
- 2. Parent Educators take books provided by Head Start and Early Head Start on home visits for families to borrow on a regular basis. Children will have opportunities to

develop emerging literacy skills through materials and activities. Children have books available during Center Days and Playgroups. Also, parents and Parent Educators read to and with the children.

3. Families have the chance to list their family goals, needs, strengths regarding literacy by using the Family Partnership Agreement. Steps to meet these goals will be supported by Family Service Workers and Parent Educators.
4. Children have opportunities to development emerging literacy skills through materials and activities in the classroom. Teachers plan for children's learning by reading books to and with children daily in the classroom. Children have the opportunity to become writers by using markers, pencils, chalk paper, notebooks, etc.
5. Parents can attend trainings and workshops about developing literacy skills and interest.

Pageturners: Meets monthly. Parents receive a children's book to read, review, and discuss. Activities to do with the children at home are provided.

Bookworms: A monthly "book club". Parents receive a book to read for a month. They then meet and discuss the book.

6. Butler County Children's Center, Inc. provides books to enrolled children 3 times during the year through the Books for Kids Program.
7. Parents have the opportunity to attend GED classes that are offered throughout Butler County. Butler County Children's Center, Inc. will pay for parents of enrolled children to take the GED test.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Butler County Children's Center, Inc. is a non-profit private United Way Agency. A volunteer Board of Directors made up of community members and two Policy Council Representatives governs Butler County Children's Center, Inc. This Grantee Board of Directors has responsibility for all legal and financial Head Start/Early Head Start issues.

BABYSITTING PROVIDED BY BUTLER COUNTY CHILDREN'S CENTER, INC.

Head Start and Early Head Start parents should try to make arrangements with other Head Start/Early Head Start parents for babysitting. However, if you are unable to find volunteer babysitting:

Babysitting will be provided for parents/legal guardians who are attending Head Start/Early Head Start trainings/meetings/functions.

The parent/legal guardian must call 1-866-348-6674 or 724-283-7456 ext. 37 and leave a message by 3:00 p.m. the Thursday of the week **before** the event.

Parents must call to cancel if they no longer need babysitting. If a parent does not cancel babysitting three times they will lose their babysitting privileges for three months.

Children regardless of age may not be present in meetings or trainings. They must be with the babysitter.

Children who are enrolled in public/private school cannot be given babysitting during the time school is in session.

Parents who arrive at an activity with children not on the babysitting list will be asked to leave.

Children sent home from Head Start because of illness or other medical reasons will not be accepted in babysitting. If your child is ill please make other arrangements, so that you may attend the Head Start activity. Ill children will not be accepted in babysitting.

In certain cases, parents can be reimbursed for finding their own babysitting arrangements:

\$2.00 per hour for one child
\$2.50 per hour for more than one child

Reimbursement will be made if a non-household member babysits. Reimbursement will be made for meetings/training times only. Pre-approval will be required.

VOLUNTEERING FOR HEAD START

In-kind is a term you will hear often in Head Start and Early Head Start. Because our program is funded by a grant awarded by the federal government, we are required to provide 25% local matching funds. The time that you volunteer in the program will be converted into a dollar amount so that our program meets its in kind amount.

There are 3 ways you can provide the Head Start and Early Head Start program with In Kind hours:

1. Volunteering in the classroom
2. Attending Parent Meetings and Policy Council Meetings
3. Doing "at home" activities with your child



1. Volunteering in the classroom

Volunteers are always needed and are a BIG help to our classrooms. Please feel free to volunteer when you are able. Anyone in the community can volunteer: parents, grandparents, neighbors, friends, etc. Volunteers can read to the children, play games, help at meal times, and more.

A volunteer works under the direction and supervision of a teacher or staff member. They do not substitute for a teacher but provide help and support to the classroom as directed by the teacher.

Some volunteer guidelines are:

1. Sign the volunteer form when you arrive at the classroom. It is kept in a notebook in the classroom.
2. The teacher will greet you and provide you with some guidance on how you can help in the classroom.
3. Take a look at the daily schedule in the classroom and discuss any questions with the teacher.
4. Dress appropriately and comfortably for working with children.
5. Let the teacher/parent educator know of your abilities, talents, suggestions or ideas that could be helpful within the program.
6. Be sure to ask about policies on: discipline, meals/snacks, restrooms, parking and fire drills.
7. Be aware that there is NO smoking allowed at any of the classroom sites.
8. Be sure to ask where you should keep your purse and/or personal belongings. Please turn off your cell phone while in the classroom.
9. Keep personal opinions regarding staff members and/or children to yourself. ALL information regarding children and their families is CONFIDENTIAL.
10. Break times are important. Be sure to take a break from the classroom!

2. Attending Parent Meetings and Policy Council Meetings

You are invited to a PARENT MEETING once a month!

We are in this together! Parent meetings occur during the months of October, November, December, March, April and May. Important information is shared and planning together occurs. We'll provide babysitting for your children while an informal meeting time for parents or guardians takes place. A snack will be served, too!

What will happen at the meeting?

- You will learn what is happening in the classrooms and at Butler County Children's Center.
- You will make decisions and help plan activities and special events to share with your children.
- You will use parent activity funds that have been set aside to be used for these activities.
- You will hear information on topics such as child safety, nutrition, disciplining with heart and skill and more!



Head Start staff will also be there to provide information, experience and practical ideas for you to try! Be sure to “sign in” on the attendance sheet so that we can count your time as in-kind.

Policy Council: The Policy Council is made up of parent representatives and alternates who are elected by other parents at their Parent Committee meetings. Classrooms, Early Head Start and Home Based Head Start will elect parents as Policy Council Representatives and Alternates. Community Representatives are also elected to participate. The group meets on a monthly basis and works together to help make decisions about the program.

The Policy Council meets regularly and reviews and approves policies and develops plans that affect the entire program. Policy Council responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Participation in the selection and approval of the hiring and terminating of Head Start staff.
- Approval of all budgets, funding applications and program policies.
- Participation in the annual self-assessment process.
- Representation on the Butler County Children’s Center, Inc. Board of Directors.
- Reviewing and approving selection criteria for enrollment in Head Start and Early Head Start.

Policy Council meetings are open to the public. However, only Policy Council members can vote.

Be sure to “sign in” on the attendance sheet so that we can count your time as “in kind”!

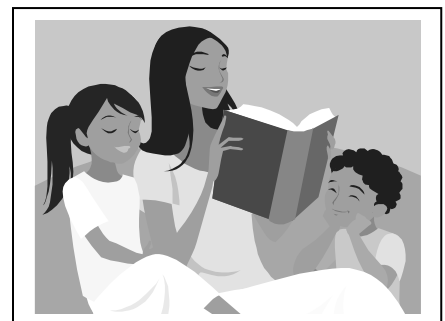
3. “At Home Activities” for Head Start and Early Head Start families

At home activities are fun ways for you and your child to spend time together and to learn!

