



FAMILY HANDBOOK

EARLY HEAD START

2019-2020

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Introduction

My Child's Program Information

Center/Home Visitor:

Address:

Phone Number:

Class hours or Home Visit Schedule:

Teacher's names:

Site Supervisor:

Early Head Start Manager:

Welcome!

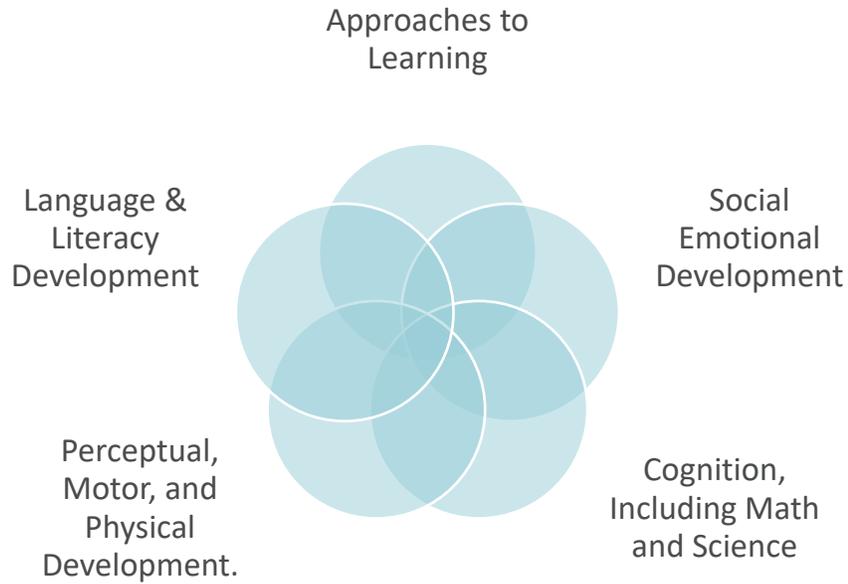
Welcome to Early Head Start. Thank you for enrolling your child in our program! This Family Handbook was written to help you know more about our program and how your child and your family might best use our many services.

What is Early Head Start?

Early Head Start is a program funded by the federal government for pregnant women and families of infants and toddlers. Early Head Start believes that **parents are the first and most influential teachers, nurturers and advocates of their children**. The Early Head Start staff work together with parents to enhance each child's education and development, health, family support and community support. Each family's culture, language, values and traditions are respected and promoted. Children with special needs are embraced in the Early Head Start programs. We consider every child a unique person with individual strengths and needs. Parents and staff work together to create individualized programs for every child.

School Readiness

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



Family's support for school readiness:

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

Section 1: Program Options

Early Head Start Centers

Our EHS teaching staff implement a research-based curriculum called the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, & Twos, which has three main ways to support your child's development. These are Intentional Experiences, Individualization, and Routines as Learning. Teachers begin with relationship building, in order to create a sense of community within the classroom. In the classroom all children can feel secure, nurtured and supported by the environment, their teacher and YOU. Each new group of individuals bring with them different interests, abilities, cultures, and families. Each child arrives at our door with backgrounds of experience that enriches our program. We want to create an environment that says, "All are welcome here."

The goal is to celebrate individuals while creating a sense of community.

The EHS classrooms are designed to make your child feel welcome, comfortable, safe and secure. Child-sized furniture and specific play areas allow children to safely explore things that are interesting to them. You will see lots of toys and materials that encourage young children to build, explore, pretend, look at books, draw, paint and mold, respond to and play music, and even cook. We also have couches where you or a teacher can sit and cuddle or read with your child.

Children each have a special area (cubby) where they can hang up their coat and store their extra clothes and things.

Learning about Themselves

In the first three years, infants and toddlers begin creating a picture of who they are, what they can do, and what they think and feel. A child's brain develops more in these first three years than any other time in their life.

We know that how we respond to your children while they are with us in the Center is very important in helping your child learn and develop.

We will be respectful and responsive to your child, share our interest in your child's accomplishments and discoveries, and create an environment where your child can safely participate in daily routines and activities. This will help show your child that they are important, interesting and competent.

Your Child's Primary Teacher

Infants and Toddlers develop best when they have a trusted caregiver that they know they can turn to. Each teacher is assigned a group of children to provide primary care. Your child will be diapered, comforted,

ALL ARE WELCOME
HERE

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

eat meals with, and share activities mainly with his or her primary teacher. This helps your child know that he or she will always be taken care of at the center.

Your Child's Class Schedule

Children feel most secure when they have a consistent and predictable daily routine. Each of the centers has the daily schedule posted on the parent bulletin board. Notice how much of our schedule centers on daily routines. We use these routines as intentional learning opportunities for your child.

Hellos and Good-byes

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

Remember to always say goodbye to your child

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

Regular Attendance

Regular attendance is key to your child's success and ability to benefit from the Early Head Start and Head Start programs. If your child is not in class, how can he or she learn? When children come to class consistently, including arriving and leaving on time, they are able to build on skills and knowledge from previous learning, and develop strong connections with other children and teachers. When children miss class or arrive late or leave early, they miss out. See the full attendance policy under **Program Policies** for more details.

Parents need to sign their child both in and out of the Early Head Start Program. The person who signs the child in and out must use his/her full legal signature and record the time of the day (Community Care Licensing, Title 22, Section 101229.1 (a) (1)).

