



**Łuq'u Nakenu**  
**Early Head Start Family Handbook**  
**2026-2027**



**Naqayeht'ana Tuh**  
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**2026-2027**



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# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

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# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## How to Use this Handbook

This handbook is designed to help families understand program expectations, services, and supports available through Head Start.

This handbook reflects the requirements of the Head Start Performance Standards, the State of Alaska Child Care Licensing regulations, and the Municipality of Anchorage childcare licensing requirements. These regulations guide how we operate, support families, and ensure the health, safety, and well-being of all children in our care.

This handbook also outlines parent rights, program responsibilities, and shared expectations required for participation in a licensed Head Start program.

Most sections include references to federal, state, or local regulations. When included, these references are provided to give additional context and explain why certain expectations or requirements are in place.

Some expectations described in this handbook are required for continued participation, as they support compliance with program regulations and ensure services can be safely and effectively provided.

Our goal is to be transparent about both the support we offer and the expectations we share, so we can work together in partnership to support your child's success. If you have questions about any part of this handbook, we encourage you to ask staff for clarification. Families may request additional information about any regulation referenced in this handbook at any time.



# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Mission, Vision, and Values

### CINHS Mission Statement

Building strong foundations with Alaska Native Families through Alaska Native cultures and education.

### Cook Inlet Native Head Start (CINHS) Vision Statement

Strong Native children and their families reaching their full potential.

### CINHS Values and Shared Commitments

At Cook Inlet Native Head Start, our work is guided by four core values: **We Care, We Respect, We Honor, and We Know Who We Are.**

These values shape our program goals, how we serve families, and what we ask of families in return. Together, they create a strong, respectful, and supportive community for all children and families.

#### **We Care**

We build genuine, supportive relationships with children, families, and staff.

##### **Our commitment:**

- Provide a safe, nurturing, and supportive learning environment
- Support the whole child, including social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development
- Promote a comprehensive approach to health, including prevention, wellness, and follow-up care

##### **Shared responsibility:**

- Families communicate with us about their child's needs, absences, and changes at home
- Children are kept home when sick, and families notify the program promptly
- Families stay engaged and respond to outreach so we can best support their child

#### **We Respect**

We honor each family's voice, culture, and experience.

##### **Our commitment:**

- Recognize and support the many cultures and perspectives in our community



- Promote respectful and proactive approaches to diversity and inclusion
- Partner with families and include their voices in program decisions

**Shared responsibility:**

- Families communicate respectfully with staff and other families
- Families follow program policies that support a safe and consistent environment
- Families partner with staff to address concerns and support their child's success

**We Honor**

We uplift culture, traditions, and our shared community.

**Our commitment:**

- Build a community where each child and adult is respected as both an individual and a member of the group
- Incorporate Alaska Native culture, values, and traditions into our program
- Foster relationships within our program and with the broader community

**Shared responsibility:**

- Families recognize that their child is part of a larger classroom community
- Families support a healthy environment by not bringing sick children to school
- Families participate in program opportunities when able (events, conferences, family activities)

**We Know Who We Are**

We are a Tribal program grounded in purpose, integrity, and accountability.

**Our commitment:**

- Provide consistent, high-quality services aligned with Head Start requirements
- Work in partnership with families, governing bodies, and staff to support strong program leadership
- Ensure coordinated services that support children and families before, during, and after their Head Start experience

**Shared responsibility:**

- Families support regular attendance and timely arrival so children benefit fully from the program
- Families complete required paperwork and follow through on requested items (such as health and enrollment requirements)
- Families ask questions and stay in communication so expectations are clear and support can be provided

## Working Together

These values and goals guide both staff and families. When we share responsibility and work together, we create a respectful, safe, and supportive environment where all children can thrive.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Participation, Communication, and Engagement

### Head Start is a Comprehensive Program

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.1; §1302.30; §1302.42; §1302.50

We are excited that you have chosen Cook Inlet Native Head Start to fulfill your child(ren)'s education needs! Enrollment in Head Start means choosing to participate in a comprehensive program that includes education, health monitoring, developmental screenings, family engagement, and more. These components are required by federal regulation and support children and families. This may include follow-up from staff and requests for additional documentation to complete program requirements. Delays in completing required items may impact a child's participation in the program.

### Communication Expectations

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.50; §1302.51; §1302.16(a)(1)

Head Start regulations frequently note how the parents and the program are in partnership together. Like all partnerships, this requires intentional, continual, and respectful communication.

Respect is a core value of the program and reflects shared Alaska Native values. Families are expected to communicate with staff, children, and other families in a respectful manner, even when concerns or disagreements arise.

Staying in communication with the program is very important as we prepare your child for success and as we navigate life situations with families. Families are expected to respond to calls, messages, or outreach from staff.

Communication from the program may come through multiple methods, including emails from ChildPlus (the database utilized by CINHS), the ChildPlus Communication App, and direct contact from program staff.

Keeping contact information up to date helps ensure families receive important information from the program. Families are expected to notify and update the program as soon as possible of any changes to contact information.

### The Way We See: the CINHS Alaska Native Cultural Curriculum

*The Way We See* is the first of its kind cultural curriculum developed and used at CINHS. Each year, students at CINHS honor a different one of Alaska's cultural groups each month, focusing learning on that cultural group, its values and environment, and related subsistence activities engaged in during that time of year. *The Way We See* is a systematic guide of planned activities designed to build experiences, skills, and attitudes that prepare each child for kindergarten. The curriculum is research-based, rubric driven, observation assessed, and draws upon learning and child development principles that are delivered through the utilization and focus upon Alaska Native values and cultural enrichment.



The curriculum is administered in a child-centered environment which is play-based and stresses the development of social, emotional, motor/physical, and cognitive skills.

CINHS is currently in the process of developing and piloting *Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Leaders: Q'udi jan gu duhdeldih'en; tatqunda naqezahda*, a companion curriculum to *The Way We See* that focuses on empowering our children with the social and emotional skills they will need to be successful learners, leaders, friends, and members of our communities. *Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Leaders* is grounded in Alaska Native values, subsistence practices, and cultures. While we are developing *Today's Learners, Tomorrow's Leaders*, CINHS will also continue to use curriculum resources such as Second Step and Pyramid Model.

In addition to being curriculum, *The Way We See* also has an assessment piece used to help track student growth and development of school readiness skills throughout their time at CINHS to ensure children leave CINHS prepared for success in kindergarten. Teachers take a minimum of two observations about each child per week and match the observations with culturally relevant descriptions of what a child mastering that skill would look like in the classroom. Updates about child growth are shared with the family during Family Conferences and other moments throughout the program year, measuring the child against their own growing abilities. The observation system tracks student growth with these snapshot stories of their classroom learning from the time they enter CINHS to the time they leave for kindergarten.

## Program Responsibilities & Enrollment

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.13; §1302.15; §1302.16**

Head Start programs are required to actively manage enrollment and maintain communication with families to support participation.

Ongoing lack of communication may impact the program's ability to support a child's participation.



# ChildPlus Communication App

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.50; §1302.16(a)(1)

Apps & games   Movies & TV   Books

## ChildPlus: Communication App

Procure Solutions LLC

Get updates, friendly reminders and more—all in one super easy-to-use platform.



2.9★  
14 reviews

10K+  
Downloads

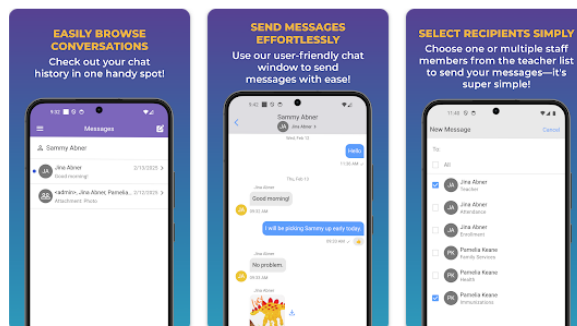
Install



Everyone

Users Interact

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Families will receive an invitation email to set up the ChildPlus Communication App. If families have access to a smartphone, they are expected to download the app and opt in to receive updates. If access to the app is not available, families are expected to work with the program to identify another way to receive important information.

**The ChildPlus Communication App is the program’s primary method for sharing important information that may impact multiple families, including program updates and emergency notifications such as program closures. It is designed to be the most efficient method to get all families information efficiently, especially when the message may be time sensitive.**



However, the ChildPlus Communication App is not intended to be the first method for families to initiate communication with the program about individual situations. For questions, updates, support, or daily items such as attendance, families are expected to contact the program directly or reach out to their Family Advocate.

## Family Partnership & Support

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.50; §1302.52

Families may contact their Family Advocate for questions or support and are expected to communicate with them as needed.

Family Advocates can help connect families with resources and support related to attendance, health, development, and family needs.

Family participation and program communication support the success of both the child and the family.

## Engagement Expectations

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.50; §1302.51; §1302.52

Enrolling in Head Start means actively choosing to engage in much more than a classroom for your child. Head Start regulations require parents and staff to partner together to meet shared goals for your family. Participating in program activities, meetings, or conversations when possible supports a child's development and strengthens connection to the program.

Families are encouraged to communicate with program staff when questions, concerns, or support needs arise so concerns can be addressed collaboratively.

## Home Visits and Family Conferences

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.34(b); §1302.52

Head Start requires Home Visits and Family Conferences as part of the program. For each enrolled child, families participate in four Home Visits per program year (two with teaching staff and two with a Family Advocate) and two Family Conferences per year. Each enrolled child will receive:

- 2 Education Home Visits (with teaching staff, to discuss your child's educational development). Additionally, education staff will conduct at least two Family Conferences which are scheduled separately from the educational Home Visits.
- 2 Family Services Home Visits (with your Family Advocate, to discuss goals, supports, barriers, and resources that may be helpful for the whole family).

### Education Home Visits:

During Education visits, teaching staff will:

- Build relationships with families and get to know the students
  - Discuss child's interest, strengths and family activities
- Explain the preschool program and the Indigenous Cultural Curriculum
  - Requirements and sequences of two Educational HV and two Parent Conferences
  - Discuss and complete the "Ages and Stages Questionnaire" & "Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional" screenings
  - Discuss "Individual Child Plan" Goals (ICP Goals) which are individualized goals created collaboratively with the families for each individual child
  - Discuss CINHS curriculum *The Way We See* and provide your student's progress
- Discuss the educational importance of regular attendance
- Discuss classroom expectations
  - Arrival routine and daily transitions
  - If applicable discuss naptime routines and toothbrushing
  - No outside foods or toys allowed (birthday food options)
  - The Municipality of Anchorage requires children to engage in outdoor activities through temperatures up to -10 degrees.
- BRING IN ALL PROPER WINTER CLOTHING BY THE FIRST DAY OF SNOWFALL! (winter hats, coats, pants, waterproof snow gloves), rain gear for seasonal weather optional.



- ALL CHILDREN MUST BRING IN A PAIR OF EXTRA CLOTHES to be kept at school (shirt, pants, underwear, socks)
- Discuss any behavior concerns that the teacher or parent may have and share how Second Steps Curriculum will support the child's social and emotional development
- Inform parents of how to be a part of the CINHS program through attending family night events, cultural learning events, becoming a volunteered member of the Parent Committee or Generational Council/Policy Council.
- Discuss family engagement at home with your child by looking at books together, having consistent routines and sleep schedules.
- Share any upcoming school events

### **Family Services Home Visits:**

During Family Services Home Visits, your family advocate will:

- Check in on your family's goals
- Complete the Family Outcomes assessment to determine family strengths and whether your family needs any additional supports or resources
- Connect you with resources and referrals as needed
- Help problem-solve challenges related to attendance, health, or family stability
- Review any required program information and update required documentation

Family Services Home Visits are focused on supporting the whole family.

