Dear Families,

Welcome to CAO Scioto County Head Start / Early Head Start. We are glad you are here. This handbook will help you understand the policies and procedures. If you have questions, please talk to a member of the classroom teaching staff or an administrator for clarification. We are here as a support to you and your family.

The information contained in this handbook is intended to help us work in partnership to care for your children; it does not create any contractual rights or obligations for staff or families. Because our centers are subject to various external legal and regulatory agencies, the information in this handbook may be subject to change at any time. When changes must occur, every effort will be made to keep families well informed. Information is shared with families through the handbook, electronic and hard copy sent home and classroom newsletters.

There will be two parent conferences and two home visits at least per school year. We also have family events at our centers after hours to promote a school family atmosphere. We want you to feel welcome and encourage you to be involved in your child’s education.

We have an open-door policy. Someone will always be available to respond to your questions, concerns and comments. It is important to us that you know you are always welcome and that we are partners with you in supporting your children’s growth and development.

**Program email:**  [contact@caosciotocounty.org](mailto:contact@caosciotocounty.org)

**Staff Name, email and phone numbers:**

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Brenda Haynes, Health, Dental & Nutrition [bhaynes@caosciotocounty.org](mailto:bhaynes@caosciotocounty.org) 740-354-3333 x233

Julie Lindamood, Disabilities, Mental Health & Transitions [jlindamood@caosciotocounty.org](mailto:jlindamood@caosciotocounty.org) 740-354-3333 x232

Janaye Stump, Transportation & Compliance [jstump@caosciotocounty.org](mailto:jstump@caosciotocounty.org) 740-354-3333 x259

Megan Miller, Behavioral & Classroom Support [mmiller@caosciotocounty.org](mailto:mmiller@caosciotocounty.org) 740-354-3333 x253

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| **CAO of Scioto County Head Start / Early Head Start Centers and Locations** | | | | | |
| Center Location, Phone Number | License Capacity | Transportation | Days & Hours of Operation | Communicable Disease Chart | Emergency Evacuation Location |
| Highland Center 1511 Hutchins St. Portsmouth, OH 45662 740-354-3333 | 120 pre-school children 8 infants & toddlers | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Social Service Office Health Office Teacher's Lounge Gymnasium Door | Primary - Mound Park Shelter Secondary - Mound Park Tennis Court |
| Carousel Center 1112 Gallia Street Portsmouth, OH 45662 740-354-3995 | 75 pre-school children | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary - Temple Tots Secondary -Portsmouth Elementary School |
| Farley Square Center 1221 Farley Court Portsmouth, OH 45662 740-353-4992 | 34 preschool children | No | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary - 14th St Community Center Secondary - PIDC Auditorium |
| Kendall Heights Center 1809 Wayne Avenue Portsmouth, OH 45662 740-354-3333 | 24 preschool children | No | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary- Playground at top of hill Secondary-Highland Head Start |
| Miller Manor Center 1130 Kinker Drive Wheelersburg, OH 45694 740-574-2141 | 34 preschool children | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary - Giovanni's Pizza Secondary - Porter Township Fire Department |
| Northwest Center 45 Morgan Drive Lucasville, Ohio 45648 740-259-5594 | 34 preschool children | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary - After The Game 11274, Route 104 Secondary - Northwest Elementary School |
| Portsmouth West Center 1533A US Highway 52 West Portsmouth, OH 45663 740-858-2010 | 40 preschool children | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:00pm | Classroom | Primary - High School in Gym Secondary - Earl Thomas Conley Park |
| Sciotoville Center 224 Marshall Street Sciotoville, OH 45662 740-354-3333 | 48 preschool children | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary- Sciotoville Athletic Practice Fields Secondary- Berean Baptist Church |
| Scioto Northwest Center 4738 Henley Deemer Rd McDermott, OH 45652 740-259-2366 | 20 preschool children | Yes | M-T-W-Th 8:15am- 3:45pm | Classroom | Primary- Northwest High School Secondary- Northwest Football Field |

**Our Yearly Calendar**

A school calendar is given to families during orientation. If you need a copy, please ask your Classroom Teacher or Home Visitor. Monthly calendars are also included in our Monthly Newsletter which will be delivered to you by Your Teacher, Driver or Home Visitor.

**Our Vision**

•We prepare children and families for lifelong learning.

•Children learn through play.

•Parents are a child’s first teacher.

•The wellness of families, children, and caregivers is essential for a child’s development.

•School-readiness begins with health and wellness.

**Our Philosophy of Education**

We believe that parents are a child’s first and most important teacher. Our goal is to develop partnerships with parents, families, and caregivers that strengthen. We want families to understand their child’s development and be advocates for their child. Staff members support families with activities for home, workshops, family activities, and regular communication. The program uses many forms of communication to engage families including phone calls, text messages, home visits, parent conferences, Facebook classroom pages, our YouTube channel, and our monthly newsletter.

We believe that children learn by doing. Learning through play is developmentally appropriate for young children. Teachers design the classroom environment that allows children to explore, reason, think critically, problem-solve, and learn independently with hands-on experiences to encourage creativity, innovation, and to promote a desire to learn. Learning is fun. Learning is messy. Staff model language, behavior, and socialization skills to children and help them scaffold concepts and develop skills.

We believe children are individuals and should be treated as such. We build a child’s self-esteem by providing activities that result in success while increasing cognitive, language, social, motor, and self-help skills. We provide an environment and activities which lead to respect for diversity and individual differences. Rules are designed to create a safe environment and a framework within which each child is provided the stability and consistency necessary for healthy development. At the same time, activities are designed to provide opportunities for the child to acquire skills in all areas of development building towards school readiness.

We believe that Head Start and Early Head Start will meet the child where they are. Not all children are not at the same developmental level. Teachers use a variety of assessments and screening to help develop individualized lesson plans for each child in their care. We address the whole child including dental health, nutrition, and physical activity in a safe and healthy environment. Home visitors work with parents in developing extended activities for families to work on throughout the week. Child Outcomes documentation are used to document a child’s gains as outlined in the Head Start Early Learning Framework and the Ohio Department of Education Early Learning and Development Standards.

**Licensing Requirements/Ratios**

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services establish staff/child ratios to ensure the safety and well-being of the children in childcare. These ratios must be maintained at all times with required staffing in the center.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Child Care Center Ratios | | |
| Age of Children | Staff/Child Ratio | Maximum Group Size |
| Infants (birth and under 12 months) | 1 to 5 or 2 to 12 in same room | 12 |
| Infants (12 months and under 18 months) | 1 to 6 | 12 |
| Toddlers (18 months and under 2.5 years) | 1 to 7 | 14 |
| Toddlers (2.5 years and under 3) | 1 to 8 | 16 |
| Preschool- 3years | 1 to 12 | 24 |
| Preschool- 4 and 5 years | 1 to 14 | 28 |

When there is a combination of ages within one group of children the age of the youngest child determines the staff/child ratio.

**Licensing Information**

Head Start/Early Head Start is federally funded and is licensed to operate by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. We are here to serve the children and their families by facilitating the child’s physical, emotional, and cognitive growth and providing social services for the entire family. We serve pregnant women and children age birth through five. A license issued by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services is posted in the Director’s office at the Highland Center and in the classroom at outside centers. The laws and rules governing child preschool centers are at the center for review.

The address and phone number of our licensing agency is: Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Post Office Box 183204

Columbus, Ohio 43218

1-877-302-2347

**Parents/Families Welcome**

Parents should feel free to visit the centers at any and all times. Family engagement is greatly appreciated. Upon arrival at the center, parents or guardians must notify the Administrator of his/her presence. Spaces are available for breastfeeding mothers. Please ask your teacher for the location at your child’s center.