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

Parents must write the names, current addresses and telephone numbers of people who can pick up and drop off their child on the Emergency Contact Form. Children cannot be picked up by anyone who seems under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Make sure an authorized adult is on time to pick up your child every day. Your child feels safe and secure when they know you will be there on time to pick them up.

If you are going to be late in picking up your child, contact your child's teacher immediately and let them know the arrangements you have made for your child to be picked up. If your child has not been picked-up from school after the class has ended, staff will contact people listed on the Emergency Form to pick up your child. **If no one can be reached and your child is still at the center 1/2 hour after the class ended, the police will be called. Parents who continue to pick up their children late may be dropped from the program.**

Routines

Daily Routines are opportunities for children and their primary caregiver, to build relationships and promote learning. Young children are learning many things during their daily routines. They learn best when adults are patient, responsive, and include them as active participants in each routine.

Meal Times

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

Your child is encouraged to try nutritious new foods, but will never be forced to eat or taste them. Food is never used as a punishment or reward. Monthly menus will be posted in the classroom and each family will receive a copy to take home. If your child cannot eat certain foods on the Early Head Start menu due to medical, religious or philosophical reasons, please speak to your child’s teacher.

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

Tooth Brushing

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

Diapering and Toileting

Your child will be diapered or given a chance to sit on the toilet at least three times while at the center. These will be recorded on the daily activity clipboard that you can look at when you come to pick up your child.

Diapering is a wonderful one-on-one opportunity for us to spend with your child. It is a time where we can talk or sing with your child and help your child feel positive about his or her body.

When your child is ready, we will partner with you to create an individualized toilet learning plan to help your child feel proud and competent about using the toilet and becoming more independent.

Intentional Experiences

Every day the teachers provide new experiences for your child to explore. These experiences invite the children to dabble in art, explore imitating and pretending, enjoy stories and books, taste and prepare food, explore sand and water, have fun with music and movement, and explore the outdoors. A child is never forced to join an activity.

Children are very creative and often find new ways to experience activities (like using the pots in the kitchen as firefighter’s helmets).



We delight in and build on these creative moments. We have handouts available on all of the experiences mentioned above that can give you ideas of things to do at home with your child. Please speak to us if you would like to know more about any of the activities.

Field trips are limited to walking neighborhood trips only. Parents are invited to participate. Teachers orient volunteers on walking field trip safety prior to our walks.

Home Visits

Your child's teacher will visit your home at least two times in the program year. This helps them see your child in the place they feel most comfortable and secure. This also gives you a chance to discuss different issues and

topics that are of interest to you, your family, and your child.



Individualizing Curriculum

Your child's primary care teacher will partner with you to individualize curriculum to support your child's growth. Initially, your child's teacher will support you in completing a developmental screener called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQs). One screener focuses on Social-Emotional Development (ASQ-SE), and the other screener looks at the rest of the areas of development (ASQ-3). The ASQ screeners will help identify any areas your child may need some extra support. With your input, your child's primary teacher will also complete a Developmental Assessment tool, called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), three times a year to look at your child's strengths and areas of growth. After each assessment, your child's teacher will meet with you to talk about your child's Early Head Start experience. Together, you and the teacher will talk about how things are going for your child and develop an individualized plan to support your child's development and growth. This plan will help guide the classroom's curriculum and provide you with activities you can do with your child at

home to prepare them for preschool. If there is any point that you have concerns about your child's development, or feel they may need additional support, please speak to your child's teacher and they can provide information and resources for your family.

Raising a Reader

Talking, singing, reading, and telling your toddler family stories, are all important ways to help your child build strong language skills. Our EHS program participates in the Raising-a-Reader program, which provides families the opportunity to borrow book bags for a week at a time. Families will receive the red book bags on a rotating basis, giving the opportunity to explore many different books with your child.

Weekly Home Activities

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

Home Base

In our Home Base option, Home Visitors use the research-based curriculum, Partner's for a Healthy Baby. This curriculum was developed for home visiting for families with children 0-3, and pregnant woman. The curriculum was designed to strengthen families and enhance the child's health and development, using the home as a learning environment. All home visits are designed to focus on family well-being in order to support the parent as the **primary influence in the child's education and development**. It is a time to work together to provide individual learning experiences using every day routines and materials in the home. The Home Visitor will facilitate interactions between you and your child, strengthening your relationship and providing you with tools to support your child's development in between visits.

Home Visits: 1 ½ hour home visits every week

Socializations: 1 ½ hour socializations twice per month

Home Visits

In the Home-based Program, you will have a Home Visitor come to your home for 90 minutes every week. Your Home Visitor will meet with you, your enrolled child and any other household members that want to participate. He or she will offer support, guidance, information and child development services to you and your family. You will have time to talk with your Home Visitor about your child and how things are going for your family. Together, you will plan activities for you to do with your child during home visits and during the week between visits.

Experiences and Routines

In the first three years, infants and toddlers begin creating a picture of who they are, what they can do, and what they think and feel. A child's brain develops more in these first three years than any other time in their life. During home visits and socializations, we will be respectful and responsive to you and your child, share our pleasure in your child's accomplishments and discoveries, and create an environment where your child can safely engage with you in daily routines and activities. This will help show your child that they are important, interesting and competent.

A great deal of a parent's day with infants and toddlers is spent feeding, diapering, changing, bathing, napping, etc. The way that these routines are carried out has a major impact on young children. Infants and toddlers are learning many things during their daily routines. These routines will make up a major part of your child's individualized plan. Your Home Visitor will share helpful ideas about routines to help you maintain a strong relationship with your child.

