

# WCCA

WRIGHT COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION



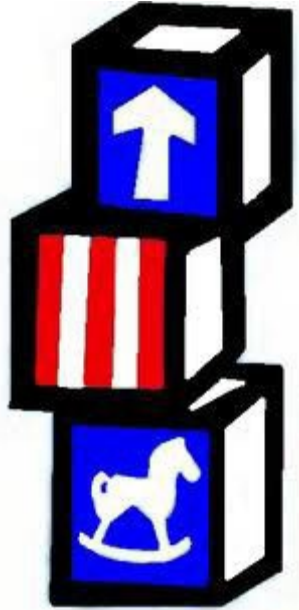
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Minnesota Relay TDD: (800) 627-3529 • [www.wccaweb.com](http://www.wccaweb.com)

Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday: 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Tuesday: 8 a.m.–6:00 p.m.



# Head Start & Early Head Start 2023-2024



## Parent Calendar/Handbook

Including Agency & Community Resource Information

Serving Wright County & Western Hennepin County

Items and events in the calendar/handbook are subject to change due to COVID outbreak or exposure.

We will notify families of any changes as they arise. We appreciate your patience and flexibility.



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# Wright County Community Action Head Start Office

130 West Division Street, PO Box 787, Maple Lake, MN 55358

Phone: 320-963-6500 Fax: 320-963-5745 Email: [headstart@wccaweb.com](mailto:headstart@wccaweb.com) website: [www.wccaweb.com](http://www.wccaweb.com)

- |  |         |  |         |  |         |
|--|---------|--|---------|--|---------|
| • Dara Smida, Head Start/EHS Director  | Ext 228 | • Felicia Mills, Family Services Coordinator | Ext 243 | • Kimberly Zeidler, Health Coordinator | Ext 234 |
| • Lisa Devitt, Education Coordinator   | Ext 236 | • Jennifer VandeVord, Inclusion Coordinator  | Ext 229 | • Samantha Puffer, ERSEA Coordinator   | Ext 235 |
| • Kelly Mayville, Nutrition Specialist | Ext 239 | • Barbara Aydt, Data Entry Specialist        | Ext 258 | • Erica Mielke, EHS Manager            | Ext 237 |
| • DaNette Dempsey, Coach               | Ext 242 |  |         |  |         |

## WCCA Head Start Centers

### ANNANDALE CENTER

St. John's Lutheran Church  
331 Harrison St. W., Annandale 55302  
320-274-3318 Cell: 763-957-9927

### BUFFALO CENTER

Wright Technical Center  
1405 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. NE, Buffalo 55313  
**Buffalo 1**, room 101, 763-684-0027  
Cell: 763-957-9662  
**Buffalo 2**, room 226, 763-682-1862  
Cell: 763-898-9275

### DELANO CENTER

Light of Christ Lutheran Church  
3976 County Line Road, Delano 55328  
763-972-8120 Cell: 763-923-9949

### HOWARD LAKE CENTER

St. John's Lutheran Church  
625 12<sup>th</sup> Ave. So, Howard Lake 55349  
320-543-2955 Cell: 763-898-9242

### MONTICELLO CENTER

Eastview Education Center  
9375 Fenning Ave. NE, Monticello 55362  
**Rm. 206:** 763-272-2922, Cell: 763-957-9698  
**Rm. 207:** 763-272-2983, Cell: 763-898-8240  
**Rm. 208:** 763-272-2969, Cell: 763-334-8582  
**Rm. 209:** 763-272-2988, Cell: 763-334-8827  
**Rm. 210:** 763-272-2910, Cell: 763-334-8721

### MONTROSE CENTER

Montrose Early Education Center  
115-2<sup>nd</sup> Street South, Montrose 55363  
763-682-8478 Cell: 763-923-9780

### ST. MICHAEL CENTER

Kaleidoscope Charter School  
7525 Kalland Ave. NE, Otsego 55301  
Cell: 763-923-9233

### **Don't forget to exercise your right to vote whenever there are local, state and national elections.**

You may register to vote if: You are 18 years or older, a citizen of the United States, and have lived in Minnesota 20 days immediately prior to the election.

If you are not registered prior to election day, you may register at your polling place when you go to vote. Bring valid driver's license or valid Minnesota Identification card showing current address, or you may have another voter vouch for you.

If you need more information, such as for absentee voting or voting rights of the disabled, call one of these numbers:

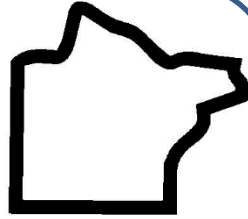
Hennepin County: (612) 348-5151

Secretary of State: (612) 296-2805

Wright County: (763) 682-7580



## WCCA Mission Statement



Working in partnership with the community to empower residents to improve their physical, social and economic well-being.



## Early Head Start Mission Statement

The mission of EHS is to support healthy prenatal outcomes and enhance the intellectual, social, and emotional development of infants and toddlers to promote later success in school and life.

## Early Head Start Program Option

We offer the Early Head Start program to families with infants and toddlers, or families expecting a baby. Early Head Start encourages the role of the parent as their child's first and most important teacher, providing strategies that help parents prepare children for school and promote their academic success.

Families receive weekly 90-minute home visits to support and strengthen parent-child relationships and develop school readiness skills. Home visitors also target health, dental, social-emotional and nutrition services; prenatal support for expectant mothers; and referrals to other community resources as needed. Early Head Start also recognizes the need for social development outside the home.

We offer socializations twice a month to allow parents and children the opportunity to build relationships with other families in the program.

## Head Start Mission Statement

To assure school readiness, WCCA Head Start helps income eligible families develop social skills. Social skills refer to the child's every day effectiveness in dealing with both his/her present environment and later responsibilities in school and life. They take into account the interrelatedness of cognitive and intellectual development, physical and mental health, and nutritional needs.



Key principles of Head Start include the following:

- Comprehensive services
- Parent Engagement and family focus
- Community partnerships and community-based services

## Head Start Program Options (children 3-5 years old)

<u>Location</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Times</u>	<u>License Capacity</u>
Annandale	Monday-Thursday	8:30 am-2:30 pm	20
Buffalo	Monday-Friday	8:00 am-2:30 pm	20 per classroom
Delano	Monday-Thursday	8:30 am-2:30 pm	18
Howard Lake	Monday-Thursday	8:30 am-2:30 pm	20
Monticello	Monday-Friday	9:05 am-3:20 pm	17-20 per classroom
Montrose	Monday-Thursday	8:30 am-2:30 pm	20
St. Michael	Monday-Thursday	8:00 am-2:00 pm	20

You can review the center's Child Care Program Plan by asking your child's teacher.