**Parent Roster**

Rosters of the names and telephone numbers of the Head Start/Early Head Start parents or guardians of children attending the centers are available upon request. The rosters will not include the name or telephone number of any parent who requests his/her name or telephone not be included.

**Enrollment**

A child is considered to be enrolled in the program only after the administrator confirms the availability of space, paperwork is complete and an orientation meeting has occurred. The required paperwork includes basic enrollment, income verification, health information, shot record and a medical form (physical) signed by a physician or certified nurse practitioner.

The following forms must be completed before a child may receive care. Anytime there is any information change you should inform your teacher, driver or home visitor immediately to assure current information is always on file.

JFS01234 Child Enrollment and Health Information

JFS01305 Child Medical Statement

JFS01217 Request for Administration of Medication

JFS01511 Family Information for SUTQ

Head Start/Early Head Start is a federally funded program designed to serve low-income children. To be accepted for enrollment, the family‘s income should be at or below the poverty guidelines. If the county has been thoroughly recruited and still is unable to fill all slots, the program may enroll 35% of the preschool slots with children whose families are at 130% of the poverty guidelines. This is determined by viewing income documents for the previous calendar year or the past twelve months and comparing them to the current poverty guidelines. Ten percent of the children may be from families who are over the income guidelines. These slots are generally reserved for children with diagnosed handicaps or extenuating family circumstances. Ten percent of the funded enrollment slots will be made available to children with diagnosed handicaps.

Scioto County CAO Head Start bases age eligibility on the age used to determine eligibility in the Scioto County/Portsmouth City Schools. However, our program has received a waiver to serve younger three-year-olds if unable to meet our funded enrollment.

Admission

In filling our center-based classrooms and home-based caseloads, we utilize our selection criteria with children receiving the most points being the highest priority. For Head Start, the age of the child is also taken into consideration with children eligible for kindergarten the following year given preference. Children turning four early in the year will be considered next. If openings still exist, younger threes will be admitted. Home base slots are available for any parent who decides that option best suits their family’s needs, either because of location or family choice. If home base is not fully enrolled, younger threes and children who are having difficulty adjusting to center base will be offered the home base option. Children in home base may transfer to center base if an opening occurs and parents request the transfer.

When all slots are filled, children will be placed on a waiting list and will be offered center base or home base as an opening occurs, using the guidelines stated in the paragraph above. Head Start reserves all rights to make the decisions as to where children will be placed.

**Fees**

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start does not charge families a fee to participate in Head Start, including special events such as field trips, and will not in any way condition an eligible child’s enrollment or participation in the program upon the payment of a fee. **Head Start Performance Standard 1302.18 Fees**

**Non-discrimination**

Head Start will not discriminate against any child because of race, religion, color, sex, national origin or handicap.

**Attendance**

Attendance is required for your child to maintain their slot. Attendance also ensures your child gets everything offered by our program and prepares them for a lifetime of learning. If your child is going to be absent, you must call the center or speak to a staff member to report the reason for your child’s absence. The Social Service staff will investigate all absences unreported by the parent/guardian by calling within one hour of the beginning of the school day. If a child is absent for three days without a parent/guardian contacting a family advocate or other staff member, a home visit will be made to determine the reason for the absence. Unless previous arrangements have been made with the Social Service Manager, two (2) consecutive weeks or eight (8) consecutive school days of absence will result in your child being dropped from the center-based program. Home base will be offered if space is available. Any child who experiences chronic absenteeism in the center-based program will be evaluated monthly and if absenteeism continues your child will be dropped.

If your child is absent with a communicable disease or for more than three days due to illness, a release from the doctor may be required for your child to be readmitted to Head Start/Early Head Start.

If a Head Start/Early Head Start home base family misses three (3) consecutive home visits or the child misses three (3) consecutive socialization days, the situation will be evaluated and may result in the child being dropped from the program. Every effort will be made to ensure home base families receive the specified number of home visits by rescheduling visits missed due to home visitor absenteeism or cancellation by the parent.

Children in the Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start may be dropped from the program for the following reasons:

1. A child does not have a physical within 30 days of entrance as required by Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and the parent chooses not to take Home Base.
2. The child’s attendance is very poor.
3. The child’s family fails to comply with any agency policy.
4. Behavioral issues, which may put the child or others at risk, continue even after appropriate interventions have been made. Intervention efforts may include parent meetings, Shawnee Mental Health observations and referrals to appropriate agencies.

**Social Service**

Head Start/Early Head Start staff works closely with parents to assess any concerns the family might have and either assist them directly or refer them to one of the agencies listed in our Community Resource Manual. The Community Resource Manual is a listing of agencies in our county who provide assistance to families. Head Start/Early Head Start staff will also help the parent set goals for the family and partner with them in reaching these goals.

**Program Options**

**Early Head Start**

Early Head Start serves pregnant women and children zero to three. One classroom with eight infants and toddlers is located at Highland. This classroom is staffed by two teachers and one classroom aide. The other 106 six are Early Head Start pregnant women, infants and toddlers are served in the home based program. Transportation is not provided for Early Head Start children.

**Center Based Head Start**

We have fourteen Head Start classrooms in eight centers across Scioto county serving children three to five years old. All classroom are full-day classrooms. A teacher or teacher administrator, bus driver, and part-time bus monitor staff each of the classrooms.

**Home Based Head Start**

The Home Base option of Head Start offers the unique opportunity to work directly with children and families in the home environment. Home Base offers comprehensive services with an emphasis on parent education for school readiness and individualized planning to bring each family to greater self-sufficiency. Home visits are scheduled weekly. Socializations are planned twice a month utilizing Head Start classrooms and community resources to extend the learning experiences and bring families together.

**Transportation**

**Release of Children**

Children will be released only to parents/guardians and individuals who have been granted permission in writing by parent/guardian to pick the child up from the center or the bus. The parent/guardian is responsible for making any changes to the Release Form. A picture I.D. may be required if a staff member is unfamiliar with the individual picking up the child. Staff will not release a child to anyone, including parents, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be called to transport the child home. Police will be notified if necessary.

**Emergency Transportation**

The center will not transport children in emergency situations. If a child requires transportation, the parent or the emergency squad will be contacted.

As a requirement of ODJFS, parents/guardians are asked to sign permission, on the enrollment form, for the program to secure emergency transportation for their child in the event of an illness or injury that requires emergency treatment. Every effort will be made to express to parents/guardians the importance of granting permission to the program to transport their child in case of emergency. If parents/guardians refuse to grant permission to the program, home based services will be offered to the family.

**Routine Transportation**

Early Head Start children must be self-transported to and from school. Head Start children will be transported to and from school in a safe manner on approved buses. All drivers have the State Department of Education School Bus Commercial Driver’s License for the smaller school buses. Parents will sign a transportation agreement that permits Head Start to provide daily transportation to and from the child’s assigned center. While on the bus, the driver and aide will be responsible for the safety of the children. At least once a month during the school year, each pupil shall be instructed in safe riding procedures and will participate in emergency evacuation drills. All routes shall be planned to assure maximum use of the buses. School vehicles shall be maintained in safe operating conditions through a systematic preventative maintenance program. Adequate transportation will be available for handicapped parents. Handicapped children will be given priority transportation. Each bus driver has a route sheet that lists all children on the bus. The bus driver puts a check by the child’s name as the child gets on the bus. When the bus arrives at the school, the bus driver counts the children as they get off the bus. When the children are taken home at the end of the day, the bus driver puts a check by the child’s name as he/she gets off the bus. No child will be dropped off unless an adult authorized to pick up the child is seen by the driver. Picture identification may be required.

