

PARENT HANDBOOK

HEAD START & STATE PRESCHOOL

2020 - 2021



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Every child deserves a great start!

Contents

INTRODUCTION	1
MY CHILD'S PROGRAM INFORMATION	1
WELCOME!.....	1
WHAT IS HEAD START?	1
SCHOOL READINESS.....	2
SECTION 1: THE CENTERS.....	3
THE CLASSROOM-BUILDING COMMUNITY	3
SEPARATION & TRANSITION TO SCHOOL.....	3-4
YOUR CHILD'S CLASS SCHEDULE	4
REST TIME (Full Day Program & Dosage ONLY).....	4
HELLOS AND GOOD-BYES.....	4
REGULAR ATTENDANCE	4-5
ARRIVAL & PICK-UP PROCESS.....	5-6
SITE SAFETY & ROLE OF FOUNDATION FAMILIES.....	6
SITE SECURITY-ENTRANCE WITH CODE.....	6
CUSTODY ISSUES.....	6
MEAL TIME.....	7
Tooth Brushing.....	7
HOME VISITS & Parent Conferences.....	7
INDIVIDUALIZING CURRICULUM	7-8
WEEKLY HOME ACTIVITIES	8
POSITIVRE GUIDANCE.....	8
SECTION 2: PARENT PARTICIPATION	9
PARENT AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS (IN-KIND)	9
FATHER OR FATHER-FIGURE ENGAGEMENT	9-10
PARENT COMMITTEE	10
POLICY COMMITTEE	10
COMMUNICATING WITH HEAD START/STATE PRESCHOOL	10
SECTION 3: HEALTH SERVICES	11
HEALTH REQUIREMENTS.....	11-12
ILLNESSES & ACCIDENTS AT SCHOOL.....	12
MEDICATION.....	12

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL.....	12-13
DISABILITIES SERVICES.....	13
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	13
CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS.....	14
NUTRITION SERVICES	14
NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT (USDA)	14-15
NON-BIAS PROGRAM.....	15
SECTION 4: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES.....	15
FAMILY STRENGTHS AND NEEDS	16
FAMILY ASSESSMENT.....	16
FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT.....	16
TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN	16
FIELD TRIPS.....	16
SECTION 5: PROGRAM POLICIES	16
ATTENDANCE	16-17
GUIDANCE ON DRESSING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL	17
PROCEDURES FOR HEARING COMPLAINTS & SOLVING PROBLEMS	17
MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING	17
HEALTHY SCHOOLS ACT/PESTICIDE TRAINING	17
RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OR WORSHIP	17
HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE.....	18
BIRTHDAY RECOGNITION	18
EMERGENCY INFORMATION	18
CONFIDENTIALITY	18
VIDEOTAPING & TAKING PICTURES	18
ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY.....	19
PERSONAL BUSINESS	19
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	20



Introduction

My Child's Program Information

Center:

Center Address:

Phone Number:

Class hours:

Teacher's names:

Site Supervisor:

Education Manager:

Welcome!

Welcome to Head Start/State Preschool. Thank you for enrolling your child in our program! This Parent Handbook was written to help you know more about our program and how your child and your family might best use our many services.

What is Head Start?

Head Start/State Preschool is a free comprehensive child development program funded by the federal government for pre-school children ages 3-5 and their families. Head Start/State Preschool sets the foundation for children to do well in school and in life. We believe that **parents are the first and most influential teachers, nurturers and advocates** of their children.

