Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium

"MAKING A DIFFERENCE"

Strengthening our families through education, empowerment, and knowledge.

2012 - 2013
Parent Handbook
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Dear Parents,

As we begin the 2012-2013 school year I would like to welcome all of you to the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium. For some, this is a new experience and, for others, it is a return to a positive and rewarding relationship. Our goal with you is one of partnerships, based on mutual respect and trust, and geared towards assisting you in meeting the needs of your child and strengthening the family.

Early Head Start / Head Start is a quality program designed to help your child become Kindergarten ready and help him/her on the road to a lifetime of learning. Your child is our future and we will do all we can to ensure that the children in our program receive the highest quality of services. Your involvement in Early Head Start / Head Start will enable us to continue to realize the possibilities of how we can best serve the children and families of Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties.

This handbook is intended to provide helpful information about the program, its operating polices and scheduled monthly events. We encourage you to keep it available for future use when questions arise about Early Head Start / Head Start Policies and to know some of the events already scheduled for your child and/or your family. The staff are readily available to answer any questions that you may have about the program.

Early Head Start / Head Start reserves the right to make any changes to this Parent Handbook when deemed appropriate.

THIS HANDBOOK WAS CREATED IN ORDER TO BETTER PREPARE YOUR CHILD/FAMILY FOR THE HEAD START EXPERIENCE. IT IS IMPORTANT TO BRING THIS HANDBOOK TO THE FIRST TWO SITE MEETINGS WHERE WE WILL DISCUSS AND LEARN ABOUT THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PARENTS TO PARTICIPATE, GROW AND EVENTUALLY TAKE SOME OF THE LEADERSHIP OF THESE MEETINGS.

Sincerely,

Head Start/Early Head Start Executive Director
Dr. Kathy L. Guajardo
IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The information contained in this book is important to its owner. If found please return to the person(s) listed below. You may return it to the Head Start Office at:

Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium
245 N. Lombardy Dr., Suite A
South Bend, IN 46619

or at your local school, give to a Head Start employee or mail it directly to the person who has lost the book. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

(Placing this information inside your book is optional and not required.)

This book belongs to: ________________________________

My child attends: ________________________________

Located at: ________________________________

Telephone number: ________________________________

Teacher’s names: ________________________________

My child’s pick-up bus #: ________________________________

My child’s drop-off bus #: ________________________________

Estimated time of my child’s bus pick up: ________________________________
WHAT IS EARLY HEAD START / HEAD START?

Early Head Start is a federally funded comprehensive interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education program for infants and toddlers, serves 60 infants and toddlers and 20 pregnant adolescent females.

Head Start is a federally funded, comprehensive interdisciplinary, preschool Child Development Program for eligible children and their family members. Currently, St. Joseph and Elkhart Counties are funded to serve 1020 children in classrooms located in area schools.

EARLY HEAD START / HEAD START MISSION:

The mission of Early Head Start / Head Start is to create seamless delivery system of education and child development for underserved infants, toddlers and preschool children, providing a nurturing, learning environment to prepare them for Head Start and/or kindergarten.

We recognize the holistic approach to the child’s development is essential. Therefore, in addition to the interdisciplinary educational component, the program will have a comprehensive health component...strong family and community component. We believe that we must strengthen and empower our children and families to overcome these obstacles and create a solid, secure foundation upon which to build.

EARLY HEAD START / HEAD START GOALS

- Allow opportunity for children and families to assimilate into the culture of school by establishing relationships through the transition process from Early Head Start to Head Start to kindergarten.
- A journey of life-long learning can begin in a child who begins at a school based Head Start program.
- Create a holistic approach by supporting the need of implementing health and social services as part of the educational process.
- Create a secure, solid foundation using available community systems of coordinated care.
- Allows children and families to develop rich relationships with teachers and staff and to be proactive in approaching educational development.
- Allow opportunity for children and families to assimilate into the culture of school by establishing relationships through the transition process from Head Start to Kindergarten.
PARENTS' COMMITMENT TO HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

- Parents must make every effort to treat other parents, Early Head Start/Head Start guests, and Head Start/Early Head Start staff with dignity and respect.

- Parents must provide accurate up-to-date contact information throughout the school year.

- Parents must set aside time to meet with their assigned Family and Community Specialist. A family partnership agreement with Early Head Start/Head Start will be formed to set annual goals and set a course to achieve those goals.

- Parents must set aside time for their child’s teacher to make beginning and end of the year home visits.

- Parents must provide records of immunizations, physical, and dental examinations within 30 days of enrollment, as mandated by Federal Law.

- Parents must make every effort to follow attendance guidelines by sending their child to school every day he/she is not ill.

- Parents must follow all rules regarding transportation. Head Start parents must ensure that an adult, defined as 18 years of age or older, accompany a child to and from the bus.

- Head Start parents must ensure that their child is signed in and/or out by an authorized adult when not riding the bus. The custody of a child must be transferred to/from Head Start staff, by signing in/out, upon arrival/dismissal.

- Early Head Start parents must accompany their child on the bus. The custody of a child must be transferred to/from Early Head Start staff, by signing in/out, upon arrival/dismissal.

- Parents must attend scheduled parent-teacher conferences.

- Parents must volunteer and/or participate in their child’s classroom or activities.

- Parents must attend site meetings as often as possible and assist in making decisions concerning improvements to the classroom and/or the overall Early Head Start and Head Start Program.
EARLY HEAD START/HEAD START’S COMMITMENT TO PARENTS

- Parents are to be treated with dignity and respect by all Consortium employees and consultants.

- Parents can expect that their child with a disability will receive services as indicated by testing, through case conference committee, and individual development of an education plan.

- Early Head Start/Head Start Staff will meet with each family to form a family partnership agreement, setting personal and family goals for life and formulating plans to achieve those goals.

- Parents will receive a home visit by their child’s teacher at the beginning of the school year to prepare them for class and at the end of the school year to discuss their overall progress.

- Parents are always welcome in the classroom and encouraged to assist whenever and wherever possible.

- Parents are to be informed regularly about their child’s progress in Early Head Start/Head Start Staff including access to his/her educational file.

- Parents can expect guidance for your child from Early Head Start /Head Start teachers and other staff, which will help his/her total individual development.

- Parents can receive help to improve daily living for yourself, and your family in adult/education/life skills through community resources dealing with health, education and the improvement of life.

- Staff will be available to teach parents about the operation of the program, including the budget and the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.

- Parents will receive training about the leadership, community service opportunities, marital relationships and parent/child relationships.

- Parents will participate in a minimum of two home visits two Parent/Teacher conferences.

- Parent must attend site meetings as often as possible and assist in making decisions concerning improvements to the classroom and/or the overall Early Head Start/Head Start Program.
PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN HEAD START/
EARLY HEAD START

Parent Involvement

Parents are an essential part of our program. We rely on parents for support in a number of areas. We welcome parents to take advantage of the opportunity to help plan and shape our Early Head Start and Head Start Program by participating in the classroom, on committees, Policy Council and Parent Site meetings.