**Field Trip Transportation**

Head Start children will be taking periodic field trips. Written permission will be obtained from the parent/guardian in advance of each field trip. The education supervisor must approve all of the field trips. A one-time permission form will also be signed allowing the children to take periodic walks around their centers. All drivers have the State Department of Education School Bus Commercial Driver’s License for the buses. There will be a First Aid Kit on each bus. At least one person trained in First Aid and CPR will be present. All children must wear nametags on each outing with center name, address, and phone number. Emergency transportation and health records must be taken along on each field trip. Before departing the center, a count will be taken of all the children, and they will be marked on a separate attendance sheet, specifically created for the trip. Upon arrival at the destination, another count will be taken to assure that all of the children have safely arrived. This process will be repeated upon leaving the destination and returning to the center. During the course of the field trip, each staff member will have specific children that they are responsible for supervising.

The infants and toddlers in Early Head Start will also take periodic walks around the Highland Center. A one-time permission form will be signed to cover these periodic walks. Infants and toddlers who are too young to walk will be in a wagon or stroller.

Self-transportation

Any Head Start family who has chosen an alternative placement in our program for their child/children will assume full responsibility for any expenses or liability incurred as a result of transporting the child to and from a center or bus pick-up/drop-off point. Parents are also responsible for ensuring good attendance. This includes any family living within our home base area, who wants their child/children to attend one of our centers, or a family who wants their child to attend another group or center other than in their area. All Early Head Start children will be self-transport.

Scioto County CAO Head Start reserves the right to allow only families who live within a 5-mile radius of the center or bus pick-up/drop-off point to transport.

**Child Drop-off and Release Policy**

Parents who self-transport are required to bring their child into the center and sign in the child. Children may not be dropped off at the entrance of the building or be sent inside alone. Self-transport children may sign into the center at 8:15am. Staff will be present to welcome your child and get them to their group. Children are welcome all day. If you are running late, don’t worry! We want your child at school. Staff must be made aware of each child’s presence before the parent departs. At departure, parents are asked to make contact with their child’s teacher to ensure that staff is aware that the child has been picked up and to sign out the child. Parents are responsible for the supervision of their child until in the care of the staff. **No child shall be left alone or unattended**. Children will be supervised at all time. Staff may release Head Start children only to parents, guardians, bus drivers or those listed on the transportation or emergency release. Parents are responsible for notifying their family advocate of any changes. Self-transport children should be picked up by 4:00pm. Please sign your child out and staff will bring your child to you.

Children will only be released to custodial parents, guardians or other adults designated by the custodial parent or guardian in the child’s folder. Parent with custodial paperwork must provide a copy to the program. A parent may call the teacher in an emergency and give permission for someone not identified on the release to transport the child provided the person presents picture identification. A picture I.D. is required for individuals picking-up children who are not known by the classroom staff.

The classroom staff will not release a child to anyone, including parents or guardians, who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Emergency contacts will be contacted to transport the child home. Law enforcement will be call if necessary.

If a child is involved in a custody issue, the parent or guardian must provide the program with court papers indicating who has permission to pick up the child. The center may not deny a parent access to their child with proper documentation (court documents or custody papers).

If Head Start is in possession of a restraining order against any person including a non-custodial parent and that person appears at the Center, the following steps will be taken immediately be taken if the individual refuses to abide by the court order:

a. Call 911 or local police, staff will record the license number and make of the vehicle if possible.

b. Call the parent/guardian.,

c. Call your supervisor or the director.

Should any unauthorized person attempt to remove a Head Start/Early Head Start child from the Center staff will call 911 immediately. See Child Abduction Procedures and the ODJFS General Emergency Plan (blue sheet above phones posted in all centers) for instructions, evacuation information, and emergency numbers.

School Bus Accident

1. If a school bus accident occurs, which results in injury to any child, the child will be transported by ambulance to the hospital.
2. Parents will be notified by phone as soon as possible.
3. If the parent cannot be reached by phone, a staff person will go to the home to inform the parent and assist in getting them to the hospital, if necessary.
4. If a school bus accident occurs, which results in no injuries, it will be the driver’s responsibility to inform the parent when the child is dropped off.
5. Law enforcement will be called to any accident involving CAO of Scioto County vehicles including school buses. Children will not be released without law enforcement permission.
6. Any accident will be reported to our licensing agency, the Ohio Department Job and Family Services. Each family will receive an Incident Report with details of the accident.

Toys and Comfort Items from Home Policy

In order to create a supportive social environment and to enhance communication skills, children are permitted to bring toys from home to school.

We ask that you follow these guidelines when you send a toy to Head Start/Early Head Start:

1. **The toy does not promote violence or fighting.**
2. **The toy is not breakable.**
3. **The toy is not too small. (If the toy can pass thorough a toilet paper holder, it is too small and is choking hazard)**
4. **The toy is not too large. (We have limited space on the bus and in our classrooms)**
5. **The toy is not sharp, pointed, or can hurt your child or others.**
6. **The toy is not valuable.**
7. **The toy does not conflict with ODJFS licensing or Head Start/Early Head Start program guidelines and policies.**

For preschool children, everyday comfort items, like a blanket or a special doll, are discouraged but staff members understand that some children need comfort items to adjust to new environments and settings. Parents should talk to their classroom teacher to develop a plan to make the child feel secure and comfortable, while maintaining program safety standards in the classroom and on the bus. If the child needs their comfort item to feel secure and it does not conflict with above guidelines, the child can start off their school experience with their comfort item. Staff members will work within the agreed plan to help the child adjust to the school setting. The goal of the plan would be for the child to eventually be able to leave their comfort item at home for the school day.

Infants and toddlers are encouraged to bring comfort items, such as blankets, pacifiers, etc. that will help the transition from home to school go smoothly. These can be left at the center. Blankets will be washed at least weekly and when needed. Pacifiers will be sanitized at least daily and when needed.

The above guidelines will help maintain a pleasant and safe classroom. Please note that whenever you send something to school to be shared, you take a risk. We cannot be responsible when toys/items are lost, damaged, or broken. Please use good judgment when you send toys/items to school.

When a Scioto County CAO Head Start classroom is housed within another agency or public school district and the classroom collaborates with another program, Scioto County CAO Head Start will defer to the host building’s policy.

Meals and Snacks

All children who attend Head Start Centers are served breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack. All meals and snacks meet USDA requirements. No family will ever be asked to provide food or snacks for their child. Families will be provided monthly menus in the newsletter.

Any food allergies or dietary requirements will be addressed with a Care Plan **JFS01236**. For food supplements, a physician's written instructions will be obtained prior to serving. When special diets are required for cultural or religious reasons, the center shall obtain written, dated and signed instructions from the child's parent or guardian.

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the program is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), age, disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5694 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Outside Food Policy**

Because of the health and safety needs of the children we serve, Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start will not allow outside foods to be brought into the classroom. The program will provide all food experiences and nutritional needs to our classrooms. Classroom staff will follow the Scioto County Head Start Classroom Nutrition Procedures.

Families are encouraged to share recipes or favorite healthy foods with the teacher that can be prepared or offered within the classroom for nutrition activities. Families are encouraged to participate in all classroom activities and alternatives items for families to bring into the classroom can be found in the Scioto County CAO Head Start Holiday Celebrations Procedures.

When a Scioto County CAO Head Start classroom is housed within another agency or public school district and the classroom collaborates with another program, Scioto County CAO Head Start will defer to the host building’s policy.

