

PARENT HANDBOOK

HEAD START & STATE PRESCHOOL

2022 - 2023



Foundation for Early Childhood Education, Inc., 3450 E Sierra Madre Blvd., Pasadena, CA 91107 (626) 572-5107 visit our website @ www.Foundationheadstart.org

Every child deserves a great start!

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| MY CHILD’S PROGRAM INFORMATION | 1 |
| WELCOME! | 1 |
| WHAT IS OUR HEAD START/STATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM..... | 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 | 4-5 |
| HELLO AND GOOD-BYE..... | 5 |
| REGULAR ATTENDANCE..... | 5-7 |
| ARRIVAL & PICK-UP PROCESS..... | 7 |
| SITE SAFETY & ROLE OF FOUNDATION FAMILIES..... | 8 |
| SITE SECURITY-ENTRANCE WITH CODE..... | 8 |
| CUSTODY ISSUES..... | 8 |
| MEALTIME..... | 8-9 |
| TOOTH BRUSHING..... | 9 |
| HOME VISITS & PARENT CONFERENCES | 9 |
| INDIVIDUALIZING CURRICULUM..... | 9-10 |
| WEEKLY HOME ACTIVITIES..... | 10 |
| POSITIVE GUIDANCE..... | 10 |
| SECTION 2: PARENT PARTICIPATION | 11 |
| PARENT AND COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS (IN-KIND-NFM)..... | 11 |
| MALE ENGAGEMENT..... | 12 |
| PARENT COMMITTEE..... | 12 |
| POLICY COMMITTEE..... | 12 |
| COMMUNICATING WITH HEAD START/STATE PRESCHOOL..... | 12 |
| SECTION 3: HEALTH SERVICES | 13 |
| HEALTH REQUIREMENTS..... | 13-14 |
| REQUIRED DAILY HEALTH CHECK (AT ENTRY TO CLASSROOM..... | 14 |
| WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME FROM SCHOOL..... | 14-15 |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| ILLNESSES & ACCIDENTS AT SCHOOL | 15 |
| MEDICATION | 16 |
| DISABILITIES SERVICES..... | 16 |
| MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES | 16-17 |
| CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS | 17 |
| NUTRITION SERVICES | 17 |
| NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT (USDA)..... | 18 |
| ANTI-BIAS PROGRAM..... | 18 |
| SECTION 4: FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICES..... | 18-19 |
| FAMILY STRENGTHS AND NEEDS..... | 19 |
| FAMILY ASSESSMENT | 19 |
| FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT | 19 |
| TRANSITION TO KINDERGARTEN | 19 |
| FIELD TRIPS..... | 19 |
| SECTION 5: PROGRAM POLICIES | 20 |
| ATTENDANCE..... | 20 |
| GUIDANCE ON DRESSING YOUR CHILD FOR SCHOOL | 20 |
| PROCEDURES FOR HEARING COMPLAINTS & SOLVING PROBLEMS | 20 |
| MANDATED CHILD ABUSE REPORTING | 20-21 |
| HEALTHY SCHOOLS ACT/PESTICIDE TRAINING | 21 |
| RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION OR WORSHIP | 21 |
| TRANSPORTATION..... | 21 |
| HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE..... | 21 |
| BIRTHDAY RECOGNITION | 21 |
| EMERGENCY INFORMATION | 21-22 |
| CONFIDENTIALITY | 22 |
| VIDEOTAPING & TAKING PICTURES | 22 |
| ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY..... | 22 |
| PERSONAL BUSINESS | 22 |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT..... | 23 |
| PARENT HANDBOOK CALENDAR..... | 24-36 |

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 our Head Start/State Preschool Program?

Head Start/State Preschool is a free comprehensive child development program funded by the federal government for pre-school children ages 2-5 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.