Socializations

Two times per month, you and your child will meet with other children and families at one of our Early Head Start Sites for Socialization “Play Groups”. The purpose of socializations for infants and toddlers, is to support child development by building strong parent-child relationships. Socializations offer a place where parents can share their parenting challenges and joys with each other and children can explore in a safe, nurturing setting.

You and your Home Visitor will work together to plan the upcoming socialization around what your child likes, their strengths and their challenges. This will help create special opportunities and experiences at the Socializations that can help your child develop.

The center where your socialization is held is designed to make your child feel welcome, comfortable, safe and secure. Child-sized furniture and specific play areas allow children to safely explore things that are interesting to them. You will see lots of materials that encourage infants and toddlers to build, explore, pretend, look at books, draw, paint and mold, respond to and play music, and even cook. We also have couches where you can sit and cuddle or read with your child.

Each socialization will include a child friendly nutritious snack. These snacks are an important part of the socialization experience. “Family style” meal service helps children to carry on conversations with others, learn to serve themselves, share food and clean up after themselves. This routine helps your child learn about healthy food, healthy eating habits, and develop self-help skills.

Your child is encouraged to try nutritious new foods but will never be forced to eat or taste. Food is never used as a punishment or reward. The menu will be posted next to the Socialization curriculum plan during each socialization. If you or your child cannot eat certain foods on the Early Head Start menu due to medical, religious or philosophical reasons, please speak to your child’s Home Visitor.

Individualizing Curriculum

Your child’s Home Visitor will partner with you to plan intentional activities to support your child’s growth. Initially, your Home Visitor will support you in completing a developmental screener called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQs). One screener focuses on Social-Emotional Development (ASQ-SE), and the other screener looks at the rest of the areas of development (ASQ-3). The ASQ screeners will help identify any areas your child may need some extra support. With your input, your Home Visitor will also complete a Developmental Assessment tool, called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP), three times a year, to look at your child’s strengths and areas of growth. After each assessment, your Home Visitor will talk with you about how things are going for your child and develop an individualized plan to support your child’s development and growth. This plan will help guide your time together with your child during home visits, at home between visits, and at Socializations. If there is any point that you have concerns about your child’s development, or feel they may need additional support, please speak to your Home Visitor and they can provide information and resources for your family.

Pregnant Women

Home Visits

Prenatal services are individualized for each family, depending on personal needs, goals and circumstances. In the EHS Prenatal Program you along with your home visitor will decide on a service that will best meet the needs of you and your family. This service plan will include the type of contact you will have with your home visitor, the duration of your contact, and when you will have contact. For example, some women and families prefer to

meet at a park to walk around for health, wellness, and exercise once a week for an hour. Some women and families may prefer to stay in contact via text, cell, or maybe even during a trip to a doctor visit, or an outing related to your pregnancy. In addition your home visitor can meet with you and any family member you wish to include. She/He will offer support, guidance, information and comprehensive prenatal services based on your family partnership agreement (FPA). When your baby is two months old they can then transition into the Early Head Start (EHS) program, taking the place of the mom as the primary client.

You And Your New Baby's Individualized Plan (Curriculum)

Learning about Your Pregnancy and After the Baby Arrives

You and your Home Visitor will explore topics of interest to you, based on our prenatal curriculum, "Partners for a Healthy Baby". We have lots of resource information and hands-on materials that we can share with you.

Some topics that will be covered are: Mother's Needs: We will be covering physical changes and discomforts, health care, emotional changes, diet and exercise; the effects of tobacco, alcohol, drugs and medications; sexuality, childbirth preparation, pre-term labor, after-baby care, and family planning.

Family Development: We will provide information on stress reduction, relationships and support, planning and problem solving, employment and finances.

Baby's Development: You will learn about fetal growth during pregnancy, bonding and attachment, responding to baby's cues, and infant development.

Preparing For Baby: Your Home Visitor will help you learn where to acquire the essential supplies for your new baby. We will also cover daily care routines, health care, the many benefits of breastfeeding, and good nutrition.

Prenatal/ Postpartum Appointments

Going to all of your scheduled prenatal/ postpartum appointments is very important. You will work with your Home Visitor to make sure you can get there on time and safely. Your Home visitor may be able to go with you if you feel you need more support.

Childbirth

Your Home Visitor will help you feel prepared for childbirth. Your Home Visitor will provide resources for

Remember to call your home visitor when your baby is born

childbirth education classes and breastfeeding support. They will also help you find appropriate support for labor if needed.

Postpartum Visits

Within two weeks after the baby is born, your Home Visitor will come and visit to make sure everything is going well. Your Home Visitor will be checking in with you often during the first month or so of this important transition time. At this point, your home visitor will work with you to complete an application for your baby to enroll in our home base program.

VOLUNTEERING

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

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

Parent volunteers do not need to go through the finger-printing process

Section 2: Parent Participation

We invite you to participate in the program in any way you can. You are welcome to visit your child's classroom at any time. Children do best in school when their parents are involved in their education. You do not need prior experience to volunteer or participate at your child's center. You might participate at the center by:

- Joining us at Circle Time,
- Supporting during meal time
- Sharing music with the children,
- Helping with projects,
- Reading or telling stories with the children,
- Gardening with the children,
- Sharing your child and family interests and traditions with the children.