**Children’s Clothing**

Any type of clothing is acceptable. A child must wear shoes. In the winter we ask that you dress your child warmly. A change of clothing must be left at the center in case of accidents, etc. Your child will get dirty. We will try to keep the mess to a minimum with smocks at art time. To avoid lost clothing, including coats and jackets, please label with the child’s full name.

Our classroom supplies are washable. The key to getting glue or paint out of your child's clothing is to soak them before laundering, preferably overnight.

**Extreme Temperature for Outside Gross Motor Play Policy**

In order to give children ample opportunity for physical development, time is provided for children to use large muscles both inside and outside. Children in our care experience outdoor play daily during the “gross motor” scheduled time. The only times children do not go outside are it is raining, the heat index is above 90 degrees, there is a poor air quality warning, or a wind chill of 25 degrees or less threatens children’s welfare.

The decision to keep children inside will be made daily, noting that conditions can change between the morning and afternoon, by the center administrator using the above guidance. All children participate in outdoor gross motor, unless a doctor’s excuse is submitted. In the event the children cannot play outside, alternative indoor gross motor activities will be planned. Staff will follow ODJFS Rule 5101:2-12-17 A(5) Programming and Material Requirements.

**Swimming Policy**

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start will not engage in swimming activities at public and/or private pools.

Classrooms may on occasion, with prior knowledge of parents, engage in water play with wading pools, sprinklers, and/or water tables. Ratio is maintained during water play activities and staff supervises children at all times. The children are never left unattended. The teaching staff will be actively involved in water related activities. Staff should position themselves so that all children are visible to them at all times.

Children will be shown the way to enter and exit the wading pool safely with discussion and demonstration. The wading pool will be emptied and sanitized daily.

**Physical Examinations**

Each child must have a comprehensive physical examination within 30 days of entrance into the program. This physical exam must include hemoglobin, a lead screen, height, weight, blood pressure, and screenings for hearing, speech and vision. This complete physical must be returned to Head Start within the thirty day time frame set by ODJFS. If the physical is not returned within the 30 day time frame, the child will be put on hold for ten days, which means the child will not be able to attend classes. If the physical is not returned to Head Start after the ten day hold period, the child will be offered the home based option if space is available. If there is no space in home base or the parent does not choose this option, the child will be dropped from the program. These regulations are required to comply with ODJFS licensing requirements. If a physical is received after a child is dropped, he will be reinstated if there is an opening at the center. It is the parent’s responsibility to return these physicals to the child’s teacher. Please schedule these appointments early since it may take a while to get an appointment with the pediatrician.

**Dental Examinations**

Head Start/Early Head Start requires that every child enrolled in the program, age three or older, have a dental exam. During your first dental visit, the dentist will examine your child’s teeth for tooth decay or other problems. Your dentist will also tell you if your child needs another appointment for follow-up services. Please keep all dental appointments. If you need help choosing a dentist, with transportation, or payment to the dentist, please contact the Health Manager.

# **Management of Illness**

A staff member with currently valid training in the management of Communicable Diseases, CPR, First Aid and Bloodborne Pathogens shall observe each child daily upon arrival at the center. We ask that you not send a sick child to Head Start/Early Head Start. The center shall immediately notify the parent or guardian of the child’s condition when a child has been observed with signs or symptoms of illness.

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness shall be immediately isolated and discharged to his parent or guardian or person designated by the parent or guardian:

1. Temperature of at least 100 degrees Fahrenheit, when in combination with any other symptoms of illness
2. Diarrhea (three or more abnormally loose stools within a twenty-four hour period)
3. Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound
4. Difficult or rapid breathing
5. Yellowish skin or eyes
6. Redness of the eye, obvious discharge, matted eyelashes, burning or itching
7. Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes
8. Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
9. Stiff neck with an elevated temperature
10. Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations: The Robi-Comb will be used on children with chronic head lice after obtaining written permission from the parent/guardian
11. Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
12. Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness

Any child demonstrating other signs of illness not listed above will be isolated and carefully observed. The parent will be notified. If a child does not feel well enough to participate in center activities the parent will be called to pick-up the child. Anytime a child is isolated they will be kept within sight and hearing of a staff member. The cot and any linen used will be washed and disinfected before being used again.

A sign on the door or a letter will notify parents if children have been exposed to a communicable illness. Children will be readmitted to the center after at least twenty-four hours of being free of fever and other symptoms. If they are not symptom-free a doctor’s note will be required stating that the child is not contagious.

Employee illness – any employee who has any of the symptoms of a communicable disease is required to stay out of the school setting. A doctor’s statement may be required for return to work. The employee will be replaced with a substitute.

Procedures followed:

1. Parent will be notified by phone call and if unable to come after the child, two staff persons will transport the child home. Other parents will be notified that their child may have been exposed to a communicable disease by a note or verbal message from the bus driver.

2. Staff will receive Communicable Disease training from a qualified trainer who has been approved by the Ohio Department

of Health.

3. Every site has a staff member trained in First Aid and CPR by a certified professional.

**Sick Children**

Do not send your child to school if he or she is sick. If your child has a fever, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, or complains of just not feeling well, please keep your child at home. This helps to prevent the spread of illness at the center. If your child has been out sick with a prolonged illness or communicable disease, a doctor’s statement is needed before returning to the center. If your child becomes ill or has an accident, we will contact you by phone. It is important that you give at least two emergency numbers to contact in case you cannot be reached. If you do not have transportation to come and pick up your child, it will be provided. An Incident Report will be completed when accidents or injuries occur and a copy given to the parent/guardian.

**Immunizations**

Immunizations must be kept current or up-to-date. To attend Head Start the following immunizations are needed: 4 DPT, 3 POLIO, 1 Varicella, 3 HEP B, 1 MMR, 2 Hepatitis A and up to 4 HIB. Please check your child’s immunization record. If these immunizations are not completed, please have them done. The health manager and staff are willing to assist you if you have any transportation problems.

To attend Early Head Start the child must be current or up-to-date with age appropriate immunizations.

Immunization Policy

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start will require that all immunizations be documented with specific month/day/year of each dose of vaccine received. Blanket statements that all immunizations are “up-to-date” will not be acceptable. Head Start staff will follow the recommendations of the medical provider, who will make the final decision regarding the spacing of immunizations and types of vaccine preparations to be used. The Ohio Revised Code allows the following types of exemptions:

1. Medical Exemption - A physician’s statement that documents that immunization against a particular disease (or all diseases) is “Medically contraindicated.” A signed statement of history of measles or a history of rubella disease may not be substituted for rubella vaccine. Official laboratory test results demonstrating detectable rubella antibody will be accepted in lieu of vaccination.
2. Religious Exemption - Parent must submit a written statement that the immunization is objectionable for specific religious reasons.
3. Reason of Good Cause Exemption - Parent must submit a written statement that immunization is objectionable due to philosophical reasons of good cause.

Written documentation of exemption status will be kept in the child’s health and classroom files. The Health Managerwill maintain a computerized tracking of immunizations. Children who are “current” or “up-to-date” will be given an “in process” exception. They must maintain satisfactory progress in completing the immunization series. If, after thirty (30) days, a center based child has not received the required immunization or has no exemption on file, the home base option will be offered. All Head Start/Early Head Start services will be rendered to the child and the family, with the exception of socialization days and field trips.

**Medication Administration**

CAO Scioto County Head Start/Early Head Start will not administer medication to any child with the only exception being a child who is able to attend Head Start/Early Head Start only through the effective use of medication. If possible, all medications should be given at home by the parent. If this is not possible, parents/guardian may come to school to administer medication to their child. Staff members may be permitted to administer medications only when no other alternative is available. In this circumstance, if a student is required by a physician's order to take medicine during the day, the procedures listed below will be followed:

1. All Head Start/Early Head Start personnel must be informed that the administration of any drug (prescription or over-the-counter) without the order of the physician and the permission of the parent/guardian could be interpreted as practicing medicine and is prohibited by law.
2. The Director or Health Services Manager will supervise the storage and dispensing of the medication. Medication will be stored in a locked area unless refrigeration is required.

