



PARENT HANDBOOK





HHWP Community Action Commission

1637 Tiffin Ave, Findlay, Ohio 45840
www.hhwpcac.org

Phone 419-423-3755
1-800-423-4304
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Welcome from the Director

Dear Families,

Hello and Welcome to HHWP Community Action Commission Head Start. We are excited to have you join our School Family and we look forward to another great year ahead!

It is our goal that every child we serve will enter kindergarten healthy and ready to learn. To reach this goal, we provide a comprehensive and integrated pre-K program focusing on the development of the whole child. This includes a curriculum addressing children's cognitive, developmental, and social-emotional needs. We are focused on parent engagement, and partnership with our community's social service providers, mental health services and local school districts.

We understand that YOU are the primary educator for your child. Your involvement in your child's education plays a critical role in their success as a lifelong learner. Parents have opportunities to learn about managing challenging behaviors, nutrition, and how to become an advocate for their child's future by attending parent activities, Parent Group, and Policy Council.

The intent of the Parent Handbook is to provide you with the necessary information and guidance that will further enhance your partnership with us in your child's education and preparation for kindergarten.

If you have any questions or concerns during the school year, please reach out to your child's teaching team or your Family Support Specialist. The Site Supervisor for your child's preschool location is also a great resource. If you feel that your concerns or questions have not been resolved, feel free to contact me at bgearing@hhwpcac.com or 419-423-3755 ext. 180.

Wishing you well,

Bailey Gearing

Director of Child Development
HHWP CAC Head Start

Mission, Values, and Philosophies

Our Mission

The mission of HHWP Community Action Commission is to reduce the conditions of poverty by providing comprehensive services to improve lives.

To accomplish our mission, HHWP CAC collects and analyzes data on the nature of poverty and the existing resources in the area. HHWP CAC involves public and private agencies, as well as the population to be served, in developing action plans to address needed services. These activities often include helping other agencies to improve and expand their services and assisting with the development of new organizations. HHWP CAC will seek out governmental and private resources to initiate and administer innovative programs in such areas as employment, education, housing development, transportation, health, emergency needs, food/nutrition, advocacy, etc.

Our Values

Advocacy - We will passionately use our collective voice to support resource allocation and programming that reduces poverty and directly impacts the communities we serve in positive ways. We operate with a genuine concern for others. We are wholeheartedly committed to helping others overcome immediate hardships and achieve long-term success.

Professionalism – We seek to do our jobs effectively and efficiently - with skill, good judgment, polite behavior, and intentional focus on continuous improvement. We treat people with respect at all times.

Partnership – We will work toward strengthening partnerships. We will place a high value on both internal and interagency collaboration as a means to achieve our mission and vision.

Our Philosophy

Our program approach is based on the philosophy that the early years of a child's life play a critical role and provide the foundation for success in school and beyond. We believe parents are their child's first and most important teachers, and that parents and educators should partner together in supporting the child's development. All children and families deserve the same opportunities to succeed and become lifelong learners.

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Center Information

Angeline Head Start (Wyandot County) Angeline School of Opportunity 11028 CH 44, Upper Sandusky, OH 43351 (419) 294-4488			Full Day Class 8:00-3:15 Monday-Thursday		
Andrea Stanley Site Supervisor astanley@hhwpcac.com		Aimee Nye Family Support Specialist anye@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-5172			
Forest Head Start (Hardin County) Forest United Methodist Church 111 East Dixon St., Forest, OH 45843 (419) 273-2317			Full Day Class 8:00-3:15 Monday- Thursday		
Andrea Stanley Site Supervisor astanley@hhwpcac.com		Aimee Nye Family Support Specialist anye@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-5172			
Kenton Head Start (Hardin County) 10702 SR 68, Kenton, OH 43326 (419) 674-4433			Full Day Class 8:00-3:15 Monday-Thursday Part Day AM Class 8:00-11:30 Monday-Thursday Part Day PM Class 11:45-3:15 Monday-Thursday		
Anne Jones Site Supervisor ajones@hhwpcac.com		Andrea Niese Family Support Specialist aniese@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-0028			
Ottawa Head Start (Putnam County) 1205 E. Third St., Ottawa, OH 45875 (419) 523-3228			Full Day Class 8:00-3:15 Monday-Thursday		
Jeanne Wenzinger Site Supervisor/Family Support Specialist jwenzinger@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-7630					
Upper Sandusky Head Start (Wyandot County) 559 South Warpole St., Upper Sandusky, OH 43351 (419) 209-0301 or (419) 209-0715			Full Day Class 8:00-3:15 Monday-Thursday		
Andrea Stanley Site Supervisor astanley@hhwpcac.com		Aimee Nye Family Support Specialist anye@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-5172			
Winfield Development Center (Hancock County) 545 Winfield Ave., Findlay, OH 45840 (419) 423-3147			Full Day Class 8:00-3:15 Monday-Thursday Part Day AM Class 8:00-11:30 Monday-Thursday Part Day PM Class 12:00-3:30 Monday-Thursday		
Raegan Costello Site Supervisor rcostello@hhwpcac.com					
Kayla Fox Family Support Specialist kfox@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419)571-5066		Diane Mason Family Support Specialist dmason@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-7327		Carla Doyle Family Support Specialist cdoyle@hhwpcac.com Cell-(419) 571-0091	
HHWP CAC Central Office 1637 Tiffin Ave., Findlay, OH 45840 (419) 423-3755 Fax (419) 422-3996 Toll Free 1-800-423-4304					

