

Tri-County Opportunities Council Head Start Program **PARENT HANDBOOK**



**TCOC Head Start
405 Emmons Avenue
Rock Falls, IL 61071
815/625-7830
1-800-323-5434
www.tcochelps.com**

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OFFICE INFORMATION

<p><u>Rock Falls Central Office</u> 405 Emmons Avenue Rock Falls, IL 61071 PH: 815/625-7830 PH: 800/323-5434 Fax: 815/626-3762</p>	<p><u>LaSalle Satellite Office</u> 308 N. 30th Road LaSalle, IL 61301 PH: 815/224-2533 PH: 815/220-1602 or 815/220-1603 (FCSW's) Fax: 815/224-2013</p>
<p><u>TCOC Annex Office</u> 507 W. 3rd Street Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/535-0684 PH: 815/535-0698</p>	<p><u>Sterling Wallace Office</u> 506 W. 4th Street Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-7915</p>

HEAD START CLASSROOMS

<p><u>Rock Falls AM/PM</u> Sterling/Rock Falls Day Care 1840 W. LeFevre Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-9228</p>	<p><u>Rock Falls Exp. AM/PM</u> Sterling/Rock Falls Day Care 1840 W. LeFevre Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-9228</p>	<p><u>Sterling AM/PM</u> Sterling/Rock Falls Day Care 1840 W. LeFevre Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-9228</p>	<p><u>Sterling Exp. AM/PM</u> Sterling/Rock Falls Day Care 1840 W. LeFevre Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-9228</p>
<p><u>Sterling Wallace</u> Wallace School 506 W. 4th Street Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-0780</p>	<p><u>Morrison</u> Open Bible Fellow. Church 11429 Ward Road Morrison, IL 61270 PH: 815/772-8008</p>	<p><u>Dixon AM/PM</u> Open Sesame Day Care 1101 Middle Road Dixon, IL 61021 PH: 815/284-3347</p>	<p><u>Polo</u> East Jordan Church 22027 Polo Road Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-4227</p>
<p><u>Oregon</u> St. Mary's Learning Center 887 Mongan Road Oregon, IL 61061 PH: 815/732-6893</p>	<p><u>Rochelle AM/PM</u> 14206 E. Flagg Road Rochelle, IL 61068 PH: 815/562-3088</p>	<p><u>Rochelle Extended Day</u> 14206 E. Flagg Road Rochelle, IL 61068 PH: 815/562-3088</p>	<p><u>Savanna Extended Day</u> 801 South Street Thomson, IL 61285 PH:</p>
<p><u>Savanna PM</u> 801 South Street Thomson, IL 61285 PH:</p>	<p><u>Mendota AM/PM</u> First Baptist Church 900 Monroe Mendota, IL 61342 PH: 815/538-3026</p>	<p><u>Earlville</u> Earlville School 415 ½ W. Union Street Earlville, IL 60518 PH: 815/246-7288</p>	<p><u>Granville</u> 102 North Church Granville, IL 61326 PH: 815/339-2410</p>
<p><u>Lacon</u> 319 5th Street Lacon, IL 61540 PH: 309/246-6398</p>	<p><u>LaSalle AM/PM</u> Christ Family Foursquare 931 3rd Street LaSalle, IL 61301 PH: 815/223-5733</p>	<p><u>LaSalle Extended Day</u> Grace United Meth. Church 1345 Chartres Street LaSalle, IL 61301 PH: 815/223-1656</p>	<p><u>Ottawa AM/PM</u> Epworth Methodist Church 627 Gentleman Road Ottawa, IL 61350 PH: 815/433-3025</p>

HEAD START CLASSROOMS (continued)

<u>Ottawa Exp. AM/PM</u> 103 W. McKinley Ottawa, IL 61350 PH: 815/434-1355	<u>Ottawa FD/FY</u> Calvary Baptist Church 1931 Pratt Lane Ottawa, IL 61350 PH: 815/433-9750	<u>Seneca Extended Day</u> 104 N. Main Seneca, IL 61360 PH: 815/357-6461	<u>Streator AM/PM</u> 1401 W. Main Streator, IL 61364 PH: 815/673-3120
<u>Streator Exp. AM/PM</u> 1401 W. Main Streator, IL 61364 PH: 815/673-3120	<u>Streator Extended Day</u> 1401 W. Main Streator, IL 61364 PH: 815/673-3120	<u>Spring Valley Ext. Day</u> United Church of Christ 227 E. Erie Spring Valley, IL 61362 PH: 815/663-1420	<u>Wyoming Extended Day</u> 110 N. 7 th Street Wyoming, IL 61491 PH: 309/695-2064

HEAD START COLLABORATION CLASSROOMS

<u>Sterling/Rock Falls Day Care</u> 1840 W. LeFevre Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/626-7397	<u>Open Sesame Day Care</u> 1101 Middle Road Dixon, IL 61021 PH: 815/288-5905
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EARLY HEAD START CLASSROOMS

<u>EHS Ottawa Center Base</u> 627 Gentleman Road Ottawa, IL 61350 PH: 815/433-4126	<u>EHS Streator Center Base</u> 1600 W. Main Street Streator, IL 61364 PH: 815/673-1300	<u>EHS Sterling Center Base I</u> 506 W. 4 th Street Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-4766	<u>EHS Sterling Center Base II</u> 506 W. 4 th Street Sterling, IL 61081 PH: 815/625-4766
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MIGRANT HEAD START CLASSROOM

<u>Migrant Head Start</u> 808 Jefferson Street Mendota, IL 61342 PH: 815/539-6666

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START/MIGRANT HEAD START 2011-2012 CALENDAR

1-3 IHSA Director's Retreat
3 Last Day PY Teaching Staff & Site Supervisors
6-10 Migrant Move-In and Training
7 Policy Council
13 Migrant Center Opens
13 PCE Meeting
15 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
23-24 Central Staff Retreat
27-28 Migrant Home Visits
29 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
30 Full Year FCSW Meeting

JUNE 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

1 Migrant Training (P.M.)
4 Independence Day - Holiday
7 Full Year FCSW Meeting
11 PCE Meeting
13 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
21 Full Year FCSW Meeting
27 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting

JULY 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

2 Policy Council
3 Central Staff Meeting
5 Migrant Training (P.M.)
8 PCE Meeting
10 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
10-12 Migrant Parent/Teacher Conf.
16 FCSW/SS Return
18 AM: Initial Home Visit Training (Teacher's ONLY)
 PM: New Staff Orientation
19 Last Day Migrant Center Open
19 New Staff First Aid/CPR Training
23-26 Education Staff Pre-Service
25 Bus Driver's Pick-Up Busses
26 Transportation Staff Pre-Service
29 Nutrition Staff Pre-Service
30-31 Parent Orientations
31 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting

AUGUST 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

1 Parent Orientations
5 Labor Day - Holiday (FY Staff ONLY)
6 Head Start PY Classes Begin
6 Policy Council
7 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
12 PCE Meeting
21 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
28 FCSW/SS Meeting
30 New Education Staff Training

SEPTEMBER 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

4 Policy Council
5 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
7 First Collection Outcomes Due
10 Columbus Day – No PY Classes; Staff Work Day
10 Transportation Inservice
10 PCE Meeting
14 Teaching Staff Inservice
19 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
26 FCSW/SS Meeting
31 Region V Conference Start

OCTOBER 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
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16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

1-4 Region V Training Conference
8 Policy Council
9 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
11 Veteran's Day - Holiday
14 PCE Meeting
17-18 Parent/Teacher Conferences
17 Nutrition Inservice
18 Health Services Advisory Council
23 Ed. Team Meeting
24-25 Thanksgiving - Holidays
30 FCSW/SS Meeting

NOVEMBER 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
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13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

6 Policy Council
7 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
12 PCE Meeting
14 FCSW/SS Meeting
16 All Staff Inservice
22 PY Staff Optional Vacation Day
23 Christmas Eve - Holiday
26 Christmas - Holiday
27 - 30 PY Staff Vacation Days

DECEMBER 2011						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

2 New Years - Holiday
3 No Class (Work Day) HS PY Staff
3 Policy Council
4 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
9 PCE Meeting
16 Martin Luther King's - Holiday
18 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
25 FCSW/SS Meeting

JANUARY 2012						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

7 Policy Council
 8 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
 10 Second Collection Outcome Due
 13 PCE Meeting
 17 Teaching Staff Inservice
 20 President's Day – Holiday
 22 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
 29 FCSW/SS Meeting