3. A written medication order must be received from the physician identifying:

1. Name of student
2. Name of prescribed drug
3. Description of the drug
4. Time to be given at school and duration of medication
5. Possible side effects, if any, which should be reported to the physician
6. Special instructions, including storage and sterile requirements
7. Date when medication will no longer be needed
8. Diagnosis or reason for the medication to be administered
9. Physician's name, address, telephone number and the date

4. Written permission must be received from the parent or guardian of the enrollee requesting that the program comply with the physician's order.

5. Medications should be brought to the Head Start/Early Head Start Center by the parent or guardian, and must be in the original prescription bottle and with the following information:

a) Student's name

b) Name of drug

c) Expiration date

d) Time schedule for administering

e) Appropriate dosage

f) Name of physician

1. Date

6. Accurate records must be kept of all medications administered to enrollees by Head Start/Early Head Start Personnel and documented on Form JFS01217.

7. Form JFS01217 must be completed for every child in need of a modified diet.

8. Form JFS01217 must be submitted for each year and as necessary FOR ANY CHANGE in the medication order or modified diet.

9. The enrollee's parent or legal guardian must agree to notify Head Start/Early Head Start of any changes; such as, change of physician, change of medication, dosage, changes in diet, etc.

1. If no physician's authorization is available, the parent(s) or legal guardian must come to the school to administer the medication.

Lead Screening

Due to Scioto County’s high-risk status, Scioto County CAO Head Start will require a Lead Poisoning Screening for Head Start/Early Head Start children at the beginning at 12 months or the first year of the child’s enrollment. Subsequent screenings and/or follow-up treatment will depend on the results of the initial screening and age of child.

**Incident, Injury and Emergency**

Scioto County CAO Head Start will follow the outlined procedures below for incidents, child injury and emergencies:

1. Fire, environmental, and weather emergencies will follow the written directions outlined on the ODJFS, Medical, Dental, and General Emergency Form (JFS 01242 form) describing evacuation routes and procedures to ensure child safety. This form is blue and can be found posted over phones in every center. Building Evacuation Diagrams are posted beside doors in all centers. Emergency Evacuation Locations are also listed in the Parent Handbook (page 1). In order to prepare for emergencies, monthly fire drills and tornado drills (during tornado season) are conducted and recorded. When a Scioto County CAO Head Start classroom is housed within another agency or public school district and the classroom collaborates with another program, the host building will schedule and conduct drills.
2. Incidents that jeopardize the safety a child will be reported to the Education Manager, Outlying Center Supervisor, and/or Director. The event will be documented in running notes and with an Incident Report to the parents/guardians and if needed a call from the classroom teacher.
3. Minor injury of children will result in basic first aid and TLC by staff. At least one staff member trained in First Aid, Communicable Disease, and CPR is always present. If the injury is more serious, first aid will be administered and the parents/guardians immediately contacted to assist in deciding an appropriate course of action.
4. Serious incidents/injury/illness will result in First Aid/CPR being provided by the staff and EMS being called. The parents/guardians will be notified and the teacher will accompany the child to the emergency room with all available health records. The teacher will stay with the child until the parents/guardians arrive. In the case of a serious injury or illness, staff will not transport children in their vehicle. Only EMS or parents/guardians will transport.

In the case of an incident, minor injury, or serious incident/injury/illness, while at the center an Incident Report is completed on form JFS 01299. The administrator of the building and the parent must sign the form. A copy is given to the parent/guardian and a copy is placed on file at the center. If a child needs medical attention, the center administrator will notify their supervisor and forward a copy of the Incident Report to their Licensing Specialist within 24 hours.

**Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect**

All staff who works directly with children will receive the minimum six (6) hour course in the recognition and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect. Three (3) hour updates will be provided every third year.

1. As required by Ohio Day Care licensing regulations, the individual staff member who has reason to suspect abuse or neglect will be responsible for reporting it to the Scioto County Children’s Services Board (SCCSB).
2. The report needs to be made as soon as possible to help facilitate a timely investigation.
3. The individual staff member is to make a verbal report to Education Manager immediately after notifying the Scioto County Children’s Services Board (SCCSB).
4. The staff member is responsible for completing the “Incident of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Form” and turning the completed form in to the Education Manager.
5. The Education Manager will be responsible for contacting the Scioto County Children’s Services Board (SCCSB) to determine the status of the referral.
6. The form and documentation of any follow-up will be placed in a sealed envelope and placed in the child’s social service file. The staff member making the initial report will also be responsible for logging in the child’s running notes that a referral has been made.

**Child Abduction Procedures**

Should any unauthorized person attempt to remove a Head Start/Early Head Start child from the Center, staff will take the following action:

1. Remain calm.

2. Tell the person he/she is not on the list to pick up the child and that our policy states that we cannot release the child

without parent/guardian permission. Allow them to use the telephone if they wish to contact the parent/guardian and

have the parent/guardian talk to you. Head Start Policy also requires picture identification before staff releases the

child.

1. If the person becomes agitated, tell them that you are unable to help them while the children are present and ask the
2. person to leave. If they do not leave, call 911. Remove the children if necessary. Try to keep the person calm and away from children until the police arrive.

4 . If you perceive a threat of force, see a weapon, or believe that children or staff members are in danger, do as the

person says. Do not confront the person. Try to protect the children, other staff and yourself. If the person removes the

child and staff have not already called the police, do so when it is safe. Then call the parent/guardian and contact your

supervisor or the Director. Write down a description of the person, the child, and the license number and make of the

vehicle if possible. See ODJFS General Emergency Plan (blue sheet) for instructions, evacuation information and

emergency numbers.

**Classroom Schedules**

The children’s daily schedule is flexible enough to provide adaptability when necessary but structured enough to provide predictability for the children. We want them to view school as a safe and comforting place, where they know what to expect and when to expect it. Each classroom has a schedule posted.

**Sample Pre-school Classroom Schedule:**

**8:15-8:30 am** Children arrive at center (toilet/wash hands), welcome rituals, Daily Health Check and Attendance

**8:30-9:15 am** Breakfast, snack and clean-up

**9:15 -10:50 am** Physical and intellectual growth activities for children including Circle Time, free play and toothbrushing

**10:50-11:20 am** Outside Play

**11:20-12:00 pm** Lunch and clean-up

**12:00-12:30 pm** Small group individual activities

**12:30-2:00 pm** Rest Timeand quiet activities

**2:00-2:30 pm** Music and Movement

**2:30-3:15 pm** Afternoon Snack

**3:15-3:35 pm** Outside play

**3:35-3:45 pm** Children will prepare for departure from the center including good-bye rituals

**3:45 pm** Children depart from center

**Sample Infant/Toddler Classroom Schedule:**

**8:15-8:30 am** Children arrive at center (toilet/wash hands), welcome rituals, Daily Health Check and Attendance

**8:30-10:45 am** Free Play-Children are free to choose from variety of experiences including:

creative/art, sensory, literacy, and play experiences. Children move between activities at their own rates with adults participating rather than directing the experience

**8:30-9:30 am** Snack is available

**10:45-11:00 am** Clean-up time and transition to Circle time.

**11:00-11:30 am** Outside play

**11:30-12:15 am** Lunch

**12:15-2:00 pm** Rest time: Books, hallway walks and other quiet activities

**2:15-3:00 pm** Snack is available

**2:15-2:45 pm** Free Play

**2:45-3:00 pm** Clean-up and transition to outside

**3:00-3:45 pm** Outside time and pick-up

**Rest Time**

All Head Start children and Early Head Start infants and toddlers are offered a rest time each day. Cots will be provided for each child. Cribs are available for all infants. The program will provide a pillow and blanket for each pre-school child and developmentally appropriate bedding for infants and toddlers. Bedding will be laundered at the center once a week and when needed. Pillows and blankets may be brought from home. During rest time, children may choose to lie quietly on their cot until other children fall asleep. In order to facilitate the children’s rest, quiet music will be played and teachers will be available to rub backs or talk quietly to the children. Alternate quiet activities will be offered for non-sleepers and early risers.

