

## MESSAGE FROM THE HEAD START PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Dear Families,

Welcome to the QCAP Head Start! We look forward to an exciting and rewarding year for all of our children and families. We thank you for choosing our program and entrusting your children to our care. Our Nationally Accredited (NAEYC) Head Start program has received a Federal Certificate of Excellence and has been selected as one of the Massachusetts Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) pilot programs. Head Start understands that children love to learn and we work diligently at encouraging them in their quest to gain knowledge and skills. We provide all children with a safe, nurturing, and secure learning environment. You are your child's first and best teacher and we really need you, working with us, to positively influence your child's learning and development.

Head Start offers families opportunities for support and growth. The more that you participate in Head Start, the more rewarding the experience will be for you and your child. Many Head Start parents and guardians have gained confidence and skills that enabled them to acquire jobs, education and advocacy skills. Head Start offers many resources that can help you realize your vision for yourself and your family. We will work with you on accomplishing your goals.

This handbook is designed to give you an overview of the Head Start program and provide you with specific information about the workings of our program. Please keep the handbook and use it as a reference for any questions that might arise during your participation in Head Start. If I can be of assistance, please feel free to call me at 617-479-8181 ext. 351.

Sincerely,

*Anne Leister*

QCAP Head Start Program Director

## MESSAGE FROM THE POLICY COUNCIL

Dear Parent/guardian(s),

We would like to welcome all new and returning families to Head Start for the coming year. We are anxious to get to know and work with all of you to ensure that our children have a "great start with Head Start".

Our experiences with Head Start have been wonderful for our children and ourselves. Policy Council is one of the aspects of Head Start that we are honored to be a part of. Parent/guardian(s) are able to work with Head Start staff, as a group, to create and approve policies that will affect all families involved in Head Start. We feel the best way for any parent/guardian(s) to help their children is to be involved in their lives. Policy Council, and Head Start as a whole, encourages parent/guardian(s) involvement. We feel it is a privilege to be a part of a child's life. We hope you will feel as strongly about your child's education as we do and as Head Start does.

You are able to participate in the Policy Council and many other various committees throughout the year. We hope you find it as rewarding as we have to be an active parent/guardian(s) in your child's education. We look forward to getting to know you all better!

Sincerely,

*The Head Start Policy Council*

## QCAP HEAD START STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

### **HEAD START MISSION STATEMENT**

To provide an early childhood program that strives for excellence in service and works in collaboration with other early care, health and education providers in our communities in order to effectively serve low and moderate-income children and families from diverse cultures.

### **WHAT IS HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START?**

Head Start/Early Head Start is a national program for the family designed to break the cycle of poverty by providing children ages birth to five from low-income families with a comprehensive program in which family, staff and community representatives work together on behalf of the child and the family. The overarching goals of Head Start focus on the healthy cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development needed to prepare children for learning. QCAP Head Start recognizes that parent/guardian(s) are the primary educators of their children and is committed to working with families to ensure that the developmental needs of each child are met. Head Start strives to help families help themselves.

### **HEAD START'S BEGINNINGS**

The National Head Start program began in 1965 as an eight-week summer program designed to provide preschool children from low-income families with a program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs. Head Start gradually developed programming for children that followed a public school calendar. In response to the growing need for full-day/full-year care to meet the needs of families' transitioning into the workforce, QCAP responded by offering full-day/full-year Head Start programming.

QCAP Head Start was one of the original summer programs in 1965. Shortly thereafter, it became a nine-month program serving preschool children in Quincy. The program expanded to serve children from Weymouth and Braintree in 1978. Two years later in 1980, the program expanded again to include children from Hull. In 1989 the program opened its first full-day/full-year classroom in Germantown.

Early Head Start services for children from birth to three were added in June of 2002, expanding Head Start services at QCAP to children from birth to five and their families. These services were expanded again to include expectant families in 2010.

QCAP Head Start sites are drug, alcohol, and smoke free environments. The program currently employs a staff of close to 100, including current and previous Head Start parent/guardian(s).

## PROGRAM OPTIONS

### **BASIC HEAD START**

The QCAP Head Start program services preschool children from the communities of Quincy, Braintree, Weymouth, Hull and Milton. The program operates four hours a day, five days a week from September to June. No classes are held on the first Monday of each month. The children receive breakfast and lunch and limited transportation is available for families who cannot transport their children. The program is free to families who meet income guidelines. In addition to the basic Head Start model, QCAP Head Start offers other programs with various schedules to meet families' individual needs. On occasion, the program may close for additional professional development days.

### **VOUCHER/EMPLOYMENT SERVICES PROGRAM (ESP)**

The Employment Services Program (ESP) is a state funded job preparation and placement program that provides day care vouchers to parent/guardian(s) currently receiving or having received Transitional Aid to Families with Dependent Children (TAFDC) within the last 12 months. Through a combination of federal and state funding, Head Start children whose parent/guardian(s) participate in ESP may attend the full day program, five days a week, 52 weeks a year, except for holidays, while their parent/guardian(s) work, or attend school or job training. Some families may be charged a fee based on the Commonwealth of Massachusetts sliding fee scale. Limited transportation is available for families who cannot transport their children to the program. All children receive breakfast and lunch and an afternoon snack. To find out more about the ESP Daycare Voucher program, contact our Head Start Enrollment Specialist or Child Care Resource Center at 617-547-1063.

### **COORDINATED FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANT**

Through the Coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant, EEC seeks to ensure that all families with young children, especially those with the greatest educational need, experiencing multiple risk factors, and in hard to reach populations, have access in their community to the supports that are essential to their success. This grant enables Head Start to deliver comprehensive services to families as well as provides Head Start staff access to consumer education, technical assistance, and training.

### **CHILD CARE SUPPORTIVE SERVICES**

The Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) also funds this program. The Child Care Supportive Services program provides the Head Start program to children whose families are receiving supportive care from the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Through a combination of federal and state funding, the Child Care Supportive Services full day program operates five days a week, 52 weeks a year, except for holidays. There is no cost for this program. Transportation is available. All children receive breakfast and lunch and an afternoon snack.

### **EARLY HEAD START**

Families may participate in EHS in one of three ways:

**The Center-Based** option is ideal for families who need full day care, who have a day care voucher or who are participating in the child care supportive services program. Center-Based services are offered five days a week, 52 weeks a year, except for holidays, 7:15 am 6:00 pm, to families with children between the ages of 15 months to 3 years. Limited transportation is available. All children receive breakfast, lunch and a morning and afternoon snack.

**The Home-Based** option is ideal for caregivers of infants and toddlers. Early Head Start services are delivered through weekly home visits from the Family Resource Specialist (FRS). Families who are enrolled in the home-based option also participate in regularly scheduled parent/guardian(s)-child playgroups, known as Discovery Day, at the Germantown Early Childhood Center in Quincy through collaboration with the Step One Early Intervention Program. Or at FIRST Early Intervention in Weymouth through a collaboration with the Early Intervention program.

Services are offered to **pregnant women** providing support and education during pregnancy. An FRS or FSW will do home visits, as determined by the client/staff. Continued service is offered after the baby is delivered.

### **ENROLLMENT/INTAKE PROCESS**

Families can obtain an application by contacting the Head Start office at 617-479-8181 ext 355. Once the application has been received by the Enrollment Specialist, an intake appointment is set up. At intake, information is gathered and exchanged. Families are introduced to the comprehensive services that QCAP and Head Start provide. Staff listens carefully to identify, early on, any family needs. Information gathered is then brought to the selection committee. The committee reviews: the income eligibility, the age of the child and the extent to which the child or family meets the selection criteria that the program has established. Children and families who are eligible are then accepted or waitlisted and notified by letter. Priority is given to families on the waitlist with the highest need as determined by the selection criteria. Once enrolled, families can also request different program options in response to changing family needs. We will try to honor a request whenever possible if space permits. Head Start provides enrollment opportunities for children and their families on a continuous basis throughout the year.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc. maintains a policy of equal opportunity and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, age, gender, religion, creed, political affiliation, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, public assistance status, disability or any other basis prohibited by law.



