

# 2020-2021

## Family Handbook

Capital Area Head Start



*It takes a community to raise a child*  
**Keystone Human Services**

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## ***Important Information***

This calendar belongs to \_\_\_\_\_

Center my child attends: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone/ext. # \_\_\_\_\_

Center address: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher or Home Visitor: \_\_\_\_\_ Associate Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Center Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Class start time \_\_\_\_\_ End time \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make sure that your child's school always has at least two working phone numbers, so that you or an emergency contact can be reached at any time! In addition, your e-mail is also helpful if you and your emergency contacts access it during your child's school hours.**

## ***Emergency Numbers***

**211 - CONTACT Helpline: Free** Confidential Listening, Health and Human Services Information & Referral, 24 hours/day, 7 days/week

**911 - Emergency**

**Central PA Poison Center**

**800-222-1222**

**Child Line and Abuse Registry**

**800-932-0313**

**Rape Crisis Services**

**717-238-7273**

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Dentist: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

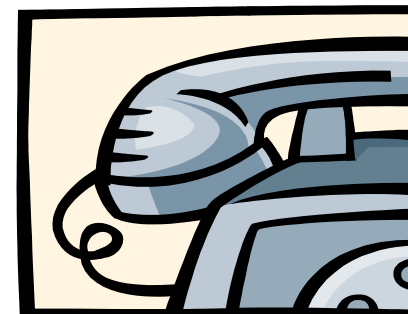
Hospital: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fire/Ambulance: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Police: \_\_\_\_\_

Crisis Intervention: \_\_\_\_\_

Domestic Violence: \_\_\_\_\_





# Capital Area Head Start Welcomes You!

## IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO FAMILIES

**Due to COVID -19, please stay alert for ongoing updates from CAHS regarding changes to health or building procedures. We appreciate all families being flexible and understanding that procedures may change based on current information from the CDC and our funders. We will do everything possible to keep our children, families, and staff safe and healthy!**

*Capital Area Head Start, as part of Keystone Human Services, provides Head Start services in Perry, Cumberland, and Dauphin counties and Early Head Services in Dauphin and Cumberland counties.*

Comprehensive educational services are provided to all of our families as well as opportunities to participate in program governance activities. Capital Area Head Start (CAHS) extends the educational process by providing families with comprehensive services to ensure they have all they need to be successful. Staff can provide information about childcare providers for parents who are working, going to school, or attending training. Parents are an integral part of programming and have a variety of many opportunities for involvement that meet their needs and interests. Services are provided at no cost to families.

- **Early Head Start**

CAHS offers Home Based Early Head Start services to pregnant moms and children age 0-3, residing in the city of Harrisburg, Carlisle and Steelton-Highspire. Home visitors work with families in their homes once a week for 90 minutes, 12 months a year. Families attend biweekly Family Days where they have opportunities to provide socialization experiences for their children and connect with other families.

- **Head Start Preschool**

CAHS offers preschool center based services for children ages 3-5. Centers are staffed by on-site supervisors and qualified teaching staff. Teaching staff complete visits in your home and 2 parent/teacher conferences each year.



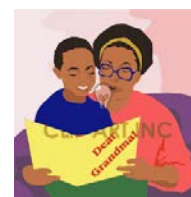
## Capital Area Head Start is a Program for Families

### The Head Start staff wants

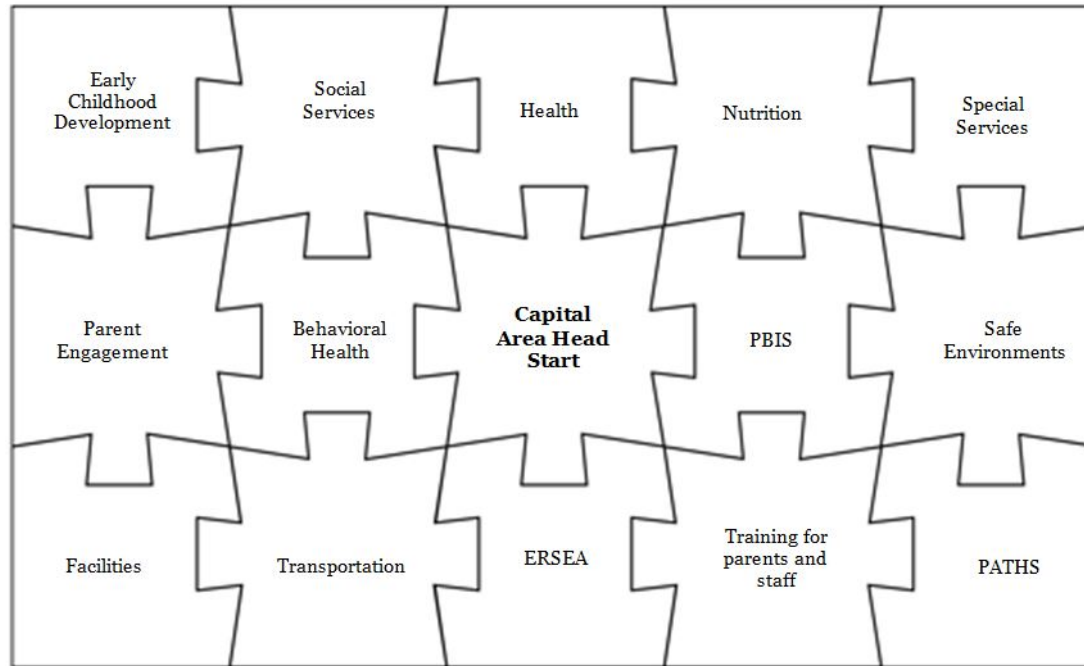
- Your ideas and help.
- To support your family by providing access to community resources.
- Your family to feel good about yourselves and to know that what you say and do is important to your community.
- You to learn that play is “work” to a child. Every experience can be used as a time for learning.
- To help your child understand his/her feelings and respect the rights of others.
- To work with you to give your child and your family opportunities for growth.
- To support your child/family’s transition to preschool or kindergarten.



**You are your child’s first and most important teacher**



## Capital Area Head Start provides services and supports in many ways





## Questions you may have

### ***What are some of the services provided by Capital Area Head Start?***

Our program provides a wide variety of services to our families that include education, health and nutrition, behavioral health, special services, social services, family self-sufficiency and parent engagement. Our program is designed to support children and families and to provide resources to support your family's goals.

### ***Who finances the program?***

The Federal Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) and Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL).

### ***Do I need to call the center if my child is not going to attend?***

Yes. You must call the center if your child is going to be absent so that we can accurately document their attendance. Otherwise, staff will need to make attempts to contact you if they have not heard from you within an hour of the start of class.

### ***What if I cannot be home for my home visit?***

Please contact your child's teacher/home visitor as soon as you know you will not be available. If you are unable to reach your child's teacher/home visitor, please call the center so that the staff can make the proper contact.

### ***Must I report illness in my family to the center?***

If any member of your family has been exposed to a contagious illness such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, lice, ringworm, or scabies, you should let your child's teacher/home visitor know immediately.

### ***What happens if my child gets ill or has an accident at the center?***

You will be contacted and appropriate action will be taken. If there is a medical emergency, 911 will be called and your child will be taken to the nearest hospital. In all cases of accidents or illness, every effort will be made to contact the parent or guardian immediately.

***Can I find out how my child is doing at school?***

Absolutely! We believe that teachers and parents are partners in the education process. The teacher will ask you to visit the center for parent-teacher conferences and will visit you in your home during the year to talk about your child's progress. You can talk with the teacher at any time during the year about your child's development and goals. You can also volunteer in your child's classroom.

***What happens if my child misbehaves at the center? Will he/she be spanked?***

Our staff is trained in classroom management and child development. At **NO** time is physical punishment (spanking) used. If staff have any specific discipline problems with your child they will work with you in a confidential matter to find a suitable solution.

***What should I do if my child cries during drop-off?***

Children often find it difficult to be separated from their parents; they may cry at first. We recommend that first you talk with your child about your plans to send them to school. We suggest that you give your child a good-bye hug and kiss and assure him or her that you will see each other later that day. We realize that many parents find it difficult to leave their children and both the child and parent may be upset. We will do our best to ease your child's discomfort (and yours)!

***What should I do if I have concerns about my child's development?***

First, check with your family doctor, pediatrician, or hospital where you get health care. Discuss your concerns with your teacher or home visitor who will partner with you to do screenings and assessments of your child's development. If needed, evaluations can be arranged with parent's written approval.

***What is Early Intervention?***

Early Intervention in Pennsylvania provides services designed to help families of children with developmental needs. Early intervention builds upon the natural learning occurring in these first few years and can make a big difference in your child's future. Beginning early to enhance your child's development has benefits for you and your child and may prevent the need for future intervention in school. Early Intervention can help children with developmental delays to become more independent, answer your questions about your child's development and improve his/her developmental and educational growth. Early Intervention also helps communities become more aware of the gifts and abilities of all its children. If you have questions about your child's development please talk to your child's teacher or home visitor. CAHS works with the Birth-3 systems in Dauphin, Cumberland and Perry counties for infants and toddlers and with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU) for preschool-aged children.

***Could I work for Head Start?***

Yes you can! Please visit our website at [www.keystonehumanservices.org](http://www.keystonehumanservices.org) for employment opportunities with Head Start. Both entry level positions and professional positions are available. We offer competitive salaries and benefits and also offer on the job training, including college courses, on site. (See the Parent Opportunities section for more information on the Hands on Training program you can complete)



# Activity Ideas for Home

*We're excited to partner with you in helping your child learn and develop and get ready for school!!*



Enjoy these ideas with your child as you continue in your role as your child's first and most important teacher.

Your child is unique - choose experiences and materials that match your child's abilities and interests.

**Have fun with your child as they explore new skills!**



Below are activity ideas for home that support each of the High Scope COR assessment areas.

- Along with a description of each area are some things to observe at that age and activities you can use to encourage your child as they explore new skills!
- Ask your home visitor or teacher for more ideas about things to do at home with your child.
- For more information about the High Scope COR assessment used in the program, see the Education and Child Development section.