For the Head Start Classroom Center Based program, your child’s teacher will be providing you with monthly calendar activities. These ideas coordinate with what is going on in the classroom and with The Creative Curriculum that we use. During home visits and parent/teacher conferences we also receive ideas from you as to what you want your child to learn.

Some possible at home activities could be:

- Counting the number of circles in your home.
- Reading together.
- Making a creation with shapes (circle, squares and triangles).
- Gather a collection of acorns. Look for similarities and differences.



For the Home-Based Head Start Program and the Early Head Start Program, together you and the Parent Educators will develop activities to do with your child. The activities are based on what you want your child to learn and on the development of your child. These ideas and MORE are ways that you child learns and that you can provide in-kind hours for the program.

Parents can earn up to 50 hours of in-kind a month for the program. Please be sure to indicate your hours and sign the “At Home Activities Form” so that we can count your time as in-kind.

ROLES OF PARENTS IN HEAD START AND EARLY HEAD START

GET INVOLVED! FOR YOUR CHILD! FOR YOU!

You are your child's first and most important teacher! There are many ways for you to share your child's Head Start and Early Head Start experience:

Communicating: Communication is important! Teachers and Family Service Workers will share information with you at home visits, conferences, newsletters, phone calls or by sending notes home. Please feel free to call your teacher, Parent Educator or Family Service Worker in order to keep communication ongoing. Also, please come in and volunteer anytime!



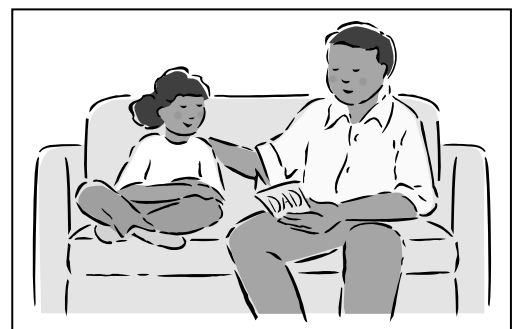
Volunteering: We need you! We need volunteers to help children with coats and shoes, to help at mealtimes, to read to the children, to stuff take-home folders, to share a special skill or to share a cultural experience. The more parent volunteers we have, the richer the children's classroom experience. You will have many wonderful opportunities this year!

Learning at home: You and your child can do in home learning activities together! It is important to spend time looking at and reading books every day. Your child's teacher or parent educator will be giving you ideas to help you as you are your child's BEST teacher. All you have to do is TAKE TIME—we will offer lots of ideas!

Decision making: We expect parents to attend monthly Parent Meetings to hear about what is happening in the Head Start classroom. Parents are elected to serve on our Policy Council to share decisions on how the money is spent, who is hired to work in the program, and what the goals are for the program.

Becoming a member: We need parents to be members of our Advisory Committees for Health, Family and Education Services. Your input on what you and your family can provide and what they need is important at these meetings. FITT (Family Involvement Together Time) is a committee that meets to plan monthly family activities. Events like: movie night, Saturday sled riding and more are planned with parent ideas.

Involving more men with Head Start: Fathers can bring strengths to their families and children and we want to encourage and support the many roles that men can play in the lives of their children and other children, too! Fathers have a powerful influence on the development and future of their children. Every month the FITT committee will plan activities for men and children to attend together. Bowling night, kite flying and a morning of fishing have been some of the events in past years. Please attend the FITT meetings and give us your ideas!



Collaborating with the Community: “It takes a village to raise a child.” Join us as we get out in the community to let others know more about our program – about Early Childhood and what all families need to be successful. Together we will find places to make our voices known.

Becoming an employee of Butler County Children’s Center, Inc.: Parents are given preference for employment when they meet the qualifications. Experience as a volunteer may be helpful to qualify for employment. A parent could become a paid babysitter during Head Start meetings and trainings, a classroom assistant or an assistant teacher. Ask your Family Service Worker for more information.

The greatest predictor of student achievement is family involvement!

You know your family best.
Partner with us to do the best!



DRUG, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND WEAPONS POLICY

1. Smoking is not permitted in any of the Head Start buildings, agency vehicles or at any Head Start function.
2. Drugs and alcohol are not permitted at any Head Start activity or function.
3. Weapons, firearms and ammunition are prohibited at all Head Start buildings and functions.

PROBLEM RESOLUTION PROCEDURE

1. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM CONCERNS

- a) If parents have a concern or question about a classroom activity or the education program, they should talk with their child's teacher or parent educator. The parent and teacher should try to solve the problem.

If a parent has a concern about their teacher or parent educator they should discuss the issue with the Site Manager.

- b) If, within a one (1) week period of time, the parent feels that the problem has not been solved, he/she may present the problem to the Home Based Manager or Early Head Start Manager.
- c) If the problem cannot be solved at this level within a one (1) week period, it should be presented to the Education Specialist.
- d) If the problem has not been resolved at this point, a written statement should be given to the Problem Resolution Committee. Please address to: Problem Resolution Committee, Butler County Children's Center, Inc., 139 Rieger Road, Butler, PA 16001. If a parent has questions about writing the problem, he/she may ask a member of the Committee or staff for assistance.

2. NON-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM CONCERNS

- a) The parent should first discuss the matter with the Family Service Worker. The parent and Family Service Worker should try to solve the problem.
- b) If, within one (1) week period of time, the parent feels that the problem has not been solved, he/she may present the problem to the Site Manager.
- c) If the problem cannot be solved at this level within a one (1) week period, it should be presented to the Family Service Manager.
- d) If the problem has not been resolved at this point, a written statement should be given to the Problem Resolution Committee, addressed to Problem Resolution Committee, Butler County Children's Center, Inc., 139 Rieger Road, Butler, PA 16001. If a parent has questions about writing the problem, he/she may ask a member of the Committee for Assistance.

If a parent feels that he/she cannot discuss the matter with certain individuals, because of their personal involvement, he/she may go directly to the person on the next higher step in the Resolution Procedure.

The Problem Resolution Committee will investigate the issues and attempt to resolve the problem. If specific action seems necessary, the Problem Resolution Committee will make recommendations to Policy Council.

CELEBRATION POLICY

Butler County Children's Center, Inc. makes Holiday Celebrations comfortable, pleasant and meaningful for the children and families. The practices we follow are:

1. Butler County Children's Center, Inc. may hold Seasonal Celebrations.
2. Teachers and Parent Educators will schedule these events; many sites use the same day.
3. Teachers and Parent Educators will schedule age appropriate activities for the children. You are welcome to share your families' traditions with us.
4. Classrooms and Parent Educators will have a sign-up sheet so families can contribute to a celebration. There will be enough celebrations so that each parent need only sign up once a year. We encourage all families to bring nutritional store bought food items for these activities.
5. We would never want to frighten or upset a child. For this reason we do not allow costumes or masks, as these can be scary to young children. Neither adults nor children are permitted to enter the classrooms in costumes.
6. The Parent Committee at each site can determine if other celebrations would be appropriate. If a parent group determines additional celebrations are needed, these celebrations can be held off site and at a time when classrooms/center days are not in session. (For example: "End of the Year Picnic".)