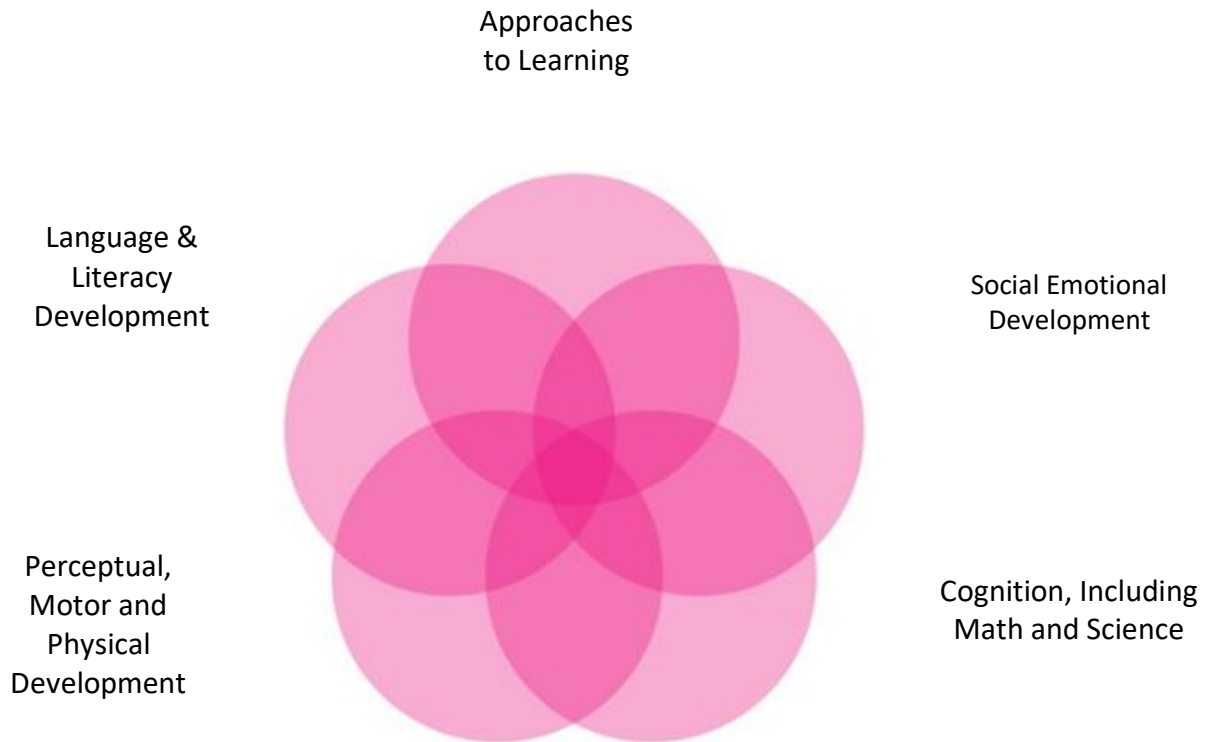
Staff work together with parents to enhance each child's development, health, family support and community support. Each family's culture, language, values and traditions are respected and promoted. Children with special needs are embraced in our programs. We consider every child a unique person with individual strengths and needs. Parents and staff work together to create individualized learning programs for every child. You will jointly develop an IDP for your child with learning goals, that may include IEP or ASQ goals, if appropriate.

If your classroom is one of our Head Start/State Preschool blended sites, funding is provided by both the Federal Government and the State, and the program follows both sets of requirements. Throughout this handbook, we will refer to "Head Start" or "the program," and this includes the Head Start/State Preschool blended program, unless stated otherwise.

Note: Sections marked with an "*" are impacted by COVID 19 and additional regulations will be provided. At the time classrooms open a separate addendum will be issued to address changes affected such as meals, tooth brushing, daily health checks, volunteers, etc.

School Readiness

To ensure children are ready for preschool, we will support your child in the following areas of development:



Family's support for school readiness:

- Families will receive resources for supporting their child's learning and development.
- Families will be provided with literacy resources to support them in reading with their child.
- Fathers will be actively encouraged to be involved in their child's preschool experience.
- Families will be prepared for their child's transition to kindergarten.



Section 1: The Centers

The Classroom-Building Community

The beginning of the year is a time for creating a sense of community, and your classroom is the gathering place. Here, all children can feel secure, nurtured and supported by the environment, their teacher, and YOU.

Each classroom will have a new group of individuals who bring with them diverse interests, abilities, cultures, and families. Each child arrives at our door with backgrounds of experience that enriches our program. We want to create an environment that says, "All are welcome here." The goal is to celebrate individuals while creating a sense of community.

Our Early Education Services are built upon Early Learning Outcomes Framework and CA Preschool Learning Foundations. We use multiple curricula to guide the teaching practices to provide a rich learning experience for children of all abilities, cultures and languages. Our primary curriculum is the Creative Curriculum 5th Edition, supplemented with Second Step & Abriendo Puertas. Classrooms environments are designed with multiple learning centers to provide learning opportunities every day in every area. We ask you to participate in the program planning time with your child's teacher. Planning time uses a "web" to connect the focus study topic and children's interests. This planning is used by teachers to develop their lesson plans and provide learning activities and track their learning progress with the ongoing assessment tool (DRDP 2015).

The classrooms are designed to make your child feel welcomed, comfortable, safe, and secure. The classroom is set up into different learning areas where children can safely explore new and interesting materials, practicing new skills as teachers provide opportunities that both support and challenge children. The basic learning areas include the art, blocks, books, writing, dramatic play, toy and puzzle areas. When you visit your child's classroom, please ask your teacher to show you the classroom areas.

Separation & Transition to School

During the first few weeks of school, it is natural for your child and yourself to experience some anxiety. Teaching staff are prepared and trained to help you with this situation.

To help ease separation and build trust we offer these strategies:

- Parents allow yourself some extra time in the classroom as needed.
- Be sure and say "good-bye" to your child and reassure him/her that you will return. If you leave without saying 'good-bye' they become more worried that you'll leave at anytime

ALL ARE WELCOME
HERE

Your children need to see themselves reflected in the classroom; we invite families to send a photo of their child and family before the school starts. Finding themselves "already there" will go long ways towards making children feel comfortable. Not only will children enjoy finding their photo around the room, but they will also delight in learning about their new friends and their families.