You might participate at home by cutting out art project materials, sewing dress-up clothes and pillows, or repairing classroom furniture. While parent participation is not required, we need and want your help to make our program a success! Please talk with staff about how you might participate. All volunteers in the classroom need up-to-date immunizations and a current TB test (Community Childcare Licensing requirement).

Parent and Community Contributions (In-Kind)

Early Head Start is supported 80% by federal funds and 20% by local donations of goods and services. This 20% portion is called In-Kind. Every time parents, organizations, or other people volunteer their time, or give an item to the program, it is recorded on an In-Kind Form. It is put into "dollars and cents" terms so that it can be counted as being 20% of the total funding. Your In-kind donation helps us maintain our funding.

Father or Father-Figure Engagement

Father/father-figures play an important role in the lives of children. Boys and girls need involved and caring men in their lives. We highly encourage fathers and father figures to volunteer in the program.

Parent Committee

You are automatically a member of your group's Parent Committee. You are invited to attend the regularly scheduled Parent Committee Meeting. We ask your permission to give your name and phone number out to the other parents in your Parent Committee. Parent Committee Meetings

provide opportunities for parents to come together and plan activities for the school year.

Teachers, or home visitors will help guide your Parent Committee Meeting and together you will discuss and learn about topics that interest you and other parents. Staff can bring information and resources on topics that are most important to the parents in your Parent Committee.

Policy Council

Each Parent Committee from every center or program in Early Head Start and Head Start elects one member to the Policy Council. The Director of Head Start, Policy Council, and the Board of Trustees at Encompass Community Services (ECS) all participate in shared decision-making for the program.



Communicating with Early Head Start

Check out the Parent Bulletin Board (center base) or speak with your home visitor (home base) for important notices including information on:

- Classroom/Socialization curriculum activities
- Community Activities
- Monthly menu (centers or socializations)
- Parent Committee Meeting schedule
- Policy Council Meeting schedule & Minutes

We want your experience at Early Head Start to be fun and rewarding for both your child and your family. If you have any ideas to improve our program, please speak with your child's teachers/home visitor. If you are unhappy about anything in the program, please speak with his/her teacher/home visitor. You may need to set a time to meet where you can further discuss the issues. If you do not feel satisfied with the results, please feel free to contact the **Early Head Start Manager at 724-3885**.

Section 3: Health Services

Health services are an important part of the Early Head Start program. Part of preparing your child for school means making sure they are healthy and ready to learn, Early Head Start requires that all children in the program receive regular medical care, including immunizations and health screenings. If you have questions or concerns about these health requirements and deadlines, or if you need assistance enrolling in health insurance or finding a medical home, your primary care teacher or home visitor can help.

Health Requirements

Due Date	Requirements
Before 1st Day	❖ Immunization Record: An up-to-date copy of your child’s immunization record must be submitted in order for your child to be enrolled in the Head Start program. In order to start school your child must be up-to-date on his/her shots.
Within first 30 days	❖ Well-Baby Check: You must submit a copy of your child’s current Well-Baby Check. ❖ Tuberculosis Screening: The Well-Baby Check must include documentation of a Tuberculosis screening and/or a TB skin test.
Within first 45 days	❖ Hearing and Vision Screening: Early Head Start children must have a hearing and vision assessment completed. ❖ ASQ
Other Requirements	❖ Dental Exam: Children in the program must have a dental exam completed every 6 months. ❖ Hemoglobin/hematocrit: you must submit documentation of Hemoglobin/hematocrit testing. This test is usually completed by your child’s medical provider at 9 and 24 months. ❖ Lead Testing: You must submit documentation of lead testing. Your child’s medical provider usually completes this test at 12 and 24 months.

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

Teachers Giving Children Medication

Staff can only give your child medication when:

1. Medication contains a prescription label with child's name, doctor's name, date, dosage and expiration date. Medication must be stored in its original container box.

2. Parent/Guardian must complete and sign the Consent form to administer medication. The form must be given to the Early Head Start teacher.
3. For inhaled medication, the parent/guardian must show the teacher how to give the child the inhaler.
4. Additional forms may need to be completed depending on the child's illness/condition.

Applying Sunscreen

Children in the EHS Centers go outside each day weather permitting. We encourage children to wear protective clothing and use sunscreen. With your permission, staff will put sunscreen onto uncovered skin. Sunscreen should be applied 30 minutes before going out in the sun and every 2 hours while in the sun.

Disabilities Services

Early Head Start fully includes children with disabilities and provides supportive services to children who have Individualized Family Service Plans and tailors the program to meet the child's specific needs.

Mental Health Services

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

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

Classroom/Socialization observations

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

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

Nutrition Services

Early Head Start supports families in learning about and practicing good eating habits to help with growth, development and health. Early Head Start participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks. Your child will receive three meals while at the center (breakfast, lunch and snack). The meals will provide each child with at least 1/2 of their daily nutritional needs. There is no charge for these meals.

Encompass Early Head Start is a participating sponsor of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Federal regulations require that the Nutrition Services Division (NSD) of the California Department of education provide sponsors a process for making household contact that will be used by both the state agency and the sponsoring

organizations. Accordingly, all child care center sponsors must contact the households of enrolled children either by telephone or in writing, if a provider or center:

- Claims a greater number of children at any meal than the number of children enrolled or in attendance.
- Claims weekend or holiday meals when such meals are not substantiated by enrollment or attendance records.
- Reports uniform meal counts on a consistent basis. While the meal counts may not always rise to the level of block claiming, they nevertheless raise suspicion about the provider's or center's claiming practices.
- Claims his/her own children (which is permissible) when only the provider's children or one outside child is present (Day care home sponsors only).
- Reports that one or more of the same children are never absent from care.
- Records a consistently high number of children in attendance; however, the monitoring visits do not verify the high attendance figures, instead showing fewer children in care than is consistently reported.

