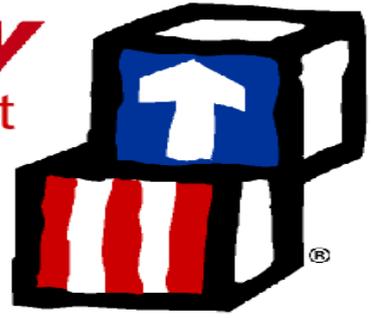




# Gateway

Early Head Start  
and Head Start



# Parent Engagement Handbook

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## **Gateway Community Action Partnership**

Gateway Community Action Partnership EHS/Head Start is a free program for income-eligible families with children who are 0-5 years old.

Gateway Community Action Partnership Head Start provides children and families with comprehensive services including: quality education utilizing a developmentally age-appropriate curriculum; breakfast, lunch, and snack; health and developmental screenings; opportunities for parent involvement; family assistance; and individualized education for children with special needs.

### **Goal 1- Learning**

- a. We will work with your child and his or her own likes, dislikes, strengths, and weaknesses.
- b. We will recognize that every child has his or her own culture and make that a part of the classroom.
- c. We will meet the special needs of all children.
- d. We make sure your child feels safe.
- e. We will make sure the classroom is a healthy place to be.
- f. We will make sure that your child is part of a place to learn about-
  - Getting along with others.
  - Expressing their feelings in a safe and health way.
  - Exploring the world around them, helping them to learn in a variety of ways.
  - How to use their hands, such as cutting and writing, and use their bodies to be healthy learners.

### **Goal 2-Healthy**

- a. We will work with you, the parent (guardian), to have a family doctor and dentist.
- b. We will work with you to ensure that children are seeing their doctor or dentist for regular exams.
- c. We will work with you to conduct screenings and assessments, to track your child's vision, hearing, growth, behavior, speech, language, and over all learning.
- d. We will work with you to address any concerns about your child's growth so that we can all work together to support your child's potential.

### **Goal 3-Transitions**

- a. We will work with you, the parent (guardian), to help your child when there are changes such as-
  - Starting Early Head Start or Head Start for the first time
  - Leaving Head Start to go to kindergarten
  - Separating from your child in the morning
  - Picking up your child in the afternoon
  - Changes in teaching staff
  - Changes at home that may affect your child

### **Goal 4-Parent Participation**

- a. We will welcome you, the parent (guardian), into the classroom and into the center.
- b. We will provide information about how children grow and how you can help your child be his or her best.
- c. We will support your participation in the parent committee and policy council process, becoming decision makers in your child's program.
- d. We will support your role as your child's advocate, seeking out the best resources for your child.

### **Goal 5-Partnership**

- a. We will work together: Education, Health, Family Partnerships/Social Services, Parent Involvement, Nutrition, Mental Health, Disabilities, and Administration to serve all eligible children and families who have been recruited from the community and selected to participate in the Tri-County Head Start/ Early Head Start program.

**EHS/Head Start Staff**

**Central Office Staff**

**President/CEO**

Albert Kelly

**Executive Vice President /COO**

Edward Bethea

**Vice President/Director**

Bonnie Eggenburg

Erica Mosley – **Director of Operations West**

Miguel Maldonado - **Director of Operations North**

Dr. Colleen Turner –**Director of Operations East**

Ciara Hayes - **Director of Program Services**

Frances Wolf – **Program Quality Senior Manager**

Shelly Mihalecz -**Health Manager**

Misty Sheppard-**Nutrition Manager**

Jameka Jones -**Mental Health Disabilities Manager**

Lucila Barrios – **Assistant Director of Program Services/ HS Ed Manager**

Gloria Andritsopolous – **Family Partnership Manager**

Laura Miletta - **EHS Education Manager**

Antoinette Byers – **Expectant Families Manager**

Carolyn E. Robinson – **Community Services Manager**

Marlena Rivera – **ERSEA Manager**

Shruti Thakkar – **Childcare Partnerships**

Jackie Halas – **Transportation**

Education Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Family Partnership Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Health Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Mental Health Disabilities Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Expectant Families Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

**Dear Parents,**

As required by the Manual of Requirements for childcare centers, we provide you, the parent of a child enrolled at our center, with this informational statement.

The statement highlights, among other things: your right to visit and observe our center at any time; to participate in the center's operation and activities; our obligation to be licensed and to comply with licensing standards and our obligation to all citizens to report suspected child abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation to the New Jersey Division OF Child Placement and Permanency (DCPP).

Please read this statement carefully and if you have any questions feel free to contact me at (856) 453-0803.

**Sincerely,**

**Bonnie Eggenburg  
Vice President /Director  
EHS/Head Start**



**The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)**

Prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or if all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at

[http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send you completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S. W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at [progam.intake@usda.gov](mailto:progam.intake@usda.gov).

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have speech disabilities and wish to file either an EEO or program complaint, please contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339 or (800) 845-6136 (in Spanish). Persons with disabilities, who wish to file a program complaint, please see information above on how to contact us by mail directly or by email. IF you require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.), please contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

**Department of Children and Families  
Office of Licensing**

**INFORMATION TO PARENTS**

Under provisions of the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52)*, every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents and staff this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent and staff member's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are available soon after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing

complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at [https://data.nj.gov/childcare\\_explorer](https://data.nj.gov/childcare_explorer).

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act(ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609)292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or(800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information, call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the *State Central Registry Hotline, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/(877)652-2873*. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to [www.state.nj.us/dcf/](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/).

**OOL/Information to Parents/April 2017**

## Discipline and Social Development

### Part 1302- Program Operations, 1302.31: Teaching and the Learning Environment

Objective: to help children gain the social competence, skills, and confidence necessary to be prepared to succeed

#### Performance Standard Reference: 1302.31(a)(b)(1)(i)

1. With the children, staff will discuss and formulate clear, age appropriate and consistent rules. There should be three to five, basic rules. Rules should be written in sentences that are less than five words long and state the desired behavior:  
Example:
  - a. Use walking feet.
  - b. Use inside voices.
  - c. Put toys away.
2. Children are reminded of rules and the behavior that is expected of them. Never assume that a child should know the rules.
3. **Watch** the children as they interact with the environment, the other children, and adults. **Ask** yourself and the children questions to gain understanding of the child. **Adapt** schedules, the environment, and the adult interaction styles to the children in the classroom to achieve a supportive, learning environment.
4. Assist children in developing self-control, loving attitudes, security, trust, independence, and overall competency.
  - a. Develop an environment that sends the right messages.
  - b. Be involved with the children, on the floor, making eye contact and smiling often.
  - c. Respond quickly to possible problems.
  - d. Respect a child's choice and individuality.
  - e. Encourage self-help skills.
  - f. Listen to children and repeat back their words.
  - g. Avoid the use of *why* questions, focus on *what* and *how* questions.
  - h. Assist with problem solving. Do not require a child to say *sorry*; do assist a child in being responsible for their behavior.
  - i. Redirect children.
  - j. Help children to express their feelings in safe ways.
  - k. Use **time away, not time out**, to help children regain control of their behaviors (This method should be used by a trained staff member).
    1. Use only when the child is a danger (emotionally or physically) to him/herself or to others.
    2. Find a quiet place where the staff person and the child can be away from the rest of the children (this does not have to be sitting); a corner of the classroom, just outside the door of the classroom, another area of the building or an outside area.
    3. On rare occasions, the child will be so out of control that you must gently restrain (in a gentle hug) the arms and sometimes the head (to avoid bites). You need to remain calm and feel very strong inside while you do this, because you want to protect the child's safety as well as your own.
    4. Stay with the child until the child is calm. Rubbing the hair or back can help or getting a drink of water.
    5. Respect the child choice as to how and when the child will return to the group. Sometimes resting can feel good.



5. Staff and volunteers shall not discipline children for failing to eat or sleep or for soiling themselves (see Health and Nutrition guidelines).
6. Staff and volunteers shall not use hitting, shaking, or any other form of corporal punishment of children.
7. Staff and volunteers shall not use abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other form of emotional punishment of children.