SAFETY OF CHILDREN

It is the primary responsibility of the staff of Butler County Children's Center, Inc. to insure the safety of the children in care. In addition to safety procedures, DPW Regulations, daily routines, lesson plans, safety checklist and memo/directives; the staff constantly keep watch over the children in their care and must know their whereabouts at all times. Staff must keep children safe at all times, and for that reason the following release procedures will be followed:

All Parents will complete a Parental Consent Form which will allow other adults (16 years of age or older) to receive or pick up their children. This form will also indicate which of these adults may be contacted in case of illness or emergency. The following rules will apply:

1. **Children will only be released to authorized adults.***
2. All adults need to carry I.D. with them when picking up children at all times (Either a picture I.D. or two other forms of I.D. are needed). Even the regular pick up adult must carry ID as there could be a substitute staff member who does not know them.
3. When possible parents should notify the program when sending an adult named on the Parental Consent form to pick up their child that has not previously picked the child up.
4. Parents may change the list of adults allowed to pick up their child at any time during the program year by contacting their Direct Care Staff or their Family Service Worker.
5. In an emergency a child may be released to adults not on the release form in two ways:
 - A. A parent may contact the classroom or Family Service Staff by phone to permit the release of the child. The parent will be asked to give a brief description of this adult. Prior to release the adult must show I.D.
 - B. The parent may send a written note to the teacher/bus monitor authorizing the release of the child to the new adult. Prior to release the adult must show I.D.
6. If the above conditions are not met, your child will not be released to that adult. Children not released at the bus stop will be returned to their classroom at the end of the bus run. Staff will call the parents or emergency contacts to come and pick the child up.
7. Children that are transported to and from school by their parent/guardian are expected to be picked up at the close of the class session.

* An adult is someone 16 years of age or older



POLICY FOR RELEASING CHILDREN TO ADULTS OF DIMINISHED CAPACITY

If an employee determines that the adult responsible for picking up a child from the Butler County Children's Center, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Program is showing behavior which indicates diminished capacity, (i.e. slurred speech, unsteady walk, confused thinking, impaired reflexes, erratic behavior, altered moods, or drowsiness) the staff member will contact another authorized adult on the release list. The impaired adult should be calmly encouraged to wait for the alternate release person and not drive.

If problems arise, the teaching staff may contact the office staff for support or request police assistance through 911. Under no circumstances will the staff endanger the other children in care.

CENTER BASED BUS PROCEDURE

1. All children who use the Head Start bus will be assigned a bus stop.
2. **The bus will only pick up and drop off children at a designated bus stops.**
3. If parents are moving and need a new bus stop, they should contact their Family Service worker at least one week in advance of their move.
4. **All bus questions and concerns must go through the Family Service Workers.**
5. We cannot guarantee front door service, the bus will come as close to your home as possible.
6. Children and parents must be at the bus stop at least five (5) minutes before the bus is due and be prepared to wait five (5) minutes after its due time. Head Start does not make return trips to pick up children who have missed the bus.
7. An adult must be with the child at the bus stop, and assist the child on and off the bus.
8. Only Head Start children, their parents, staff and volunteers may ride the bus to and from the center.
9. No one is permitted to eat/drink on the bus for safety reasons.
10. All bus passengers and drivers must wear seat belts.
11. Volunteers who ride the bus are expected to help the children.
12. The Bus Monitor can refuse a child from boarding the bus; if the child displays symptoms of a communicable disease, appears to be too sick to attend class, or fails to present written clearance from a doctor that was requested by the health staff or teacher.
13. If no one picks up the child at the bus stop at the end of the day the child will be returned to his classroom at the end of the bus run.
 - a. The Family Service staff will try to contact the parent.
 - b. If the parent cannot be reached the staff will contact the parent's emergency contact number(s) so they can come and pick up the child.
 - c. **If no one is located and it has been two (2) hours since class dismissal, The Children and Youth Agency will be contacted to take custody of the child.**
 - d. If a child is returned to their classroom more than twice the following policy will become effective: at the time of the child's third return the family will lose bus service for a day. If the child is returned a fourth time the child will lose bus service for four days, this will continue for each additional return. The Family Service staff will work with the family to limit this possibility.
14. The parent is responsible for keeping the Emergency Contact/Release numbers up-to-date with the family service staff.

SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT

As mandated in the Program Performance Standards, initial screening of children is carried out to identify evidence of developmental, sensory, or behavioral concerns and to determine if children should receive a formal evaluation to determine if a child requires specialized services. Ongoing assessment which is based on child observation is also required to identify each child's strengths and needs, to help tailor learning experiences and other services, and to support staff in communicating and working with parents and families.

Each child's screening and assessment results will be reviewed with his/her parent during a home visit or parent conference. Parents know more than anyone else about their children and provide additional meaningful and reliable information. Families' observations, ideas and concerns are central to planning for and carrying out each child's educational program during the Head Start year.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Head Start and Early Head Start are inclusive environments. This means all children, including children with disabilities or special health needs, are welcomed into all Head Start and Early Head Start Programs. Reasonable accommodations are made to ensure that each child has the opportunity to participate in the full range of Head Start programming.

When screening results identify evidence of developmental, sensory or behavioral concerns, or when children enter Head Start or Early Head Start with identified disabilities, our Head Start program works closely with parents and the early intervention programs to ensure that children are evaluated and/or receive all necessary services.

If your child has a special health need or diagnosed medical condition you may be asked to complete a health care plan which may contain information from your child's doctor. This plan ensures that all your child's health care needs are met.

Even with program adaptations and individual support, some children may still have difficulty participating successfully in the classroom environment. Our Head Start program has developed a Severe Behavior Policy to ensure that classrooms are able to maintain a safe environment and to ensure that children who continue to have difficulty within the classroom environment receive appropriate support services. A copy of this Severe Behavior Policy is available from your Site Manager.



HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Head Start Performance Standards require that to be enrolled in Head Start a child must have an up to date immunization record, an up-to-date well check-up and a professional dental exam within the last 12 months (if the child is over 3 years of age). Head Start also requires that a child have a lead screening completed. If your child has not had this screening, you should request it at your child's next well check-up.

SPECIAL DIETS

If a child is unable to eat any of the food that is provided for medical or religious reasons, parents should notify the staff. Parents must present a written statement from their family doctor or clergyman in order for a child to be given a meal different than the planned menu.

FOOD TREATS

Parents are permitted to send snacks only on the day of designated special occasions or on their child's birthday. If parents wish to provide a birthday treat, they should contact the child's teacher or Parent Educator one week in advance. Other treats must be arranged in advance with the teacher or Parent Educator. Snacks must be prepackaged store bought items; no home-made treats may be distributed.