FEBRUARY 2012						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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MARCH 2012						
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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

7 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
 12 PCE Meeting
 13 Policy Council Meeting
 15-16 Parent/Teacher Conferences
 15 Transportation Inservice
 15 Nutrition Inservice
 16 Health Services Advisory Council
 21 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
 28 FCSW/SS Meeting

2-5 PY Staff Vacation Days (centers may vary based on school calendars)
 2 Policy Council
 6 PY Staff Optional Vacation Day
 9 PCE Meeting
 18 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
 20 Teaching Staff Inservice
 25 FCSW/SS Meeting

APRIL 2012						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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29	30					

MAY 2012						
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20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

1 Policy Council
 2 Central Staff Meeting
 12 Fishing Derby
 14 PCE Meeting
 16 Central Staff Meeting & Ed. Team Meeting
 16 All Staff Inservice
 18 Collection #3 Outcomes Due
 18 FCSW/SS Meeting
 23 Last PY 4-Day/Week Class Day
 25 Last PY 5-Day/Week Class Day
 25 Last Work-Day PY Nutrition & Transportation Staff
 28 Memorial Day - Holiday

3 Last Work-Day PY Teaching Staff and Site Supervisors

JUNE 2012						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30



IMPORTANT CLASSROOM INFORMATION

Classroom Address:

Classroom Phone Number:

Teacher/Parent-Child Educator's Name:

Teacher Assistant's Name:

Bus Driver's Name:

Bus Monitor's Name:

Food Service Worker's Name:

Site Supervisor's Name:

Family & Community Service Worker's Name:

Classroom Hours:

Radio Station to listen for bad weather:



This Parent Handbook is to help the family understand Head Start's policies and procedures and to aid in questions a family may have throughout their Head Start experience.

WELCOME TO THE T.C.O.C. HEAD START PROGRAM!

Dear Head Start Families:

We wish to welcome you and your family to the Tri-County Opportunities Council Head Start Program. It is our desire to make your child's transition into school life a pleasant and rewarding experience. In order to have a successful Head Start Program, parents and staff must share their talents, knowledge, time and energy. Your child receives the greatest benefit when we all work together. We urge you to participate in the program as much as possible.

The *Important Classroom Information* page of this handbook contains information specific to your child's assigned program and/or option. Please keep this handy and take the time to get to know the program staff that interacts with your child on a regular basis. Our program welcomes parent questions and input at any time. Below is some basic information on program administrators, managers, and specialists which may assist you in getting your particular question answered.

T.C.O.C. Main Office

Rock Falls, IL 61071

815/625-7830 or 800/323-5434

Terri Lawrence, Head Start Director: extension 16

Susan Weeks, Office Manager: extension 39

Carol Cravatta, Health Specialist: extension 38

Jenine Patty-Anderson, Curriculum and Wellness Manager: extension 38

Jill Calkins, Early Head Start Manager: extension 37

Michelle Kelly, Disabilities/Mental Health Specialist: extension 37

Neddie Watts, Assistant Office Manager: extension 11

Lorri Bernier, Family & Community Partnership Manager: extension 34

Jamie Larson, EHS Behavioral/Education Specialist: extension 34

Jackie Molln, Nutrition Specialist: extension 23

Anna Garza, EHS Health/Nutrition Specialist: extension 27

Sherry Koester, Health Assistant: extension 27

T.C.O.C. Satellite Office

LaSalle, IL 61301

815/224-2533

Linda Smith, Health Specialist

Anne Metcalf, Transportation Supervisor

T.C.O.C. Head Start Mission Statement

T.C.O.C. Head Start is committed to taking the leadership role in developing partnerships to build stronger communities.

We create and nurture supportive experiences that lead to successful outcomes for children, families, and staff.

PROGRAM LOGISTICAL INFORMATION

Tri-County Opportunities Council is a community action agency that has been providing services to low-income individuals and families since 1965. The agency is a “non-profit” organization. They are the “grantee” for our local Head Start Program meaning they assume legal and fiscal responsibility for insuring funds and services are in compliance with all regulations. In addition to the Head Start Program, Tri-County Opportunities Council operates several other programs that assist and support individuals and families. Your Family & Community Service Worker will provide you with additional information regarding these programs.

T.C.O.C. Head Start is a federally funded program. Our grant allows us to serve 722 preschool children and their families. Our service area covers the nine Illinois counties of Bureau, Carroll, LaSalle, Lee, Marshall, Ogle, Putnam, Stark and Whiteside. The program is free to all eligible participants except those participating in a full-day/full-year option.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

The T.C.O.C. Head Start Program offers a variety of program options. Options include:

- **Center-Based Option:** Children attend class in a DCFS licensed center. There are several variations of the center-based option that operated during a 9 month (school year) including:
 - 3½ hours/day; 4 days/week
 - 7 hours/day; 4 days/week
 - 8 hours/day; 5 days/week
- **Home-Based Option:** One in-home visit per week and two socialization days per month.
- **Child Care Collaboration Option:** The T.C.O.C. Head Start Program has collaborative agreements with three child care centers within the services area. Education is done by the partnering child care center and Head Start provides all other supportive comprehensive services.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA/ENROLLMENT

Head Start is a federally funded program. Eligibility requirements are set by the Federal Government. To participate in our Head Start Program, a child must be at least three years by September 1st of the respective school year and the family must meet income guidelines as set by the federal government. Children with diagnosed disabilities may be enrolled in the program regardless of income. Our goal is to serve the neediest children and families. A parent-approved point system was developed by program parents to select participants for enrollment into the program from all of those that meet eligibility criteria.

ATTENDANCE

It is important that your child comes to school every day or that the parent and child are home every week for the scheduled home-based home visit. Children need consistency in order to make the most gains from their Head Start experience. Regulations require that we strive to meet a minimum of 85% average daily attendance. If a family is not committed to consistent attendance, Head Start may not be appropriate placement for your family.

If your child will be absent from school it is important that:

- You notify your child's teacher or parent/child educator
- Send a written excuse stating the reason for the absence the day your child returns to school.
NOTE: On rare occasions, a one day leniency waiver of this policy may be granted.
- Three successive days of absenteeism without a phone call or excuse will result in contact by either the classroom teacher and/or the Parent/Child Educator. If there is a problem, the program is committed to working with the family to solve the problem. Excessive, unexcused absenteeism may result in a child being dropped from the program as there are always children on the waiting list who would be eager to fill that slot.

Please work with us to ensure your child gets the maximum program benefits by attending on a daily basis.

2011 - 2012 CALENDAR OF NON-OPERATIONAL DAYS

The TCOC Head Start calendar of operations varies according to the program option in which your child is enrolled. Your teacher and/or family & community service worker will keep you updated of monthly calendar of events.

- **Holidays: All options closed on:**

September 5, 2011 (Labor Day)

January 2, 2012 (New Year's Day)

November 11, 2011 (Veterans Day)

January 16, 2012 (Martin Luther's B-Day)

November 24 & 25, 2011 (Thanksgiving Holiday)

February 20, 2012 (President's Day)

December 23 & 26, 2011 (Christmas Holiday)

May 28, 2012 (Memorial Day)

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

The educational programming for children strives to provide an environment which helps children develop a positive self-concept, build ethnic pride and to increase the physical, intellectual and social/emotional skill level to move them toward school readiness. We believe that a child's experience during the early years is very important to his/her later achievement in life.

Head Start staff respects and promotes the unique identity of each child and family and makes no judgments on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.

We believe that parents are the important teachers for their child(ren). No one knows more about a child than his/her parent. Therefore, it is important for parents to volunteer and be a part of this program and their child's "school life." Parents are involved in planning and implementation of the educational program, participating in home visits, assisting on field trips, volunteering in the classroom and during home-based socialization days and in many other ways.

TIPS FOR VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM OR SOCIALIZATION DAYS

DO

- Comfort a child
- Hold a child's hand
- Praise a child
- Interact with a single child or a small group of children
- Report behavior issues to teacher

DO NOT

- Discipline a child
- Take a child to the restroom alone
- Raise your voice
- Break confidentiality
- Judge a child and/or his/her family

IDEAS FOR ASSISTING STAFF AS A CLASSROOM OR SOCIALIZATION DAY VOLUNTEER

- Read to a child or small group of children
- Assist children with coats, zippers, etc.
- Sit with and facilitate discussions at meal time
- Listen to a child "read" to you
- Pat backs at nap time
- Assist staff with daily preparation and clean up
- Teach a child a song or finger play
- Supervise a center during free choice
- Assist with tooth brushing
- Assist children at clean up time
- Write down a child's dictated story
- Assist during a field trip

The above ideas are just a few ways to assist in the educational program. Please share your talents with your child's teaching staff. When in doubt, just ask and the classroom staff will ensure your volunteering experience is meaningful.