Staff and volunteers shall not require a child to remain silent or inactive for an inappropriately long period of time for the child's age, nor should they ever be seated alone or placed in a corner.

Staff and volunteers shall not withhold from children food, emotional responses, stimulation, or opportunities for rest or sleep.

If there is an ongoing problem with a behavior of a child, record behaviors (with the time and setting) in the narrative section of the child's file. Contact the Disabilities/Mental Health Specialist or Education Coordinator for assistance and/or to determine if a referral is appropriate: *(This is to be completed by a trained staff member)*

- a. A conference will be scheduled with the parents, staff, and a management team member.
- b. A plan will be developed to assist the child in functioning in the classroom.

### **REMOVAL OF CHILDREN (EXPULSION) POLICY FROM GATEWAY COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START CLASSROOMS**

The removal of children from the Head Start education environment occurs only when the nature or severity of circumstances is such that education in the classroom setting with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. The Head Start referral process to the Mental Health/Disabilities Specialist will be specifically followed and documented. Under no circumstances, will a Teacher, Teacher Assistant, Classroom Aide, Family Worker or Site Director make a determination to have a child removed from the Head Start Center. The Head Start Director, a multidisciplinary team, and the child's parent will partner to develop a plan to meet the needs of the child, which may include assisting the family in finding another setting in which the child may be served. This alternate setting may include the home environment. There will be detailed documentation in the child's file explaining the removal of the child from the Head Start center setting, including an Individual Program Plan (IPP), Individualized Education Plan (IEP), or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). All children and families will continue to be served through Head Start services.

## **What to Expect from the EHS/Head Start Staff**

*Since parents are encouraged to participate in various ways throughout the EHS/Head Start Program, we the EHS/Head Start staff will do our best to:*

- Make regular follow-up calls to address your child's absence where there is no prior notification.
- Make you feel welcome at all times. We have an open door policy.
- Keep you posted of all happenings in the Head Start Center and program.
- Make our program-area service plans available for you to read.
- Send notices home in advance with explanations.
- Avoid asking anything of you that staff wouldn't feel comfortable doing.
- Visit you in your home.
- Always be willing to answer any questions that you might have or direct you to someone who can answer your questions.
- Partner with you to help you reach your goals.
- Provide a warm, friendly atmosphere for you and your child.
- Encourage you to share your ideas to improve our Head Start Center and program.
- Work together to ensure that there is a quality program.

## **Responsibilities of Parents**

**Regular attendance will help your child get the most from the Early Head Start/Head Start program.**

### **Hours of Education Services to Children:**

- **New Jersey Early Head Start: 8:30-3:30**
  - **DOE Head Start: Consult with Center, hours based on contract with district**
  - **Regular Head Start (bus riders): 9:00 to 3:00**
  - **Regular Head Start (non-bus riders): 8:30 to 3:30, please see your Child/Family Site Director to see if your center offers extended hours**
  - **Please contact your Child/Family Site Director for exceptions. In some cases, based on need and center staffing, Family Partnership agreements may be made to provide different hours of services to children.**
  - **Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships: Up to 10 hours per day of services**
1. If your child is enrolled in a Head Start Full Day/Full Year or State Funded Preschool/Head Start program (formerly Abbott), the classroom will open at 7:30am and close at 5:30pm. Hours of operation vary for each center.  
All Early Head Start/Head Start children should arrive no later than **8:30am** for the beginning of their learning day and Picked up by **3:45pm**.
  2. Early Head Start parent who demonstrate a need for later care can request a Family Partnership Agreement for extended hours. All Early Head Start /Head Start children must be picked up promptly.
  3. For half-day sessions, dismissal time is 1:00pm unless otherwise notified.

4. Only an adult who is authorized by you on the Pick-up List may pick up your child.
5. Please call us when your child will be absent or arrive after **8:30am**. Children need to have a regular routine as part of their growth and preparation for kindergarten.
6. If a child misses a meal, a bowl of cereal or a sandwich may be supplied. When possible, parents are asked to stay until the child is settled.
7. If you plan to have your child out for vacation or a long period of time, you **MUST** let your child's Teacher and Family Advocate know. Depending on the situation surrounding the absence your child may have to be placed back on the waiting list. We ask for 85% attendance.

**Food - Please see our nutrition section pg. 18.**

### **Toys**

**Please leave toys and other similar items at home. EHS/Head Start cannot be held responsible for their safe return if brought in. Also at this age, children are just beginning to learn about sharing. The skill of sharing is better taught through materials provided by EHS/Head Start.**

### **Clothing**

**The preschool experience is a time of discovery. Children run, jump, hop, glue, paint and play in the sand on a daily basis.**

1. Please dress your child in comfortable, washable clothing and sneakers (closed toe shoes). Jewelry is discouraged as it may become tangled or lost during active play.
2. Since we like to play outside (everyday according to the weather) and take walks and trips throughout the year, please dress your child to suit the weather. It would be helpful if you would put his/her name on his/her clothing and place them in a bag. (E.g. jackets mittens, boots, hats, etc.)
3. We encourage children to take care of their personal needs during bathroom times; however, accidents do occur. Please provide the Head Start Center with a complete change of clothes marked with your child's name.

## **Childcare Facility Licensing Statement**

### **Parent and Community Participation**

#### **10:122-6.8**

- (b) The center shall allow the parent (s) of enrolled children to visit the center at any time during the center's hours of operation to observe its operation and program activities without requiring the parent (s) to secure prior approval.
- (c) The center shall provide the parents of prospective enrollees the opportunity to visit the center to observe its operation and program activities but may require that such visits are arranged and at the convenience of the center director.

## **DCPP – Child Protection and Permanency (DCPP) Reporting Statement**

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the Division of Youth and

Family Services' Office of Child Abuse Control at (877)652-2873 or to any DCPD District Office. Such reports may be made anonymously.

## **POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

### **Authorized pickup and emergency numbers**

**Please provide to your child's center at least three people, at least 18 years of age, who will be authorized to transport your child or be contacted in the event of an emergency. Included for each contact should be a current address, phone number and place of employment. It is also important to immediately notify your Family Worker to amend the list should any changes occur.**

### **NO CHILD WILL BE PERMITTED TO HAVE CONTACT OR BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSONS NOT INCLUDED ON THE LIST.**

Each child may be released only to the child's parent(s) or person(s) **18 or older** authorized by the parent(s) to take the child from the center and to assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the parent(s) cannot be reached.

If a non-custodial parent has been denied access, or granted limited access to a child by court order, the center shall secure documentation to that effect, maintain a copy on file, and comply with the terms of the court order.

**If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) fails to pick-up a child by the time of the center's daily closing, the center shall ensure that:**

- 1) The child is supervised at all times;
- 2) Staff members attempt to contact the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
- 3) An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/ her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s), have failed and the staff member(s) cannot continue to supervise the child at the center, the staff member shall call the Division's 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the child's parent(s) is able to pick-up the child.

**If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and/ or emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/ or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the center shall ensure that:**

- 1) The child may not be released to such an individual;
- 2) Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and
- 3) If the center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the Division's 24-hour State Central Registry Hotline (1-877-652-2873) to seek assistance in caring for the child.

# **Health**

Health screenings and preventive routine doctor visits are an important part of your child's development and future.

## **Head Start/ Early Head Start Health Screenings:**

Head Start Health Coordinators will conduct Hearing and Vision Screenings with guardian permission. Hearing and vision screenings are beneficial to ensure the student is ready to learn. Using evidence-based equipment to conduct the screenings; we will identify any obstacles the child may be experiencing. The office of Head Start requires Health screenings to be completed within 45 days of enrollment.

### **Vision screening tools:**



- Evidence based screening tools are used to conduct vision screenings, including *Lea Symbols Flip Chart*, *Welch Allyn Spot Vision Screener*, and *18 Vision Development Milestone Chart*.
- Screening measures the ability to see near and far objects clearly.