## WCCA Head Start & Early Head Start 2023-2024 School Readiness Goals

As part of Head Start's constant efforts to improve quality, WCCA Head Start has developed School Readiness goals for our children. WCCA Head Start and Early Head Start School Readiness goals are designed to help children and their families prepare for success academically in school. The School Readiness Goals align with the Head Start/Early Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) and are organized by five (5) broad domains within the ELOF. WCCA's SRG also align with the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs), and the local school districts' expectations of skill levels for children entering kindergarten. WCCA surveys the public school districts in the service areas annually to determine school's requirements and expectations for children's abilities when entering kindergarten.

### APPROACHES TO LEARNING

**Goal 1:** To ensure school readiness in approaches to learning development, birth through 5-year-old children will demonstrate an understanding of the skills and behaviors needed to engage in learning.

**Objective:** Children will show growth annually in the area of approaches to learning as measured by improved scores through TS Gold, DRDP, and ASQ-3 data.

### SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Goal 2:** To ensure school readiness, birth through 5-year-old children will demonstrate an understanding of building and maintaining relationships and the ability to recognize, express, and manage emotions.

**Objective:** Children will show growth annually in the areas of social and emotional development as measured by improved scores through TS Gold, DRDP, and ASQ-3 data.

### LANGUAGE & LITERACY

**Goal 3:** To ensure school readiness, birth through 5-year-old children will demonstrate an understanding of communication and development of literacy skills.

**Objective:** Children will show growth annually in the areas of language and literacy as measured by improved scores through TS Gold, DRDP, and ASQ-3 data.

### COGNITION

**Goal 4:** To ensure school readiness in approaches to cognition and general knowledge development, birth through 5-year-old children will demonstrate an understanding in the areas of reasoning, memory, problem solving and thinking skills.

**Objective:** Children will show growth annually in the area of cognition as measured by improved scores through TS Gold, DRDP, and ASQ-3 data.

### PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR & PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

**Goal 5:** To ensure school readiness, birth through 5-year-old children will demonstrate an understanding of perceptual, fine and gross motor development.

**Objective:** Children will show growth annually in the areas of perceptual, motor, and physical development as measured by improved scores through TS Gold, DRDP, and ASQ-3 data.

# September/septiembre 2023

October 2023

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
27	28	29	30	31	1	2
3	4 Labor Day	5 Monticello Welcome Back Days	6 Monticello Welcome Back Days	7 Parent Orientation for Annandale, Buffalo, Delano, Howard Lake, Montrose, St. Michael  First Day of Class at Monticello  Early Head Start Orientation 9-12	8	9
10	11 First Day of Class for: Annandale, Buffalo, Delano, Howard Lake, Montrose, St. Michael  First Day of EHS Services	12	13	14	15	16  Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
17	18	19 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	20	21	22	23
24	25	26 Early Head Start Socialization	27	28	29	30

# School Readiness and Education

## **Daily Schedule:**

A typical day in Head Start includes time for individual, small group, and large group activities. During large group activities, children will be involved in storytelling; finger plays; music and movement; and games. During active learning time, children can choose what they want to play while teachers conduct learning activities in small groups. By engaging in small group learning and meaningful play, your child will get the skills needed to be successful in kindergarten. The daily schedule also includes time for snacks, meals, tooth brushing, hand washing, outdoor play, and rest time.

## **Appropriate Dress:**

Your child should always wear comfortable play clothes in which they can get messy. Have your child wear sturdy shoes for running (no sandals, please!). If weather permits, the children will play outdoors. Make sure your child is dressed for the weather every day (coat, mittens, and hat, scarf, boots, and snow pants in cold weather). Please send an extra set of clothing and any toilet-training supplies in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name.

## **Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS):**

WCCA Head Start uses the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to ensure our teachers and classrooms provide quality emotional and academic support for the children. Children who are positively motivated and connected to others in the preschool setting are more likely to succeed in both social and academic domains. Trained CLASS observers rate teacher's classroom interactions to make certain our teachers are effective and reinforce the skills children need to succeed in school.

## **Head Start Curriculum and Assessment**

**Creative Curriculum** is based on the belief that children learn from warm teacher and child interactions, guided encouragement and support from adults, and the opportunity to engage in meaningful important play experimenting with materials and the environment. Each classroom is set up with distinct interest areas. We put materials on low shelves and hooks so children can take them out and put them away on their own. Containers and shelves have labels with pictures so children know where materials belong. By setting up the center this way, we are helping children learn how to make choices, solve problems, take care of their own needs, and become independent, self-confident, curious learners

**Teaching Strategies Gold:** In our effort to ensure children's academic progress we assess children's growth using an online assessment system created in conjunction with Creative Curriculum. Children learn in nine broad areas of development with refined dimensions of skills in these areas. Using Teaching Strategies Gold, we are able to determine children's developmental level which enables teaching staff to plan meaningful engaging activities to promote continued learning.

## **Early Head Start Curriculum and Assessment**

**Partners for a Healthy Baby** curriculum is a research-based parenting curriculum used for our Early Head Start program. The curriculum is compiled of evidence-based strategies for home visitors to use when addressing issues facing expectant and new families and children ages 0 through 3. Partners for a Healthy Baby is a "two generation" curriculum that addresses the needs of both the parents and the children. Partners curriculum contains four categories: Family Development, Maternal & Family Health, Preparing for Baby; Caring for Baby/Caring for Toddler and Baby's Development/Toddler's Development. Topics within each category contain detailed information pages that can be printed or sent digitally to the families.

The **Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP 2015)** is a developmental continuum from early infancy to kindergarten entry. The DRDP is administered in the child's home environment through home visitor and parent observation and examples of children's work. Children are assessed in five areas of development, four times per year, to determine progress and growth. This system is aligned to the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPS).

## **Child Development/IDEA Statement:**

We continually monitor the development of all children in our care through ongoing observation and recording and we want the best outcomes for all children. We are a primary referral source for early intervention under federal IDEA special education law. We are required to refer a child in our program who has been identified as having developmental concerns or a risk factor that warrants a referral as soon as possible, but in no case more than seven days after the identification. While this is a mandate, we want to keep open communication with parents and caregivers about their child and any concerns we have before a referral is made. We can assist the parent with the referral or partner with them in the referral process.