DAILY SCHEDULE

Each classroom will have a slightly different daily schedule or routine. While daily schedules are developed around the needs of each particular group of children, there are common components and routines in each schedule. Daily schedules should have a balance between large group and

Individual/small group times, active and quiet periods and teacher-directed and child-initiated times. Each day your child will experience:

- **Circle or large group time:** A time when all children in the class come together for activities such as singing, dancing, chanting, finger plays, introduction of daily activities, introduction of a new material or activity, etc. Adults sit in the circle with children and participate.
- **Small group activities:** Children are divided into small groups for a specific lesson targeted at their individual needs. Small groups are teacher-directed activities. Volunteers can assist by helping the children keep involved.
- **Work Time/Free Choice Time:** At this time of day, children can choose centers and activities that they would like to participate in. Children can move from center to center. This period of time is a child-initiated activity. Children learn many skills through self-discovery and interaction with their peers. Volunteers can assist by observing or participating in the child's play. Be sure to get down on the child's level and interact with the children. Let the children lead the play.
- **Gross Motor Time:** A time of day for children to use/develop their large muscles. Weather permitting, we encourage children to have outdoor time each and every day. Children use the playground equipments, participate in active games, etc. Adults can supervise and ensure the safety of children at this time.
- **Meal Times:** Each child will get a breakfast, snack and/or lunch each day. Meals provided are dependent on the program option that the child is enrolled in. Adults should sit and eat with children, model table manners and facilitate conversation.
- **Story Time:** Story time may be presented in several forms. Children may have a large group time for a daily story read by the teacher, parent volunteers or a guest reader. Story time may be a small group activity or even an individual activity. Children may act out a story, create their own stories and make them into a book. Volunteers can assist by asking children open-ended questions, etc.
- **Toileting, Hand washing and Tooth brushing Times:** Times for children to take care of their personal needs and practice health and safety routines. Volunteers can assist the teacher with supervision at these times as well as model correct hand washing and tooth brushing techniques for children.
- **Transition Times:** Transitions are daily routine planned activities that are very short in duration and that help children move efficiently from one activity to the next.



- **Nap Time - (Extended Day, Full-Day/Full-Year and Child Care Options only):** This time is for children attending a longer day session to rest. All children will rest for a specified amount of time each day. Cots, sheets and blankets are provided by the program for each child. Children do not need to sleep but they must rest quietly. Volunteers can assist by rubbing or patting the backs of children to help them relax and rest. Daily schedules will be posted in the parent area in each classroom.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

Center-Based classrooms are set up in learning centers. Centers help children organize their thoughts and choices, promote social interactions among children and assist with “traffic flow” within the classroom. Centers that you can expect to see in each classroom include, but are not limited to:

- **Dramatic Play:** Children enjoy acting out different experiences they have in the community or at home pretending they are different people. Through dramatic play, the child develops a better understanding of his/her relationships with others and what it means to work and play together. Activities in the dramatic play area stimulate language development, problem solving skills and social skills.
- **Manipulative/Small Motor/Cognitive:** In this area children develop small motor skills and promote learning skills. Materials are organized and stored on low shelves which are labeled. There are many small pieces that the children use to grasp, position, classify, group, and to develop problem-solving skills, eye-hand coordination skills and knowledge of concepts.
- **Discovery/Science Center:** Children experience pouring, mixing, measuring, comparing, predicting and problem solving. The children will use and develop sensory awareness. The children will explore concepts such as smooth, rough, wet, dry, sticky, hot, cold and many more. This center also builds language and vocabulary skills. This center is a relaxing and soothing area for the children.
- **Art Center:** This center offers a variety of materials for the children to explore and work with to express their own creativity. Children will use their imaginations and use free art to create.
- **Block Center:** This area gives children the tools to learn such concepts as height, weight, size, shape, color balance, planning, counting, measuring, matching and sorting. Children will also learn to cooperate, share, problem solve and develop language skills. Children are in different stages of building, therefore you will see different kinds of creations from complex structures and project activities to the simple stacking of blocks.



- **Library Area:** Children will learn the value of books and how to care and appreciate them. The library area is a quiet area with soft cushions and furniture for the children to relax and enjoy reading.
- **Writing/Literacy Area:** This center has plenty of materials for the children to explore and practice their writing and literacy skills. Materials include such things as stampers, pens, paper, cards, picture books, letter models, crayons, markers, etc. Children develop written forms of communication and use the center to practice writing their names, practice writing letters, journaling or creating their own story books.
- **Computer Area:** Each classroom has a computer for use by the children. Children learn to manipulate and explore as well as enhance cognitive and language skills by using a variety of age-appropriate software programs provided.
- **Large Group Area:** An area where children can gather together on a daily basis for circle time, large motor activities, etc.

CURRICULUM

The T.C.O.C. Head Start Program uses the *Creative Curriculum*. This curriculum is designed around an application of developmentally appropriate practices and highlights the important balance between applying a general knowledge of child development with the particular knowledge a teacher gains by forming a relationship with each child and family. The curriculum also incorporates new information about the concept in literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts, and technology that preschool children can and should learn.

In addition to the *Creative Curriculum*, the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program has developed and integrated a supplemental health curriculum into daily activities for children.

HOLIDAYS AND THE CURRICULUM

T.C.O.C. Head Start celebrates the uniqueness of each child and family and is inclusive of all traditions and beliefs. Classroom activities during the traditional “holiday” times will center on seasonal changes, families, and other topics meaningful to children. We encourage families to celebrate holidays in their own special way, to establish family traditions and share those traditions and special times with their Head Start class. This policy was developed and approved by the T.C.O.C. Head Start Policy Council in April, 1999.

ASSESSMENT/INDIVIDUALIZING

T.C.O.C. Head Start uses the *Creative Curriculum Development Continuum for Ages 3-5* as the tool for collecting data on each child’s growth and development. This assessment tool is used on an on-going basis by classroom staff. Data is submitted three times annually. The data helps staff and parents see the growth of their child during the year. Individual goals are developed for each child based on their particular area of need. Goals recognize what the child already knows and builds on that knowledge by selecting skills that challenge the child

to move to the next step. Data is used by teaching staff to plan daily lessons that address those individual needs. The aggregate data is used by program managers and specialists to continually assess the curriculum effectiveness and to target areas of training for teaching staff. The assessment information and child goals will be formally shared with you at each parent/teacher conference. As a parent, you can also review the continuum and your child's planning and progress report at any time.

FIELD TRIPS

Approximately one time per month, center-based classes (with the exception of the child care collaboration option) will have the opportunity to go on a field trip within their community. Field trips are designed to give your child an opportunity to learn more about their community and the people in it. The things that children learn are included in classroom activities and discussions before and after the trip itself.

Field trips are a crucial time for parent volunteers. Safety on field trips is our prime objective. Please try and volunteer on at least one field trip if your work/home schedule permits.

HEAD START CENTERS

All Head Start centers are licensed by the Department of Children and Family Services. Centers are visited by the local DCFS representative, the assigned State of Illinois Fire Marshall and a representative of the local health department annually to insure compliance with all required rules and regulations.

PEST CONTROL

T.C.O.C. Head Start Program is committed to maintaining clean and safe center facilities for children enrolled in the program. If pest control services are deemed necessary, chemicals for insect and pest control shall be applied in minimum amounts. Chemicals will never be applied when children are in attendance at the center. No child shall be allowed to enter a center being treated for at least two (2) hours after treatment or as specified on the label, whichever is greater. Commercial chemicals shall be applied by a licensed pest control operation and shall meet all standards of the Department of Public Health. A record of pesticides used shall be maintained at the center. All parents will be notified of scheduled pesticide treatment at least two (2) days prior to any treatments. The site supervisor, center director and teacher are responsible for insuring compliance with this policy.