### **Hearing Screening tool:**

- Evidence based hearing screener is used to conduct hearing screenings.
- Screening measures the threshold of hearing for pure tone frequencies (pitch) and loudness.

## **Physical examination**

It is important we have your child's up to date health information at the center to comply with the NJ Child Care licensing and to meet the requirements set by the Office of Head Start. All children attending the program are required to supply the center with proof of age appropriate physical or well child examination. For children 3-5 years old proof of a physical is due every twelve months. For children 0-2years old proof of Well Visits are due at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24 months of age.

## **Dental examination**

Dental care is essential to preserve temporary teeth "baby teeth" and to teach good dental habits in preparation for the arrival of permanent teeth "adult teeth". Head Start requires all students to receive and provide proof of preventive dental exam and cleaning by a licensed Dentist every 12 months starting at 2 years old.

- Preventive care can also take place at home- Starting at the eruption of the first tooth all children should brush their teeth twice a day with adult supervision. Its recommended children brush in the morning shortly after waking up and before bed. Help make dental hygiene fun and successful.
  - Use a timer or play a favorite song to make sure kids brush their teeth for two minutes.
  - Set an example and brush your teeth when they brush.
  - Avoid sugary treats.
  - Use a pea size amount of fluoride toothpaste.
  - Read books or watch videos that talk about dental hygiene.
  - Start taking your child to the dentist at the eruption of the first tooth so they are not scared.
  - Plan a fun activity following your child's dentist visit.

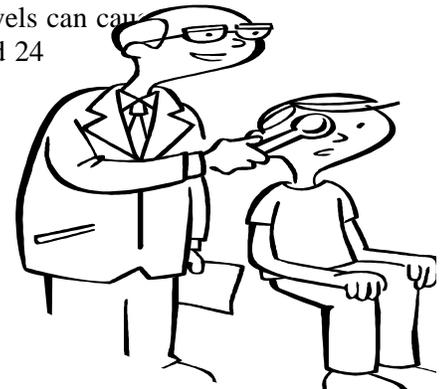


## **Blood test for lead and hemoglobin/ Hematocrit**

There is no safe lead level; protecting children from exposure to lead is important to lifelong good health. High lead levels can cause developmental delays and behavior issues. Very high lead levels can cause more serious problems such as seizures or coma. Lead testing is required at 12 and 24 months of age.

Hemoglobin/ Hematocrit levels can interfere with a child's development if too high or too low. This can often be corrected by proper diet. Hemoglobin/ Hematocrit testing is required at 12 months of age however; doctors often recheck at 24 months.

Both tests can be completed at a doctor's office. Or with permission from parent by a Gateway Head Start Health Coordinator.



## Immunizations

- Requirements for 18 months to five years of age to attend a pre-school include: (4) DTaP with six months between the third and fourth immunization, (3) Polio (1) HIB after the first birthday, (1) MMR after the first birthday and (1) Varicella after first birthday, (3) Pneumococcal 1 of which is needed after the first birthday, (1) Influenza 1 dose to be administered between Sept 1 and December 31 of each year. Please be advised that at any time, staff may have to access your child's shot records via the state supported system.



## Absence

Parents will receive a call from the center when a child is absent from the program. Parents are encouraged to contact the center to notify the Family Advocate and or teacher if a child is or will be absent the reason for the absence (s) and the date the child will return. Children who are absent three days or more need a letter from the physician stating the child's diagnosis and that the child may return to school. Children who have an excludable communicable disease are required to have a note from the physician to return to the program. Children who have a cold or flu do not need a physician note to return to school but must have a note from the parent stating why the child was absent, even if the child was absent for three days or more.

## Illness

Gateway's goal is to ensure the health and safety of our children and families; In order to keep our center safe and healthy we are asking guardians to not bring a sick child to the center. Deciding when to keep a sick child at home from school is not always easy. It's important for children to attend school and for some parents staying home means missing work. But when a child is truly sick, they need to stay home in the care of an adult to get well and to prevent spreading illness to others. Please keep the school office up to date with current phone numbers so you or an alternate contact can be reached if your child becomes ill or injured at school. Visitors, Children, and Staff are all required to undergo a health screening prior to entering the child care center. The screener will observe for any illnesses, conduct a temperature check, and ask if anyone in the home is ill or have knowledge of being exposed to COVID-19.

Guardians, visitors, staff and children will be excluded from the center if they develop or show 2 of the following symptoms.:

Fever of 100.4 or Higher	Muscle Aches	Congestion or Runny Nose
Vomiting or Nausea	Headache	
Diarrhea	Sore Throat	
Chills/ Shivers	Fatigue	

Guardians, visitors, staff and children will be excluded from the center if they develop or show any 1 of the following symptoms.:

Severe pain or discomfort	Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
Severe Coughing	Red eyes with discharge
Shortness of Breath	Blood in urine
Difficulty or rapid Breathing	Stiff Neck
Loss of Taste	Swollen Joints
Loss of Smell	Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
Infected, untreated skin patches	Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding that cannot be covered

If a child becomes ill during the day, they will be supervised in a separate area. Sick children must be picked up upon request. If staff cannot reach the parent, the emergency contact person will be contacted. Children who are

ill may not stay in the center. If a child is absent from the program with a suspected communicable disease, he/she may not return without a note from a physician indicating that the child is no longer contagious and free of symptoms. Parents must report any diagnosed communicable disease to the center.

Below is a list of Communicable disease(s):

<u>Respiratory illnesses</u>	<u>Gastrointestinal illnesses</u>	<u>Contact illnesses</u>
Chicken Pox	Campylobacter	Impetigo
German Measles	Escherichia coli	Conjunctivitis
Hemophilus Influenzae	Giardia Lamblia	Scabies
Measles	Hepatitis A	Shingles
Meningococcus	Salmonella	<u>Other</u>
Mumps	Shigella	
Strep throat		MRSA
Tuberculosis		
Whooping Cough		
Scarlet Fever		
COVID- 19		

\*Reportable disease that will be reported to the health department by the center immediately.

\*\*Note: If your child has **chicken pox**, a doctor’s note is not required for re-admitting the child to the center. A note from the parent is required, stating either that at least six days has elapsed since the onset of the rash, or that all sores have dried and crusted. If your child is exposed to any excludable disease at the center, you will be notified in writing.

Children who have been ill may return when they:

- Are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours without the aid of Medication
- Have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours
- If your child has exhibited symptoms of COVID-19, Head Start will follow CDC and DOH guidelines to guide you for when it is safe for your child(ren) to return to care
- Are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities
- Are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child’s physician signs a note stating the child’s condition is not contagious, and;
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.

**Medication**

Parents are encouraged to come to the center to give their child medication that is needed during the program hours. Medication can be administered at the center when the following requirements have been met: Medication Permission form must be completed by the physician (obtain from your Family Advocate), parent must sign the form and it must be reviewed by the Health Coordinator. Medication will not be accepted if all criteria is not met. Staff will be trained regarding administering the medication. Medication must be in its original container, labeled by the pharmacy and have the child’s name on it and it must be kept in a locked box in the Family Worker’s office.

Parents of children who need medication during the school day should contact your Family Advocate for all the information and forms needed. Medication must have been given to the child by the parent first at home to monitor any side effects before it can be administered in the center. This policy applies to Over the Counter medication also (eg. Tylenol, etc.). No medication is to be sent with the child or kept in a book bag/diaper bag.

### **Reaching the Health Team**

Parents should feel free to contact the Health Manager regarding Head Start children's health issues. The Health Manager can be reached at (856) 497-6642.

### **Special Needs Children** **Mental Health**

**Mental health is an important part of your child's well-being.** However, good mental health is no accident. It can be developed and maintained with time and effort.

In order to ensure that your child remains in good mental health, the Mental Health/Disabilities Specialist, Child/Family Site Director and center staff conducts general classroom observations as well as individual child observations. Outside consultants supply services where indicated and approved by parents and Central Office Staff. The Mental Health/Disabilities team can be reached at (856)740-6743.