## **CLASSROOMS LOCATIONS**

<b>Braintree High School 128 Town St. Braintree, MA 02184</b>	<b>781- 380-4850</b>	<b>Fax: 781- 380-1489</b>
<b>Eldridge Center 46 Lincoln St. Braintree, MA 02184</b>	<b>781-356-4644</b>	<b>Fax: 781-356-8998</b>
<b>Germantown Early Childhood Ctr. 9 Bicknell St. Quincy, MA 02169</b>	<b>617- 773-1222</b>	<b>Fax: 617- 984-2870</b>
<b>Gould Hall 130 Spring St. Hull, MA 02045</b>	<b>781- 925-3167</b>	<b>Fax: 781- 925-9127</b>
<b>Weymouth Base 26 Pidgeon Rd. Bldg. 128 S. Weymouth, MA 02190</b>	<b>781- 331-4880</b>	<b>Fax: 781- 331-4993</b>
<b>Head Start Partnership with South Shore Day Care Weymouth Preschool 1320 Commercial Street Weymouth, MA. 02189</b>	<b>781- 335-0704</b>	<b>Fax: 781- 331-8509</b>
<b>Early Head Start Discovery Day Germantown Early Childhood Ctr. 9 Bicknell St. Quincy, MA 02169</b>	<b>617- 773-1222</b>	<b>Fax: 617- 984-2870</b>
<b>Early Head Start Discovery Day First Early Intervention 574 Main St. Weymouth, MA 02189</b>	<b>781-331-2533</b>	<b>Fax: 781-340-1337</b>

**QCAP HEAD START ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

1509 Hancock Street, Quincy, MA 02169 Phone: (617) 479-8181 Fax: (617) 769-9850

		<u>Extension</u>
<b>Program Director</b>	<b>Anne Leister</b>	<b>351</b>
<b>Program Coordinator</b>	<b>Margaret Downey</b>	<b>382</b>
<b>Education Coordinator</b>	<b>Keather Reichel</b>	<b>353</b>
<b>Family Services Coordinator</b>	<b>Lisa Crowley</b>	<b>350</b>
<b>Health Coordinator</b>	<b>Barbara Brown</b>	<b>359</b>
<b>Health Assistant</b>	<b>Paula Malger</b>	<b>357</b>
<b>Nutrition Coordinator</b>	<b>Charlotte Currie</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Children’s Services Coordinator</b>	<b>Nancy Craven</b>	<b>362</b>
<b>Enrollment Specialist</b>	<b>Nancy Dean</b>	<b>352</b>
<b>EHS Family Resource Specialist</b>	<b>Heather Case</b>	<b>365</b>
<b>EHS Family Resource Specialist</b>	<b>Traci Lipson</b>	<b>343</b>
<b>Bi-Lingual Translator</b>	<b>Cowina Lam</b>	<b>358</b>
<b>Office Assistant/Bi-Lingual Translator</b>	<b>Wendy Wong</b>	<b>323</b>

**EARLY HEAD START COORDINATOR**

<b>Beletu Angagaw/Germantown</b>	<b>617-773-1222</b>	<b>5</b>
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**EDUCATION SPECIALISTS**

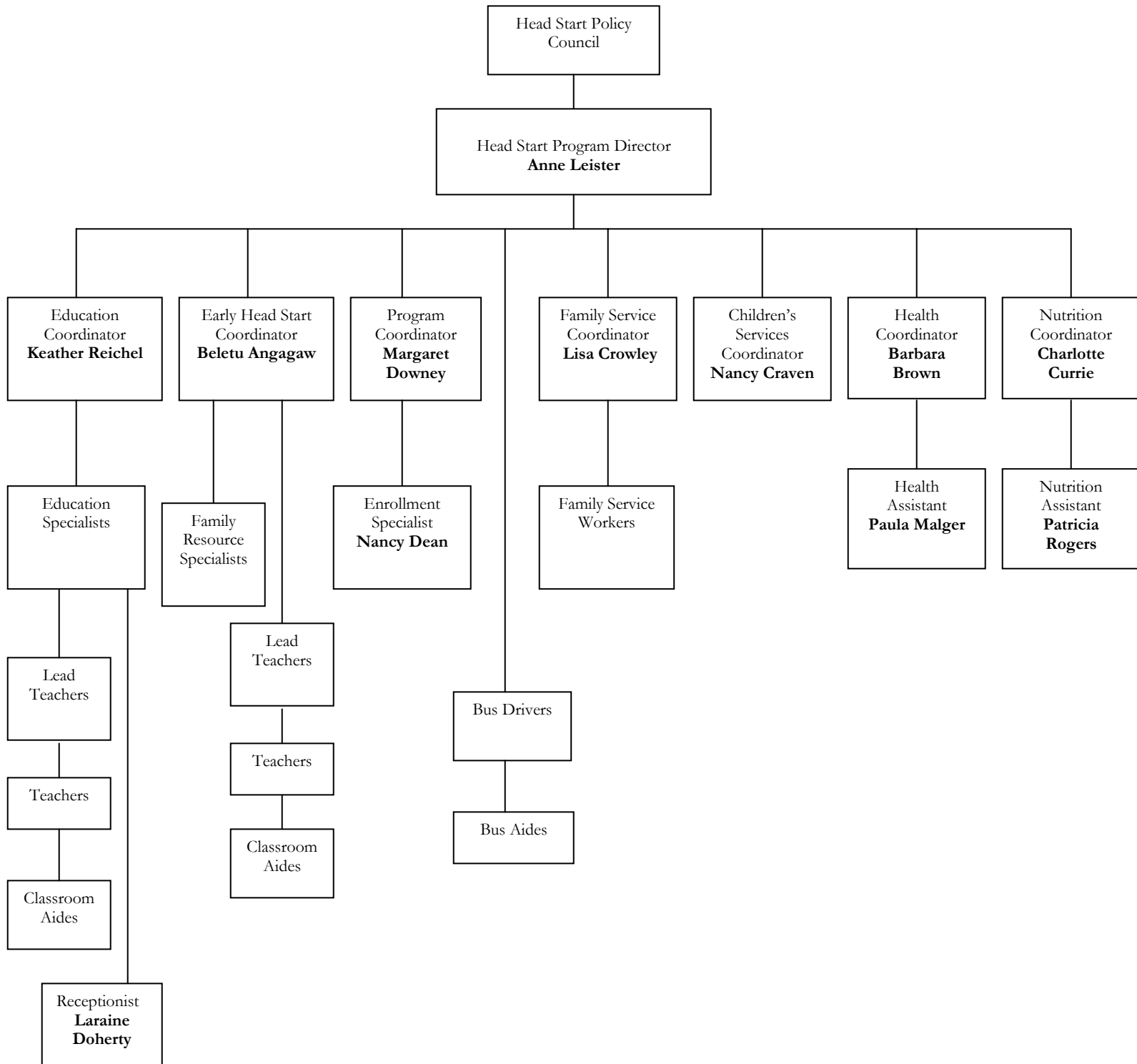
<b>Nancy Botelho/Eldridge</b>	<b>781-356-4644</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>Janet Widdop/Braintree/Gould Hall</b>	<b>781-380-4850</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Angie Goossen/Weymouth Base</b>	<b>781-331-4880</b>	<b>5</b>

**FAMILY SERVICE WORKERS**

<b>Sheila Krausert</b>	<b>781-331-4880</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Noreen Shana Allen</b>	<b>781-331-4880</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Tracy Lundin</b>	<b>781-356-4644</b>	<b>102</b>
<b>Helen Ferullo</b>	<b>781-356-4644</b>	<b>103</b>
<b>Maggie Yeung</b>	<b>617- 773-1212</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Cristina Marchione</b>	<b>781-380-4850</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Claudia Velazquez</b>	<b>781-925-3167</b>	
<b>Cara Smethurst</b>	<b>617-773-1222</b>	<b>2</b>

**QUINCY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAMS, INC.**

**Head Start Program**



## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR PARENT/GUARDIAN(S)/COMMUNITY**

If a parent/guardian(s) or community member has a concern, that concern should be brought up first with the staff person involved. If the issue cannot be resolved the staff person's supervisor should be contacted. Meetings will be scheduled for the parent/guardian(s) or community representative to meet with the appropriate staff person. Parent/guardian(s) are encouraged to present their grievances in writing to avoid confusion and should present specific detailed information to explain the concern.

Responsibility for all programmatic decisions rests with the Head Start Program Director who will, if necessary, address the issues with appropriate staff and parent/guardian(s).

In accordance with Policy Council roles and responsibilities, the Head Start Program Director is responsible for bringing any issues that affect Head Start policy before the Policy Council for consideration.

If you have any questions regarding this Grievance Procedure, please call the Program Director at 617-479-8181 x 351. Please note that the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) is our licensing authority. The phone number for the Department of EEC is 617-472-2881.

<b>QCAP HEAD START SCHOOL CLOSINGS 2010/2011</b>
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Part Day Opening Day	September 27, 2010
Columbus Day	October 11, 2010
Veteran's Day	November 11, 2010
Thanksgiving break	November 25 & 26, 2010
Christmas Day (observed)	December 24, 2010
New Year's Day (observed)	December 31, 2010
Part Day Classrooms Close for Break	December 27 - January 3, 2011
Part Day Classrooms Re-open	January 4, 2011
Martin Luther King Day	January 17, 2011
President's Day	February 21, 2011
Part Day Classrooms Close for Break	February 21-25, 2011
Part Day Classrooms Re-open	February 28, 2011
Patriot's Day	April 18, 2011
Part Day Classrooms Close for Break	April 18 – 22, 2011
Part Day Classrooms Re-open	April 25, 2011
Memorial Day	May 30, 2011
Last Day of Part Day Classrooms	June 14, 2011
Independence Day	July 4, 2011
Labor Day	September 5, 2011



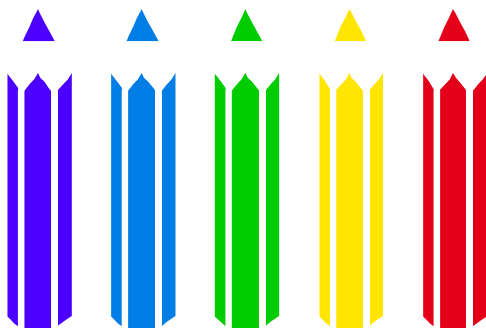
**Part day classrooms will be closed the first Monday of every month.**

**Full Day classrooms continue to operate during the public school vacation breaks in the summer, December, February and April.**

**The program will be closed for two professional days to be announced.**

## MY RIGHTS AS A HEAD START PARENT/GUARDIAN(S)

1. To be welcomed into the classroom.
2. To choose whether or not I participate as a program volunteer, without fear of endangering my child's right to be in the program.
3. To be informed regularly about my child's progress in Head Start/Early Head Start.
4. To always be treated with dignity and respect.
5. To expect that Head Start/Early Head Start staff will act in the best interest of my child.
6. To be able to learn about the operation of the program, should I be elected to serve on the Policy Council including the budget and the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions
7. To take part in major policy decisions affecting the planning and operation of the program should I be elected to serve on the Policy Council.
8. To help develop and participate in adult programs at my discretion that will benefit my children and my family.
9. To take part in the planning and implementation of programs that are designed to increase my skills in areas of possible employment, should I elect to apply.
10. To be informed about all community resources concerned with parenting, health, nutrition, education, and the improvement of family life.



## MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A HEAD START PARENT/GUARDIAN(S)

1. To take advantage of the Head Start opportunity as a valuable learning experience for me and my child.
2. To learn as much as I can about the program.
3. To become a part of the Head Start team and take part in the classroom as an observer, a volunteer, or a paid employee if I am qualified and selected, and to contribute my services in whatever way I can toward the enrichment of the total program.
4. To provide parent/guardian(s) leadership by taking part in major policy decisions, monthly parent/guardian(s) meetings, elections, Policy Council or by explaining the program to other parent/guardian(s) and encouraging their full participation.
5. To work cooperatively with teachers and staff and to treat them with dignity and respect.
6. To welcome teachers and staff into my home to discuss how to build upon my child's school experiences.
7. To evaluate and offer suggestions to improve the program.
8. To meet my responsibilities as primary caretaker by always letting staff know where I can be reached in case of an emergency or arranging for other contacts and pick up of my child when needed.

## WHEN YOUR CHILD BEGINS SCHOOL



### WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOUR CHILD GOES TO SCHOOL

If this is the first time a child has been away from home for any period of time, the child may act in a way that is unexpected and/or different, even a temporary return to old behaviors that had been outgrown, until he/she feels comfortable with the new routines. Sometimes the first school experience can be very stressful to children and families. Remember that a child's first experience away from home is the start of independence, but it is also a new challenge that must be mastered before the child can feel a genuine comfort level or sense of self-confidence.

Inform the child about what is going to happen. Example: "The bus will come and pick you up, you'll be going to school without me, and at the end of the day the bus will bring you home, and I'll be waiting for you". By doing this, fears and problems that the child may have about leaving, attending school, etc. may be eliminated or lessened. All children need to know what to expect, just as adults do. This is true of any situation, not only on the first day of school. When children are informed about the sequence of events they need to follow, they have the opportunity to ask questions, become familiar with what is expected of them, learn how to handle their feelings about transition activities, and generally become better prepared for what is to come.

A child may or may not have difficulty transitioning to school. The first day of school a child may cry or behave in other ways that show he/she is upset about leaving home. This is very normal behavior for a young child. Keeping a child home is only postponing – and encouraging – similar behavior.

Sometimes a child reacts to the way a parent/guardian(s) feels about him/her going to school. If a child is encouraged to feel confident about his/her abilities to handle this new experience, that confidence will continue to grow. If a parent/guardian(s) feels uncomfortable, a child may act in a similar fashion. Children handle new experiences on an individual basis just as adults do, so allow some time to adjust to the new routine.

### ATTENDANCE

Please notify the child's teacher or family service worker if he/she will not be attending school for any reason. If the child receives transportation, please call the transportation line at 781-356-4644 ext. 105. Head Start policy requires us to check with the parent/guardian(s) when a child is not in school for three consecutive days.

### WHAT TO WEAR

The Head Start program provides a fun filled experience for children in which "hands on" activities take place each day. If a child becomes totally involved in an activity such as painting, pasting, cooking, etc. the appearance of his/her clothing sometimes tells the fun he/she has had. Clothing may become stained. We will try to protect the children's clothing by using aprons when we know a "messy activity" will take place. We do keep some extra clothing on hand for emergencies, but we do ask that a complete set of extra clothing be provided.

Please label all clothing. If a child's name is written on these items, it will help us in preventing loss of clothing. Reminder: Head Start is not responsible for any lost belongings that are sent in.

We plan to take the children outside each day unless the weather is stormy, so please dress your child according to the weather. Sneakers, not sandals, are expected to be worn for the safety of the child. Please - no open toed shoes



## **REST TIME**

Children who attend school on a full-day basis will be given a rest period each day. EEC states that children in care for more than four hours must be provided time for extended rest or sleep. The length of this period of time shall be appropriate to the needs of the children, but in no case shall it be less than 45 minutes. Children will be allowed the amount of rest, quiet activity, or sleep that they need according to the EEC regulation (7.24(5)(b)). Each child will have his/her own mat. Any child who is not asleep can play quietly, away from the sleeping children. Blankets are provided and washed routinely.

For your child's safety, your infant should only be placed on his/her back to sleep.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

In conjunction with our classroom lesson plans, we may occasionally arrange field trips. These may include trips to the local police stations, fire stations, playgrounds, etc. Family members are always welcome to join us on these trips. Permission for field trips to areas within walking distance of the classroom is requested at the time that the enrollment packet is completed. Parent/guardian(s) will be asked to sign a permission slip for each trip that requires bus transportation to and from the classroom. Parent/guardian(s) will be informed prior to each trip of the destination, date, and time.

## **CHILDREN'S RECORDS AND CONFIDENTIALITY**

An individual file is kept for each child in a locked file cabinet at the classroom site. These records are confidential and are accessible to authorized staff and the parent/guardian(s) of each individual child. QCAP Head Start shall not distribute or release information in a child's record to anyone not directly related to implementing the planning or funding for the child without the written consent of the child's parent/guardian(s). In no event shall such access be delayed more than two business days after the initial written request. QCAP Head Start has procedures governing access to, duplication of, and distribution of such information; and shall maintain a permanent, written log in each child's record indicating any time a child's record has been released.

1. Parent/guardian(s) can make an appointment to review his/her child's record with a 48 hour written notice to the Family Service Coordinator or Head Start Program Director.
2. Parent/guardian(s) have the right to add information, comments, data or any other relevant materials to his/her child's record. Such requests will be made in accordance with the procedures described below.
3. Parent/guardian(s) have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in their child's record. If the parent/guardian(s)/guardian believes that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the child's record, he/she has the right to request a conference with the Program Director.
4. QCAP Head Start will not charge a fee for copies of information contained in the child's record.
5. Upon written request of the parent/guardian(s), QCAP Head Start will transfer the child's record to the parent/guardian(s) or any other person the parent/guardian(s) identifies, if the child is no longer attending the program.

## **AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EARLY EDUCATION AND CARE (EEC)**

Upon an authorized request from EEC, QCAP Head Start will make available to EEC any information required to be kept and maintained under these regulations and any other information reasonably related to the requirements of these regulations.

## CHILD INFORMATION CONTACT SHEET

At the time of enrollment, annually, and as changes occur, all families are asked to provide the names and daytime phone numbers of at least three people who can pick up the child. Picture identification will be required from all contacts at the time of pick up. This policy is for the protection of each child.

If any changes need to be made to the contact sheet, the FSW and/or teacher must be immediately informed. Changes may include the following:

1. **Legal/physical custody**
2. **Change in contact person**
3. **Change in address and/or phone numbers – home, work or school**

It is extremely important that we have work, home and cell phone numbers in case of an emergency and it is imperative that we know as soon as possible if these change.

Children are only released to authorized parent/guardian(s) or person(s) authorized in writing by the enrolling parent/guardian(s) to pick up the child. More complex cases will be discussed on an individual basis.

In case of an emergency, a signed and dated note may be given to the bus driver in the morning or to the child's teacher at drop off. At this time, the contact sheet can be updated. **The person picking up the child from the classroom or bus stop must have a picture I.D.**



## EDUCATION

Head Start/Early Head Start strives to enable all children to reach their maximum potential. Each child receives a variety of developmentally appropriate, individualized learning experiences to encourage growth and success in the skill areas of language and literacy, early numeracy (math), large and small muscle development, self-help as well as social/emotional and physical health. We recognize parent/guardian(s) and family members as the child's first and primary teacher. QCAP Head Start strongly encourages family input in the many activities that contribute to children's success in our program, such as participating in home visits, completing home activities, volunteering for parent/guardian(s) committee meetings, attending EHS Discovery Days, parent/guardian(s)-teachers conferences, and participating in ongoing communication.

The curriculum builds upon children and families' strengths, interests and individual needs and is intended to stimulate learning across all areas of development. Curriculum plans can be provided upon request. Volunteers are always welcomed on the Curriculum Committee.