Some suggestions of treats and beverages would be:

TREATS

Cheese
Crackers
Pretzels
Sesame Nut Mix
Dried Fruit
Granola Bar

BEVERAGES

Milk
Fruit Juice

-- and many other yummy nutritious treats!



HEAD START CENTERS

Administration Office

139 Rieger Road
Butler, PA 16001
724-287-2761
1-866-348-6674

Bon Aire Center/EHS Office

131 Homewood Drive
Butler, PA 16001
Telephone: 724-283-3053

Chicora Elementary School

205 Kittanning Street
Chicora, PA 16025
Telephone: 724-445-7987

Dassa Head Start

Dassa Elementary School
391 Hooker Rd.
West Sunbury, PA 16061
Telephone: 724-637-2200

West End Head Start

805 New Castle Street
Butler, PA 16001
Telephone: 724-287-2017

Mt. Chestnut Head Start/ Home Based

139 Rieger Road
Butler, PA 16001
Telephone: 724-283-4915

Oakland Elementary School

545 Chicora Rd.
Butler, PA 16002
Telephone: 724-287-2708

Middlesex Elementary School

116 Browns Hill Road
Valencia, PA 16059
Telephone: 724-898-4508

Bruin Elementary School

139 School Street
Bruin, PA 16022
Telephone: 724- 756-2030
Ext. 2131

OTHER IMPORTANT NUMBERS:

Child Abuse:	State Childline Children & Youth Agency (Weekends and after 4:30 p.m. – Call 911)	1-800-932-0313 724-284-5156
Domestic Violence:	VOICe	724-283-8700
Housing or Food Related:	Salvation Army: Catholic Charities:	724-287-5532 724-287-4011
Medical:	Butler Memorial Hospital: Ambulance: Poison Control Center (Pittsburgh):	724-283-6666 9-1-1 1-800-222-1222
Center for Community Resources:		724-431-0095
Child Care Information Services of Butler County (CCIS)		724-285-9431
Resource and Referrals for Child Care:		724-287-1004
Mental Health Crisis:		1-800-292-3866

CENTER BASED HEAD START PROGRAM INFORMATION

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THE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Creative Curriculum is designed for early childhood programs serving children ages 3 – 5. It is based on a firm foundation of scholarly research and reports that identify how children develop and learn and those approaches that are most likely to ensure children's success. The Creative Curriculum includes the following goals:

- **Social/Emotional Development:**
 - **Achieving a sense of self:** knowing oneself and relating to other people – both children and adults.
 - **Taking responsibility for self and others:** following rules and routines, respecting others, and taking initiative.
 - **Behaving in a pro-social way:** showing empathy and getting along in the world, for example, by sharing and taking turns.

- **Physical Development:**
 - **Achieving gross motor control:** moving the large muscles in the body, especially the arms and legs, consciously and deliberately. Gross motor control includes balance and stability; movements such as running, jumping, hopping, galloping and skipping; and physical manipulations such as throwing, kicking, and catching.

 - **Achieving fine motor control:** using and coordinating the small muscles in the hands and wrists with dexterity. As these fine muscles develop, children are able to perform self-help skills and manipulate small objects such as scissors and writing tools. The achievement of fine motor skills generally lags behind gross motor development.

- **Cognitive Development:**
 - **Learning and problem solving:** being purposeful about acquiring and using information, resources, and materials. As children observe events around them, ask questions, make predictions, and test possible solutions, learning reaches beyond just acquiring facts. Persistence and knowing how to apply knowledge expands their learning even further.

 - **Thinking logically:** gathering and making sense of the information by comparing, contrasting, sorting, classifying, counting, measuring, and recognizing patterns. As children use logical thinking, they organize their world conceptually and gain a better understanding of how it works.

 - **Representing and thinking symbolically:** using objects in a unique way, for instance, a cup to represent a telephone, or a broom to represent a horse; pretending, for instance to be mommy or a firefighter; portraying the word through charts or pictures, for instance, making a graph to show changes in the weather over time or a drawing to show what happened to a character in a story. Representations and symbols free children from the world of literal meanings and allow them to use materials and their imagination to explore abstract ideas.

- **Language Development:**
 - **Listening and speaking:** using spoken language to communicate with others, enlarging one's vocabulary, expressing oneself, understanding the oral speech of others, participating in a conversation, and using language to solve problems. As children learn to listen and speak, they gain control of themselves and their world, relate effectively to others, and gain and store more and more information.

 - **Reading and writing:** making sense of written language, understanding the purpose of print and how it works, gaining knowledge of the alphabet, writing letters and words. When children begin to read they gain access to new worlds of information and faraway places, including the world of imagination. Writing things down expand memory, communication, and understanding.

OUTDOOR PLAY

All Head Start classrooms include outdoor play as a regular part of the daily routine. The children will play outside every day when weather permits (temperatures above 25 degrees and below 90 degrees) and when the facility has a safe and suitable play yard.

Please be sure to dress your child in outerwear (coats, hats, boots, gloves etc.) that will match the weather and keep your child comfortable.

TRANSITIONING TO KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten readiness and social competency are the primary goals of the Head Start Program. When a child is of kindergarten age, Head Start will provide parents with registration dates and times from the various school districts, along with other necessary information a parent will need when enrolling their child for school. Children will be given the opportunity to visit a kindergarten classroom while they are still in Head Start, so they may see first hand what a classroom looks like as well as what kindergarten children do while in school. Head Start children participate in classroom activities and interact with kindergarteners during the visit.

Additional information and materials will be sent home to parents regarding the transition to kindergarten experience. Training will also be provided for parents of kindergarten bound children to address any questions and discuss ways parents can advocate for their child upon entering the school system.

Lastly, children's Head Start educational records will be forwarded to the school district of residence, with parental consent in an effort to help schools plan for future programming.

CLASSROOM ATTENDANCE POLICY

Head Start Performance Standards require children to attend at least 85% of the days the classroom is available in the month. This means children who miss more than 1 or 2 days per month are not meeting the guidelines and will not be receiving the most benefit from the program.

To monitor attendance and offer assistance to families who are having difficulty in maintaining their child's attendance level, the following procedure has been established:

1. Parents are asked to call their site office when their child is going to be absent.
2. Parents are asked to send an excuse with the child when he/she returns.
3. If a child is absent three (3) days in a row, and the site has not been notified of a reason, the child's teacher will call the parent to determine the reason.
4. If by the 5th day the teacher has been unable to determine a reason for a child's absence, the Family Service Staff will be notified.
5. The Family Service Worker will then attempt to reach the family by phone, home visit or letter.
6. If another week goes by with no response from the family, a letter will be sent to the family informing them they are in danger of losing their Head Start services.