By taking advantage of partnering, parents will join Head Start/Early Head Start forming a strong team to educate their child and enhance their family’s opportunity to grow in parenting, relationship and leadership skills.

We will share information with you on a regular basis through parent meeting minutes, notes, newsletters and flyers. Parent information will also be sent home with your child. Please check your child's papers daily for mail and to see what she/he was working on that day at school.

In the following pages you will learn how Early Head Start/Head Start forms partnerships and depends upon the involvement of parents and other community organizations. Early Head Start/Head Start is unique in that it does not seek to simply teach children, but enhance families through learning and growing together.

You will find opportunities to interact with other families, Early Head Start and y Head Start staff and community leaders to gain knowledge, information and necessary services for your family as you partner with Early Head Start/Head Start. Early Head Start and Head Start needs you to plan for this involvement at many levels. The next few pages of this Handbook describe what is expected from both Early Head Start and Head Start and you as a family that benefits from its services.

If you have not already met with your Family and Community Specialist you will soon have that opportunity. You will be asked to provide family information and set growth goals. This will require a partnership that depends upon Early Head Start and Head Start keeping its commitments. Each family will have to plan on keeping similar commitments as well.
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

The Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium program staff will guarantee confidentiality and privacy in regard to services, records and discussions of or about any person served by the program. Even the fact that an individual or family is served by this organization must be kept confidential. Any disclosure of confidential information must be carried out within the guidelines specified in this policy. The practice of confidentiality must be maintained in all Head Start programs, departments, function and activities of the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium.

Part of protecting the confidentiality of Head Start children and families requires that staff can only communicate with parents and/or legal guardians. Information to communicate with any third party requires the express written permission of the parent and/or guardian.

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Philosophy and Goals

The Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium is family centered and is designed to build upon a parent's role as the principle influence on a child's development. Our Early Head Start and Head Start Program works to engage in a process of collaborative partnership with individual families to develop a "Family Partnership Agreement". This partnership between Early Head Start and Head Start and parents is required by the Department of Health and Human Services to help parents in developing their individual strengths and successfully meet personal and family objectives. Through these agreements, parents are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of Early Head Start and Head Start, including direct involvement in policy and program decisions that respond to their interests and needs.

The general objective of Family Partnerships are...

- to establish mutual trust, identify strengths or need of services for each family, and the necessary services or supports to meet those goals
- to establish new or build upon pre-existing family plans and goals by obtaining information from the family, provide information and/or opportunities available from other community agencies to enhance or meet those goals
- to establish the roles that staff and families will play in addressing and meeting each goal
- to work collaboratively with participating parents to identify and access those community services and resources that are responsive to their interests and goals
- to ensure that parents are provided opportunities to enhance their own parenting skills, as well as, gain knowledge and understanding of the educational, developmental needs and activities of their children
- to provide opportunity to participate in medical, dental, nutritional and mental health education programs
The Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium is a community organization that works to form collaborative partnerships with other child and family service organizations. The outcome is the forming of a "Community Partnership Agreement" with those community organizations that are responsive to the needs of children and families. These partnerships help to establish a wealth of information and opportunities that will enhance or improve the quality of service to Early Head Start and Head Start Families.

A binder of community resources will be provided for you to access resources as needed. Please contact your Family and Community Specialist if you need assistance.

PARENTS ARE PARTNERS!

Parent Site Meetings

Every parent or guardian of a child enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start is a member of the Parent Site Meeting for that site. You should take the opportunity to attend and become active at your site meetings. At Site Meetings parents have the very important task of helping plan and conduct the Site Meetings and activities. You will also give input in program planning (example: giving input to teachers on ideas for the classroom.) At the first Site Meeting, held in September, parents will learn about what happens at future meetings and the leadership positions that will be elected. At the second meeting, in October, parents will be elected by parents to serve as officers and representatives for the parent site meeting and the Policy Council. The newly elected leaders will help plan and conduct the meetings for the rest of the year. Each site will be able to set project goals and activities to help improve the Site Meetings, families, classrooms and Early Head Start and Head Start in general.

A Parent binder will be provided to those elected as a representative from each Site. It will contain a calendar of Policy Council and all site meetings along with Head Start Performance Standards, Rules of Operation and other parent information available for your review. All helpful information to help you fulfill your new role as a Early Head Start and Head Start parent/leader.

List of All Areas of Parent Partnering

- In the classroom
- Attend Parent Site Meetings
- As a regular volunteer
- As a member of an Advisory Committee
- As a member of the Policy Council
- Volunteer their talents/skills to the program
- Do work at home for the staff
Specific Partner Opportunities and Guidelines

Some parent partner opportunities that are available have specific responsibilities and provide special growth opportunities. There are several opportunities and guidelines listed in the next few pages. In each case your child’s Teacher or Early Head Start Staff and Head Start Staff can help you receive training and education to fulfill your duties.

You may find yourself serving in only one area, but many parents find joy in serving in several areas of Head Start at the same time.

Mileage/Babysitting Reimbursement

Parents or guardians who participate in the Policy Council meetings and other parent involvement activities are eligible for reimbursement for mileage and babysitting expenses based on available funding.

A Regular Volunteer

A REGULAR volunteer is defined as a volunteer who has applied for a specific volunteer position that requires direct contact with any Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Early Head Start and y Head Start children and a written agreement, or is in the classroom 12 or more hours per month, or those on a set schedule that have direct contact with children, or those identified as a regular volunteer by the Executive Director, Program Service Manager, Family and Community Specialist, or Teacher due to the nature of the specific volunteer role.

Many community volunteers participate in our classrooms as well, however all regular volunteers must provide background information and proof of a Negative TB test to the Head Start Office. All regular volunteers will be required to complete a Criminal background check and receive training regarding volunteer expectations.

All volunteers are expected to sign and adhere to the following code of conduct:

- No cell phone usage while volunteering
- Follow Head Start dress code
- Confidentiality standards must be signed and kept

Site Meeting Leadership Positions

These positions are all elected by parents from within your particular site. Early Head Start and Head Start is required to provide that parents engage in shared decision-making with management team regarding program planning, development, implementation, evaluation, training. This is done at several levels. It begins at the Site Meeting where parents are elected to lead the meetings and set goals for each site and the classes contained at that site.

Your Family and Community Specialist will give you a better explanation and training on what happens at Site Meetings, but the following is a brief overview of what elected leaders can expect.
What are Site Meetings?