## APPROACH TO CURRICULUM

We use the acronym **GERMSS** as a roadmap to outline QCAP Head Start's curriculum plan.

- **Goals** for children's learning and development - what do we want children to achieve this year?
- **Experiences** through which children will achieve these goals - what learning experiences will we offer them?
- The **Role** of families, teaching teams, the Family Resource Specialist, and other program staff in helping children achieve these goals - what are our individual and shared responsibilities as a team to help children achieve these goals?
- **Materials** needed to support the implementation of the curriculum - what furniture, equipment, and supplies are appropriate for the ages and stages of children's development?
- **Sound Child Development Principles** that guide the ways in which we work with children - how will we apply universal patterns of growth and development?
- **Standards:** making certain that the curricula is consistent with all of the **Head Start Performance Standards** -encourages children's education and development (including health, dental, mental health and nutritional development)?

In addition to many other curriculum resources, QCAP Head Start uses the Massachusetts *Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences*.

- ❑ All young children are capable of learning.
- ❑ Children show individual differences in development.
- ❑ Knowledge of child growth and development is essential for program development and implementation.
- ❑ Children's language skills are the best predictors of academic success.
- ❑ Developmental domains are highly interrelated.
- ❑ Young children learn by doing.
- ❑ Families are the primary caregivers and educators of their young children.



## AT QCAP HEAD START CHILDREN

- **Plan:** children consider what they are going to do with their materials and how they are going to do it.
- **Play:** children use materials and equipment in ways that best suit their personal curiosity and understanding.
- **Reflect:** children recall things that happened to them, reinforcing or questioning their understandings.
- **Revisit:** children practice skills and replay experiences in many different ways, with each activity refining or modifying previous learning.
- **Connect:** children, with the help of staff, connect new knowledge with past experiences, creating links among subject areas and areas of skill development.

### **APPROACH TO HOLIDAYS, BIRTHDAYS AND GIFTS**

QCAP Head Start's diverse families help us to recognize, understand, and appreciate a variety of customs and traditions. Children and families are encouraged to discuss and share their traditions, which may be celebrated in the classroom through music, colors, literature, games, shapes and clothing. Teaching teams and the Family Resource Specialist will not initiate specific holiday activities but are responsive to the traditions celebrated by the children and families. Religious symbols will not be displayed in the Head Start educational setting; i.e. classrooms or Discovery Day. Holidays are not the primary focus of the curriculum. This is stated in the Head Start Performance Standards. For further details regarding holiday procedures, please see QCAP Head Start's Curriculum Plan available to you at each site.

At Head Start we recognize that a birthday is a family celebration. On a child's birthday he/she will be recognized with activities such as being line leader or having a hat decorated with stickers of his/her choice. No food, including cake, will be allowed in the classroom due to Federal and State regulations that prohibit these practices. Additionally, we do not allow gift exchange in the classroom.

Many strong relationships develop at Head Start between children, families and staff. These relationships mean so much and sometimes families want to show gratitude to our staff. QCAP policy across the agency does not allow staff to accept any gifts from clients. Please refrain from giving gifts.



### **APPROACH TO MULTICULTURAL AND ANTI BIAS CURRICULUM**

QCAP Head Start/Early Head Start recognizes and values children's cultural differences. Culture and family is at the core of each child's social and emotional development. The teaching teams are aware and respectful of the role of the family in defining each child as an individual. Head Start encourages family input, including ideas about nutritional experiences, music, art, style and dress, which enhance our multicultural curriculum.

The cultural groups represented in our classrooms are the primary sources for planning a culturally relevant program. The teaching teams attend in-service trainings and workshops as well as use the information obtained from home visits to better understand the cultural influences that are interwoven in all aspects of a child's life. When the teaching team understands each child's home culture, the neighborhood communities and the mainstream culture, they can build a more accurate and detailed picture of who each child is and how they relate to others.

Children become aware of differences by being introduced to a variety of cultures, languages, customs, dress, styles, and foods. The teaching team accepts and values the cultural differences of the children and families and works toward helping children to accept and respect everyone's unique heritage and gender equality.

## **PREGNANT WOMEN**

The Family Resource Specialist (FRS) or Family Service Worker (FSW) will make home visits throughout pregnancy according to a schedule established by an expectant mother and the home visitor. A limited number of visits will be provided post delivery. The FRS or FSW will work closely with the family to build a strong trusting relationship by respecting the family's culture and values and by listening to the family in order to identify the family's goals, strengths, and needed services. The newborn is eligible for participation in the EHS home based option. Once the child is 15 mos., he/she may continue with enrollment in the home-based option or may be eligible for the center-based option until the age of 3. The curriculum for Pre-Natal and Home-Based children under one year of age is *Partners for a Healthy Baby*, and *Helping Babies Learn*.

This curriculum is based on sound child development theories about how children develop and learn. It acknowledges the importance of establishing a partnership with parent/guardian(s) and involving them in meaningful ways. It recognizes that culture and family are at the core of children's social and emotional development.

EHS socializations in the Home-Based option lend support by strengthening the relationship between the parent/guardian(s) and child. Many appreciate the opportunity of being with other parent/guardian(s) where they can safely share the joys and challenges of caring for infants and toddlers. They gain support, enhance their knowledge, and develop friendships.

## **CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

### **SCREENING/ASSESSMENT/REFERRAL PROCESS**

A developmental assessment is completed on each child within 45 calendar days of their entry into the program and annually thereafter. Parent/guardian(s) are invited to attend participate in screening, if they cannot they will receive the results in writing. The Children's Services Coordinator will work with parent/guardian(s) and staff who have concerns about a child's educational/behavioral abilities. If necessary, a meeting will be held with staff and parent/guardian(s) to discuss options for an outside referral. In the event further interventions are needed, the QCAP Head Start staff will follow the required pre-referral process. Additional information will be collected through observations and assessments and a meeting will be held with the family. In the event the family does not want to pursue the referral, parent/guardian(s) will be asked to sign a Refusal of Services. (See Disabilities Plan)

Children's vision and hearing are also evaluated if they have not been done at the child's annual physical. Parent/guardian(s) are invited to participate and when they can not they are notified about the results of their child's screening in writing. The Health Coordinator will contact the parent/guardian(s) if further evaluation is deemed necessary. (See Health Care Policy and Disabilities Plan)

QCAP Head Start/Early Head Start has chosen the High/Scope Child Observation Record (COR) as our formal method of assessment. The teaching team will observe and record children's development using anecdotal observations that are collected on an ongoing basis throughout the child's enrollment. Through ongoing observation and documentation, a picture develops of each child's skills and performance in several areas. Family reports are shared at least twice a year.

For more information regarding the Child Observation Record, please refer to the Parent's Guide for the COR and/or request a copy of the Curriculum Plan.

## **APPROACH TO CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Children with special needs thrive in an environment that is accepting of differences. Teaching teams and the Family Resource Specialist (FRS) include children with identified special needs in the program by helping them live, learn, play, and socialize in an inclusive setting with typically developing children. We collaborate with families, specialists, and staff members to adapt the curriculum, environment and daily routines to meet the individual needs of all children.

Planning for children with special needs requires careful thought, the assistance of the Children's Services Coordinator, and other specialists. Teaching teams and the FRS recognize children's learning styles, likes, dislikes, and how their specific needs may affect their ability to learn and participate in activities. Effective child development practices serve all children equally.

In an effort to provide individualized services for children with disabilities or children that may exhibit behavioral issues and to provide support, direction, and guidance to Head Start staff, consultants are available, including an in-house behavioral consultant. These consultants will make recommendations to staff and families, observe children in the classroom and/or at Discovery Day, do home visits and provide workshops and training.

For more information, please request a Disabilities Plan.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**



Family involvement is the cornerstone of the program. Head Start believes that parent/guardian(s) is the most important influence on children's development. We encourage Head Start families to partner with us to decide what kinds of learning experiences to offer to children. Our Head Start program needs many people to work together, sharing talents, knowledge and energy. Head Start's greatest strength is its families. QCAP Head Start encourages family members to become involved in all aspects of the program. They may participate in the classroom and other program activities. Parent/guardian(s) contribute to Head Start by direct involvement in decision-making. One vital way families provide a leadership role in the program is to serve on the Head Start Policy Council. (For more information see the Policy Council Section)

## **HEAD START FAMILY SERVICES**

The primary role of Family Services at Head Start is to provide support to families. Staff will develop Family Partnership Agreements to help support a family's chosen goals regarding such topics as employment, housing and financial awareness/education. The family services staff will provide information about community resources such as doctors, dentists, WIC, food stamps, fuel assistance, financial management, and housing subsidies. During the year, various workshops are offered to staff and parent/guardian(s) such as basic first aid and CPR, nutrition, parenting skills, information about child development, employment skills such as resume writing and job search techniques, financial literacy education, and other topics that families request. Family Services staff works closely with families to make reading and learning fun outside of the classroom as well as in the home.