Babies – 0-12 months	Toddlers (12-36 months)	Preschoolers (3 and 4 year olds)
<b>APPROACHES TO LEARNING:</b> How your child develops, learns and gains new skills. Your child brings unique habits, personality, and preferences to how he or she explores the world and the people in it.		
Your baby learns about her world as she <b>explores</b> by touching, tasting, listening to and feeling everything around her. Give her safe things to explore and watch to see what's especially interesting to her. Encourage your baby to touch and play with her bottle, toys and things she finds interesting - "You love your bottle – you can hold and turn it!"	Encourage your toddler to use words to describe what he is doing, and what he is asking for help with. Ask them to help <b>solve simple problems</b> – "I wonder where your toy is hiding."	<b>Planning</b> is an important step for your preschooler. Ask her to plan what she wants to do and then recall what she did. Encourage her to try new things, <b>problem solve</b> and to be <b>persistent</b> in her activities and play projects. Provide <b>interesting materials</b> to encourage problem solving (boxes, containers, puzzles, tape, glue, etc.) "Wow, look what you're creating. You're trying lots of ways to make those two pieces fit together."

<b>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: How your child learns to identify and control their feelings and learns to talk about their emotions. With your support, your child will begin to develop an understanding of other people’s feelings as well as their own feelings.</b>		
Your baby carefully observes the expression of <b>emotions</b> which is an important part of his development. As your baby grows, his personality will become more clearly expressed through emotions, especially toward you and other family members. Support his <b>attachment</b> and his bond with you by responding to him, picking him up, and making eye contact. By talking to him about what you’re doing and why, he’ll become increasingly alert to his environment and to other children and adults.	Encourage your toddler to <b>play alongside</b> other children. Bring her to parks to play with other children. Encourage her to take part in <b>daily routines</b> , like dressing herself, bathing, picking up toys. Assist her at first and gradually teach her to do tasks on her own. <b>Label her feelings</b> as she expresses them and let her know that you understand – “You’re so angry and frustrated about the truck not working. I understand you feel mad when toys don’t work the way you’d like them to.”	Encourage your preschooler to label his feelings and share why he feels that way. Support his growing ability to <b>regulate and manage his emotions</b> . “You told Sandy how you felt about her taking your toy instead of grabbing it back. I’m so proud that you’re using your words to let her know how you feel and figured out how to share the toy.” Encourage him to ask others to play with him and take turns.
<b>PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH: How children develop physically, learn what their bodies can do and how to take good care of their bodies.</b>		
Your baby is practicing their motor skills with a determination that can amaze you! Put balls or rolled up socks in a bowl or pan. Encourage your baby to <b>touch, reach, feel, push, pull and grab</b> safe objects, including ones she can put in her mouth. Sing with her to encourage <b>movement</b> . Name your child’s body parts to encourage <b>self-identification</b> .	Encourage your toddler to <b>pick up small objects</b> like pine cones, clothespins, lids, etc. Provide objects that he can fit together and pull apart. Encourage him to <b>go up and down steps, run, jump, hop</b> , etc. Encourage him to use his fingers and utensils to feed himself. Have him <b>identify his body parts</b> and talk about them as he tries to dress himself.	Support your preschooler as she performs <b>self –care tasks</b> like washing hands, dressing, and brushing teeth. Provide materials that she can mold in her hands like playdough, as well as writing or drawing materials that can strengthen her <b>grasp</b> . Create an obstacle course inside or outdoors to <b>jump, go over and under things, hop, gallop, skip, toss a ball</b> in a box, etc.
<b>LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND COMMUNICATION: Children communicate through gestures, speaking, and writing. Children learn to use words and sentences, express their needs, and have conversations. They start learning the system of reading and writing letters and recognize symbols, letters, and words around them. At home and in school your child learns through play experiences and other opportunities such as interactions and conversations with other children and adults. Ask “open-ended questions” that encourage your child to think more deeply and develop their reasoning skills: How do you think you could solve this? What would happen if...? Why do you think it works that way? How does that happen? I wonder why...? Even babies benefit from beginning to hear these types of open-ended questions.</b>		
<b>Talk</b> to your baby throughout the day. Explain what you are doing, what he is experiencing, and what he sees, hears, and feels. <b>Respond</b> to his coos and vocalizing. Encourage him to repeat familiar words by frequently naming family members (mom, dad, siblings) and labeling favorite objects. Make the sounds of different animals and objects with him. Encourage him to touch, hold and explore books. <b>Read</b> to him and talk about the pictures.	Your toddler’s vocabulary is growing quickly. Label people, places and things and help your toddler to use <b>words</b> . Sing familiar songs and rhymes with her and encourage her to “perform” on her own. Talk about and point to letters you see in stores, on signs, in books, etc. Sing the alphabet song with her. <b>Read</b> together frequently and point out familiar objects and people and ask her what she sees. Encourage her to <b>handle books</b> and to turn the pages. Provide <b>writing</b> materials for her to scribble.	<b>Listen</b> to your preschooler’s stories and characters. Encourage him to tell you about his friends and interactions. Use <b>rhyming</b> words with him and explain what rhyming words are. Identify <b>letters</b> with him and make the <b>sounds</b> of the letters together. When you read with him, ask questions like “what do you think is going to happen”, “I wonder what he’s thinking about”, etc. Engage him in telling a story. Encourage him to <b>“write”</b> - at first making letter-like marks and later actual letters.

<b>MATHEMATICS:</b> How children learn math throughout their day, counting real items, putting puzzles together, building with boxes or blocks to learn geometry, learning measurement when seeing how far they can jump, and creating patterns with water, sand, and art materials to lay the foundations for algebra.		
Provide <b>simple objects</b> for your baby to explore. Teach her to ask for more using signs and words. Move objects in front of her to increase spatial awareness and encourage her to <b>gather and sort</b> things. Provide objects and containers for her to fill and empty. <b>Stack boxes, containers, toys.</b> Count things aloud as you go about your daily routine.	<b>Count</b> frequently with your toddler, as you share your daily activities. Show him objects to <b>collect and group together</b> into collections. Provide a box, container or small bucket to collect objects – clothespins, pinecones, rocks. Give him objects he can <b>stack by size or line up</b> in different collections. Label <b>shapes</b> that he sees throughout the day.	Point out <b>patterns</b> to your preschooler, showing her simple alternating patterns, “the socks are lined up red/blue/red/blue.” Talk about <b>measurement and position</b> words like fast, slow, full, empty, big, small, tall, short, and in, out, on, under, up, down. Ask her to identify <b>shapes</b> and encourage her to <b>count</b> objects by pointing to each one as she counts.
<b>CREATIVE ARTS:</b> How children explore and represent their ideas and feelings though art, music, movement, and pretend play.		
Provide materials with different <b>textures and colors.</b> Play <b>music</b> and sing <b>songs</b> with your baby. What songs does he like best? Frequently mimic actions and sounds of animals that he sees or make sounds of vehicles or other sound he hears.	Encourage your toddler’s <b>imagination.</b> Make sounds of animals and objects with her. <b>Dance and play</b> with her and sing favorite <b>songs.</b> Provide <b>art</b> materials for her to explore and use. Toddlers love play dough and even crumpling paper. Talk about <b>colors.</b> Give her some clothes to “dress up” for pretend play.	As your preschooler uses <b>art materials,</b> comment about the colors he used, shapes he drew, what he’s making. “You certainly used a lot of red and blue, and look at those circles!” Sing <b>songs</b> and listen to <b>music</b> he enjoys – make a box and spoon into a drum - have a parade around the house. Encourage his <b>creativity</b> by entering into his <b>pretend play.</b>
<b>SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:</b> Children observe and make sense of the world through their senses. Children attempt to understand the what, how and why of the natural and physical world. They observe, experiment, make predictions, and share discoveries. They use a variety of tools to investigate the world, including appropriate technology.		
Help your baby experience nature. Spend time outside in different seasons and weather. Allow her to <b>touch, smell, hear, see and taste</b> / use her senses to explore different materials. Encourage her to <b>drop, shake, roll, push, squeeze and throw.</b> Provide <b>simple tools</b> – containers, spoons, lids, etc. for her to explore and use in different ways. “I wonder how it would sound if you hit that box with the spoon”	As you go about your day with your toddler, talk about objects and actions, animals and birds, the weather and the seasons. Give him things to touch and label the <b>natural elements</b> he sees “wow, that rock is cold to touch and feels rough” - “I see that little bird flying up over the tree.” Cook with your child, showing him different tools used to prepare his food. Encourage him to sort items by <b>same/different</b> “Can you put all the smooth rocks in this pile and all the rough ones in this pile?”	Allow your preschooler to use cooking materials and help you cook and clean. <b>Explain</b> how plants grow “this tomato came from a tomato plant and needed lots of water and sunshine to grow up from the dirt” Support her as she tries <b>different solutions</b> to problems and ideas she has when she plays. Encourage her to <b>match things</b> and identify what is <b>alike and what is different.</b> Do <b>simple experiments</b> together – “I wonder what will happen to the ice cube in the cup?” “If we move, will our shadows follow us?”

**SOCIAL STUDIES:** Your child learns about who he is and how he fits into the diverse worlds of his family, school, and community. He will see how they are the same and different, explore s other places, and becomes aware of how time passes.

Allow your baby to **explore her body**, put her fingers, thumbs, and feet in her mouth. Talk about when activities are **finishing and beginning** and encourage her to sign or tell you when she's done with an activity. Label when **objects are hers** and when objects are yours. "This is your book." "This book is my book" Show her how to move things out of her way to get to another object.

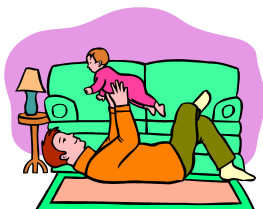
Show your toddler where things belong and where specific events occur. "We change our clothes in the bedroom and we cook in the kitchen." Create **familiar routines** for him, ask him what comes next. Show him pictures of himself. Hold him up to mirrors and talk about his reflection – "There you are! I see your blue short in the mirror and on you." Encourage him to **identify himself** and use his name.

Have your preschooler put things **where they belong**. "Wow, you knew just where to put your socks and shirts". Use **signs and labels** to help your child remember where to put them. Pretend with your child that you and she are community helpers like doctors, police, and teachers. **Talk** with her about when things will be happening (tomorrow, next week) or when they happened (yesterday, last year).

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING:** The COR advantage tool is used with children for children age two and older, whose first language is not English. Children who are learning English go through stages in which they first listen and imitate, then they try out sounds and words, and eventually speak the new language. Understanding the words and language usually come before speaking the new language.