**What types of things happen at a site meeting?**
- Goals are set for group partnership with Head Start improvement program
- Discussion of personal concerns for Head Start
- Parents meet parents with common goals and experiences
- Discuss and plan parent activities that improve family and educational experiences for the children
- Opportunities for parent involvement in community

**How does a meeting work?**
- Parents are elected to leadership positions
- Each meeting is run by parents starting in October/November
- Each meeting follows a prepared agenda (help from FACS personnel)
- Each meeting has a record of what was discussed (minutes)
- Sign in sheets record attendance

**What positions are available?**
- Chairperson/Representative to Policy Council (May be the same person, but does not have to be)
- Assistant chairperson
- Secretary

**What kind of responsibility does a parent/leader have?**
- Faithful attendance
- Available time to fulfill duties
- Learn Roberts Rules of Order (Training will be provided)
- Learn/Understand leadership principles (Training will be provided)

**Policy Council**

Each Site will elect a representative to the Policy Council. There are many leadership opportunities available to someone elected to the Policy Council. (Complete training is provided for parents who are elected. It is not necessary for someone to understand all of the duties to fill this position; You just need a willingness to serve and learn.)

The information on pages 14-16 will help you understand some of the leadership opportunities of a Policy Council member. This will help you decide if you wish to serve as a representative.
Policy Council

This is a description of what leadership opportunities are available to someone elected to the Policy Council. (It is not necessary to understand all of these responsibilities to fill this position; only a willingness to serve and learn. There will be training for parents who are elected)

Qualifications: Leadership skills, dependability, commitment to the philosophies of the Head Start Program, ability to maintain confidentiality. A Policy Council member MUST be able to commit significant time and energy to the program while in office.

Requirements: Complete and submit a Policy Council nomination form, be elected into office by program parents, attend all Policy Council orientations and trainings, attend all Policy Council and Site Meetings, and be available upon request. A background check may be required for members of the Policy Council. Members elected to be Policy Council Officers will have additional responsibilities, including the requirement of attending Board Meetings and presenting reports to the Policy Council.

ITEM V: COUNCIL RESPONSIBILITIES (From the Rules of Operation)

The Council shall work with key management staff to develop, review, approve and submit the following policies and procedures [1304.50 (d)(1)]:

- Procedures describing how the governing body and the Council will implement shared decision-making; for program planning;
- The program's philosophy and long- and short-range program goals and objectives;
- The composition of the Policy Council and the procedures by which policy group members are chosen;
- Criteria for defining recruitment selection and enrollment priorities;
- The annual self-assessment of the grantee's progress in carrying out the programmatic and fiscal intent of its grant application, including planning or other actions that may result from the review of the annual audit and findings from the Federal monitoring review;
- Program personnel policies and subsequent changes to those policies, including standards of conduct for program staff, consultants and volunteers;
Serve as a link to the Parent Site Committees, governing bodies, public and private organizations and the communities they serve. A Policy Council member from each Site will complete a Monthly Policy Council Report for distribution at the Site meetings. Each representative to the Policy Council will complete a Monthly Site Activity Report for distribution to the Policy Council and the Site Committees;

Assist the Committees in communicating with parents to ensure that they understand their rights, responsibilities and opportunities in Head Start and to encourage their participation in the program;

Assist the Site Committees in planning, coordinating and organizing program activities for parents with the assistance of staff and ensuring that funds set aside from program budgets are used to support parent activities;

Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents and community organizations and assist in the mobilization of community resources to meet identified needs [1304.50 (d)(2)(i) - (iv)];

Assist in the development of policies regarding the reimbursement of low income members for reasonable expenses associated with their Council and/or Committee responsibilities [1304.50 (f)];

Observing confidentiality in all personnel matters is mandatory. Personnel information cannot be shared outside the meeting. If this is violated it constitutes grounds for immediate removal from the Policy Council.

Any officer or member of this Policy Council who fails to perform their duties as outlined can be removed by a 51% vote of the Policy Council members present at the meeting. Written notification of membership termination will be mailed as a confirmation.

**Role of Officers of Policy Council**

**ITEM VII: OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL**

**Section 1  Election**

The Council shall elect the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary at the November Council meeting, or whenever a vacancy occurs. Officers shall assume their duties immediately. The election shall be conducted by the Chairperson from the previous council, acting in an honorary capacity.
ITEM VII: OFFICERS OF THE COUNCIL (continued)

Section 2  
Duties of the Chairperson  
The Chairperson shall be the presiding officer at all meetings of the Council and shall perform all duties outlined in these Rules of Operation. The Chairperson shall see that all orders and resolutions of the Council are carried into effect, shall chair the Executive Committee and shall represent the Council officially when necessary.

Section 3  
Duties of the Vice-Chairperson  
The Vice Chairperson shall perform all of the Chairperson's duties during the Chairperson's absence from the Council. The Vice Chairperson shall perform all duties outlined in these Rules of Operation and may perform all duties designated to him/her by the Chairperson.

Section 4  
Duties of the Secretary  
The Secretary shall oversee the keeping of the minutes of Council and Executive Committee meetings and a current role of attendance in permanent form. The Secretary shall keep a copy of the Program Governance Service Area Plan and a Policies and Procedures Manual which will be developed and updated with appropriate action by the Council. A copy of the Service Area Plan and Policies and Procedures Manual will be provided to each Policy Council member. The Secretary shall be able to serve as presiding officer of a regular Policy Council meeting should the Chair and Vice Chairperson both be absent. Secretary shall not have any other additional duties to sign documents or represent the Council during their temporary role as presiding officer. Assistance for keeping minutes of that particular meeting may be secured by another parent on the Policy Council, as long as the members agree through motion and a consent vote.

Section 5  
Term Limitations  
The number of one-year terms any individual may serve as an officer on the Council will be limited to a combined total of three terms.
Family Education and/or Training Budget

There are several educational opportunities available to parents through Head Start. Each year, however, there are a limited amount of funds available for these opportunities. Below you will find a list of the educational opportunities offered through Head Start to assist in your family growth.

In order to support the mission statement of the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium, funds will be made available for parents seeking to earn a GED/High School Diploma, or attend ENL classes. All other available no cost services must have been explored by the parent, in order to receive these funds.

Each year there are opportunities for parents to attend local conferences. Because of the cost there are limits to how many parents may attend. The first limitation is the amount of funds available per year for parent activities and/or leadership training. The second factor is determining who will likely be benefited by the training and how the local Head Start will benefit by the parents that learn and implement the leadership skills they learn.

It is important for you to be aware of ways that you may develop your leadership skills and how you might qualify to attend future conferences.

Parent Activity Funds will be given funding (per parent) to determine how funds will be spent locally to support Head Start Initiatives.

Information and Sample Forms

The following pages contain information and samples of forms that you will want to be familiar with. There are forms for reimbursements for travel and child care costs, and what to do if you need to make a Community Comment or Complaint.
Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium
245 N. Lombardy Dr., Suite A ~ South Bend, IN 46619

PARENT POLICY COUNCIL

Child Care Reimbursement Request Form

The Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium will reimburse parents for child care payment provided to their child care provider during their attendance for an established meeting or training set by the Policy Council or the Consortium Board.

Date: ______________ Location of Meeting ____________________________

Parent Signature: ________________________ SS# ____________

Name of Head Start Child: ________________________________

Child care services provided by: ________________________________

Cost of Child Care: $ __________ per hour for ______ hours - $ __________

$ __________ per day for _______ days - $ __________

I certify that the amount listed above for payment is in accordance with the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium regulations governing allowance and reimbursement for members of the Policy Council and/or Area/Policy Committee.