**Active Supervision Policy**

A major responsibility of the staff is to ensure the health and safety of each child entrusted in our care. Staff persons are alert to the safety needs of their children, anticipate possible hazards, and take necessary appropriate precautionary and preventative measures. No child shall be left alone or unattended. Children will be actively supervised at all time. Staff will comply with **ODJFS Rule 5101:2-12-19 Supervision, Staff/Child Ratio and Grouping**.

**Active supervision** requires focused attention and intentional observation of children at all times. Staff will position themselves so that they can observe all of the children: watching, counting, and listening at all times. During transitions, staff will account for all children with name-to-face recognition by visually identifying each child. Staff is also expected to use their knowledge of each child’s development and abilities to anticipate what they will do, then get involved and redirect them when necessary. This constant vigilance helps children learn safely.

Staff will follow the key strategies of **Active Supervision**:

1. **Set up the environment** to see and hear all children.
2. **Position staff** in the environment to prevent children from harm.
3. **Scan and count** and be able to account for all children in their care.
4. **Listen** to children and classroom sounds or lack of sounds. Sounds alert staff to signs of concern or danger.
5. **Anticipate children’s behaviors**. Be pro-active.
6. **Engage and redirect** children to offer support. Conscious Discipline-“*Lend the child your frontal lobe.”*

**Positive Child Discipline and Guidance Policy** 1304.21(a)(3)(i)(A) – 1304.21(a)(3)(ii)

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start is committed to using Conscious Discipline to promote social competence and address challenging behaviors. Conscious Discipline has been specifically designed to make changes in the lives of adults first. The adults, in turn, change the lives of children. Our goal is that we are better able to think in the higher center of our brain and learn to cope with emotions and manage responses rather than react to life events. Conscious Discipline is based on safety and building strong relationships (a School Family); it helps decrease power struggles and builds life skills. In a School Family, the teacher’s job is to keep the child safe and the child’s job is to help the teacher keep them safe.

Using Conscious Discipline our staff strive to create a relaxed, positive environment that enables children to explore and experiment while remaining safe and feeling well supported. Through positive guidance strategies and modeling social skills, our staff helps children learn pro-social behaviors, build confidence and self-esteem, and develop greater respect for others’ rights and feelings, as well as a sense that they are themselves respected.

Discipline concerns in the classroom and during home visits are handled by staff in a way that encourages children to solve problems and develop a sense of inner self-control. Children are given authentic choices and the opportunity to be an active part of decision-making in their environment, thus fostering a sense of personal responsibility. Our staff will help children to understand the reasons for rules and limits and make helpful choices.

## **Our staff will practice The Seven Powers for Conscious Adults**

Power of Perception: **No one can make you angry without your permission.**

**GOAL:**  To teach adults and children to take responsibility for our own upset.

Power of Unity**: We are all in this together.**

**GOAL:**  To perceive compassionately and offer compassion to others and to ourselves.

Power of Attention**: Whatever we focus on, we get more of.**

**GOAL:**  To create images of expected behavior in a child’s brain.

Power of Free Will**: The only person you can change is you.**

**GOAL:**  Learning to connect and guide instead of force and coerce.

Power of Acceptance**: The moment is as it is.**

**GOAL:**  To learn to respond to what life offers instead of attempting to make the world go our way.

Power of Love**: Choose to see the best in others.**

**GOAL:**  Seeing the best in others keeps us in the higher centers of our brain so we can

consciously respond instead of unconsciously react to life events.

**Our staff will teach children the Seven Skills of Discipline**

Composure:  Becoming the person you want children to be.

GOAL: Child can self-regulate. S.T.A.R. Stop, Take a breath And Relax. I can handle this.

Assertiveness:  Saying “no” and being heard

**GOAL:**  Child can set limits respectfully. Child can express needs.

Encouragement:  Building a school family

**GOAL:**  Child senses belonging. You did it! Good for you! You \_\_\_ so \_\_\_. That was helpful.

Choices:  Building self-esteem and will power

**GOAL:**  Children will grow their skills by making decisions. You have a choice. You may \_\_\_ or

\_\_\_. Which is better for you?

Empathy:  Teaching children to manage their emotions.

**GOAL:**  Children will be able to understand feelings and link those feelings to behaviors. Your face

is going like this. You seem \_\_\_. You wanted \_\_\_.

Positive Intent:  Creating teaching moments with oppositional, shut down, and aggressive children.

**GOAL:**  Child will connect with caring adult. You wanted \_\_\_. You may not \_\_\_. When you want

\_\_\_ say or do \_\_\_.

Consequences:  Helping children learn from their mistakes

**GOAL:**  Consequences only work with connected children. Did you like it? Was that helpful or

hurtful?

Staff will use the Conscious Discipline Behavior Chart, which harnesses the Power of Free Will by encouraging children to choose to change hurtful actions into helpful ones. Using the Classroom Behavior Chart encourages lasting behavioral change by helping children choose acceptable behaviors instead of relying on a progression of prescribed consequences.

Here are the basic steps:

Step 1: Provide the opportunity to choose again and be helpful.

Step 2: Provide the opportunity to go to the Safe Place to practice calming strategies so the child can choose a

helpful behavior.

Step 3: Create a Behavior Plan based on safety, connection and problem solving that targets the supports the child

needs.

Step 4: Once it is clear that the child possesses the needed skills and is connected to the School Family, create

logical consequences to facilitate helpful behavior.

Home Visitation: In the home, the Head Start/Early Head Start Home Visitor must respect the parents' method of disciplining their children. However, one of our purposes is to help parents find more effective means of discipline. Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start does not condone parents physically disciplining (spanking, etc.) or verbally abusing (calling names, etc.) children. This destroys the positive atmosphere that we attempt to encourage. Our staff will work with parents to help them understand and use Conscious Discipline in their home.

* Unacceptable Discipline Methods:  The following methods are prohibited by staff at all times, under any circumstances:

1. Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, shaking, pinching, squeezing and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear
2. Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or use of the bathroom
3. Use of food as reward
4. Abusive or profane language
5. Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment or emotional abuse, including shaming, humiliating, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child
6. Punishment for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet
7. Bribes, false threats or false choices
8. Retaliating or doing to the child what the child did to someone else
9. Labeling a child as “bad” or otherwise implying that the child is a problem, rather than the behavior

If a child exhibits a consistent challenging behavior, efforts will be made to understand why the behavior is happening. Staff and parent conferences are held to talk about ways to change behaviors, if necessary. It is important that staff and parents use a consistent approach to the problem both at the center and at home. If the child does not show improvement, we may refer the child and parents to Shawnee Family Health and/or other qualified professionals for further evaluation.

**School Readiness Goals**

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start has established School Readiness Goals around the five essential domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical health and well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development as outlined in the Head Start Framework. Attributes were developed under each goal to help focus definition and clarity.