Encourage your toddler to **listen** to English words spoken around them. Encourage him to **speak** using the language he is most comfortable with, but **label** objects and actions in English.

Encourage your preschooler to observe conversations and **follow directions** in English. Ask her to **label** what she sees and does in English and to say phrases or sentences using English as often as possible. Praise your child's **attempts to use English**.



**My home is my school  
because I learn there**



**Note:** Always be sure to choose safe toys and activities for your baby and toddler and supervise them closely.  
Young children are very curious and can easily try to explore unsafe objects or places.  
Your home visitor or teacher can give you more information on home safety.

## Attendance



***Help Your Child Succeed – Build the Habit of Good Attendance!***

**You can make the most of your experience with CAHS by making sure your child attends class daily and that you keep all your home visits! ☺**

Preschool Center based programming: It's so important that children arrive **on time** as the Head Start day begins. This consistency in arrival time will help your child develop a good routine and have a rewarding learning experience. Please tell your child's teacher if your child will be absent from school **PRIOR TO THE START OF CLASS**. Otherwise, staff will need to make attempts to contact you if they have not heard from you within an hour of the start of class. If you don't talk to the teacher and your child is absent 2 days in a row, staff will attempt to follow-up with a visit to your home, in order to ensure that you and your child are OK, and to support getting your child back in school. Poor or irregular attendance can be cause for an attendance contract and/or dismissal from the program. There are hundreds of families on the waiting list wanting to enroll.

Early Head Start Home based programming: Early Head Start home base children have 22 scheduled socialization days and weekly home visits. Please notify your home visitor if you need to cancel and reschedule your home visit. Numerous missed visits may result in an attendance contract and/or dismissal from the program.



**A child's regular attendance is important  
for a meaningful and successful Head Start experience  
and is the key to success in preschool and beyond!**

***We can't wait to see how much your child learns by being at school every day!***

# Child Supervision is Active Supervision!

Providing a safe and secure environment for your child is Capital Area Head Start's first priority. We value the trust you place in us to provide a high quality program and provide active supervision for the children in our care.

Our staff work constantly to be able to **see, hear, direct, assess and assist** the children at all times. Staff take regular and frequent counts of the children and use a flip card counting system to monitor children during Family Days and in our preschool classrooms. Staff are specially attuned to times of increased risk, such as transitioning from one activity or area to another.

## How can I partner with staff and support the active supervision of my child?

- Share information with staff if your child tends to run or hide or presents other challenging behaviors or has any other behaviors that create a safety risk.
- Accompany your child into and out of the building - don't allow your child to run ahead or lag behind.
- Hold your child's hand (especially your toddler and young preschooler) who are often intrigued by exploring places and may be new to the routine.
- Make sure you sign your child in and out of the classroom or Family Day room.
- Ensure latches, gates and/or doors are closed behind you after you enter the classroom and again when you leave the classroom.
- Avoid interrupting classroom routines including arrival and dismissal time.
- Make arrangements to talk with staff when children are not present. Leave a message for them or talk to a support staff or supervisor not responsible for children during that time.
- Call staff before or after class/Family Day to talk to them, or talk to/leave a message with the Center Director or support staff. Staff do not answer their direct phone during programming.
- Be aware of variations from the normal routine (class visitors, dismissals or drop offs from locations not normally used, during construction or other noisy, busy environments, etc.)
- Be aware of transitions times such as coming or going to the playground, transition on and off the bus, field trips, moving from one room to another, etc.



# Classroom celebrations, events, end of year activities and Holidays

If you or your parent group wishes to plan a class celebration, event or end of the year activity, it must be planned **with staff** so that we can ensure that we respect the age of the children and the cultural/religious makeup of the families and the community of your center. When planning events and activities, please remember that staff are responsible for meeting program policy and procedure and keeping the children in their care safe. Working closely with the staff will ensure a smooth, safe, and enjoyable event.

When planning celebratory activities, remember that children do best in normal circumstances where routine changes are kept to a minimum. **Fun learning events that encourage active participation are recommended.**

All regular Head Start procedures apply to celebrations.

- a) Include **all** children and families.
- b) Meals or snacks must be nutritious. ***Please note: all food items for celebrations will be provided by CAHS. Parents may not bring food items into the center.***
- c) Activities must be process (not product) based, appropriate in length and type and developmentally appropriate for the children.  
Examples: Finger painting and experimenting with colors and shapes (process) rather than painting a specific picture (product); participating in a large group activity with music and movement, playing in a water or sand table, enjoying an obstacle course, etc. (process)
- d) No money may be collected from parents to fund an event.

Cultural diversity and ethnic expression are encouraged by CAHS. Because all Head Start programs are a function of the federal government, Head Start does not acknowledge any particular religious affiliation. Religious instruction is left to your family's discretion. Please inform your staff of any conflicts you may encounter regarding our program and your religious affiliation so that we may discuss it with you and address your concerns. CAHS encourages families to educate each other on the practices and traditions of their culture in order to facilitate understanding of the people in our communities.

Capital Area Head Start does not observe or celebrate holidays or religious events. To avoid excluding children and families because of their individual family beliefs, values, or financial circumstances, we ask that you not bring holiday cards, food or gifts into the classroom to distribute to children. Holiday seasons may be used as a time to celebrate the seasonal changes or important values of the holidays, for example: friendship, giving, sharing love for others, and saying thank you. Please know your child will be made to feel special on his/her birthday in our classrooms, and do not send in birthday snacks, favors, gifts, balloons, invitations to parties, etc.

# Closings and cancellations



## Weather related closings

- **Head Start Preschool** will follow their local school district's decision for delays, early dismissals, and closings. For example if Harrisburg School District closes then the MLK center will close. Center staff will provide you with guidelines on delays and early dismissals for your child's center.
- **Early Head Start Home Base** - Family Days will be cancelled if the school district cancels. If there is a delay, Family Days will be held. Home Visitors will notify you directly of any home visit delays/cancellations.

## Emergency closings

In the event that individual classes or centers need to be closed due to a center problem (i.e. no water, no heat, etc...), staff will call you to explain that classes have been cancelled. All sites will have an Individualized Emergency Plan to be used in the event of a regional disaster. Please check with your center director/home visitor for specific details.



## Clothing and dress code

Classrooms are busy places with many activities such as painting, water play, and play dough so dress your child in comfortable PLAY clothes. Please dress your child according to the weather - have your child wear boots when it is snowy or wet and rainy and hats and gloves on cold days. Children take pride in dressing themselves. Clothing should be easy for them to handle. Avoid items like body suits and bib overalls if your child can't fasten them. Children should wear or bring sneakers (not open toe shoes like sandals or flip flops) so they are safe on the outdoor play equipment. If your child doesn't have sneakers please talk with your teacher or home visitor and they may be able to assist. Outside play experiences are provided everyday weather permitting. There will be no outside play on days when there is active precipitation or the temperature is above 90 degrees or below 25 degrees.





# Code of Conduct



*It is the role of every person at CAHS to treat staff, parents, and children with respect and dignity*

It is an expectation that **ALL ADULTS**, in all Capital Area Head Start settings, conduct themselves in the following manner:

- With courtesy and respect
- With patience
- Treat people the way you want to be treated
- Acknowledge and celebrate the cultures and practices of other people and families
- Model how we want our children to treat others
- By dressing appropriately

Under **no** circumstances will the following behaviors be allowed:

- Physical or verbal punishment of children
- Threats to staff or parents, including threats made on social media
- Swearing and cursing
- Smoking
- Quarreling, verbal fighting, raising of voices with other staff or parents
- Doing things that are against center safety practices and policies
- Bringing drugs, alcohol, or being visibly under the influence of drugs or alcohol
- Bringing weapons of any kind to CAHS centers or events
- Inappropriate or excessive displays of physical affection between adults

If the above behaviors occur, parents will be asked (privately if possible) by a staff person to stop the inappropriate behavior. If parents continue to quarrel, verbally fight, or threaten, **staff will call the police**. Unsafe or threatening behavior may result in the individual being banned from the building and another adult will need to bring the child to and from school. At an appropriate time, staff will refer the parent to Capital Area Head Start's Conflict Resolution Procedures or offer the parent referrals for needed support services.

We know that as parents you want to be assured that CAHS maintains a peaceful and professional environment, and all measures will be taken to hold staff and parents accountable for following the above expectations.

## Resolving Concerns

If you have any concerns with Capital Area Head Start, please follow the steps outlined below. This would include concerns with services being delivered, concerns with employees who work with you, or concerns with another parent. During this process, it is expected that staff and parents maintain a respectful working relationship in order to reach the best solution for all parties involved, most importantly, our children!

**Level 1** – Try to work out the problem/complaint at the center level with the persons involved. *(Teachers and home visitors will assist at the parent's request)*

**Level 2** – If the parent is not satisfied, the problem/complaint should be taken to the center supervisor and Parent Engagement Coordinator

**Level 3** – Problem/complaint is directed to the Parent Engagement and appropriate coordinator.

**Level 4** – The problem/complaint is taken to a Head Start Director/Executive Director.

**Level 5** – The problem/complaint is taken to the Policy Council Executive Committee.

**Level 6** – The problem/complaint is taken to the Policy Council.



## Confidentiality

Information is released on a “need to know” basis even within the program. You may request the release of information to an individual (such as your family doctor) or other agency by signing a release form, which your teacher or home visitor can provide. Information may not be given without a signed release form. **Staff, volunteers, and parents/guardians are not permitted to discuss information they learn about other Head Start families outside the program.** Capital Area Head Start follows the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations. For information on confidentiality and your child’s transition into school, see Notification of Rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) in this handbook.

## Custody Matters

It is the intent of Capital Area Head Start to maintain positive relationships with all members of your family. In an effort to remain neutral and work together with the families in our program, we are unable to "take sides" when there may be possible conflicts regarding the children we serve. To that end, we will remain neutral in situations where there are custody agreements in place.

If you have a court order/decreed, which establishes you as the legal guardian, you **must** provide Capital Area Head Start with a copy of such documentation to be included with your child’s permanent record. We will use this as a legal basis for working with the custodial parent.

In the absence of such a document, you must be aware that we cannot deny either parent access to his/her child. We cannot withhold information or refuse to work with the other parent. We cannot keep the other parent from picking up his/her child from the center.

Capital Area Head Start wants to protect all children from emotionally upsetting situations. In the best interest of your child, parents should make every effort to resolve custodial issues outside of the center setting. Thank you for your anticipated cooperation!