Signed: ________________________________

(Name of Provider)

(Address)

(City, State, Zip Code)

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Approved for Payment __________________________, Executive Director

_______________________________, Business Manager

Purchase Order # ______________________ Date: ______________________

Form: AD2031
Community and Consumer Comment Policy

There is a form at the end of this policy that is to be filled out step by step as described below.

In every organization involving people, projects and purpose there are bound to be some differences, disagreements or disappointments. Just as in other organizations, there will be times when the Head Start team effort will be tested by conflict or situations that could have been handled in a better manner. There may be times when you simply wish to offer a suggestion for improvements in the program.

The following steps will provide the guidance necessary for anyone desiring to make comments, report problems or offer suggestions. The steps have been approved by the Consortium Board and the Policy Council according to the Federal Performance Standards. Each step must be taken in the correct order to ensure a timely and effective response to your concerns. Advancing to an inappropriate step or person in charge will only slow the process as it must be documented that each step was appropriately followed.

ITEM XII: COMMUNITY AND CONSUMER COMMENT POLICIES

Parent Comment/Dispute Resolution

Any parent receiving services through the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium program may initiate a concern. Such concerns may include, but are not limited to, the following program management and service areas: communication, disabilities, education, eligibility/enrollment/attendance, facilities, fiscal operations, health, nutrition, parent involvement, personnel, social services and transportation.

The resolution of all concerns is to follow Steps 1 and 2 below. If other Head Start parents share the same concern, the concern may be processed through the Site Committee and beyond via Steps 3 through 7. If the concern remains the concern of an individual parent only, the concern will move directly from Step 2 to Step 4.

STEP 1 – Take the concern to the Early Head Start/Head Start staff person directly responsible

An individual with a concern should first take the concern to the person(s) directly responsible for that program area. For example, a concern regarding the classroom should be discussed first with the teacher. If the concern is resolved at this level, no further action is necessary and written documentation turned over to the PSM (Program Service Manager) within 24 hours. If the concern is not resolved at this level, the individual should move on to Step 2.

A concern taken beyond Step 1 must be in written form and should contain the following:

- Description of the specific comment or concern
- Date of the incident or date when concern first arose
- The name/signature of the person submitting the comment or concern
- Date written comment/concern submitted to Head Start staff
STEP 2 – Take the concern to the Supervisor/Manager

If resolution is not achieved at Step 1, the individual may submit a written description of the concern to the appropriate management staff person (for example: Area Supervisor or Transportation Manager). The management staff person will mail a certified letter with a written response within 24 hours acknowledging the receipt of the concern. The management staff person will meet with all parties involved within 3 working days of receiving the individual's written concern. If the concern is resolved, no further action is necessary. Within 5 working days of the meeting, the management staff person will provide the individual who submitted the written concern with a written summary of any action taken to resolve the identified concern. If the concern is not resolved at this level, the individual should move to Step 4. If the concern is not resolved at this level and other Head Start parents share the same concern, the parents should move to Step 3.

STEP 3 – Take the concern to the Site Committee

If the concern remains unresolved following the meeting outlined in Step 2, the individual should take the concern to the Site Committee. This invites parents with a similar concern to join in voicing and discussing the concern or help resolve the concern. The concern should be presented in writing to the Site Committee Chairperson with a request to have the concern placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Site Committee meeting. The written request should include a detailed description of the concern.

The Site Committee will address the concern at the Site Committee meeting. If the individual and a majority of the quorum of the Site Committee agree upon a resolution of the concern no further action is necessary. The minutes of the meeting will reflect the resolution of the concern, including the steps needed to resolve the concern.

If a majority of the quorum of the Site Committee members present at the meeting agree that the issue is a concern for other parents and the concern is unresolved, the Site Committee should move on to Step 4. The Family Support Specialist responsible for assisting the parents in the facilitation of the meeting will inform the Area Supervisor of the unresolved concern. If the concern is not resolved at the Site Committee meeting, the concern is then taken to Step 4.

STEP 4 – Take the concern to the Early Head Start and Head Start Executive Director

Individual Parent Concern - If the concern remains unresolved following the meeting outlined in Step 2, the individual may within 3 working days make a written request to meet with the Head Start Executive Director. The written request should be sent to the Head Start Executive Director and include a detailed description of the concern.

The Head Start Executive Director will meet with all parties involved within 3 working days of the written request. If a resolution to the concern is agreed upon, no further action is necessary. Within 5 working days following the meeting, the Head Start Executive Director will provide the individual with a written summary of the action proposed to resolve the concern. The Head Start Executive Director will be responsible for communicating with Head Start staff involved in completing the steps necessary to resolve the concern.
If the Site Committee concern is not resolved at the meeting with the Head Start Executive Director, the concern is then taken to Step 5.

**STEP 5 – Take the concern to the Policy Council**

If the concern remains unresolved following the meeting outlined in Step 4, the concern should be taken to the Policy Council. The concern should be presented in writing to the Policy Council Chairperson with a request to have the concern placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Policy Council meeting. The request should include a detailed description of the concern.

The Policy Council will address the concern at the Policy Council meeting. If a resolution to the concern is agreed upon by a majority of the quorum of the Policy Council, no further action is necessary. The minutes of the meeting will reflect the resolution of the concern. Within 5 working days following the meeting, the Policy Council Chairperson will provide the Site Committee Chairperson with a written summary of the action taken to resolve the concern. At the next Policy Council meeting, the Head Start Executive Director will report to the Policy Council the steps taken to implement the agreed upon resolution.

If the concern is not resolved at the Policy Council meeting, the concern is then taken to Step 6.

**STEP 6 – Take the concern to the Executive Officers of the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium Board and the Policy Council**

If the concern remains unresolved following the meeting outlined in Step 5, a joint meeting between the Executive Committee of the Head Start Consortium Board of Directors, the Head Start Policy Council Administrative/Personnel Committee and the Head Start Executive Director will occur within 5 working days. If the Executive Committee of the Head Start Consortium Board of Directors and the Policy Council Administrative/Personnel Committee agree upon a resolution to the concern, the resolution will be recommended for approval to the Head Start Consortium Board and Policy Council. If a majority of the quorum of the Policy Council approves the recommendation, the Head Start Executive Director will notify the Board of Directors of the decision. Written notification to implement the corrective measures agreed upon will be provided to the Head Start Executive Director by the Policy Council Chairperson. The meeting minutes will reflect the decision of the Policy Council. At the next regularly scheduled Policy Council meeting the Head Start Executive Director will provide a written summary of the action taken to resolve the concern. The Policy Council representatives will inform Head Start parents of the action taken to resolve the concern through the reports they give at their respective Site Committee meetings.