All Home Visits are scheduled throughout the program year at times that work for your family, but coincide with fall and spring programming.

### **Family Conferences**

In addition to the two Home Visits conducted by education staff and two Home Visits conducted by Family Advocates each program year, families will be invited to visit the school for conferences twice each program year as a part of the Head Start program requirements. During Family Conferences, educators will:

- Collaborate with you to update your child's individual learning goals
- Share updated information about your child's learning and development
- Answer any questions about classroom routines and expectations
- Share information about any upcoming school events, volunteer opportunities, child transitions, etc.

**By enrolling in Head Start, families are expected to:**



- Participate in all scheduled home visits
- Communicate with staff if a visit needs to be rescheduled
- Be engaged and open to partnership during visits

Home visits are a required part of the Head Start program and help us provide the best possible support to your child and family.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Enrollment Requirements and Procedures

### Enrollment Requirements

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.12; §1302.13

CINHS has a multi-step enrollment procedure:

- 1) submitting an application with required documentation;
- 2) completing an in-person or telephonic interview to verify important details, and
- 3) waitlist, acceptance, and enrollment.

Head Start regulations require the program to verify and document all eligibility information. Submitted documents must be current and valid to be accepted. An interview is required by Head Start regulations as part of the eligibility verification process.

All families must submit the following documents prior to being considered for acceptance:

- Application for student enrollment
- Copy of child's birth certificate

### Alaska Native/American Indian Priority

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.12(c)(1); §1302.14

As a Tribal Head Start program, CINHS prioritizes enrollment for children who are Alaska Native or American Indian.

This priority supports the program's mission to serve Native children and families and to provide culturally responsive services that reflect the values, traditions, and strengths of our communities.

Parents of Alaska Native or American children should submit verification of tribal enrollment or certificate of Indian blood. CINHS can accept either the child's document or the parent's (as long as the parent is listed on the birth certificate).

### Other Priority Factors

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.14(a); §1302.12

CINHS uses a selection process that assigns priority points to applicants based on identified community needs, individual family risk and protective factors, and program requirements.

This process is informed by the program's Community Needs Assessment and is reviewed and approved annually by the Policy Council and Board of Directors. Priority points help ensure that available slots are offered to families with the greatest need.

Families will receive guidance on their unique situations and what priority placement points they may qualify for during the required eligibility interview. During the interview process, staff may request verification for priority placement with additional documents, including income verification. Depending



on the circumstances of each family, there may be additional documents needed on a case by case basis, in accordance with Head Start regulations. These items may include but are not limited to housing status verification, custody or court paperwork, health related documentation, and other items.

## Full Day Services Eligibility

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.21(c), §1302.14, §1302.12

Full-day program options are limited and require families to meet additional eligibility factors related to work, school, training, or child needs. Placement is based on availability and priority. Families may enroll in part-day services while waiting for a full-day opening.

## Acceptance and Enrollment

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.12(k); §1302.15(a)

Following acceptance, a Family Advocate will assist the family if needed in submitting or filling out the following required enrollment documents prior to the child's start date. Please note that Family Advocates are assigned by classroom and the Advocate assisting with enrollment paperwork may not necessarily be the advocate assigned to the classroom.

The enrollment packet collects important information needed to meet regulatory requirements, support your child's health and development, and ensure CINHS can safely and effectively serve your child and family.

Information collected supports health monitoring, program planning, and family services. Incomplete or missing information may delay enrollment or impact participation. CINHS will provide follow-up and support to help families complete required forms.

Families are expected to carefully complete all required forms and submit documentation as requested.

## Enrollment Packet Documents

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.12; §1302.42; §1302.15

- [Emergency Contact Card](#)  
Provides the program with emergency contacts and information
- [Communication and Engagement Agreement](#)  
Provides expectations for partnership between parents and the program
- [Attendance Agreement](#)  
Provides expectations for student attendance
- [Lead Screening Form](#)  
Screens your child for lead risk at home

- **TB Risk Assessment**  
Screens your child for risk of tuberculosis
- **Dental Consent Form**  
Consent to have your child screened for dental care
- **SouthCentral Foundation ROI**  
Allows CINHS to coordinate some health-related documents with healthcare providers at ANMC, SouthCentral Foundation, and Alaska Native Tribal Health Consortium
- **CINHS ROI**  
Allows CINHS to coordinate additional health-related documents with other providers
- **Health History Form**  
Gives a comprehensive history of your child's health so CINHS can ensure safety and appropriate development
- **Health Exclusion Agreement**  
Provides information and expectations for keeping your child home when they are sick
- **CACFP Medical Statement**  
Collects information about food related medical concerns, including allergen information
- **Nutrition and Activity Survey**  
Collects information about your child's nutrition at home, including important allergy information and special dietary needs
- **CACFP Enrollment Form**  
Enrolls your child into the Child and Adult Food Care Program, which allows CINHS to provide nutritious meals to your student at no cost to families
- **ASQ Screening**  
Provides consent for your child to receive age-appropriate observation and screening for appropriate development
- **Mental Health Screening**  
Provides consent for your child to receive mental health screening
- **Alaska Native Cultural / Language Background**  
Collects information on your child's cultural identity
- **Media and Activity Consent**  
Provides consent for multiple items related to activities and education
- **Family Handbook Acknowledgement**  
Acknowledges that parents have received a copy of the family handbook and agree to follow the expectations it contains
- **Additional documents on a case-by-case basis**  
There may be additional documentation required on a case-by-case basis, including but not limited to health exemption forms, individual health care plans, or legal documentation. These requirements are in place to ensure your child's safety.

Once the application and enrollment process is complete, your family will be contacted with a start date by your assigned Family Advocate.



# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Program Structure and Information

### Operation & Program Options

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.21; §1302.24; §1302.31

As a Tribal Head Start, CINHS integrates Native and family culture into everything we do. We take great pride in our Native traditions and cultures.

CINHS offers both part-day and full-day program options for children and families. All classrooms utilize *The Way We See*, CINHS's cultural curriculum and maintain required staff-to-child ratios and group sizes in accordance with Head Start Performance Standards and licensing requirements.

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#### **Part-Day Program, Head Start only (Ages 3–5)**

The part-day Head Start program serves up to 17 children per classroom and with at least a 1:10 child to staff ratio. Classes operate Monday through Thursday in morning or afternoon sessions, each lasting approximately 3.5 hours, and extending from mid-August-late May.

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#### **Full-Day Program, Head Start (Ages 3–5 years)**

The full-day Head Start program serves up to 17 children per classroom and with at least a 1:10 child to staff ratio. Classes operate Monday through Thursday, each lasting approximately 7.5 hours, and extending from mid-August-late May.

---

#### **Full-Day Program, Early Head Start (Ages 6 weeks-3 years)**

The full-day Early Head Start program serves up to 8 children per classroom and with at least a 1:4 child to staff ratio. Classes operate Monday through Friday, each lasting approximately 7.5 hours, and extending from mid-August-late June.

---

#### **Program Features (All Options)**

All CINHS program options include:

- A Family Advocate assigned to each family
- Two Home Visits by education staff and two Home Visits by Family Advocates per program year
- A minimum of two Family conferences per year
- Nutritious meals and snacks served daily



- Family engagement opportunities, including center-wide family events
- A comprehensive school readiness program through cultural curriculum

## CINHS Classrooms

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.21(b); Alaska 7 AAC 57.505; AMC 16.55

### **Naqayeht'ana Tuh location (370 W 16th Avenue, Anchorage AK 99501)**

**907-433-1601**

#### **Early Head Start Classrooms**

- Alagnaq Classroom (8:30 AM-4:00 PM)
- Jak Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)
- Neigoon Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)

#### **Head Start Part Day Classrooms**

- Amgan AM Classroom (7:30 AM-11:00 AM)
- Amgan PM Classroom (12:00 PM-3:30PM)
- Chuq'eya AM Classroom (8:30 AM-12:00 PM)
- Chuq'eya PM Classroom (1:00 PM-4:00 PM)

#### **Head Start Full Day Classrooms**

- Caiggluk Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)
- Tiḡyuḡ Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)
- Uqpik Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)

### **Łuq'u Nakenu location (6901 E Tudor Road Suite 7, Anchorage Alaska 99507)**

**907-433-1600**

#### **Early Head Start Classrooms**

- Cetuaq Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)
- Uxchum Chiidaa Classroom (8:30 AM-4:00 PM)

#### **Head Start Part Day Classrooms**

- Aghveq AM Classroom (7:30 AM-11:00 AM)
- Aghveq PM Classroom (12:00 PM-3:30PM)
- Húuyei AM Classroom (8:30 AM-12:00 PM)
- Húuyei PM Classroom (1:00 PM-4:00 PM)

#### **Head Start Full Day Classrooms**

- K'uhda'i Classroom (8:30 AM-4:00 PM)
- Taquka'aq Classroom (7:30 AM-3:00 PM)



## Sample Classroom Schedules

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.31; Alaska 7 AAC 57.410; 7 AAC 57.520AMC 16.55.160

Sample classroom schedules are listed below for each of our program options (Early Head Start, Part Day Head Start, Full Day Head Start).

### **Sample Early Head Start Schedule**

8:30 – Arrival & Welcome  
9:00 – Breakfast & diaper check  
9:30 – Brush teeth  
10:00 – Gathering  
10:30 – Snack  
11:00 – Outside/walk  
12:00 – Lunch  
12:30–2:15 – Nap  
2:15 – PM snack (diapers, wash hands)  
2:45 – Outside or Gym  
3:45–4:00 – Goodbyes

### **Sample AM Head Start Classroom Schedule**

8:30 AM – Arrival & Welcome  
9:00 AM – Breakfast  
9:30 AM – Toothbrushing & Potty  
9:45 AM – Gathering  
10:15 AM – Small Group Activities / Free Play  
10:45 AM – Outside Time  
11:15 AM – Lunch  
11:45–12:00 PM – Leave-taking

**\*Schedules vary by classroom and teacher, and may change throughout the year. For the most up-to-date classroom schedule for your child’s classroom, please speak to your teacher.**

### **Sample PM Head Start Classroom Schedule**

1:00 PM – Arrival & Welcome  
1:30 PM – Lunch  
2:00 PM – Outside Time  
2:30 PM – Gathering  
3:15 PM – Small Group Activities / Free Play  
4:00 PM – Snack  
4:15 PM – Toothbrushing & Potty  
4:00–4:30 PM – Leave-taking

### **Sample Full Day Head Start Classroom Schedule**

- 8:30 AM – Arrival, wash hands
- 8:45 AM – “Firepit” Gathering
- 9:00 AM – Breakfast and Potty
- 9:30 AM – Outside/ Gym time
- 10:00 AM – Toothbrushing
- 10:15 AM – Free Choice and Teacher Directed Activities
- 11:15 AM – Reading Time
- 11:30 AM – Lunch and Potty
- 12:00 PM – Rest Time
- 1:15 PM - Free choice
- 1:45 PM – “Firepit” Gathering
- 2:00 PM – Snack
- 2:30 PM - Outside/Gym time
- 3:00 PM - Teacher’s choice and directed activities
- 4:00 PM - Goodbyes

## Calendar Summary

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.24**

The program calendars are designed to meet required annual hours of service in accordance with Head Start regulations.

The school year calendars for Early Head Start and Head Start are included as an appendix to this handbook. The calendars note important dates throughout the school year, including planned holidays, closures, workdays, and events. Families should refer to the calendars and program communications for updates throughout the year.