# Education and Child Development



Young children learn from their experiences with hands on exploration and experimentation with a wide variety of materials, creating and problem solving.

## High Scope Curriculum – Head Start

Capital Area Head Start uses the research based High Scope Curriculum for preschool children enrolled in Head Start. Using the High Scope approach and the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, your child will progress in eight learning domains, including Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

## Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum – Early Head Start



Partners for a Healthy Baby is the research based curriculum used in Early Head Start for expectant families and children from birth to age 3. Home visits are planned around family's interests and needs and cover a wide variety of topics.

## High Scope COR (Child Observation Record) Assessment



The High Scope COR assessment measures how your child is developing and learning by observing what he does and how he does it as he plays, interacts with other children and adults, and goes about his daily routines. You play an important role in the assessment process as you observe your child at home and share information with your child's teacher or home visitor. Every child is unique and we want to hear from you about your child's special interests, strengths and needs. Then we can plan together how we can support their development and learning and help them be ready for school! (See School Readiness Goals section!)

## **PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)**



PATHS is the curriculum used to support your child's social-emotional development in the classroom and at home. When you hear your child talk about Twiggie's adventures or about "doing Turtle" they are talking about PATHS. On the day your child is chosen to be the PATHS kid of the day, he or she will want to tell you all about it! (For more information on PATHS, see the Positive Guidance section)

***Ask your home visitor or teacher if you would like more information about the High Scope Curriculum, the High Scope COR assessment, Partners for a Healthy Baby curriculum, PATHS or the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards.***

## **CAHS School Readiness Goals**

The development of skills your child needs to be ready for school began when they were born! The development and skills look different for infant, toddlers and preschoolers as you'll see as you work with us in looking at the High Scope COR outcomes for your child and setting goals for next steps. CAHS School Readiness Goals have been established for children ages birth through age 5 and are global goals for all children in the program, as well as a roadmap for your own child's next steps and readiness for school.

You and your child's teacher or home visitor observe your child, assess their skills and development, set goals and plan for them. The High Scope COR assessment information for all children is added together each year to get program wide results or "outcomes". This provides a look at the overall development of all enrolled children and helps us improve the quality of the program in meeting school readiness goals.

CAPITAL AREA HEAD START SCHOOL READINESS GOALS Early Head Start and Head Start Ages 0 - 5	
Capital Area Head Start believes school readiness involves children being ready for life. Children from birth through age five develop secure relationships, knowledge and skills that enable them to successfully transition into preschool or into kindergarten with both family and staff support. CAHS school readiness goals are global goals for all children and parents in our program, and are in addition to developing individual child and family goals in partnership with parents. CAHS has school readiness goals in each of five essential domains: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language and Literacy, and Cognition and General Knowledge. They are based on child development milestones as reflected in our research based curriculum (High Scope), assessment tool (High Scope Child Observation Record: COR Advantage), screening tool (Ages and Stages), Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards, and the Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework. Capital Area Head Start's school readiness goals were developed with input from staff in all service areas, school districts and parents, and with careful consideration of child outcomes. This document will be refined and revised as needed with additional input for each program year.	COR Advantage Items
Approaches to Learning <i>Being interested and engaged in the learning process</i>	
Children will choose and intentionally plan to participate in activities that are interesting and meaningful to them. They will engage in these activities with attention and persistence.	A
Children will demonstrate simple problem solving approaches. They will begin to seek solutions to a problem using critical thinking skills to recognize and analyze the problem.	B
Children will demonstrate increasing ability to form mental pictures and communicate details of their experiences.	C
Families will learn and use new ways to promote learning during naturally occurring events / routines.	
Social Emotional Development <i>Developing a healthy self-concept and relationships</i> <i>Regulating behavior and emotions / self-control</i>	
Children will become increasingly aware of how their actions affect others.	G
Children will demonstrate healthy and appropriate attachments and secure relationships with adults.	E
Children will be able to recognize and name their emotions, and increase in their ability to regulate emotions, impulses and behavior.	D
Children will demonstrate an age appropriate interest in other children and develop their ability to form relationships with other children.	F
Children will be able to resolve conflicts with decreasing levels of adult support.	H
Families will build upon positive relationships with their children helping children to develop an understanding of their own and other people's feelings and to regulate their behaviors. Families will help children understand their valued role as a family member (sister, son, daughter, brother, grandchild) and take on age-appropriate responsibilities that contribute to family life with this role.	

<b>Physical Well-being and Motor Development</b> <i>Using and controlling the body</i> <i>Understanding wellness and safety</i>	
Children will develop increasing control, coordination and balance in activities and movement involving their large muscles (legs, arms and trunk).	I
Children will develop increasing control and of their fine motor movements in performing tasks with fingers/hands.	J
Children will demonstrate understanding and age appropriate participation in a range of daily health and safety routines, activities and tasks.	K
<b>Families</b> will demonstrate increased knowledge and understanding of preventative practices and follow-up for special health needs/care plans/treatment that lead to positive health outcomes for children.	
<b>Language and Literacy</b> <i>Understanding and using language</i> <i>Developing foundational skills for reading and writing</i> <i>For dual language learners: progress in English acquisition and development of home language</i>	
Children will recognize sounds in their environment. They will increasingly be able to recognize sounds of language and begin to associate them with letter sounds.	N
Children will demonstrates ability to make marks on paper, then to make letter-like forms, leading to ability to string letters together to form words.	R
Children will use increasingly complex communication/ language/ vocabulary to express needs and ideas.	L
Children will exhibit comprehension of spoken and written language showing age-appropriate responses including engaging in conversation, responding to questions and retelling or predicting what will happen in a story.	M, Q
<b>Families</b> will share stories and books together frequently. <b>Families</b> will support the child's development of their home language as the child progresses in acquiring English.	
<b>Cognitive and General Knowledge</b> <i>Gathering information to develop thinking skills and solve problems</i> <i>Understanding how things work in the larger world</i>	
Children will progress from an understanding of oneness to number words and quantity.	S
Children will learn about who they are and how they fit into the diverse worlds of family, school and community.	FF
Children will explore materials, ask questions, test out their ideas, make predictions and give reasons for the results.	CC
<b>Families</b> will work towards identified goals.	

## Employment and Education Resources

***Employment and Education Supports are available Capital Area Head Start***



If you are interested in getting your GED, attending ESL classes, job training, college or employment, you can:

- Talk with your child's teacher or home visitor
- Ask for written information about employment and education resources
- Contact resources on your own by calling Contact Helpline at 2-1-1
- Ask for assistance from the Family Support Specialist working with your center
- Participate in opportunities provided by CAHS to meet programs that support Employment and Education goals



~Grow Your Potential~

# Health



## Behavioral Health

“Behavioral health” is used to describe the connection between our behaviors and the health and well-being our bodies, mind, and spirit. This includes behaviors such as eating habits, exercise and our social interactions that either immediately or over time impact physical or mental health. Much like the Nutrition, Health or Education components, our Behavioral Health component is here to make certain that children and their families thrive in their classrooms and communities and are supported in dealing with problems as they arise. The Behavioral Health Consultant is there to support mentally healthy home and program environments for the children the program serves by:

- Overseeing Positive Behavior Interventions and Support (PBIS- see p. ) practices responsive to the needs of a child or group of children and families.
  - Observing classroom environments and assessing teacher-child-family interactions
  - Observing individual children and assessing social and emotional development
- Providing recommendations, support and guidance to staff and families faced with a behavioral challenge
- Providing group, individual staff, and parent education on mental health issues
  - Assess for parental wellness and identify supports for *parental depression/anxiety*
- Partnering with and referring to other community mental health resources

## Supportive Services

**PLEASE NOTE: Prior to your child attending class, they will need their up to date immunization record and a physical and dental exam.**

As we are sure you would agree, it’s very important for your child to be healthy in order to grow and learn. Head Start staff will assist you in any way possible to meet health and dental requirements. This includes:

- Helping you find a doctor or dentist that accepts your insurance or helping you get insurance if needed.
- Helping you set up an appointment. Let us know if you can’t get an appointment within a month.
- Helping to arrange transportation to-from appointments (for enrolled children)
- Going to the doctor or dentist with you and your child when you may need health support
- Helping you locate medical/dental records
- Explain to you why these health requirements are necessary
- Completing health screenings within 45 days of your child’s start date, and with your permission, to include: hearing, vision, height, and weight.



## Physicals and Dentals

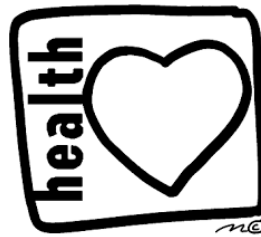
It is best practice for all children to have regular preventative health checks. All children attending Head Start must have an updated **yearly** physical and dental examination as per the federal Head Start requirements. Head Start will provide forms for these exams or your physician can use his/her office form.

### ***A physical exam includes:***

- Yearly Asthma, Allergy & Special care plan (for children with any special health needs along with asthma and allergies)
- Hearing test
- Vision test (If your child is untestable for hearing or vision, please have doctor mark form as “untestable at this time”)
- Hemoglobin or hematocrit
- Lead test
- Sick cell results
- Blood Pressure
- Height & Weight (shoes off)
- Documentation of food allergies, restrictions, & substitutions
- Up to date immunizations

### ***A yearly dental exam includes:***

- Exam results and any needed follow-up



## Care Plans



### Asthma, Allergy and other Special Health Care Plans

We want to keep your child safe. If your child has asthma, food allergies, allergies to bee stings, seizures, or another special health care need, your child's doctor **MUST** provide a care plan. A care plan for environmental allergies is required only if medication needs to be given in school.

- **Care Plans and medication consent logs must be on file at your child's center PRIOR to your child's first day in school** and updated when your child's health status changes.
- All care plans must be updated **yearly** or as the condition changes.
- **If your child's Care Plan requires medication that is to be given at school, it must be brought to class prior to your child starting school.**
- If your child has had an allergic reaction to a bee sting or insect bite, please tell your child's teacher. If your child's doctor has prescribed emergency medication for bee stings or insect bites, this **MUST** accompany your child to class and on all field trips. An Allergy Care Plan must be provided by your child's doctor **yearly** for all children with a history of an allergic reaction to insects, such as bees.