Program Operations

Classroom Daily Schedule Summary

Below is a sample daily schedule of the amount of time children will participate in specific activities. Each classroom will have an individualized, posted schedule outlining the specifics for each classroom. Your child's teacher will be able to elaborate further on the schedule and why certain activities have been selected.

Time	Part Day Am Class (8:00-11:30 am)	Time	Part Day PM Class (12-3:30 pm)	Time	Full Day Class (8:00 am- 3:15 pm)
8:00	Arrival/handwashing/restroom/ Tabletop activities	12:00	Arrival/handwashing/restroom/ Tabletop activities	8:00	Arrival/handwashing/restroom/ Tabletop activities
8:15	Morning meeting/circle	12:15	Morning meeting/circle	8:20	Morning meeting/circle
8:30	Breakfast/tooth brushing	12:30	Lunch/tooth brushing	8:50	Breakfast/tooth brushing
8:50	Music and Movement	12:50	Small groups	9:20	Small groups
9:00	Small groups	1:10	Guided learning centers	9:50	Guided learning centers
9:15	Guided learning centers	2:10	Circle time/read aloud	10:50	Circle time/read aloud
10:15	Circle time/read aloud	2:25	Music and movement	11:45	Handwashing/ restroom/music and movement
10:30	Outdoor play	2:35	Outdoor play	12:00	Lunch
11:00	Handwashing/restroom	3:05	Handwashing/restroom	12:30	Nap
11:10	Lunch	3:10	Snack	2:00	Small groups
11:30	Dismissal	3:30	Dismissal	2:20	Circle Time/read aloud
				2:40	Music and Movement/table activities
				3:00	Snack
				3:15	Dismissal

Arrival and Departure

To ensure your child's safety, we will follow recommended guidelines regarding drop off and pick up. Adults will not leave children unattended in the building or vehicles during drop off and pick up. Parents, whenever possible, will establish a "hold hand" policy with their children when walking between the parking lot and the building. Children must be signed in when dropping off and signed out when picked up. They must be picked up promptly at the scheduled class end time. Staff will release children only to people on the **Parent Permission Form**. If an emergency arises in which the parent or any person listed on the Parent Permission Form cannot pick up, then the parent must contact the Site Supervisor. Staff will check the ID of anyone they do not recognize. Please remind anyone designated to pick up your child to bring a picture ID. If a person appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, staff will offer to call individuals listed on the Parent Permission Form. Police will be notified if the parent refuses alternative transportation and leaves with the child. If a child is continually picked up late, a Family Partnership Agreement will be completed.

Items from Home

Please do not send in items or toys from home unless approved by teaching staff. Your child's classroom is well supplied with materials and equipment to encourage learning and social interaction. We do not want personal toys to get lost or broken.

Clothing

Play clothes are recommended. We will be painting, playing with sand, going outside, etc. Non -slip shoes (like tennis shoes) are best. **No flip flops are permitted.** Dress your child for the weather, weather permitting, we go outside daily. Please label and send a complete change of clothes into the classroom for your child. Return borrowed clothes to the center after laundering.

Rest Time

Rest time will be included in the daily class schedule for classrooms operating for 5 or more hours. Rest time will be in accordance with the developmental needs of each individual child. Each child will be assigned his/her own cot and blanket, they will be labeled with the child's name. Cots will be sanitized, and blankets will be washed in accordance with the DCY licensing rules. Cots will be placed to allow enough room for movement around each cot. Children who do not want/need to nap will be given learning activities to do while resting on their cot.

Class Roster

A list of parents and phone numbers is made available to parents of children in the classroom or site, upon request. Only those parents who have given permission for this information to be shared will be on this list.

Weather Policy

We go outside daily unless the weather is too bad (generally, less than 25° F, more than 90° F, rain, thunder/lightning, high winds, ice, etc.). If the weather is too bad to go outdoors, children will have activities and equipment indoors that promote use of their larger muscles. Each classroom will assess the weather and will make decisions about closings/delays accordingly. The staff will inform parents which local stations to follow for closings. Notification will be sent through the Learning Genie Application regarding any closing or delay information.