If the concern is not resolved in the meetings outlined in Step 6, the Impasse Resolution process will be initiated.
Community Comment Tracking Form

Each step must be taken in the correct order to ensure a timely and effective response to your concerns. Advancing to an inappropriate step or person in charge will only slow the process as it must be documented that each step was appropriately followed. This form will help you to complete the process and insure that you have a record of who has been spoken to and what has been accomplished. Please feel free to attach additional appropriate documents that help to explain what has been accomplished.

Staff persons receiving a complaint should sign all complaints as having been made aware of the problem. A signature does not mean that you agree or disagree with the complaint. After recording the suggested solution, action or recommendation given, make a copy and place it in the family file.

Step 1
Date incident or problem occurred: _______________________

Describe the nature of your comment, concern or complaint: ____________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Suggested solution, action, or recommendation given: ________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Person submitting comment or complaint: ______________________ (Signature)__________________________ Relationship to child Today’s Date

Staff Person receiving the comment or complaint: ______________________ (Signature)__________________________ Position Date action taken

Attach a written explanation of action taken. ______________________ (number of pages attached)

Step 2 (If Necessary)
If resolution is not achieved at Step 1, the individual may submit a written description of the concern to the appropriate management staff person
Describe additional concern or failure to resolve the issue. (Written by family member) ________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

Management Staff receiving the comment or complaint: ______________________ (Signature)__________________________ Position Date action taken

Attach a copy of written response and explanation of action taken. ______________________ (number of pages attached)

The management staff person receiving this comment or complaint will mail a written response within 24 hours acknowledging the receipt of the concern. The management staff person will meet with all parties involved within 3 working days of receiving the individual’s written concern. If the concern is resolved, no further action is necessary.

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Step 3 – Take the concern to the Site Committee

cation or name of Site: ____________________________________________

Describe any additional information about your concern, so that it can be placed on the meeting agenda.

______________________________________________________________

Name of Site Chairperson: ____________________ Signature ______________ Date received ______________ Date of meeting ______________

Attach notes about the discussion at the meeting/minutes of the meeting when they become available ____________________________ (number of pages attached)

Step 4 – Take the concern to the Head Start Executive Director

Individual Parent Concern - If the concern remains unresolved following the meeting outlined in Step 3, the individual may within 3 working days make a written request to meet with the Head Start Executive Director.

The Head Start Executive Director will meet with all parties involved within 3 working days of the written request. If a resolution to the concern is agreed upon, no further action is necessary. Within 5 working days following the meeting, the Head Start Executive Director will provide the individual with a written summary of the action proposed to resolve the concern.

Today's Date: __________________________

Describe any change or unresolved portion of the problem. ________________________________________________________________

Date Head Start Director received complaint: __________________________

Attach response: __________________________ (number of pages)

Step 5 – Take the concern to the Policy Council

If the concern remains unresolved following the meeting outlined in Step 4, the concern should be taken to the Policy Council. The concern should be presented in writing to the Policy Council Chairperson with a request to have the concern placed on the agenda of the next regularly scheduled Policy Council meeting.

Describe any change or unresolved portion of the problem. ________________________________________________________________

Chairperson receiving documentation from parent and/or Head Start Director: ______________________________ (Signature ______________ Date)

Attach description of action or resolution passed to correct the problem or submit to the Governing Board __________________________ (number of pages)

Step 6 – Take the concern to the Executive Officers of Head Start Consortium Board
HEALTH INFORMATION / REQUIREMENTS

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A FAMILY DOCTOR OR DENTIST AND NEED ONE, YOU MAY CALL YOUR FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SPECIALIST WHO WILL HELP YOU.

The immunizations needed are:

1. At Birth: HepB
2. 2 Months: HepB+DTaP+PCV+Hib+Polio+RV
3. 4 Months: DTaP+PCV+Hib+Polio+RV
4. 6 Months: HepB+DTaP+PCV+Hib+Polio+RV
5. 12 Months: MMR+PCV+Hib+Varicela+HepA
6. 15 Months: DTaP
7. 2 Years MCV4

All Exams must be completed by Sept. 30, 2012 or during the first 30 days of entry during the school year.

Head Start emphasizes the importance of early identification of health problems. The goal of the health services is to improve and maintain the health of the child and his/her family. Prior to school starting, arrange for your child to receive a physical and dental exam by your family doctor/dentist. If you are a Medicaid recipient, Medicaid will pay the bill. If your family is covered by other insurance (either medical or dental), please use that. If you do not have Medicaid or insurance, you must apply for Hoosier Healthwise. Your child should have his/her physical and dental exam completed BEFORE ENTERING THE CLASSROOM.

The dental exam should include:

- Oral exam and cleaning
- Fluoride treatment if needed
- Evaluation of all dental cavities (restoration of cavities could begin at this time)

The Head Start forms which the doctor and dentist sign at the time of the exam must be returned to the Head Start Family and Community Specialist.

The routine school physical exam for a Head Start child should include:

- Physical exam
- Immunizations completed (or at least current with dates attached to the physical form)
- Hemoglobin screening (for iron deficiency anemia)
- Vision and Hearing screening
- Blood Lead Level
- Dental Exam
The routine school physical exam for an Early Head Start child will need to be completed at the following ages: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months and 36 months. A dental exam needs to be completed at 24 months of age.

**NUTRITION**

If your child is in the Early Head Start program, he/she will receive 2/3 of his/her daily nutritional needs in Early Head Start. The program provides breakfast, lunch, and a p.m. snack.

Children in the Head Start program will receive one-third of his/her daily nutritional needs at Head Start. The program provides breakfast and a hot lunch for AM classes and a hot lunch and nutritious afternoon snack for PM classes each day.

The safety of children is our most important concern. We must restrict food prepared off site due to health considerations, including allergies, food sensitivities, choking concerns, and nutritional content, as well as religious food preferences. Therefore, we do not allow any outside food to be given to the children. Please do not bring any food or “treats” for birthday or holiday parties. If you would like to send in something to share with the class, some suggestions would be stickers, pencils, erasers, puzzles, etc. The only exception will be for Family Engagement Celebrations and notification will go home prior to the celebration.

If your child needs a specific diet for religious or medical reasons or has any food allergies, forms must be completed to request changes. These forms must be returned to Head Start Family and Community Support persons so that the Nutritional Dietary consultant may review and make necessary recommendations. Changes or substitutions because of food allergies for medical reasons must be documented by the child’s physician. The Head Start Nutrition consultant will arrange for all necessary meal or food substitutions by working with your family and the school kitchens.

The Nutrition Consultant also plans nutrition education opportunities for you and your child. Weekly food projects and nutrition activities are done in the classroom; by involving the children in nutrition activities they learn about new foods and enjoy eating them. From time to time a variety of nutrition topics may be offered to parents at site meetings. Health and safety information, as well as fun healthy recipes will be sent home for your enjoyment.