## Medication



Having medication in the classroom is a **SAFETY CONCERN**. Please check with your child's physician to see if a dose schedule can be arranged that does not involve the hours that your child is in class. The first dose of medication should **always** be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction. Staff are **NOT** allowed to transfer medication from one center to another.

#### *If medication must be administered at school:*

- Medication will be kept out of reach of children
- The medication log is completed by the parent /guardian and reviewed by the parent/guardian and CAHS staff
- The medication is in the original container with your child's name on the container
- The label on the medication **must match** the care plan and should include:
  - Name and phone number of prescriber
  - Clear, concise directions on how to administer the medication with specific times to administer
  - If your child is transferred from one center to another it is your responsibility to take the medication to the new center. Staff are not allowed to transfer medication from one center to another
- If your child drops from the CAHS program, you must pick up all medication from the center or it will be disposed of/thrown away.
- Any medication not picked up on the last day of school, will be disposed of/thrown away.

## Medical Emergencies



If a medical emergency should occur at a center, staff will immediately contact the parent or guardian.

An ambulance will be called if any of the following conditions exist:

- uncontrolled bleeding
- suspected fractures
- unconsciousness
- severe neck, back, and head injuries
- any condition perceived to be life threatening
- behavior posing a significant danger to self or others, when parents have not responded to calls from CAHS staff to discuss next steps

## When your child is sick



As you may know, when your child is sick or tired, they may be very uncomfortable. Children who are sick and/or tired may have difficulty listening and learning. Children who are sick can also cause other children or staff to become sick. It is important to be aware of symptoms that may indicate that your child is sick. **Should your child display any of the following, please do not send your child to school. Symptoms include: chills, sore throat, persistent coughing, fever, diarrhea, unidentified rashes, stomachache, vomiting, and eyes or ears with drainage.**

**If your child develops these symptoms while at the center, you may be called to take your child home. We ask that you come to pick up your child as soon as possible when you are called.** If your child is sent home with symptoms of fever, vomiting, and/or diarrhea, your child will need to stay home. Your child cannot return until they are symptom free without medication for at least **24 hours**. If your child does not exhibit signs of improvement after the first 24 hours, they are NOT to return to school until their symptoms have completely disappeared.

**If your child is absent several days due to sickness you may be asked for documentation from your doctor stating that your child is able to return to school. If you have any questions relating to sickness please contact your health staff.**

## Helpful Information: Signs of Illness



It is helpful to know what to look for that may indicate your child may need medical attention. Please remember if your child has any of the following signs of illness, do not bring your child to school until they are free from symptoms and/or cleared by your family physician to return to school.

- **Diarrhea:** This means more than one abnormally loose stool. If a child has just one loose stool, he still may have diarrhea. Therefore, observe the child for additional loose stools or other symptoms.
- **Severe Coughing:** The child gets red or blue in the face and makes high pitch croup or whooping sound when he coughs.
- **Difficult or Rapid Breathing:** This is especially important in an infant under six months of age.
- **Yellowish Skin or Eyes:** This could be indicative of a more serious illness such as hepatitis.
- **Pink Eye:** Tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation followed by swelling and discharge of pus.
- **Unusual Spots or Rashes:** Observe the appearance, location, and type of rash.
- **Sore Throat or Difficulty Swallowing:** Combined with a temperature may indicate “strep throat”.
- **Infected Skin Patches** – crusty, bright yellow, dry or ring like area of skin: This could be indicative of impetigo, ringworm or other infectious skin disease.
- **Unusually Dark or Tea Colored Urine:** This could be indicative of a more serious illness such as hepatitis.
- **Gray or White Stool:** This could be indicative of more serious illness such as hepatitis.
- **Headache and Stiff Neck:** Combined with an elevation of temperature may be indicative of early signs of meningitis.
- **Vomiting:** Combined with elevation of temperature, may be indicative of either viral or bacterial illness.
- **Unusual Behavior:** Child is cranky or less active than usual; child cries more than usual; child feels general discomfort or just seems unwell.
- **Loss of Appetite:** Not to be confused with likes and dislikes of food selection.
- **Severe Itching of Body or Scalp or Scratching of Scalp:** This could possibly relate to lice or scabies

If your child is (or has been) exposed to any contagious condition such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, lice, ringworm, or scabies, please tell the center staff immediately.



## When to call the doctor



When your child is ill, occasionally you will need to call the doctor. If you are not sure whether to call the doctor, it is probably safer to call.

***Remember, the younger the child is, the more cautious you should be.***

***Get medical help immediately with any of the following conditions:***

- For infants under four months, forceful vomiting
- Looking or acting very ill or getting worse quickly
- Neck pain when the child's head is moving or touched
- Stiff neck or severe headache and looking very sick
- Seizure
- Acting unusually confused
- Blood-red or purple rash made up of pinhead-sized spots or bruises that are not associated with an injury
- Rash of hives or welts that appears and spreads quickly
- Difficulty breathing, that the child cannot play, talk, cry, or drink, skin or lips look blue, purple or gray
- Stomachache without vomiting or diarrhea after a recent injury, blow to the abdomen, or hard fall
- Severe stomachache that causes the child to double up and scream
- Stools that are black or have blood mixed through them
- Dry mouth, no tears, sunken eyes or not urinating for at least eight hours
- Serious accident or injury
- Any wound with uncontrolled bleeding
- If the child has any of the following after a head injury: decrease in level of alertness, confusion, headache, vomiting, irritability or difficulty walking and unequal pupils



## Common Health Concerns

### Impetigo

Impetigo is a very common skin infection caused by the strep or staph bacteria. It may start as oozing from an injured spot on the skin, such as an insect bite, cut or burn, and can easily travel to other areas of the skin by hand contact. Impetigo is usually treated with an antibiotic ointment. You may send your child to school after 24 hours of treatment and with a doctor's note.

### Lice

**CAHS is a LICE & NIT FREE Program. Anytime lice is found at a center all children and staff will receive a daily head check for 7-10 days.**

A child found with lice or nits in his/her hair will be sent home immediately. The child will not be allowed to return to the center until treatment has been completed and no nits remain in the hair. **Staff will check children before being allowing them to return to the center. These safety practices will help prevent future spread of lice at the center.**

Lice are tiny insects that live only in human scalps and hair. They hatch from small eggs, known as nits that are firmly attached to the individual hairs. They cannot easily move up or down the hair. Nits may be found throughout the hair and are most often located at the back of the scalp, behind the ears, and at the top of the head. The main symptom of head lice is itching caused by the bite of the louse. Often red bite marks and scratch marks can be seen on the scalp and neck. Lice are not a sign of unclean people or homes. Anyone who has contact with an individual with lice can easily contract lice.

Treatment consists of getting rid of the lice by treating both the person with lice and the living area. All family members should be checked.

#### ***To treat lice:***

- Contact your doctor to determine the proper products to use
- Use these products very carefully by following the directions
- Always consult a doctor before treating infants, pregnant or nursing women, and/or people with extensive cuts/scratches on the head or neck
- After shampooing with the medicine, remove all the nits with a fine-toothed, nit removal comb (this is the key to getting rid of the lice/nits).
- Check and comb for nits daily for the next 10 days.
- The treatment may need to be repeated in 10 days.
- All family members must be checked for lice.

#### ***For personal items and surroundings, such as furniture and linens:***

- Machine-wash all washable and infested items in HOT water. Dry them in a HOT dryer.
- Put non-washable items (furry toys, pillows) in a hot dryer for 20 minutes or have them dry-cleaned
- Seal items that cannot be washed or dried in a plastic bag for 30 days. (the life cycle of a louse is 30 days, at which point they die)
- Boil combs and brushes for 10 minutes or soak for 1 hour in a diluted bleach solution
- Thoroughly vacuum rugs, mattresses, and upholstered furniture and dispose of the vacuum bag

## **Pinkeye (Conjunctivitis)**

Pink eye is an infection of the eyes that is caused by either bacteria or a virus. The white parts of the eyes become pink, and the eyes produce lots of tears and discharge. In the morning, the discharge may make the eyelids stick together. Often an antibiotic eye medicine will be given. This decreases the bacteria's ability to spread to the other eye and to other persons. ***You may send your child to school after 24 hours of treatment and with a doctor's note.***

## **Ringworm (Tinea)**

Ringworm is a mild infection of the skin or nails caused by fungi. It is not serious and is easily treated. On the skin, ringworm appears as a flat, growing, ring-shape rash. These edges of the circle are usually red and may be raised, scaly and itchy. The center of the circle is often clear. Another type of ringworm fungus can cause the skin to become lighter in flat patches. On the scalp, infection begins as a small bump and spreads outward, leaving scaly patches of temporary hair loss. Scales, cracks and blisters may be seen on the skin between the toes. Ringworm that is confined to the skin is treated with an anti-fungal ointment that is applied to the skin for several weeks. ***You may send your child back to school after beginning treatment. You will need to bring the medication to school so we know that the treatment has begun. The medication will be returned back to you at that same point in time. Please cover ringworm area with gauze when attending school.***

## **Scabies**

Scabies is a common skin infection caused by a tiny (microscopic) insect called a mite that only infects people. Symptoms do not appear until 2 to 6 weeks after the initial exposure. On re-exposure, symptoms can start within days. Symptoms of scabies include an intensely itchy rash with red bumps and burrows, along with short, discolored lines in the skin. A person's scratch marks may cover these up. The rash usually appears on the sides of the fingers and finger-webs, wrists, elbows, underarms, and belt lines. The mites require direct contact with skin to spread. Scabies can be treated with prescription mite-killing creams or lotions. These are applied to the skin and then washed off after a specified time. ***You may send your child to school after treatment and with a doctor's note.***

## Sun safety



Children need protection from the sun when playing outside. Although areas of shade are provided at most centers, sunburn from reflected sun is a real possibility.



Sunscreen is an over the counter product which will be applied to your child's skin if you provide it and follow the steps below.

**If you would like to provide sunscreen for your child to use at the center, some steps must be taken:**

Regulations require that we have **a signed note from you giving permission to apply sunscreen.** When completing the note, here are some points to remember:

- Note must contain the name of sun screensunscreen product and the SPF number.
- Please talk with your child's doctor because he/she may need a wide range of SPF coverage
- Please specify when to applyyou would like it to be applied.
- Please write your child's name on the sunscreen

Sunscreen can lose its effectiveness and should not be used from one year to the next. Depending on the sensitivity of your child's skin, a higher SPF may be needed. Sunscreen may need to be applied more than once daily depending on product directions and activities at the center (water table, outdoor games that cause sweating, etc.)