If either a Child Study Team or private physician or therapist has previously diagnosed a child with a mental health classification, EHS/Head Start is obligated to implement an Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) that is consistent with the needs of the child.

**It is necessary to have full parent participation in the program to foster an environment of acceptance, encouragement and good health practices. Parents are also encouraged to review EHS/Head Start Social Discipline and DYFS policies with Family Workers at the time of enrollment**

### **Special Needs (Physical, Medical, Nutrition Needs)**

**We understand that one of the most difficult facts for a parent to accept is that their child may have special needs.** However, disabilities do not go away when ignored. It is the goal of EHS/Head Start to help identify those children with disabilities and help establish a program to serve those children. **EHS/Head Start welcomes children with special needs.**

**Those special needs include but are not limited to:**

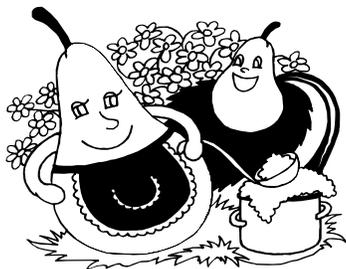
- |   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 1.) Health Impairment                       | 11.) Asthma            |
| 2.) Emotional/Behavior Impairment           | 12.) Diabetes          |
| 3.) Speech/Language Impairment              | 13.) Over/under weight |
| 4.) Visual Impairment (including Blindness) | 14.) Eating disorders  |
| 5.) Hearing Impairment (including Deafness) | 15.) Seizures          |
| 6.) Orthopedic Impairment                   | 16.) ADHD              |
| 7.) Mental Retardation                      | 17.) ADD               |
| 8.) Learning Disabilities                   | 18.) Heart             |
| 9.) Autism                                  | 19.) Other Impairments |
| 10.) Traumatic Brain Injury                 |                        |



**If you know a family who has a child with Special Needs, please refer them to your local Head Start and Early Head Start center. Head Start and Early Head Start provides a comprehensive, multi-cultural program to pre-schoolchildren, infants, toddlers, and their families. Using community and family partnerships, Head Start and Early Head Start**



addresses the early childhood developmental needs and health services, including children with special needs.



## Nutrition

Our Head Start program promotes healthy growth and good eating habits. Each day we prepare a variety of fresh foods to offer the children. Your children will be encouraged to eat at breakfast, snack and lunch times.

Staff will work with you to include your child's favorite cultural and ethnic foods into the menu selections. Head Start Food Service Staff follow menus, based on United States Department of Agriculture guidelines, to supply your child's daily requirements for good nutrition. Copies of menus are posted in centers throughout the program year.

We will offer educational opportunities for you to gain new skills and ideas for cooking nutritious meals at home. Share with us your ideas and questions about food, menus and nutrition activities. Please join us for many of the nutrition activities that we have planned throughout the year.

*Let us know about your child's food restrictions or allergies that have been identified by his or her doctor. We can provide a special meal to meet your child's nutritional needs. A note from your physician with diagnosis and substitutes must be presented.*

At Head Start, nutrition is a vital part of our program. We encourage healthy eating habits at all times.

**\*\*Please do not send food in with your child. \*\***

Breakfast, lunch and snacks are provided according to our performance standards. Many children are on special diets – we must take these children's needs into account.

## Party Policy

45CFR 1304:23; 1304.23(b)(I)(IV)

Celebrations are an important part of life. We encourage age-appropriate activities; however, our performance standards need to be followed at all times.

The following foods **are not permitted**:

- Hot dogs or sausage rounds
- Whole grapes, hard raw vegetables and fruits and uncooked dried fruit (e.g. raisins) raw unpeeled fruit slice (apples, pears)
- Candy, cough drops, taffy, marshmallows, caramels, jelly beans
- Whole nuts, beans, seeds or grain kernels
- Pretzels, chips, peanuts, Chewing gum, popcorn and spoonfuls of peanut butter
- Chunks of meat or cheese
- Honey, eggs, cow's milk and citrus fruits in children less than one-year-old (honey may contain botulism that is harmful to infants; eggs and milk can be highly allergenic).
- Foods high in sugar/salt/fat. (See the Site Director regarding Rich Original Whip Topping Base)

All parent-planned activities for the children must be pre-approved by the Site Director and Family Partnership team and Associate/Assistant Director. Please turn in your requests **4 weeks in advance** for any food to be provided for parties.

**MUST BE PRE-APPROVED AT LEAST 4 WEEKS IN ADVANCE.**

All food must be commercially prepared in a commercial kitchen, and must be in an unopened commercial package.

## **Multi-Cultural Holiday Policy**

Gateway Community Action Partnership EHS/Head Start will follow the guidelines outlined below to educate children and families about various holiday traditions within an environment of acceptance that supports and respects the culture, language and ethnicity of EHS/Head Start families and staff.

Gateway Community Action Partnership County EHS/Head Start:

1. Use holiday activities as part of many other kinds of activities about a cultural group.
  - a. Various cultural activities are included in the curriculum throughout the year through literature, music, food, and art experiences.
2. Set holiday activities in the context of people's daily life and beliefs by connecting them to specific children, families, and staff.
  - a. Celebrations should be reflective of the children, families and staff within each classroom. For example, a classroom with Asian children, families, or staff, might include a celebration of the Chinese New Year if someone connected to the classroom celebrates this holiday. If there were no Asian children, families, or staff, or if this holiday were not celebrated by anyone in the classroom, it would not be included in the curriculum.
  - b. Family Workers and Teachers will meet with parent prior to the child's entry to the program to discuss family traditions and celebrations. In this way, EHS/Head Start can be familiar with various celebrations and so that these celebrations can be incorporated into the EHS/Head Start curriculum.
3. Establish a distinction between learning about another person's holiday rituals and celebrations of one's own holiday. Invite children, families and staff to participate as guests in holiday activities not part of their culture. Encourage the children, families, and staff whose holiday it is to share feelings as well as information.
  - a. Each classroom and center will determine how many guests can safely be accommodated at any one celebration. Centers can explore other options for holding activities that might have more participants than the center can accommodate (i.e. holding celebrations outside or limiting participants to parents only).
4. Honor every group that is represented in each classroom/provider home including children, families and staff. Activities and experiences will be respectful of each family's diversity and cultural and ethnic background.
5. Not assume that everyone from the same ethnic group celebrates holidays the same way. Differences will be evident and respected.
6. Demonstrate respect for everyone's traditions throughout the curriculum.
  - a. Incorporate holiday celebrations during the week or day of the holiday. A holiday is not a monthly theme.
7. Plan strategies for working with the children who's that' beliefs do not permit participation in holiday celebrations. Tri County EHS/Head Start will include parents in creating satisfactory alternatives within the classroom/provider home.
  - a. Teachers will notify parents in advance of any holiday celebrations that are planned for the classroom. Teachers will indicate alternative activities on their lesson plans for those children who will not be participating in the holiday activity or event. Alternative lessons will be planned for those children whose parents elect to keep them at home due to a holiday celebration. The Teacher, Teacher Assistant, and/or Parent in the classroom can implement Holiday activities. Teachers will meet with the President of the Center Parent Committee to discuss which holidays will be celebrated, how they will be celebrated, and who will be responsible for each activity.