7. If there is still no response one week after the above letter is sent, a final termination of service letter will be issued.
8. Children with sporadic attendance are not benefiting from the Head Start Program and the Family Service Worker will attempt to determine the reason for the irregular attendance so that the child can attend on a regular basis. When sporadic attendance continues despite our attempts to help the family, the child will be dropped from the program.

Stopping service to our Head Start families is a last resort. We, of course will attempt to assist all our families who are working to correct the attendance difficulties.

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEER JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	VOLUNTEER CLASSROOM ASSISTANT
SUPERVISOR:	Classroom Teacher or Parent Educator
GENERAL DESCRIPTION:	Works cooperatively with staff on a consistent basis, becoming familiar with daily activities and the Head Start philosophy.
SKILLS NEEDED:	Friendly, warm personality. Able to work with young children. Emotionally mature and able to follow directions. Understands and like children, displays a positive attitude, and accepts special needs of children.
TASKS:	Assists staff in carrying out daily activities, outings, field trips, and special events. Assists with clerical work and clean up with Staff supervision, reads stories, supervises outdoor activities, mixes finger paint, and readies art supplies. Helps provide a smooth change from one activity to another. Prepares and supervises various activities with teaching staff help.
EXPECTED RESULTS:	Increased understanding of child development. Serves as a role model for children. Increased ability to work with children and be able to implement ideas. Work cooperatively with staff.

How do parents and family members volunteer or work in the classrooms?

Answer: As involved volunteers and/or as paid substitutes.

- a. Visit the Center and see how your child works and plays with other children.
- b. Volunteer to work with the children, help the staff prepare materials for the activities they are doing with the children, become involved in planning for the daily activities.
- c. Ask the teacher for guidance or things to do.
- d. Parent volunteer sheets are completed by the parents.

How do parents work with their children at home?

- a. Share ideas with staff about activities they can be doing with their children to help the child continue learning.
- b. Share ideas and activities with the Head Start/Early Head Start staff that could be used in the program.
- c. Complete the in-home activities as provided by the classroom Teacher.

Most Center Based parents welcome Head Start Staff into their home. Head Start Staff is required to visit each family at least four times each Program Year.

The Direct Care Staff visits twice a year to work with each parent on their child's developmental growth. The Family Service Worker visits at least twice a year to assist parents with goal setting and identifying their strengths.

DISCIPLINE

In Head Start there are established procedures for disciplining children. Parents are required to follow these procedures while volunteering. Children are never to be hit, yelled at, or shamed. When conflicts arise with a parent's own child, the staff may help the parent to handle the problem. When parents see behavior in their own children that concern them, they can discuss the matter with the Teacher or Family Service Worker in a conference, (please, not in front of the child). Other suggestions for talking to the children are:

- a. State suggestions in a positive manner. Tell the child what you want him to do rather than what you don't want her to do. Avoid using the word "don't" --- you'll have better results if you say, "Ride around the table", instead of, "Don't bump the table." This is using a positive, instead of a negative, suggestion.
- b. Use a quiet, confident tone of voice when you speak to a child. Your voice is a teaching tool. If you speak quietly to a child, he will pay more attention to you than if you raise your voice and speak in a commanding tone.
- c. Give the child a choice only when you want to leave the choice up to her.
- d. Avoid using words such as "bad" or "not nice" to describe children. Do not blame or shame children.
- e. Encourage the child to be as independent as possible in taking care of himself and in his play. Give the child the minimum of help in order that he/she may have the maximum chance to grow in independence, but give the help the child needs. Give him time enough to get into his own coat. Let her take the sponge and wipe up the milk herself if she spills it, even if you have to dry things a bit afterwards. When you help him this way, he is learning how to solve problems and be independent.
- f. Interest the child in desirable behavior. Help children by making desirable behavior seem interesting and fun. "Let's pretend we're delivery men when we take the blocks back in our wagons." Is more fun than just having to put the blocks away.

Butler County Children's Center, Inc. does not permit staff or volunteers to punish, humiliate or intimidate children. Staff who uses these methods will be subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to suspension, demotion or termination. Volunteers who use these methods will be asked to volunteer in other activities other than the classroom.

CLASSROOM SNOW POLICY

The Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms follow the School District snow days. If your School District delays or cancels school, Head Start will be cancelled. Bon Aire, West End, Mt. Chestnut and Oakland follow Butler Area School District; Dassa follows Moniteau School District; Bruin and Chicora follow Karns City School District; Middlesex will follow Mars Area School District.

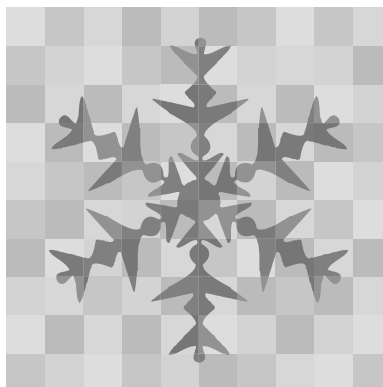
The Head Start/Day Care classrooms in our facilities operate regardless of weather conditions. Children enrolled in the Head Start/Day Care classroom program can use services as needed.

You may listen to WBUT/WLER at 1050 AM or 97.7 FM for news of closings, or you may follow the school closings on the Pittsburgh TV listings.

Snow make up days will be scheduled as needed.

SNOW POLICY FOR PARENT MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

1. When Butler Area School District delays or cancels school there will be no morning Parent Meetings or activities.
2. When the School District in your area delays school there will be no morning Parent Committee Meetings or trainings. Evening meetings will be held.
3. When the School District in your area cancels school there will be no Parent Committee Meetings or activities.
4. When the School District in your area dismisses early there will be no evening meetings or activities at that site. When Butler Area School District dismisses early there will be no Parent Trainings/FITT Activities held at any location.
5. When an event will be held on the weekend the Family Involvement Manager will make a determination as to whether or not the event will occur by Friday at 2:30 p.m. (When the Family Involvement Manager is not available the Family Service Manager will make the determination).
6. Cancellations will be announced on the local radio station.



EXCLUDING ILL CHILDREN

CHILDREN WILL BE EXCLUDED IF THE FOLLOWING SIGNS OF CONTAGIOUS DISEASE OR ILLNESS ARE PRESENT:

- 1. FEVER:** Infants (up to 12 months) auxiliary or ear temperature of 100 degrees. Children older than 24 months with an auxiliary or ear temperature of 102 degrees F. will be excluded if the child can not participate in daily activities or the child is exhibiting other signs of illness listed below.
* For accuracy temperature should be taken a half hour after the child wakes up or eats.
- 2. UNUSUAL LETHARGY, irritability, persistent crying, and difficult breathing.**
- 3. UNCONTROLLED DIARRHEA:** defined as an increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water that is not contained by the diaper or toilet use.
- 4. VOMITING:** two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- 5. MOUTH SORES:** with drooling
- 6. UNIDENTIFIABLE RASH**

CHILDREN WILL ALSO BE EXCLUDED IF THEY CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN ALL DAILY ACTIVITIES AND EXHIBIT SIGNS OF ILLNESS.

