

Five County Child Development Program, Inc.

This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider

2024-2025 PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to Five County Head Start and Early Head Start!!



Mrs. Janet Moak,
Family Service/ERSEA Director
Dr. Jonathan Bines,
Executive Director
Mr. Billy Craft,
Board of Directors, Chairperson

Five County Child Development Program's Mission Statement
"Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities."

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To stay up-to-date on information and events

Visit our website at www.fivecountyhs.org

Like our Facebook page at [Five County Child Development Program Inc. 1965](https://www.facebook.com/fivecountyhs)



Letter from Five County's Executive Director

Dear Parents of Five County,

Five County Child Development Program, Inc. would like to take this opportunity, to welcome all of our Head Start Parents. Thank you for entrusting Five County Child Development Program, Inc. with your child's education. Our goal is to instill values and principles in the minds of every child and to bring about physical, mental, academic and social development skills needed to succeed in life.

Five County Child Development Program, Inc. employs highly qualified, caring teachers and staff, to make sure that your child/children are properly taken care of while in our facilities. Five County's mission statement is "Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities." Five County Child Development Program, Inc. would not be able to carry out our mission or the philosophy of Head Start without **YOU!**

We look forward to partnering with you as we work together to give your child a Head Start. Thank you for your continued support.

Yours truly,

Dr. Jonathan Bines
Executive Director



Head Start Programs

Head Start programs prepare America's most vulnerable young children to succeed in school and in life beyond school. To achieve this, Head Start programs deliver services to children and families in core areas of early learning, health, and family well-being while engaging parents as partners every step of the way.

Head Start encompasses Head Start preschool programs, which primarily serve 3- and 4-year-old children, and Early Head Start programs for infants, toddlers, and pregnant women. Head Start services are delivered nationwide through 1,600 agencies which tailor the federal program to the local needs of families in their service area. Head Start programs promote the school readiness of children ages birth to 5 from low-income families by supporting their development in a comprehensive way.

Early Head Start Program & Expectant Moms Program

Five County is offering Early Head Start (EHS) services in Lincoln County only. This program will serve infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women. The Five County EHS program will provide intensive comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families and to pregnant women and their families.

Both programs support parents, mothers, and fathers in their role as primary caregivers and teachers of their children. Just like Head Start, the Early Head Start program promotes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of infants and toddlers through safe and developmentally enriched caregiving. This prepares children for continued growth and development and eventual success in school and life.

Parents will have the opportunity to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum. The program will assign a Family Advocate who can assist the family in obtaining needed resources. The Early Head Start Expectant Families Program assists pregnant women and expectant families by supporting healthy pregnancies that support children's learning and development starting in infancy.

CHILD CARE REGULATIONS SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

Dear Parents,

The Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities require that child care providers supply you with a summary of the Child Care Regulations that govern the licensure of child care facilities. You will find that information below.

The Child Care Regulations are the rules and regulations that each child care facility in Mississippi must follow in order to maintain their Child Care License. You, as a parent, are entitled access to these regulations. Among the subjects covered in the Child Care Regulations are:

Licensing Requirements	Health, Hygiene, and Safety	School-Age Care
Right of Entry and Violations	Nutrition and Meals	Summer Day Camp & School-Age
Facility Policies and Procedures	Discipline and Guidance	Programs
Personnel Requirements	Transportation	Hourly Child Care
Records	Diapering and Toileting	Hearings, Emergency
Reports	Rest Periods	Suspensions, Legal Action
Staff Requirements	Feeding of Infants and Toddlers	and Penalties
Program of Activities	Swimming and Water Activities	Release of Information
Equipment, Toys, and Materials	Children with Special Needs	
Building and Grounds	Night Care	

Appendices

Appendix A - Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting	Appendix F – Hand washing Procedure
Appendix B - Reportable Diseases	Appendix G - Diaper Changing Procedure
Appendix C - Nutritional Standards	Appendix H - Cleaning and Disinfection Procedure
Appendix D –Playground Safety	Appendix I - Communicable Disease/Conditions
Appendix E - Dishwashing Procedure and Return to Child Care Guidelines	Appendix J – Rules and Procedures for State Level Administrative Hearings

A full copy of the Child Care regulations is located in the Center Director’s office of your child’s Head Start or Early Head Start center. It will be made available to you upon request. You may also access the Regulations at www.healthymms.com (from the left menu, select Regulations and Licensure, then Child Care). You may direct your questions to the local licensing official, Kimberly Putman at 662-8417870 or you may contact the Child Care Licensure office in Jackson, Mississippi at (601)364-2827.

Should you have a complaint concerning a child care facility, contact the licensing official listed above or call the Child Care Licensure office, toll free, at **1-866-489-8734**.