8. Follow the EHS/Head Start Nutrition Guidelines when including food as a part of the holiday celebration. No candy will be served to the children at any time. Food items will supplement the EHS/Head Start meals and snacks rather than replace them. A variety of foods will be included through the EHS/Head Start monthly menu's, which consider cultural and ethnic preferences and broaden the child's food experience.
- a. All food that is brought into the center must conform to the nutrition guidelines. Food must either be prepared in a commercial bakery (store bought & in its original package) or prepared on site in the EHS/Head Start kitchen, Chapter 13 Sanitary Code). Parents are discouraged from spending excessive amounts of money on commercially prepared foods. Food must be high in nutrients and low in salt, fat, and sugar. (Performance Standards 1304.23 (VI)).
  - b. "After reviewing various types of cake toppings, Policy Council and Head Start agreed that **Rich Original Whip Topping Base** complies with Head Start's call on obesity and nutrition. Shop Rite and Acme both carry this topping. Also ...when ordering the cake make sure the parent asks for **Rich Original Whip Topping Base**. We also ask that the topping be written on the cake order and brought in to the center." --Policy Council, 2004
  - c. Challenge the commercialization of holidays in our curriculum, and explore with families how to find and make inexpensive toys and holiday decorations and how to have inexpensive celebrations.
  - d. Holiday celebrations will focus on educating children about cultural traditions, NOT ON RELIGION. Actions will follow developmentally appropriate practices for young children in a multi-cultural setting.
  - e. Gifts may be obtained through donations from area merchants/agencies with prior approval from the Parent Involvement Specialist. There must be gifts for every child. Gifts are to be distributed directly to the parents either at pick-up time or at drop-off time. There will be no gift exchanges between children at the center/providers' homes. Goody bags may be completed with donations from merchants and parents as long as they meet the above guidelines and one is available for every child. (Goodie bags may not contain any candy or sweets.)
9. Gateway Community Action Partnership EHS/Head Start may celebrate any holidays/children's birthdays, which are important to our community utilizing the above state guidelines.
- a. Families may not distribute party invitations at centers/provider homes.  
Examples of Developmental Appropriate Multi-Cultural Holiday Activities
    1. Ornament shapes to lace (ornaments can be hung on a tree or in a window)
    2. Painting with evergreen branches
    3. Sponge paint wrapping paper
    4. Finger plays such as 5 pumpkins, 5 bells, etc.
    5. Sing the same song in various languages
    6. Move as if you are...a pumpkin, a turkey, a reindeer, etc.
    7. Share a family holiday/cultural recipe.
    8. Share a cultural game, i.e. hunt for eggs, spin the dreidel, etc.
    9. Read a story that is multi-cultural
    10. Share a story that relates to a holiday celebration in a cultural manner

# Education

Welcome! We have many fun activities planned for you and your children. The education program will be using Creative Curriculum. This program is an award-winning, hands-on, learning program designed for all preschool children, including those with special needs. Our program strongly emphasizes family involvement and literacy. It is designed to conform to the Head Start's Federal Guidelines and the Head Start Performance Standards. Throughout the school year, children will explore many new studies, which focus on their interest level. In collaboration with these studies, new vocabulary words will be introduced as well as numbers, shapes and colors. Each classroom will be "buzzing" with exciting new adventures!

EHS/Head Start recognizes that young children learn best when they are actively involved in their environment. In EHS/Head Start classrooms children get many opportunities to investigate what interests them - to solve problems, discover relationships and make comparisons.

The classroom is organized to promote active learning. **EHS/Head Start classrooms have various learning centers where children can explore materials and learn through play.** Teachers interact with their children to encourage higher order thinking skills. Children are encouraged to talk about their discoveries and creations.

**Play is the foundation for children's learning.** Children at play are actively involved in creating studies, exploring and establishing environments, solving problems, and developing shared understandings. As children play with each other, they learn to see other children's' points of view and to become more caring. They learn to use language in new ways to describe their play and to interact with others. Through play, children develop their muscles and coordination as well as their pre-reading and pre-writing skills.



**To make our EHS/Head Start program a good place for every child, we gear our classroom environments and activities to the community and the families we service. We are eager to learn as much as we can about each child's family, cultural background, past experiences, and current circumstance. With this information, we work to create a program that addresses the needs of the children and the families that we serve.**

## Family Literacy

**Reading aloud to children is a very important part of preschool development. It encourages children to read, helps word pronunciation and creates a positive self-image.** Gateway Community Action Partnership EHS/Head Start gives the families an opportunity to read and tell stories to children in the classroom. Many of the field trips to museums or local libraries also emphasize child literacy. Families are invited to attend field trips as chaperones.

Children are welcome to choose a book from our lending library to take home for one week. Children love being read to by family members. It only takes 10-20 minutes each day and it becomes some of the best time spent with your child!

**For those family members who would like to improve their reading skills, obtain a high school diploma, or simply want to continue their education, we offer a referral service to provide the resources needed to obtain your educational goals.**

*Talk to your Family Advocate for more details!*

## **Birth to Five School Readiness Goals**

1. *Social-Emotional Development* – Child will form caring relationships and successfully interact with others as part of creating a foundation for success in school and in life.
2. *Language, Literacy, and Communication* – Children will demonstrate how to listen to and understand language, as well as how to share their thoughts, ideas, and feelings through ongoing communication opportunities, books, early writing, and other language/literacy opportunities.
3. *Cognition and General Knowledge*- Children will engage in activities related to *Logic and Reasoning, Mathematics, Science, Creative Arts, and Social Studies* that promote cognitive development, including the construction of thought processes, such as remembering, problem solving, and decision-making.
4. *Physical Development and Health*–Children will strengthen their perceptual skills, gross motor and fine motor; and engage in behaviors that promote health, safety, and nutrition.
5. *Approaches to Learning*- Children will engage in skills and behaviors that demonstrate self-regulation, initiative, curiosity, and creativity.

## **YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S FIRST TEACHER**

### **PEDESTRIAN SAFETY**

*Please review with your child*

Walking is great exercise. You can go almost anywhere on your own two feet, plus, it's free!

**But walking can also be dangerous. How can we stay safe?**

Well, let's see.

Safety tips for walkers:

1. **Always walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk and you have to walk in the road, always walk FACING traffic, so you can see any car that might go out of control.**
2. **Dress to be seen. Brightly colored clothing makes it easier for drivers to see you during the daytime. At night, you need to wear special reflective material on your shoes, cap or jacket to reflect the headlights of cars coming towards you.**
3. **Tips for Crossing the Street:**
  - **Cross only at corners or marked crosswalks.**
  - **Stop at the curb or the edge of the road.**
  - **Stop and look left, then right, then left again, before you step into the street.**
  - **If you see a car, wait until it goes by. Then look left, right and left again until no cars are coming.**

- **If a car is parked where you are crossing, make sure there is no driver in the car. Then go to the edge of the car and look left-right-left until no cars are coming. Keep looking for cars while you are crossing, and remember, walk. Don't run.**
- **Always ensure that children are holding an adult's hand.**

## **ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD OFTEN**

Be specific -- and be sincere.

### **ALLOW MISTAKES**

Children learn by trial and error.

### **BUILD INDEPENDENCE**

Encourage your child to try tasks by themselves, such as getting dressed or choosing their clothes.

### **AVOID COMPARISONS**

Never compare one child's skills with another's.

### **GIVE YOUR CHILD RESPONSIBILITIES**

Have your child clean up toys, set the table, or help with the laundry. Simple chores help children feel important.

### **ASK OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS**

"Tell me about your picture."

"What do you think would happen if--?"

"Is there another way to--?"

There is no right or wrong answer.

Children are encouraged to reason and to use their language skills.

### **BE FIRM BUT FAIR**

Set clear limits. When you're upset with your child's behavior, talk about what your child has done and why you are upset.

### **EXPLORE YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD**

Take walks around the neighborhood. Visit a park, local library, or police station.

## **Tips to Parents from Your Preschooler**

- Be positive! Don't tell me that I'll have a great time at childcare and then tell grandma that you feel guilty about enrolling me. I pick up on your feelings very easily! If you feel great about leaving... I'll feel great about staying.
- Don't mind me if the first day I love it and the second day I hate it! It's a new place, new kids, new adults and new schedule. Keep my schedule consistent and I will be fine.
- When you drop me off in the morning, give me a kiss and a hug and tell me you'll see me later. When you do, I feel secure and know when you'll come back. If I cry, my teachers will hold me. They love me too and want the best for me.
- Please take time to look at my artwork. I work long and hard at it all day while you are at work. If you do not care, I will not be enthusiastic about creating it.
- Spend time with me after we get home at night. I know that you are tired and I'm full of energy because I took a nap! Let's go for a walk after dinner. I need time with my family too.
- Sometimes I would like it if you would talk to me and explain to me what is going to happen to me before it happens. Tell me what day I am going to start school and what I will do there during the day. It would help to lessen my fears. Point out the center to me as we ride by so I can be excited about it.
- Give me the choice to do things by myself. I'm littler and slower than you are but I can do things all by myself. I can dress myself and I can pick what breakfast cereal I want to eat. Making decisions can make me feel very important.
- Sometimes I do not want to go to school. Sometimes you do not want to go to work. But after we both get there, we are fine.
- Do not be mad at me if, after I pass that "adjustment period," I don't want to go home when you come

to pick me up. Be glad that my teachers are wonderful people who make me want to stay.