- Acknowledge and be sensitive to your child's feelings. It is normal for children to cry when you leave during the first few days of school. Your child's teachers will help reassure them that you will return when class is over. Most children transition to the new routine within the first couple of weeks.

Your Child's Class Schedule

Children feel most secure when they have predictable and consistent daily routines. Each classroom has a posted daily routine that children can depend on and understand. Children will engage in many adventures and experiences that interest them and suit their playful, inventive natures.

Your child's routine might include:

- ✓ Good morning circle
- ✓ Breakfast
- ✓ Tooth brushing*
- ✓ Circle time
- ✓ Small group activity
- ✓ Outside time
- ✓ Lunch
- ✓ Rest time

Rest Time (Full Day Program & Dosage ONLY)

Rest time is an important part of a child's day. It offers them an opportunity to rest their bodies, and revitalize their minds. Teaching staff will provide a relaxing environment for naptime. Children in the full day and extended hours program will have the opportunity to nap/rest daily. Children will nap/rest on cots with sheets, and blankets. We provide all bedding and ask that you do not send bedding from home. Your child is welcome to bring a small soft toy from home if they need this to feel safe and secure during rest time. This toy will need to stay in their cubby at other times of the day. Please take it home and wash regularly.

Hellos and Good-byes

Every day you and your child will say good-bye to one another at the start of class time and say hello again at the time of pick-up. These hellos and good-byes are your child's first steps on a life-long journey of learning how to separate from and then come together again with the important people in their lives.

Remember to always say goodbye to your child

By saying good-bye, you teach your child you can be trusted. Your child can count on the fact that you will not disappear without warning. We can work together to create a hello and good-bye ritual. This may be as simple as walking to the door with your child or giving your child a big hug before you leave.

Regular Attendance

Regular attendance is key to your child's success and ability to benefit from the Head Start/State Preschool Program. If your child is not in class, how can he or she learn? When children come to class consistently,

including arriving and leaving on time, they are able to build on skills and knowledge from previous learning, and develop strong connections with other children and teachers. When children miss class, arrive late or leave early, they miss out.

Parents **MUST** call each day when a child is absent. We ask that parents call before class starts, within the first hour of class or by the end of the business day the child is sick. The agency is mandated to report our attendance each day, so your cooperation is highly needed. Prior arrangements must be made with the Center Manager, FSA and the teacher if the child needs to be absent longer than three days because of a family emergency or medical reasons requiring a medical note (i.e. surgery scheduled). Request for planned leave must be done in writing and submitted to the Center Manager/FSA as soon as possible. In case of emergency leave, the parent must notify the center as soon as possible. If a child is absent for three consecutive days and there is no contact with/from the family to the school, the child may be placed back on the waiting list and not allowed to attend class until another opening is available.

Acceptable reasons for your child's absence are: Illness/quarantine of parent or child, Medical/Dental appointment for the child, family emergency or court ordered visitation. **Family Emergency includes:** Transportation (Only when there is absolutely no adult available to bring or pick up the child or if parent(s) deem it is unsafe to bring the child), sibling illness, death in the family, housing crisis, medical emergency, domestic violence and birth of a child. **Unexcused absences would include:** the child did not feel like coming to school, woke up late (parent or child).

For Full Day Programs Only:

Due to State Regulations, the notice of action appeal process is provided to full day parents upon enrollment.

- If a child is absent for 3 consecutive days and there is no contact with/from the family to the school, the family will be sent a "Notice of Action" with a "Termination of Services". If the parent chooses to appeal the agency's decision, the parent must follow the appeal process as stated on the "Notice of Action" form. The agency's next steps will be contingent on what the family has chosen to do.

For more information, talk to your child's Teacher, your FSA or contact the main office at 1-626-572-5107.

Arrival and Pick up Process

Parents need to sign their child both in and out of the Head Start/State Preschool Program utilizing the tablet/pad to obtain electronic signature. The person who signs the child in and out must use his/her full legal signature (Community Care Licensing, Title 22, Section 101229.1 (a) (1)). Each child must be signed in and a health check must be completed by the teacher prior to the child joining classroom activities.

*Only authorized adults who are 18 years or older and listed on
the Emergency Contact Form can pick up children*

Parents must write the names, current addresses and telephone numbers of people who can pick up and drop off their child on the Emergency Contact Form. **Any changes to the names on the Emergency Contact**

Form must be made in person – phone calls will not be accepted. Children cannot be picked up by anyone who seems under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Make sure an authorized adult with a valid ID is on time to pick up your child every day.

If you are going to be late in picking up your child, contact your child's teacher immediately and let them know the arrangements you have made for your child to be picked up. If your child has not been picked-up from school after the class has ended, staff will contact people listed on the Emergency Contact Form to pick up your child. **If the parent has not arrived at the end of the child's program hours and no one can be reached from the Emergency Contact Form, the local police department may be contacted.** If a pattern of tardiness has been observed, the Family Service Associate and Teacher will meet with the parents and discuss a plan of support to address late pick-ups.