## Program Changes in Schedule or Calendar

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.102; §1302.50**

Planned closures (such as holidays, staff training days, and breaks) are scheduled in advance and shared with families at the beginning of the program year, listed on the school calendar, and shared through ongoing communication.

Unplanned closures (such as severe weather, facility issues, or other unexpected events) may occur with little notice.

### When unplanned closures occur:

Families will be notified primarily through the ChildPlus Communication App. Additional details will be provided as available.



Families are responsible to have a backup plan for child care when closures occur.

The program builds a limited number of emergency/weather closures into the calendar. If the number of emergency closure days exceed the amount built into the calendar, the program will determine a schedule for make-up hours which may require adjustments to the program calendar. Any adjustments to the program calendar will be communicated to families through the ChildPlus Communication App, email, or in person.

### ASD Weather Closures:

CINHS decides independently of the Anchorage School District regarding a weather-related closure. While we most often align with the School District when a weather-related closure occurs, parents should be sure to look for official communication from CINHS. Other unplanned program closures occur only as directed by the CINHS Executive Director.

## Parental Access and Visitation

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska 7 AAC 57.520; AMC 16.55

CINHS encourages active family involvement. Parents and guardians have access to their child at any time and to all areas of the center used by children, for the purpose of observing or participating. Access is subject to reasonable procedures to ensure the safety and supervision of all children.

To support a safe and consistent environment for all children, families are expected to follow all center procedures during visits, including sign-in requirements and staff direction.

## Transportation

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1303 Subpart F (as applicable); Alaska 7 AAC 57.565; AMC 16.55.230B-E

CINHS does not provide direct transportation services. Families are responsible for arranging transportation to and from the center each day.

Families who are experiencing challenges with transportation are encouraged to speak with their Family Advocate about available resources and support.

## Parents Guide to Licensed Childcare

As a licensed child care program, CINHS provides families with the State of Alaska's "Parent's Guide to Licensed Child Care" at the time of enrollment, as required by Alaska Child Care Licensing.

This document provides important information about how child care licensing works, including health and safety standards, monitoring practices, and the role families play in choosing and overseeing care.

A copy of this required notice is included as an appendix to this Family Handbook for your reference, and is accessible online at <https://health.alaska.gov/media/qxto12xo/cc61-parents-guide-to-licensed-care-teddy-bear-letter.pdf>

Families are encouraged to review this document as part of understanding their rights, responsibilities, and the standards that guide licensed child care programs.

## Fees and Costs

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.16(a); §1302.50; 42 U.S.C. §9839(a)

**All CINHS services are offered with no charges, tuitions, or fees to the family.** The program is funded through federal grants and other funding sources to support children and families in our community.

While there is no financial cost, families are expected to actively participate in the program, including regular attendance, engagement in services, and completion of required items. These expectations help ensure your child and family receive the full benefit of the program.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Attendance, Drop-off, and Pick up

### Early Childhood Education & School Readiness

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.1; §1302.31

CINHS is an early childhood education program and, as a school, has expectations for attendance, participation, engagement, and daily routines. The program helps prepare children for schooling, including building routines and attendance habits that support a successful transition to the Anchorage School District or other educational systems.

### Attendance Expectations

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.16(a)

Regular attendance supports a child's learning and development. Children are expected to attend consistently unless they are sick or there is another important reason.

**Families are required to notify the program front desk prior to the class start time if a child will be absent.**

- Łuq'u Nakenu location (Tudor): 907-433-1600
- Naqayeht'ana T'uh location (16th Street): 907-433-1601



**If a child is absent and the program has not been notified, Head Start requires the program to follow up with families to ensure the child's well-being and offer support if needed.**

### Attendance Monitoring & Support

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.16(b)

Head Start programs are required to actively manage enrollment and ensure program slots are used effectively. This includes monitoring attendance on an ongoing basis to identify patterns of absence and concern.

If a child's attendance falls below 90% or otherwise becomes a concern, the program will partner with families to understand challenges and create an Attendance Support and Success Plan to improve attendance.

If attendance does not improve, or if the program is unable to determine whether a child will continue attending, the program may need to consider changes to the child's participation or program option. In some situations, this may include discontinuing enrollment and returning the child to the waitlist if ongoing participation cannot be confirmed.

## Arrival & Tardiness

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.16(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.505

A child's class begins at the scheduled start time, and arrival after this time is considered tardy. Children are expected to arrive on time and ready to participate. Continued late arrival can disrupt learning, make it harder to transition into the classroom routine, and impact full participation in activities. Family advocates will partner with families to support consistent on-time attendance when tardiness becomes a concern.

If a family expects to arrive more than 30 minutes beyond the classroom start time, families are expected to notify the program front desk as soon as possible.

Children arriving more than 30 minutes after the scheduled class start time will be checked in by a Family Advocate or Family Advocate Supervisor, who will connect with the family and escort the parent/guardian and child to the classroom. This process helps support safe transitions into the classroom environment and provides an opportunity for staff to check in with families regarding attendance needs, barriers, or whether additional community resources are needed.



Continued patterns of late arrival will result in additional follow up in accordance with requirements from the Office of Head Start. If a family accrues three or more arrivals more than 30 minutes after the class start time, they will be required to create an Attendance Support and Success Plan with their Family Advocate.

## Pick-Up & End of Day

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska 7 AAC 57.505; AMC 16.55

Timely pick-up is required to ensure appropriate supervision, and staffing in accordance with licensing requirements.

Children are expected to be picked up at the scheduled end of the program day. Pick-up times are intended to occur at that time without an extended grace period. Picking children up on time supports their sense of security, routine, and overall well-being. Picking children up on time also demonstrates respect for staff schedules and their responsibilities outside of the classroom day.

If a family will be late picking up a child, they are expected to notify the program front desk as soon as possible.

If a child has not been picked up within 5 minutes after the scheduled end of the program day, staff will begin calling the family and emergency contacts to ensure someone is on their way.

If a child remains at school 30 minutes after the end of the program day and the program is unable to reach the family or emergency contacts, staff may need to follow required procedures to ensure the child's safety. This may include precautionary calls to APD or OCS.

Repeated late pick-ups may indicate a need for additional support. After three late pickups, your Family Advocate will connect with you to problem-solve, provide resources, and create an Attendance Support and Success Plan to support consistent pick-up times.

## Attendance Support and Success Plans

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.16(a), §1302.50, §1302.51, and §1302.15(c)

When attendance concerns arise, including repeated tardiness, frequent absences, inconsistent attendance patterns, continued late pickup, or attendance falling below program expectations, the program will begin a graduated attendance support process designed to identify barriers and work together on solutions before attendance concerns become more serious.

### Early Attendance Support

For initial attendance concerns, Family Advocates will check in with families to discuss:

- barriers impacting attendance,
- available program supports and community resources,
- transportation or scheduling concerns,
- and strategies to support improved attendance.

### Formal Attendance Plan

If attendance concerns continue, the program will initiate a formal Attendance Support and Success Plan. Attendance Plans are individualized and focus on developing parent-driven strategies for improved attendance. CINHS reviews these plans on a weekly basis to ensure that the identified strategies are successful, and if not, to move quickly on new strategies for success.

Attendance Plans may include:

- Plan A — Week 1 of intervention and initial support strategies,
- Plan B — Week 2 of intervention if attendance concerns continue after Plan A,
- Plan C — Week 3 of intervention if attendance concerns continue after Plan B. Movement between plan levels only occurs if prior interventions do not result in improvement.

### Attendance-Based Slot Management Review

If attendance concerns continue despite intervention efforts, the case may be officially referred for program review regarding attendance and slot management. This review may occur when:

- attendance patterns continue after completion of an Attendance Plan,
- attendance concerns return after a previously successful intervention,
- or attendance patterns become excessive enough to significantly impact consistent utilization of the assigned slot.

This review may include consideration of:

- additional attendance interventions,
- transition between full-day and part-day programming,

- reassignment to another session time,
- or other placement options that may better support consistent participation.

If program leadership determines that the currently assigned program option cannot be consistently utilized despite intervention efforts and reasonable attempts to identify alternative solutions, the program may proceed with reassignment of the slot and disenrollment. This is in accordance with enrollment management requirements from the Office of Head Start.

The program's goal is always to work collaboratively with families whenever attendance concerns arise and to provide reasonable opportunities for improvement and support before operational decisions regarding enrollment are considered.

## Emergency Contacts and Information

**Regulatory Reference: Alaska 7 AAC 57.620; AMC 16.55**

For child safety, only individuals identified on the emergency contact card may pick up a child. Individuals picking up a child must be prepared to present identification so staff can verify authorization.

CINHS follows legal documentation when determining who may access of pick up a child. In the absence of court or custody orders, both parents listed on the child's birth certificate are considered authorized and must be listed on the emergency contact card.

If there are court orders or custody arrangements that limit a parent's access, families must provide current legal documentation to CINHS. Staff can only enforce restrictions that are supported by documentation on file. Without up-to-date documentation, CINHS will follow the most recent information available, which may include allowing access to both parties.

Accurate and up-to-date emergency contact information is important for child safety and communication. Families are expected to notify the program as soon as possible of any changes, either to the contact information listed or to authorized individuals who are listed as emergency contacts.

Families are expected to share the program expectations and family handbook with anyone who may drop off or pick up their child so they have the same understanding of program requirements.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Student Health

### Health Exclusion Summary

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.520; AMC 16.55

CINHS follows all federal, state, and municipal regulations regarding when a child should be kept home or sent home from school when ill. We also follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, Managing Infectious Diseases in Child Care and School, 6th Edition. All of these regulations are considered in the Exclusion and Care Guidance Table which appears later in this handbook section.

**A child will be excluded when any one of the following applies:**

1. The child is not able to participate comfortably in program activities, including outdoor play
2. The child requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
3. The child has a condition that poses a risk of spreading infection to others
4. The school Certified Medical Assistant or program leadership determine the child is too ill safely participate
5. Required health documentation such as current physical, well-child exam, or up to date immunizations) has not been completed or provided within required timeframes
6. The child has frequent or recurring health-related absences and the program deems that medical evaluation is necessary prior to return

Additionally, CINHS serves children and families who may have complicated medical histories or vulnerabilities. Keeping your child home when they are sick helps protect others and reflects our shared Alaska Native value of caring for and respecting our extended community.

### Health Exclusion Expectations

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.520

- Families are expected to keep children home when exclusion criteria are met
- If symptoms develop during the program day, families will be contacted for pickup. If requested to pickup your child early for health reasons, parents are expected to facilitate pickup within one hour of contact so CINHS can limit exposure to other children, staff, and families.
- Emergency contacts will be called if a parent/guardian cannot be reached

### Children's Health and Outdoor play

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.31(e); Alaska 7 AAC 57.565; AMC 16.55

Outdoor play is a required part of the daily classroom schedule. Children must be well enough to participate in all parts of the program day, including outdoor play.



Due to required staff-to-child ratios, CINHS cannot accommodate children who require modified participation, one-on-one care, or remaining indoors due to illness.

## Health-Related Attendance and Follow-up

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.16; §1302.42

Illness-related absences are considered excused when they are communicated to the program in advance.

Head Start programs are required to support children's ongoing health and regular attendance. If a child experiences frequent health-related absences, CINHS may partner with the family to request a visit with the child's primary care provider. This supports the child's health and consistent attendance, in alignment with Head Start health requirements.