Post Office Box 1700 • Jackson, MS 39215-1700 • 1-866-HLTHY4U • www.HealthyMS.com

Equal Opportunity in Employment and Services

Management Team

Executive Director

Jonathan Bines..... (601) 792-5191

Human Resource Manager

Regenald Byrd..... (601) 792-3251

Chief Fiscal Officer

Tangelia Reese..... (601) 792-3230

Child Health & Safety Services

Tanya Feazell..... (601) 792-3256

Family Service/ERSEA

Janet Moak..... (601) 792-5194

Education & Early Childhood

Latasha Harrien (601) 792-8573

Transportation

Evelyn Strickland..... (601) 792-4196

Maintenance & Facilities

Clevie Brent..... (601) 441-1985

Nutrition

Hadassah Devine..... (601) 441-1163

Disabilities/Mental Health/Transition

Tina Johnson..... (601) 382-6263

Parent, Family & Community Engagement

Sheanda Davis..... (601) 441-1574

Compliance Officer

Antionette Brown(601) 792-8162

Child Plus Manager

Lurine Price..... (601) 792-3235

Lincoln County EHS/HS Liaison

Robbin Dillion.....(601) 382-0567

Five County Head Start Centers and Phone Numbers

Collins-601-765-3386

New Hebron-601-694-2698

Hopewell-601-765-1070

New Zion- 601-265-5570

J.E. Johnson- 601-792-4243

Topeka- 601-587-0074

Richardson/Mamie Martin- 601-265-5120

Magee-601-849-9105 or 601-439-6011

Early Head Start Lincoln County – 601-867-0206 / or 601-441-7202

“Improving the Quality of Life of Children, Families, and Communities.”

Should you have any questions, needs or concerns please feel free to contact your Family Advocate.

Center Name	Advocate	Work Cell Phone Number
Collins	Ms. Hathorn	601-441-8422
	Ms. Jones	601-867-0211
Hopewell	Ms. Keyes	601-441-6134
	Ms. Owens	601-867-0212
J.E. Johnson	Ms. Buckley	601-517-5743
	Ms. Robinson	601-517-4787
	Office	601-792-8901
Magee	Ms. Newsome	601-517-2974
	Ms. Winn	601-867-0208
	Ms. Woodard	601-867-0203
	Ms. Young	601-867-0207
	Office	601-439-6011
Mamie Martin	Ms. Hall	601-867-0209
New Hebron	Ms. Hammond	601-867-0210
New Zion	Ms. Bledsoe	601-517-0335
Richardson	Ms. Cooper-Neal	601-517-0642
Topeka	Ms. J. Brown	601-441-6129
	Ms. Hammond	601-867-0210
Lincoln County Early Head Start	Ms. Gardner	601-867-0206 or 601-265-5562
Expect Families Program	Ms. Weathersby	601-441-7202



Five County's History

The History of
Head Start
1965-Present



President Lyndon B. Johnson officially declared the “war on poverty” in his message to Congress on January 12, 1964. In that message he outlined the nature of the Federal Anti-Poverty program and the Community Services Administration, formerly called the Office of Economic Opportunity, was established. Five County Child Development Program, Inc., a non-profit Mississippi Charter Corporation, is an outgrowth of this act of the President and Congress.

Community leaders, such as Dr. S. L. Richmond, Reverend L. Z. Blankenship, Sr., Mr. Edgar Bridges, Sr., Mr. J. C. Burns and others pioneered the birth of Sophia Sutton Mission Head Start by organizing the community, mobilizing public and private resources. The purpose of Head Start was and still is to serve underprivileged children and families.

Sophia Sutton Mission Head Start was an eight-week summer pilot program that started in March of 1965, in Jefferson Davis County under the directorship of Dr. S. L. Richmond. The Head Start program became a full year program in September 1966. In 1971, the program was chartered and the name was changed to Five County Child Development Program, Inc., serving the counties of Jones, Jefferson Davis, Covington, Simpson, and Lawrence. In the late 70's Five County discontinued services in Jones County. The Board of Directors directed the program from December 1971 through June 1972. In July of 1972, Ms. Magdalene White was selected as Head Start Director and served through June 1978. Mr. Preston White, Jr. served as interim Head Start Director from July 1, 1978 through June 1979, at which time Mr. Buford Graves was selected as Head Start Director and served from July 1979 through September 2000. Mr. Lee A. Frison, Sr. served as Head Start Director from October 2000 through May 2007. Five County has been under the leadership of Dr. Jonathan Bines as Head Start

Director since June 1, 2007. On June 30, 2014, Five County Head Start grant ended. The new Head Start grant was awarded to Five County as of July 1, 2014, with Dr. Jonathan Bines as Executive Director. In July 2020 Lincoln County was awarded to Five County, once again serving five counties in south Mississippi. Five County Early Head Start in Lincoln County will provide care to 48 Early Head Start infants, toddlers and expectant families. Five County Head Start, will provide services to 3- and 4-year-old children. In August 2022, the program established a partnership with the Brookhaven School District in Brookhaven, MS to expand its services to preschool-aged children in the Lincoln County area. The agency currently serves 528 three-to-five-year-old children and their families in Covington, Jefferson Davis, Lawrence, Lincoln and Simpson continues to implement its mission statement in each county.