If you would like more information or have questions regarding this regulation, you may contact the NSD at the address and phone number below:

The Child and Adult Care Food Program is administered in California by the Community Nutrition Programs Unit, Nutrition Services Division, California Department of Education located at 1430 N Street, Suite 1500, Sacramento, CA 95814. Their toll free number is 800-952-5609.

Meals at Socializations

Meal times or snacks are an important part of socializations. Child friendly nutritious meals and snacks are offered, as a part of the socialization experience. There is no charge for these meals or snacks.

Bringing Food to the Socializations/Classroom

No prepared food (homemade or store bought) may be brought to the socializations/classroom. Whole fruits and vegetables are allowed and must be washed and prepared at the center. Parents can talk with staff about providing (either staff or parents) the ingredients for a cooking activity with prior approval. Ingredients must be whole fruits and vegetables or items brought in unopened packages. See Celebration Policy under "Program Policies."

Non-Discrimination Statement (USDA)

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at 800-877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at the [Filing a Program Discrimination Complaint as a USDA Customer page](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call 866-632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: 202-690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Section 4: Family and Community Services

Family Strengths and Needs

At enrollment your Primary Care Teacher or Home Visitor will complete a Family Strengths and Needs Survey to help them understand any needs your family is experiencing (such as having enough food for your family, having a safe place to live, etc.). Together you and your teacher or Home Visitor can develop a plan to help you with these needs. Your teacher or Home Visitor knows a great deal about our community and can refer you to

community resources if needed. If new needs for your family come up during the year, please contact your Teacher or Home Visitor.



Family Partnership Agreement

The Teacher or Home Visitor will help you look at your hopes and dreams for your family, and then support you in establishing a “goal” for those things that are most important to you. Together you will work on developing a Family Partnership Agreement with steps towards a goal that is relevant for your family.

Family Assessment

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

Transitions

Our Early Head Start Centers are licensed by the State of California to serve child within a specific age range. At enrollment, your child’s teacher will give you your child’s exit date based on the age range of the center your child is attending.

At least six months before your child’s 3rd birthday your child’s teacher or home visitor will begin to develop a Pre-school Transition Plan with you. At that time your child’s teacher or home visitor will provide you with information on what Head Start Placement options are available for your child and how to apply for a placement in the programs. Your teacher or home visitor can also support you in accessing information regarding a community placement for your child.

Throughout your participation in EHS, your child's teacher or home visitor will help you look at what next steps you would like for your child's care and education. Your teacher or Home Visitor will help you look at the needs of your child and family, and help you to find what is best for you. During your time in our program, you may experience different types of transitions. Transitioning will be individualized depending on the type of transition (ie; Home base to Center base, EHS to HS, Pregnant woman to new baby). If your child will be transitioning to an EHS or Head Start classroom, you will have a chance to visit a classroom and speak with a teacher.

Section 5: Program Policies

Attendance

Your child will get the most out of their Early Head Start experience if they come to school or attend home visits and socializations regularly and on time. If your child has many absences (missing more than 10% of classes or 15% of home visits), your center team or home visitor will work with you to develop an Attendance Improvement Plan to enable your child to receive the full benefit of participating in our program.

Absences that are considered excused are:

- Illness of child or parent
- Family emergency (no more than 4 school days)
- Child's medical or dental appointment (Should attend part of class if possible)
- Child's therapy appointment

Center: If your child will absent, it is your responsibility to call the center and let us know. If we don't hear from you within the first hour of class time that your child will not be coming to school, we will call you to make sure you know your child is not in class. This is a safety precaution.

Home base: If you will need to miss a scheduled home visit, you must call (or text) your home visitor **at least one hour before your visit in order for the absence to be considered excused**, and attempt to reschedule for another time during the same week.

After 8 unexcused absences in the center-base program or 4 unexcused absences in home base, your child may be dropped from the program.

When to Keep Your Child Home from School/Reschedule a Home Visit

The Head Start and Early Head Start programs take many precautions to prevent the spread of illness. However, children in childcare do get sick. **See below to determine if you should keep your child home.**

If your child becomes ill at the center, the center staff will reference the Illness Policy, to determine if he/she needs to be sent home. Children will be sent home if the illness prevents the child from fully participating in their daily activities or if the child needs one-on-one care. When children get sick they want the comfort of home and the care of their families.

Children with the following symptoms should stay home or will be sent home (*Or reschedule home visit for Home base program option*):

- **Fever**- 101°F (oral) or 100°F (armpit) **with other symptoms** such as sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, etc. * A child must be fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medicine, for twenty-four hours before returning to class.
- **Behavior change**- lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, or persistent crying for unexplained causes. (In the Home Base Option, the home visits can continue if there are no other symptoms, and the home visitor can adjust the activities of the home visit according to the child's needs)
- **Coughing** – *uncontrolled* coughing or wheezing.
- **Rash** – when unusual, quickly spreading or with a fever or blisters.
- **Diarrhea** – Diarrhea is defined by stool which is occurring more frequently and/or is less formed in consistency than usual in the child. Exclusion is required for children whose stool contains blood, mucus

or whose frequency exceeds 2 stools above normal for the child per 24 hours and is not associated with changes in diet, medication or non-contagious illness.