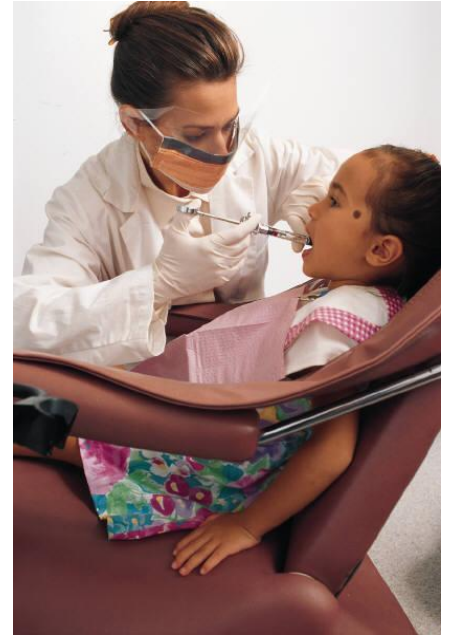
HEALTH AND WELLNESS SERVICES

The health of your child is very important. We at the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program, and you as the parent or guardian, want your child to be healthy, strong and happy. If your child's health and dental needs have been met, he/she will be more successful learning and growing in the Head Start Program.

The Head Start health program is comprehensive in nature including requirements and services in the areas of medical health, dental health and general wellness areas.

Head Start Performance Standards and DCFS Licensing Standards require your child to have completed the following procedures **prior to attending class**:

- Physical Exam (including a Varicella vaccine or verification of the chicken pox disease)
- Lead Screening
- TB Mantoux Test
- Hemoglobin Screening



PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

Physical exams must be completed **annually**. All parts of the examination, as listed above must be completed before the child can attend class. In addition, a complete list of immunizations your child has been given must be supplied to the program in order to complete the physical examination process.

DENTAL EXAMINATIONS AND FOLLOW-UP TREATMENT

Head Start regulations requires us to ensure that every child has a dental exam **within 45 days of enrollment and that any required dental follow-up work is completed within 90 days of enrollment.**

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to ensure that dental exams and follow-up work is completed within the required time frames.

It is extremely important the parent or guardian keep scheduled medical and dental appointments. **Health and dental care providers require at least a 24-hour advance notice of cancellation of an appointment.** If you need assistance with transportation to an appointment, please contact the Health Specialist at the extension listed in the front of this book.

TOOTH BRUSHING

The care of your child's first teeth is very important. Children will brush their teeth on a daily basis as part of the classroom routine. Toothbrushes will be provided for all enrolled children. We encourage parents to work with their children on correct tooth brushing procedures and ensure that children continue brushing at home.

HEARING AND VISION SCREENINGS

A part of the health screening process for your child includes a hearing and vision screening. As with other screenings, the **must be completed within 45 days of the child's enrollment**. Hearing and vision screenings are offered as part of the community health screenings that our program conducts in August and September. If a child fails (or was uncooperative) at the time of the initial screening, our program will schedule a re-screen for the child. If the child fails the re-screening process, the parent will be contacted and a referral initiated for follow-up services by an audiologist (hearing) or an eye doctor (vision).

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES AND EXCLUSION FROM CLASS

In accordance with DCFS Standards, children may not attend class if they have an illness which prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities and/or calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children in the group. Those include:

- **Rash combined with a fever of 101 degrees (oral)** or with behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness is non-communicable, or until the rash disappears completely.
- **Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing**, or any other signs of a possible severe illness.
- **Severe diarrhea or frequent loose stools** which may be accompanied by stomach discomfort.
- **Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours** unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition in which the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- **Mouth sores** associated with the child's inability to control his/her saliva until such time as the child's physician or local health department states that the child is not infectious.
- **Conjunctivitis**, commonly known as **pink eye**, until 24 hours after treatment has begun and all draining has stopped.
- **Impetigo**. Exclusion remains in effect until 24 hours after treatment has begun and no drainage is occurring or until the drainage can be covered.
- **Strep Throat** until 24 hours after treatment has begun and the child is without a fever for 24 hours.

- **Scabies** until 24 hours after treatment.
- **Chicken Pox** until at least six days after the onset of the rash or pox are scabbed.
- **Whooping Cough** until five days of antibiotic treatment has been completed.
- **Mumps** until nine days after the onset of parotid gland swelling.
- **Measles** until four days after the disappearance of the rash.

Symptoms which may be indicative of one of the serious communicable disease can be identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control and Communicable Diseases Code (77 IL Adm. Code 690).

If a fever, vomiting, diarrhea or rash has occurred within the past 24 hours, the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program recommends that children not return to school until they are fever free and have been without the help of medications for the past 24 hours.

HEALTH CHECKS

Children receive a brief health check upon daily arrival at the center. The purpose of this health check is to insure that each child is well enough to stay for class. The teaching staff will decide whether they are able to care for the child safely based on the child's degree of illness, the safety of other children in the group and the available space and equipment to care for the child that is ill.

HEAD LICE POLICY

Our Head Start program adheres to a strict and aggressive anti-nit policy designed to stop the spread of head lice. All children receive a head check at the beginning of each week. Our policy is:

- If a child has three or more nits, the child CANNOT remain in class. The parent will be notified to take the child home and begin treatment. (Only as a last resort will the child be taken home by bus).
- Teaching staff will inform the family of procedures for getting rid of lice quickly and safely.
- It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to schedule a time with the teaching staff to have the child brought back to the classroom for a re-check. The child must be re-checked and cleared of nits before he/she can return to the class.
- Our policy gives families a two week time frame to insure that their child is cleared of head lice. Enrollment in class may be in jeopardy if the problem persists.

- If a case of head lice is discovered in the classroom, T.C.O.C. teaching staff will send home an information letter informing the rest of the parents in the class. This letter is generic and nature and does not identify children by name.

MEDICATIONS

The purpose of administering medications at school is to help each child maintain an optimal state of health. **Whenever possible, please make every effort to administer needed medications either before or after school hours.** Head Start staff can only administer medications at school under the following conditions:

- Medications prescribed by a physician must be in the original container and labeled by a pharmacist. The child's first and last names, date filed, expiration date along with the physician's instructions for administering the medicine must be printed on the pharmacy label.
- Over the counter medication can only be given with a documented recommendation by a health care provider.
- Permission to administer the medication must be obtained from the parent prior to administering any medication.
- Medications must be delivered to the school via a responsible adult and left for the duration of time that the medication needs to be administered.
- In the rare instance where the parent or guardian is unable to deliver the medication to the child's classroom, the parent is still responsible for signing the permission slip for administering the medication.
- All medication either transported by program staff and/or left at the center will be stored in a lock box.
- Dates, times and dosage are recorded by staff whenever a medication is given to a child either at school or on the bus.
- Staff is trained in proper procedures for administering medications.



If you are interested in the full T.C.O.C. Head Start policy and procedures on medication, please contact the health specialist at the extension listed in the front of this book.

PREVENTION AND STAFF TRAINING

- A minimum of one staff classroom staff member and one transportation staff member are certified in First Aid and CPR.
- All staff receives annual training on OSHA regulations.
- Head Start employees will always wear gloves when treating a wound or cleaning up vomit, blood or other body fluid spills. OSHA and DCFS procedures are followed. Classroom volunteers must also follow precautionary procedures if assisting staff with the above.
- Each classroom and each bus contains a fully stocked first aid kit.

HAND WASHING

Children and adults wash their hands with soap and water routinely and frequently during the day to prevent the spread of disease. Hand washing times include:

- Daily arrival at the center
- Before and after any meal service
- After toileting or diaper changing
- After handling pets or other animals
- After wiping or blowing nose
- After playing outdoors
- Before and after cooking activities
- After touching items soiled with body fluids

In facilities where sinks are not available within the classroom, hand sanitizers are available for use after sneezes and/or nose blowing. Please encourage your child to follow the same health routines at home. (DCFS Section 407.130 Health Requirements).

SUNSCREEN POLICY

Sunscreen may be applied to your child when going outside for more than 10 minutes and if temperatures are 70 degrees or over. Permission forms for sunscreen are offered if the parent requests it to be used. Parents must sign the sunscreen permission form; request which body parts the classroom staff will apply sunscreen to.

Parent must provide sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more. (Without Paba is recommended as Paba gives some children blotchy rashes). It is also recommended that the sunscreen not be over one year old.

The sunscreen must be labeled with the child's name, be in a plastic container and given to the bus driver or directly to the teacher.

The sunscreen will be left at school until the last day of class.

HAND LOTION POLICY

Hand lotion is occasionally offered to children after washing their hands or used as a soothing, comforting measure with children.