# October/octubre 2023

November 2023

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	1	2

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
1	2	3 Early Head Start Socialization	4	5	6 Physical Exams for Monticello Due Today	7
8	9	10 Physical Exams Due Today	11	12	13	14
15	16	17 Early Head Start Socialization  Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	18 Monticello Early Release at 12:20	19 Fall Break All Centers Closed	20 Fall Break All Centers Closed	21 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31 Early Head Start Socialization	1	2	3	4

## School Readiness and Education (Continued)



### **Attendance Policy:**

It is important for your child to attend Head Start every day. If a child is at risk of missing more than 10% of program days, we will implement an Attendance Success Plan, making sure we are helping your child to gain the skills to do well in Head Start and beyond. If your child will be absent for any reason, call your child's teacher as well as the bus company. Contact information for bus companies is listed on page 11 of this Parent Calendar/Handbook. Each day your child is absent without notification, your child's teacher will contact you. If we do not hear from you for two consecutive days, staff will attempt a home visit. If a child does not attend Head Start for 30 consecutive calendar days, that slot will be considered vacant and offered to a child on the waiting list. Accommodations to the attendance policy will be made for absences due to COVID quarantine.

### **Communication**

Your child's teacher and other Head Start staff will frequently give you information in the form of handouts, newsletters, and flyers. Every child needs a backpack to carry papers to and from home. Please check your child's backpack every day for important papers. Teachers may also communicate via text or an e-mail, with your permission. Make sure teachers have the most up-to-date contact information for you. Each center's Parent Resource Area has a bulletin board with up-to-date information. Please take a moment to look at it when you visit the center.

### **Home Visits and Conferences**

**Head Start:** Your child's teacher will make at least two visits to your home during the program year. You will also attend two conferences at the center. These home visits and conferences give you a chance to discuss your child's progress with the teacher. Family Advocates will conduct home visits and conferences as needed, as well as check-in with you at least twice per month. If there is a COVID concern, home visits and conferences may be held outside while maintaining physical distancing, or held virtually. Please feel free to call your child's teacher or family advocate anytime you have a question or concern.

**Early Head Start:** Your family will receive weekly home visits, forty-six weeks throughout the program year. If you or your child are sick and unable to complete your home visit, please call your home visitor immediately. Canceled visits will need to be re-scheduled and made-up within two weeks of the canceled visits.

### **Transition**

**Head Start:** We will help you and your child prepare for moving on to kindergarten in several ways. We will give you ideas on how to prepare your child for kindergarten, and let you know about the local school's kindergarten registration dates. We will help your child prepare by working on school readiness skills, social-emotional skills and self-help skills. You can help by making sure your child's immunizations are up to date, registering your child for kindergarten, and getting him or her on a regular bedtime schedule.

**Early Head Start:** Your child's transition from Early Head Start to Head Start will begin at 30 months. You and your home visitor will discuss transition topics during your scheduled home visits. You will have the opportunity to tour the Head Start classroom and attend a family engagement event to learn more about the Head Start program. Prior to entry into Head Start, you will have a meeting with the Head Start Family Advocate and your child's Early Head Start Home Visitor to complete enrollment paperwork.

### **Field Trips**

We may take field trips or provide lyceum programs for children at the centers or at socialization throughout the year, as funding allows. Staff will obtain written parental permission ahead of time for field trips. We will not have your child participate in any research, experimental procedures, or public relations activities without your permission.

### **Socialization**

Socialization events are offered to Early Head Start families twenty-two times per program year. Socialization serves to enhance your child's social-emotional development. Children have the opportunity to explore learning activities with their parent/guardian and meet new friends. We also offer opportunities for parents to connect with guest speakers and discuss various topics.

# November/noviembre 2023

December 2023

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
29	30	31	1	2	3 Monticello Early Release at 12:20	4
5 Daylight Savings Time Ends Turn Your Clocks Back	6 All Centers Closed for Staff Training	7	8	9	10 Veteran's Day (observed) Buffalo closed	11
No Early Head Start Visits This Week						
12	13	14	15	16	17 Buffalo closed for Conferences	18 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
19	20	21 Monticello closed for Conferences Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	22 All Centers Closed	23 Thanksgiving Day All Centers Closed	24 All Centers Closed	25
No Early Head Start Visits This Week						
26	27	28 Early Head Start Socialization	29	30	1	2

## Weather Closing Guidelines

Occasionally, there may be weather conditions that cause WCCA Head Start locations to close for the day, start late, or close early.

When temperature, wind chill or road conditions are of concern, WCCA will follow local school district closings and delays whenever possible.

In the case of a center closing, late start or early release due to weather, you will receive notification via text or e-mail, or a call from your child's teacher. Information will also be posted at:  
<http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/school-closings/>



Announcements of closings and cancellations are listed as WCCA HEAD START on:

**WEB:** <http://minnesota.cbslocal.com/school-closings/>    **TELEVISION:** WCCO 4 News    **RADIO:** WCCO 830 AM

If the Governor calls a statewide weather-related school closing, all Head Start locations **will be closed for the day.**



We urge parents and caregivers to have back-up childcare arrangements in place when severe weather is threatening, as your child may arrive home earlier than usual.

# December/diciembre 2023

January 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
3	4	5 Dental Exams for Monticello Due Today	6	7	8 Dental Exams Due Today	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
17	18	19 Early Head Start Socialization  Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	20	21	22 Winter Break All Centers Closed	23
24	25 Winter Break All Centers Closed	26 Winter Break All Centers Closed	27 Winter Break All Centers Closed	28 Winter Break All Centers Closed	29 Winter Break All Centers Closed	30
No Early Head Start Visits This Week						
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

# Transportation



WCCA Head Start provides transportation at most locations. Transportation is provided to as many children as possible, based on desired pick up/drop off locations and bus routes. Unfortunately, we are not able to guarantee transportation for all families.

## General Transportation Guidelines

- Notify your child’s teacher or the ERSEA Coordinator as soon as possible to make requests for changes. You will need to fill out a Change in Transportation Form. Allow at least **3 days** for changes to take effect.
- Contact your child's teacher or family advocate as soon as you know your child will be absent from Head Start.
- We will only release your child to individuals listed on the **Child Emergency Contacts & Authorization** form. If you would like to make changes to your child’s Emergency Contact form, please contact your child’s teacher, family advocate or the WCCA Head Start office as soon as possible to fill out a Change form.
- There can only be one pick-up or drop-off location Monday through Thursday/Friday. We cannot accommodate alternate days/locations.

## TRANSPORTATION PROVIDERS

Annandale and Howard Lake Centers	Delano and Montrose Centers	Monticello Center	Buffalo Center
M & M Bus Service	Stahlke Bus Service	Hoglund Transportation	Vision Transportation
(320) 274-8313	(763 ) 972-3991	(763) 295-3604	(763) 682-3232

### PICK-UP

1. **Pick-up will be at the same place every day.** Any change must be requested in writing at least **3 days** in advance.
2. Watch for the bus. Have your child ready at least **10 to 15 minutes** before your scheduled arrival time, as the route time may fluctuate from day to day based on children’s attendance. **The bus driver will wait at least 30 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute.**
3. All pick-ups are made in driveway or curbside of your home.
4. A caregiver must accompany their child to the bus. The bus monitor will help the child into their safety harness.
5. Caregivers must initial the sign-in/sign-out sheet at pick up each day. During COVID, the bus monitor will sign your child in.
6. If your child misses the bus, a caregiver must provide transportation to the center, walk with the child into the center and sign the child in.