**Parent/guardian(s)/Guardian Visits-**QCAP Head Start maintains an "open door policy" and encourages and permits unannounced visits by parent/guardian(s) to the child's classroom whenever the child is present.

**Parent/guardian(s)/Guardian Input-**QCAP Head Start encourages parent/guardian input in the development of program policy and center operations.

**Family Reports-**QCAP Head Start will provide families with a written progress report twice a year (four times for children with special needs) for each child who participates in the program. QCAP Head Start staff will bring concerns or significant developments to the parent/guardian(s) attention as soon as they arise.

**Parent/guardian(s) Conferences-**Head Start staff is always available to set up individual conferences at the request of the parent/guardian(s).

## **HOME VISITS**

Children learn best when there is a strong partnership between home and school. Home visits are a requirement of the Head Start program and a time for families to meet with Head Start/Early Head Start staff to help the program support families' interests and needs. Often times, parent/guardian(s) are very surprised at how happy children are to see teachers and family service workers visiting the home. Head Start works with the entire family and not just the child in the program so home visits are scheduled to best individualize for the family.

Home visits are valuable in building relationships with parent/guardian(s), encouraging family participation in the program, and making connections between the home-school settings. We strive to develop positive relationships between parent/guardian(s) and staff, by learning more about family's individual strengths.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Parent/guardian(s) are always welcome to volunteer in the classroom and with permission, extended family members and significant others may volunteer, as well. Volunteers are necessary for Head Start to be successful. Children love having family members in the classroom. To volunteer, please contact your child's teachers. The staff will help you find a volunteer job that meets your needs and interests. Volunteers always work along with classroom staff. If interested please see the Education Specialist at your site.

The time that volunteers give to the classroom and its projects is counted as parent/guardian(s) involvement and is called an "IN-KIND DONATION". We require documentation of this service and have a form that we will ask you to fill out for our records.

In addition to parent/guardian(s)s, volunteers may also be college or high school students, foster grandparent/guardian(s), mentors, etc. who use Head Start to gain experience in working with young children. The more volunteers there are assigned to a classroom, the more individual help we will be able to give each child.

QCAP Head Start recognizes the importance of positive male influences in the lives of children and welcomes participation from fathers, uncles, grandfathers or other men who have an important relationship in the life of a child. Opportunities such as parent/guardian(s) meetings and our Good Guys men's program are also available. Head Start strives to support men and women to play an active role and to take advantage of education and leadership opportunities throughout the program.

## **FAMILY PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP**

### **THE ROLE OF THE POLICY COUNCIL**

Head Start/Early Head Start programs are designed to have a formal structure of Program Governance that provides parent/guardian(s) and community representatives with the authority and the opportunity to participate in shared decision-making concerning program design and implementation.

Parent/guardian(s) must hold at least 51% of the seats, with the remaining seats filled by community representatives. The Policy Council is responsible for overseeing program planning, including approving goals and objectives for the program. Members of the Policy Council are involved in reviewing the budget, Head Start policies, interviewing and approving new Head Start staff, participating in the program Self Assessment and reviewing the selection criteria for enrollment into the Head Start program. The Policy Council elects a chairperson who conducts the meetings and is also a member of the QCAP Board of Directors.

Parent/guardian(s) from each preschool classroom elect a representative and one alternate to represent them at policy meetings. Early Head Start Center-Based classrooms elect one representative and one alternate to represent each set of two classrooms. One representative and one alternate are elected by Early Head Start Home-Based families. Elections for new representatives are held annually in October. Policy Council meetings take place at a day and time set by the members, which is usually one evening a month. Minutes of the Policy Council Meetings are available to each family.

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) MEETINGS**

Monthly parent/guardian(s) meetings are held at each site. Head Start/Early Head Start staff facilitate the meetings and families bring to these meetings knowledge of their own children and the needs of their families. Topics include issues concerning raising children, home visits, parent/guardian(s) activities, the community, or any other topic that is of interest to the families.

At the beginning of each meeting parent/guardian(s) have an opportunity to ask their Policy Council representative/alternate to bring issues to the Policy Council on their behalf. Representatives also report issues discussed at Policy Council meetings. We appreciate input and participation in order to help our program grow.

### **GOALS OF THE MONTHLY PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) MEETING**

1. To make all families feel welcome, creating an environment in which people feel comfortable sharing ideas.
2. To work cooperatively with families and staff in planning socialization, family activities, and other program functions.
3. To recruit volunteers to assist in classroom activities.
4. To suggest changes and improvements that may be helpful to a child's experience in the program and to improve the quality of services to children and families.
5. To provide support and assistance to its elected Policy Council representatives as well as receive information.
6. To work to improve the local community or to improve programs which impact low-income people.
7. To support parent/guardian(s) activities that focus on adult learning experiences such as: family reading projects, ESOL workshops, budgeting, job training, etc.

## THE ROLE OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN(S)

Every Head Start/Early Head Start program must have effective parent/guardian(s) participation. There are at least four major kinds of family participation in the program.

1. Participation in the process of making decisions about the philosophy and planning of the program.
2. Participation in the classroom as a volunteer.
3. Participation in parent/guardian(s) activities that they have helped to develop.
4. Work collaboratively with staff towards goals that support the best interests of children



## HEALTH COMPONENT

It is the goal of the health component to link families to an ongoing health/oral health care system, and to assure that families receive comprehensive health services that help children develop and realize their full potential. A complete copy of the QCAP Head Start Health Care Policy is available. Please contact the health office at (617) 479-8181 x357 or x359 for a complete policy. The Health Care Policy is available at each site and can be used as a reference. The following policies will help explain how our program handles practical health issues.

### HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Head Start Health Advisory Committee consists of health professionals as well as Head Start/Early Head Start staff and families of Head Start children. The Committee assists and advises in the planning, operation, and evaluation of the program in order to provide the best possible services to Head Start children and their families. The Health Advisory Committee reviews and develops all health care policies.

**Physical** - Children must be up to date on their scheduled immunizations before they enter Head Start. For more information on scheduled immunization, see table below. **It is a state requirement** that each child have a complete physical within one year prior to enrollment in Head Start. If a child's physical expires during the year at Head Start, an updated one must be provided immediately or the child may not be able to attend. As part of the physical exam, children must be screened for lead poisoning, anemia, vision and hearing, and blood pressure for children 3 years and older. **A Tuberculosis (TB) Risk Assessment is needed. If a child has been determined to be at low risk for tuberculosis, the assessment will need to be updated yearly and documentation will need to be provided for a child to continue in the program.**

**VACCINATION SCHEDULE**

<b>Vaccine</b>	<b>Toddlers</b>	<b>Preschool</b>	<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>Grade 7-12</b>	<b>College</b>
<b>Hepatitis B</b>	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	-----	-----
<b>DTaP/DT/ Td</b>	>4 doses DTP	>4 doses DTP	5 doses DTP	>4 doses DTP or >3 doses Td 1 Td booster given in grades 10-12	11 Td booster within last 10 years
<b>Polio</b>	> 3 doses	>3 doses	4 doses	>3 doses	_____
<b>Hib</b>	4 doses	4 doses	_____	_____	_____
<b>MMR</b>	1 dose	1 dose	2 doses measles 1 dose mumps 1 dose rubella	2 doses measles 1 dose mumps 1 dose rubella	2 doses measles 1 dose mumps 1 dose rubella
<b>Varicella</b>	1 dose		1 dose	1 dose	

Additional vaccines may be recommended during the year. If a family plans to travel to a foreign country they should inform their physician, since additional vaccines may be recommended for people traveling outside of the U.S.

**Dental Exam** - Tooth decay is the number one dental problem among preschoolers, but it can be prevented. Starting children with good dental habits at an early age will help them grow up with healthy smiles. **Each child must have a dental exam**, which includes: cleaning, and fluoride treatment. Follow up treatment must be completed if deemed necessary by a dentist. Please send us documentation after each visit. If you need assistance locating a dentist, please speak with your Family Service Worker or call the Health Office at 617-479-8181 ext 357 or 359.

## UNIVERSAL (INFECTION CONTROL) PRECAUTIONS

Infection control practices help reduce the spread of illnesses caused by germs. Universal precautions means using the same infection control practices such as hand washing, using gloves, cleaning and disinfecting when dealing with blood or body fluids at all times. A self-made bleach solution that is stored out of the reach of children is used for cleaning and disinfecting.

It isn't enough to take precautions only when someone looks sick. People can carry and spread infections when they appear sick and when they appear healthy. Many infections are contagious in the day or two before symptoms appear. People can carry infections without any symptoms for a long time.

### **HANDWASHING**

This is the most important infection control measure. Staff, children and families should wash their hands:

#### **BEFORE AND AFTER**

**Eating or handling food**  
**Taking or giving medication**  
**Providing First Aid**  
**Sensory activities-such as sand and water activities, play dough, etc.**

#### **AFTER**

**Toileting or diapering**  
**Coming into contact with bodily fluids and discharges (including wiping noses)**  
**Playing outdoors**  
**Handling animals or their equipment**  
**Cleaning**

## PLAN FOR RECOGNIZING AND MANAGING COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Head Start/Early Head Start staff cannot diagnose or prescribe treatment for illness. This is a Health Care provider's role. We cannot provide total care for sick children. If a child is sick, we ask that the child remain at home until he/she is well. Some illnesses require a physician's note; please see the Illness Exclusion Policy on page 32.