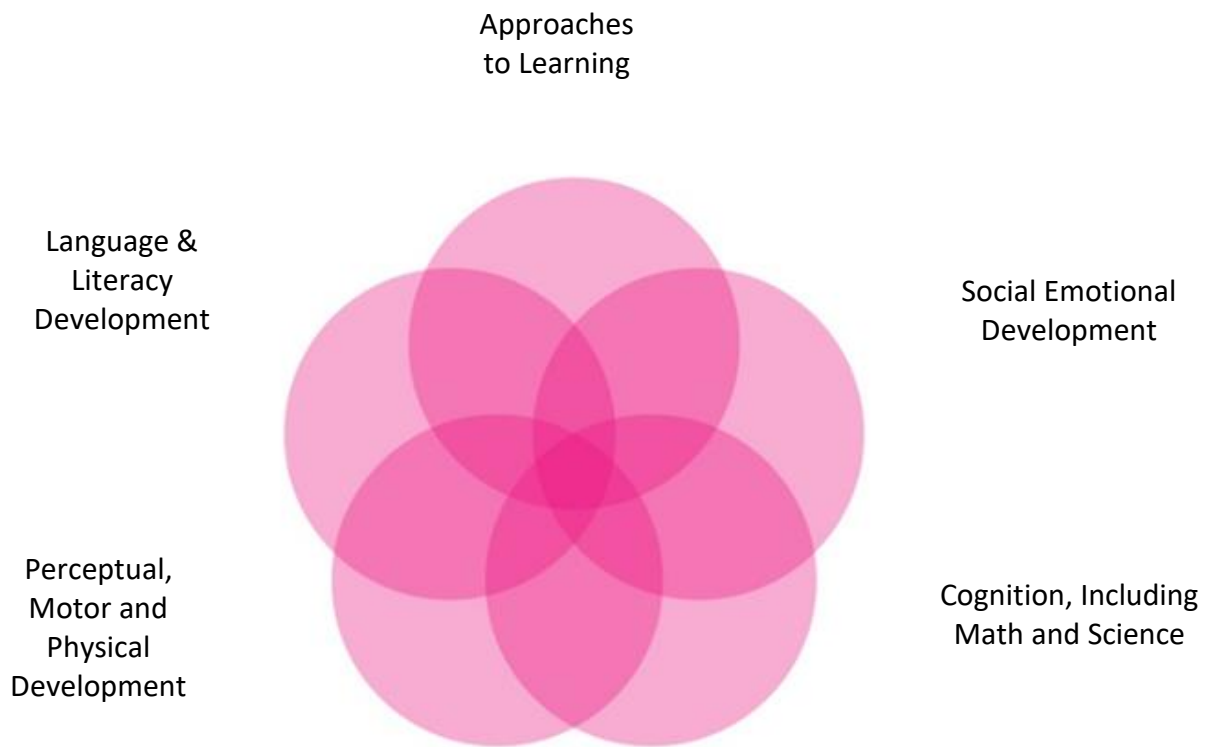
Staff work together with parents to enhance each child's development, health, family support and community support. Each family's culture, language, values, and traditions are respected and promoted. Children with special needs are embraced in our programs. We consider every child a unique person with individual strengths and needs. Parents and staff work together to create individualized learning programs for every child. You will jointly develop an IDP (Individualized Development Plan) 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 kindergarten, 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. Classroom 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, 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 art, blocks, books, writing, dramatic play, toy, and puzzle areas. Young children learn through play, and exploring the learning materials and classroom indoors and outdoors. 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. Behaviors that come from anxiety can be crying, screaming, falling on the floor, running and

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.

more. The teaching staff have many years of experience and are prepared and trained to help you and your child with this situation.

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

- Parents allow your some extra time (5-10 minutes) in the classroom as needed, for the first week.
- Remain calm and reassure your child that school is a safe place, and he/she will be okay. When parents show signs of stress and anxiety, children become more fearful.
- **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 will not return.
- Establish a “good-bye” routine and stick with that routine every day. Some examples are a hug and high-five then leave, or two hugs and say, “I love you,” then leave. You may ask your child’s teacher for suggestions.
- 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

Rest time is a critical 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 will have the opportunity to nap/rest daily, typically between the hours of 12pm and 2pm. Children will nap/rest on cots with sheets, and blankets. Children who don’t nap will have quiet activities that they can do on their cot during naptime. 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.

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

Hello and Good-bye

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. This is an opportunity to practice routines, as they prepare for kindergarten. 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 can 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 if the child is sick. The agency is mandated to report on 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 made in writing and submitted to the Child Development Specialist/FSA as soon as possible. In case of emergency leave, the parents 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.