Preparing for kindergarten is addressed through our School Readiness Goals. The goals are intended to give guidance about what children need to be successful in school. Our teachers share the goals with families during parent meetings and work with families to meet the goals. Individual goals for children will be developed with School Readiness Goals in mind by the teacher and family.

**High Quality Teaching and Learning**

Scioto County CAO Head Start follows the Creative Curriculum model. We feel Creative Curriculum allows for the things we feel our most important to our children and families. First, parents are their children’s first teachers. We want parents to be involved with their child’s first teachers. We want parents to be involved with their child’s education and to have input into what their child is learning in the classroom. Second, we believe that each child is an individual and his or her experience should reflect that. The Creative Curriculum supports both of these beliefs.

The Early Head Start classroom uses the Creative Curriculum. Early Head Start home base follows a combination of Creative Curriculum and Parents as Teachers (PAT) to serve their families’ needs.

**Screenings**

Teachers begin their assessment of children with development (Brigance for HS and ASQ for EHS) and social/emotional screens (E-DECA). The screens help teachers establish a baseline for each child and alert them to any concerns. Screens are done within 45 days of enrollment. Individual child assessment is done quarterly throughout the school year. Assessment information is shared with parents and funding sources. Upon enrollment, parents sign permission for program to share assessment outcomes with funding sources including Head Start and the Ohio Department of Education. Outcomes can also be shared with the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services pursuant to 5101:2-17-02 0f the Administrative Code.

**Lesson Plans**

Lesson plans are available in each classroom. The binder that contains forms the teachers utilize, as well as other information, is kept in the classroom and is available to parents upon request.

**Native Language**

Information in a family’s native language is available upon request.

Home Visits

The purpose of home visits from center base educational staff is to provide information to the family about their child’s progress in the Head Start/Early Head Start classroom. These visits are a requirement of our federal regulations. Assigned staff members are mandated to meet with each family two times a year. Parent cooperation and involvement are greatly needed and appreciated.

The home visits are also arranged to update the parents on Head Start/Early Head Start activities and goals. At the time of the home visit, an assessment is made of the child, family and community needs. Other home visits provide opportunities for follow-up on needs and to discuss activities and goals.

The home visits are coordinated and arranged by the Education Manager and teaching staff. Before a home visit is made, the child’s parents are notified and asked permission for arranged meetings.

**Disabilities and Special Needs**

If your child is suspected to have a disability, the following steps with parental permission will be conducted:

**Screenings and Evaluations**

Staff ensures that all children are screened and problems identified during the screening process are further evaluated by the appropriate diagnostician or the Local Education Agency to determine if a disability condition exists.

**Documentation and Developmental**

Children who have been identified through the screening process through their Local Education Agency as having a suspected disability then undergo with parental consent an Evaluation Team Report (ETR). This evaluation can assess the child’s level of functioning in areas such as gross motor skills, fine motor skills, self-help skills, speech/language skills, general knowledge skills and social-emotional skills. This testing will determine if the child is functioning at an age appropriate level and if he/she is not, in what specific areas he/she needs assistance.

**Individual Education Plans and Evaluation Process**

A meeting is held with parents, the child’s teacher, school district personnel, and the Inclusion Manager to discuss the results of the ETR and any therapy or special services that the child may need. This process ensures that we are using a team approach to maximum the child’s potential and to make certain that they are receiving the services (i.e. speech therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, or one-on-one assistance) in the classroom that they need.

**Follow-up**

The child’s progress is monitored throughout the year and the parents are kept up-to-date through conferences and progress reports that are sent home.

**Mental Health Services**

**Social/Emotional Group Activities**

Shawnee Family Health Staff is our early childhood mental health consultant. SFH staff work closely with our staff and families to promote a positive learning environment.

**Identification and Referral**

Parents and/or teachers might suggest that they are having issues with a child at home or in the classroom or that they are concerned about the way a child is behaving. They may be concerned that a child is too shy, too aggressive or may be having difficulty adjusting to the Head Start/Early Head Start setting and they may be seeking advice to better deal with the child. In this case, written permission may be obtained from the parents so that a mental health consultant can observe the child in the classroom and provide information to the staff and parents on how to better deal with the child. In more involved or family crisis situations, the family will be referred to a local mental health center for further evaluation, counseling or parenting classes.

**Head Start/Early Head Start Weapons Policy**

No weapons of any kind are permitted on Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start property. Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start recognizes the importance of preserving a safe environment for children, employees, volunteers, and parents. In order to maintain the safety of Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start centers and classrooms, this policy will be strictly enforced. Program property is defined as: property utilized, supervised, rented, leased, or controlled by Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start including, but not limited to: playgrounds, parking lots, school buses, and any property on which Head Start/Early Head Start activity takes place.

A weapon is defined as:

•A gun of any kind whether is real, play, loaded, or unloaded including registered firearms carried by a valid concealed handgun licensed individual (CCW). The only exception to this rule is a weapon carried by a law enforcement officer performing official duties.

•All knives of any kind whether sharp, dull, with or without blades, large or small this includes box cutters and razor blades.

•Any other weapon but not limited to clubs, knuckles, nunchucks, explosive weapons, and/or any instrument used or designed to threaten or assault.

If a weapon is found in a child’s possession, whether real or play, staff will immediately take the weapon. The staff will notify management after the weapon is safeguarded. The teacher will notify the parent/guardian for a conference immediately. The teacher and management will meet with the parent/guardian. Law enforcement and children’s services will be notified if a real weapon is confiscated. The child and their parent will be referred to the Shawnee Family Health for individual assessment and parenting classes as needed.

An adult found in possession of a weapon will be asked to immediately leave the premises. If the individual refuses to leave, law enforcement will be called. Failure to comply with this policy may result in the adult being banned from Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start property.

**Security Cameras**

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start authorizes the use of video cameras on program property to ensure the health, welfare, and safety of all staff, children, and visitors to program property, and to safeguard the program’s facilities and equipment.

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start may also use video obtained from cameras in the following ways:

1. Teachers may review classroom video for assessment purposes.
2. Management staff may review classroom video for assessment purposes.
3. Management staff, the Executive Director, and the CAO Board reserve the right to view video to observe classroom procedures.
4. Parents may view video in the event a child is having difficulty functioning in the classroom.
5. Service providers, who work directly with children, may view video of children for assessment purposes as deemed necessary by program administration with a signed release from the parent or guardian.
6. Cameras are used to monitor visitors entering the building at Highland.

When a Scioto County CAO Head Start classroom is housed within another agency or public school district and the classroom collaborates with another program, Scioto County CAO Head Start will defer to the host building’s policy.

All school buildings have security measures in place for the safety of children and employees. Parents and visitors are asked to comply with the system in place at the school you enter. Generally, there is a sign-in requirement and some buildings will have video surveillance equipment. Staff will explain these requirements during the orientation.

**No Smoking / Electronic Cigarette / Tobacco Policy**

All Scioto County CAO Head Starts/Early Head Start are smoke/tobacco free centers this includes electronic cigarettes or “vaping”. Individuals may smoke/vape/use tobacco in the designated area or their personal car if the car is not parked on program property. Staff will not smoke, vape, or use tobacco in the homes of families participating in the program during any program–related activity or assignment. Staff will observe and comply with **ODJFS Rule 5101:2-12-13 Smoke Free Environment for Licensed Child Care Centers**as highlighted below:

1. The center shall provide for a smoke-free environment for the children.
2. Smoking shall only be allowed in a designated area of the property. Children are not to see or smell smoke.
3. The administrator shall post in a conspicuous place at the main entrance of the center, a notice stating that smoking is prohibited.
4. Smoking is prohibited in any CAO of Scioto County vehicle or bus.