Safety at drop off and pick up is extremely important. We understand parking is limited and can be challenging. You must obey all driving laws.

Do not double park or leave any child unattended in your vehicle

Site Safety & Role of Foundation Families

Foundation families will assist in site security to ensure care and supervision for all children. The following procedures will be reviewed during enrollment and orientation, and included in training during monthly parent meetings.

- When entering and leaving school grounds, make sure that all doors/gates are closed completely.
- During arrival and departure time, make sure that children's hands are held or children remain by the side of the responsible adult at all times.
- When observing another parent leave the door/gate open, remind them that they must close the door/gate/fence.
- If any child is observed unattended (without a staff/parent/guardian) in or around the site, the child will be taken immediately to the nearest staff member.
- Be mindful of staff's responsibility for care and supervision of all children by scheduling time for questions or concerns before or after arrival and departure.
- Playing on school grounds before or after class hours is never permitted.
- Families may support care and supervision of children by volunteering as gate monitors.
- Classroom parent volunteers will assist in ensuring that all children remain under the supervision of their classroom staff.
- No cell phone usage upon Drop-off or Pick-up of the child.

Site Security – Entrance with Code

Each site has a security system, each parent/guardian will be given an access code to enter the site daily, during school hours. All other guests, community volunteers, etc. must use the call system at the gate to be let in. We appreciate your cooperation to help maintain a safe space at school.

Custody Issues

Foundation for Early Childhood Education cannot prevent any parent from removing his or her child from the center if there is no court order on file. If there is a court order restricting a parent from visiting or picking up their child, then a copy of the court order must be provided to the agency, which will be placed into the child's confidential file.

*Mealtime

Mealtime is a chance for children to begin to develop good nutrition and health habits. Children eat “family-style” at the table with their “primary teacher.” Eating meals, setting the table, serving themselves and cleaning up give children a chance to feel cared for and to develop self-help, communication and social skills.

Your child is encouraged to try nutritious new foods, but will never be forced to eat or taste them. Food is never used as a punishment or reward. Monthly menus will be posted in the classroom and each family will receive a copy to take home. If your child cannot eat certain foods on the Head Start/State Preschool menu due to medical, religious or philosophical reasons, please speak to your child’s teacher and fill out Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations (*form*). This form must be completed by a physician but is required **ONLY** for children with food allergies or intolerances, or special dietary needs due to a disability. To ensure your child’s health and safety, you must submit this form prior to your child’s first day of school in order for the Registered Dietician to process your paper work or your child will not be permitted to start class on the first day.

Please see Nutrition Section of the Handbook for more information regarding the meal program.

*Tooth Brushing

Children brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste every day in the classroom. Children get a chance to practice self-help skills, by brushing their own teeth, with guidance and modeling by their teacher. Eating a low sugar diet, brushing every day, and regular visits to the dentist, creates lifelong habits and helps keep teeth healthy.

Home Visits and Parent Conferences

A minimum of two home visits are conducted each year. These visits provide a special time for parents and teachers to share valuable information regarding the child’s progress, and plan age-appropriate goals (IDP) to continue the child’s development and growth in the program and home environments. Home visits also provide opportunities to establish a link between home and school. Teachers will coordinate with parents to arrange home visits. In addition to the two home visits, we are required to conduct a minimum of two parent conferences. Parent Conferences share vital information regarding your child’s development and how to continue your child’s progress.

NOTE: Parents may also request additional conferences with their child’s teacher as needed.

Individualizing Curriculum

Your child’s primary care teacher will collaborate with you to individualize curriculum to support your child’s growth. Initially, your child’s teacher will support you in completing a developmental screener called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQs).

One screener focuses on Social-Emotional Development (ASQ-SE), and the other screener looks at the rest of the areas of development (ASQ-3). The ASQ screeners will help identify any areas your child may



need some extra support. With your input, your child's primary teacher will also complete a Developmental Assessment tool, called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), three times a year to look at your child's strengths and areas of growth. After each assessment, your child's teacher will meet with you to talk about your child's Head Start/State Preschool experience. Together, you and the teacher will talk about how things are going for your child and develop an individualized plan to support your child's development and growth. This plan will help guide the classroom's curriculum and provide you with activities you can do with your child at home to prepare them for preschool. If at any point that you have concerns about your child's development, or feel they may need additional support, please speak to your child's teacher and they can provide information and resources for your family.

Weekly Home Activities

We will be providing activities, with ideas that you can do with your child to support their development and School Readiness. Please use these resources to spend quality time with your child each day. Make sure to document the time you spend on these activities on the **Weekly Classroom and Home Volunteer Time Form** at your child's Center. You can also document the time spent reading or doing other activities that support your child's learning.