If your child is excluded with; high fever, excessive vomiting, or uncontrollable diarrhea he/she must be symptom free in order to return. If you bring your child and symptoms re-occur your child will be excluded again and you will be contacted to pick up your child.

RE-ADMISSION AFTER MEDICAL TREATMENT (Hospital, Doctor, Clinic, etc.):

Any child who has been treated at the emergency room or admitted to the hospital for any treatment or surgical procedure must have a written clearance from a physician to return to the Head Start.

WHEN SIGNS OF A CONTAGIOUS DISEASE AND/OR ILLNESS ARE EVIDENT, THE FOLLOWING WILL TAKE PLACE:

1. For the child's comfort and to prevent spread of infection, the teacher/site staff will call and ask the parent or the emergency contact person to take the child home.
2. If signs of a contagious disease are evident, staff may request doctor's written clearance for child to return. If parent does not get clearance, the child can not return until all signs of suspected contagious illness are no longer present.
3. If a child is diagnosed with a contagious disease a note will be sent to all other parents informing them that their child has been exposed to a specific disease and a listing of the symptoms that they should look for. (No children's names will be disclosed.)

4. When parents see these symptoms, they must keep their children out of school until symptoms are no longer present. If diagnosed with a communicable disease, refer to following communicable list as to when children may return.
5. Teachers can refuse a child's admittance if a child displays symptoms of the communicable disease or appears to be too sick to attend class.

CHILDREN MUST BE KEPT OUT OF HEAD START WHEN DIAGNOSED WITH A COMMUNICABLE DISEASE FOR THE INDICATED PERIOD OF TIME:

CHICKEN POX: When all blisters have scabs (usually 6-10 days).

DIPHTHERIA: Two (2) weeks from the time the child is taking antibiotics, or until there are two (2) negative culture tests.

FIFTH DISEASE: No exclusion unless the child is unable to participate in daily activities.

GIARDIASIS: Once diarrhea has stopped.

HAND, FOOT, AND MOUTH: Seven (7) to ten (10) days from the onset or until all of the blisters have dried and disappeared

HEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE TYPE B (HIB): Child must have written clearance from a health professional or local health department.

HEPATITUS A: One week after onset of illness and after immune globulin has been given to all contacts.

IMPETIGO: Twenty-four (24) hours after doctor prescribed treatment has begun.

INFECTIOUS DIARRHEA: Until negative stool sample is obtained.

LICE: The following procedures must be followed:

- (1) Use prescription lice shampoo.
- (2) After shampooing remove all nits from hair. Child will not be re-admitted with nits.
- (3) Check other household members.
- (4) All combs and brushes need to be washed and soaked in hot water (at least 130 degrees Fahrenheit) for at least 10 minutes.
- (5) All other washable clothing, linen, pillows, etc. need to be washed in hot water and then put in hot dryer for 20 minutes.
- (6) Place all non-washable items in a tightly sealed bag for 14 days.
- (7) Vacuum all carpeting and furniture. There is also a spray that can be purchased at the drug store for furniture and carpeting (discard vacuum bag after each use).
- (8) The first day your child returns to class after being sent home with head lice he or she will not be able to ride the bus. You must transport the child to the classroom 10 minutes before starting time. The teaching staff will check the child's head and if lice or nits are found, you will be asked to take the child home and go through needed steps.

MEASLES: Four (4) days after the rash began.

MENINGITIS: Must have written clearance from a health professional.

METHICILLIN RESISTANT STAPHAURIEUS (MRSA): Must have written clearance from a health care professional.

MONONUCLEOSIS: Child will need a doctor's written permission to be re-admitted.

MUMPS: Nine (9) days after the onset of swelling.

PERTUSSIS (Whooping Cough): Seven (7) days from the time the child begins taking antibiotics.

PINK EYE (acute bacterial contagious conjunctivitis): Forty-eight (48) hours from the start of eye drops prescribed by a doctor. May return in 24 hours if written permission is obtained from a doctor.

PINWORMS: Twenty-four (24) hours after doctor prescribed treatment has begun.

RESPIRATORY STREPTOCOCCAL INFECTIONS: (Scarlet Fever, Bronchitis, Strep Throat, etc.) After 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.

RESPIRATORY SYNCYTIAL (RSV): When all signs of illness are gone.

RINGWORM: Twenty-four (24) hours after beginning medication.

ROSEOLA: No treatment necessary – child may return after rash is gone.

ROTAVIRUS: When all signs of illness are gone.

RUBELLA: Six (6) days from the time the rash begins.

SALMONELLA: Must have written clearance from a health care professional.

SCABIES: Twenty-four (24) hours after treatment. Child will need a doctor's written permission to be re-admitted.

SHIGELLA: After treatment complete and two stool cultures taken 24 hours apart are negative.

TONSILLITIS: Twenty-four (24) hours from the time the child begins taking antibiotics.

TUBERCULOSIS (TB): As soon as effective therapy has been started and adherence to medication is documented

ADMINISTERING MEDICATION POLICY

Infant through Kindergarten

A. To administer non-prescription medication these things are required:

1. Parent and Doctor must complete "Authorization for Medication Form".

a.) Physicians instructions must include:

- Child's name
- Dosage
- Date prescribed
- Doctor's name
- Name of medication
- Side effects (Optional)

b.) Parent permission, which contains child's name, name of medication and when to give medication.

2. Non-prescription medication must be in the original container.

3. Medication must be handed to an employee by parent. It will be kept in a locked area.

B. To administer Prescription Medication and Prescription Maintenance Medication these things are required:

1. Parent and Doctor must complete form "Authorization for Medication Form" (If you do not have a form when you get to the doctor's office have the doctor give written authorization on their letterhead or script pad).

a.) Physicians instructions which must include:

- Child's name
- Dosage
- Date prescribed
- Doctor's name
- Name of medication
- Side effects

b.) Parent permission, which contains child's name, name of medication and when to give medication.

2. The medication container must have original label and contain the following basic information:

- The name of child
- Name of child's doctor
- Name of medication
- Issue date of medication
- Dosage
- How often to give dosage
- Storage requirement (ex.: refrigeration)
- Expiration date

3. Medication must be handed to an employee by the parent. It will be kept in a locked area.



AUTHORIZATION FOR MEDICATION FORM

Directions for completion:

1. Physicians Section – If a parent or guardian does not have this form when they take their child to the physician they can have the physicians write the required information on his/her stationary and staff may staple this to the form. If they don't get anything in writing from the physician the parent can sign a release of information for the physician if there is not one already on file. Releases are filed in child's health file. Teaching staff or site staff may contact physician's office to retrieve needed information.
2. Parent Section – In some cases a parent may have to send permission on another piece of paper. As long as it contains the required information the staff can staple this to the form.
3. Staff Checklist – this section should be completed by staff person who is in charge of the classroom (ex.: Head Teacher, Group Supervisor).