## Return-to-Care Requirements

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.520

A child excluded due to illness may return only when ALL of the following are met unless otherwise noted in the Exclusion and Care Guidance Table:

- Able to participate fully in all daily activities, including outdoor play
- Symptoms have improved
- Does not require additional care beyond what staff can safely provide
- No longer considered contagious, when applicable

## Doctor's Note Requirements

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(b); Alaska 7 AAC 57.540

**A doctor's note is generally REQUIRED when:**

- Returning before standard exclusion timeframe (e.g., before 24 hours after vomiting)
- A condition is potentially contagious and not clearly resolved
- The child was excluded for:
  - Rash of unknown cause
  - Breathing concerns
  - Mouth sores with drooling
  - Diagnosed communicable disease
- The child has been absent due to illness for three (3) or more consecutive program days

Doctor's notes must clearly indicate when a child is able to safely return to group care.

**A doctor's note is generally NOT REQUIRED when:**

- Fever-free for 24 hours without medication
- Diarrhea has resolved
- Vomiting has resolved for 24 hours
- Illness resolves within fewer than 3 consecutive program days.

A "program day" refers to any scheduled day the child was expected to attend.

## • Communicable Disease Notification

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(a)(1); Alaska 7 AAC 57.520

If a communicable illness is identified in a classroom, CINHS will notify families of potential exposure in alignment with program procedures. The ChildPlus Communication App will be the primary method for notifying families of potential exposure.



## Family Guidance on Seeking Medical Care

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42; §1302.46

Families know their child best. You should seek medical advice any time you feel it is needed and beyond your knowledge to treat, regardless of whether the thresholds listed in the Exclusion and Care Guidance table below have been met.

The Exclusion and Care Guidance Table is intended to support decision-making and does not replace the advice of your child's health care provider.

## Exclusion and Care Guidance Table

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.520

| Condition | What to Look For     | Exclude From School When                                                                                                       | Return to School When                                              | Doctor Note Required                           | When to Seek Medical Advice                                                                       |
|-----------|----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Fever     | Elevated temperature | Fever higher than 101°F with behavior change or other symptoms, OR greater than or equal to 100.4 °F in infants under 2 months | Fever-free for 24 hours without medication AND able to participate | NO, unless there are 3 or more school absences | Fever lasts more than 3 days, exceeds 104°F, or child is unusually lethargic or difficult to wake |
| Diarrhea  | Loose/watery stools, | Cannot be contained, causes accidents,                                                                                         | Resolved AND able to participate                                   | NO, unless there are 3 or                      | Signs of dehydration (dry mouth, no tears,                                                        |

| Condition                  | What to Look For                              | Exclude From School When                                                                        | Return to School When                            | Doctor Note Required                                                                           | When to Seek Medical Advice                                                               |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                            | increased frequency                           | exceeds 2 above normal, OR impacts care of others                                               |                                                  | more school absences                                                                           | decreased urination), blood in stool, or lasts more than 3 days                           |
| Vomiting                   | Episodes of vomiting                          | 2 or more episodes in 24 hours                                                                  | No vomiting for 24 hours AND able to participate | YES – if returning before 24 hours OR cause unclear, OR if there are 3 or more school absences | Persists beyond 24 hours, dehydration signs, severe abdominal pain, or blood/bile present |
| Rash                       | Unexplained rash                              | Rash with fever/behavior change OR suspected communicable disease                               | Resolved OR cleared by provider                  | YES – if cause unknown or there are 3 or more school absences                                  | Rapid spread, pain, blistering, open sores, or accompanied by fever                       |
| Behavior Change / Lethargy | Unusual tiredness, irritability, not engaging | Unable to participate, other symptoms are present, or requires more care than staff can provide | Returns to baseline AND able to participate      | NO, unless there are 3 or more school absences                                                 | Difficult to wake, unresponsive, or sudden significant change in behavior                 |
| Respiratory Symptoms       | Cough, congestion, breathing difficulty       | Difficulty breathing, persistent uncontrolled cough, or                                         | Improved AND able to participate                 | YES – if excluded for breathing concerns OR if there are 3 or more                             | Rapid breathing, wheezing, retractions, bluish lips/face, or                              |

| Condition                      | What to Look For               | Exclude From School When                        | Return to School When                        | Doctor Note Required                                                                      | When to Seek Medical Advice                                     |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                |                                | unable to participate                           |                                              | school absences                                                                           | worsening symptoms                                              |
| Mouth Sores with Drooling      | Mouth sores and drooling       | Uncontrolled drooling AND unable to participate | Resolved OR cleared by provider              | YES                                                                                       | Unable to eat/drink, dehydration signs, or worsening sores      |
| Skin Lesions / Sores           | Open, draining sores           | Cannot be fully covered OR actively draining    | Dry or fully covered                         | NO, unless there are 3 or more school absences                                            | Increasing redness, swelling, pain, pus, or spreading infection |
| Communicable Disease (General) | Symptoms of infectious illness | Considered contagious OR exclusion recommended  | No longer contagious AND able to participate | YES – when needed to confirm non-contagious status OR there are 3 or more school absences | Symptoms worsen, do not improve, or diagnosis is unclear        |

## Program Exclusion Authority

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.520

CINHS retains the authority to exclude or send a child home at any time if the Certified Medical Assistant (CMA) or program leadership determines the child is too ill to safely participate, even if the specific symptoms listed in the Exclusion and Care Guidance Table listed in the family handbook are not explicitly met.

This determination is based on professional judgment to protect the health and safety of the child, other children, and staff.

## Health Documentation Requirements and Exclusion

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(b); Alaska 7 AAC 57.550; AMC 16.55

In addition to illness-related exclusions, children may be excluded from care if required health documentation is not completed within required timeframes.

CINHS follows Head Start Performance Standards, State of Alaska child care licensing requirements, and Municipality of Anchorage childcare licensing requirements related to children's health records, including physical exams, well child check-ups, and immunizations.

The Municipality of Anchorage requires CINHS to exclude children from care when:

- Required health documentation (including a current physical or well child exam) has not been completed within five weeks of enrollment
- Immunizations are not up to date, and no valid exemption is on file at the time of enrollment
- Required follow-up documentation or updates have not been provided after reasonable notice



**Parents are STRONGLY encouraged to ensure these items are complete prior to the first day of school to avoid disruptions to their child's routine and participation.**

## Program Health Documentation Expectations

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42; §1302.50

- Families are expected to complete and submit all required health documentation within established timelines
- Families are expected to stay in communication with staff regarding appointments and documentation status
- CINHS will provide reminders and support to help families meet these requirements

## Health Documentation Support and Follow-Up

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42; §1302.46

CINHS recognizes that scheduling appointments and obtaining documentation can sometimes be challenging. Staff will work in partnership with families to:

- Provide reminders of upcoming or overdue requirements
- Assist in identifying health care providers or resources
- Allow reasonable time for families to obtain documentation when progress is being made

## Return-to-Care Requirements (Documentation-Based Exclusion)

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42(b); Alaska 7 AAC 57.550

A child excluded due to missing health documentation may return to care once required documentation has been submitted, reviewed, and cleared by the Certified Medical Assistant and Family Services Manager.

## Health Documentation Program Authority

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.42; Alaska 7 AAC 57.550; AMC 16.55

CINHS retains the authority to exclude a child from attendance if required health documentation is not completed, in order to remain compliant with licensing requirements and Head Start regulations, and to ensure the health and safety of all children.

## Frequent and Recurring Health-Related Absences Exclusion

**Regulatory Reference:** 45 CFR §1302.42(a)(1), §1302.42(b)(1), 45 CFR §1302.47(b)(4); 7 AAC 57.520; 7 AAC 57.500

In some cases, a child may be required to obtain a medical evaluation prior to returning to care when there are frequent or recurring health-related absences.

This determination is made by the program to ensure the child is healthy, able to fully participate, and that any underlying health concerns are appropriately and quickly diagnosed and addressed. This requirement is consistent with Head Start health standards and supports the health and safety of all children.

## Medication Administration

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47; Alaska 7 AAC 57.550

Parents and guardians are required to inform the Certified Medical Assistant of any medications their children receive before arriving at the program. Medications to control a fever will not be administered by program staff and children with a fever above 100.4 degrees are considered sick and are to stay home. All medications administered while a child is at CINHS are documented daily on the child's Medication Authorization Form and Log. All medications at Center are kept inaccessible to children. All empty or unused medication containers are returned to the child's family. Prescription, over-the-counter medications, or sunscreen will only be administered when:

- The staff person administering the medication has been trained;
- The medication is in the original container;
- The parent provides written consent.
- The Certified Medical Assistant and Director or designee provides consent for the medication to be administered in the facility;
- The medication is not expired;
- The doctor has provided written notice of approval (for over-the-counter medication);
- The medication has the name of the child and the dosage to be administered;
- The name of the prescribing doctor is listed on the original container (for prescription medication); and,
- The medication has the original prescription label attached.

## Types of Medication

Topical products, as approved by the health department, whether brought in by the parent or a facility supply may be used with prior written parent/guardian permission. Use shall not exceed manufacturer's directions. The approval for application of sunscreen or diaper rash ointments is on a one-time permission form signed during or after enrollment.

**Injected Medications:** While CINHS recognizes a child may require injected medication during attendance at Head Start/Early Head Start as part of treatment for a known medical condition or an injection may be required to deal with a life-threatening event (such as allergic reaction), injection of medication is recognized as an invasive procedure and may occur during attendance at CINHS only when necessary to allow a child's program attendance. Arrangements for administration of injected medication must be reflected on an Individual Health Care Plan for the child that includes avoiding triggers, symptoms to watch for, how and when to administer, medication side effects and when to call emergency personnel. While any required on-going injected medication will be administered by a CINHS staff certified medical professional, all CINHS staff are trained in the use of emergency injectable medications (ex. Epi-pens).

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Daily Classroom Management

### Classroom Drop-Off and Sign-In Expectations

At CINHS, we know that a supportive drop-off process can set your child up for a successful day of learning. We ask that families help us in the following ways:

- Sign your child into the classroom and initial beside your arrival time
- Check in with teachers to share any new information they may need to know
- Check your child's backpack to ensure it contains no outside food or drink or any toys that may detract from your child's learning
- Assist your child with their first use of the classroom toilet or conduct the first diaper change of the day
- Wash hands with your child to help ensure the classroom is kept as free of outside germs as possible
- Transition your child to join in morning play, meal, or group activity

These steps may not be the best fit to set your child up for a successful day of learning. We ask that you please work with your Teachers and Family Advocates to create a drop-off routine that helps to meet the needs of your learner and family

### Children with Special Needs

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.60; §1302.61; §1302.63**

At Cook Inlet Native Head Start, we know every child brings his or her own unique strengths and needs to the learning process. CINHS works collaboratively with families of children with special needs and our community partners to create a supportive, developmentally appropriate learning environment in which all children can grow and learn. Every child enrolled with CINHS receives developmental and social-emotional screenings, ongoing assessment and, as appropriate, referral for further specialized assessment and/or services. Inclusion of children with special needs is important to the CINHS program and we make every effort to enroll and best serve eligible children with special needs through collaborative partnering and by ensuring CINHS staff are trained and supported.



## Children's Personal Belongings

**Regulatory Reference: Alaska 7 AAC 57.540; 7 AAC 57.550**

CINHS employees may check any child's backpack and/or bag before entering class to ensure school safety. Items that may pose a safety risk are not permitted in the classroom. Children's personal toys and food from home are not permitted in the center.

Medications must not be sent to school in children's backpacks. All medications must be given directly to CINHS staff (CMA, classroom teachers) by the child's adult family member.

Extra set of clothing to keep at CINHS: When children's clothing becomes soiled during their time at school, children are changed into extra clothing from home (the child's soiled clothing is then returned home in a plastic bag). Because CINHS serves many families, parents are expected to ensure their child always has a full set of clean, dry clothing at school to change into if necessary.