Types of Absences (2 types)

1. Excused Absence

- **Sick-** Illness of Child or Parent, Quarantine of Child and/or Parent,
- **MEDICAL**
- **COVID** – (concern, exposure, positive results)
- **Court Order/Visitation-** court order will be kept in the child's file
- **Transportation**
- **Family Emergency-**
 - Natural disasters (i.e., earthquakes), transportation problems (parent has no means to bring child to school due to car trouble and has no one else to bring child, parent has limited funds to

- repair car or take public transportation, car breaks down on way to school, car accident)
- Hazardous weather conditions that prevents travel to school such as flooding and high winds.
- Sibling Illness,
- Hospitalization of a family members (grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles, siblings)
- death of family member,
- Sudden change in residency (i.e., family is evicted from the home, becomes homeless) family needs to find new temporary residency, which may be further from school and could affect attendance temporarily.
- Community concerns (drive-by-shootings, gang wars, riots, and neighborhood lockdowns) family will be given a 1-day excused absence; additional days will be on a case-by-case basis.
- **Best Interest-** i.e., Family Vacation, time with relatives, special events for the child, cultural and religious celebrations, enrichment opportunities. Best Interest days not to exceed 10 days in a program year. **Any Best Interest Days exceeding 10 days will be considered unexcused.**

Best interest days are not limited to Child Protective Services or 'At Risk' for abuse or neglect.

2. **Unexcused absences:** Any reason for absence that does not fall under one of the above-mentioned categories or that falls under the following categories

- Contact unsuccessful with parent or guardian
- Parent Choice/oversight
- Child did not feel like coming to class

FSA and/or Teacher will code the absence based on the reason provided by the Parent/Guardian within the Agency Data Base System.

For State Preschool (Full-Day) Program Family's Only:

No family will be dis-enrolled due to excessive absences except in the following circumstances as described under "Abandonment of Care"

Abandonment of Care-

When the family has not been in communication with their FSA or teacher for seven consecutive calendar days to inform them for why the child is not attending class or why services are no longer needed, the FSA will attempt to contact the parent through a variety of written communication methods (letters, electronic methods- email, text). The FSA will keep documentation of all communication attempts, including a copy of all written communication, in the child's file. The FCEC and/or AD will inform the parents in these communications that failure to communicate with the agency may result in termination of services.

(d) The contractor shall issue a Notice of Action to dis-enroll the family based on abandonment of care when there has been no communication with the FSA or Teacher for a total of 30 consecutive calendar days.

No Contact with Family- HEAD START PROGRAM ONLY

If the child is absent for more than 2 consecutive days, without any contact, the FSA will conduct a home visit on the 3rd day, document efforts and leave the parent a 24-hour notice to contact the school or FSA.

If the parent does not contact the school or the FSA by the end of the 4th day, the child will be placed back on the waitlist by the FCEC or AD, if the FCEC is absent. Family would be contacted to re-enroll when a vacancy occurs, in order of priority. All attempts will be made by the FSA to contact family through email, text, phone call or home visits prior to placing child back on the waitlist.

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

Arrival and Pick up Process

Parents/Guardians 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 Card can pick up children

Parents/guardians must print the names, current addresses and telephone numbers of adults who can pick up and drop off their child on the Emergency Card. **Any changes to the names on the Emergency Card 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 Card to pick up your child. **If the parent/guardian has not arrived at the end of the child's program hours and no one can be reached from the Emergency Card, the local police department may be contacted.** If a pattern of tardiness has been observed, the Family Service Associate, Center Manager, Teacher or Child Development Supervisor will meet with the parents and discuss a plan of support to address late pick-ups. If a parent has more than 4 late pickups the parents will be required to meet with the Education Coordinator and/or the Assistant Director to address the 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 park illegally to drop off/pick up and **NEVER** 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 the 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 always remain by the side of the responsible adult.
- 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 the 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 the 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.
- **Please discontinue all phone calls during drop-off or pick-up.** Phone calls and other distractions can interfere with children's safety at school.

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 follows court orders, as provided to us to indicate shared custody and/or visitation. We 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

Mealtimes are 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. Please note, contingent on LA County Public Health directives the agency may need to continue practicing individual mealtime for children, should Covid-19 still be a concern in the community.

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 or *medical condition*. To ensure your child's health and safety, you must submit this form prior to your child's first day of school for the Registered Dietician to process your paperwork 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. Please note, contingent on LA County Public Health/CCLD directives the agency may need to discontinue tooth brushing in the classroom should Covid-19 still be a concern in the community.



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 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 screening tool

called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQs).