If you would like to know the brand of lotion used in your child's classroom or the ingredients contained in it, please ask your child's teacher(s).

Permission forms are available if your child may have hand lotion applied.

ACCIDENT AND INJURY PROCEDURES

Safety is of primary importance to our program, however, occasionally accidents do occur while your child is in our care at the center. Parents and guardians sign emergency permission forms permitting teaching staff to obtain or provide emergency medical care if the parent or guardian is unavailable after many attempts to contact.

The program has developed the following procedures to assist you and your child at those times.

Minor Accidents (those that do not warrant a visit to the emergency room or physician):

- The staff will tend to the injury following all safety, first aid and sanitation procedures.
- Every attempt will be made to notify the parent or guardian of the nature and extend of the child's injury. Attempts to reach the family will be documented and kept in the child's file.
- The staff witnessing the accident will complete an injury report. The report must be shared with and signed by the parent or guardian. The original report will be kept in the Rock Falls main office.

Major Accidents (those requiring treatment at the emergency room or by a physician):

- Every attempt will be made to notify the parent or guardian immediately.
- A site staff member will notify the Rock Falls central office and also report the incidence to DCFS as per licensing requirements.
- If the parent or other authorized emergency backup person cannot be contacted, staff will make arrangements to get the child to the emergency room as indicated on the parent authorization form.

- An accident report is completed by the teaching staff with copies going to the parent and to the emergency room. The treating health care provider will complete the necessary parts of the paperwork, sign, date and return to the program. The parent will be provided with a copy of the report.
- T.C.O.C. Head Start does carry supplemental accident insurance. This policy is secondary coverage only. If the child is covered by private insurance, a medical card or Kid's Care, that insurance coverage is the primary company for covering injury costs.

INSURANCE COVERAGE

The T.C.O.C. Head Start Program covers a supplemental accident policy with a \$50,000 aggregate limit. Tri-County Opportunities Council carries a general liability policy with \$2,000,000 aggregate limit.

SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

Exposure to environmental tobacco smoke is detrimental to the health of children and non-smoking adults. **Smoking or use of tobacco products is PROHIBITED in all Head Start facilities, in all Head Start vehicles and at all Head Start sponsored activities.**

NUTRITION SERVICES

Eating foods that are good for you is not only a pleasurable experience, but probably has a greater impact on our health than anything that we do. At Head Start, our goal is to provide food that is good for your child in an atmosphere that is relaxed and enjoyable. We hope to promote healthy eating habits that nourish your child's body, preserve his/her teeth while at the same time develop an enjoyment of family mealtime.

GOALS OF THE T.C.O.C. HEAD START NUTRITION PROGRAM

- Provide food to help meet the child's daily nutritional needs.
- Promote the opportunity to learn about and practice good food habits by:
 - Providing a variety of foods and encouraging children to taste these foods.
 - Provide a variety of eating experiences.
 - Provide opportunities for children to set the table, help with food preparation and food service.
 - Model and encourage proper table manners.
- Support staff, families and children to understand the relationship between good nutrition and good health.
- Provide information, resources and activities that demonstrate the inter-relationship of nutrition to other activities in the Head Start program and its importance to the overall child's develop.
- To involve staff, parents and other community agencies in the child's nutritional needs.

MEAL SERVICE AND MENUS

Head Start provides the children with a hot lunch and a nutritional breakfast and/or snack every class day. Meals and snacks are served family-style. We encourage you and your children to eat together as a family at home. Children are also encouraged to clean up their own spills. These skills encourage the child to be independent and to learn some self-help skills. Children learn to serve themselves, pour their own drink and use the correct eating utensils.

All menu planning follows Head Start Performance Standards and the CACFP program. Our program adheres to the rules of serving foods that:

- Contain no or low sugar and low or no fat.
- Include a Vitamin C source daily and a Vitamin A source every other day.
- Incorporate cultural foods and/or preferences on a regular basis.



- Ensure that children with special food requirements, as documented by a doctor, are provided daily for that child.
- Meet the requirements for the food components of the CACFP program.

TIPS FOR SUPERVISING AT MEAL TIMES

In most cases, children will be eating at small tables and to the extent possible, with an adult at each table to supervise during meal times. Food is placed on each table in serving bowls with enough food for each person at that table. Adult meals are paid by program funds, so do not be afraid to sit, eat and converse with children while you are volunteering. Meal times are not only nutritional times, but times when children learn a variety of skills. You can assist children by:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating.
- Encourage children to serve themselves. Children should be encouraged to put at least a small portion of each food on their plate. Children must be encouraged, **but never forced**, to at least try everything on their plate. Remember that appetites vary among children, and in the same child, from day to day.
- Spills are normal and expected. The spill is cleaned calmly and meal continued with little attention placed on the spill. Some children, especially at the beginning of the year may require adult assistance to get the spill cleaned up.
- Have children take small servings at first. Second helpings are available for children who are still hungry.
- **Do not talk about your own personal food dislikes.**
- **Tea, coffee and/or soda are not permitted in the classroom.** You as an adult are a role model for children. Encourage children to drink the milk, juice or water provided to them on a daily basis.
- Forget the word **dessert!!!!** Head Start does not serve dessert-type foods such as cookies, cakes, etc. to children. We substitute the dessert component with an extra fruit component.
- Engage children in social conversations during meal times.
- Model good table manners.

NUTRITION SPECIALIST & REGISTERED DIETICIAN

T.C.O.C. Head Start employs a Nutrition Specialist to oversee the nutrition component of our program. (Refer to beginning of book for name and extension #). In addition, our program has a consultant registered dietician to support program operations. Both of these persons are available for support and resource materials at the request of the parent. Please feel free to contact them with questions or concerns. You will also be receiving a nutritional analysis and growth chart on your child two times per year.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AND FOOD IN THE CLASSROOM

Classrooms have routines for celebrating birthdays. Please check with your child's teacher to see what the procedure is for your child's individual classroom. **High sugared foods are never allowed to be served at school or during Head Start activities.** Contact your teacher or the nutrition specialist for ideas if you would like to supply a birthday treat or snack for the classroom.

DCFS Licensing Rule: Food served to children while participating in Head Start activities may only be commercially packaged or must be prepared in a licensed kitchen. The only exception to this rule is for snacks prepared in the home for the Home Based home visit activities.

FOOD PROGRAM

T.C.O.C. Head Start participates in and follows the regulations of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) established for child care centers operating Child and Adult Care Food Programs (CACFP). CACFP reimburse participating sites which serve nutritious meals by following meal patterns established by the USDA. CACFP is administered at the federal level by the Food and Nutrition Services, an agency of the United States Department of Agriculture. The State Board of Education (ISBE) administers the CACFP in Illinois. ISBE approves sponsoring organizations, monitors the program and provides guidance and assistance to assure that sponsors are meeting the requirements.

In accordance with the Federal Law and USDA policy, this program is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 800/795-3272 (voice) or 202/720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

DISABILITY SERVICES

As per Head Start regulations, the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program reserved at least 10% of enrollment slots for children with diagnosed disabilities and/or special needs. Enrolled children with disabilities and/or special needs receive the same services provided by Head Start as well as any extra accommodations that may be required. This program component is designed to identify and serve children with disabling conditions along with normally-developing children in the least restrictive environment.

Our Head Start program is committed to inclusion. What this means is that children with diagnosed disabilities and/or special needs are in the same classrooms as their friends. Inclusion is the philosophy or belief that ALL children have the same needs for acceptance, friendship and connectedness. T.C.O.C. Head Start is committed to this vision.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENINGS

Developmental screenings are done with each child **within 45 days of enrollment into the program**. The screening is done by a team of staff members. Screening instruments used by our program are the *DIAL 3* for children enrolled in the center-based option and *Ages and Stages* for children enrolled in the home-based option. Children are screened in areas of cognitive development, language development and fine and gross motor development. Parents will receive the results of their child's developmental screening.

Children who are enrolled later in the year receive their screening during class time by the site supervisor and/or the Parent/Child Educator.

Children who fail their initial developmental screening will be re-screened at a later date. If concerns still exist, the teacher will contact the parent/guardian and start a referral to the local school district or local education agency (LEA) for a complete diagnostic assessment.

Children qualifying for special education services will have an IEP developed for them by the local district. Head Start staff is available to attend IEP meetings with parents as a support and resource upon request.

Many children already have IEP's or IFSP plans when enrolled in the program. The Head Start teacher or parent/child educator will work with your child to support the IEP/IFSP goals.