The role of the Head Start staff is to:

- Work with health professionals to develop health policies, staff training, and information for caregivers.
- Observe children for signs of illness.
- Provide a comfortable setting for a sick child until the parent/guardian(s) arrives.
- Document signs and symptoms, as well as actions taken.
- Minimize the spread of disease to other children and staff.
- Notify and discuss with parent/guardian(s) their child's condition, whether he/she is too sick to attend, the need for medical evaluation and treatment.

### **EXERCISE**

Children need exercise and rest. Children must participate in 60 minutes of planned gross motor physical activity per day, utilizing both their large and small muscles in both indoor and outdoor activities, weather permitting. Games and outdoor play are fun ways to maintain a healthy body. Outdoor play also gives the benefits of sunshine and fresh air.

## NUTRITION COMPONENT

Head Start/Early Head Start provides and promotes nutritious eating and healthy habits to the children in our care laying the groundwork for a lifetime of healthy eating. A child's nutritional state determines in part the ability of the child to learn, grow and develop socially and emotionally. Parent/guardian(s), Head Start staff, and community agencies, such as WIC, work together to make sure that children learn good eating habits that will support growth and long-term well-being.

Each family is asked to fill out a nutrition assessment when a child is enrolled. This gives an opportunity to share family's eating patterns, how the child eats, what religious, cultural or personal food preferences a family has, and any nutrition related problems determined by the doctor or health professional; such as anemia or obesity. It is very important that we are informed about any food allergies or sensitivities that have been documented by the health care provider. The program nutritionist reviews the nutrition assessment and creates an Individual Nutrition Plan for a child if necessary. A note from the health provider is necessary if foods are to be eliminated from a child's diet for medical reasons. Every child's height and weight will also be charted to complete the nutrition assessment. The nutrition assessment for expectant families is obtained from the WIC program by community partnership agreement.

All children receive breakfast and lunch while at Head Start. Children who stay all day also receive an afternoon snack. Families enrolled in the Home Based Program enjoy a snack as part of Discovery Day. There is a comfortable area for breastfeeding or bottle-feeding at the infant/toddler location. All food served follows a meal pattern that ensures a child's daily nutritional needs are met. Menus are planned to include a wide variety of healthy foods and take into consideration cultural preferences. All foods served at Head Start must be high in nutrients and low in sugar, fat and salt. Breakfast and snacks are made on site. Hot lunches are provided by the local public school system.

Plenty of time is allowed for meals at Head Start. Staff sits with the children and eats the same foods. Children are never forced to eat and food is not used as a punishment or reward. Children also learn about healthy food choices by hearing stories about food, setting the table, cleaning up, classroom food and nutrition activities, and being encouraged to try small amounts of unfamiliar foods.

Head Start/Early Head Start needs parent/guardian(s) in all areas and nutrition is no exception. Parent/guardian(s) can help plan menus, help in the classroom with food activities, serve as a volunteer or substitute for food service or help in the program review. Head Start provides parent/guardian(s) with information about food preparation, shopping tips and community food and nutrition resources. Parent/guardian(s) share recipes and shopping tips at family meetings. QCAP Head Start receives funding from the USDA and all meals served are in compliance with federal requirements. In accordance with federal law and the U. S. Department of Agriculture policy, QCAP Head Start is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call 800-795-3272 or 202-720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Here are a few suggestions to remember when feeding young children.

- Buy, prepare and serve plenty of healthy, unprocessed fruits, vegetables and grains.
- Be calm and relaxed at mealtime.
- Introduce new foods by offering a small amount. Be patient if a child doesn't want to eat a new food the first time, offer it again later.
- Eat healthy foods – a child learns by example.
- Enjoy meals as a family.

## TRANSPORTATION



1. **PARENT/GUARDIAN(S) MUST MEET THE BUS AT PICKUP AND DROP OFF.**  
The child must be walked to and from the bus. The bus aide will be waiting at the door of the bus and will help the child on and off the bus. The bus aide must remain on the bus at all times. A child can not be unattended on the sidewalk. A child can only be released to people listed on the contact sheet. Head Start transportation staff will not release any child to anyone who is under 12 years of age. Please be outside 5 minutes before the scheduled pickup and drop off time.
2. **NO CHILD CAN BE DROPPED OFF AT ANOTHER BUS STOP WITHOUT A WRITTEN NOTE FROM THEIR PARENT/GUARDIAN(S).** The note must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian(s) and given to the bus driver. The child cannot be brought to another bus stop that is not on a regular route.
3. **IF FOR ANY REASON THERE IS NO ONE AT THE BUS STOP** the child will be brought back to the Eldridge Center in Braintree. Toddlers will be returned to their school. It will then become the responsibility of the parent/guardian(s) to pick up the child. Please refer to the pick up policy.
4. **IF A CHILD IS RETURNED 3 times**, a meeting may be held with the parent/guardian(s), the bus staff and the Family Services Coordinator to determine what steps need to be taken to correct the situation. Loss of transportation privileges may occur and it will become the responsibility of the parent/guardian(s) to transport the child to and from school.
5. **IF A CHILD IS SICK**, do not send him/her to school. If a child appears to be sick, the bus driver can refuse to transport him/her to school.

*If a child was absent from school, bus service will not resume until the bus staff is notified that the child is ready to return. Call 781-356-4644 extension 105 and leave a message for the bus staff.*

6. We work together as a team to ensure the safety of all children on the bus.

**FOR SAFETY REASONS:  
NO TOYS, POCKETBOOKS, BACKPACKS, STUFFED ANIMALS,  
BLANKETS, FOOD ETC. WILL BE ALLOWED ON THE BUS!**



## ATTENDANCE

Head Start policy requires us to check with the parent/guardian(s) when a child is not in school for three consecutive days. Please notify the child's teacher or FSW if he/she will not be attending school for any reason. If the child receives transportation, please call the bus staff at 781-356-4644 ext. 105 before pick up time.



## INCLEMENT WEATHER

As we all know, the New England weather can be very unpredictable. With this in mind, it may be impossible for transportation staff to be on time due to inclement weather such as snow, etc. Please be patient and dress warmly while waiting for the bus. If we need to close early due to weather, parent/guardian(s) will receive a phone call at home or at work. If conditions warrant, the program may cancel transportation but not classes. In such a case, the parent/guardian(s) is responsible for the child's transportation to and from the program. **It is very important that contact sheets are complete and updated.**

## CONTINGENCY PLAN FOR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS

In the case of fire, natural disaster, or situations (chemical spills, bomb threats) necessitating evacuation of the building: children will be evacuated to a site-specific "safe" location within walking distance. A Head Start staff member will notify the main office at (617) 479-8181 x355. Parent/guardian(s) will be notified by phone that the decision has been made to evacuate the site.

In the case of power outage, loss of heat, or loss of water, a determination will be made by the Program Director about whether it is safe to keep the center open taking into consideration EEC and Health Department regulations. If necessary, parent/guardian(s) will be notified and children will be transported in Head Start buses to another Head Start site, returned home or asked to be picked up.

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION PROCEDURE

- EVACUATION PLANS ARE POSTED IN EACH CLASSROOM.
- Daily attendance is recorded immediately as children arrive and leave.
- Lead Teacher leads the children out of the building, ensuring all children are accounted for.
- Staff bring attendance sheet, First Aid Kit, Emergency Contact/Consent forms and Evacuation Plan.
- Staff and children proceed to designated area.
- Staff will notify the Program Director as soon as possible.
- A staff person will assist any child with a physical disability.



<b>EMERGENCY EVACUATION SAFE SITE LOCATIONS</b>
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**BRAINTREE HIGH SCHOOL**

In the parking lot across from the main entrance to the High School.

**ELDRIDGE CENTER**

The field directly behind the building or if directed by other authorities (such as police or fire department) to the field at the end of Liberty Street and Commercial Street.

**GERMANTOWN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER**

The grassy area behind the Manet Health Center.

**GOULD HALL**

The playground across the street.

**WEYMOUTH BASE CENTER**

The end of Pidgeon Road in the clearing by the QCAP Head Start sign.

**Additional information regarding Emergency Contingency Plans  
are posted in each classroom.**

## QCAP HEAD START POLICIES/PROCEDURES

### TOILETING AND DIAPERING

This plan was developed by the Department of Public Health and the Department of Early Education and Care, and is adhered by QCAP Head Start.