Head Start ensures that each child is nutritionally assessed while in the program. This is accomplished through:

- The Nutrition Assessment and Health History forms that you will complete before your child enters the program
- Height and weight measurements
- Dental reports (a dental exam)
- Blood hemoglobin levels
- Food eating habits/behaviors
The Dietician will evaluate the results and work with the staff and parents of any children with specific problems such as:

- Anemia
- Overweight
- Allergies
- Underweight

DEVELOPMENTAL SERVICES

All children will receive sensory and behavioral developmental screenings within 30 calendar days of enrollment to identify areas of concern. The screenings are brief checks, which help identify children who may need educational interventions. Parents will be informed of the results of the screenings and will have the opportunity to work with Head Start personnel in planning educational experiences for their child.

Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium works closely with the child’s home school district and other agencies to provide a full range of services including a free and appropriate education to meet the individual special needs of the child.

Parents are an important part of this process, and a vital link in the decision making process and education experiences for their child. The strengths and needs of the child and family will provide the basis for making decisions regarding services in the least restrictive and most appropriate environment for their child.

MENTAL HEALTH

The promotion of positive mental health is a major goal of the Head Start program, for all members of the Head Start Community, children, their families and Head Start staff, both in the classroom environment and in the home. Head Start strives to provide a nurturing program which promotes feelings of competence, success, problem-solving skills, making new friends, a positive self-concept and respect for individual differences.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE TEAM

The purpose of the Student Assistance Team (SAT) is to identify and provide individualized services to children who are experiencing persistent behavioral/or learning difficulties within the classroom environment.

Families are very important members of the SAT, and are encouraged to participate anytime throughout the process. If you need further information, or have concerns regarding your child, please contact your child’s teacher.
**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

Our goal at Head Start is to help your child cope with little problems and small emotional concerns before they become big problems that are more difficult to deal with. We know that behavioral and emotional problems can interfere with your child's learning and development. We believe that extra help in learning to manage emotions and behavior is simply another type of education we can provide, giving your child greater opportunity to be ready to learn when he or she reaches school age. A behavioral health specialist visits each Head Start classroom. The specialist can assist children who have difficulty managing their emotions or behaviors. The specialist will consult with teachers and parents at a Student Assistant Team meeting to address each child's social/emotional needs. As a parent, you may have questions or concerns about your child's behavioral health. In extreme situations where a child endangers self or other, the child may need to remain at home until a Student Assistant Team meeting is completed and needed services are in place.

**DISABILITY SERVICES**

Serving children with disabilities is a very important piece of Head Start's work with children and their families. At least ten percent of enrollment opportunities in the program are made available for children with disabilities.

If a child qualifies for services, an Individual Family Services Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be developed with family and staff input. The IFSP/IEP must be developed before special services are provided. Many of our children come with an IFSP/IEP and many are first served in Early Head Start after the screening and assessment process.

**REFERRALS**

When there is evidence of a suspected disability, with parent written consent, a request for assistance is made to the local school district to determine if there is a need for a multidisciplinary evaluation and if special services are needed.

The child’s educational program will be designed to provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences based on the child’s needs. The family is an active participant in this process and will receive a copy of the IFSP/IEP at the case conference or shortly afterwards. Parents are a partner in this process and their involvement makes a difference. Together we can provide a quality educational experience for your child.

Those children entering the program with a diagnosed disability that have a current IFSP/IEP would be ready to begin special services following program entrance.
EARLY HEAD START / HEAD START TRANSITION

The goal of Transition Services is to help all Early Head Start and Head Start families move successfully into their next educational environment. For many Early Head Start families it will be Head Start, while for others it will be a pre-school program other than Head Start. For many Head Start families, it will be Kindergarten and for others it will be their next year in Head Start. We also work with agencies providing early intervention services to assist families in transitioning from early intervention to Head Start. Our program will be working with the parent and the local schools and agencies to help the parent and their child with this transition. This process will continue throughout the program year.

Children with an IFSP/IEP will have an individual transition plan developed with the involvement of parents and staff or in some cases a preschool program other than Head Start or the child's home school district.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

Indiana law requires that any Head Start personnel who knows or suspects child abuse or neglect will be responsible for reporting the suspected abuse or neglect in accordance with the Governing Board Policy. As employees of the Elkhart and St. Joseph Head Start Consortium, we are not here to make judgment if a child is abused or neglected. We are legally mandated to report a suspicion of abuse or neglect. Our reporting is to help protect a child if the need exists and to help a family access any needed services. The care and well being of a child is of the utmost importance.
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT AND HEALTH SERVICES EDUCATION

Head Start is designed to meet the needs of each individual child. Children are introduced to learning experiences in a one-on-one interaction with teachers and small/large group situations. The activities of the classroom promote the children's intellectual, social, emotional, language and physical growth.

Emphasis is placed on building the child's positive self-concept and making their Head Start experience a pleasant one. Head Start gives your child lots of love, attention and guidance. Much effort is given to direct your child toward activities that will lead to success at completion.

Developmental appropriate practices are used in all classrooms. To support these practices the teaching staff will:

- Promote a positive climate for learning.
- Will know each child well and design activities based on their knowledge of each individual child's differing abilities, developmental levels, and approaches to learning.
- Plan and prepare a learning environment that fosters children's initiative, active exploration of materials, and sustained engagement with other children, adults, and activities.
- Provide a variety of concrete learning materials relevant to children's own life experiences that promote their interest, engagement in learning, and conceptual development.
- Encourage children's developing language and communication skills by talking with them throughout the day, speaking clearly and listening to their responses, and providing opportunities for them to talk to each other.
- Observe and interact with children in all situations to maximize their knowledge.
- Draw children's curiosity and desire to make sense of their world to motivate them to become involved in interesting learning activities.
- Ensure that curriculum goals address learning in all developmental areas: physical, social, emotional, language, aesthetic, and intellectual.
- Use the High Scope Child Observational Record to assess children's progress, examine children's work samples, and document their developmental or learning needs.
- Work in partnership with parents and community regularly to build mutual understanding and ensure that children's learning and developmental needs are met.
- Engage in ongoing professional development activities.
TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Transportation is provided for the families enrolled in the Head Start Program through the school corporation in which the child attends classes. If transportation is available in your school district, parents or guardians will be contacted by mail shortly before school starts to inform them of the times for pick-up, drop-off, and specific locations where this will occur. Buses will pick-up and drop-off in front of the address that is supplied to Head Start. Exceptions may be necessary for apartment complexes, housing complexes, or mobile home parks where the bus cannot stop directly in front of the house. Parents who are participating in transportation should be aware of the procedures that are established for the safety of your child.

Head Start Schools are SMOKING FREE. There is no smoking allowed on the grounds at any of the Head Start facilities. Smoking is also not permitted while standing at the bus stops before or after the pick-up or drop-off times.

Address/Name/Phone Changes: When there is a change in any of your child's information, you must contact your Family and Community Specialist immediately. Head Start cannot guarantee your child's placement, session, site or continued services once this form has been submitted. This process may take up to 2 weeks. Transportation changes may take 14 business days to process before transportation can be provided for your child. Families will be limited to a maximum of two address changes per school year.