Positive Guidance

Positive behavior is promoted by:

- Setting clear rules and limits.
- Building trusting relationships
- Engaging in responsive caregiving that meets the child's needs
- Redirecting a child's behavior, and offering alternatives
- Comforting children
- Teachers modeling appropriate behavior
- Presenting appropriate options/activities to a child



There will be no use of corporal punishment or other forms of punishment that involve emotional or physical abuse or humiliation of any child in our program. All children will be under the direct visual supervision of teaching staff at all times.

Section 2: *Parent Participation

We invite you to participate in our program! You are welcome to visit your child's classroom at any time during program hours. Children whose parents are involved in their education do best in school. You do not need prior experience to volunteer or participate at your child's center. Opportunities are provided for parents to develop their skills. You might participate at the center by:

- Joining us at the welcome circle and helping us transition your child into the day
- Supporting with mealtime
- Sharing your child's and families interests and traditions
- Sharing music with the children
- Helping with projects
- Reading or telling stories with the children
- Gardening with the children
- Sharing your occupation with the children
- Providing ideas for the weekly lesson plans
- Working on weekly home activities with your child
- Attending parent activities

You might participate at home by cutting out art project materials, sewing dress-up clothes and pillows, or repairing classroom furniture. While parent participation is not required, we need you and want your help to make our program a success! Please talk with staff about how you might participate.

Parent and Community Contributions (In-Kind)

Head Start/State Preschool is supported 80% by federal money and 20% by local donations of goods and services. This 20% portion is called In-Kind. Every time parents, organizations, or other people volunteer their time, or give an item to the program, it is recorded on an In-Kind Form. This In-Kind donation demonstrates the community's support for our program.

Father or Father-figure Engagement

Father and father figures have an important role in the lives of children. Boys and girls need involved and caring men in their lives.

VOLUNTEERING

We love classroom volunteers! In order to volunteer in the classroom, the following are required:

- Negative TB test
- MMR vaccine
- TDap vaccine
- Influenza vaccine

Parent volunteers do not need to go through the fingerprinting process, unless they volunteer 16 hours a week or more.

We highly encourage fathers and father figures to volunteer in the program.

Parent Committee

You are automatically a member of your center's Parent Committee. You are invited to attend regularly scheduled Parent Committee Meetings. Parent Committee Meetings provide opportunities for parents to come together and plan activities for the school year.

Your teachers and FSA help support your Parent Committee Meeting. Together you will look at topics that interest you and other parents. Staff can bring information and resources on topics that are most important to the parents in your Parent Committee. Please share your interest with the center staff.



Policy Committee

Each Parent Committee elects one member to the Policy Committee. The Director of Head Start/State Preschool, the Policy Committee, and the Board of Directors at Foundation for Early Childhood Education all participate in shared decision making for the program.

Communicating with Head Start/State Preschool

Check out the Parent Bulletin Board for important notices including information on:

- Community Activities/Resources (Health, Mental Health & Social Services)
- Educational Announcements
- Monthly menu
- Parent Committee Meeting schedule
- Policy Committee Meeting schedule
- Procedures for Hearing Complaints and Solving Problems
- Employment Opportunities
- Child Abuse Law
- Shaken Baby Information
- SID's Information
- Service Area Coordinators Information
- Parent's Rights
- Personal Rights

We want your experience in our program to be a rewarding one for your child and your family. If you have any ideas to improve our program, or if you are unhappy about anything in the program, please speak with us. The best person to speak with first is your child's teacher or Family Service Associate. You may need to set a time to meet where you can further discuss the issues. If you do not feel satisfied with the results, please feel free to contact the **Head Start/State Preschool Site Center Manager**.

Section 3: Health Services

Health services are an important part of the program. Preparing your child for school means making sure they are healthy and ready to learn, Head Start/State Preschool requires that all children in the program receive regular medical care, including immunizations and screenings. If you have questions or concerns about these health requirements and deadlines, or if you need assistance enrolling in health insurance or finding a medical home, your FSA will be available to assist you.

Your FSA will need a form from your doctor/dentist showing information from your child's last visit to the doctor/dentist. If we do not have this on file, your FSA will ask you to sign a consent form so we can get this paperwork from your child's doctor. Your Health Coordinator/FSA will give you information on how often you should take your child to the doctor/dentist.

Health Requirements

When	Requirements
Before 1st Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Immunization Record: An up-to-date copy of your child's immunization record must be submitted in order for your child to be enrolled in the Head Start/State Preschool program. In order to start school, your child must be up-to-date on his/her shots.❖ Special Meal Accommodation or Allergies/Intolerance: Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations (form). This form must be completed by a physician but is required ONLY for children with food allergies or intolerances, or Special dietary needs due to a disability. To ensure your child's health and safety, you must submit this form prior to your child's first day of school in order for the Registered Dietician to process your paper work or your child will not be permitted to start class on the first day.
Within first 30 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Physical Examination: You must submit a copy of your child's current physical medical examination.❖ Tuberculosis Screening: The physical medical examination must include documentation of a Tuberculosis screening and/or a TB skin test.
Within first 45 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Hearing and Vision Screening: Head Start/State Preschool children must have a hearing and vision assessment completed.❖ ASQ❖ Growth Assessments (Height/Weight)
Other Requirements - within 90 days	<ul style="list-style-type: none">❖ Dental Exam: Children in the program must have a dental exam completed every 6 months.❖ Hemoglobin/hematocrit: you must submit documentation of Hemoglobin/hematocrit testing. Your child's medical provider usually completes this test at 9 and 12 months and then a risk assessment done annually.❖ Lead Testing: You must submit documentation of lead testing. Your child's medical provider usually completes this test at 12 and 24 months.