#### A. DIAPERING PROCEDURES

1. Diapers shall be changed regularly when soiled or wet.
2. Children shall be washed and dried with individual washing materials, such as single-use disposable washcloth, during each diaper change.
3. Children's hands shall be washed thoroughly with soap and running water after the child has been changed. Staff members shall wash their hands thoroughly with soap and running water after changing each child. Individual towels shall be used to dry hands.
4. The changing table or diapering surface shall be used for no other purpose.
5. The changing surface shall be cushioned, intact (no cracks or tears) and impervious to water (water proof).
6. A disposable covering shall be used on the changing surface.
  - The covering shall be large enough to adequately cover the surface.
  - The disposable covering shall be changed after each use.
  - The changing surface shall be washed with soap and water and sprayed with a commercial disinfectant spray.
7. Running water shall be adjacent to the diapering area for hand washing.
8. Diapering and food preparation and service areas shall be separate.
9. Clothing or cloth diapers soiled by feces, urine, vomit, or blood shall be "double-bagged" in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items. Soiled disposable diapers must be placed in a waterproof container with a tight-fitting cover and a disposable plastic liner. The container must be emptied, washed and sanitized at least daily. Teachers/FRS ensures that all soiled clothing is sent home daily.
10. A change of clothing shall be available for each child. Extra center-owned clothing shall be available for changing purposes in addition to clothing brought from home by each child. Center owned clothing must be laundered after being worn by a child.



#### B. TOILET TRAINING PROCEDURES

1. Children must be toilet trained in accordance with the requests of their parent/guardian(s) and in a manner that is consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities.
2. ***No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting or not using the toilet. Toilet training shall not be coerced.***
3. Children shall be supervised during toileting. An adult shall be present for supervision and/or assistance by the doorway of the bathroom.
4. Children shall wash their hands with soap and running water after toileting. Staff members will also wash their hands with soap and running water after assisting children with toileting or toileting themselves. Individual towels shall be used to dry hands.
5. Clothing or cloth diapers soiled by feces, urine, vomits or blood shall be "double bagged" in sealed plastic bags and stored apart from other items. (This is a practical interpretation of the covered, waterproof container required by the Department of Early Education and Care). Soiled, disposable diapers must be placed in a waterproof container with a tight-fitting cover and a disposable plastic liner. The container must be emptied, washed and sanitized at least daily. A change of clothing will be available for each child from either the extra clothing or center owned clothing. Please launder and return all clothes, except underwear.

## CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

*“Discipline is the slow, bit by bit, time consuming task of helping children see the sense of acting in a certain way.” – James Hymes*

### **CHILD GUIDANCE PHILOSOPHY**

Helping children develop self-control is an enormous challenge and responsibility. Positive relationships between adults and children are key to a child’s healthy social and emotional development. Effective child guidance practices help children to form strong relationships with others. Staff’s understanding of each child’s individual strengths, interests, and needs, in partnership with effective classroom management techniques, helps guide each child toward self-knowledge and the beginning of self-control. For additional information on this topic, please refer to the Child Guidance Policy located at each center.

### **POSITIVE CHILD GUIDANCE**

EEC licensed programs may not use child guidance techniques that use any form of punitive punishment or physical restraint.

- Punitive punishment is spanking or use of other physical forms of abuse: subjecting children to cruel or severe punishment such as humiliation, verbal abuse, neglect; depriving children of meals or snacks; force feeding children; and disciplining a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet; or forcing a child to remain in soiled clothing or forcing a child to remain on the toilet, or using any other unusual or excessive practices for toileting and other practices used to motivate the child to become more compliant with the caretaker’s authority and demands.
- Physical restraint involves the use of physical force on the child’s person by a caretaker. This is done to control the child’s movements and/or actions in order to motivate the child to become more compliant with the caretaker’s authority and demands.

Dealing with children who act out in disruptive ways that place them in imminent harm or endanger others requires a great deal of skill and tact from the teacher/FRS. The teacher/FRS must always consider the immediate safety of all the children in the program when responding to situations. Teachers and the FRS may only supportively hold a child in rare cases of an emergency situation where a dangerous threat to a child exists. The teacher/FRS may only hold the child long enough to remove him/her from the dangerous situation and when appropriate, return him/her to safety.

#### **Supportive holding of children should be considered only in the following situations:**

- The child’s safety is at risk;
- The safety of other children or adults is at risk;
- The child must be moved in order to be safely supervised;
- The child demonstrates a sustained behavior that is highly disruptive and/or upsetting to other children necessitating moving the child.

#### **Supportive hold should not be implemented unless:**

- The safety of the child and others demands immediate intervention; or,
- All other possible interventions have been attempted prior to supportive holding; and,
- The supportive hold should only be sustained long enough to remove a child from an unsafe environment or keep him/her from hurting self or others.

Touch is key in children’s development, so it does not make sense to adopt a “no-touch” policy when children are hurting – or intending to hurt – other children, adults, themselves, or damage the things around them. When children behave in dangerous or destructive ways, teachers/FRS should physically intervene in a calm, nurturing manner that is responsive to the specific situation and the child’s developing abilities and capacity to understand. It may take the form of hugs, taking a child by the hand;

picking up a child and moving the child to a safe area; and holding a child on one's lap – familiar ways of touching that acknowledge and affirm the child while interrupting their behavior. Teachers/FRS must proceed with the awareness that touch may not be welcomed by a child.

Occasionally, children may not be able to regain control of their behavior in spite of the teacher's/FRS' best efforts. The provider should seek help for these instances. These are situations which may result in one of the following:

- The child's behavior is so intense that it is likely the child will be isolated by the other children if it continues.
- There is a serious possibility of harm to the child, the other children, or staff and it has become extremely difficult for this child or other children to learn and grow in the program.
- The child's behavior consumes so much of the provider's time and energy that the provider has considered asking parent/guardian(s) to remove the child from the program.

In the event that a child is unable to regain control of their actions with supportive intervention and guidance from the teacher/FRS, the parent/guardian(s) will be asked to assist in the classroom or at Discovery Day in order to help the child to have a positive experience while at Head Start. On occasion, parent/guardian(s) may be asked to pick up the child for the remainder of the day.

Adapted From the EEC Child Guidance Policy - EEC Technical Assistance 8/26/2002

For a complete reading of the EEC Child Guidance Policy, please go to

[http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/forms\\_techasst/technical\\_assistance/child\\_guidance\\_gcc.pdf](http://www.eec.state.ma.us/docs1/forms_techasst/technical_assistance/child_guidance_gcc.pdf)

## **TERMINATION POLICY**

No family with an outstanding fee will be allowed to re-enroll their child in the program for a new fiscal year unless the balance is paid in full. Families who are applying for a continuation of their daycare vouchers to extend their child's placement at Head Start/Early Head Start must also have paid their fees in full.

Staff will consult with families whenever there are concerns about a child's ability to function appropriately in the classroom. While the program strives to individualize curriculum and develop approaches to learning that meet the needs of individual children, children must be able to maintain themselves safely in the classroom without posing a safety risk to other children or program staff and without disrupting the operation of the classroom. In this event, families will be given written observations about staff concerns and will be asked to meet with Head Start/Early Head Start staff and program consultants if applicable, to develop a strategy and a timeline for an intervention. In some instances we may recommend a referral for further assessment by a specialist. Children are most able to succeed when parent/guardian(s) and staff communicate openly, support one another based on mutual trust and respect, and work cooperatively to develop consistent plans that can be followed at home and at school.

In the event of any situation designated as an emergency, the Program Director may order an immediate termination of a child's enrollment in order to protect the safety of other children and/or staff. Whenever possible, reasonable efforts will be made to ensure that the parent/guardian(s) has support and resources to provide another placement for the child if the program terminates a child's placement. The child's teaching team will lead discussions and plan activities to provide closure and a positive classroom experience around the child's termination from the program, i.e.: good-bye stories/books, good-bye cards, pictures, good-bye calendar.

## **PICK UP POLICY**

Only people named on the contact sheet will be allowed to pick up a child. Anyone who picks up a child will be required to show picture identification. The child must be picked up on time. In case of emergency, please notify the center. If staff has not been notified, they will call everyone listed on the contact sheet to pick up the child. If no one can be reached one hour after closing, the staff will notify the local authorities and DCF.

Anyone arriving after closing time will be charged a fee of \$10.00 for a pick up within the first 10 minutes then charged \$1.00 for each additional minute thereafter. If there are repeated late fees, a meeting with the program director may be scheduled which may result in termination from the program

No child will be released to anyone who is suspected to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. A staff member will attempt to reach another authorized adult from the contact sheet to pick up the child. If the person picking up refuses to cooperate, staff reserves the right to contact the police. The program reserves the right to ask that an adult be removed from the contact sheet or to file a 51A.