For questions or resources regarding disability services, contact the Disability/Mental Health Specialist at the extension listed in the front of this book.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

The social emotional health of an individual has an effect on the person's total well being. The joys and stresses of growing and changing can cause children to feel insecure. All children benefit from an environment which accepts them as individuals, appreciates their capabilities and fosters their growth in many areas.

The words *Mental Health* can often be scary for parents. As part of the comprehensive programming offered at T.C.O.C. Head Start, *Mental Health* takes “prevention” rather than a “treatment” approach. The program is designed to help children feel good about themselves, learn to get along with others and to solve conflicts by problem-solving. Activities are planned to support the child’s self-esteem and set the stage for a feeling of success. Mental health services are available not only to the children, but to their families as well.

In no case does the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program ever use corporal punishment as guidance or discipline technique.

MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTANT

T.C.O.C. Head Start has a contractual agreement with Allied Counseling to provide mental health consultation services to our program. Each center and home-based option is assigned a mental health consultant. The consultant will be visiting each classroom or home-based option a minimum of two times during the year to observe children during their daily activities. Consultants will meet with teacher after each observation to discuss findings and plan follow-up and supportive activities where warranted. Teachers will be sharing the results of the mental health observation with you, the parent or guardian, at your parent/teacher conferences.

In some cases, particular children may require a follow-up observation. In those cases, the classroom teacher or Parent/Child Educator will meet with you and get permission for the follow-up services prior to initiation of those services.

T.C.O.C. Head Start includes some time for parents as part of their contractual agreement with Allied Counseling. Consultants are available to present at parent meetings if the particular parent group request those services. Parents may also take advantage of up to 30 minutes of free consultation time with the assigned consultant if there are family issues or concerns that you would like to address.

CONSCIOUS DISCIPLINE

T.C.O.C. uses the *Conscious Discipline* curriculum. This curriculum is based on cutting-edge research in the area of brain development. Daily routines and rituals are practiced in the classroom which help children feel safe and secure in their social environment, help children learn conflict resolution and self monitoring skills and promote positive interactions with adults and their peers.

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

The following policy and procedures have been developed as guidelines for Head Start to use in supporting the families we serve. One of the goals of these guidelines is to provide an environment for children that is safe, secure and nurtures the development of social and emotional competence. This means that the words and strategies used will be respectful of children and will not involve judging or shaming.

LEVEL ONE GUIDANCE AND INTERVENTION PROCEDURES

Attachment: Forming a relationship with a child is one of the most important first steps to facilitate learning. This relationship is formed by becoming attuned to the child's temperament, feelings, motivations, interests and strengths.

Team: Develop classroom routines, procedures and rules as a team. Children will sense the compatibility of their teachers, feel secure enough to begin to form attachments and develop social competence. Remember to include the parents as significant members of your team.

Developmental Appropriateness: Staff will use techniques that are appropriate for all children with whom they work to help them develop social skills and self control. These techniques will include; anticipating and eliminating potential problems, establish routine and rituals, ensure that children know exactly what you want them to do, use praise to influence behavior, provide adequate supervision, minimize transitions, plan for gross motor play, and to plan the daily schedule to allow the children a mixture of choices.

Use of Natural or Logical Consequences: When rules are broken or inappropriate behavior occurs, natural or logical consequences will be used as a teaching tool. Consequences may include the reactions of others or resulting events in the child's environment. Examples of natural or logical consequences; give child a choice of another activity, playmate or area in which to play and make sure child follows through with this choice.

Verbal Techniques of Intervention: A number of verbal techniques can be used to guide children's behavior including: setting clear expectations, arrange compromise, redirect, offer choices, give descriptive feedback, recognize the individual verbally, give children words to use, use words to describe non-verbal communications, such as, "You are telling me that you are not hungry by playing with your food."

Encourage problem solving and promote turn-taking through acknowledging feelings, use tone of voice and body language consistent with the situation and the child's message.

****Head Start and DCFS prohibits interactions that are viewed as punishments which are humiliating or frightening to a child. These include emotional abuses such as name calling threatening, shaming, shunning or making derogatory remarks about the child's family.**

Physical Techniques of Intervention: These can be used to guide children who require additional reinforcement to verbal cues, these include; moving next to the child, offer replacement behavior by asking the child to play with the teacher, model appropriate behavior (pick up blocks), redirect to an appropriate behavior, offer a time for quiet separation, use physical calming techniques such as rubbing the child's back.

Head Start and DCFS prohibits any corporal punishment (ex: hitting, spanking, pinching, kicking, biting, or other rough handling).

LEVEL TWO GUIDANCE AND INTERVENTION PROCEDURES

The preceding techniques of behavior guidance described will be effective for assisting most children in successfully developing healthy expression of their emotions, social skills, impulse control and responsibility toward property. However, some children do not respond to the Level One methods of guidance. Assisting these children becomes a greater challenge for the teaching team. When a child's behavior requires additional planning and more direct intervention, the intervention procedure tracking is initiated and a behavior management plan is developed. All who are responsible for the care of the child are considered members of the intervention team.

In developing a plan of intervention, four important points should be kept in mind at all times:

1. There are many factors that may affect a child's social/emotional development; these include both biological and environmental causes.
2. Head Start staff must avoid focusing on any one specific factor as the sole cause of challenging behavior.
3. We must build on children's and families' strengths and capabilities of resiliency to cope with stressful factors in their lives.
4. All children, families and staff have a right to their privacy. The Tri-County Opportunities Council Head Start Program policies of confidentiality located in the Personnel Handbook must be adhered to at all time.

INTERVENTION PROCEDURE TRACKING

1. Parent will be contacted with concerns.
2. Observation will be completed by Site Supervisor or Education/Behavioral Specialist. Must be completed prior to the development of a plan. These observations will include classroom observation, review of child's file and portfolio. The Mental Health Consultant may be asked to complete an individual observation with consent of the parent of guardian.
3. Development of the Social/Emotional Support Plan for the child in consultation with the family members, teaching team, Site Supervisor, Family & Community Service Worker, Education/Behavioral Specialist and any other professionals considered appropriate members on the intervention team.

Intervention Options: The following list of intervention option techniques is not all inclusive. The Behavior Plan is based on the findings of the intervention team and is individualized according to the needs of the child and family.

Environment Adjustments and Adaptations (classroom routine, classroom, teacher)

Referral to Mental Health Provider (with parent consent)

Separation (brief separation from the group)

Sending child home (when endangering self or others)

Physical restraint (used only to keep the child from harming himself or others)

Change of placement option

Referral to community resource

Placement Evaluation - Any children who after attempts to meet his individual needs have been made, demonstrates an inability to benefit from the program, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be discharged. This mandate of DCFS Licensing Standards for Day Care Center Section 407.205.

Guidance Summary: It is critical that all efforts to work with the child and family are documented. Each step taken in the behavior guidance process must be implemented over a reasonable period of time. The process cannot be accelerated to attain a desired expectation. Changes in behavior often take time and every effort should be made to have the patience required to effect the desired change.

Guiding children's behavior can be one of the most challenging tasks of a Head Start Program but it can also be the most important work an adult can do for a child. It is important to remember that our job is to guide and teach children the ways that are most appropriate to act. We can only do this if we earn a child's trust and respect.