Your Child's Family Service Associate will work with you to make sure your child has a regular doctor or clinic, gets regular checkups and gets follow-up care if they need it. Teachers and Family Service Advocates can provide information and activities on dental health, nutrition, physical activity, emotional health, and safety. Your child's Family Service Advocate can assist in acquiring documentation from your medical/dental provider once you complete a consent form.

Illnesses and Accidents at School

In case of illness or an accident at school, the following procedure will be observed:

The teacher will contact the parent immediately and inform them of the situation at hand. Additional steps will be taken based on the severity of the illness or accident.

- Call the Health Coordinator/RN for advice.
- Isolate the child, and wait for parent to pick-up the child.
- If the parent cannot be reached, the teacher will contact the person listed by the parent on the emergency card.
- Call 911 if the illness or accident requires immediate emergency attention.

Medication

Non-Medical Staff (teachers) will be trained by a licensed Registered Nurse on how to administer Medication to your child according to the physician's instructions.

The original medication must be clearly labeled with the following information:

- Child's full name
- Name of Health Care Provider
- **Medication MUST be in original labeled container**
- Name of medication
- Dosage
- Time and Frequency
- Route of administration
- Expiration date

In order to administer the medication in the classroom, we must obtain from the parent, the Physicians instructions, the parent medication authorization and the medication. Without these items, the child will be temporarily excluded from the program until all the required documentation is gathered.

When to Keep Your Child Home from School

The Head Start/State Preschool programs take many precautions to prevent the spread of illness.

However, children in childcare do get sick. **See below to determine if you should keep your child home.**

If your child becomes ill at the center, the center staff will reference the Illness Policy, to determine if

he/she needs to be sent home. Children will be sent home if the illness prevents the child from fully participating in their daily activities or if the child needs one-on-one care. When children get sick they want the comfort of home and the care of their families.

Children with the following symptoms should stay home or will be sent home:

- Following an injury, surgery or illness where attendance would pose a significant risk to the child or anyone in contact with the child.
- Fever- 104°F or higher within the last 24 hours.
- Behavior change- lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, or persistent crying for unexplained causes.
- Sore throat with fever and swollen glands or mouth sores
- Vomiting more than two times in the previous 48 hours
- Runny or watery diarrhea
- Bloody Stool that is not explained by dietary change, medication or hard stool
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Open draining sores or sores that appear infected
- Pink or red conjunctiva (i.e., white of the eyes) with white or yellow eye mucus drainage (signs of bacterial infection)
- Any communicable disease (chicken pox, hand foot and mouth....)
- Live lice or Nits-children must have had at least one treatment at home before returning to the classroom.

If you are unsure about sending your child to school, contact the center staff/Family Service Associate the Health Coordinator/RN for assistance.

Disabilities Services

Head Start/State Preschool fully includes children with disabilities, provides supportive services to children who have Individualized Education Plans (IEP) and individualizes the child's learning experiences to support goals on the IEP.

Mental Health Services

Mental health is an important part of the overall health and well-being throughout every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood. Promotion of mental health is incorporated into all components of the program and is integrated through daily activities. For young children, mental health means being able to develop secure, trusting relationships, expressing emotions appropriately and interacting with others.

Head Start/State Preschool partners with local mental health professionals to ensure children, and families, have access to prevention and intervention services. Let us know if you are interested in services for your child, yourself and/or your family at any time during the program year. We can provide you with information on how to access services through your medical insurance, and/or local community

programs.

Classroom Observations

Staff works collaboratively with parents and the Head Start/State Preschool Mental Health Consultant to support children's social emotional development and to provide a timely and effective identification and early intervention.

The Mental Health Consultant may visit your child's classrooms during their enrollment in the program. The goal of the visit will be to see how children are adjusting to the program, with peers and adults. Staff will inform you ahead of time of the date of the visit during your child's class. Consultations and Individualize observations for specific children are available upon parental request.

*Nutrition Services

All children enrolled at Foundation for Early Childhood Education, Inc. are eligible to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, sponsored by "The United States Department of Agriculture" (USDA). An important part of our educational program is providing nutritious meals daily, which are high in nutrients, low in fats, salt and sugar, and at the same time provide and promote mealtime as a positive learning experience. These meals are provided to help establish good eating habits at a young age. Meals are served in a family style setting, with children and adults sitting around the table. A variety of food types are served, and children are allowed to have choices over what and how much they wish to eat, and are introduced to new foods, tastes and menus. A Staff member will model during meal time.