## **CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT POLICY**

1. All new staff will be hired providing they have no criminal record relating to child abuse, neglect or child sexual abuse. A Background Record Check is done on all staff and regular program volunteers.
2. All QCAP Head Start staff are considered to be “mandated reporters” by state law. All staff will be trained in the program’s Child Abuse and Neglect Policy in their initial staff orientation. Training will be held annually for all staff on how to recognize indicators of neglect and abuse, on Massachusetts’ reporting laws and on staff’s role as mandated reporters. QCAP Head Start’s Child Abuse and Neglect policy is posted in each classroom, is included in the Family Handbook and Health Care Policies, and is part of the orientation that is offered to new families and program volunteers.
3. Any staff person who suspects child abuse, neglect, or sexual abuse must report the case in question to his/her supervisor who will inform the Family Service Worker and/or Family Services Coordinator if there is no Family Service Worker. The Family Services Coordinator will work with the staff team involved with the particular family to be assured that all information pertaining to the situation has been shared, will review the concerns and allegations, and will notify the Head Start Program Director. Consultation with the Family Services Coordinator and/or Head Start Program Director is required before a 51A report is filed. Family service staff will file a report with the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A staff member will inform the parent/guardian(s) of the program’s intention to file a 51A report with DCF unless there are safety concerns.
4. If institutional abuse or neglect is suspected, it is immediately reported to the Head Start Program Director, who in turn will report the incident to the Executive Director of Quincy Community Action Programs, Inc. An internal investigation is conducted and the staff member(s) in question will be removed immediately from any direct contact with children while an investigation is in process.
5. The licensee shall notify the Department of Early Education and Care immediately after filing a 51A report or learning that a 51A report has been filed, alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity. The Licensee shall cooperate in all investigations of abuse or neglect as stated in the regulations 102CMR7.05(3)(b)4,5. No staff member will be permitted to have unsupervised contact with children until the conclusion of the

QCAP, EEC and DCF investigations and the staff member has been approved to resume child care responsibilities. If the investigation determines that abuse and/or neglect has occurred, the staff in question will be recommended to the Policy Council to be terminated from the agency.

6. In accordance with N-30-356-1-20 applicable Head Start law and policy Section 511 of the Fellow Act, P.L.52-644, the Head Start Program does the following:
  - a. Establishes and maintains cooperative relationships with agencies providing child protective services in the community, and with any other agency to which child abuse and neglect must be reported under State Law, including regular formal and informal communication with staff at all levels of the agencies.
  - b. Informs parent/guardian(s) and staff of what state and local laws require in cases of child abuse and neglect.
  - c. Knows what community medical and social services are available for families with an abuse or neglect problem.
  - d. Reports instances of child abuse and neglect reportable under state law on behalf of Head Start.
  - e. Discusses the report with the family except as noted above.

## ILLNESS/EXCLUSION POLICY

A child is too sick to attend the program (if any of the following):

- The child is unable to participate comfortably in the program's activities.
- The staff cannot adequately care for the needs of the sick child without compromising the care of the other children.
- The child has any of the following symptoms unless a health care provider determines that the child is well enough to attend and that the illness is not contagious.
  - *Fever* above 100.5 auxiliary (under the arm) accompanied by behavior change and other symptoms of illness (i.e., the child looks and acts sick).
  - *Diarrhea*: Changes from the child's usual stool pattern - increased frequency of stools, loose/watery stools, or child can't get to the bathroom on time.
  - *Vomiting*: more than once in the previous 24 hours.
  - *Mouth Sores*: with drooling
  - *Rash*: with a fever or behavior changes, or until the doctor has determined that the illness is not of a communicable disease.
- The child with any of the following diagnoses (until treated or no longer contagious) may return with the following guidelines:
  - *Infectious Conjunctivitis/pink eye*: with eye discharge until 24 hours after treatment has started.
  - *Scabies or other infestation*: Until 24 hours after treatment.
  - *Lice*: Until free of nits and cleared for return with a head check by an on-site Head Start staff member. Please note that a child may NOT ride the bus until appropriate checks are complete.
  - *Strep throat, scarlet fever, or other Strep infection*: Until 24 hours after treatment started and the child is free of fever.
  - *Pertussis*: Until five days after treatment has started.
  - *Tuberculosis*: Until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious.
  - *Chicken Pox*: Until six days after start of rash or all sores have crusted over.
  - *Mumps*: Until nine days after start of symptoms.
  - *Measles*: Until six days after start of rash.
  - *Oral Herpes*: If a child is drooling or until lesions are healed.
  - *Shingles*: If lesions cannot be covered until lesions are dry.



## EMERGENCIES AND ILLNESS PROCEDURES

1. Evaluate the child's condition.
2. Isolate, if necessary, but do not leave the child unattended.
3. Give reassurance and basic first aid, if needed.
4. Teacher, family service worker, transportation staff or health coordinator will notify parent/guardian(s). If parent/guardian(s) cannot be reached, a contact person listed by the parent/guardian(s) will be notified.
5. If the child's condition is beyond the staff person's ability to assess or care for, "911" will be called.
6. Children will be transported to the hospital by ambulance accompanied by Head Start staff or parent/guardian(s).
7. Authorization for emergency care forms will be taken to the hospital along with the contact form.
8. The staff member in charge when the emergency occurred fills out Injury/Accident Reports. EEC will be notified of any injury or illness which requires medical attention.
9. These procedures will also be followed when children are on field trips.



## MEDICATION POLICY

Head Start staff will not routinely administer medication. Valid reasons for administration of medication during a Head Start class would be:

- When medication dosage cannot be adjusted to exclude hours when a child is at Head Start.
- When a child has a chronic medical problem (such as asthma), which may require urgent administration of a medication.
- When refusal to administer medication at Head Start would pose a significant hardship or require the absence of a child in the recovery phase of an illness who is otherwise well enough to attend Head Start.

It is the policy of QCAP Head Start that if a child requires medication that must be administered during the time he/she is at QCAP Head Start, the licensed prescriber and parent/guardian(s) must fill out, date and sign a **MEDICATION AUTHORIZATION FORM**. Parent's must administer the first dose of medication at home (in order to observe the child for side effects) before staff can administer the medication at school. This policy covers both prescription and non-prescription medications. Medications must be in their original container with the prescriber's written direction on it. Medication will be administered only to the child for whom it is prescribed and in accordance with the licensed prescriber's written instruction. It is recommended that the medication, which is needed in school, be put in two labeled containers by the pharmacist to avoid the need to transport the medication.

Medication must be transported by a responsible adult (i.e. parent/guardian(s) will hand medication to the bus driver, not send it to class with the child). If the medication is a **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE** it may **NOT BE TRANSPORTED BY BUS**. Parent/guardian(s) must deliver any controlled substance to the classroom where the parent/guardian(s), teacher and a witness will count the medication together and record the amount. Teachers will do a weekly count with a witness on any controlled substance.

Medication that requires refrigeration will be stored in a locked bag in a designated place in the refrigerator. Medication that does not require refrigeration will be stored in a locked bag in a locked cabinet unless it is being transported, for example: field trips and playgrounds. When transported, it will be in the locked bag in the first aid bag. All medication including those required by staff and volunteers must be adequately labeled, stored out of reach of children, refrigerated if necessary and kept under lock and key. Emergency medications are stored out of reach of children and easily accessible to staff.

Medication will be administered in a location where the child will have relative privacy. If this is not possible, the other children will be reminded that medications are only taken when the care-giving adult gives them.

### **PLAN FOR DISPENSING MEDICATION**

- Prior to enrollment in the Head Start program, parent/guardian(s) will receive the policy on administering prescription and non-prescription medication.
- All staff administering medication have completed the EEC approved Medication Administration training.
- All medication including topical non-prescription medication is administered to a child only with written permission from the parent/guardian(s) and explicit written instruction from the licensed prescriber. **Medication Authorization Forms are only valid for one year from the date signed.**
- A parent/guardian may train staff in the proper use/administration of medication with written permission from the prescribing physician stating the parent/guardian is qualified to train staff.

- Parent/guardian(s) will be contacted:
  - a. Before “PRN” (as needed medication) is administered
  - b. When scheduled medication is not given or not given on time (30 minutes before or after scheduled time).
  - c. When any medication error is made.
- Sunscreen and insect repellent may be generally administered to a child with parent/guardian(s) authorization.
- No eye medication or ear drops will be administered.
- All medication will be kept in its original container, **CLEARLY LABELLED** with the child’s name, drug name and directions for use and storage. Medication will not be administered contrary to the directions on the original container unless authorized by a written order of the child’s licensed prescriber.
- A medication log is maintained for every medication dispensed. The completed log is put in the child’s file. The medication log is located on the opposite side of the Medication Authorization Form. When the same medication is given over a long period of time and more space is needed, a blank medication log should be copied and stapled to the original Medication Authorization Form. In this way, authorization and documentation are always together. The person administering medication will record the child’s name, medication, dose, time given and their signature.
- All medication is stored under proper conditions for sanitation, preservation, security and safety.
- All unused medication is disposed of or returned to the parent/guardian(s) when no longer needed.

**SUMMARY**

If your child needs medication during school hours you must provide the following:

- Physician’s signed written instructions on Medication Authorization Form.
- Parent/guardian(s) signed permission for dispensing medication.
- Clearly labeled medication in its original container with child’s name, drug name and clear direction for usage.

<b>SCHOOL CLOSING POLICY</b>
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In the event of an unexpected school closing for reasons other than a weather emergency, the parent/guardian(s) will be notified by phone call from the staff.

The Head Start/Early Head Start classrooms will follow the public school snow closing/delay policy in each town that the program site is located. In the event schools in 3 of the 4 towns (Braintree, Hull, Quincy and Weymouth) that sites are located in are closed, all site locations in the 4 towns serviced by the Head Start program will be closed.

If conditions warrant it, the program may cancel transportation but not classes. In such a case, the parent/guardian(s) is responsible for the child’s transportation to and from the program.