TRANSPORTATION

Head Start regulations do not require Head Start programs to provide transportation, however, the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program does provide bus service to all center-based options with the exceptions of the child care collaborations, Streator Extended Day and Sterling Wallace classes. We will make every attempt to transport your child, however, we work very hard to try and keep bus routes under one hour. In some cases, your child may live too far out of town or from the center which would prevent our program from providing bus service. **Bus service may be revoked for a child at any time for abuse or non-compliance with our bus policies and regulations.**

BUS SERVICE PICK-UP AND DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

- Children must be dressed and ready to board the bus at their assigned pick-up time. If the bus pulls up at pick-up and no one responds or if there is no one coming out to the bus, the driver will honk the horn 3 times. After one minute, the bus will proceed with the rest of the route. **The bus will not return and it will be your responsibility to get your child to the classroom.**
- It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian or other authorized adult (**at least 14 years of age**) to walk your child to the bus at the beginning of the day and walk out and get your child off of the bus at the end of the day. Please hold your child's hand and remain outside until your child is seated and secured in his/her seat at pick-up and hold your child's hand until the bus has departed at drop-off times. Our bus monitor will assist children with securing our child's safety harness.
- All adults (parent/guardians or other authorized adult) will sign a daily log indicating the date and time that the child was released into their custody.
- Safety of children is our highest priority. Therefore, any non-custodial parent or guardian or any other authorized adult as per the Parent Agreement Form, must present a picture I.D. prior to the child being released into their custody. If your child is being dropped off regularly to another adult (child care provider, etc.) please take the time to introduce that person to your bus driver at the beginning of the year.
- **It is extremely important that you think carefully about the persons you would like listed on your release form prior to the beginning of the year. No child will ever be released to anyone who does not have their name on the Parent Agreement Form as an authorized release person for that child. This includes non-custodial parents.**



- In rare cases, an emergency may occur which requires someone other than those persons listed on your agreement form to pick up or get the child off of the bus. In those cases, it is your responsibility to inform our program via a written, signed note provided to the teacher and/or bus driver. Picture I.D. will also be required of that person.
- In the event that the parent/guardian or other authorized as listed on the Parent Agreement form is not at the drop-off location, the child will ride the remainder of the bus route. The bus driver will then make one more attempt to deliver the child to the drop-off point. If the bus makes a second trip and there is still no authorized adult present, the children will be returned to the classroom. Parents/guardians must then pick up their child at the site.
- If the child is returned to the classroom, the teaching staff will make all attempts to contact the child's parent/guardian or other emergency numbers in the child's file. If no one can be reached, the local police or DCFS will be contacted. No T.C.O.C. staff person shall hold the child responsible for this situation. All discussions with parents regarding transportation issues will be held confidentially with the parent/guardian and never with the child.
- If a child is brought back to the classroom more than three times in one year, that child will lose his/her bus privileges. Please be responsible.
- After three times the bus will NOT make a second trip to the house.
- Please allow 5 minutes either side of your pick-up and drop-off time. In other words allow 5 minutes before or after scheduled time. During the winter months, times may vary slightly depending on weather. Occasionally during the year routes may change based on children dropping and adding new children. Your bus driver will keep you informed of any such changes.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS FOR PICK-UPS AND DROP-OFFS

- Your child must be picked up and dropped off at the same time locations as listed on your Parent Agreement Form. Changes in pick-up or drop-off points will only be considered in **extreme emergencies**.
- If necessary to change your pick-up and drop-off points (for example if your move or change child care providers), you must notify the program **in writing** at least 3-5 days prior to the change in order for the program to record changes and for the driver to make changes to his/her bus route.

SAFE RELEASE OF CHILDREN

If the parent/guardian or other authorized adult appears to be intoxicated or under the influence, staff will encourage that person to find temporary care for the child. If the child appears to be in danger (for example, a parent plans on driving), staff is required to notify police.

ILLNESS AND ABSENTEEISM

When a child is ill and/or will not be attending class, please contact the center prior to the beginning of the bus route. The classroom staff will contact the bus driver and the bus will not stop at your house on that day. If you do not have a telephone or if you miss calling prior to the beginning of the route, please watch for the bus and let the driver know that the child will not be attending that day.

The Head Start bus **will not** stop at your house the day after absenteeism **unless** the parent/guardian contacts the site to inform staff that the child is able and ready to return to school. The bus driver will stop at all route locations on Mondays unless informed not to do so.

The parent is responsible for sending a note stating the reason for absenteeism when the child returns to school.

BEHAVIOR AND SAFETY ON THE BUS

- Children are expected to remain in their seats with their safety vests fastened during the bus ride.
- Children are taught simple bus rules and transportation staff use simple routines to help children remain safe during the bus ride. These include, but are not limited to:
 - Ensuring children keep their hands and feet to themselves and in their own space.
 - Using low or inside voices
 - Songs, stories or finger plays to help children enjoy their bus ride.
- Neither children nor adults may eat or drink on the bus due to the risk of choking.
- If a child removes his/her safety vest, stand up walks around or in any other way is potentially harmful to him/herself or others or threatens the safe operation of the bus, the bus driver will pull the bus to the side of the road until the child is properly seated, his/her safety vest is fastened and there is no more potential danger to that child or others.
- If the bus cannot continue the route because a child will not accept or comply with positive re-direction:
 - If the bus has not departed from the pick-up location, the child will be returned to the custody of the parent/guardian or other authorized adult.
 - If on the route, the driver will attempt to contact other staff to get assistance in removing the child from the bus and returning that child to his home or pick-up location.
- Occasionally, some children have great difficulty in complying with bus rules and safety procedures. In those cases, the teacher, bus driver and bus monitor will meet with the parent/guardian to co-develop a plan to address that child's particular needs in order for him/her to continue to receive bus transportation. If attempts at intervention are unsuccessful, it may be necessary for the parent/guardian to self transport their child to and from the center.

SEAT BELT/SAFETY VESTS

All children and adults are required by law to wear seatbelts when transported in any Head Start vehicle. In busses, children 50 pounds and under are required by Head Start regulations to be fastened in an approved safety restraint or safety vest system. Children over 50 pounds must wear seatbelts. All children and adults are required to wear seatbelts in all other Head Start vehicles (for example, van transport to medical and dental appointments, etc.)

AUTHORIZED RIDERS AND BUS VOLUNTEERS

- **Authorized Riders:** Parents/Guardians and other adult volunteers may ride the bus to and from the center. Unfortunately, our insurance does not allow us to transport other children on our bus. Home-based families are an exception to this rule due to their programmatic needs.
- When you volunteer to ride the bus as a bus monitor for the day, you and your child will be the first ones picked up at the beginning of the day and the last ones dropped off at the end of the day. Please know and follow all bus rules and safety procedures. Ask the driver to show you where the first aid is located and train you on emergency evacuation procedures. You are the “extra hands” that help keep children safe during the bus ride.
- Adults volunteering as the bus monitor sit in the rear of the bus by the emergency door.
- As a bus volunteer, please do not distract the driver by trying to hold a conversation with him/her. Refrain from gossip or inappropriate conversations in front of the children.

BOOK BAG POLICY

All book bags will be collected by the bus driver/bus monitor and stored in a container in the front or rear of the bus. The container will be secure and away from all exits on the bus.

No book bags with wheels will be allowed on the bus. If you are sending a book bag with your child, please make sure it is of the appropriate size for him/her. In most cases, book bags sent to school on Monday will remain in the classroom until the end of the week and then come home with your child. (Please see your bus driver or classroom teacher for particular procedures for your child’s assigned classroom). Any important papers addressed to parents will be distributed by the driver during the days in the middle of the week.

SELF TRANSPORTS

All parents/guardians are responsible for self-transporting their child to and from the Sterling Wallace and Streater Extended Day centers. In some cases, other parents choose to self-transport rather than having their child ride the bus. **You must make a decision at the beginning of the school year as to**

whether your child will be riding the bus or if you will be self-transporting. We will not allow children to ride the bus one day and then be self-transported the next day. To do so would create confusion and affect bus route schedules for those parents who are having their children ride on the bus.

If you are self-transporting:

- The parent/guardian or authorized adult (at least 14 years of age) hold the child's hand and walk them into the classroom daily. Only the parent/guardian or other authorized adults (as per the Parent Agreement Form) may pick the child up. If the staff does not know the person picking up the child, he/she will check the release list to make sure that person is on the list and will also asks that person for a picture ID.
- Parents/guardians or other authorized adult will be required to sign the child in when bringing them into the classroom and sign the child out when picking the child up at the end of the day.
- Children are not allowed in the center until the beginning of class. If you bring your child earlier, you will be required to wait in the car with them until that time. Teaching staff are preparing for the day and do not have time to care for your child before the beginning of the class day. All children must attend and arrive at the time scheduled prior to beginning of the school year.
- Your child must be picked up at the time that the class day is over. A five minute leeway for pick-up is acceptable. Staff has responsibilities at the end of the day which does not allow them time to care for your child.
- If you fail to pick up your child within indicated time frames, the same procedure as per bus transports will be followed. The teaching staff will make every attempt to contact the parent/guardian or other emergency contact. If no one can be located within 30 minutes the program will contact the local police and the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). No T.C.O.C. staff person will hold the child responsible for this situation. All discussions with the parent/guardian regarding transportation issues will be held confidentiality with the parent/guardian and never with or in front of the child.
- Excessive tardiness in picking up your child may result in your child losing his/her spot in the class.