Proper outerwear: As children participate in outdoor play during their time at CINHS each day (weather permitting), it is very important to make sure your child arrives at school prepared to be outdoors. We count on our families to be sure children come prepared with appropriate outdoor gear. CINHS follows the same guidelines as Anchorage School District and children play outside until the temperature reaches -10 degrees Fahrenheit with wind chill and play outside in light rain or damp. If you need assistance obtaining outdoor gear for your child, please contact your Family Advocate.

Proper Footwear: Due to safety concerns, we at CINHS ask that you do not send your child to school in open-toed shoes. Students need adequate footwear to play both inside and outside.

We ask that you please label all clothing, and any other personal items, with your child's first and last name to help us make sure missing items find their way home. Unlabeled lost and found items are kept so they can be retrieved; the front desk staff can help families access the lost and found items.

## Potty Training Support

We recognize that each family and child approaches transitioning from diapers to using the toilet independently in their own way and at their own pace. Potty training is a big milestone, and we want to partner with families to support each child in a positive, respectful, and developmentally appropriate way. When your family is prepared to begin your potty training journey, please reach out to your child's teacher to discuss the level of support you are giving your child and what your process looks like so that teachers can do their best to mirror that in the classroom. Keeping the bathroom routine as consistent as possible between school and home is key to supporting successful potty training.

Teachers are trained to assist children in the bathroom as needed, placing their body between the child and the rest of the class to provide as much privacy as possible while assisting in the bathroom stall. This also allows teachers to maintain their classroom supervision. In addition, each classroom keeps diapering/bathroom logs to document the assistance they provide each child in the classroom and help track the frequency of bathroom opportunities throughout the day. Families are welcome to see these if they have any questions about potty training practices in the classroom.

If your family has any questions about readiness for potty training, questions about providing your child with positive support during the learning process, or want support developing a potty training routine that works for you, please reach out to your child's teacher at any time.

## Children's Birthdays/Outside Food

**Regulatory Reference:** 7 CFR §226 (CACFP); Alaska 7 AAC 57.560

Cook Inlet Native Head Start (CINHS) recognizes that birthdays are an important event. However, because we serve families who may have diverse allergies, no cakes or outside food may be brought into the classrooms for celebrations. This is in compliance with USDA food requirements. As a latex and choking hazard aware facility, balloons are prohibited in our center. We suggest party hats, tablecloths, plates or cups as a welcomed celebration alternative.

## Classroom Pets & Visiting Animals

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska 7 AAC 57.540; 7 AAC 10.1090(b); AMC 16.55,

CINHS believes animals can play a valuable role in the classroom by providing a wide variety of learning experiences for children. All classroom animals (visiting or residents) must be pre-approved by the CINHS Education Manager and are arranged in accordance with Municipal Code and state law.

## Use of Electronics

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska 7 AAC 57.520; HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.31; AMC 16.55.190C-E

CINHS believes appropriate programming for young children focuses on active learning and exploration. At times, electronics may be used to supplement learning activities with pre-approval by the Education Manager. iPads with educational programs are also utilized within CINHS classrooms to enhance learning through teacher facilitation and always under teacher supervision.

Screen use is limited and used only to support developmentally appropriate learning activities.

Screen viewing time, including TV, computers, and hand-held devices, will not be used for children under the age of two. For children over the age of two, screen time will be limited to no more than one hour in a 24-hour period, except for special occasions. Additionally, the screen viewing time will be for physical or educational purposes specially designed for the interest and benefit of the child.

Children are not required to participate in screen viewing activities. If you would like to opt out of screen viewing activities for your child, please speak with your classroom teacher so we can arrange alternate activities during such times.

## Volunteers

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.90(b); Alaska 7 AAC 57.310; AMC 16.55

Family members and community volunteers (such as parents/guardians, Elders, college students in practicum experiences and others) are always invited to share their time and talents at our center. Volunteers are considered any family or community member that is in the classroom more than 8 hours in a 30 day period. Anchorage Municipal Codes may require that all volunteers pass a background check, including fingerprint cards, as well as health screening and TB test. Volunteers are not counted

in teacher/child ratios, but are utilized to enrich interactions and provide additional attention to children. Volunteer time is also an important way to help CINHS reach its required federal financial “match”. If you are interested in volunteering, please talk with any staff member to obtain a volunteer application. Thank you for considering investing in your time with the program!

## On-Call Teachers

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.91; Alaska 7 AAC 57.300

All CINHS on-call teachers are carefully screened with the same level of background checks as other staff and receive regular trainings. Should your child’s teacher require extended leave, CINHS will provide you with additional detailed information.

## Outdoor Play

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska 7 AAC 57.520; HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.31(e)

In compliance with Municipal code, all CINHS children play outdoors for 30 minutes for every four hours of care when weather conditions are permissible (time outdoors may be shortened due to severe weather). Consistent with Anchorage School District Policy, children will remain indoors when temperatures are lower than -10 degrees Fahrenheit (with wind chill). Any exclusion from outdoor play must be coordinated with the CINHS CMA and approved by the CINHS Education Manager.

Due to required staff ratios, CINHS is unable to accommodate requests for individual children to remain indoors during outdoor play time. Children who are too ill or who are otherwise unable to participate in all of the daily activities, including outdoor play, should remain home.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Social Emotional Learning and Behavior Supports

### The Pyramid Model

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.31; §1302.45; §1302.46; §1302.47;

At CINHS, we are committed to creating a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment where every child can learn, grow, and thrive. One of the keyways we do this is by using the Pyramid Model, a research-based framework that helps teachers support children's social-emotional development and positive behavior.

The Pyramid Model is an approach used in early childhood programs across the country to promote healthy relationships, emotional skills, and positive behavior in young children. It is designed to support all children, while also providing additional support for those who may need it.

The Pyramid Model is designed with three tiers:

#### **Tier 1: Universal Supports (For All Children)**

At the base of the pyramid are practices that benefit every child in our program. These include:

- Building warm, caring relationships with children and families
- Creating predictable daily routines
- Teaching social-emotional skills like sharing, taking turns, and expressing feelings
- Using positive guidance and encouragement

#### **Tier 2: Targeted Supports (For Some Children)**

Some children may need extra support to develop social or emotional skills. For these children, teachers may:

- Provide small group activities focused on friendship skills or emotional understanding
- Use visual supports, such as picture schedules or cue cards
- Offer additional coaching and practice in specific skills

#### **Tier 3: Individualized Supports (For a Few Children)**

A small number of children may need more individualized support. In these cases, we work closely with families and specialists to:

- Understand the child's unique strengths and needs
- Develop a personalized support plan
- Use consistent strategies across home and school

By using the Pyramid Model we are teaching children how to express their feelings in healthy ways, helping them to build strong friendships, reducing challenging behaviors through proactive support, and creating a positive and inclusive classroom environment.



Families are an essential part of the Pyramid Model. We believe children do best when there is strong communication and consistency between home and school. If you have questions about the Pyramid Model or how we support your child, please get in touch with your Special Needs Coordinator

## Behavior Guidance Practices

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.17(a); §1302.31; AMC 16.55.200; 7 AAC 57.535

CINHS prohibits center practices that are harmful, humiliating, or punitive to a child. This includes:

- Corporal punishment or physical discipline
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory language
- Discipline related to food, rest, or toileting
- Use of restraint, except with necessary to ensure immediate safety

Children are not removed from the group for extended periods. If a child demonstrates ongoing unsafe behavior, exclusionary practices are only used as a last resort when safety cannot otherwise be maintained.

In these situations, CINHS will work in partnership with families to develop a written plan that includes individualized supports to help the child succeed in the program.

## Positive Behavior Support Strategies

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.45(a); §1302.31(b)

CINHS firmly believes that every child has individual needs and talents and that the potential of every child's life can be improved if opportunities for growth and development are met in a positive, helpful and safe manner through the use of positive guidance. Positive guidance involves using positive, encouraging and proactive methods to help children maintain and learn appropriate behaviors.

Positive guidance is never physically and/or emotionally punitive. Rather, relationships with children are built through honesty, consistency and trust. Positive guidance capitalizes on the moments when children are following expectations and uses times of inappropriate behavior as opportunities to teach the skills children need to become more successful.

By using positively phrased communication and consistent positive guidance strategies, children are able to learn what they can do rather than what they cannot do. Positive guidance helps children learn social expectations, how to navigate their friendships and what to do with strong emotions, all in a safe and loving environment.

While there are no punishments in positive guidance, there are limits and consequences. For more information on positive guidance, please visit the Center on Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning website at [www.csefel.vanderbilt.edu](http://www.csefel.vanderbilt.edu) or ask to speak with the Education Manager or the Special Needs Coordinator.

# Suspension & Expulsion Policies

Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.17(a); Alaska 7 AAC 57.500; 7 AAC 57.535

## Suspension

CINHS prohibits or severely limits the use of suspension due to a child's behavior. Any suspension will be temporary and used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated through reasonable supports.

Before determining whether a temporary suspension is necessary, CINHS will:

- Collaborate with the child's parents/guardians
- Utilize appropriate community resources (such as behavior specialists, psychologists, or other providers)
- Implement and document reasonable modifications and supports

If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, CINHS will support the child's return to full participation as quickly as possible while maintaining safety by:

- Continuing collaboration with parents/guardians and the appropriate community resource
- Continuing to utilize appropriate community resources
- Developing a written Behavior Support Plan outlining supports and next steps
- Providing services, which may include home visits
- Determining whether referral to additional support services is appropriate

## Expulsion

CINHS will not expel or unenroll a child due to behavior.

If a child exhibits persistent and serious unsafe behaviors, CINHS will explore and document all possible steps to support the child's safe participation in the program. These steps include:

- Collaborating with parents/guardians and teaching staff
- Considering whether the child may be eligible for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- Coordinating with appropriate agencies (such as early intervention or school district services) to determine eligibility for additional supports, when applicable
- If a child has an IFSP or IEP, CINHS will collaborate with the appropriate service providers to ensure needed supports are in place. If the child does not have an IFSP or IEP, CINHS will work with the family, with consent, to explore eligibility for services.

If, after all reasonable supports have been implemented and documented, the child's continued enrollment presents a serious safety risk that cannot be mitigated, CINHS will work

in partnership with the family and appropriate agencies to facilitate a transition to a more appropriate placement.

## Safety Planning for Behavioral Concerns

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.17(b); §1302.45; §1302.50; §1302.52; §1302.17(b); §1302.61; Alaska 7 AAC 57.505

At CINHS, we make every effort to ensure all children and staff are safe during their time at the center. We respond to a wide range of learning styles and needs and value your child's individuality. Should your child present unsafe behaviors (such as hitting, throwing things, causing harm to another child or adult) or become unable to control themselves in a safe manner, you will be informed by telephone, in writing, or both. Should it become necessary to work with your family and child to help make positive changes in his/her behavior, we will work together as a team using all available documentation, observation, developmental screenings and assessments to create a plan for success for your child's time at CINHS. The CINHS Special Needs Coordinator will also work with your child's CINHS team and family when needed to make additional recommendations that may include service provision at home for a time or more appropriate services for your child such as Anchorage School District services and/ or transfer to a therapeutic preschool setting to ensure child and staff safety.

CINHS uses many alternative steps and intervention strategies to prevent exclusion of a child from the program. Any exclusion must be documented and discussed with the child's family prior to exclusion and all exclusions must be reviewed and approved by the CINHS Special Needs Coordinator.

Exclusions will only occur if:

- There is a violation of the Behavior Support Plan that includes a refusal, lack of or decline in parental plan participation, or
- The safety and welfare of the child, classmates or employees has been determined to be a significant risk.