If your child has an Allergy/Intolerance to a particular food you will be required to have your child's physician complete a, "Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations form". This form is required ONLY for children with food allergies or intolerances, or Special dietary needs due to a disability. To ensure your child's health and safety, you must submit this form prior to your child's first day of school in order for the Registered Dietician to process your paper work or your child will not be permitted to start class on the first day. You can obtain this form from your Family Services Associate.

Food is never used as punishment or reward. Some of the learning experiences of the children include serving themselves, and cleaning up their spaces, learning about nutrition and healthy eating habits. Mealtime is also used for language development, such as conversations about different topics, e.g. "taking care of our bodies", etc. Based on food program guidelines, Head Start/State Preschool children may only eat food provided by the agency. No food shall be removed from the site, as this could create health issues. No food shall be brought to the site from home or store.

Breakfast, Lunch and a PM snack will be provided daily

Due to our CACFP Guidelines children are only allowed to consume food and drinks provided by the Agency. Outside food is **NOT** allowed.

Non-Discrimination Statement (USDA)

"This institution is an equal opportunity provider, employer and lender."

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

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

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Non-Bias Program

We provide a non-bias program. This means: Boys and girls are encouraged to engage in active play, and to enjoy quiet play. We help children develop a sense of freedom to explore as many of their talents, interests, and roles as they would like to. We encourage boys and girls to develop and express a full range of emotions. Children will have the opportunity to see men and women in a nurturing role, for them to learn and understand parenting as a responsibility shared by both men and women. Children will see men and women performing a variety of jobs, which will help them understand that people are free to choose their work, and that most jobs can be performed equally well by men and women.

Section 4: Family and Community Services

Head Start/State Preschool helps parents explore what is working well in their families, what their current needs are, and what they want to learn more about. Your FSA is available to work with you and help you to find solutions that work for you and your family.

We believe that a healthy start prepares children for learning. Your Family Services Associate (FSA) will work with you to make sure your child has a regular doctor/clinic, gets regular check-ups and follow-up care, if needed. They can provide information and activities on dental health, nutrition, physical activity, emotional health and safety.

FSA will help you to identify and establish goals for your family, support you in achieving these goals and

give you information on accessing community resources.

Family Strengths and Needs

At enrollment, your FSA will complete a Family Strengths and Needs Assessment to help them understand any needs your family is experiencing right now (such as having enough food for your family, having a safe place to live, etc.). Together you and your FSA can develop a plan to help you with these needs. Your FSA knows a great deal about our community and can refer you to community agencies. If new family needs come up during the year, please contact your FSA.

Family Assessment

Your FSA will complete a Family Assessment with you two times per year. These assessments help the staff and yourself identify areas of strength and areas where you may need support. The staff and the program use the information gathered from these assessments to look at community partnerships and assess what the program can do to best support families.



Family Partnership Agreement

Your FSA will help you look at your hopes and dreams for your family, and then support you in creating goals for those things that are most important to you. You and your FSA will create a Family Partnership Agreement, with goals that are relevant for you.

Transition to Kindergarten

The goal of Head Start/State Preschool is to help your child be ready for school. We want to make the transition to the next year as smooth as possible for both you and your child. In the spring, the teacher will engage in Transition Activities, if your child will be attending Transitional Kindergarten (TK) or kindergarten we will be inviting you to a kindergarten transition workshop where you can ask questions about TK or kindergarten. We will give you the information you need to enroll your child in your local school. With your permission, Head Start/State Preschool will also pass information on to your child's kindergarten teacher to help them support your child.

Field Trips

Field Trips to local Elementary Schools or nearby community locations, such as libraries may be part of transition for your child to be successful in our Head Start program.

Section 5: Program Policies

Attendance

Your child will get the most out of their Head Start/State Preschool experience if they come to school regularly and on time. If your child has many absences (missing more than 10% of classes), the center team will work with you to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan to enable your child to receive the full benefit of participating in our program.

Absences that are considered excused are:

- Illness of child or parent
- Family emergency
- Child's medical or dental appointment (Should attend part of class if possible)
- Child's therapy appointment
- Custody or Court Order

If your child will absent, it is your responsibility to call the center and let us know. If we do not hear from you within the first hour of class time that your child will not be coming to school, we will call you to find out the reason for your child's absence.

After 10 unexcused absences in the center-based program, your child may be placed on the waiting list and will not be able to return to class until another opening is available.

Guidance for Dressing your Child for School

Play is fun, but can also be messy. Please dress your child in comfortable clothing that can be easily washed.

Children learn best when they are dressed in comfortable clothing. Please dress your child in clothing that allows freedom of movement coincides with and allows the child to play in water, sand, paint and other typical "fun play". Children often get messy during the learning day; please send an extra set of clothing that can be washed easily. Children may get messy, or have an accident, Comfortable, closed-toe shoes with socks must be worn daily for safety. Please dress your child according to the weather.