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES FOR PARENTS

In case of health emergency, a staff person will take a child to the closest hospital or an ambulance will be called. Parents will be notified as soon as possible.

CENTER BASED NUTRITION PROGRAM

Butler County Children's Center, Inc. Head Start Program participates in the Department of Education Federal Food Program. Breakfast and lunch are provided with a variety of foods stressing a nutritionally balanced menu. Classroom menus are distributed monthly for the parents.

1. Non-Discrimination Statement: "All meals served to children under the Child Care Food Program are served at no separate charge regardless of race, color, sex, age, disability, or national origin. There is no discrimination in admissions policy, meal service, or the use of facilities."
2. Complaint Procedures: "Any complaints of discrimination should be submitted in writing within 180 days of the incident to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250."

SAMPLE MENUS

BREAKFAST

Bagel/Cream Cheese
Orange wedge
Milk

LUNCH

Turkey w/ stuffing
Peas & Carrots
Apples
Milk

REMEMBER

On program days parents should:

- a. Dress their child in simple, washable clothes. The children play outdoors and indoors. They play with markers, paste and paint.
- b. Put their child's first and last names on clothing, such as sweaters, coats, hats, both mittens, and boots.
- c. Call or send a note if their child brings home something that does not belong to him/her.
- d. Send written excuses for absences of any length of time and call if a child will be absent.
- e. LEAVE A COMPLETE EXTRA SET OF CLOTHING (LABELED) IN THE PROGRAM, IN CASE OF ANY ACCIDENTS.
- f. In winter, send boots, mittens, and hats for outdoor activities.

HOME BASED HEAD START PROGRAM INFORMATION

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THE PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

Preschool children enrolled in the Home Base option receive educational services that are the same as the Center Based option. Parent Educators implement the “Parents as Teachers: Born to Learn Curriculum” in the home setting and extend learning experiences beyond the home in the Center Day classroom setting.

TRANSITIONING TO KINDERGARTEN

Kindergarten readiness and social competency are the primary goals of the Head Start Program. When a child is of kindergarten age, Head Start will provide parents with registration dates and times from the various school districts, along with other necessary information a parent will need when enrolling their child for school.

Additional information and materials will be sent home to parents regarding the transition to kindergarten experience usually at one of the Center Days. Training will also be provided for parents of kindergarten bound children to address any questions and discuss ways parents can advocate for their child upon entering the school system.

Lastly, children’s Head Start educational records will be forwarded to the school district of residence, with parental permission, in an effort to help schools plan for future programming.

HOME BASED ATTENDANCE PROCEDURE

As part of the intake procedure parents sign an agreement that they will be home for every visit, or notify the Parent Educator if they are not going to be present. Should a Parent Educator experience chronic cancellations or parent absences when they attempt a home visit the following procedure will be followed.

1. After the second consecutive cancellation or parent absence the Parent Educator will contact the parent to discuss the missed visits. When the Parent Educator cannot reach a family by phone they will send a letter requesting the family initiate contact regarding the missed visits. The letter will give the family five working days to respond.
2. If after five working days there is no response by the family the Parent Educator will send a second letter informing the family that if they do not respond within five working days the Head Start services will be stopped.
3. If there is still no response by the family a final termination of service letter will be issued ending services.

If the family responds the Parent Educator will offer the family alternate visit times and days and will request the family schedule make up visits. The Parent Educator will make all attempts to continue the family’s enrollment in the program.

HOME BASED TRANSPORTATION

Transportation to Home Based Center Day can be arranged by discussing your needs with your visitor. All bus policies and safety procedures must be followed.

POLICY FOR HOME-BASED CENTER DAYS WHEN SCHOOL IS DELAYED OR CANCELLED

1. When Butler Area School District cancels class there will be no Center Day held.
2. When Butler Area School District delays school the Home-Based Center Day will be held using normal hours of 9:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. There will be no transportation available. Parents may arrive late if they need to put a child on an elementary school bus.

GUIDELINES FOR ILL CHILDREN

Signs of contagious disease and/or illness:

1. Fever: Infants (up to 12 months) auxiliary or ear temperature of 100 degrees. Children older than 24 months with an auxiliary or ear temperature of 102 degrees F. will be excluded if the child can not participate in daily activities or the child is exhibiting other signs of illness.
* For accuracy temperature should be taken a half hour after the child wakes up or eats.
2. Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying and difficulty breathing.
3. Uncontrollable diarrhea: defined as an increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern.
4. Vomiting: two or more times in the previous twenty four hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and child is not in danger of dehydration.
5. Mouth sores: with drooling.
6. Unidentifiable rash.

Children must be kept out of Head Start Center Days when signs of contagious disease and/or illness are present, or if the child is unable to participate in activities because they don't feel well.

CHILDREN WITH A DIAGNOSED COMMUNICABLE DISEASE MUST BE KEPT OUT OF CENTER DAYS FOR THE LENGTH OF THE CONTAGION (refer to pages 26 - 28). THESE POLICIES APPLY AS WELL TO CHILDREN WHO WOULD BE IN THE BABYSITTING ROOM. (Refer to page 10)

Parents should alert the Parent Educator of illnesses present in the home prior to their scheduled visit. Parent Educators will determine if they should keep the visit or reschedule the visit for a different time.

HOME BASED TIPS FOR PARENTS

On Center Day parents should:

- A. Dress their children in simple, washable play clothes.
- B. Put their child's name on clothing such as sweaters, coats, hats, mittens and boots.
- C. Call your Parent Educator if your child brings home something that does not belong to them.
- D. Call the Administration Office (724-287-2761) on Center Days if you are unable to attend.
- E. Stay home if your or your children are sick.

Families that self-transport to Center Day should:

- A. Be with their child until the class start time (9:30 a.m.).
- B. Call if you will arrive after 9:35 a.m.
- C. Sign their child in and out of the classroom.

HOME BASED NUTRITION PROGRAM

Nutrition is a part of every home visit. It is a way for parents and children to enjoy a variety of snacks together and encourage self help skills. Parent Educators will bring snack foods to each home visit. Parents are asked to provide juice, milk or water to drink. Once a month, a cooking experience will be planned with the parent and Parent Educator.

SAMPLE MENUS

SNACK

Bagels & Cream Cheese
Graham Crackers & Raisins
Trail Mix
Vegetables & Dip

COOKING EXPERIENCE

Muffin Pizza
No Bake Cookies
Shaker Pudding

CENTER DAY MEALS

Children attending Center Day will receive a nutritious lunch. Parents attending Center Day will be offered a nutritious lunch. Meals follow the Department of Education Federal Food Program Guidelines.



EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM INFORMATION

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CURRICULUM IN EARLY HEAD START

The child development and education approach for infants and toddlers are based on; an understanding of the child's family and culture; the development of trust and security; and the opportunity to explore sensory and motor experiences. Goals for children's development and learning are established in partnership with parents and based on the child's ongoing developmental assessment. Each home visit focuses on the parent, as the child's most important relationship and as the child's first teacher. Through daily experiences such as feeding, diapering or toileting, greetings or goodbyes, bathing, dressing and play the Early Head Start Parent Educator supports the parent's ability to provide rich learning experiences in the home. This helps to increase the pleasure that both the parent and child take in the relationship that they are building. Expected outcomes for children include the ability to form close trusting relationships, curiosity and the motivation to learn, problem solving, self-control, and the capacity to communicate.

EARLY HEAD START ATTENDANCE POLICY

As part of the intake procedure parents sign an agreement that they will be home for every visit or notify the Parent Educator if they are not going to be present. Should a Parent Educator experience chronic cancellations or parent absences when they attempt a home visit the following procedures will be followed:

1. After the second consecutive cancellation or parent absence the Parent Educator will contact the parent to discuss the missed visits. When the Parent Educator cannot reach a family by phone the Parent Educator will send a letter requesting the family initiate contact regarding the missed visits. This letter will give the family five working days to respond.
2. If after five working days there is no response by the family, the Parent Educator will send a second letter informing the family that if they do not respond within five working days the Head Start services will be stopped.
3. If there is still no response by the family, a final termination of service letter will be issued ending services after five working days.

If the family responds the Parent Educator will offer the family alternate visit times and days and will request the family schedule make up visits. The Parent Educator will make all attempts to continue the family's enrollment in the program.



SOCIALIZATIONS/PLAYGROUPS

Head Start Program Performance Standards require that Early Head Start socializations occur at least twice a month. The purpose of socializations is to strengthen the parent/child relationship. The socialization experience will provide developmentally appropriate materials, parent/child interactive activities, and a time for parents to discuss and support each other in creating positive experiences with their young children. Snacks and meals will be served to each child during groups socializations. The type and nature of the meal or snack will be determined by the content and context of the particular socialization, as well as the developmental level of the children. Appropriate infant formula and baby foods will be available for infants. Good nutrition and healthful eating habits will be promoted through activities such as menu planning, discussion, and the preparing and sharing of snacks or meals.

You are invited!

The Early Head Start Playgroup is offered to families twice a month and we are hoping you are able to come!

Here are some things we want you to know so that your time at Playgroup is enjoyable.

You may be wondering....



When does Playgroup happen?

Two times a month. There is a morning session (10:00-11:30 a.m.) at our Mt. Chestnut Site, 139 Rieger Road, and an evening session (6:00-7:30 p.m.) at our Bon Aire Site, 131 Homewood Drive. Take a look at the Playgroup Calendar for all the dates that we will be getting together.

What will we do at Playgroup?

Parents/guardians will arrive with their Early Head Start child and go to a room where toys such as blocks, puzzles, and balls are there for play. Story time will occur and music and movement too. There will be a meal time and formula and baby food will be provided. You can help to plan the meals!

Will my Parent Educator be there?

The eight Parent Educators take turns arranging and attending Playgroups. So, there are times when he/she will be there. Be sure to let him/her know the first time that you are attending and your Parent Educator will be there to help you and your child get settled in.

How will we get there?

We encourage you to drive as well as car pool with others and we will reimburse you for the expense of driving. However, if that is not possible, we do provide transportation. Please talk with your Parent Educator if you and your child need transportation and she/he will arrange for you to be picked up.

What if I need babysitting for my children who are not in Early Head Start?

We can provide babysitting for them. Make certain you call 724-287-2761 or 1-866-348-6674 by 3:00 p.m. the Thursday of the week before Playgroup is to occur to sign up your child who needs babysitting. They will be in room with staff members where there are toys for them to use. They too will have a meal.

What should we wear?

Dress your child in something that is comfortable and that you don't mind getting a bit messy. We will be busy and sometimes involved in art activities that can involve paint or glue. You should also wear clothes that are comfortable.

What should I bring?

Not much! Although, extra clothes for your child would probably be a good idea. We will have diapers but extra diapers and wipes would be fine to bring. We will show you where the diaper changing area is located at each site. Cell phones are OK, but please have them off when Playgroup is in session. We will have food and beverages for all, so no need to bring any food or drinks. If you would like (and give us permission on attached page), we will be glad to take pictures of you and your child with our camera, so we ask you to leave your camera at home.

Please be sure to ask your Parent Educator about anything you are unsure about.

We are looking forward to seeing you at the next Playgroup!

TRANSPORTATION TO EARLY HEAD START PLAYGROUP/SOCIALIZATION

Transportation to Early Head Start Playgroup Socialization can be arranged by discussing your needs with your Parent Educator. All bus policies and safety procedures must be followed.

EARLY HEAD START SNOW POLICY

1. When Butler Area School District cancels class there will be no playgroup held.
2. When Butler Area School District dismisses school early there will be no evening playgroup.
3. When Butler Area School District delays school there will be no morning playgroup; however there will be evening playgroup.

GUIDELINES FOR ILL CHILDREN

Children will be excluded from playgroup if the following signs of contagious disease or illness are present:

1. **FEVER:** Infants (up to 12 months) auxiliary or ear temperature of 100 degrees. Children older than 24 months with an auxiliary or ear temperature of 102 degrees F. will be excluded if the child can not participate in daily activities or the child is exhibiting other signs of illness listed below.
* For accuracy temperature should be taken a half hour after the child wakes up or eats.
2. **UNUSUAL LETHARGY, irritability, persistent crying, and difficult breathing.**
3. **UNCONTROLLED DIARRHEA:** defined as an increased number of stools compared with the child's normal pattern, with increased stool water that is not contained by the diaper or toilet use.
4. **VOMITING:** two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
5. **MOUTH SORES:** with drooling
7. **UNIDENTIFIABLE RASH**

CHILDREN WILL ALSO BE EXCLUDED IF THEY CANNOT PARTICIPATE IN ALL DAILY ACTIVITIES AND EXHIBIT SIGNS OF ILLNESS.

CHILDREN WITH A DIAGNOSED COMMUNICABLE DISEASE MUST BE KEPT OUT OF SOCIALIZATIONS FOR THE LENGTH OF THE CONTAGION. THESE POLICIES APPLY AS WELL TO CHILDREN WHO WOULD BE IN THE BABYSITTING ROOM (Refer to pages 25 & 26).

Parents should alert the Parent Educator of illnesses present in the home prior to their scheduled visit. Parent Educators will determine if they should keep the visit or reschedule the visit for a different time.

TRANSITIONING FROM EARLY HEAD START TO HEAD START

A transition meeting is held around the time of a child's third birthday to prepare families and staff for the child's transition from Early Head Start to Head Start. Information is shared at the meeting by the sending teacher and the receiving teacher. A home visit is scheduled with both (old and new) teachers attending. Once completed, plans are made and the child is entered in the new program.