- Please do not feel guilty about leaving me! I know that you love me and that you will do what's best for me! I also know that when I start kindergarten I will be well adjusted socially and mentally. I will be asking questions way ahead of the other children. Why? Because you had the insight to put me with other children at a young age where I could learn new things and meet new friends.

### **101 Ways to Praise Your Child**

Wow \* Way to go\* You're Special \* Outstanding \* Excellent \* Great \* Good \* Neat \* Well done \* Remarkable \* I knew you could do it \* I'm proud of you \* Super star \* Nice work \* Looking good \* You're on top of it \* You're catching on \* Now you've got it \* How Smart \* Good job \* That's incredible \* Hot dog \* Remarkable job \* You're beautiful \* You're a winner \* You make me happy \* Hip Hip Hooray \* You're important \* Magnificent \* Beautiful \* Fantastic \* You're on target \* You're on your way \* How nice \* You're spectacular \* You're darling \* Super \* Super job \* Beautiful work \* Good for you \* Nothing can stop you now \* Dynamite \* You're fantastic \* Awesome \* You're precious \* Fantastic job \* You've discovered the secret \* Bingo \* Great discovery \* You are responsible \* You are exciting \* You are fun \* You're a real trooper \* Marvelous \* Terrific \* You're growing up \* Outstanding performance \* You tried hard \* You figured it out \* What a good listener \* You're a treasure \* You mean a lot to me \* You're a good friend \* That's correct \* A big hug \* What an imagination \* You learned it right \* You're incredible \* Now you're flying \* Bravo \* Beautiful \* I like you \* I respect you \* You're sensational \* Phenomenal \* A+ job \* Hooray for you \* You're unique \* You care \* Creative job \* You belong \* You brighten my day \* Super work \* That's the best \* You made my day \* Say I love you \* Beautiful sharing \* You mean the world to me \* You're important \* You've got a friend \* You're a joy \* You make me laugh \* You're A OK \* My Buddy \* I trust you \* You're perfect \* You're wonderful \* A big kiss \* Exceptional performance \*

**P.S. Remember a smile is worth 1000 words!**

### **Toilet Training Policy**

**A joint effort between both the at-home and in-school environments will be attempted to complete successful, independent toileting habits.**

#### **Independence**

**“You can do it yourself!” Children are encouraged to independently toilet themselves.**

**For our older children in Head Start** training pants or “pull-up” style undergarments will be supplied by Head Start along with wipes to assist in achieving this goal. **Families should provide a change of clothing. Clothes should have your child’s name, fit your child and should be appropriate for the current season.**

**For our infants/younger children in Early Head Start** diapers and wipes are supplied by Gateway Community Action Partnership. Family members should supply a change of clothing and undergarments for their child. **Clothes should have their name, fit your child and should be appropriate for the current season.**

EHS/Head Start centers will supply changing tables, sanitary disposal pails, and toilet seats. Plastic bags for changing clothes will be made available.

#### **A Team Effort**

Your Family Worker will provide you and your family with resource materials about toileting upon request. Classroom teaching staff will share responsibility with you for your child’s success.

#### **Empowering Your Child’s Success!**

- Limit liquid intake three (3) hours prior to bedtime.
- Wake child to use the bathroom before you retire for the night.
- Provide a comfortable environment for the child.

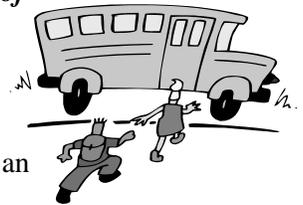


- Provide pull-ups or training pants to enable independence.

**Remind child to use bathroom every two hours while awake,  
before sleeping and before bus/car**

**Transportation**

1. When transportation is provided, please have your child prepared to meet the bus at least **10 minutes before scheduled time**. The bus will wait no longer than one minute, so please have your child ready.
2. **All children must have a bus pass to ride the bus. If the child does not have a pass the child will not be allowed to board the bus in the morning or in the afternoon.**
3. **Please be at the bus stop to assist your child on and off the bus.**
4. **Children will be returned to the center if an authorized person is not at the stop to receive the child.**
5. **Children cannot be released to anyone without your consent. Children can only be released to an adult (age 18 or over). The person's name must be on the child's Authorized Child Visitation and Pick-up List. You cannot give verbal consent over the phone; the name must be on the list. Please review your list periodically for any changes. (please see Policy on the Release of Children Pg 14)**
6. **No Child can be released to anyone under the age of 18.**
7. The bus driver has an assigned stop for each child. If there is a problem, contact your Transportation Specialist
8. If your child rides the bus, parents are encouraged to volunteer to ride the bus as an aide whenever possible.



**RULES FOR AIDES AND PARENTS RIDING BUS:**

1. Bus aides/parent must assist the children on and off the bus.
2. The seat belt must be properly fastened from the moment the child is seated.
3. Riders must enforce strict discipline while the bus is in motion.
4. All riders not assisting children must be seated and properly restrained when the bus is in motion
5. Bus drivers are not to get off the bus when children are on board or boarding.
6. **No staff or volunteer should be on their cell phones.**
7. The rider and driver must make sure all the children are off the bus at the end of the bus run.
8. **The check in and off list must be completed with each run.**
9. When children are boarding the bus, a monitor is to walk in front of the line and one monitor is to walk at the back of the line, keeping all children as safe as possible. The monitor at the back of the line will wait until all children are on the bus before leaving. The ratio of children to adults will be 1:10 minimum 2 staff accompanying children to the bus.

**For your child's safety, please use the main entrance when dropping off and picking up your child. Emergency exits are used for fire drills, loading/unloading children from the bus, and delivery of food.**

**ERSEA (Eligibility)**

Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance governs how programs determine eligibility, enroll children, and track attendance.





## Family Partnerships



The Family Partnership Program Area links the center, the home and the community through the following activities:

- Offering your family, the opportunity to become aware of the resources in your local community and how to use them.
  - Conducting meaningful home and center visits. Family Workers will visit you in your home to talk to you about your child and/or EHS/Head Start happenings. We encourage parents to visit the EHS/Head Start Center whenever possible.
- Identifying strengths and needs of families so that staff and families will work

together to meet the family's goals. The Family Worker can refer you to supportive community resources that will help you accomplish your goals.

- Family workers also provide informational workshops with support from various community resources on a variety of topics that help to educate EHS/Head Start families.
- Listening when there is a need to talk. The Family Worker is trained to deal with the different obstacles EHS/Head Start families face and will keep information confidential.
- Sincerely trying to improve the quality of life for EHS/Head Start families.
- Provide a research-based parenting curriculum

### FAMILY ENGAGEMENT GOALS

**#1. Parents will participate in workshops and presentations which will assist them in improving their employment status enhancing their financial security.**

**#2. Parents and families will participate in educational workshops on child development, health fairs (relating to family health, dental, and nutrition), or programs/presentations relating to financial literacy, housing, transportation, strengthening families, improving parenting skills, and small business education.**

**#3. Parents will utilize information and/or referrals provided by Gateway as well as other community services to maintain safety and health during various emergency situations.**

**#4. Parents will increase their ability to advocate for their families through their participation in training, program governance, and community activities.**

**#5. Parents will receive information and support in pursuing education and training (including role modeling by staff), to advance their learning interests and life goals.**

## Parent Involvement

**Parent Involvement is essential to the EHS/Head Start Program.**

In order for EHS/Head Start to succeed, the program needs active participation from parents. In the centers, parents can participate in many ways. Some examples of ways to help are volunteering in the classroom, on the bus, or in the kitchen.