Should a child be excluded from program for any length of time, CINHS will provide developmentally appropriate education experiences at home during the exclusion period. A Behavior Support Plan will be developed by the CINHS Special Needs Coordinator in collaboration with the child's teachers and family before a child will be able to return to school.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Developmental Screenings and Special Services Referrals

### Developmental and Mental Health Screenings

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.33; §1302.14

In ordinance with the Head Start Performance Standards, and with parental consent, each parent must complete a current developmental screening to identify concerns regarding a child's developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive, and emotional skills within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program. The developmental and behavioral screenings that Cook Inlet Native Head Start use are called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional. These developmental screening tools are the first step in helping us determine if your child's development is on track, similar to a screening you might fill out at your child's well-child visits with their physician.

Additionally, Cook Inlet Native Head Start collaborates with families as partners in the health, mental health, and well-being of your child in a linguistically and culturally appropriate manner. We provide both families and students access to mental health consultants and their community resources, with parental consent. Our mental health consultants provide consultation services that strengthen and support the mental health and social emotional development of the children in our program.

### Developmental and Behavioral Support for Your Child

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.31; §1302.33; §1302.34; §1302.45; §1302.47; §1302.60; §1302.61; §1302.63

At Cook Inlet Native Head Start, we believe every child grows and learns at their own pace. Our goal is to partner with families to support each child's development, behavior, and overall well-being in a caring and respectful way.

#### What Happens if There Are Concerns?

Sometimes families or teachers may notice concerns about a child's development, learning, or behavior. When this happens, we work together to better understand your child's needs and provide support.

You can share concerns at any time—there is no waiting period for family concerns.

#### How the Process Works

##### **1. Share Your Concerns**

Families can talk with their child's teacher or Family Advocate at any time about concerns related to development, behavior, or emotional well-being.

##### **2. Initial Support in the Classroom**

Teachers create supportive classroom environments using research-based practices (like the Pyramid Model) and may begin trying strategies to help your child succeed.

##### **3. Team Review and Observation**

Our Special Needs Coordinator may observe your child in the classroom and gather information to better understand their strengths and needs.



#### **4. Communication with Families**

We will stay in regular contact with you to share what we are seeing, hear your perspective, and talk about next steps.

#### **5. Additional Support (if needed)**

If concerns continue, we may:

- Conduct developmental or behavioral screenings
- Consult with specialists (such as our Anchorage School District Special Education teachers)
- Offer additional classroom supports

Your permission is always required before any formal evaluation.

#### **Family Meetings (P.A.C.T. Meetings)**

If more support is needed, we will invite you to a P.A.C.T. (Parents, Advocates, Coordinators, and Teachers) Meeting. These meetings are a chance to work together as a team.

#### **At the First Meeting, We Will:**

- Talk about your child's strengths and needs
- Listen to your priorities and concerns
- Review observations and any screening results
- Create a plan to support your child (if needed)

This plan may include strategies used at school and ideas you can use at home.

#### **After the Meeting:**

- Staff will use agreed-upon strategies consistently
- Progress will be monitored over time
- We will stay in communication with you

#### **If Needed, a Second Meeting May Be Held:**

- Review your child's progress
- Decide if a referral for a formal evaluation by our ASD Special Education Team may be helpful

#### **Behavior and Safety**

If serious behaviors occur (such as hurting others, hurting themselves, or unsafe actions), staff will document the incidents with a Behavior Incident Report and communicate directly with you.

If frequent incidents occur, a team meeting will be scheduled to develop an Individual Behavior Support Plan to better support your child.



### Mental Health and Family Support

If your child or family is experiencing a difficult time (such as grief, stress, or major life changes), please let us know. We can connect you with our Mental Health Consultant to provide additional support and resources.

If you ever have questions or concerns, please reach out to your child's teacher, Family Advocate, or the CINHS Special Needs Coordinator—we are here to support you and your child every step of the way.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Center Supervision and Safety

### Supervision of Children

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b); Alaska 7 AAC 57.500; 7 AAC 57.505

CINHS maintains staff-to-child ratios in accordance with Head Start and licensing requirements to ensure children are safely supervised at all times. Supervision is primarily provided by classroom staff, with additional support from other qualified staff as appropriate to the activity.

A designated supervisor is present at each center to oversee daily operations. In their absence, a qualified staff member provides on-site supervision, and program leadership ensures coverage is maintained.

Children are supervised at all times by staff who remain within sight or sound and are aware of each child's location and needs in all settings, including classrooms, transitions, and outdoor areas.

Children must be signed in and out by a parent/guardian or authorized adult. Families are responsible for escorting children to and from their assigned classroom or group area. CINHS staff may only supervise enrolled children, and all individuals authorized for pick-up must be listed on the emergency contact card, be at least 16 years old, and may be asked to present identification.

### Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b)(5); Alaska Statute AS 47.17.020

Children's safety is the highest responsibility of the program. Alaska State Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting law (section 47.17) and the Municipality of Anchorage Code require Head Start staff and all licensed child care providers to report suspected or known cases of child abuse and neglect to the Office of Children's Services or other authorities.

Staff are required to report suspected incidents regardless of where the suspected incident occurred. All incidents of suspected or known child abuse or neglect are reported to the Office of Children's services within 24 hours. All reports are confidential.

### What is considered abuse or neglect?

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska Statute AS 47.17.290

State law defines child abuse or neglect as physical injury that harms or threatens a child's health or welfare, failure to care for a child, including neglect of the necessary physical needs: (food, shelter, clothing, and medical attention), emotional, mental, and social needs. • Sexual abuse, including molestation or incest.



## Unsupervised Child Policy and Procedure

Lack of supervision may be considered child neglect. This could include children twelve (12) years of age or younger left unsupervised at home or unattended in a vehicle. Alaska State Law requires that incidents of child abuse or neglect be reported to the office of children's Services (OCS).

Many CINHS families have additional children who do not attend the program. Please do not leave any child under age 12 unattended in your vehicle during drop off, pick up, or any other time. CINHS is required to make a report of concern if we are aware of children left unattended in vehicles.

## Family Safety

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b); §1302.46**

CINHS serves families from a variety of backgrounds, and is a safe place for parents and families who may be dealing with domestic violence, drug and alcohol use in the home or unplanned homelessness. Trained staff are available during center hours to assist families in obtaining immediate resources.

We recognize that even stable family situations can experience unexpected barriers. We encourage all families to reach out for support when needed.

## Fire and Earthquake Safety

**Regulatory Reference: Alaska 7 AAC 57.560; AMC 16.55**

CINHS meets all safety standards. An emergency evacuation plan is practiced and documented, with emergency drills scheduled regularly. During fire drills, children are led to a safe area outside of the building. Earthquake drills are held within the building.

## Smoke, Tobacco, Drug, and Alcohol-Free Environment

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b)(9); Alaska Statute AS 18.35**

CINHS is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and staff. The use of tobacco, including smoking and smokeless tobacco products, is prohibited in all CINHS buildings, vehicles, and surrounding property.

CINHS also maintains a drug- and alcohol-free environment at all program sites and events. Individuals who appear to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol may be asked to leave or make alternative arrangements for child pick-up to ensure safety.

Staff will work with families to support safe and appropriate arrangements when needed.

## Violence and Threats

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b)(9); Alaska Statute AS 18.35

Violence or threats on CINHS property or directed toward CINHS staff or property will not be tolerated. Any parent, family member, volunteer, contractor, consultant or visitor who engages in violence or making threats of violence or intent to harm another individual or themselves will be asked to leave the premises until an investigation can be conducted. CINHS reserves the right to deny access to the premises or sponsored events indefinitely depending on the results of the investigation.

## Prohibition of Weapons

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b); Alaska Statute AS 11.61; 7 AAC 10.1080(c)

To ensure the safety of all children, families, and staff, weapons are not permitted on CINHS property.

This includes, but is not limited to, firearms, ammunition, knives, or any item that may be used to cause harm. This policy applies to all individuals, regardless of permits or license. Any person who brings a weapon to the facility will be asked to leave immediately.

## Plant Safety

**Regulatory Reference:** Alaska 7 AAC 57.540; 7 AAC 10.1095; HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.47(b)

Plants in the facility will not be poisonous. If there is valid educational reason to have a plant that is considered poisonous, a plant safety plan must be completed and submitted to licensing, and will include information on the plant, the location, and how staff will protect the children from it.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Student Nutrition

### Meals and Snacks

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.44(a); 7 CFR §226 (CACFP); Alaska 7 AAC 57.560

All meals and snacks served at CINHS meet USDA food program requirements and are low in fat, sugar, and salt. Each CINHS meal provides one-third of a child's daily nutritional requirement. Meals are prepared on-site and are served family style. Children and staff sit together for mealtimes and children are encouraged to serve their own food (as age appropriate).

CINHS is a food and nut allergy aware facility. Each child with a documented food allergy must have an Individualized Health Care Plan on file coordinated through the CMA and signed by the child's physician prior to the child's start date.

Due to potential allergens and federal nutrition program requirements, no outside food is allowed in CINHS classrooms.

Meals are part of the daily program and are provided at no cost to families.

The sample two week menu is provided to help families understand the types of meals and snacks provided. Menus may vary based on availability, seasonal items, and program needs. CINHS publishes the menu monthly prior to their use in the classroom. Questions or comments about the menu may be addressed to the Executive Assistant at 907-433-1602.

### Sample two week menu

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.44(a); 7 CFR §226.20; AMC 16.55.220A.2; 7 AAC 47.560(a)

| Day       | Breakfast                                | Lunch                                                                          | Snack                              |
|-----------|------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Monday    | French Toast<br>Pears                    | Harvest Stew<br>Pineapple and Mango<br>Wheat Roll                              | Baked Sweet Potatoes<br>and Apples |
| Tuesday   | Mixed Fruit<br>Muffins<br>Scrambled Eggs | Fish Pie<br>Arugula/Spinach with Italian<br>Dressing<br>Mandarin Oranges       | Bean and Cheese Burrito            |
| Wednesday | Shredded Wheats<br>Blueberries           | Chicken Curry Casserole<br>Yogurt Sunflower Seed Dip<br>Carrots<br>Raspberries | Tuna Salad (F-11)<br>Wheat Thins   |

|          |                                   |                                                        |                                   |
|----------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Thursday | Waffles<br>Strawberries<br>Yogurt | Rainbow Rice with Buffalo<br>Broccoli Bites<br>Oranges | Graham Crackers<br>Fruit Smoothie |
| Friday   | Cream of Wheat<br>Mixed Fruit     | Quick Quesadilla<br>Green Beans<br>Banana              | Blueberry Lemon Parfait           |

## Week 2

| Day       | Breakfast                              | Lunch                                                                  | Snack                    |
|-----------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Monday    | Peaches<br>Cream of Wheat              | Stir-fry Fajita with Chicken<br>Squash and corn<br>Brown Rice<br>Pears | Cheese Stick<br>Honeydew |
| Tuesday   | Cheerios<br>Bananas                    | Beef Sliders<br>Baked Carrots<br>Mixed Berry                           | Goldfish<br>Zucchini     |
| Wednesday | Applesauce<br>WG Bagel<br>Cream Cheese | Turkey Bean Soup<br>Apples<br>WG Tortilla Chips                        | Ritz<br>Mandarin Oranges |
| Thursday  | Oatmeal<br>Mixed Berries               | Baked Salmon<br>Quinoa Salad<br>Orange Vinaigrette<br>Fruit Salad      | Peaches<br>Fruity Dip    |
| Friday    | Avocado<br>Scrambled eggs<br>Tortilla  | Ground beef Spaghetti<br>Apples/Pears<br>WG Noodles                    | Strawberries<br>Yogurt   |

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Parent Program Involvement

### Parent Involvement

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.50; §1302.51**

CINHS believes direct involvement of parents and guardians is an integral part of our program's success. We strongly encourage family members to volunteer and to become a part of the overall planning of our program. Please ask your teacher, Family Advocate or any staff member on ways to become involved.