One questionnaire focuses on Social-Emotional Development (ASQ-SE2), and the other questionnaire focuses on physical, gross motor, fine motor, and other areas of development (ASQ-3). The ASQ developmental screening tools will help identify any areas where your child may need some extra support. With your input, your child's primary teacher will also complete a Developmental Assessment tool, three times a year, called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), 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 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. Children will always be under the direct visual supervision of teaching staff.



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, as part of our "Open Door Policy". 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 family's interests and traditions
- Sharing music with the children
- Helping with projects
- Reading or telling stories with 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.

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
- COVID-19 Vaccination (2 initial vaccines required)

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

Male Engagement

Fathers and father figures have a significant role in the lives of children. Children need to be involved and caring men in their lives. 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 of 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 access to 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/FSS** will be available to assist you.

Your FSA/FSS 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/FSS will ask you to sign a consent form so we can get this paperwork from your child's provider. Your Health Coordinator/FSA/FSS will give you information on how often you should take your child to the doctor/dentist.

Health Requirements

| When | Requirements |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Before the first day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Immunization Record: An up-to-date and legible 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. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div> Required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Polio • 4 DTaP • 1 HIB (on or after 1st birthday) • 1MMR (on or after 1st birthday) • 3 Hep B • 1 VAR (on or after 1st birthday) </div> <div> Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hepatitis A -PCV -RV -Influenza </div> </div> ❖ 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 or medical condition. To ensure your child's health and safety, you must submit this form prior to your child's first day of school for the Registered Dietician to complete an individualized nutrition health care plan or your child will not be permitted to start class on the first day. A new form must be completed if new meal accommodation is identified or no longer needed in the classroom. ❖ Medication: Physician Instructions for Medication at School Form must be completed by a physician for children with medical conditions requiring medication during school hours. 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 Nurse to complete an individualized healthcare plan or your child will not be permitted to start class on the first day. This form must be completed fully in order for schools to administer the required medication. A new form must be completed for each medication and each time there is a change in dosage or time or if medication is no longer needed in the classroom. |
| Within the first 30 days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Physical Examination: You must submit a copy of your child's current and complete physical medical examination. Once expired, it must be submitted yearly for children enrolled in Head Start and every 6 months for Early Head Start children. ❖ Tuberculosis Screening: The physical medical examination must include current documentation of a Tuberculosis risk assessment and/or a TB skin test. |
| Within the first 45 days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Hearing and Vision Screening: Head Start/State Preschool children must have a hearing and vision screening completed. ❖ Growth Assessments (Height/Weight) |
| Within the first 90 days | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Dental Exam: Children in the program must have a dental exam completed every 6 months and/or as often as the dental provider requires follow-up and completion of dental treatment. ❖ Hemoglobin/hematocrit (Anemia Screening): 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 is done annually. ❖ Lead Screening: You must submit documentation of lead level results for all children in HS programs. Your child's medical provider usually completes this test at 12 and 24 months. |

Your Family Service Associate and FSS 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, and FSS's can provide information and resources on oral health, nutrition, physical activity, emotional well-being and safety. Your child's Family Service Advocate/FSS can assist in acquiring documentation from your medical/dental provider once you complete a consent form.

Required Daily Health Check (at entry to classroom)

Prior to arriving to class all families will be required to complete a Health Assessment on their child, which they will complete at home prior to arrival, upon arrival to class, teaching staff will conduct a Daily Health Check on each child at the start of every class. The daily health checks will add time to the process of receiving children. The teacher will observe each child for any signs of illness. The teacher will look at each child at eye level and ask how they are doing. The teacher will listen to the child's voice and observe the child's appearance. The teacher will then ask the parent how the child has been doing and address any symptoms observed. The teacher will then take the child's temperature and if there are no concerns the child can be accepted into class. After clearance, parent/guardian will sign in for the child.

The purpose for the health assessment and the health check is to help prevent the spread of communicable illness, have fewer absences and to reduce the possibility of a classroom health emergency. Since a mildly ill child can become seriously ill in a short period, it is important for the parent/guardian to take the child home.