PARENT & FAMILY SERVICES INFORMATION

The T.C.O.C. Head Start Program supports the philosophy that parents are equal partners with Head Start staff. This partnership insures that maximum Head Start benefit for your child while in the program. Parent participation is strongly encouraged. In this section you will learn about activities and opportunities for parents in Head Start and why it is important that your family participates. There is also information about some policies and regulations that apply to our program operations.

VOLUNTEERING

There are four key ways that parents can participate in our Head Start Program.

- Decision-making
- Parents as volunteers to assist with educational program
- Participation in parent activities
- Working with your child(ren) at home



PARENT CENTER COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Every other month all parents of a child in a Head Start class meet together with a representative of the teaching staff and the assigned Family & Community Service Worker. You will learn about what is going on in the classroom, what the children are working on and how you can support classroom learning at home. You will be planning with the classroom teacher some of the activities that will be used in lessons for the upcoming month. Other topics will be discussed such as parenting tips, budgeting, etc. Each parent center committee will elect officers to work with the Family & Community Service Worker to plan monthly and conduct monthly meetings. Parent meetings are a great time to meet new people and be involved with your child's education.

POLICY COUNCIL

Head Start operates under a system of shared governance. The program is governed by the T.C.O.C. Board of Directors and the T.C.O.C. Head Start Policy Council. Each cluster of centers elects a person to represent them on the T.C.O.C. Head Start Policy Council. Policy Council works with the Head Start Administration on program plans, policies and procedures. Policy Council does not get involved with the day-to-day operations of the program. Some activities you will be involved in as a Policy Council member include, but is not limited to budget and grant input and approval, hiring and termination of employees, review and update of written service delivery plans, and review update of other policies. Policy Council will meet one time per month for a twelve month period. Meetings are generally held in the evening for approximately two hours. Child care and mileage expenses are reimbursed for each meeting and travel time. The Policy Council representative is responsible for reporting to the parent group at their class's next meeting.

HOMWORK ACTIVITY SHEETS

You are your child's first and most important teacher. Head Start offers the chance to do some simple activities together. Your Teacher and/or your Family & Community Service Worker, will send your Homework Activity Sheets weekly home with your child. **It is very important that this form be returned to your child's classroom weekly.** These activities are fun and help your child in learning skills. You can also choose an activity from your classroom's newsletter. Please do one activity a night, at the end of the week you should have 5 activities checked. Head Start is a federally funded program and we are required to have the community "match" the dollars given to us in our grant by the federal government. The time you spend working on homework activity sheets, will help us meet this match. The homework sheet will help Head Start document and track the time you spend working on activities with your child.

HOME VISITS AND PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

- **Center-Based Options:** You will receive a minimum of two home visits (beginning-of-year) for the teaching staff to meet you and your child, get paperwork completed and give you all of the needed information for the starting the year, and an end-of-year from your child's teacher. In addition, the Family & Community Service Worker will be making a minimum of two home visits per year to work with you on the Family Partnership Agreement. More home visits may be scheduled depending on the need of each family. Two parent/teacher conferences will be held during the year to discuss your child's progress. Those conferences are scheduled in November and March and will be held in your child's classroom. It is extremely important that all parents participate in these home visits and conferences.



- **Home-Based:** Your Parent/Child Educator will be making weekly visits of 1½ hours/visit to work with you and your child. The Family & Community Service Worker and the Parent/Child Educator will both work with you on the Family Partnership Agreement. Home-Based families do not have parent/teacher conferences as they are involved on a weekly basis in their child's activities and progress.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

ALL Head Start staff, as per DCFS requirements, is considered mandated reporters. This means, that by LAW, all staff are required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services. All staff is trained on how to recognize possible suspicious circumstances and they are obligated to report them. The program does NOT need to inform the parent if an abuse/neglect report is made. Head Start strives to support parents in any way that we can. If you find yourself in a stressful place or relationship, please work closely with our Family & Community Service Worker for guidance and resource information that is designed to prevent potentially abusive situations before they occur.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your privacy is very important to us. All information about your child and family is considered confidential and cannot be discussed with persons outside of the T.C.O.C. Head Start Program without written permission from the parent and/or guardian. All volunteers in Head Start are expected to keep information they may observe while working in the classroom or on the bus regarding a child's behaviors, home or family situation, etc. confidential. You, as your child's parent or guardian may view the information in your child's file at any time in the presence of a staff member. Information will be copied for you upon request; however, no original forms or other documentation may be removed from your child's file. We request that parents refrain from asking staff or discussing other children with other volunteers at all times.

CUSTODY ISSUES

Custody of any Head Start child is a very serious legal matter that requires good understanding, communication and cooperation between staff and parents/guardians. Any child attending Head Start classes has been placed in our temporary care by the agreement of the parent(s)/guardian(s). We follow the law regarding the rights of both custodial and biological parents. We cannot supersede those rights without a copy of a legal order of custody and/or a copy of a legal order of protection. We strongly encourage families to work out their differences and refrain from putting the Head Start staff in the middle of disagreements for the sake of your child(ren).

PARENT AND COMMUNITY COMPLAINT POLICY

Purpose: It is the policy of the Tri-County Opportunities Council Head Start Program to:

1. Ensure that Head Start maintains a positive image in the community.
2. Ensure that the Performance Standards are being complied with by establishing a method of hearing and resolving community complaints.
3. Provide a mechanism by which current Head Start parents may voice concerns, complaints, and/or grievances about any aspect of T.C.O.C. Head Start and furthermore, may be assured of a fair hearing and resolution of the grievance.

4. Assure that all Head Start parents have knowledge of and understand this grievance procedure and that they feel free to use the procedure without fear of criticism or action being taken to adversely affect the family and/or child's status.
 - **It is further understood that any parent/guardian who has a grievance and does not follow the procedures as outlined in this policy will not, under any circumstances, have his/her grievance taken seriously. Therefore, no official action will be taken to resolve this issue.**
 - All parties involved in the steps outlined below are to keep confidential all information surrounding the grievance.
 - It is understood the appropriate Head Start staff reserved the right to ask a person with skills in facilitating groups to facilitate group meetings if they become necessary.

Community Complaints:

1. A complaint from a community member should be made in writing to the Head Start Director with a copy for the Policy Council Chairperson.
2. The complaint will be reviewed by the Policy Council Administrative/Personnel/Finance Committee at the next regularly scheduled meeting. The committee will review the complaint and work with the Head Start Director to resolve the issue. The complaint and recommended resolution will be brought before the full policy council for input.
3. A written summary of the complaint and the resolution will be presented to the T.C.O.C. President/CEO for review and feedback.
4. The Head Start Director will contact the source of the complaint and resolve it according to the resolution as outlined by the Policy Council.
5. The Policy Council will be informed of the disposition of the grievance at the next regularly scheduled meeting. If the party making the complaint is not satisfied with the Policy Council resolution, then.....
6. The matter remains unresolved; the information is forwarded to the Tri-County Opportunities Council Board of Directors for review and final binding resolution.

Parent Complaints:

All parent complaints must first be discussed with the individual staff or parent to whom the complaint is directed. If the parent remains unsatisfied, the following procedure will be followed:

1. Present the complaint in writing to the immediate supervisor of the individual to whom the complaint is about. The supervisor contacted then has five (5) working days to schedule a meeting between the involved parties.
2. The supervisor will notify the Head Start Director of the complaint, the people involved and the time and date of the scheduled meeting.

3. If, after the meeting, the complaint is resolved, the supervisor will attach a written summary of the meeting and submit this to the Head Start Director for review and filing. The appropriate manager/specialist will be informed of the outcome by the Head Start Director.
4. If, after the meeting, the complaint remains unresolved, the supervisor will contact the Head Start Director. The Head Start Director and/or his/her designee will then schedule another meeting within five (5) working days. If resolved, procedures as outlined in #3 occur.
5. If unresolved, the complaint is forwarded to the Policy Council Administrative/Personnel/Finance Committee for review and resolution. The Head Start Director will be in attendance and present all documentation from previous meetings. The decision of the Policy Council Administrative/Personnel/Finance Committee shall be final and binding unless the entire Policy Council shall decide to intervene by resolution of two-thirds majority vote of the Policy Council members present at a duly called meeting.
6. If Policy Council intervention is invoked, the matter goes to the T.C.O.C. Board of Directors for consideration. The Impasse Policy procedures will be initiated if no agreement can be reached between the Board and the Policy Council.
7. The person making the complaint will be notified, in writing, of the final resolution.