### Generational Council

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1301.4**

The Generational Council (previous years known as Parent Committee) is formulated by a group of family members who would like to voluntarily participate in the enhancement of our program by generating resources aligned with *The Way We See*, supporting the development and implementation of cultural celebrations, and increasing the amount of Indigenous language usage throughout the program.

As required by the Federal Government, all Head Start/Early Head Start Programs must have a group of members with parents/caretakers of children who are enrolled in the program. We invite any parents, grandparents, and caretakers of Cook Inlet Native Head Start to join the Generational Council and would like to have at least one person to represent each of the following cultural groups.

#### CULTURAL GROUPS

1. Yup'ik/Cupik
2. Iñupiaq/St. Lawrence Island Yupik
3. Dene
4. Unanga/Suqpiq
5. Eyak/Tlingit/Haida/Ts'msyen

### Policy Council

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1301.3; §1301.5**

CINHS Policy Council is made up of parents/guardians of enrolled CINHS children and community representatives nominated and elected as early in the school year as possible to assist with CINHS programming. Policy Council meetings are held once a quarter throughout the school year at a time and date set by the Council. Policy Council members serve as an additional layer of program governance as required for all Head Starts. Policy Council members help guide program decisions, including policies and funding. Please talk with your child's teacher or your Family Advocate if you are interested in serving on or participating with Policy Council. Your voice helps shape the services we provide to children and families.

Matters that may come before Policy Council include but are not limited to:



- All CINHS funding applications and amendments to funding applications;
- Procedures describing how the CINHS Board of Directors and Policy Council will make decisions;
- CINHS Strategic Planning.
- CINHS partnership opportunities;
- Annual self-assessment of CINHS fiscal and programmatic operations;
- CINHS program personnel policies including standards of conduct for program staff, consultants, and volunteers
- Decisions to hire or terminate any person who works for CINHS

## Parent Roles in the Program / Conflicts of Interest

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1301.3(e); §1301.2; §1302.50**

Families are encouraged to participate in program activities, including employment and leadership opportunities such as Policy Council. To ensure clear roles and avoid conflicts of interest, certain positions may have limitations. Staff will provide guidance if a family member is interested in employment or governance roles to ensure compliance with program and regulatory requirements.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Program Policies and Protections

### Confidentiality

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1303.20; §1303.21

CINHS staff are highly dedicated to maintaining the confidentiality of information of enrolled children and their families and will release information solely with a signed release of information from the child's parent and/or legal guardian. Municipal childcare licensing may examine CINHS records for the sole purpose of determining CINHS compliance with licensing requirements.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.10; AMC 5.20; AMC 15.55.160A.1

CINHS follows state law, Anchorage Municipal Code and Office of Head Start non-discrimination policies. As a federally funded Tribal Head Start, CINHS provides enrollment preference to Alaska Native and American Indian children residing in the Anchorage area.

CINHS is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All program activities are conducted without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, disability or any other legally protected status. Equal access to employment and all program activities is available to all qualified persons. Individuals requiring reasonable accommodation are encouraged to notify the Human Resources department. In addition to other applicable federal, state, local and Tribal regulations, CINHS complies with the following in all of its employment and program activities: Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Titles I and V, Civil Rights Act of 1991, Equal Pay Act of 1963, Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Sections 501 and 505, Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1985 (COBRA), Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). CINHS is a drug-free workplace.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office



or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter 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; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

## Liability Insurance

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1303.11**

CINHS maintains liability and transportation insurance coverage in accordance with AMC 16.55.210I. CINHS maintains comprehensive general liability and transportation insurance with a company authorized to write insurance policies in the state of Alaska, in an amount not less than \$500,000 per occurrence, and \$1,000,000 aggregate.

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Questions, Concerns, and Resolutions

**Regulatory Reference: HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.102(d); §1301.3(c); Alaska 7 AAC 57.800**

CINHS is committed to resolving concerns respectfully and as quickly as possible, and to work collaboratively with staff toward resolution. Families may bring forward concerns without fear of retaliation.

We believe most concerns are best addressed and resolved at the lowest level first with staff who are directly involved, such as the classroom teacher or the Family Advocate. If a concern arises, please follow these steps: 1) Speak directly with the staff member involved 2) If unresolved, contact the staff's supervisor 3) If still unresolved, contact the department manager 4) If needed, elevate the concern to the Executive Director. If a concern is not resolved at the program level, families may bring the concern to the Policy Council.

If after this level you feel a complaint has not had effective resolution, your complaint may be addressed to the Municipality of Anchorage's Child Care Licensing Program which monitors, investigates, and enforces corrective action. They can be contacted at 825 L Street, 3rd floor, P. O. Box 196650, Anchorage, AK 99519-6650. Phone: (907) 343-4758. Recent Municipal inspection reports of the CINHS facility are available to be viewed at: [muni.org/childcare](http://muni.org/childcare).

We encourage open, respectful communication and will work in partnership with families to address concerns.



# Cook Inlet Native Head Start

## Changes to Information in the Policies and Family Handbook

**Regulatory Reference:** HSPPS 45 CFR §1302.102(a); §1302.50; §1301.5

CINHS reserves the right to update this Family Handbook to align with program needs and regulatory requirements.

Families will be notified of updates through the ChildPlus Communication App, email, or in person. The most current version of the handbook will be provided or made accessible to families. Parents may request the most recent version of the handbook at any time with your Family Services Advocate.

Families are expected to review all updates, as they may impact program expectations and requirements.





## CHILD CARE LICENSING PROGRAM

Division of Public Assistance  
Child Care Program Office



### PARENTS' GUIDE TO LICENSED CHILD CARE

This form is required to be included in a child care facility's policies and must be provided to parents at enrollment.

- ♦ Choosing care for your child is a significant decision.

When you entrust the care of your child to another person, you are making an important decision. Visit, ask questions, and carefully compare several programs. Licensed care includes child care homes, group homes, and centers. Your choice depends on what you want and need for your child.

- ♦ Licensing is a key to quality child care.

Licensing promotes good care by setting basic health and safety standards. Before a center, group home, or home is granted a child care license, it must meet minimum regulatory standards such as: health, safety, and program requirements. Child Care Licensing Specialists from the Child Care Program Office conduct on-site inspections at a facility to monitor regulatory compliance and to investigate reports of concern. The goal of licensing is to prevent predictable risks of harm to children; however, licensing cannot guarantee that a facility meets all requirements at all times.

- ♦ An informed parent is a key to quality child care.

Parents are responsible for choosing and monitoring their child's care. Licensors generally visit a minimum of twice a year, but you visit each time you take your child. Visit unexpectedly sometimes or in the middle of the day. Keep an eye on the quality of care. What do you see when you visit? Is the environment safe? Are caregivers knowledgeable, nurturing, and communicating with you about your child's daily care and needs? How many children are present, are there enough caregivers? Are activities appropriate? Watch how your child responds to the program and interacts with caregivers. Listen to what your child says and pay attention to changes in their behavior. It's ultimately a parent's decision to choose a facility which meets their family's needs and their standards for health, safety, and quality.

- ♦ What to do if you have questions or concerns about the care your child is receiving:

First discuss with your caregiver or the facility's Administrator or Child Care Associate if you have any concerns, observe any health or safety issues, or feel the facility's program needs improvement. If you are still concerned, believe children may be in danger, or feel a licensing standard has been violated, contact the Child Care Program Office toll free at 1-888-268- 4632 or via email at [CCPO@alaska.gov](mailto:CCPO@alaska.gov)

## **CHILD TO CAREGIVER RATIO REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES**

### **CHILD CARE HOMES**

- 1 caregiver required; must be at least 21 years of age
- No more than 5 children younger than 13 years of age including the caregiver's own children, without fire safety approval
- No more than 8 children total, younger than 13 years of age, including the caregiver's own children, with fire safety approval
- No more than 3 children under the age of 30 months
- No more than 2 children may be non-ambulatory
- No more than 5 children, including the caregiver's own children under the age of 18 years, are allowed in nighttime care between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., with fire safety approval

### **CHILD CARE GROUP HOMES**

- 2 caregivers required, one must be the Administrator and must be at least 21 years of age
- Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age
- No more than 12 children total younger than 13 years of age, including the caregiver's own children, with fire safety approval
- No more than 5 children under the age of 30 months
- No more than 4 children may be non-ambulatory
- No more than 5 children, including the caregiver's own children under the age of 18 years, are allowed in nighttime care between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., with fire safety approval

See 7 AAC 57.505 for child-to-caregiver ratio requirements allowing 1 caregiver in a Group Home.

### **CHILD CARE CENTERS**

- Administrator and/or Child Care Associates must be at least 21 years of age
- 13 or more children in care, with fire safety approval

The number of caregivers, who are at least 18 years of age, needed to meet child-to-caregiver ratios:

- 1 caregiver for every 5 infants (birth through 18 months)
- 1 caregiver for every 6 toddlers (19 months up to 36 months)
- 1 caregiver for every 10 preschool children (3 and 4 year olds)
- 1 caregiver for every 14 kindergarten children (5 and 6 year olds)
- 1 caregiver for every 18 school age children (7 through 12 years old)

See 7 AAC 57.510 for allowable maximum group sizes in a Center.

### **CHILD CARE FACILITIES MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS TO BE LICENSED**

- Required to apply for a Provisional or Biennial License
- Must meet all licensing standards and requirements
- Must be in compliance with all licensing regulations
- Must allow Child Care Licensing access to inspect the facility and premises to ensure licensing compliance and to investigate complaints
- All staff/household members must have valid criminal history check from the State of Alaska Background Check Program
- All caregivers must meet the licensing early child development training requirements

## **OBTAIN FROM PARENTS**

- Child's immunization records or an approved exemption form
- Child emergency information
  - must be updated by parent when changes occur or
  - at least semi-annually
- Permission for:
  - medication administration
  - transportation
  - field trip participation
- A plan of care for a child identified with a special need
- A behavior guidance plan for a child with a behavior issue

## **PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS**

- Must promote children's healthy development
- Must include quiet and active, group and individual, indoor and outdoor activities
- Must include minimum of 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity for every 3 hours in care
- Must ensure screen time viewing is limited to 1½ hours in a 24- hour period
- Must have a specialization approved by Child Care Licensing to provide nighttime care or allow children to participate in a moderate risk activity

## **SUPERVISION**

- Ensure children are always supervised by an adult caregiver
- Ensure children receive age appropriate supervision
- Ensure a child's whereabouts are known at all times while in care
- Ensure child-to-caregiver ratios are always met

## **SAFETY**

- Must meet Child Care Licensing and fire safety standards
- Must have an emergency evacuation plan, train staff, and document monthly evacuation drills
- Ensure water temperature is between 100 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Ensure firearms and ammunition are stored properly away from children. Note: firearms and ammunition are prohibited in a child care center.
- Ensure the facility is free of hazards inside and outside
- Ensure electric outlets accessible to children under age 5, have child protective outlet covers

## **BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE**

- Must be positive and never cruel, humiliating, or damaging to the child
- Must set realistic expectations and clear and consistent limits
- Must not be disciplined or punished related to eating, napping, or toileting
- Ensure if time-outs are used they are age appropriate and a child is never removed from other children for more than 10 minutes
- Ensure corporal punishment of children is prohibited. Note: corporal punishment means "the infliction of bodily pain as a penalty for a disapproved behavior. It includes: shaking, spanking, delivering a blow with a part of the body or an object, slapping, punching, pulling or any other action that seeks to induce pain."