### DROP-OFF

1. **Drop-off will be at the same place every day.**
2. All drop-offs are made in driveway or curbside of your home.
3. Caregivers must be home at drop-off time and meet the bus. **The bus driver will wait at least 30 seconds and a maximum of 1 minute.**
4. A caregiver must come out to the bus to meet the child and initial the sign-in/sign-out sheet upon drop-off each day.
5. If the authorized caregiver is not at the drop-off location, the child will be returned to the center. **If we are unable to make arrangements with anyone listed on the Child Emergency Contacts & Authorization form, child protection or law enforcement will be called.**

## BASIC SAFETY RULES ON THE BUS

To insure safety, the bus driver, bus monitor and/or teacher will take the following steps to address behavior concerns:

1. Ask the child to stop the inappropriate behavior.
2. Let the parent(s) know about the behavior concern.
3. Involve parent(s) in setting up a plan to help their child ride the bussafely.
4. If a child is unable to ride the bus safely, parents will be asked to make alternative transportation arrangements.



Bus evacuation drills are completed three times per year at each Head Start classroom.

# January/enero 2024

February 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	1	2

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
31	1 Winter Break All Centers Closed	2 Monticello Closed Other Classes Resume Early Head Start Socialization	3 Monticello Resume	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King, Jr Day All Centers Closed	16 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative) Early Head Start Socialization	17	18	19	20 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3



Parent and family engagement in Head Start and Early Head Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being; supporting strong relationships between parents and their children; and nurturing ongoing learning and development for both parent and children. This results in children who are healthy and ready for school.

<b>Head Start Parent and Family Engagement Outcomes</b>	
<b>Family Well-Being</b>	Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security.
<b>Positive Parent-Child Relationships</b>	Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child’s learning and development.
<b>Families as Lifelong Educators</b>	Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school, and in their communities.
<b>Families as Learners</b>	Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.
<b>Family Engagement in Transitions</b>	Parents and families support and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including Early Head Start to Head Start, Head Start to other learning environments, and Head Start to kindergarten through elementary school.
<b>Family Connections to Peers &amp; Community</b>	Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal and informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhance social well-being and community life.
<b>Families as Advocates and Leaders</b>	Parents and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, or in community and state organizing activities to improve children’s development and learning experiences.

- Each Head Start family receives at least two Home Visits and two Conferences throughout the year with their child’s teacher. Family Advocates will also complete home visits and conferences with families throughout the program year as needed.
- Early Head Start families receive a home visit each week. During these visits, you will have the opportunity to discuss your family’s strengths and needs, and to complete an assessment designed to measure the outcomes described above. We use this information to design our services to help all families achieve growth in the above areas.
- Through our Family Partnership Process, our staff will also spend some time with each family to discuss their hopes and dreams for the future, and provide resources and/or referrals to assist in achieving those hopes and dreams.
- We offer parent meetings and family engagement events each month for Head Start and Early Head Start families. These events give you the opportunity to connect with local resources and make decisions about your child’s program.
- We offer parents the opportunity to learn about the Conscious Discipline parenting curriculum. This curriculum helps improve parenting knowledge and skills, increase parents’ ability to manage their own emotions and respond to children’s challenging behaviors, and improve emotional management and behavior in children.
- WCCA has a Policy Council made up of elected Head Start and Early Head Start parents. The Policy Council meets once a month to review program reports, receive updates on individual classrooms and programs, and make decisions that impact the Head Start and Early Head Start programs. This is a great chance for parents to develop leadership skills, network with other parents, advocate for children, and represent the voice of the children and parents in the program.



# February/febrero 2024

March 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
25	26	27	28	29	1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6 Early Head Start Socialization	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
18	19 President's Day All Centers Closed	20 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)  Early Head Start Socialization	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29 Monticello and Buffalo closed for conferences	1	2

## Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

You are welcome to visit your child's Head Start center at any time.

WCCA Head Start has always recognized the importance of parent engagement in the success of our program. After all, parents are their children's first and most important teachers. We encourage all family members to GET INVOLVED in the WCCA Head Start program.

Volunteers are always needed at Head Start. We have a variety of ways you can be involved in the program through volunteering your time and talents! Whether you have a few minutes or a few hours, the value you can bring to the WCCA Head Start program and the families we serve is immeasurable!\*

Whenever you volunteer your time or donate materials to Head Start, be sure to fill out a Family Engagement Record. Your time is a valuable contribution to our program; we get credit for matching our In-Kind volunteer hours to federal funding. Your child's teacher can explain in-kind in more detail.

\*Participation of Head Start parents is not a condition of enrollment



Parent, Family and Community Engagement is more than just getting involved at the Head Start center! Children are learning all of the time, not only through active instruction, but also at home and in the community, interacting with family and friends.

Activities you do at home with your child are important to help connect what we learn in Head Start with what you do at home. The teacher will provide weekly newsletters to give you some ideas of things you can do at home with your child to support his/her learning. Use the Family Engagement Record to document time you spend working with your child at home that supports goals you and the teacher/home visitor set for your child and your family.

### Confidentiality and Data Privacy

All information on the children and families in the WCCA Head Start is considered private and kept secure. We will maintain confidentiality and respect each family's right to privacy.

We share your family's information only when there is a legitimate need for it:

1. With you and the people that you provide written permission to share information with;
2. With Wright County Community Action staff members whose direct job duties require it; and
3. With state and federal auditors and funding source employees whose jobs require access to this information to ensure that you are being properly served.