Field Trips

Head Start will provide opportunities for children to go on educational field trips throughout the year. To ensure your child's safety all necessary permission slips must be signed prior to the field trip date. If the permission form is not returned prior to the field trip, your child will not be permitted to attend the field trip. Parents are required to transport their child to any off-site field trips and remain with them during the duration of the field trip. If the parent wants to take their child home after the field trip, they must inform the teacher and sign the appropriate form. Children must remain under supervision of a teacher or parent during field trips. The no smoking policy is always followed, even when away from the center.

Walking Field Trip

Head Start Staff will follow the active supervision policy during a walking field trip. While on a walking field trip one teacher leads and the other stays at the end of the line. Children will line up by two's, using the buddy system, holding hands or onto a rope. Children will stay on sidewalks unless there are none, in which case, they will stay at the side of the street in the grass. Everyone is to remain with the group for the entirety of the trip.

Head Start Code of Conduct

It is the expectation of HHWP Community Action Commission that Head Start families will abide by our Code of Conduct.

1. Adults will not leave children unattended in the building or vehicles.
2. Parents, whenever possible, will establish a “hold hand” policy with their children when walking between the parking lot and the building.
3. Parents will not play loud music in the parking lot or create loud disturbances.
4. Parents and staff will drive at a safe speed while in the Head Start parking lot.
5. Parents will be respectful of the school grounds and property. Parents will clean up after themselves and their children.
6. Parents are to dress appropriately while at school whether visiting, volunteering in the classroom, or dropping off their children. Parents are to avoid clothing with obscenities or references to drugs/alcohol, and clothing that is revealing.
7. Parents will not smoke, vape, or bring alcohol or other drugs onto the property including in the parking lot.
8. Parents will refrain from inappropriate or excessive displays of physical affection.
9. Parents will conduct themselves as a positive role model and set a good example for the children in our care. They will treat ALL others with respect and dignity. They will refrain from loud talking or shouting, cursing, name-calling, quarrelling, verbal, or physical fighting, making displays of anger or making rude remarks to staff, children, or other visitors/parents.
10. Parents will follow the directions of HHWP Community Action Commission Head Start Staff.
11. Parents will be supportive of the goals of the classroom and the school is assisting their child.
12. Parents will work to ensure their child arrives on time and attends their scheduled program hours consistently, except for absences outside of their control (illness, travel, etc.).
13. Parents and authorized adults will make a concentrated effort to keep themselves aware of important HHWP Community Action Commission Head Start guidelines and regulations.

Social Media and Public Broadcasting

Our official agency and Head Start social media pages provide a forum to share program information and updates, community resources and relevant news stories. While we encourage engagement and interaction on these pages, we also ask that posts are respectful of our students and staff.

Head Start discourages parents and community members from taking their concerns/grievances to social media. This practice is generally unproductive and usually leads to poor outcomes. Parents are expected to behave in a civilized nature online and in social media platforms and discouraged from any of the following behavior on social media:

1. Posting defamatory ‘statuses’ about fellow parents, students, and the school or its employees.
2. Posting names, photos, videos, of other children/families in the program.
3. Raising queries, concerns, and complaints.
4. Posting anything malicious about the school or any member of the school community.

Parents and community members are encouraged to take their concerns/grievances to a staff member and/or administrator instead of voicing concerns on personal social media pages. This can be formally done through the Complaint Procedure located in this parent handbook.

The Code of Conduct has been established by the HHWP Community Action Commission Policy Council to promote a safe and healthy environment for all the children, families, and staff of the HHWP CAC. Policy Council Approved February 2020. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct may be prohibited from entering Agency and Program facilities and may be subject to termination of services.

Program Services

Early Childhood Development Screening and Assessment/Preschool Services

Head Start guidelines require us to use a screening tool, in collaboration with parents, to identify concerns regarding a child's development, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills, within 45 days of the beginning of our program. We use ASQ3 and DECA as our screening tools. The screening is completed annually and reviewed by staff. The results of the screenings are then reviewed with families during conferences and the next action steps are put into place, if necessary. Assessment-Frog Street Cognitive Toybox is the on-going assessment tool that we use to monitor children's growth and development in the classroom. Teachers collect the data in several forms, including work samples, developmental checklists, anecdotal notes, photographs, and videos. The information is gathered and then entered into the database and connected to an objective from the Frog Street Curriculum that is being used in the classroom. This information assists teachers in planning activities to increase child development skills, program planning, and reporting to parents as well as stakeholders. Each child's progress will be reviewed quarterly during conferences. HHWP Head Start does not report child level data to ODJFS pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-17 of the Administrative Code.