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. Please check your child carefully for signs of illness or skin condition each morning before sending him/her to school. Whenever your child is sick it is best to consult the child's health care provider or clinic immediately, so that early treatment may prevent more serious illness. **See below to determine if you should keep your child at home.**

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

- Following an injury, hospitalization, surgery, or illness where attendance would pose a significant risk to the child or anyone in contact with the child.
- Fever- 100.4°F or higher within the last 24 hours.
- Medication with the last 24 hours
- Behavioral change- lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, or persistent crying for unexplained causes.
- Sore throat and swollen glands or mouth sores
- Any type of sores
- Chills
- Headaches
- A combination of raspy sounding voice, sneezing, coughing, and runny nose with nasal discharge
- Vomiting

- Runny or watery diarrhea
- Bloody stool that is not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stool
- Rash
- Pink or red conjunctiva (i.e., white of the eyes) with white or yellow eye mucus crust drainage (signs of bacterial infection)
- Abdominal pain or complaints of pain anywhere in their body
- 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.
- **Any one in home with positive results for COVID-19, possible exposure to COVID-19, and/or waiting on COVID-19 results**

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

If your child becomes ill at the center, the centre 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 their home and the care of their families. Parent/guardian will be asked to bring in a note from their health care provider if child is seen in the doctor's office. The note should indicate diagnosis, treatment (if applicable), and when the child is cleared to return to class.

Illnesses and Accidents at School

Every precaution is taken at our centers to ensure proper care of children. Short-term exclusion is determined by Health Coordinator, RN, or Assistant Director. In case of illness or an accident at school, the following procedure will be observed:

The teacher will contact the parent/guardian 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 and/or RN for advice.
- Isolate the child and call the parent/guardian to pick up the child. The teacher will recommend parent to seek medical advice from a health care provider and if a doctor's note is needed. The note should indicate diagnosis, treatment (if applicable) and when child is cleared/allowed to return to class.
- If the parent/guardian 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.
- In the case of an accident occurring at school, the teacher will hand the parent a written report form that parent the will take to the health care provider. The note should indicate diagnosis, treatment (if applicable), restrictions (if applicable) and when child is cleared/allowed to return to class.

Medication

Non-Medical Staff (teachers) will be trained by a licensed Registered Nurse in 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/guardian, the physician's 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.

Disabilities Services

Foundation for Early Childhood Education offers Head Start/State Preschool program. We are committed to working with families to ensure that children, especially those with identified IEP and not yet identified disabilities are full included in our program and services required to meet each child's individual developmental, health and social needs. Please share any concerns about your child's development, delays you or others have noticed and speak to your child's teacher. We will assist with referrals to LAUSD.

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 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. We provide a structured daily schedule with activities to engage children at their personal level. Reasonable classroom expectations/rules are established that include input from the children. When possible, ignore maladaptive behaviors and focus on positive behaviors throughout the day. When children exhibit extreme undesirable behaviors (defined as aggressive, harmful and severe behaviors), necessary steps must be taken by staff to help children gain self-control and to develop self-calming behaviors.

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 Individualized 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 mealtimes as a positive learning experience. These meals are provided to help establish good eating habits at an early 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 mealtime.

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 Accommodation form." This form is required ONLY for children with food allergies or intolerances, or special dietary needs due to a disability or medical condition. To ensure your child's health and safety, you must submit this form prior to your child's first day of school for the Registered Dietician to process your paperwork or your child will not be permitted to start class on the first day. You can obtain this form from your Family Services Associate/Family Services Specialist.

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 should 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 (Child and Adult Care Food Program) 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 and employer.”

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 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.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Anti-Bias Program

We provide an anti-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 you 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 be 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. We encourage families to address concerns directly with staff involved, starting with Teacher or FSA.

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 spray 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.

Transportation

Transportation Resources will be provided to all parents in the “Parent Resource Book” (i.e., Public Transportation)

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 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. (e.g., songs, birthday crown, button, card) Parents/guardians are included in the planning. According to our nutrition guidelines, cakes and other party sweets are not permitted. Outside food is not allowed.

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 especially important that the information you provide us with 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/FSS, 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 regarding 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 Cards will be filed separately and will always be available in case of an emergency. Enrollment lists, addresses and phone numbers will not be shared with other agencies or parents/guardians 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, staff training and social media. You will be notified beforehand if we know the news media will be coming to videotape or photograph an event. Parents/guardians will be asked for permission anytime we would like to use your child's photo outside their classroom for staff training needs or in our program materials such as flyers.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Our Agency has a Zero Tolerance Policy against Violence or Any Act of Violence 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
2022-2023

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 damage 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.