### Wright County Community Action Parent/Community Complaint Procedure

If a parent is having a disagreement with any Head Start employee, the parent should meet with the employee to try to resolve the dispute informally. If this attempt is unsuccessful, the parent may follow the Community Complaint Procedure outlined in the following chart:

STEP	ITEM	PERSON/GROUP
1.	Parent/Community writes complaint and sends to Maple Lake Office.	Staff
2.	Receive written complaint.	Staff
3.	Route complaint to program manager/director. All complaints from elected public officials will be brought to the attention of the Executive Director.	Program Director
4.	Investigate/examine complaint to determine type of complaint and validity.	Program Director
5.	Determine applicability of existing agency/program policies, rules, regulations or law.	Program Director
6.	Prepare written response to complaint to include any needed explanation and/or any planned action or corrective measures.	Program Director
7.	Route complaint and written response to Executive Director for review/approval before mailing response.	Program Director
8.	Approve written response and/or planned action or corrective measures.	Executive Director
9.	Send response to complaint.	Program Director
10.	Where resolution requires a change to local agency or program policy, the proposed policy change will be considered and acted on by the Board of Directors and, where applicable, the Head Start Policy Council prior to implementation.	Board of Directors; Head Start Policy Council
11.	Corrective action implemented.	Executive Director; Program Director

# March/marzo 2024

April 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
25	26	27	28	29	1 All Centers Closed for Staff Training	2
3	4	5 Early Head Start Socialization	6	7	8	9
10 Daylight Savings Time Begins Turn Your Clocks Forward	11	12	13	14	15	16 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
17	18	19 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative) Early Head Start Socialization	20	21	22 All Centers Closed for Staff Training	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Annandale, Delano, Howard Lake, Monticello, St. Michael Spring Break						
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

# NUTRITION



The food we choose to fuel our bodies and the activity we get affects how we feel today and in the future. Your children are no different! At Head Start, good nutrition and physical activity contribute to a healthy learning environment. Your Head Start Child will learn to try new foods, learn where their food comes from and learn how to eat family style, including using proper table manners, and learn how to socialize during meals. For more information on nutrition go to [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) to explore food groups, answer questions about your child's growth and get recipes and menu ideas.

## HEAD START PARTICIPATES IN CACFP

When your child comes to the Head Start center or Early Head Start socialization, they will receive healthy foods provided by the CACFP program. CACFP stands for the Child and Adult Care Food Program, which provides WCCA with reimbursement for meals and snacks. CACFP also requires that we follow their meal pattern requirements to assure that children receive nutritious foods. This includes milk, fruits, vegetables, whole grains and meat/meat alternatives. CACFP is a government-funded program that does not discriminate.

## Standard/Full Civil Rights Statement

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

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

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

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

**This institution is an equal opportunity provider.**

# April/abril 2024

May 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
28	29	30	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	1

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
31	1	2 Early Head Start Socialization	3	4	5	6
Buffalo & Montrose Spring Break						
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Early Head Start Socialization  Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	17	18	19  Montrose Make-Up Day	20  Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
21	22	23	24	25	26  All centers closed	27
28	29	30  Early Head Start Socialization	1	2	3	4

# HEALTH & SAFETY

WCCA Head Start's Health & Safety Policies & Procedures have been approved by our health consultant. Complete policies are available upon request at the center or the main office.

## Health Requirements:

- **Well Child Physical Exam** is required to be turned in within **30 days** of starting the program and annually thereafter. This includes blood pressure, height, weight, hearing and vision screening and lead level documentation.
- **Head Start (age 3-5)** requires an annual exam. **Early Head Start (birth – 3)** follows the Minnesota EPSDT Schedule (2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24 & 30 months)
- **Immunizations** are required to be turned in before the child starts the program. Required immunizations are based on age.
- A **Dental Exam** is required to be turned in within **90 days** of starting the program.

## Health Services:

- WCCA has MNSure navigators on staff to assist in applying for **health insurance** through **MNSure**, if needed.
- **Dental Days with Children's Dental Services** are offered several times during the year to complete dental exams and treatment.
- **Well water testing.** We send well water in to test for fluoride and connect families with resources for fluoride supplements.
- **Tooth brushing and oral health education** at the centers daily.

## Health Resources:

- **"Give Kids a Smile"** is an annual event that takes place in February. Dentists across Minnesota provide free care to low income children. Information will be sent home with your child. Visit [www.mndental.org](http://www.mndental.org) for more information.
- **Wright County Public Health** offers **Child and Teen Checkups** for children that do not have insurance or their insurance does not cover checkups. Call 763- 682-8921 for more information.
- **Wright County Wellness on Wheels** offers services including immunizations, lead and hemoglobin levels, car seat checks and much more. Call 763-682- 7516 for more information.

## Medication:

- Prescription medication from a doctor or dentist will be given at Head Start, only if necessary, with a completed **Permission to Administer Medication** form.

## Ill Children:

- Ill children will be excluded from Head Start
- If your child becomes ill at Head Start, he/she will rest on a cot with a blanket isolated from the other children until picked up. You or the designated contact person will be called to pick the child up.
- Please let your home visitor know if you or your child are ill. For the protection of the home visitor and other children, the visit may be canceled.
- If your child has been exposed to a diagnosed contagious illness or condition in the classroom, an infectious disease notice will be sent home with your child and posted in the classroom.
- **For COVID related illness or exposure, please see the WCCA COVID Mitigation Policy and Procedure**

## Pets:

- Head Start teachers may choose to house pet(s) at their centers. You will be informed if and what pets are at your child's center. Please let your child's teacher know if your child has an animal allergy.

## Safety and Medical Emergencies:

- All WCCA Head Start center staff are currently certified in First Aid and in Infant/Child CPR and Obstructed Airways.
- Emergency Procedures and numbers are posted in all centers.
- In situations requiring emergency medical attention, your child (accompanied by a Head Start staff person) will be taken by ambulance to the nearest medical facility. The parent(s) or designated contact person will be called.
- Head Start will report injuries at Head Start requiring emergency care to the DHS Licensing Division.
- In case of emergency, the following limited list may be used as sources for medical care for your family:

Buffalo Hospital	763-682-1212
Centra Care Hospital, Monticello	763-295-2945
St. Cloud Hospital	320-251-2700
Ridgeview Medical Center, Waconia	952-442-2191

- Fire drills are conducted monthly
- Tornado drills are conducted 4 times per year
- Lockdown drills are conducted every other month
- Bus evacuation drills are conducted 3 times a year

# May/mayo 2024

June 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
28	29	30	1	2	3 Montrose Make-up day	4
5	6	7 Early Head Start Socialization	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15 Last Day for: Annandale, Delano, Howard Lake, Montrose, St. Michael	16	17	18 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
19	20	21 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative) Early Head Start Socialization	22	23 Buffalo Make-Up Day	24 Buffalo Make-Up Day Last Day for Buffalo	25
26	27 Memorial Day All Centers Closed	28	29	30	31	1

## What is . . . Early Childhood Mental Health?



## Mental Health Services

Early Childhood Mental Health is a child's ability to experience warm and responsive relationships with caregivers, create relationships with others, explore and learn, communicate in play and express and regulate emotion. Children who have healthy mental health have a positive quality of life and can function well at home, in school, and in their communities.

### A Child's Physical and Mental Health are Both Very Important

Support for a child's physical health includes:

- Nutritious food
- Adequate shelter
- Adequate, routine sleep
- Daily exercise
- Immunizations



Support for a child's mental health includes:

- Unconditional love from family
- Self-confidence and high self-esteem
- The opportunity to play with other children
- Positive Support, Encouragement and Guidance from family, teachers and caregivers

### Classroom Consultation:

The Mental Health Consultant will visit each classroom several times throughout the year. Teaching staff are provided with support and ideas on helping your children grow socially and emotionally. With parent permission, our Mental Health Consultant will work with children in small groups to model strategies for teachers and assist children in their social/emotional development.