Curriculum

Frog Street Pre-K is the research-based curriculum that we use in our classrooms. It is a comprehensive, integrated curriculum that ties together ten learning domains to make strong learning connections. Frog Street Pre-K follows a clear and specific scope and sequence with a focus on developing Kindergarten readiness. Throughout the program, children explore and discover through hands-on, child-centered activities. Frog Street Pre-k is aligned with Ohio's Early Learning Standards and the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.

Frog Street Pre-K builds a safe and positive learning environment utilizing concepts from Conscious Discipline. It focuses on literacy skills and provides a diverse and engaging literacy for teachers to use in the classroom. It also incorporates problem solving and critical thinking skills through STEAM learning activities. Frog Street Pre-k acknowledges the individual needs of all learners and provides strategies for special needs adaptations, differentiated instructions, English language learners and cultural responsiveness.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parents and teachers meet at least four times per year, for two home visits and two conferences. During these meetings, the child's progress as well as any concerns of the teachers or parents are reviewed and discussed. Parents and teachers also establish goals for a child's skill development. In addition, parents are encouraged to call the teacher or stop by the classroom to discuss their child's progress. You may also request an additional meeting with your child's teacher, to take place outside of the scheduled class time.

School Readiness Goals:

Social emotional development

1. Manage behaviors, impulses, and intense emotions independently.
2. Uses words to describe common emotions and describe cause.

Approaches to Learning

1. Focuses on a task for sustained periods of time.
2. Contributes ideas and beliefs in a group setting.

Literacy

1. Recognizes some letters in own name.
2. Writes first name correctly.

Cognition

1. Counts a large set of objects up to ten.
2. Understands that the last number counted represents the quantity in a large set of objects (up to ten).
3. Counts aloud to twenty.

Gross/Fine Motor

1. Uses large muscle movements for a variety of activities (ex. Kicking, running, jumping).
2. Uses small muscle movements to manipulate objects (ex. Holding a pencil, picking up small objects).

Special Needs and Disabilities Services**Special Needs/Special Education IEP**

All children attending the Head Start Program are provided with individualized care and guidance to help them reach their full potential. Head Start will make it a priority to identify children who may need additional services. Head Start staff will help parents obtain those services. If your child has an existing IEP/IFSP parents are required to provide a copy to Head Start Staff. Staff are required to address existing IEP/IFSP goals for that child.

Inclusion of Children with Special Needs and Disabilities

Head Start provides provisions for children with disabilities to be included in the full range of activities and services provided to all Head Start children as well as provisions for any necessary modifications/adaptions. Our program will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including administering medication and care procedures to children with disabilities.

Behavior Management and Social-Emotional Development

Head Start uses Conscious Discipline®, written by Dr. Becky Bailey, as the framework for behavior management. This philosophy, based on current brain research and sound knowledge of child development, focuses on helping children feel emotionally safe and connected with others. When this is accomplished, children are better able to learn, remember what they have learned and are more willing to cooperate. Conscious Discipline® views all conflicts and problems as opportunities to learn and teach. Each child in our Head Start School Family™ can learn the skills needed to successfully manage life challenges as they occur throughout the daily routine with the guidance provided teaching teams and our Mental Health & Disabilities Coordinator.

Transitioning into the Head Start Classroom

To ensure a smooth transition into the Head Start classroom, we will use assessments and parent input to identify children who may benefit from an individualized transition plan. This plan may include a reduced schedule, special accommodations for drop-off/pick-up and mealtimes, allowing a comfort object, or parent participation in classroom activities. Parents will be informed if their child needs an individualized transition plan, and they will be asked to review and sign the individualized transition plan prior to the first day of school. Teachers will closely monitor the child's progress and regularly review the transition plan to determine readiness for typical classroom routines.

Targeted Social Emotional Supports

At times, preschool children use challenging behaviors. These behaviors typically express a need or the lack of appropriate social skill. We support children when they are showing these behaviors by modeling and teaching Conscious Discipline Strategies. Some of these Strategies include:

- Taking a deep breathe (smile, take a deep breath, and relax)
- Using a Safe Place (quiet place to calm, notice, and regulate feelings)
- Redirecting
- Giving positive choices
- Using I Love You Rituals

Suspension, Expulsion, and Individualized Plans

Head Start will not suspend or expel any child due to behavior. Staff and caregivers will work together to develop an individualized behavior support plan.

When behavior is physically dangerous to children, peers, or staff, the program will work with families to develop an individualized behavior support plan to address the individual needs of the child and work to maintain safety. These are developed when there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by providing reasonable modifications.

Alternative Service Plans are also used when children will benefit from reduced time in the classroom. The Head Start Director is the only one who may approve an Alternative Service Plan. When an Alternative Service Plan is deemed necessary, we will help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by:

- Continue to engage with parents, mental health consultants, and continue to utilize appropriate community resources.
- Develop a written plan to document the action and support needed.
- Provide services that may include home visits.
- Determine whether a referral to a local agency responsible for implementing IDEA is appropriate.