## Chap Stick

Regulations require that we have **a note from you giving permission to apply Chap Stick.** When completing the note, here are some points to remember:

- This note must contain the name of product.
- Chap Stick may need to be applied more than once daily depending on activities at the center.
- Chap Stick can lose its effectiveness and should not be used from one year to the next.





## Bed bugs

Bed bugs continue to be a problem at times and are increasing in prevalence. Please see the attached information provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Health titled “*Bed Bug Fact Sheet*”. If throughout the program year, you need additional resources on this sensitive subject matter, please talk to your child’s teacher or home visitor.

### **“BED BUGS FACT SHEET”**

- 1. What are bed bugs?** Bed bugs are small insects that feed on human blood. They are usually active at night when people are sleeping. Adult bed bugs have flat, rusty-red-colored oval bodies. About the size of an apple seed, they are big enough to be easily seen, but often hide in cracks in furniture, floors, or walls. When bed bugs feed, their bodies swell and become brighter red. They can live for several months without food or water.
- 2. What does a bed bug bite feel and look like?** Most bed bug bites are initially painless, but later turn into large, itchy skin welts. These welts do not have a red spot in the center like flea bites. If you have a concern regarding bug bites, you may want to see your doctor.
- 3. Are bed bug bites dangerous?** Although bed bugs are a nuisance, they are not known to spread disease.
- 4. How does a room become infested with bed bugs?** - In most cases, people carry bed bugs into their homes unknowingly, in luggage, furniture, bedding, or clothing. Bed bugs may also travel through small crevices and cracks in walls and floors.
- 5. How do I know if my home is infested with bed bugs?** You may notice itchy skin welts. You may also see the bed bugs themselves, small bloodstains from crushed insects, or dark spots from their droppings. It is often hard to see them because they hide in or near beds, other furniture, and in cracks.
- 6. How do I get rid of bed bugs?** - A licensed pest control professional is necessary to get rid of bed bugs.
- 7. The pest control company should:**
  - inspect your home to confirm the presence of bed bugs
  - find and eliminate their hiding places
  - treat your home with special cleaning and/or pesticides if necessary
  - make return visits to ensure bed bugs are gone

For more information about bed bugs: <https://www.cdc.gov/parasites/bedbugs/faqs.html> This fact sheet provides general information. Please contact your physician for specific clinical information.

## Notification of Rights Under The Family Educational Rights And Privacy Act (FERPA)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) affords parents and students who are 18 years of age or older (“eligible students”) certain rights with respect to the student’s education records. These rights are:

The right to inspect and review the student’s education records within 45 days after the day Keystone Human Services (KHS) receives a request for access.

1. Parents or eligible students should submit to KHS the “Request for Access to Student Education Records” form. KHS will make arrangements for access and notify the parent or eligible student of the time and place where the records may be inspected.
2. The right to request the amendment of the student’s education records that the parent or eligible student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student’s privacy rights under FERPA. Parents or eligible students who wish to ask KHS to amend a record should complete the “Request to Amend Student Education Records” form. If KHS decides not to amend the record as requested by the parent or eligible student, KHS will notify the parent or eligible student of the decision and of their right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the parent and eligible student when notified of the right to a hearing.
3. The right to provide written consent before KHS discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student’s education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

FERPA permits the disclosure of PII from students’ education records, without consent of the parent or eligible student, if the disclosure meets certain conditions found in §99.31 of the FERPA regulations. Such disclosures include:

- Disclosures made to other employees of KHS who have legitimate educational interest
- Disclosures to schools in which the student seeks or intends to enroll
- Disclosures to authorized representatives of Federal, State and local educational authorities conducting an audit, evaluation or enforcement of education programs
- Disclosures to State and local officials pursuant to State statute concerning a juvenile justice system and the system ability to effectively serve, prior to adjudication, the student whose records are disclosed
- Disclosures to organizations conducting studies on behalf of schools
- Disclosures to accrediting organizations to carry out accrediting functions
- Disclosures to parents of a dependent student
- Disclosures to comply with a judicial order or subpoena
- Disclosures in health and safety emergencies
- Disclosures of information classified as directory information
- Disclosures of education records of students in foster care to State and county social service agencies or child welfare agencies (as amended by the Uninterrupted Scholars Act of 2013, 20 U.S.C. 1221).

Except for disclosures to school officials, disclosures related to some judicial orders or lawfully issued subpoenas, disclosures of directory information, and disclosures to the parent or eligible student, §99.32 of the FERPA regulations requires KHS to record the disclosure. Parents and eligible students have a right to inspect and review the record of disclosures.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by KHS to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA are: Family Policy Compliance Office, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20202

# Nondiscrimination in Services

Admissions, the provision of services, and referrals of parents/children are made without regard to race, color, religious creed, disability, ancestry, national origin (including limited English proficiency), age or sex. Program services are made accessible to eligible individuals through the most practical and economically feasible methods available. Any individual who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with Keystone Human Services, the PA Human Relations Commission, or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights.

## Nutrition

Children’s meals



All children are served family style breakfast, lunch and sometimes snack, depending on the center time schedule. Family style meals are a hallmark of Head Start programming. Family style meals help to support good eating habits for your child. You child will get to serve themselves, including pouring milk, as well as have the opportunity to socialize with their peers and adults. Family style eating supports your child’s self-esteem, independence, social, language and motor skills. We would love for you to come in, sit at the table, and join in a meal or snack with your child!

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)



Some centers participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a Federal initiative that provides healthy meals and snacks to children receiving early childhood care services. CAHS is reimbursed for serving nutritious meals that meet USDA requirements. CACFP centers follow meal requirements established by the USDA. **For non-participating CACFP centers, Capital Area Head Start collaborates with local school districts to provide nutritious meals to children enrolled in programming.**

CACFP Meal Component Structure

Breakfast	Lunch	Snack (Two of these four groups)
Milk Fruit or Vegetable Grain or Bread	Milk Meat or Meat Alternate – 1.5 oz. Grain or Bread One serving of fruit. One serving of vegetables	Milk Meat or Meat Alternate Grain or Bread Fruit or Vegetable

**Contact Information:** *If you have questions about CACFP please contact one of the following:*

Shawnee Hooper, Director  
Capital Area Head Start  
3705 Elmwood Drive  
Harrisburg PA 17110  
717-541-1795

Vonda Cook, Chief Division of Food and Nutrition  
Bureau of Budget & Fiscal Management, Department of Education  
333 Market Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Harrisburg PA 17126-0333  
717-787-7698

## Nutrition Information



The daily food provided to your child contains at least 1/3 of their daily nutritional needs. Special attention is given to limiting fat and sugar, serving fresh fruits and vegetables and increasing consumption of whole grains. In addition, CAHS menus are nut and pork free.

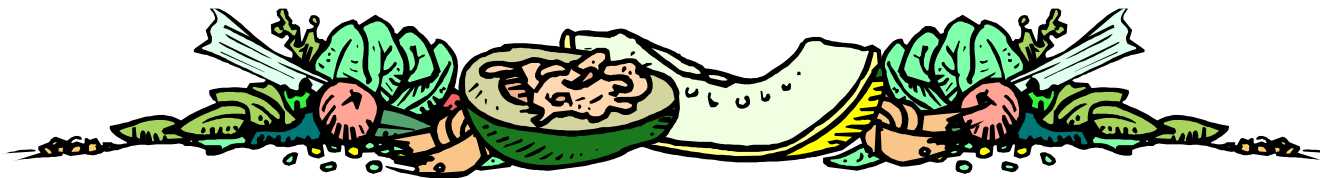
**No external food can be brought into classrooms.** All nutrition needs or special food experiences are provided by CAHS so that we can ensure compliance with all regulations and take into consideration any allergies or dietary restrictions.

Special dietary needs: All food restrictions must be documented on an Allergy Care Plan and must list appropriate substitutions, if required. (See care plan section for more information)

- We respect and honor food preferences due to your religion or culture. Please notify your child's teacher if you and your child follow a specialized diet (i.e. vegetarian, no red meat, etc.).
- The Nutrition Coordinator will help develop plans to meet any special dietary needs your child may have.

Menus are prepared in advance and posted on the Parent Bulletin Board. Children are encouraged to try food that is served. Your child will never be forced to eat or taste foods. Food is never used as punishment or reward.

All meals served to children are served at no separate charge regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. There is no discrimination in admission policy, meal service, or the use of facilities. Any complaints of discrimination should be submitted in writing within 180 days of the incident to The Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.





## Parent Opportunities

***Come join with  
other parents!***

**We believe you are the primary educator of your children!**

You can participate by helping in the classroom, actively participating in parent meetings and activities, working with your child's teacher/home visitor, serving on Policy Council, identifying and improving support in your community, serving on a program wide committee and in many other ways and by making sure your child gets to school and you participate in home visits!

**You are an integral part of the program!**

Regular communication between you and the staff is an excellent method of receiving and providing information.

There are many opportunities throughout the school year for you and your family. Look for flyers and other information that will be posted in your child's class and/or center and for notifications that are sent home.

**We would love to have your family participate in all the opportunities and activities being part of Head Start offers.**

**There are many ways you can participate - come on out!**

For more information about parent opportunities, contact a Parent Engagement Coordinator.



***Keep reading to learn more about the  
family opportunities and activities  
Head Start offers!***

## Hands on Training (H.O.T.)

***We want you!***



We support you with your employment goals and pursuits! If you're interested in working with preschool children and don't have experience in an early childhood classroom, the Hands on Training (H.O.T.) program offers you the opportunity to gain training and experience working with children. This program consists of basic training and 25 volunteer hours in the classroom. Successful completion of the H.O.T. program may give you the experience to apply for a position with Head Start, however completion of the H.O.T. program is not a guarantee of employment with CAHS.

In order to participate in the H.O.T. program, you must complete a TB test and have satisfactory clearances completed.

CAHS will cover the costs of those items.

**If you are interested in the H.O.T. program, contact your child's teacher/home visitor  
or Family & Community Development Coordinator**

**We want you!**

## Parent Meetings, Workshops and Family Activities



### **You are automatically a member of the Parent Committee at your center!**

Throughout the year, you have the opportunity to help plan parent meetings, workshops and activities that meet your interests and needs and support the education and healthy development of your family.