**Parents and Community Members as Volunteers**

Parents and legal guardians as volunteers provide additional help in the classroom, on the bus, at home visits and during socializations. We encourage them to attend our Policy Council Meetings and Parent Clubs and to participate in home visits and parent conferences to discuss goals and concerns.

Not only are our parents/legal guardians encouraged to volunteer, but community volunteers are utilized as well including Foster Grandparents. Community volunteers and Foster Grandparents are under more restricted guidelines and must contact the Parent Involvement Manager before assignments can be made. Volunteering gives parents and the community a chance to experience all the benefits that Head Start and Early Head Start provide children and families.

Qualifications:

* Must be at least 16 years old and not interfere with school.
* Must be dependable and responsible.
* Must have a TB test and the results turned into the Health Manager or Parent Involvement Manager.

(TB test can be obtained for free at the TB Clinic located at 617 Court Street on the corner opposite the Department of Job and Family Services.)

* Strongly urged to attend a volunteer training workshop, or volunteer orientation with Parent Involvement Manager.

Duties:

* Volunteers in the classroom may help with activities, clean up, read stories to the children, decorate the room, play with the children on the playground, help with tooth brushing, etc., under the direction and supervision of the classroom teacher.
* Volunteers may attend field trips with the children, but must provide their own transportation.
* Volunteers may eat lunch or snack with the children, setting an example for the children by trying everything on their plate.
* Volunteers may work in the office, making copies, using the computer or answering phones.
* Volunteers must sign a volunteer job description form at orientation and complete a Volunteer In-Kind form.

Guidelines:

* Volunteers must respect the confidentiality of each child and family in the Early Head Start/Head Start program; do not discuss children’s behavior with anyone except a teacher or coordinator.
* Volunteers will never discipline a child; if a child is misbehaving, inform the classroom staff.
* Volunteers are to never be left alone with the children.
* Volunteers may not drink pop or coffee in the classroom or at lunch with the children. The only food allowed in the classroom is what is being served to the children.
* Volunteers may not ride be transported by buses.
* Smoking is never allowed in front of the children, in the Early Head Start/Head Start building or on the parking lot.
* Volunteers must comply with the same hygiene rules and dress code as the staff. Volunteers are not to wear halter-tops, belly shirts or obscene T-shirts.
* Physical punishment is never allowed. You cannot spank your own child in the building or on the grounds.
* No child shall be humiliated or subjected to profane language or other verbal abuse.
* All children are to be treated equally.
* Volunteers will not sit on the tables in the classroom or lunchroom.
* Volunteers are to be positive with the children and should try to eliminate “no” and “don’t” when communicating with the children.
* Walk over and talk to a child at eye level, rather than yelling at a child across the room.
* If disagreements arise between adults, volunteers must voice them away from the children, never in their presence.
* If volunteers are in doubt about anything, they are to ask a staff member.

**Policy Council - Purpose and Responsibilities**

Policy Council is a group that works in partnership with management staff of the Head Start/Early Head Start program.  The group is comprised of parents of children enrolled in the program and community representatives.  More than half of the Council's members must be parents of currently enrolled children.  Parents are elected each year and serve one-year terms.

Responsibilities include review and approval of all funding applications and amendments to funding applications for Head Start/Early Head Start, including administrative services, prior to the submission of such applications to HHS.  They participate in the annual self-assessment of the program. Policy Council also reviews and approves program personnel policies and subsequent changes to these policies, in accordance with **45CFR 1301.31**, including standards of conduct for program staff, consultants, and volunteers. The Policy Council also reviews and approves decisions to hire or terminate employees who work primarily for the Head Start/Early Head Start program of the grantee.

**Project READ**

You will receive a monthly newsletter that has a Project Read form included. List each book you read to your child and turn it into your teacher or bus driver. They will make sure it gets to the Family Engagement office. After 20 books/activities have been turned in, you will receive a Literacy Kit. The Literacy kit includes a book and activities to go with it, that will help your child achieve their School Readiness Goals.

**Parent Club**

All parents are automatically Parent Club members when they sign their child up for Early Head Start/Head Start. There are many wonderful and exciting benefits for both the parent and the child when you are involved in the Parent Club. You will be planning activities and field trips for your child’s class and learning more ways to work with your child to successfully transition him/her into Head Start or kindergarten. You will also learn activities you can do at home with your child.

**Meetings and Workshops**

Regular meetings and workshops are also available to parents. The date and times for these will be listed in the monthly newsletter. When you enroll your child, you are asked to list topics/subjects that are of interest to you and the workshops are planned around the interests of the parents. If you have any ideas or a talent to share please share with your teacher, home visitor or Parent Involvement Manager.

Childcare, refreshments, and gas money are available at each workshop held by Head Start/Early Head Start, and each family attending will receive a book or developmentally appropriate game, etc.

**Communication with Parents and Families**

Please read your Monthly Newsletter. It has parent activities, workshops, program activities, a monthly menu, and a questionnaire for you. Head Start/Early Head Start staff will frequently send notes home to parents. We will also port information on our Facebook page, CAO of Scioto County Head Start/Early Head Start. These are our way of communicating important information to parents. Please read all notes. We strongly encourage parents to become involved in every aspect of the program. Head Start/ Early Head Start will hold parent meetings and workshops regularly. We invite all parents to attend. If you have questions/suggestions regarding parent workshops, call the center or the Family and Community Engagement office, 740-354-3333 x240.

Parent Complaint Procedure

In the event that a parent has a concern or complaint about the Head Start/Early Head Start Program the following steps should be followed:

1. Discuss concern or complaint with child’s classroom teacher, home visitor or bus driver, as applicable.

2. If the problem is not resolved, contact the Education Manager.

3. If no resolution is reached, the Director should be contacted. The parent should complete a Grievance Form. The form can be obtained from a staff member. The parent needs to submit the form to the Director. The Director will share the grievance with the Grievance Sub-committee prior to presenting it to Policy Council. The Grievance Sub-Committee will assist the Director and Parent Involvement Service Manager for a resolution. Policy Council will be informed of the resolution regarding the grievance reported. At any point during the procedure, the parent may choose to or be requested to put the complaint in writing.

Employees will follow the same procedures for concerns, complaints or resolving problems related to the program.

Parent/Volunteer Dismissal from the Classroom

Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start is committed to working with the parents as well as the child. We feel parent involvement is essential in providing a positive experience for your child and will do everything possible to involve parents and make them feel welcome. In the event of a parent creating disruptions in the classroom to the extent that a classroom has difficulty functioning, the following policy will be in effect.

If any Head Start/Early Head Start parent should create disruptions (such as breaking confidentiality, harassing, making in-appropriate comments to the children, parents, or staff, disrespecting the teacher as the leader of the classroom, or exhibits any behavior that is deemed disruptive), Head Start/Early Head Start will have the right to dismiss the parent/volunteer from the classroom. No services will be discontinued to the child of the parent dismissed from the classroom.

All complaints will be investigated and documented thoroughly. The Head Start/Early Head Start parent/volunteer will need to accept the final results of the investigation of the complaint.

**Closing and Delay Policy**

From time to time, Scioto County CAO Head Start/Early Head Start program may need to delay or close Head Start /Early Head Start sites due to inclement weather or other general site issues. Updates about delays and closings will be posted on WSAZ, WNXT, our Facebook page, and will be available by calling our phone system.

During the school year, when local school districts, which house our Head Start units, have a delay or close due to bad weather, these sites will follow the school district’s policy. Remaining center decisions will be made on an individual basis, based on weather conditions. This information will be relayed as soon as conditions warrant.

*Revised 8/2022*