Early Head Start will have observation days 3 times per year. A mental health professional will attend a socialization to observe the children, visit with parents about concerns, and answer questions about social and emotional development.

### Curriculum:

Mental wellness is further enhanced in our program through **Second Step**, a fun, research-based curriculum to help instill social-emotional skills in children; and **Conscious Discipline**, a comprehensive emotional intelligence and classroom management system that integrates all domains of learning.

### Consultation Visit:

You have the option of making an appointment with a mental health professional. (Refer to "The Parents' Guide to WCCA Head Start Mental Health Services" or speak to a staff member for further information)

### Confidentiality:

Your Child's records are confidential, as required by law. Records cannot be released without your written consent, except if required by law.



# June/junio 2024

July 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
30	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
2	3	4 Early Head Start Socialization	5 Monticello Last Day Early Release at 12:20	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
16	17	18 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative) Early Head Start Socialization	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	1	2	3	4	5	6

## **Policy & Procedures for the Release of a Child from a Head Start Center**

WCCA Head Start children will only be released to the child's parent or an authorized caregiver. These are the people listed on the *Child's Emergency Contacts and Authorization* form. This is the policy for both children being released from a WCCA Head Start center or from a WCCA Head Start bus.

### **Head Start Center**

When a parent/authorized caregiver is picking up a child, they are required to sign the child out, in the Sign-In book located at the Head Start Center.

- If the person picking up the child is not recognized by the Head Staff, they will be asked to confirm their identity with a picture I.D. and the name will be checked with authorized emergency contacts listed on the *Child Emergency Contacts and Authorization* form.
- If the person attempting to pick a child up is unable to identify themselves, the Head Start child will not be released. The Head Start center staff will contact the child's parent and their direct supervisor, or the Family Support Manager, as soon as possible.
- WCCA Head Start Staff cannot refuse to release a Head Start child to the child's parent without legal documentation restricting the parent's access to their child, unless the parents were never married and no legal custody arrangement is in place (Minnesota Statute 257.541).
- In circumstances where there is no authorized person available to pick up the Head Start child, Head Start center staff should continue to attempt to reach someone identified on the *Child's Emergency Contacts and Authorization* form, and then contact their direct supervisor, or the Family Services Coordinator.
- If Head Start staff are continuously unable to reach anyone to pick up the Head Start child, staff will contact law enforcement or child protective services.

### **Head Start Bus**

When an authorized caregiver is removing a child from the Head Start bus, the caregiver is required to initial the Bus Pick Up and Release form, located on the Head Start Bus.

- If the person getting the child off the bus is not recognized by the Head Staff, they will be asked to confirm their identity with a picture I.D. and the name will be checked with authorized emergency contacts listed on the *Child Emergency Contacts and Authorization* form.
- If the person attempting to get the child off the bus is unable to identify themselves, the Head Start child will not be released. In this circumstance, the Head Start center staff should contact the child's parent and their direct supervisor, or the Family Services Coordinator, as soon as possible.
- In circumstances where there is no authorized person to release the child to, the child should be returned to the Head Start center at the end of the route. Head Start center staff should attempt to reach someone identified on the *Child's Emergency Contacts and Authorization* form, and then contact their direct supervisor, or the Family Services Coordinator.
- WCCA Head Start Staff cannot refuse to release a Head Start child to the child's parent without legal documentation restricting the parent's access to their child, unless the parents were never married and no legal custody arrangement is in place (Minnesota Statute 257.541).

### **Unauthorized Persons**

Under no circumstances will a child be released to any person not listed on the *Child Emergency Contacts and Authorization* form. If an unauthorized person attempts to remove the Head Start child from the center, the WCCA Head Start staff will:

- Call 911
- Notify the child's parent(s)
- Notify their supervisor
- Document the incident in the child's file; and complete an Incident Report and submit the report to the WCCA Head Start Office.

### **Incapacitated or Abusive Persons**

- If an authorized person who is incapacitated (due to substance use, or any other reason) attempts to pick up a child, he/she will be informed that the child cannot be released.
- If the person becomes belligerent, staff will call law enforcement.
- Parents, or other authorized caregivers will be called and informed of the situation
- If no authorized person is available, staff will call law enforcement, and a report will be made to Child Protective Services, if warranted.
- Staff will notify their supervisor following the incident. In addition, staff will document the incident in the child's file and on a WCCA Incident Report form.

# July/julio 2024

August 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
30	1	2	3	4 Independence Day	5	6
7	8	9 Early Head Start Socialization	10	11	12	13
14	15	16 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	17	18	19	20 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
21	22	23 Early Head Start Socialization	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31	1	2	3

## **Reporting Policy for Programs Providing Services to Children—Wright and Western Hennepin Counties**

The mandated reporting policy must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment in the childcare program and must be made available upon request.

### **Who Should Report Child Abuse and Neglect**

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years, you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

### **Where to Report**

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- Reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed child foster care or family child care facility should be made to county child protection services
- Reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in all other facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 431-6600
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at Wright County Human Services (763) 682-7449, Hennepin County Human Services (612) 348-3552, or local law enforcement: Wright County Sheriff at 763-682-1162 or Hennepin County Sheriff at 612-348-3744.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, you should call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division at (651) 431-6600.

### **What to Report**

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, section 626.556) and is available upon request.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

### **Failure to Report**

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed Personal Care Provider Organizations.

### **Retaliation Prohibited**

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

### **Internal Review**

When the facility has reason to know that an internal or external report of alleged or suspected maltreatment has been made, the facility must complete an internal review within 30 calendar days and take corrective action, if necessary, to protect the health and safety of children in care. The facility must document completion of the internal review and make internal reviews accessible to the commissioner immediately upon the commissioner's request.

### **Corrective Action Plan**

Based on the results of the internal review, the license holder must develop, document, and implement a corrective action plan designed to correct current lapses and prevent future lapses in performance by individuals or the license holder, if any.

# August/agosto 2024

September 2024

Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5

Sunday/domingo	Monday/lunes	Tuesday/martes	Wednesday/miércoles	Thursday/jueves	Friday/viernes	Saturday/sábado
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Early Head Start Socialization	14	15	16 Last Day of Early Head Start	17 Conduct a Monthly Family Fire Drill
18	19	20 Policy Council Meeting 6:00 PM (tentative)	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

## Behavior Guidance Policies and Procedures

WCCA Head Start promotes a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children. Our goal is to help children develop safe and appropriate ways of interacting with others and with the environment.