## **HEALTH**

- Ensure the facility meets cleaning and sanitation standards
- Ensure meals and snacks are nutritious and follow Alaska Food Program standards
- Ensure sanitary practices are used for food preparation and handling
- Must notify parents if their child is exposed to a contagious or communicable disease
- Ensure a medical provider approves attendance before admitting a seriously ill child
- Ensure drinking water is safe
- Ensure facility is smoke free
- Ensure there is always a caregiver with CPR and first aid certification present
- Ensure medicine and toxic materials are labeled and stored safely out of reach
- Ensure medicine is only administered with parent permission
- Ensure a caregiver's own child and all children in care are treated equitably

## **EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES**

- Ensure furniture and equipment are safe and durable
- Ensure there is an adequate and varied amount of age appropriate toys and books available for children in care
- Ensure children have storage space for their belongings
- Ensure children under age 5 have a cot/mat/bed and bedding that is clean and sanitary for resting
- Ensure infants sleep on their backs in an approved crib free from materials and blankets that could increase the risk of suffocation

## **SPACE**

- Must have indoor and outdoor space to accommodate the physical and developmental needs of children in care:
  - 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child
  - 75 square feet of usable outdoor space per child

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start EHS | 2026-2027 Calendar Draft

| AUGUST '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S          | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|            |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2          | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9          | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16         | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23         | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30         | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

10-12 Inservice Days  
13-14 Enrollment  
17 First day of School

| FEBRUARY '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|              | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7            | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14           | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21           | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28           |    |    |    |    |    |    |

15 Elizabeth Peratrovich /Presidents' Day  
26 Teacher Workday

| SEPTEMBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S             | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|               |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6             | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13            | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20            | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27            | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |

7 Labor Day  
25 Teacher Workday

| MARCH '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|           | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7         | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14        | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21        | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28        | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |

12 Inservice Day  
15-19 Spring Break

| OCTOBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S           | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|             |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4           | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11          | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18          | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25          | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

12 Indigenous Peoples Day  
23 In Service  
30 Parent Teacher Conferences

| APRIL '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|           |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4         | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11        | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18        | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25        | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |

2 Family Night 4-6pm  
16 Parent Teacher Conferences

| NOVEMBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
| 1            | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8            | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15           | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22           | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29           | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |

11 Veterans Day  
20 Teacher Workday  
26-27 Thanksgiving Break

| MAY '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S       | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|         |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2       | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9       | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16      | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23      | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30      | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

21 Teacher Workday  
31 Memorial Day

| DECEMBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|              |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6            | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13           | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20           | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27           | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

4 Family Night 4-6pm  
18 Teacher Workday  
22-31 Winter Break

| JUNE '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S        | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|          |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6        | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13       | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20       | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27       | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |

18 Juneteenth  
29 Last Day of School  
30 Teacher Workday

| JANUARY '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S           | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|             |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3           | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10          | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17          | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24          | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31          |    |    |    |    |    |    |

1-8 Winter Break  
11 Teacher Workday  
12 School Resumes  
18 M.L. King Jr Day

|  |                                         |
|--|-----------------------------------------|
|  | School Opens                            |
|  | Last Day of Classes                     |
|  | Enrollment                              |
|  | Parent-Teacher Conference (no school)   |
|  | Vacation Day/Legal Holidays (no school) |
|  | Teacher Workday (no school)             |
|  | Inservice Day (no school)               |
|  | Family Night (no school)                |

# Cook Inlet Native Head Start HS | 2026-2027 Calendar

| AUGUST '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S          | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|            |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2          | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9          | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16         | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23         | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30         | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

10-12 Inservice Days  
13-14 Enrollment  
17 First day of School  
21 Teacher Workday  
28 Teacher Workday

| FEBRUARY '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|              | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7            | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14           | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21           | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28           |    |    |    |    |    |    |

5 Teacher Workday  
12 Teacher Workday  
15 Elizabeth Peratrovich /Presidents' Day  
19 Teacher Workday  
26 Teacher Workday

| SEPTEMBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S             | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|               |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6             | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13            | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20            | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27            | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |    |    |

4 Teacher Workday  
7 Labor Day  
11 Teacher Workday  
18 Teacher Workday  
25 Teacher Workday

| MARCH '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|           | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  |
| 7         | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14        | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21        | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28        | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |    |

5 Teacher Workday  
12 Inservice Day  
15-19 Spring Break  
26 Teacher Workday

| OCTOBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S           | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|             |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4           | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11          | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18          | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25          | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |

2 Teacher Workday  
9 Teacher Workday  
12 Indigenous Peoples Day  
16 Teacher Workday  
23 Inservice Day  
30 Parent/Teacher Conferences

| APRIL '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S         | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|           |    |    |    | 1  | 2  | 3  |
| 4         | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 |
| 11        | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18        | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25        | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |    |

2 Family Night 4-6pm  
9 Teacher Workday  
16 Parent Teacher Conferences  
23 Teacher Workday  
30 Teacher Workday

| NOVEMBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
| 1            | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  |
| 8            | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| 15           | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| 22           | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| 29           | 30 |    |    |    |    |    |

6 Teacher Workday  
11 Veterans Day  
13 Teacher Workday  
20 Teacher Workday  
27-28 Thanksgiving Break

| MAY '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S       | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|         |    |    |    |    |    | 1  |
| 2       | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  |
| 9       | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| 16      | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23      | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30      | 31 |    |    |    |    |    |

7 Teacher Workday  
14 Teacher Workday  
20 Last Day of School – no PM Classes  
21 Teacher Workday

| DECEMBER '26 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|--------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S            | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|              |    | 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  |
| 6            | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10 | 11 | 12 |
| 13           | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20           | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27           | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 |    |    |

4 Family Night 4-6pm  
11 Teacher Workday  
18 Teacher Workday  
21-31 Winter Break

|  |                                         |
|--|-----------------------------------------|
|  | School Opens                            |
|  | Last Day of Classes                     |
|  | Enrollment                              |
|  | Parent-Teacher Conference (no school)   |
|  | Vacation Day/Legal Holidays (no school) |
|  | Teacher Workday (no school)             |
|  | Inservice Day (no school)               |
|  | Family Night (no school)                |

| JANUARY '27 |    |    |    |    |    |    |
|-------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| S           | M  | T  | W  | Th | F  | S  |
|             |    |    |    |    | 1  | 2  |
| 3           | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  |
| 10          | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17          | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24          | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31          |    |    |    |    |    |    |

1-8 Winter Break  
11 Teacher Workday  
12 School Resumes  
15 Teacher Workday  
18 M.L. King Jr Day  
22 Teacher Workday  
29 Teacher Workday



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# Help Your Child Succeed in Preschool and Kindergarten

## Build the Habit of Good Attendance

### DID YOU KNOW...

**Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.**

Missing 10% of school (1 or 2 days every few weeks) can make it harder to:

- Gain early reading and math skills.
- Build relationships.
- Develop good attendance habits.

**High quality preschool and kindergarten has many benefits!**

- The routines your child develops will continue throughout school.
- Make the most of early grades by encouraging your child to attend every day.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Work with your child and his/her teacher to develop your child's strong attendance.**

**Talk about it – sing about it – make it an adventure!**

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Share ideas with other parents for getting to school on time.

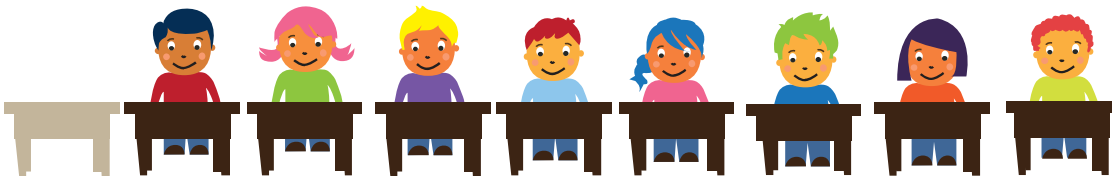
**Before the school year starts**

- Find out what day school starts and begin a countdown!
- Keep your child healthy and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Attend orientation with your child to meet teachers and classmates and find out about health and safety procedures.

**Ready, Set, GO!**

- If you are concerned your child may have Covid-19, call your school for advice. Ask for resources to continue learning at home if needed.
- Ask family members or neighbors for assistance if you need help.
- Try to schedule non-Covid-19 medical appointments and extended trips when school is not in session.
- If your child seems anxious about preschool or kindergarten, talk to the program director, teacher, your doctor or other parents for advice.





## Help Your Child Succeed in Preschool: Build the Habit of Good Attendance

Early School Success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.**

Missing 10 percent of preschool (one or two days every few weeks) can

- Make it harder to develop early reading skills.
- Make it harder to get ready for kindergarten and first grade.
- Develop a poor attendance pattern that's hard to break.

**High quality preschool programs have many benefits for your child. The routines your child develops in preschool will continue throughout school. You can make the most of preschool by encouraging your child to attend every day!**

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Work with your child and his/her teacher to help your child develop strong attendance. Your enthusiasm is a big boost to success.**

**Talk about it – sing about it – make it an adventure!**

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before
- Share ideas with other parents for getting out the door on time

**Before the school year starts:**

- Find out what day preschool starts and start the exciting count down!
- Make sure your child has the required shots.
- Attend orientation with your child to meet the teachers and classmates.

**Ready – Set GO!**

- Develop back-up plans for getting to preschool if something comes up
- Ask family members, neighbors or other parents to lend a hand if you need help dropping off or picking up your child
- Schedule medical appointments and extended trips when preschool is not in session
- If your child seems anxious about going to preschool, talk to the program director, teacher, your doctor or other parents for advice. If the problem persists, make sure the program is a good fit for your child.



# When is sick too sick for school?

*A regular attendance routine is important for your child's well-being and learning. These tips can help you decide when to keep your child home when they don't feel well.*



## SEND ME TO SCHOOL IF...

- I have a **runny nose** or just a **little cough**, but no other symptoms.
- I have **NOT had a fever overnight** and **have NOT taken fever reducing medicine** during that time.
- I have a **mild stomach ache**.
- I have **not thrown up** overnight and can drink liquids without throwing up.
- I have a **mild rash** and no other symptoms.
- I have **eye drainage WITHOUT fever**, eye pain or eyelid redness.



## KEEP ME AT HOME IF...

- I have a **temperature higher than 100.4**
- I have **thrown up two or more times** in the past 24 hours.
- My **stool is watery** and I may not make it to the bathroom in time.



## SEEK MEDICAL CARE IF...

- I have a **temperature higher than 100.4 AND any of the following**: ear pain, sore throat, rash, stomachache, headache or tooth pain.
- I have **stomach pain and fever**, I have **bloody or black stool**, or I am **dehydrated** (tired and sleepy, dry mouth) and/or I have **not urinated** in the last 8 hours.
- I have a **persistent cough** or **trouble breathing**, or have a fever with the cough.
- I have **eye swelling, eye pain** or an **eye injury**.
- I have a **rash that has blisters**, is draining, is painful, looks like bruises, and/or I have a fever with the rash.

*If you don't know whether to send your child to school, have specific concerns regarding your child's physical or mental health, or are worried your child will spread illness, contact your child's health care provider, a local urgent care or the school nurse. These tips are not meant to take the place of local health department/school district health guidance including about contagious illnesses such as Covid-19 and the flu.*