Our goal is to work with the family to get their child back to the center as soon as possible. If Head Start, in partnership with the caregiver, determines that we are not the least restrictive environment for the child Head Start will collaborate closely with the caregiver to identify the best placement for the child.

Family Engagement Services

Family Support

Family Support Specialist will schedule a minimum of two meetings during the school year, as a part of the Family Partnership process. If you are not available during regular school hours, staff will arrange a time that is convenient for both parties.

Family Strengths Assessment and Partnership

The Family Support Specialist will work with your family to identify your family's strengths. They will also work to identify any challenges your family may face. The Family Support Specialist can develop goals and ways to reach those goals through education, support, and linkage to community resources. These partnerships help to promote positive mental and physical well-being for all family members.

Parent Group

All parents are encouraged to attend parent group sessions. These groups provide parents with helpful information, family activities and education. Parents help decide when meetings will take place and what topics will be discussed. Snacks and childcare are provided during parent group sessions.

Policy Council

Policy Council is the guiding body of Head Start and participates in the decision making for the entire program. Policy Council must approve the budget planning, program changes and grant approvals. Parent participation is extremely important, and Policy Council cannot run without elected parent representatives. Meals are provided and parents receive reimbursement for mileage and childcare cost.

Opportunities for Parents

Parent and caregiver involvement is critical to the success of your child and the program. If parents take an active role, the program becomes stronger, as do the children and families that the program serve. Taking an active role can be accomplished in many ways. Such as visiting the classroom, talking with the teaching staff, or participating

in conferences, Parent Group, and Policy Council. Your interest and input will support your child's success and will assist the staff in improving the program's services.

Health Services

Head Start is required, by State and Federal regulations, to ensure that children enrolled in the program receive regular and up-to-date health care services. Our program meets these requirements by providing a number of health and developmental screenings during the program year. Our screening will provide a quick check of your child's growth and development and can detect possible concerns early on. Supporting the overall health and wellbeing of your child is one of the most important steps to ensure your child is set up for success in the classroom.

With your consent, Head Start Staff or medical professionals may complete the following screenings with your child:

- **ASQ-3 (Ages and Stages Questionnaires, 3rd Edition)**- This developmental screening provides a snapshot of children's development in six areas – Language, Gross Motor (Large body movement), Fine Motor (hand coordination), Problem Solving, and Personal-Social skills.
- **DECA (Devereux Early Childhood Assessment for Preschoolers)** – This screening tool focuses on identifying the key social and emotional health and resilience.
- **Mental Health Observation** – On an as needed basis, Mental Health Professional come on-site to observe a child and/or the whole classroom.
- **Hearing and Vision Screenings**- These screenings will indicate a possible concern in your child's vision and hearing.
- **Lead and Hemoglobin (iron level) Screenings** –The lead screening is completed by collecting a small sample of the child's blood through a finger poke. The hemoglobin (iron level) is screened using the Pronto, by placing sensor on placed on your child's finger and measures the hemoglobin blood level. This screening can be completed by your child's medical provider, WIC, Local Health Dept., or Head Start Staff.
- **Height and Weight Checks**- Height and weight will be measured twice a year and reviewed by our Registered Dietitian to ensure your child is growing at a healthy rate.
- **Dental Exam**- Dental Professionals from the community will come on-site and provide Dental exams for children who have a Health Partners of Western Ohio, Dental Consent form completed. They will identify any need for follow-up and treatment.
- Our program does not report child level data to ODJFS pursuant to Chapter 5101:2-17 of the Administrative Code.

Immunization Tracking

A copy of your child's vaccination record will be kept with your child's file. We will track and monitor this information, so we can best support you in staying up to date on scheduled vaccines.

If a child is missing or does not have immunizations, parents will sign a waiver indicating that they understand that the child is at risk for catching vaccine preventable diseases. We may ask parents to keep their child home if there is an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease.

Your child needs vaccines as they grow!

2025 Recommended Immunizations for Birth Through 6 Years Old

Want to learn more?
Scan this QR code to find out which
vaccines your child might need. Or visit
www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/childquiz/



VACCINE OR PREVENTIVE ANTIBODY	BIRTH	1 MONTH	2 MONTHS	4 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	7 MONTHS	8 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	15 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	19 MONTHS	20-23 MONTHS	2-3 YEARS	4-6 YEARS
RSV antibody	Depends on mother's RSV vaccine status						Depends on child's health status							
Hepatitis B	Dose 1	Dose 2			Dose 3									
Rotavirus			Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3									
DTaP			Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3				Dose 4					Dose 5
Hib			Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3			Dose 4						
Pneumococcal			Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3			Dose 4						
Polio			Dose 1	Dose 2	Dose 3								Dose 4	
COVID-19					At least 1 dose of the current COVID-19 vaccine									
Influenza/Flu					Every year. Two doses for some children									
MMR								Dose 1						Dose 2
Chickenpox								Dose 1						Dose 2
Hepatitis A								2 doses separated by 6 months						

KEY

- ALL children should be immunized at this age
- SOME children should get this dose of vaccine or preventive antibody at this age

Talk to your child's health care provider for more guidance if:

1. Your child has any medical condition that puts them at higher risk for infection.
2. Your child is traveling outside the United States. Visit wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel for more information.
3. Your child misses a vaccine recommended for their age.