Misconduct on the Bus:
- Bus drivers / monitors will complete a School Bus Incident Report on the misbehavior, discuss issues with parent, and inform Head Start staff.
- Bus misconduct will be addressed according to school corporation policies.

EARLY HEAD START TRANSPORTATION POLICIES:

Pick-up:
- The parent and child must be present when the bus arrives
- A parent must ride with the child on the bus

Drop-off:
- Infant/toddlers will only be transported by bus with the parent present and on the bus with the child.
- Parents and children will only be dropped off at the pick-up address.

HEAD START TRANSPORTATION POLICIES:

Pick-up:
- An ADULT must be present with the child when the bus arrives.
- An ADULT must escort the child to the bus, handing the child to the bus monitor.
- To report your child’s absence, contact your child’s classroom.
- Children are asked to leave all toys, candy, and any other snacks at home.
- Children are expected to respectfully follow bus rules and be respectful of adults and other students.
- Child Safety Seats must be used by all children riding the bus.

Please have your child ready in the morning 5 minutes before the bus arrives in order for the child to quickly and safely board the bus. The bus monitor will assist the child(ren) on and off the bus. The bus will not wait longer than one (1) minute for the child(ren). If your child(ren) misses the bus, you may bring your child to the school. You must report to front office to receive sign in information.

**Drop-off:**
- Children will only be released to the responsible adult whose name has been listed on the child’s emergency form. Changes or additions to this list must be made in writing and provided to the Family and Community Specialist, who will forward to the Head Start office.
- An ADULT must walk to the bus and retrieve the child from the bus monitor.
- If another adult will be accepting your child, the parent must provide a written permission notification to FACS, prior to the event. The note must clearly state the person’s name, address, and telephone number. Be sure to notify the person you have designated to receive your child that they will be required to sign a responsibility form and also provide photo identification or, if you are not at home, your child will not be dropped off.

The transportation department expects that a parent or guardian will be at home at the designated time to receive the child. If no one is available, a phone call will be made to your home phone number, emergency contact name, and the child will be returned to the school. If no contact is made by calling these numbers, Child Protective Services will be called and the child will be turned over to them as abandoned. It is VERY IMPORTANT that parents and guardians take seriously the responsibility of being home for their child.

If a child is returned to the school more than 3 times, the child will be placed on the Head Start Waitlist.

- The first time that a child is returned to the school, a written and verbal warning will be issued.
- The second time that a child is returned to the school, a second written warning will be issued.
- The third time a child is returned to the school, transportation will be immediately suspended and the child placed on the Head Start Waitlist. The child will not be allowed to return to school until a conference is scheduled with the Family and Community Specialist, the parent, the classroom teacher, and the Program Service Manager.
For those who drop their child off at school:

Please do not drop your child off more than 5 minutes before school is designated to begin. Teachers need time to prepare for the day. If you arrive prior to this you must stay with your child until the class begins. You must sign your child in when arriving and sign your child out when departing. The sign in/out sheet will be available in your child’s classroom.

IS YOUR HEAD START CHILD WELL ENOUGH TO BE IN SCHOOL TODAY?

We are all working together to keep our children, families and staff healthier! For this reason it is important for parents to know and understand the policy to temporarily dismiss a child from the classroom. It begins by determining if their condition poses a health hazard to other children and staff. Any child out for 3 or more consecutive days will require a doctor’s note before entering school.

EXCLUSION POLICY: As a part of the policy, any contagious illness will be temporarily excluded from class. They may only return when they have documented treatment from their doctor.

All About HighScope

What is the HighScope education approach?

HighScope is an “active learning” approach to educating children from birth to young adulthood. Developed in 1962 in Ypsilanti, Michigan, the HighScope approach is used in many preschools and Head Starts around the world. Long term studies show the HighScope approach promotes the healthy development of children and provides long-lasting benefits through adulthood.

What is HighScope viewpoint about education?

Children’s interests and choices are at the heart of HighScope Programs. This approach to education is called “child-initiated learning.” We provide children with wide variety of materials and plan experiences and expand their learning. We encourage this learning by observing, supporting and understanding what they do. We plan experiences for children that encourage independent thinking, initiative (the ability to make and then follow through on a plan), and creativity. Young children’s capabilities develop quickly when they act on their own ideas, use materials freely, and exercise their imaginations.

What are HighScope’s goals for young children?

- To learn through active involvement with people, materials, events, and ideas.
- To become independent, responsible, and confident-ready for school and life.

- To learn to plan many of their own activities and carry them out and talk with other children and their teachers about what they have done and what they have learned. To gain knowledge and skills in important content areas including language and literacy, initiative, social relationships, creative representation, movement, music and logical thinking.

**What are the features of the HighScope approach to early childhood education?**

- **Active learning-** Children are involved in direct hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas.

- **Adult-child interaction-** We create a safe setting where children can pursue their interests and learning. We observe and interact with children at their level to discover how they think and learn. We share control of all learning experiences and encourage children to solve problems with materials, turn to other children for help, work together, and resolve conflicts together.

- **Learning environment-** furniture and equipment are arranged and labeled in several clearly laid out interest areas such as the block area, house area, art area, book area, toy area, and sand and water area.

- **Daily Routine-** Each day follows a similar schedule of events called the daily routine which provides consistency and predictability for both children and adults. A daily plan-do-review process (the core of the daily routine) gives the children the opportunity to decide what they intend to do, follow through on it and then reflect on it. Large and small groups are also part of the daily routine along with meals and outside time.

- **Assessment-** Teachers write down factual notes about each child’s behaviors, experiences, and interests. We use the COR (Child Observation Record) to measure each child’s development. Based on these observations we plan experiences that will encourage each child’s growth and development.

**How can our family use the HighScope approach at home?**

You can provide many different learning materials, often using everyday objects that cost very little or nothing. You can encourage your children to make plans, carry them out, and talk about them, and talk about what they have learned from their experience. You can try to be more consistent and predictable in your routines so everyone in your family knows what to expect.

You are welcome to visit your child’s Head Start classroom and see the HighScope curriculum in action. Our classroom teachers will visit with you twice at your home and will have two scheduled parent-teacher conferences with you. From these home and classroom visits, we learn from one another and become partners in promoting the growth of your child. Together we can listen to, talk to, and plan with children in ways that encourage their development and strengthen learning.
HUMAN RESOURCES

Employment

Early Head Start and Head Start parents are given priority for becoming paid employees of the program, i.e. Positions such as:

- Administrative Staff
- Paraprofessionals
- Secretary
- Teachers (appropriate degree required)
- Other positions as they become available

Parents interested in employment may complete an application at the Head Start office:

Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium
245 N. Lombardy Drive, Suite A
South Bend, IN 46619

Parents are encouraged to apply for positions.

Career Development

Most jobs in Head Start require higher education (college degrees). The South Bend and Elkhart communities offer adult courses that lead to a high school diploma, or GED. Information about these courses may be obtained by calling the South Bend Community School Corporation at 283-8000 or Elkhart School Corporation at 262-5500.