- **Vomiting** – more than twice in a 24-hour period. A child who vomits in the morning before school or on the way to school should stay home. A child who vomits in school will be sent home.
- **Mouth sores** –with abnormal drooling, unless medical provider states child not infectious.
- **Eye infection** – red, or pink eyes with thick mucus or pus draining from the eye. Medical provider must approve readmission via a doctor’s note, with or without treatment.
- **Head Lice**- Children will be sent home at the end of class with information on treating head lice. Children should be treated with a combination of medicated shampoo and nit combing. Children can return to class after first treatment. If a child has lice on 3 or more occasions, a referral will be made to the health staff. *If in the Home Base Program, Home Visits can continue and your Home Visitor will support your family with information regarding treatment. See Lice Policy.*
- **Antibiotics**- *Many childhood bacterial infections require a 24 hour period on antibiotics before the child is no longer contagious (conjunctivitis, strep throat) and can return to school. If a child requires antibiotics for a longer period of time, a doctor can provide a note stating when the child can return to school. **
Note: Ear Infections are not contagious.

Parents must report all illnesses diagnosed by a child’s doctor to the center staff. For more information, refer to the Caring for Ill Children policy under our Health Policies and Procedures.

If you are unsure about sending your child to school or cancelling a home base home visit, contact the center staff/home visitor or the health staff at 724-3885.

Guidance on Dressing your Child for School

The following is guidance on dressing your child for school so that they are comfortable and safe while participating in daily classroom activities.

- ✓ Keep an extra set of clothing for your child at school at all times. If your child gets wet or very dirty, he/she can change their clothes. Include a pair of pants, a shirt/top, underwear, and socks.
- ✓ Label your child’s clothing with their name, especially their sweaters, jackets, sweatshirts, and extra set of clothing. This will help us identify which item of clothing belongs to your child.
- ✓ Dress your child in comfortable clothing, which is easily removable so that children can use the bathroom with limited adult assistance.
- ✓ Dress your child in clothing that can be easily cleaned (washed). Children are encouraged to participate in activities that involve paint, sand, water and outdoor activities. Please do not send your child to school in expensive clothing. For safety reasons, no clothing with draw strings is allowed (sweatshirts, jackets, etc.).
- ✓ Appropriate and properly fitting foot wear (shoes) is extremely important for large muscle development. Open-toed shoes (such as sandals, flip-flops, shoes with high heels, wheelies or slippery soles, or boots) may cause injury to your child while he/she is running or climbing on the playground equipment. Please send your child to school in tennis shoes or closed-toed shoes that do not have slippery soles. Velcro works best on tennis shoes, not laces.
- ✓ For safety and sentimental reasons, only post earrings will be allowed, no other jewelry please. The program is not responsible for lost jewelry.

To promote a safe, secure and positive environment for everyone:

- ✓ No clothing and/or accessories (hats, belts, jewelry, etc.) will be permitted that have a profane or obscene message, promotes violence, smoking, drinking and/or use of drugs.

Other guidelines to consider when getting your child ready for school:

- ✓ To minimize the spread of infectious germs your child may not bring cosmetics or nail polish to school.
- ✓ To ensure that home items stay at home (jewelry, toys, household items, etc.), please check your child's backpack on a daily basis.

Date approved by Policy Council: 9/24/14

Including All Children and Families

Early Head Start is dedicated to providing children with an experience, which is accepting and respectful of all people including culture, religion, ethnic background, creed, family structure, etc.

Home Language

All our teachers speak English and most of them speak Spanish. We are committed to encourage and support strong language skills for your child in the language(s) your child speaks at home. Your child will be exposed to both English and Spanish at the Early Head Start centers. If your child's home language is not English or Spanish, the teachers will partner with you to learn words in your home language to support your child in the classroom. If needed, we are dedicated to arrange a translator for any meeting and we also welcome you to bring your own if you so desire. We encourage you to share your home language, family culture, and traditions with our program and the other children in the classroom.

A Child's Rights

Early Head Start is required to make sure that all staff members treat each child with dignity. Each child will:

- Receive safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations.
- Be free from corporal or unusual punishment, infliction of pain, humiliation, intimidation, ridicule, coercion, threat, mental abuse or other actions of a punitive nature including interference with functions of daily living such as eating, sleeping, or toileting or withholding of shelter, clothing, medication or aids to physical functioning.
- Be free to attend religious services or activities of his/her choice.
- Not be locked in any room, building or center premises.
- Not be placed in any restraining device.

A Parent's Rights

Under California Child Care Licensing Regulations, parents have the right to:

- Enter and inspect the center during any operating hours.
- File a complaint with the local licensing office.
- Review, at the center, reports of licensing visits and complaints against the center made during the last three years.
- Complain to the licensing office and inspect the center without discrimination or retaliation.
- Request in writing that a parent not be allowed to visit your child or take your child from the center, provided you have shown a certified copy of a court order.
- Receive from the center the name, address, and phone number of the local licensing office.

- Be informed by the center, upon request, of the name and type of association to the center for any adult who has been granted a criminal record exemption.
- Receive from the center the Caregiver Background Check Process form.