FOR MORE INFORMATION
Call toll-free: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
Or visit: www2.cdc.gov/vaccines/childquiz/



Nutrition Services

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. We follow their meal pattern requirements which allow us to provide one-third of the government recommended daily nutritional needs for children 3-5 years of age who participate in the program. Children in morning classrooms will receive breakfast and lunch. Children in our afternoon classrooms will receive lunch and snack. Children in our full day classrooms will receive breakfast, lunch, and snack. A registered dietician approves our menus that are posted in the classroom. Food is prepared by our Head Start cooks or by cooks who work for our contracted vendors. All meals are prepared in a Food Service Licensed kitchen.

A special /modified diet can be provided for a child if your child's medical provider can provide the appropriate documentation. If a child requires adaptive equipment during mealtime, we will provide that for the child.

The children and staff eat meals together. Children are encouraged, but not forced, to try new foods. Mealtimes are used as an opportunity to teach nutrition and/or food concepts. Children help with set-up and clean up. Food is never used as a reward or punishment. Clean drinking water will be available to children during service hours. In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**
Program.Intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Important Policy Information

Accidents and Emergencies

The center has several procedures to follow in the event of an emergency occurring while a child is in the center's care. In the event of an emergency, staff would follow the written instructions posted in each classroom. To prepare children for the unlikely need to evacuate, the center will conduct monthly fire and tornado drills and quarterly lock down drills. Should the center need to evacuate, our emergency destination is assigned per the Center Disaster Plan which is available from the Site Supervisor. A sign will be posted in front of the center indicating that we have been evacuated and the location where you can pick up your child. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact your emergency contacts as listed on your child's paperwork.

In the unlikely event there is an environmental threat of violence the staff will secure the children in the safest location possible.

In the unlikely event there is an environmental threat or a threat of violence the staff will secure the children in the safest location possible and will contact and follow the directions given by the proper authorities. Head Start staff will contact the parents as soon as the situation allows. An incident report would also be provided to the parents. All Staff members receive First/Aid, CPR, and Communicable Disease training. In the case of a minor accident/injury, the parents will receive notice. If an injury/illness is life threatening, EMS will be contacted, parents will be notified, and a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital with all available health records. Children will be admitted to the program even if parents refuse to grant consent for emergency transportation.

If a child is involved in an incident/injury, an incident report will be completed, and given to the person picking up the child, on the day of the incident/injury. If a child is involved in an emergency, the report shall be available within twenty-four hours after the incident occurs. The center shall also contact licensing personnel from the appropriate ODJFS office within twenty-four hours when there is a “general emergency” or “serious incident, injury or illness.” The report will be provided to licensing staff within 24 hours of the incident.

Active Supervision of Children

Head Start Staff will ensure that no child is left alone or unsupervised while in our care. We mandate that supervision of all children is always maintained. This is achieved by:

- A minimum ratio of one staff member to ten children is maintained at all times.
- All centers must implement a name to face recognition system for transitioning children.
- All classroom teaching teams will post a daily classroom schedule.
- Each classroom will implement a set of classroom rules that include safety practices. Classroom rules are developed with the children and reviewed regularly.
- All staff are to monitor their positioning when they are with children. Being aware that their backs are not to the children for long periods of time but to the walls.
- The children are signed into and out of the classroom each day.
- Attendance is taken at the start of class and at the midpoint of the class day.

Administering Medication

Head Start establishes and maintains written procedures regarding the administration, handling, and storage of medication for every child. All medication, including those required for staff and volunteers, are labeled, and stored, under lock and key, and refrigerated if necessary. The Administration of Medication form is completed for each child when medication is necessary. Each time a child is dispensed medication it will be documented on the care plan or the Administration of Medication form, unless it is a non-prescription topical product or lotion, and manufacturer’s instruction are followed. This documentation will be reviewed regularly with parents.

Attendance Policy

Consistent school attendance is the foundation of student learning and children receive the full benefit of Head Start Preschool when they attend on a regular basis. Children are expected to attend at least 85% of the time each month, only missing 1-2 days per month. Mildly ill children are able to attend the center. See “Ill Child” about symptoms that prevent your child from attending.