Behavior guidance at Head Start has two primary goals. First, we strive to help children develop self-control, regulate their behavior and emotions, recognize consequences and discover alternative solutions and outcomes. This is an important step toward being prepared to enter kindergarten. Second, we want to find an immediate solution to challenging behaviors. We protect the safety of children and staff. To accomplish these goals, we use the following techniques on a daily basis:

### I. MODELING OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

All Head Start staff will demonstrate appropriate communication and behavior towards children. For example, if teachers want children to use quiet voices, they will use quiet voices themselves. Staff will:

- A. Tell children what they are to do in a positive tone.
- B. Ignore attention-seeking behavior, when appropriate.
- C. Help children discuss their feelings and use words to express themselves; help them gain understanding and definitions of vocabulary words such as empathy, embarrassed, cooperate, sharing
- D. Talk to children about how their actions affect others.
- E. Help children develop problem-solving skills.
- F. Actively demonstrate and practice situations and skills with the children at group times such as how to walk in a group, sit in a group, clean up the classroom, ask peers to play, get the attention of adults, get ready to go outside, and use techniques to help calm themselves down. These skills are especially important in the beginning months of Head Start, as well as when new children join the program throughout the year.
- G. Promote the importance of children as individuals who in turn are a valuable, cohesive group.

### II. MEETING CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENTAL NEEDS

Teachers will plan activities that are developmentally appropriate for young children. One of the main reasons for children's misbehavior is frustration. By avoiding situations that frustrate children, many undesirable behaviors can be prevented. Teachers will:

- A. Set clear and consistent expectations for wanted behaviors. Demonstrate and practice what the skill looks like. Reinforce the expectations daily in a positive way.
- B. Plan a daily schedule that provides a balance of free choice and structured activities.
- C. Plan activities that will challenge children, without being too difficult.
- D. Limit the number of transitions to reduce children's stress. Incorporate methods to help children transition between activities. These include techniques such as send a signal, move with a song, make transitions exciting, use a timer, stick to the routine and be strategic. Refer to *Creative Curriculum Volume One: The Foundation*, pages 150-168
- E. Limit the length of waiting time
- F. Provide materials that are developmentally appropriate for young children.

### III. ARRANGING CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENTS

The physical environment provides the setting in which children can thrive and learn. The environment includes all aspects of the room, equipment, materials available, and outdoor space. Creating an environment that is safe, attractive, organized, comfortable, and well-designed has a vital impact on how the children interact with each other and the materials available. Refer to *Creative Curriculum Volume 1, The Foundation*, and pages 55-72 for details regarding how to set up and maintain the classroom. A thoughtful environment can help reinforce the learning goals for the children as well as allow teaching staff to interact, observe, and support the children. By examining possible causes of misbehavior in the physical environment, teachers can anticipate and avoid potential problems. Teachers will:

- A. Arrange the classroom in ways that allow children to be independent.
- B. Use shelves and furniture to divide the classroom into interest areas as well as prevent running.
  - Provide duplicates of popular toys.
  - Avoid clutter so children can see what toys are available.
  - Label containers and shelves so children can easily find what they are looking for.
  - Provide child-sized furniture for equipment.
  - Provide a quiet area for children to relax and "get away". Stock the area with materials children may use to calm themselves down.

### IV. ACTIVE SUPERVISION

The best way to avoid conflict in the classroom is to provide appropriate supervision and proactive strategies. Teachers will:

- A. Ensure that there is always an adequate staff-to-child ratio (1 adult/10 children).
- B. Conduct only one teacher-directed activity in the classroom at a time, while a second staff person acts as a "floater."

- C. Position themselves strategically around the room to be available to children. Be actively engaged with the children, down on their eye level, and maintain eye contact.
- D. Watch for potential conflicts and help children resolve issues before conflict occurs.
- E. Ensure that children are within sight and hearing at all times.
- F. Conduct head counts on the half hour as scheduled and document accordingly throughout the day.
- G. Pay attention to children's physical cues. Tune into children's body language and physical signals to be able to prevent unwanted mistaken behaviors before they occur.

#### **V. SETTING LIMITS**

Teachers will create safe, calm environments in their classrooms by setting limits. They will:

- A. As a group with children's input, establish a few clear, simple rules that children can understand. (E.g. Be safe, be responsible - then have discussion about what being responsible looks like in action – be kind, have fun!)
- B. Explain rules and what they look like to children. Apply rules consistently
- C. Give positively stated reminders about rules and expectations
- D. Post rules prominently throughout the classroom for parents, staff and volunteers to read
- E. Provide immediate, logical consequences for children's unacceptable behavior. Refer to Creative Curriculum Volume One: The Foundation, pages 152-153

#### **VI. REDIRECTION**

Teachers will redirect children away from conflicts and guide them toward more acceptable choices. For example, if a child is knocking down another child's blocks, the teacher may direct him toward another play area. Teachers will also:

- A. Give children choices of acceptable activities
- B. Redirect children to more acceptable activities.
- C. Notice and encourage desirable behavior. Say, "Would you like to play with the blocks too? When we want to play with our friends we use the words, "Can I play with you?" If our friend says, "Yes" then you may play with them. If they say "No" that's ok too and you will need to find another area to play".

#### **VII. INTERVENTION/METHODS TO CALM CHILDREN**

It is vital to help children calm down and regain inner control so they can stay with the group and be successful. Teachers will give the children methods and coach them to use techniques in order to help them remain calm in the classroom. Teachers will use methods such as:

- A. Acknowledge the child's feeling.
- B. Give the child a quiet space and some time to settle down with a quiet activity such as coloring, looking at a book, or putting together a puzzle.
- C. Encourage the child to take deep breaths – in through the nose, out through the mouth.
- D. Have the child use a soft/cuddly object, like Calm Down Bunny, puppets, or other special object, such as a calming object to pet/focus on.
- E. Discuss what was troubling the child after he/she has calmed down.

#### **VIII. BEHAVIOR/INCIDENT REPORTS & DOCUMENTATION**

In order to analyze children's patterns of behavior, the incidents must be documented and shared with the parents. Behavior/Incident Reports will be fully filled out as soon as possible, or no later than the end of the staff person's shift. Parents/caregivers will be given their copy of the Behavior/Incident Report at the time of pick up or when the child gets off the bus to go home. Due to unforeseen circumstances, if the Behavior/Incident Report is not completed by the end of the class day, staff must complete the form and provide a copy to the child's parent/caregiver the next class day.

