

Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium Head Start 2024-2025

For a full version of The Parent Handbook please go <https://headstartesj.com> or



SCAN ME



CLASSROOM #

CLASSROOM PHONE #

TEACHER

TEACHER ASSISTANT

Family & Community Specialist _____ **PHONE NUMBER** _____

NOTES:

PHONE NUMBERS

HIGHSCOPE CURRICULUM

Dear/Guardians, Family and Friends,

In the Head Start Program we teach the HighScope Curriculum. Teachers ignite children's interest in learning by creating an environment that encourages them to explore learning material and interact with adults and peers. We focus on supporting early learners as they make decisions, build academic skills, develop socially and emotionally, and become part of the classroom community. (HighScope Education Research Foundation 2022).



HIGHSCOPE CURRICULUM

MISSION/VOLUNTEERS

The mission of the Elkhart and St. Joseph Counties Head Start Consortium is to create seamless delivery systems of education and child development for underserved infants, toddlers and preschool children. We provide 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 obstacles, create a solid and secure foundation upon which to build.

Please Check with a Head Start Staff employee about in person volunteering. If the school your child attends allows in-person volunteers, Head Start invites you to join your child's classroom after completion of the following: background check, civil rights, drug screening and TB survey. We encourage your support for your child not only will this boost your child's self-esteem, but you are also earning money for the classroom through In-Kind.

Parents play a critical role when volunteering in their child's Head Start program. During the school year as parents participate in various activities and document the time, it converts toward an in-kind match like money, it tells the government we have taken our grant seriously and through the support of parents are able to meet the government's challenge.

Other ways to volunteer are:

- Monthly Site Meetings (In-person/Virtual)
- Home visits/ Parent teacher conferences
- Family Partnership Agreement
- Serve on our Policy Council (refer to page 27-28 of parent handbook)

MISSION/VOLUNTEERING (IN-KIND)

TARDIES/ABSENCES

For your child to take advantage of our program to the fullest, attendance is vital. Have your child at school on time. Please call your teacher to excuse your child ahead of time in case of illness, appointments, or family emergency.

Consortium's Attendance Policy

Federal law requires Head Start employees to inquire on a child's well-being within the first (1st) hour of school.

If your child is not able to attend school for any reason, families are to contact the Head Start teachers within the first (1st) hour of school. Families who do not contact their teacher within the first (1st) hour will receive a call regarding reason for absence.

If a child is absent for two (2) consecutive days without communication from a parent/guardian, a home visit will be conducted. Chronic Absences will require a Student Assistance Team (SAT).



ATTEND TODAY, ACHIEVE TOMORROW

TARDIES/ABSENCE

HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

All children enrolled in the Consortium will need to have their routine physical/well-child exams completed at the following ages and prior to entry: 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 36 months and then yearly. A dental exam needs to be completed between 18-24 months of age and every six months or more frequently as recommended by dentist for follow-up at the eruption of the first tooth and later than 12 months.

The Consortium requires that all children are up to date with state/federal immunization guidelines to attend Head Start. A copy of immunization records is required at the time of application.

Due to federally mandated standards, every child is required to be tested for lead and hemoglobin, between 9-12 months, 24 months, and between ages 3 to 5 years old if not previously tested. All Exams must be completed and submitted by the child's home visit and prior to school entrance.

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 and in accordance with the Governing Board Policy.

NUTRITION

The safety of children is our most important concern. We must restrict food prepared off site due to health considerations. Please do not bring any food or "treats" for birthday or holiday parties. 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. The Head Start Nutrition Consultant will arrange for all necessary meals 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. The Dietician will work with the staff and parents of any children with specific problems such as: Anemia, Overweight, Allergies and Underweight.

HEALTH, NUTRITION & CHILD WELLBEING

MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

If your child has a diagnosed health concern (asthma, seizure disorder, food allergy); a health care plan must be completed with a Head Start Nurse prior to the start of school.

If medication is prescribed for the diagnosed health concern; a **"parent permission to administer"** form must be completed prior to your child attending school. The parent permission form must be signed by the parent/guardian and prescribing physician. The medication can only be accepted in its original box from the pharmacy. The box must contain the pharmacy label including the child's name and instructions.

To help us maintain the health and safety of your child, please ensure the following requirements are completed before the first day of school:

- **Health Care Plan with the Head Start Nurse.**
- **Parent permission form signed by parent/guardian and physician.**
- **Medication received by Head Start Nurse in its original container/box.**

If medication is required for school; an individual med bag may be required for emergency medications. **Individual med bags must be transported daily to/from school and handed off from adult to adult.**

Please see the last 2 pages of this flip chart for additional information on:

- **When is Sick Too Sick for School?**
- **Quick Guide: Isolation /COVID-19**

If medication is not required for the diagnosis, the physician must provide written documentation.

MEDICATION REQUIREMENTS

TRANSPORTATION

We have provided wristbands for your child. If you have not received them, contact your teacher or your Family & Community Specialist (FACS). Children with no wristband will not be able to board the bus.

- Children must wear a wristband for the first 4 weeks of school (30 days), and anytime a child changes site or classroom.
- Be at your stop on time. ~ Drivers will only wait 1 minute from the time the bus lights turn on until they are allowed to leave the bus stop~.
- Have your valid ID ready (Original ID) We cannot accept copies (i.e. electronic devices, cell phone or tablet). Parents also must be prepared to show the Photo ID at any given time in the event there is a substitute staff member filling in for the day.
- Parents/guardians please refrain from using your cell phone when putting your child on or getting them off the bus.
- When the bus arrives at the end of the day, only contact names listed on the emergency contact form (1520) can receive the child.
- Parents/guardians and authorized persons must use hand to hand contact when escorting children to and from the bus.
- Sign the bus manifest form from the bus driver/monitor when putting your child on and getting them off the bus.
- Hand the Med bag to the bus monitor/driver. The Med bag is **NEVER** to be in the child's hands or backpack. If a child does not have his/her approved Med bag they cannot ride the bus that day.
- If your child is not riding the bus on any particular day, please contact your Transportation Dept. and your teaching team within the first (1st) hour of School or as soon as possible.
- Please be respectful and patient with your driver/monitors/staff. Remember there will be other children on the bus. If you have a concern with the driver/monitor/Head Start staff, please contact your Program Manager.
- At the bus stop, for safety purposes, no animals of any kind or size should be within 50 feet of the bus stop.
- No Smoking is allowed within 50 feet of a Head Start Facility or bus stop.

Note/Reminder

Please do not enter the bus, as it is a "Class D Felony". Without permission from the bus driver.

PICK UP AND DROP OFF PROCEDURES

For those who drop off their child at school:

- Parents must use hand to hand contact with your child from the parking lot to a staff member, from the staff member to the car. Children must wear their wristband for the first 4 weeks of school (30 days) and anytime a child changes site or classroom.
- Have your original valid ID ready. We cannot accept copies (i.e. electronic devices, cell phone or tablet). Parents also must be prepared to show the Photo ID at any given time in the event there is a substitute staff member filling in for the day.
- If a child requires an individual Med bag it must be transported daily to/from school and handed off from adult to adult.
- Please do not drop your child off more than 5 minutes before school is designated to begin.
- If you arrive prior to school starting, you must stay with your child until staff arrive to receive your child.
- You must sign your child in when arriving and sign your child out when departing.

Note /Reminder

Please allow at least two (2) weeks for changes to be processed by our enrollment team after completing a **Change of Status Form (COS)**.

TRANSPORTATION