At the beginning of the year, sites plan orientation activities for families which include an Open House, meeting or a time to come and meet the staff and visit your child's classroom. This is a time for you to learn the essentials and help you start the school year and each site elects Policy Council Representatives who will represent your site. (see Policy Council below)

Workshops and family events give your family the opportunity to come play, learn, network with other parents and enjoy family activities.



## Policy Council



Policy Council is one of the decision making and governing bodies of CAHS and is one of the many ways you can participate in the shared decision making process. Policy Council meetings are held monthly to discuss issues affecting all levels of operation of the Head Start program.

Voting members of Policy Council are elected from current parents of Early Head Start and Head Start children who are voted in at each center and also include community representatives.

Policy Council meetings are open to others, however, when a non-member is in attendance, they may only observe the meeting. They may not actively participate in the meeting (voting, issues, discussion, etc.).

**Check with your center director or home visitor to see if your center is being represented.**



## Program committees

**Program committees are comprised of parents, people from the community and Policy Council members.**

To join a committee, contact your Parent Engagement Coordinator or the Family and Community Development Coordinator.

- **Education Committee** members review curriculum, assessment and have the opportunity to visit classrooms.
- **Personnel Committee** members review new hires and the hiring procedures and have the opportunity to participate in the interview and selection of CAHS employees.
- **Program Design and Management Committee** members review strategic plans, service area plans, grantee improvement plans and grant application requests to be submitted to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) by the Head Start program.
- **Family and Community Engagement Committee** focuses on selection criteria, clothing bank, recruitment, parent advocacy, male involvement, the parent survey and other issues as needed.
- **Health Service Advisory Committee (HSAC)** provides support and guidance on health, nutrition, behavioral health and special services concerns and programming.





## **ReadyRosie You are your child's first and most important teacher!**

Ready Rosie is a research based program that provides activity ideas to support your child's learning and development at home!

- Watch a short 2-3 minute video of a modeled activity and then do the activity with your child in your own home or on-the-go! The videos are in English and Spanish and closed captioning is available in Arabic, Vietnamese, Dari, and American Samoa.
- Receive regular playlists of videos that link to the learning that's happening in your child's classroom or in your home via a text message and/or email! AND you can pick any video from the extensive Ready Rosie library anytime and choose your own videos to watch, including videos from experts about development, digital media and screen time, storytelling, music, and more!
- Attend a Ready Rosie parent workshop and learn more about supporting your child's development and school readiness! Workshop topics include positive parenting strategies, literacy, math, parent engagement and more!

Signing up for Ready Rosie is easy!

- Staff will talk with you about Ready Rosie
- You provide an email address or number to text
- You receive an invitation to enroll by email or text
- You follow the instructions and complete the short registration process

You can also keep learning with your child all summer long with Ready Rosie's Summer Soar.

Summer can be the best time to learn and grow as a family. Log into your ReadyRosie account and you'll find 10 weeks of activities and games for your childrenxfgvdymkrky65uiu7trrrt55 as they head off to kindergarten and preschool as well as activities for your babies, toddlers and elementary age children too! Watch the quick videos of activities your family will love doing together and watch your summer learning soar! Check out the summer themes which include topics like: Move, Play, Learn! Take Learning Wherever You Go! Favorite Summer Memories! Making a Plan for Back to School!

**Thank you for taking the time to learn and grow with Ready Rosie**

## Training programs

CAHS is committed to the ongoing learning of staff and parents. Training is provided by the agency for staff and families. Please check your center's **parent bulletin board** and **monthly program wide newsletter** for details about training topics, dates, and times or ask your center director, teacher, or home visitor for a current schedule of agency training.



## Photographing children

Head Start asks that you **not** take photos of children during program activities, to ensure the privacy of all families and children in the program. **CAHS does not arrange for class or individual child school pictures to be taken.**



## PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an approach to teaching and supporting positive behaviors and meeting the needs of all children. This program-wide approach to social-emotional development focuses on building a **safe and positive environment** in which your child, and all children, can learn, as well as developing the **nurturing relationships** needed to help children thrive!

PBIS is a process for creating safer and more effective programs. The process focuses on improving a program's ability to teach and support positive behavior for all children. PBIS includes program-wide procedures and processes intended for all students and all staff in all settings. PBIS is not a curriculum. It is a team-based process for problem solving, planning, and evaluation. It is an approach to creating a safe and productive learning environment where teachers can teach and all children can learn. Our Behavioral Health staff and consultants work closely with teachers and parents to ensure that strong social-emotional practices are in place to support the whole classroom, as well as strategies to meet the unique needs of individual children.

Throughout the school year, your teacher or home visitor will help your child learn what the expectations "look" and "sound" like in every setting, including home and school. These lessons will be re-taught and reinforced throughout the school year, and are a regular, ongoing part of our program. Your teacher or home visitor will also provide "Take 5" or other family activities to support PBIS throughout the year.

Our program wide PBIS motto is: ***Take care of yourself. Take care of your friends. Take care of your home and school.***

## Positive Guidance



**Our motto is:**

**Take care of yourself.**

**Take care of your friends.**

**Take care of your home and school.**



We use positive guidance to teach children to control their own behavior and to solve their own problems. Positive guidance is a way of teaching children, not punishing children who have acted inappropriately. The goal is to enable children to become socially and emotionally competent and to become independent, responsible and socially mature human beings by learning to make responsible choices and accepting the consequences of those choices. Isolation, threats of isolation or corporal punishment are never used. We are committed to respectful partnerships with you to promote positive child guidance. We also use the PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) Curriculum to support children's social/emotional development. This curriculum encourages your child to identify and share their feelings, develop empathy for others, learn important skills for self-control, and develop problem-solving skills.

**Try using this  
at home too!**

### **(Positive Guidance continued)**

The procedure includes several specific steps. A complete copy of the Positive Guidance Procedures is available upon request for any Head Start parent or guardian.

1. CAHS staff provides a positive, nurturing and supportive environment to help your child gain social-emotional competency.
2. If your child is struggling with classroom expectations or behaviors at home, Head Start staff will work with you to develop specific strategies to help your child improve the behavior.
3. If the child's behavior does not improve, staff will collect more information about the child and meet with you to discuss ways to help your child improve the behavior and be successful at CAHS.
4. Occasionally children show challenging behaviors that interfere with learning and/or become a safety issue. When this happens, we will take the following steps:
  - a. Teachers or Home Visitors will think about changes they can make to the classroom or to support behavior at home. Teachers/ Home Visitors will talk with you to discuss possible causes of the behaviors and strategies to put in place (Classroom /Family Reflection)
  - b. If the behavior continues, Head Start staff will coordinate a team that includes the teaching staff as well as any other staff that may support the child, the parent/caregiver and any other family members that are invited, the Behavioral Health Coordinator, and Center Director. The team will meet to review data collected, strategies being used and assess progress to develop additional strategies and create an Individualized Behavior Support Plan (IBS).
  - c. Teachers, with the support of Head Start staff and the child's family, will use the strategies in the IBS and meet/communicate regularly to assess progress. The plan will be modified as needed through the process.
  - d. During this process, staff may recommend further evaluation or work with you to refer your child for other services. CAHS also partners with Behavioral Health providers in the community in order to get guidance and recommendations.
5. Other possible strategies may providing additional classroom help (you or staff) for a limited time, a modified schedule, or providing Head Start services through another program option.

If you have concerns regarding your child's behavior, the following agencies can be contacted for behavioral health support:

- Perform Care (717) 671-6541
- Early Intervention:
  - In Dauphin County: Dauphin County Case Management Unit (CMU) (717 ) 232-8761
  - In Cumberland and Perry Counties: Cumberland/Perry Mental Health (MH)/Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD ) (717) 240-6320

If you have questions or concerns about your child's development, contact the **CONNECT Helpline** at 1-800-692-7288 or **Early Intervention Services** at [www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/childcareearlylearning/earlyinterventionservices](http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/childcareearlylearning/earlyinterventionservices).

**Parent to Parent** is a resource in which parents are connected with other parents who have dealt with the same challenges, and are able to provide guidance and support. Services are free and confidential and may be accessed by calling 1-888-727-2706.

***Safe Classroom Management Practices (SCMP):*** All staff receives training in how to keep their classrooms safe learning environments. Many of the strategies that teachers use are meant to PREVENT challenging and unsafe behaviors. Teachers also use PATHS curriculum (as mentioned above) to TEACH children skills in learning how to understand and control their emotions, as well as provide REINFORCEMENT that encourages positive behaviors.

In the event that children engage in unsafe behaviors, teachers use CAHS approved techniques to keep all members of the classroom safe. These techniques include, but are not limited to, removing the child to a safer area, holding a child's hand to escort to a safer area, and use of crisis intervention techniques (blocking hits/kicks, hair-pulling releases, bite releases, etc.). Only classroom staff who have received training in the use of crisis intervention uses them. Volunteers never use these techniques. Parents will be notified before the end of the day that a crisis intervention has been used on their child. If a child's behavior compromises the safety of children or adults, other options/services may be offered. CAHS will offer support to the family during this period of time.

## Quality Assurance

Capital Area Head Start maintains Federal Performance Standards as required by the Department of Health and Human Services and the regulations established by the Pennsylvania Office of Early Learning and Child Development. The Federal Head Start Bureau regularly sends a team of reviewers, not affiliated with CAHS, to ensure compliance with Performance Standards (regulations). In addition CAHS staff, Policy Council, and members of the Keystone Service Systems Board of Directors conducts an annual self-assessment. This is a time for our program to identify our specific strengths, areas for growth, and accomplishments. For details about the self-assessment or federal reviews please be sure to check the Calendar and monthly Policy Council minutes (which will be posted on your parent bulletin board). *Quality assurance is everyone's responsibility!*

You are welcome to participate in the self-assessment process. Contact your Center Director, Home Visitor or Parent Engagement Coordinator.

# Safety



## At Home Safety Checklist: Is my home safe for my children?

- |     |    |   |
|-----|----|---|
| Yes | No | Is there an unlocked gun where my child plays?  |
| Yes | No | Do I have working smoke alarms in my home? Do I test them regularly?  |
| Yes | No | Do we have a fire escape route planned? Do we practice our fire escape route?                                     |
| Yes | No | Are stairs, hallways and doorways clear?  |
| Yes | No | Are stairs, hallways and doors locked /gated as needed?   |
| Yes | No | Are matches and lighters out of the reach of my children?   |
| Yes | No | Are medicines, alcohol, cleaning solutions, and other toxic substances locked and/or out of reach of my children? |
| Yes | No | Do I have appropriate child restraints/car seats in my vehicles?  |
| Yes | No | Are the electrical cords in my home in good condition?  |
| Yes | No | Are the electrical outlets protected with outlet covers?  |
| Yes | No | Do I have emergency numbers posted near or saved in my phone?   |

\*If you are in need of resources to address at home safety concerns, please reach out to a member of the Capital Area Head Start team so we support you.