#### **IX. SEPARATION**

Protecting the safety of children and staff is very important. If attempts to guide the child's behavior and help them calm have been unsuccessful and the child's behavior threatens the safety and well-being of others, "separation from the group" may be used. Before a child is separated from the group, less intrusive methods must have been tried and those methods must be proven to be ineffective. Separation must meet the following guidelines:

- A. The reason for separation from the group must be explained to the child at eye level.
- B. The child must be in a part of the classroom where he/she can be seen and heard at all times by a staff person; A staff person will remain with him/her for the shortest time possible.
- C. The child's return to the group will be contingent upon the child's stopping or bringing the problem behavior under control.
- D. The child will be allowed to return to the group when the behavior stops or has lessened to a degree that the child poses no threat to him/herself or others.
- E. Any separation must be documented on a duplicate Behavior Incident/Separation Report. This form must document child's name, staff person's name, date and time of the separation, what less intrusive methods were tried, how the child's behavior threatened his/her own or other's health and safety, and that the parent was notified in writing by sending home the yellow copy of the Behavior Incident/Separation Report
- F. If a child is separated three or more times in one day, the child's parent will be notified by phone and in writing, by sending home the yellow copies of the Behavior Incident/Separation Report
- G. If a child is separated five or more times in one week, or eight or more times in two weeks, the procedure in XII will be followed.

## **X. PHYSICAL RESTRAINT**

Sometimes it may become necessary to physically restrain a child to prevent him from harming himself or others. Holding will be used as a last resort and will not be done using artificial or mechanical restraints. The goal is for the child to walk away from the crisis feeling good about himself and others. The staff person who is restraining a child will:

- A. Cross his/her arms in front of the child and hold the child's back against themselves.
- B. Place his/her head in a position to reduce the chance of being hit by the child's head.
- C. Talk positively to the child, using a quiet and soothing tone of voice.
- D. Help the child gain control by providing firm, but supportive restraint.
- E. Watch for signs that the crisis is passing (e.g. lowered voice volume, relaxed muscles, or a more regulated breathing pattern).
- F. Document the use and results of restraint on the Behavior Incident/Separation Report
- G. Call the Inclusion Coordinator and/or your direct supervisor.
- H. Send a copy of the Behavior Incident/Separation Report to the office.
- I. Send a copy of the Behavior Incident/Separation Report home with the student.

If physical restraint of a child causes a severe reaction (e.g. fear, extreme anger, etc.), the teacher will:

- A. Notify the child's parents and discuss alternative strategies;
- B. Document the reaction in detail and place in the child's file;
- C. Discontinue the use of physical restraint until further advised; and
- D. Notify the Inclusion Coordinator and/or the direct supervisor to discuss alternative strategies.

## **XI. PROHIBITIVE PRACTICES**

Head Start believes in the philosophy of positive guidance for young children and prohibits any physical punishment or punishment that is humiliating or frightening to a child. **Staff that use any of these prohibited actions or direct another person to use these actions will be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in Wright County Community Action, Inc. Personnel Policies – Disciplinary Procedure.**

This includes:

- A. Corporal punishment: hitting, spanking, pinching, kicking, biting, or any rough handling.
- B. Emotional abuse: name calling, shaming, shunning, threatening, making derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family, or any degrading statements.
- C. Punishment for lapses in toilethabits.
- D. Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing or medical care.
- E. Separations from the group, except as specified in Part IX
- F. Physical or mechanical restraints, except as specified in Part X.
- G. Discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and/or national origin.

## **XII. ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVES**

Staff will use techniques listed in Parts I-VII to positively guide children's behavior. If these techniques are unsuccessful and undesirable behavior continues, the following steps will be taken:

PHASE I: Observation, Documentation, and Implementation of Behavior Management Strategies

PHASE II: Development of an Individual Behavior Plan

PHASE III: Behavior Plan Review and Modifications

PHASE IV: Program Modifications

PHASE V: Alternative Program Options

## **XIII. GUIDANCE SUMMARY**

It is critical that documentation for all efforts to work with the child and family is kept. Each step taken in the behavior guidance process must also be implemented over a reasonable period. The process cannot be sped up to attain a desired expectation. Changes in behavior often take time to evolve and every effort should be made to have the patience required to effect the desired change.

If a child is out of control and a danger to their-self or others, WCCA Head Start reserves the right to send the child home for aggressive behavior.

If a child is uncontrollable, highly aggressive, or displaying dangerous behavior that requires a higher adult to child ratio, WCCA reserves the right to have the child taken home for the remainder of the day. The teacher will discuss with the parent(s) what happened and steps to avoid the situation again.



## Programs Operated by Wright County Community Action

**WIC (WOMEN INFANTS & CHILDREN)**: WIC focuses on providing nutrition education and care. This includes supplemental foods for women, infants and children who are income eligible and have a nutritional need. Priority service is given to pregnant women, breast feeding mothers and infants.

**EARLY HEAD START AND HEAD START**: The WCCA Head Start Program provides child and family development programming for income eligible pregnant women and families with children ages 0-5, living in Wright and Western Hennepin Counties.

**HOME WEATHERIZATION**: The Home Weatherization Program reduces fuel costs by providing a variety of energy conservation services to income eligible households. Elderly persons with disabilities and high fuel consumers are a priority for service.

**TRANSITIONAL HOUSING**: WCCA provides partial monthly rent assistance for up to 18 months to income eligible families.

**FORECLOSURE PREVENTION COUNSELING**: WCCA's Foreclosure Counseling Program assists homeowners to understand their mortgage, and consider the realistic options available to try to prevent foreclosure. Counselors are also able to work with homeowners and their lender to negotiate reasonable options.

**ENERGY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**: This program assists income-eligible households to meet part of the cost of home heating energy and promotes self-sufficiency through energy conservation and consumer education activities.

**THRIFT SHOP**: WCCA's Thrift Shop located in Waverly, MN, offers a wide selection of gently used merchandise including shoes, clothing, household items, and toys.

**FOOD SHELF**: The WCCA food shelf is the only food shelf in Wright County that serves all county residents, regardless of which community they call home. It's a client-choice food shelf that offers a variety of nutritious foods for families in need.

**EMERGENCY FOOD BOX NETWORK**: WCCA distributes 30-pound emergency food boxes to partners throughout the county to shorten the distance between people in need and food shelf resources.

**MOBILE FOOD SHELF**: WCCA works with rental community properties to deliver food shelf services right to your door.

**TAX PREPARATION**: WCCA and trained volunteers provide tax preparation assistance year round to economically disadvantaged and elderly residents.

**MNSURE NAVIGATOR**: WCCA has trained MNSure navigators who can help people work through the process of applying and enrolling into health plans through the MNSure Health Insurance Exchange.

**AGING SERVICES**: Designed to help adults 60 and older manage their homes and remain independent. Services include homemaker services, chore services, assisted transportation, caregiver consulting, friendly visiting, technical help and education.