For any concerns about Parent or Child Rights, contact our local licensing office:

Community Care Licensing Department
2580 North First Street, Suite 300
San Jose, CA 95131
(408) 324-2148

Complaints and Grievances

You have the right to express dissatisfaction with any aspect or decision regarding your care and experience with Encompass at any time free from intimidation or retaliation. We want to understand your situation and come to a conclusion or resolution that is agreeable to all parties involved. We take your concerns seriously. All information about grievances will be treated as confidential information.

I have a complaint. Now what do I do?

If you have a complaint or concern, talk to your teacher, Family Services Advocate or Home Visitor about your problem or concern. The program staff working with you or your child is the primary and initial point-of-contact. It is their responsibility to help resolve your complaint as much as they are able, and to report the complaint to their supervisor. At any time, or if you are not satisfied with the outcome and feel your complaint has not been resolved, you may file a formal grievance.

I want to file a grievance. Now what do I do?

You may file the grievance with any Encompass staff person or directly with the Encompass Quality Improvement Team. Grievances may be filed verbally or in writing, including by email. Grievances may be directed to:

380 Encinal Street, Suite 200
Santa Cruz, CA 95060
Phone: (831) 469-1700
Email: QIOfficer@EncompassCS.org

All grievances will be reviewed by the Encompass Quality Improvement Team. You will receive a written response within 30 days. A 14 day extension may be required if additional information is needed. If you are not satisfied with the final resolution, you have the right to file an appeal with the Encompass Clinical Director.

Joint Legal Custody

California law is clear that parents who have joint legal custody have equal access to all information regarding their child, including enrolling the child and making changes to the enrollment information. Court orders are required to prevent a non-custodial parent or legal guardian from certain activities such as picking up the child or volunteering in classroom/program activities.

Professional Boundaries

Staff **cannot**:

- ❖ Write letters regarding child custody issues.

- ❖ Provide testimony, verbally or in writing about any child, unless subpoenaed by court order or CPS mandate. It is not in the best interest of the child for staff to act with partiality towards one parent or the other.

Reporting Child Abuse

All Early Head Start staff are mandated reporters by California State law. All actual *or suspected* acts of child abuse **must** be reported to Child Protective Services (CPS), and to Community Care Licensing. Child abuse includes physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse and neglect. Staff may also refer families to other agencies for further counseling and support.

Sexual Harassment

Early Head Start does not tolerate sexual harassment of children, staff or parents. Our program provides appropriate supervision to ensure the safety of all children and adults at our center.

Adult Code of Conduct (Behavior Guidelines)

It is the expectation that all adults, in Head Start/Early Head Start/State Preschool settings and/or events (classroom/socializations/office/field trips/etc.) Conduct them in the following manner:

- ✓ Treat staff, adults and children with respect, courtesy and patience.
- ✓ Serve as a role model for children and other adults.
- ✓ Respect the cultures and practices of other people and families.
- ✓ Dress appropriately when volunteering in the classroom.
- ✓ Resolve conflicts with staff or other adults away from children and/or seek appropriate staff assistance.
- ✓ Have fun and enjoy the experience.

The following behaviors will **not be** allowed in a Head Start/Early Head Start/State Preschool setting and/or event:

- Resolution of conflicts while children are present.
- Physical or verbal punishment of children (includes threats and/or yelling).
- Threats to staff or other adults.
- Swearing/cursing.
- Smoking.
- Bringing drugs, alcohol or weapons to a Head Start/Early Head Start/State Preschool setting or event.
- Being under the influence of drugs, alcohol or inhalants.
- Quarreling/verbal/physical fighting and yelling at staff or other adults.
- Violation of Confidentiality Policy (sharing information you know about other families in the program).

If the above behaviors occur, parents/clients/Policy Council members will be asked (privately, if possible) by a staff member to stop the behavior. If the behavior continues staff will call the police. Staff will, at an appropriate time, refer the parent/client/Policy Council member to the program Complaint Procedures or offer referrals for counseling services.

No Smoking Policy

The Policy Council has voted to prohibit smoking at any Early Head Start site or Early Head Start event (including in the parking lots). Second hand smoke is not healthy for children or staff. We want to serve as positive role models for children.

Classroom Behavior Policy

The health, safety and well-being of each child enrolled in our program is of utmost importance to us. Young children are learning to express and manage feelings, and sometimes may display behaviors that are challenging. Our EHS staff will support children by being clear and consistent, promoting the development of positive social skills, encouraging mutual respect, strengthening self-esteem, and supporting a safe and secure environment for all children and adults. The program does not expel children for any reason. Refer to full Behavior Policy for details.

State Licensing (Reference: R. 400.9101, subsection c) prohibits the use of physical punishment as a way to manage children behavior. The withholding of food, basic needs or participation in special events, name-calling, ridicule, or any form of demeaning, harsh or frightening treatment is strictly forbidden.

Positive Behavioral Strategies

Positive behavioral strategies are proactive, and serve to teach children skills to manage their own behavior. Individual and cultural factors will be considered when planning for and providing guidance. The following guidelines will be followed:

- ✓ Teachers will provide a safe and developmentally appropriate classroom environment that supports positive social behavior.
- ✓ All adults will interact with children in a positive, friendly, and socially supportive manner, modeling positive social behavior with each other and with the children.
- ✓ Children will be taught positive social skills through direct teaching, modeling and practice.
- ✓ Children will be redirected from unsafe behavior to another appropriate outlet to support their healthy impulse.
- ✓ Teachers will provide predictable and consistent daily routines that will provide adequate time and support for children to transition from one activity to another.
- ✓ Classroom rules and expectations will be reviewed regularly and will be consistently implemented and modeled by program staff.
- ✓ Children's behavior will be recognized through positive feedback and encouragement.
- ✓ Occasionally, a child's behavior has the potential to injure him/her, or others. If this is the case additional strategies may be called for.