- Parents can be involved by attending Parent Committee meetings to plan activities for the families in your center. This is also an opportunity to attend workshops and access opportunities in the community.
- **Parents can also share in making decisions about the program by serving on Gateway Community Action Partnership EHS/Head Start's Policy Council. This group of parents and community representatives approves or disapproves policies and personnel decisions. *Policy Council is the link that connects local parent committees to broader program-wide issues.***



The time you spend in these activities is called In-kind. It is a process of matching community donations of goods and volunteer time with money from the Federal Government. The EHS/Head Start program is required to match 20% of the money received from the Federal Government and most of it can only come from you, EHS/Head Start parents.

Begin to think about the activities that you would like to do. Let your Teacher's Assistant know what area interests you and s/he will help you plan a volunteer schedule. **You must report to your classroom all of your volunteer hours spent in the classroom, participating in meetings or other program activities.**

**Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's education by participating in the EHS/Head Start program. There are many ways a parent can accomplish this:**

1. **Visit your EHS/Head Start Center and talk to staff about your child.**
2. **Volunteer in the classroom.**
3. **Assist the bus driver by riding on the bus.**
4. **Attend monthly Parent Committee meetings.**
5. **We want parents to be involved in the decision-making that affects their children so Parent Committee meetings are scheduled every month for parents to attend and voice their concerns.**
6. **The Parent Committees select parent representatives to sit on the Policy Council.**
7. **Chaperone field trips.**
8. **Attend your Center Workshops and other planned activities.**
9. **Assist with setting up Parent Corners at EHS/Head Start Centers.**
10. **Doing laundry (EHS/Head Start blankets and sheets) or preparing materials for classroom activities.**

## Transitions

One of the goals of Gateway Community Action Partnership Early EHS/Head Start is to develop a system of continuous transition activities. In 1999, with the addition of Early EHS/Head Start, serving infants and toddlers and pregnant women, the children are offered comprehensive services before birth that can continue until they enter kindergarten.

The program staff assists parents and children in making the following transitions:

- From home visits for the pregnant woman to Early Head Start, family child care homes or childcare programs.
- At the age of 3, from Early Head Start to a 3-5 Head Start classroom, family childcare home, or child care program.

- At the age of 5, from the Head Start Program to a public school kindergarten program.

**Early EHS/Head Start staff assists children through each step of the transition. Staff respect parents and children and make the transition as easy as possible.**

## **Special Events Policy**

1. Special events are identified but not limited to graduations, step-ups, concerts, preschool proms and holiday parties.
2. Site Directors and Family Advocates will have knowledge of the special event but can not, plan, schedule or collect anything during work hours related to the event.
3. Head Start/ EHS events will be voluntary for children and their families.
4. Parents will organize the participation of interested individuals by making an announcement in the monthly parent meeting of the special event.
5. The Parent committee will then arrange an offsite location and inform the parents of the date and time of the meeting for the special event.
6. None of the materials for the special event can be brought to the Head Start Center for storage **or** pick-up.
7. Head Start/EHS is not liable for special events that are planned and organized offsite by Parents and the committee.
8. Staff can attend the special event after work hours.

## **Grievance Procedure** **(Disagreements and Complaints)**

In a Head Start Center, where staff and parents work closely together, there are sometimes disagreements and conflicts. If you have a conflict with a staff member, please approach them, first. They might not be aware there is a problem. Try to work together to resolve your differences, and to find a solution that is acceptable to both of you. If you cannot resolve the conflict, ask to meet with the Center Coordinator. **Note: If you have any disagreements and complaints, you should notify your Parent Committee and Policy Council Representative.**

**You must follow the Chain of Command:**

**Be advised that the center’s Policy Council Representative should be guiding you through the Chain of Command.**

1. Meet with the person with whom you have the disagreement
1. Family Advocate
2. Child/Family Site Director
4. Management Team/Any Team Member
5. Director(s) of Operations
6. Director of Program Services
7. Director
8. Policy Council is the voice of the parents

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

Courteous and respectful behavior between and among all program participants is essential for Gateway Community Action Partnership Head Start to achieve its mission, help assure a positive environment and promote the safety and security of children and families and staff. Like employees, parents, volunteers, participants and everyone else involved with the program must follow a Code of Conduct as outlined below.

**Standards of Conduct:** All staff, consultants, parents, and volunteers will:

- A. Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability;
- B. Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families and other staff members;
- C. Leave no child alone or unsupervised (staff and consultants) while under their care;
- D. Use positive methods of child guidance and not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation; not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, to the denial of basic needs.
- E. Conduct themselves personally and professionally in a manner that reflects positively upon the program's reputation and upon the children and families the program serves; and,
- F. Not solicit or accept personal gratuities, favors or anything of significant monetary value from contractors or potential contractors if they are engaged in the award and administration of contracts or other financial awards.

**Gateway Head Start Centers will not tolerate behavior by employees, parents, volunteers, consultants or anyone else involved with the program that violates the Code of Conduct. Examples of violations could include but are not limited to the following:**

- **Threats to staff, parents or children,**
- **Physical or verbal punishment of a child,**
- **Discourteous language around others,**
- **Smoking,**
- **Quarreling, verbal fighting, loud shouting and displays of anger,**
- **Bringing drugs, alcohol or weapons to program sites or events,**
- **Physical violence,**
- **Inappropriate or un-welcomed displays of physical affection, and**
- **Inappropriate dress (see dress code).**

**IMPLICATIONS FOR PARENTS**

If a parent **violates** the Code of Conduct, Gateway Community Action Partnership reserves the right to:

- Restrict access to program children, classrooms and activities,
- Terminate the child's enrollment,
- Remove the child's name from the waiting list,
- Contact Division of Youth and Family Services,
- Contact the police,
- Take civil or criminal action.

**PROCEDURES:**

1. The staff person who witnesses the violation will speak directly with the parent in private when possible, practical and if safety is not an issue.
2. When the safety is threatened, staff will call the police. This could be but is not limited to when parents continue to quarrel, fight or threaten children, staff, or other parents or adults. Staff will notify the Site Director as soon as practical and as immediately as possible.
3. Staff should report violations to the Site Director promptly. In the Site Director's absence, contact a member from the Management team.
4. The Site Director will notify the Associate/Assistant Director who will determine the program response to the violation and will notify the person(s) involved.

**ANNUAL CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE** -Performance Standard Reference: 1303.22 (e), (f)

1. Confidentiality is the responsibility to keep information private (secret, not to be disclosed, restricted). In order to maintain confidential information, the following must occur:
  - In compliance with HIPPA regulations, by law we cannot share your or your child's

- information with other agencies, programs, persons, etc. without your written consent.
2. Parents/Guardians are requested to not share personal information with anyone, other than an authorized person in the Gateway Community Action Partnership Head Start program. This includes any information which you may see or hear at the centers. Confidentiality and privacy requirements apply to all individuals (children, parents, staff and community volunteers) within the Head Start program.
  3. However, we do have a duty to share confidential information with Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P)/Department of Human Services (DHS) as part of our role in serving and protecting children. In the state of New Jersey, everyone is mandated to report child abuse or neglect to DCP&P/DHS, Department of Education (DOE) and other funding/governing bodies.
  4. Information may be shared with anyone who works for Gateway Community Action Partnership who is an active member of the Child's or Family's service team, such as: the family advocate, classroom staff working with the child, the bus driver who transports the child, the food service worker who meets the nutritional needs of the child, and managers/specialists, etc., who have an interest in the child's/family's success.
  5. Disclosure without parental consent but with parental notice and opportunity to refuse. The parent/guardian will be notified, and upon request, be provided with a copy of the information requested, and given an opportunity to challenge and refuse disclosure of the child's records to the school district.
  6. Disclosure of personal information without parental consent might occur under the following conditions: a) a court order b) in order to address a disaster, health or safety emergency c) in compliance with federal legal requirements of the program or d) a request from DCP&P regarding child abuse or neglect. The program can only disclose the information that is deemed necessary for the purpose of disclosure.
  7. No information will be given to anyone who is not a legal guardian to the child (this includes family members) or who does not have a legal right to the Family's/Child's information This also includes outside agencies who do not have a funding/governing role with our agency.