If a child will be absent or tardy, the parent or caregiver must contact the center staff immediately to explain the reason. If a child is unexpectedly absent and no contact has been made within one hour of class start time, Head Start staff must attempt to contact the parent/guardian to ensure the child’s safety and well-being. When a child does not arrive at the program as scheduled from anywhere other than home, we will contact the parent or guardian of the child. If they are not available, we will reach out to emergency contacts.

If a child has been absent for three consecutive days with no explanation from parent/guardian, Head Start staff are required to conduct a home visit. If a child’s attendance falls below 85% staff may work with families to increase consistent attendance. Any child that is absent for thirty consecutive calendar days, whether excused or unexcused, will be dropped from the program, as their enrollment slot will be considered a vacancy.

Center Licensing and Complaint Information

The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services-(JFS), licenses our HHWP CAC Head Start centers. The License is posted in plain sight in each center, and copies are available for review upon request. The Head Start centers are licensed for preschoolers from 3 years of age to kindergarten age eligibility, and the capacity for each center is stated on the center’s license. The JFS class staff/child ratio is 1:12 or better, however Head Start Performance Standards indicate child/staff ratio is 1:10. The class size is twenty children per class, or less. Fire, health, building inspections, and compliance reports are posted in plain sight and copies are available for review upon request. A copy of the laws and rules governing childcare centers is available to review at each center. You may call toll free 1-877-302-2347 ext. 4 to report any suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules.

No family or child is discriminated against based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, or age.

- The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.
- A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing childcare are available for review at the center.
- The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.
- Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.
- The administrator's hours of availability to meet with parents and child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.
- The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the ODJFS. Inspections are also online at <http://childcaresearch.ohio.gov/>. Parents may search for a specific program and sign up to be notified when the program's latest inspection is posted online.
- It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. To file a discrimination complaint, write or call Health and Human Services (HHS) or ODJFS. HHS and ODJFS are equal opportunity providers and employers.

Write or Call:

HHS
Region V, Office of Civil Rights
233 N. Michigan Ave., Ste. 240
Chicago, IL 60601
(312)-886-2359 (voice)
(312)-353-5693 (TDD)
(312)-886-1807 (fax)

Write or Call:

ODJFS
Bureau of Civil Rights
30 E. Broad St., 37th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215-3414
(614)-644-2703 (voice)
1-866-277-6353 (toll free)
(614) 752-6381 (fax)
1-866-221-6700 (TTY) or (614) 995-9961

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

Confidentiality

HHWP CAC Head Start is required to keep your information confidential. This means that Head Start staff cannot share any information regarding any Head Start child or family without their written permission. Information will only be share with other staff within the program on a need-to-know basis. If you would like Head Start staff to share information with others, (grandparents, babysitter, significant other, etc.) a Release of Information or Authorize of Designee is required.

There are certain circumstances where it is necessary for Head Start Staff to share confidential information. By law, Head Start Staff are required to report any information about suspected child or elder abuse; information regarding harm to yourself or others; or under the direction of a court order subpoena.

Enrollment

Children are registered by providing required information including, but not limited to application, age verification of the child, documented verification of family income and the child's immunization records. Once the enrollment paperwork is approved, children are accepted or placed on a waiting list. Children are accepted into the program from the waiting list based on the agency's priority selection process. For a child to be accepted or placed on the waitlist the entire enrollment process must be completed.

Eligibility Requirements

- At least 3 years old or turned 3 years old by kindergarten cutoff date in the school district in which the child resides.
- Must be no older than the age required to attend school.
- A family's income is at/or below 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
- A Family receives Public Assistance including: TANF/OWF, Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or SNAP.
- A child is determined homeless, as defined under the guidance of the McKinney-Vento Act
- A child is in Foster Care.
- Additional considerations can be made based on Head Start Guidelines, eligibility criteria and areas of need.

Child Health Requirements

- Children must have a physical examination or well child exam within 30 days of enrollment.
- Copy of current immunization record.
- Care plans and medication administration instructions from a physical for chronic illnesses, such as asthma, diabetes, etc. These forms must be updated each year.
- Special diet documentation from a health care professional.
- Allergy information with a Medical Care Plan in place.
- Current Lead and Hemoglobin screenings
- Hearing and vision screenings as recommended by EPSDT.
- Medical and Dental Homes.