## Emergency plans and safety drills

- Each CAHS center has an emergency evacuation plan written and posted in the classroom.
- Fire drills are held monthly at each centered based site and bimonthly at every home based site.
- Other types of emergency drills are practiced regularly throughout the year.



## Keeping Your Children Safe: Child Abuse Prevention

***Capital Area Head Start Staff are required by law to report any suspected child abuse.***

CAHS staff are dedicated to making sure that all children are safe, healthy, and happy! We partner with families to ensure that children are nurtured and loved both at home and at school, and that they have the best possible childhood experience! It is also important that we take steps to protect children from potential harm. All CAHS staff are Mandated Reporters, and are **required by law** to report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to ChildLine. This may include safety risks to children such as the presence of weapons, illegal substances or unsafe physical environments.

We also encourage YOU, as caring adults, to report concerns of abuse or neglect that you may have for any child in your community by calling **ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313**.

Additionally, CAHS staff regularly check the Megan's Law website to stay informed of individuals in the area of the center that are identified as offenders. Staff identify any risks and take measures necessary to protect your child. This is a public notification website that you may also use to access information on Megan's Law offenders: <http://www/pameganslaw.state.pa.us/>



**Together we can make a difference in our community by working together  
to prevent child abuse and neglect from ever happening.**



**Raising safe, happy, healthy kids is good for everyone -  
parents, staff, neighborhoods, and communities!**

*Strict confidentiality is observed throughout this process. Details of suspected abuse are discussed on a need to know basis only. This policy is established to protect the privacy of the parents and the child involved.*

## **Poison prevention**

Young children are curious and on the move. Following the guidance below will reduce the risks of your child being accidentally poisoned.

- Lock cabinets containing medicines and chemicals
- Use original containers for chemicals; never store in soda bottles, jars, etc.
- Select containers with childproof caps and close tightly after each use
- Check for lead-based paint on cribs, toys, walls or any items your child might chew or suck on
- Be careful with medicines-never administer in the dark, and re-read the label each time you give your child their medicine
- Never call medicine “candy”
- To protect your child -- KEEP CHEMICALS OUT OF REACH on high shelves or cabinets -- never under the sink, etc.



**If your child gets into a hazardous substance**

- **Call Poison Control immediately**
- **Follow their instructions exactly**



**POISON CONTROL  
Toll Free Number  
1-800-222-1222**



## Safe release of children from classrooms



- Your child will only be released to authorized individuals listed on the *Emergency Contact for Child* form.
- In order for staff to honor your custody arrangements, they must have a copy of the custody order.
- If you have given permission for someone NOT listed on the emergency form to pick up your child, and have notified your child's teacher, that person must provide ID.
- If you are late picking up your child from school or the bus stop and cannot be reached by phone and no one on the emergency form can be reached, after ONE HOUR we will notify the proper authorities. **PLEASE MAKE SURE WE ALWAYS HAVE AT LEAST 2 WORKING PHONE NUMBERS TO ENSURE THAT WE CAN REACH YOU OR AN EMERGENCY CONTACT!!!**
- If you use a childcare provider that drops off and/or picks up your child from Head Start: Once they are signed into our classroom by the childcare, CAHS is responsible for your child. Once the provider signs your child out at the end of the day, they are responsible.

*If an emergency keeps you from arriving for your child on time, please notify the center as soon as possible and arrange for one of your emergency contacts to pick your child at the designated time.*

## Smoking



Smoking is **not** permitted in the presence of children. This includes the center, classroom, outdoor play areas, busses, field trips, parking lots, and school grounds during scheduled hours of operation. Also we respectfully ask that you not smoke on scheduled home visits.

# Transportation

## Field trips

Trips outside the classroom are fun, learning experiences. Most classrooms will take a walking field trip at some point during the year. When you enroll your child, you are asked to sign a permission form that will enable your child to go on field trips. Destinations may include community locations within walking distance of your center. On occasion, special funds may become available for bussed field trips. Volunteers are often needed for field trips and you may be asked to come with the class if you are able. School-aged siblings are **not** permitted to attend on field trips as it may impact their attendance with their assigned school programming.

## Walking procedures

You, or other person (16 years and older) approved by you, will be responsible for bringing your child to and from the classroom and signing your child in daily. For public school based sites, siblings age 9 and over attending the same school, may drop off your child with advanced understanding between you and the teacher.

Please drop off and pick up your child ***on time***.

- **Staff are only responsible for supervising your child during stated class hours.**
- It is your responsibility to arrive at the center ***no earlier than 5 minutes prior*** to the scheduled start of the class day.
- All children must be picked up promptly at the end of their school day. Teaching staff have other responsibilities after class is over. Consistent late pick up may result in a contract or dismissal from program.
- Pick up by an emergency contact with your prior approval and teacher notification requires proper identification which is required by the teacher when they are unfamiliar with an individual picking up your child.
- Please inform everyone on your child's emergency contact form to be prepared to show identification when picking up your child.
- Maintaining the safety of all children is extremely important to CAHS and all parents. We greatly appreciate your cooperation upon entry and exiting the building.

*We would love to have you participate in the classroom!  
Be sure to sign up for a day in your child's center.*

## Volunteers



Helpful hints for classroom participation:

- You can spend time playing with your child and the children in the class. Please dress accordingly and wear comfortable clothing and shoes appropriate for an active classroom experience.
- Sometimes your child is excited because you're in the class and this may cause him/her to misbehave. Although it's difficult, try not to get upset. The teachers will understand. Your child will be more comfortable each time you visit and adjust as you volunteer more, and will be proud to see you as "teacher".
- Check with your teacher or center director before bringing siblings into the classroom. You are responsible for supervising your children when you bring them to the center. Typically, due to space and safety concerns, only your enrolled child and your immediate family are included in program events, activities, meetings, or can receive child care if offered during meetings.

For your health and the health of the children, all "regular volunteers" must have a TB test and completed clearances. A "regular volunteer" is defined as "any parent or community person age 18 and over, who is trained to assist in implementing ongoing program activities" and who volunteers 3 or more times in a month. Regular volunteers must provide a completed volunteer packet.



You can volunteer your time in other ways too. You can be on Policy Council, help in the office, etc. Ask your teacher, home visitor or Parent Engagement Coordinator what you can do. Check out the Parent Opportunities section in the handbook!

## Tips for a successful year in Head Start



- Please let us know immediately of any changes in address, telephone number, or change in emergency contact person. It is important the we always have at least, one other adult, in addition to parent(s), to contact in the event of an emergency.
- Please inform everyone listed on your child's *Emergency Contact* form to be prepared to show ID when picking up your child.
- If your child will be absent, please let the center know. We will contact you if your child has an irregular pattern of attendance or has been absent or not home for home visits for more than two days.
- Become actively engaged at your center by participating in the classroom, attending parent meetings and workshops, communicating regularly with staff, and reading all materials that are sent home.
- Please tell your child's teacher/home visitor of any changes concerning your child's health: if your child is enrolled in a new health insurance plan, if your child is assigned a new primary care provider, or a new doctor or dentist. Also tell your teacher/home visitor if your child starts regularly taking a new medication or a change is made to the medication, or your child develops an allergy to food or medicine.
- Let the teacher/home visitors know of any special happenings in your home that might affect your child—a new baby, a death, a move, a vacation, birthday, etc. This way the staff can better meet your child's individual needs.
- Continue to support your *Behavior Partnership Agreement*.



## Transition to preschool and kindergarten



Starting school, whether it be preschool or kindergarten, means change for children and families. Our goal is to work with you to ensure a smooth and successful transition into and out of our program. Working as partners, our role is to help your child to feel safe and secure as they move from one placement to another. Planning for this change is important for both you and your child. Your child's teacher or home visitor will support your family by sharing information about your new school, parents rights and responsibilities, tips for communicating with the staff, visiting and parent engagement at your new school. Together we can set the stage for success!



***Take care of yourself.***  
***Take care of your friends.***  
***Take care of your home and school.***

## Our Mission

To provide a state of the art, community based, early childhood school experience that is focused and responsive to the ever changing needs of families. We empower families to see the future with a sense of hope to embrace the skills and confidence necessary to set and achieve their own goals.



## Our Vision

We understand the difference between the world that is and the world that can be. Our vision is a world in which all children are safe, healthy, nurtured, and loved with opportunities for active learning. We create a world in which all parents are supported and respected in their challenging role as parents. This is a world where we work ourselves out of business and Capital Area Head Start is no longer needed.

## Our Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) Mission:

The Capital Area Head Start Positive Behavior Interventions and Support mission is to promote a safe and positive environment that enhances learning through teaching and recognizing positive behavior and to create a sense of community in which all children, families, and staff actively contribute.

## Resources:

Employment with CAHS  
Early Childhood Knowledge and Learning Center  
National Head Start Association  
PA Head Start Association  
PA Department of Education  
PA Early Learning Keys to Quality  
PA Child Care Association  
PNC Grow Up Great  
Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for  
Early Learning (CSEFEL)  
Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional  
Intervention (TACSEI)

[www.keystoneemployment.com](http://www.keystoneemployment.com)  
<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>  
[www.nhsa.org](http://www.nhsa.org)  
[www.paheadstart.org](http://www.paheadstart.org)  
[www.pde.state.pa.us](http://www.pde.state.pa.us)  
[www.pakeys.org](http://www.pakeys.org)  
[www.pacca.org](http://www.pacca.org)  
[www.pncgrowupgreat.com](http://www.pncgrowupgreat.com)

[www.csefel.vanderbilt.edu](http://www.csefel.vanderbilt.edu)

[www.challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu](http://www.challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu)  
[www.highscope.org](http://www.highscope.org)

High Scope

CONTACT Helpline –connect to resources in your community!

<https://pa211.communityos.org> or call 2-1-1

\*this is a GREAT resource for connecting you with up to date information on resources that can help you with your personal/ family needs and goals! 😊