## **Use of Technology and Social Media Policy**

### ***Head Start Program Performance Standards***

#### ***Subpart J — Program Management and Quality Improvement***

§1302.100 Purpose. A program must provide management and a process of ongoing monitoring and continuous improvement for achieving program goals that ensures child safety and the delivery of effective, high-quality program services.

### ***Use of Social Networking and/or other Websites:***

Gateway takes the safety and privacy of its children, families and staff seriously. As such Gateway has strict policies for the use of social media (twitter, Instagram, Facebook, etc.) and websites.

1. ***Posting of photographs or videos of children, other than your own, is prohibited, unless posted on a Gateway approved Facebook page, Twitter account, or the Gateway Community Action Partnership website.*** This includes, but is not limited to photographs or videos of children obtained through hand held devices, computers, video monitoring systems, child care monitoring apps, or any other electronic device or transmission.
  - a. Only photographs or videos of children who have the permission to photograph form signed by the parent on file may be posted as per the above guidelines.

- b. Employees must maintain professional boundaries in the use of electronic media. Social Networking/Media parent/staff relationships are limited to center sites and approved devices only.
  2. Any breaches of the center's Policy on the Use of Technology and Social Media identified must be promptly reported to the Child/Family Site Director who will notify the Director of Operations/Programs/Options or the Vice President.
  3. Each center may establish a form of communication using emails, texting, website page, communication services or social media, with prior approval from the Director of Operations/Programs/Options and knowledge of the Vice President, for general center information/updates.
    - a. It is expected that staff/parent communication related to the program only occurs on approved sites or through approved formats.
    - b. Staff who have prior personal relationships with families should work to maintain personal-professional boundaries as it relates to center and agency business.
    - c. **ALL EMERGENCY communication MUST** be by phone and documented in the child's file. Texting, emailing, etc. may not take the place of notifying a parent by phone of an emergency.
    - d. Examples of types of communications might include:
      - i. Suggestions for ways families may be involved in children's learning activities
      - ii. Positive updates on child's day
      - iii. Community information, events, and resources
      - iv. Photographs of their child
      - v. Closures of the facility due to snow or calendar updates
    - e. Examples of types of communication that should be done face-to-face or by phone and NOT by technology:
      - i. Illness/Accidents/Injuries
      - ii. Behavioral Concerns/Negative updates
      - iii. Unusual emergency closures or other unusual incidents
4. Posting of private or sensitive company, staff or prior staff, and/or enrolled or previously children/family information is **prohibited**.
  - a. Posting of live feeds obtained through handheld devices including children with written permission from the parent to do so on file is **prohibited**.
  - b. Use of social media/networking and/or other websites is **prohibited** when supervising children.
  - c. Vulgar or abusive language, disparaging remarks and/or references of a disparaging manner, personal attacks of any kind, or offensive terms targeting individuals or groups is **prohibited**.
5. No cell phones, smart phones, or smart watches are permitted in the classroom or any other setting in which children are being supervised. They must be kept locked up in the Child/Family Site Director's Office, the Family Advocate Office or kept off-site such as your car. Please work together to develop a storage system for the staff who are bringing cell phones into the center.

- a. Staff seen with cell phones in their pockets, on a shelf, or elsewhere in the classroom or playground will be held accountable, including potential termination.
  - b. Staff may use cell phones in the following areas, if they are not currently with a child: kitchen, offices, lunch rooms, and other administrative areas. If staff are assisting with children in any manner, they are NOT to have a cell phone on them, unless engaged in an emergency phone call for an EHS/HS child, such as an injury.
  - c. Designated staff may have cell phones in their possession during walking trips and field trips. However, use of phones are strictly to be used for emergencies and communication with the center or main office.
  - d. Exceptions to this rule are the following:
    - i. Staff who are “passing through the classroom” for a quick monitoring visit, however, even then, unless documenting a compliance or non-compliance issue in the classroom or playground, phones should be kept out of sight. Staff responsible for children may NOT have a cell phone in the room
    - ii. Child/Family Site Director and Site Director Designee may keep one on them while in the classroom, but may not use the phone while in the classroom except in extreme emergencies for the center (such as a lockdown).
    - iii. Bus Drivers may have their cell phones on the bus, but they may only use them for emergencies (such as a bus accident) when children are present. They must wait until all children have been accounted for, and transitioned to classroom staff, before they can use their cell phone for other reasons.
6. Ipads or similar devices may be used with children for purposes of documenting children’s development or engaging children in technology related activities. All such devices must be set up to protect children from inappropriate website content, see I/T department for assistance by submitting an email request.

### **1302.50 Family engagement.**

(a) Purpose. ... integrate parent and family engagement strategies into ... program services to support family well-being and promote children’s learning and development....

(b) Family engagement approach. A program must: (1) Recognize parents as their children’s primary teachers and nurturers and implement intentional strategies to engage parents in their children’s learning and development and support parent-child relationships...

1. Current policy prohibits staff from taking cell phones into the classroom or having them on them when working directly with children.
2. **Parents, Volunteers, and other non-staff in the building** are asked to refrain from using cell phones in the classrooms or the hallways directly outside a classroom.
3. Cell phones should be used outside of the building or in designated areas such as the parent/staff lounge area, as appropriate when working with someone in an office area, or other appropriately designated areas.

### **The Research**

Nearly one-third of children feel unimportant when their parents use their cell phones during meal times, conversations, TV watching and playing outside, according to a recent study....The kids said they

had to compete with technology for their parents' attention, and 28 percent of mothers and fathers agreed with this observation....In addition, 54 percent of the kids think their parents spend too much time on their phones. Fifty-two percent of moms and dads agreed with their children and worried that they were setting a bad example for their kids....

We're the first generation of parents with 24/7 access to phone calls, email, the Internet, and more, right there in our pockets or purses. It can be hard to navigate this crazy connected world we find ourselves in and remember that the digital universe can wait while we interact with the people with us in the present moment. We as moms and dads need to put down our cell phones and focus more on our kids. They *are* more important than the latest work email or what's trending on Twitter. Let's make sure they know it. –by *Ellen Sturm Niz, Parenting Magazine*

**Gateway Early Head Start and Head Start Early Education Programs** are designed to place the focus on supporting children's development in all domains of learning:

- Approaches to Learning
- Social and Emotional Development
- Language and Literacy
- Cognition, Mathematics, Scientific Reasoning
- Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

**Staff and Parents together make the best teaching team for children!**

## **Child Care Partnerships Program**

Gateway Community Action Partnership Head Start's Child Care Partnerships Program was developed to serve income eligible families who have enrolled their children (3-5) in licensed Child Care Centers (State Funded or Private Pay).

**Families must be working or going to school and be on some type of subsidy in order to qualify.**

Families can choose their providers by location or program hours. The Child Care Partnerships Program works together with everyone.

### **CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM OFFERS CHILDREN:**

- Health and Developmental screenings
- Planned, individualized learning activities

### **CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS S PROGRAM OFFERS FAMILIES:**

- Opportunities to set family goals
- Referrals to community agencies to help meet your goals
- Involvement in Head Start Parent Committees, Policy Council, workshops and family events
- E.H.S
- Parent Conferences
- Home Visits

### **CHILD CARE PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM OFFERS CHILD CARE PARTNERS:**

- The Creative Curriculum
- Program supplies



- A weekly fee for each enrolled child **to purchase enhanced licensed childcare.**
- Visits by education staff to support the learning program
- Monthly In-service and Head Start training opportunities

**For more information, Parents and Licensed Child Care Centers can call *the Head Start Child Care Partnerships* Program at 455-6394 ext. 6717 or 6719 (Program Specialist).**