III Child Policy

- The following are symptoms for which a child shall be sent home from the center:
 - a) Temperature of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit (one hundred degrees Fahrenheit if under the arm) when in combination with any other sign of illness
 - b) Diarrhea (three or more abnormally, unexpected, or unexplained loose stools within a 24-hour period)
 - c) Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or make a whooping sound.
 - d) Difficult or rapid breathing
 - e) Yellowish skin or eyes
 - f) Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain
 - g) Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots, or rashes
 - h) Unusually dark urine and/or grey, white stools
 - i) Stiff neck with elevated temperature
 - j) Evidence of untreated lice, scabies, or any other parasite infection. A "nit free" return policy is enforced.
 - k) Sore throat or difficulty swallowing

- l) Vomiting more than once or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.
- m) Illness listed on the Communicable Disease Chart that indicates classroom removal.
- A child must be symptom and fever free without medication for 24 hours before returning to the classroom.
- Each center shall have an isolation plan with a cot for a sick child where they can be watched by staff until sent home from the center.
- If a child is to be sent home, the parent will be notified and a form will be sent home, explaining what symptoms have been observed.
- The period for returning to the center will be determined by taking into consideration the ODH Communicable Disease Chart, posted in the classroom, and information provided by the child's doctor. Depending on each situation, the Health & Nutrition Manager reserves the right to vary from this to make sure the health needs of the children and staff are being met.
- Upon discovery of a child with a communicable disease, all parents will be notified of the presence of the communicable disease in the center.

Head Start staff may ask that a child be seen by a medical professional and obtain a note prior to returning to the classroom. If you choose not to see a medical professional your child can return to the classroom only when there are no remaining signs and symptoms of illness.

When your child arrives at Head Start the teacher will do a Quick Health Check. The Quick Health Check is a head-to-toe observation of your child while he/she is playing. The teaching staff are looking at activity level, behavior changes, and any physical changes.

The teachers will check your child's head for head lice every week. We do this because head lice are easily spread from one child to another and prevent the spread of head lice by detecting it early.

Complaint and Grievance Process

HHWP CAC Client/Community Complaint Procedure

Our intent is to provide services that are of high quality and meet the needs of our clients. Occasionally, issues of concern will arise from clients or community members. In the unfortunate event of a conflict between a parent and a staff member, the following steps are to be taken to ensure the manner is handled and resolved in a way that respects the dignity and value of both parties. Most issues can be resolved by talking to the person most directly involved. If this does not resolve the issue, or if you are more comfortable doing so, you may speak with the Site Supervisor or Family Support Specialists. The various Head Start Managers and Program Director are also available to talk to you.

If the situation cannot be resolved via discussion, you may file a formal written complaint. This process is open to anyone who has applied for, or received services from HHWP CAC and is not satisfied with the quality or quantity of the service.

The line of authority to resolve the written complaint is as follows:

1. Program Director
2. Executive Director
3. Policy Council
4. HHWP CAC Board of Directors

Attempts will be made to satisfy the complaint at each level. The detailed procedure can be found in the Policy Council Rules of Operation available at each site.

Tuition/Fee

Children will not be charged a fee in the Federal Head Start program if enrolled in the Center based or Home-based option. In the Child Care option, children may be charged the Parent Copay for childcare services.

Weapons Policy

Guns/firearms, knives, clubs, and other weapons are not permitted in any HHWP CAC Head Start facility, grounds, or vehicles, except by Law Enforcement Officers.

Swimming Activities

HHWP CAC Head Start does not offer swimming activities.

Gifts

While we appreciate the thoughtfulness, HHWP CAC Head Start staff are not permitted to accept gifts of any kind from the individuals and families we serve. Donations may only be accepted by the agency/program use.

Child abuse and Neglect

All HHWP CAC Head Start employees are required by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect cases.

They must report immediately to their local Child Protective Services (CPS).

If you suspect a HHWP CAC Head Start Staff member (or anyone else) of abuse or neglect, you should contact the local CPS agency.

Hancock County Department of Job & Family Services- (419) 424-7022

Wyandot County Department of Job & Family Services- (419) 294-4977

Putnam County Department of Job & Family Services- (800) 523-5799

Hardin County Department of Job & Family Services- (419) 675-1130

Custody

HHWP CAC Head Start strongly encourages parent engagement from both parents. When a custody arrangement is in place, Head Start must have the custody court orders on file. The parent(s) is responsible to provide any updated documentation once filed with the court. Head Start staff must adhere to its guidance. There may be times the non-custodial, non-residential parent would like to participate in our Head Start activities. Our staff welcomes parent engagement from both parents regardless of custody/visitation agreements. We will not allow the non-custodial, non-residential parent to remove the child from the center unless otherwise specified by the primary, custodial parent.

HHWP CAC Head Start Follows the Ohio Revised Code custody rights of unmarried mothers when determining residential and legal custodian of the child whose parents were not married at the time of birth.

Scheduled School Closings

September 1, 2025 - Labor Day

November 11, 2025 - Veterans Day

November 27-28, 2025 - Thanksgiving

December 22, 2025-January 2, 2026

Winter Break

(Students return January 5, 2026)

January 19, 2026 - MLK Jr. Day

February 16, 2026 - Presidents' Day

March 16, 2026 - Teacher In-Service