For additional details on the behavior policy, please request a copy of the Prevention and Early Identification of Behavior Concerns Procedures from teachers or Home Visitor.

Emergency Closing

In the event of an emergency, the Head Start Director is responsible for making the decision to cancel or postpone classes. Examples of situations that might call for canceling or postponing classes would be severe weather conditions, natural disasters, power outage, or damage to center buildings.

In the event of severe weather conditions or a natural disaster, parents should call the Head Start office at 724-3885 to see if their child's center will be open. If they cannot reach the office they can call 211 to get an update on school district closures. If their child's school district is closing so is their child's Head Start, Early Head Start or Pre-K center. In the event of a class closure, you will be notified via phone by a staff member or automated call.

When bad weather causes early dismissal or cancellation of classes, parents are responsible for picking up their child as quickly as possible. Parents should make arrangements for back up adults to act as emergency contacts and add them to the Emergency Form. This enables them to pick up a child in the event of such emergencies if their parents are unavailable.

If a natural disaster were to occur during a class session, staff will notify parents if the center is closing. Staff will stay with the children until all the children have been picked up.

Lockdown Procedure

If one of our centers is notified by the police that it needs to lockdown due to police action in the area, the staff will keep all the children inside the center. The blinds will be drawn and the doors will be locked. Staff will not be able to unlock the doors until the police tell them to reopen. They will place a **red** paper in the window near the door to let parents know that the center is locked down. The Head Start Office will notify parents of the lockdown status by phone. Do not try to come into a center when it is on lockdown. The staff cannot open the doors. If you are inside when a lockdown is announced you will have to stay inside with the children. When the lockdown is over the staff will put a **green** paper in the entry window and the Head Start Office will contact families. At that point you can pick up your children.

Sometimes in a very serious situation, police will bus the children to a safe location. If this happens, the Head Start Office will call you and let you know where to pick up your child.

Staff will keep the children safe and comfortable for as long as the lockdown lasts.

Confidentiality

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

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

Videotaping and Taking Pictures

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

Notice of Health Information Practice and Privacy Policies

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

Introduction

At Encompass Community Services Child & Family Development Programs, we care about our participant's privacy and strive to protect the confidentiality of your child's personal information. This Notice of Health Information Practices describes the personal information we collect about your child; and how and when we use or disclose that information. It also describes your rights as they relate to your child's protected health information. This notice applies to all protected health information as defined by federal regulations.

Confidentiality

Family and child records will be kept confidential. All files will be stored in a locked file cabinet. Emergency forms will be filed separately and will be available at all times in case of an emergency.

Who can look at your child's file?

- Parent who has custody, foster parent, legal guardian
- Any person or agency that parent has given written consent to look at the child's file
- Center Staff
- Program Administrators
- Federal, State and County officials for audits or reviews
- Any court official or Child Protective Services (CPS) Worker with appropriate identification and documentation (i.e., subpoena, court order)
- California Department of Social Services Licensing Agency has the right to interview children or staff and inspect children's records without prior consent. They also may be admitted into the program to observe the physical condition of children. (Section 101200 b, c)

Sharing Children's and Families' Health Care Information

Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1966 (HIPAA), Encompass must obtain specific written consent to request or give out health care information about your enrolled child. Only the minimum amount of information necessary will be shared and only on a need-to-know basis in order to meet State Licensing and Federal Performance Standards. We will ask for specific consent from you before we speak with and/or share information with any of the agencies or professionals that you work with. Encompass may give out information without written consent in the case of a medical emergency, to report suspected child abuse or neglect, to inform county health officials of a reportable communicable disease, or as required by a court order.

You have the right to:

- Obtain a paper copy of this Notice of Health Information Practices on request,
- Inspect and receive a copy of your child's file,
- Withdraw this authorization in writing at any time for all future disclosures. Withdrawing authorization may prevent your child from participating in our programs.

Encompass Community Services Child & Family Development Programs are required to:

- Maintain the privacy of your child's health information,

- Provide you with this notice, which outlines our legal duties and privacy practices with respect to information we collect and maintain about your child,
- Abide by the terms of this notice.

We reserve the right to change our practices and to make new provisions effective for all protected health information we maintain. Should our information practices change, we will mail a revised notice to you.

We will not use or disclose your child's health information without your authorization, except as described in this notice. We will also discontinue the use and disclosure of your child's health information after we receive a written withdrawal of the authorization.

For more information, or if, you have any questions or would like to report a problem; you may contact the Privacy Officer: the Encompass Human Resources Manager at (831) 469-1700 ext. 113.

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you can file a complaint with the Privacy Officer or with the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. There will be no retaliation for filing a complaint with either the Privacy Officer or the Office for Civil Rights. The address for the OCR is listed below:

Office for Civil Rights
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, S.W. Room 509F, HHH Building
Washington, D.C. 20201



**LEARN, GROW,
THRIVE!**



WWW.ENCOMPASSCS.ORG

831-724-3885
225 Westridge Drive
Watsonville, CA 95076