Post high school classes are available at several local institutions, for example:
- Indiana Technical College (Ivy Tech)
- Local Universities (Bethel College, Indiana University (IUSB), Davenport College, and Goshen College)

Early Head Start and Head Start will strive toward the betterment of its employees and parents. Training is offered to enhance parent and employee marketable skills. Career development strategies include job enhancement, professional training, educational opportunities, and a sincere desire to maximize potential.

The Child Development Associate (CDA) program provides training for parents in child development and early childhood education to explore related areas with the objective of up-grading their skills and competencies in career development.

For information regarding career development, contact Human Resources at 283-8127.
A PERSONAL INFORMATION
The person below MUST BE the same person applying for Lifeline service. Please do not forget to sign the application in Section E.

First Name: __________________________________________ Last Name: __________________________________________

Date of Birth: __/___/______ Last 4 digits of SSN: __ __ __ __ Home Telephone Number: ____________________________

Email: ____________________________

Home Address: Is this a temporary address? □

Street Address: ____________________________ Apt: ____________________________

City: ____________________________ State: __________ Zip Code: ____________________________

Mailing Address: (if different from above)

Street Address: ____________________________ Apt: ____________________________

City: ____________________________ State: __________ Zip Code: ____________________________

COMPLETE SECTION B OR C

B PROGRAM-BASED ELIGIBILITY
Fill in bubbles for all programs that you or a household member are currently enrolled in. You must provide proof of program participation (DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS). This could include a copy of your benefit ID card, a copy of an eligibility letter from an authorized agency or current or prior year’s statement of benefits.

☐ Medicaid
☐ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
☐ Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
   (Not the same as Social Security Benefits)

☐ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
☐ Federal Public Housing Assistance (Section 8)
☐ Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
☐ National School Lunch Program’s Free Lunch Program

REMEMBER: YOU MUST PROVIDE A COPY OF YOUR PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

-OR-

C INCOME-BASED ELIGIBILITY
Calculate TOTAL household income by reporting the income of all adult persons residing in your home in the appropriate category. REMINDER: YOU MUST PROVIDE PROOF OF INCOME (DO NOT SEND ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Maximum Yearly Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$15,079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$20,425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>$25,771</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>$31,117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$36,463</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If you have more than 5 people in your household, write the number and add $5,346 for each additional person on top of the $36,463.

Proof of income reported: Choose an item from the list below and include it with your application.

Three consecutive months of one of these statements (from the previous 12 months): -OR-

☐ Your pay stubs
☐ Social Security benefits statement
☐ Veterans Administration benefits statement
☐ Retirement/Pension benefits statement
☐ Unemployment/Workers’ Compensation benefits statement

One of these documents:

- Prior year’s State or Federal income tax return
- Income statement from employer
- Federal letter of participation in General Assistance
- Divorce decree or child support document containing income

TURN OVER TO COMPLETE

Mail the Application to: Assurance Wireless, PO Box 7600, Mattoon, IL 61938-9807

Fax materials to: 1-877-732-3018
ACCOUNT PIN & SECRET ANSWER
If you qualify, you'll be asked to enter your Account PIN whenever you access your Assurance Wireless account. If you ever forget your PIN, we'll ask you for your Secret Answer. To keep your service working, you will need to remember both of these answers. Please write them down for safekeeping.

CHOOSE YOUR ACCOUNT PIN:
Think of a secret 6-digit number that's easy to remember, keeping these rules in mind:
- No more than 3 consecutive numbers in a row  
  (123456 won't work)
- No repeated numbers next to each other  
  (445566 won't work)
- Numbers only (no symbols or letters)

CHOOSE YOUR SECRET ANSWER:
What is your favorite city?

Your Account PIN: _______ _______ _______ _______

AND-

Your Secret Answer:

SIGNATURE
By signing below, I certify under penalty of perjury that the information contained within this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that providing false or fraudulent information to receive Lifeline benefits is punishable by law.

- I certify that the information contained within this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

- I understand that Lifeline is a federal government benefit program and that willfully making a false statement or providing fraudulent information in order to obtain this government benefit may result in fines, imprisonment, de-enrollment, or permanent removal from the program.

- I understand that only one Lifeline discounted service (landline or wireless) is available per household. A household is defined as an individual or group of individuals who live together at the same address and share income and expenses. A household is not permitted to receive Lifeline benefits from multiple providers. I understand that violation of the one-per-household rule constitutes a violation of federal rules and will result in de-enrollment from the Lifeline program and potential prosecution by the United States government.

- I understand that Lifeline is a non-transferable benefit. I will not transfer to any third party, including another eligible individual, any of the rights or benefits received under the Assurance Wireless service.

- I certify that I participate in a qualifying federal program or meet the income qualifications to establish eligibility for Lifeline. I have provided documentation as proof of eligibility for Section B or Section C.

- I certify that my household will receive only one Lifeline benefit. To the best of my knowledge, (i) I currently have a Lifeline plan with a different provider, and (ii) I am not receiving a Lifeline benefit or (iii) if I currently have a Lifeline plan with a different provider, and (if approved for Assurance Wireless service, I will keep my current provider) that I am receiving a federal Lifeline Assistance benefit from Assurance Wireless.

- I certify that if I have provided a temporary address: Assurance Wireless will attempt to verify every 90 days that I continue to reside at that address, and I must notify Assurance Wireless within 30 days of any change of address. If I do not respond to Assurance Wireless' address verification attempts within 30 days, I may be de-enrolled from Assurance Wireless service.

- I certify that I will inform Assurance Wireless within 30 days of any change of address, and I may be subject to penalties if I fail to do so:
  - I no longer participate in a Lifeline qualifying program or my annual household income exceeds 135% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.
  - I am aware that my household is receiving more than one Lifeline benefit.
  - For any other reason, I no longer meet the criteria for federal Lifeline support.

- I authorize Assurance Wireless or its agent to access any records (including financial records) required to verify my eligibility for Assurance Wireless service. I authorize state or federal agency representatives to discuss with, and or provide information to, Assurance Wireless verifying my participation in public assistance programs that qualify me for Assurance Wireless service.

- I authorize Assurance Wireless to provide access to or release any records required for the administration of Assurance Wireless service.

- I understand that the completion of this application does not constitute immediate approval for Assurance Wireless service.

YOU MUST INITIAL THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS BELOW:

- No one in my household is receiving Lifeline benefits from another provider to my knowledge.

- I understand that I may be required to re-certify continued eligibility for Lifeline at any time, and that failure to do so will result in the termination of my Lifeline benefits.

- I consent to have my personal identification information shared with the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) (the Lifeline Program administrator) and/or its agents for the purpose of confirming that neither I nor my household receives more than one Lifeline benefit.

X ____________________________
SIGNATURE (Please use blue or black ink)

DATE: __/__/____

X ____________________________
PRINTED NAME

☐ Have you remembered to initial and sign the Application?
☐ Have you remembered to attach copies of your documentation?