**Please remember to write your child's name on all articles of clothing and personal belongings.*

Procedures for Hearing Complaints and Solving Problems

The Procedures for Hearing Complaints and Solving Problems is posted on the Parent Bulletin Board in each site.

Mandated Child Abuse Reporting

In accordance with child abuse reporting laws of the State of California (Penal Code sections 11165-11174.5), all persons/professionals working with children are obligated to report suspected child abuse. This includes teachers, consultants, supervisors, family service associates, etc. Therefore, each individual Foundation staff member or volunteer is a mandated reporter.

Healthy Schools Act/Pesticide Training

The agency will be spraying for insects from time to time as needed, around the perimeters of the building and if necessary inside. As part of the "Healthy Schools Act", the agency will inform all parents at least 72 hours before the application of the pesticide, through a posting at the site. As part of the notification, parents will be informed of the active ingredients or ingredients in each pesticide product. For further information on pesticides and their alternatives, please visit (<http://www.cdpr.ca.gov>) or review the Safety Data Sheet Binder, located at your site. Please ask your teacher for the Binder.

Religious Instruction or Worship

Our agency does not provide for or allow religious instruction/worship in its child development program.

Holiday Observance

Holidays are observed in ways that are respectful to our families. Our goal is to provide a consistent and calm environment with activities that are appropriate and interesting to the children. No particular set of beliefs is promoted, but children will be able to experience different customs observed by families through celebrations of cultural traditions. There will be no fundraising for the purpose of purchasing gifts. The Program Planning Committee (with the input of all parents) will select three holidays to explore during the program year.

Birthday Recognition

Birthday calendars are posted in each classroom. Each child's birthday is recognized and celebrated individually. (i.e. songs, birthday crown, button, card) Parents are included in the planning. According to our nutrition guidelines, cakes and other party sweets are not permitted.

Emergency Information

Sites are equipped with food, water, and emergency supplies, such as flashlights, blankets, radios first aid kits, etc. Each site has an emergency action plan (please see posted plan in the classroom). Earthquake, fire and Community crisis drills are conducted once a month.

In case of emergencies, we need correct emergency information. It is very important that the information you provide us on the emergency card is correct and up to date (i.e. address, emergency phone number, etc.). Parents are required to notify the staff (FSA/Teachers) of any changes in their emergency information, as soon as possible. Failure to report any change(s) will hinder our ability to contact you in case of an emergency.

If there are changes in who has permission to pick up your child from school, you must come into the center and fill out the emergency card in person. For safety reasons, we will not accept cell phone calls for changes in emergency pick up.

Confidentiality

The program collects a great deal of information from parents that help us to better care for the children in our programs and support families.

Family and child records will be kept confidential. All files will be stored in a locked file cabinet. Emergency forms will be filed separately and will be available at all times in case of an emergency. Enrollment lists, addresses and phone numbers will not be shared with other agencies or parents without a parent's written permission except in specific situations required by law or regulation. See Confidentiality Statement for additional details.

Videotaping and Taking Pictures

At times, children in our programs are videotaped or have their pictures taken. With your general permission at enrollment, these pictures and videos may be used in the classroom with the children, at home visits, during parent meetings and staff trainings. You will be notified beforehand if we know the news media will be coming to videotape or photograph an event. Parents will be asked for permission anytime we would like to use your child's photo use outside their classroom or for staff training needs.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Our Agency has a Zero Tolerance Policy against Violence or Any Act of Violence in order to ensure a safe and comfortable environment for staff, families, and children, which is enforced on our employees as well as the families we serve. Unprofessional conduct, including disrespectful and inappropriate communication and other conduct directed to a fellow employee, child, parent or anyone else associated with the Agency will not be tolerated.

Personal Business

Personal business, such as buying and selling merchandise is not allowed at the site or near the entrances of the facilities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I hereby acknowledge receipt of the Parent Handbook
2020-2021

Child's Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Site Name: _____

Class Number: _____

Date Received: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

In accordance with child abuse reporting laws of the State of California (Penal Code sections 11165-11174.5), all persons/professionals working with children are obligated to report suspected child abuse. This includes teachers, consultants, supervisors, family service associates, etc. Therefore, each individual Foundation staff member or volunteer is a mandated reporter.

FALSE REPORTING PENAL CODE § 11172(a) Any person reporting a known or suspected instance of child abuse or neglect shall not incur civil or criminal liability as a result of any report, unless it can be proven that a false report was made and the person knew that the report was false or was made with reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the report. Any person who makes a report of child abuse or neglect known to be false or with reckless disregard of the truth or falsity of the report is liable for any damages caused.

MISSION STATEMENT

Foundation for Early Childhood Education is a human services organization committed to providing a comprehensive, high quality program for young children, and their families.

We promote the development of self-sufficiency, and empowerment of children, families, and staff. We celebrate the whole child, and the diversity of our communities.