Parent Newsletter

Parent Engagement

Parent engagement is very important to the growth, development and success of your child. Throughout the year we will need your support and cooperation. We are available to you for conferences about your child/children and to help with any concerns that may arise. (Policies are subject to change due to COVID)

In order for us to operate cooperatively and successfully this year, we ask you to please keep this handbook and make every effort to abide by these rules:

Children Attending School Daily

Please send your child to school **every day** they are able. Attendance affects your child's outcomes and success. If for any reason your **child will be absent or late, please notify the Center Staff before 8:30 a.m.** It is the policy of Five County to attempt to make contact with the parent if your child is unexpectedly absent and the parent has not contacted the center by 8:30 a.m.

Arrival and Departure

The centers hours of operation are between 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. We ask that children not be dropped off or picked up before or after that time to ensure the mandated child/teacher ratio for the safety of each child. Therefore, for all of our families, we encourage each of you to bring children to school to get the most of the day and to meet our goal of instructional hours and foster exceptional attendance.

Head Start

We are excited to open our Head Start classes at 7:30am, but not before. We would appreciate if your child arrived at the center between 7:30am and 8:30am (EXCEPT at the Mamie Martin Center (referenced on page 10) to participate in all activities that are planned, beginning with morning routines and breakfast which is served at 8:30am. Children who are transported on our buses, pick-up times and location will be communicated with you during parent orientation and the meet and greet transitional activity. Buses will depart all centers by 2:45pm. For those children who are car-riders, parents will need to sign their children in upon arrival and the same is expected upon pick up, to sign their child out in the afternoon. Parents are required to buckle their child in their car seat before departure.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start center operational hours are **7:30am – 3:30pm**, Monday through Friday. Unfortunately, transportation will not be provided for our Early Head Start families. The same arrival and departure processes will be followed as Head Start, that is sign-in and sign-out with the addition of parents speaking to their child's teacher to complete a morning check and in the afternoon collecting a daily communication of the day. Remember children are expected to be picked up by 3:30pm daily. Parents are required to buckle their child in their car seat before departure.

If circumstances arise and it is necessary to leave earlier or later in either case, parents will be notified.

Head Start

We are unable to permit your child to bring food, toys or money to school.

Early Head Start

It is permissible for mother's who are breastfeeding to bring in breast milk and it will be properly stored to feed your infant. In addition, you will not be required to bring formula, dry cereal, bottles, or sippy cups for your child. These

items will be provided for the children. Formula and pureed infant food will also be provided and our Nutrition and Health Services staff along with the Family Advocate will work with you to ensure we have food options available as your child is introduced at specific intervals. Bottles and sippy cups will be properly labeled with your child's name and sterilized onsite. For the older toddlers, we will follow the Head Start process referenced above and according to solid food introductions.

Updated Contact Information

Please keep all contact information *current at all times, this includes: phone numbers, physical addresses, and email addresses*. This includes a number where you or someone authorized by you can be reached in case of emergency. If your child gets sick at school, please be sure an authorized individual is available to pick your child up. Please share your email address and cell phone number with your Family Advocate, as this will be needed for electronic communication platforms.

Change Of Clothing

For Head Start, please send a change of clothing including under garments and socks (clearly labeled) to leave at school in case of emergency. Mistakes do happen and we need to be prepared at all times. We do art, and other messy projects on a daily basis as well as get down on the floor or go outside for other activities. Your child should be able to feel comfortable and free to participate in all our learning activities. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather.

We asked that Early Head Start parents send a change of clothing including under garment and socks. In addition, your child will not be required to bring a diaper bag or backpack as diapers and wipes will be provided by the program. At enrollment and throughout the year, you will need to communicate with your Family Advocate to provide information on diaper or training pants sizes as your child grows.

Sick Child

Please keep your child home if he or she is ill and notify the center. We are not equipped to care for sick children and some illnesses are highly contagious. For example: Fever, COVID, Flu, RSV, Whooping Cough, Pink Eye, Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease, Stomach Virus, Strep Throat, Lice or Ring Worms.

Parent Engagement in Head Start

Five County HS/EHS seeks to build an effective and supportive partnership with our families. We encourage parents to participate with their children in home-based activities. Parents are encouraged to work with their children in the home, collaborating with the center staff to support the child's Head Start and Early Head Start experience. Parents are also encouraged to attend monthly parent meetings, to be involved in decision making about your child's center.

Five County Head Start/Early Head Start seeks to:

1. Improve the quality of life of the children, families, and communities that we serve.
2. Support parents as the primary educator, nurturer, and advocate for their children.
3. Provide every parent an opportunity to have a positive experience in both Head Start and Early Head Start.
4. Ensure that parents are involved in program policy making decisions.

Partner with us to give your child a Head Start or Early Head Start!!

Be a part of the Five County Child Development team that endeavors to improve the quality of life for the children, families, and communities that we serve. We are looking forward to a successful year with you and your child.

INSURANCE COVERAGE:

Five County Liability Insurance Risk Management Partners Insurance covers students, volunteers and staff.

Parental Dress Code for Pick-Up/Drop-Off at Centers/Field Trips

Parents, Guardians and Authorized Persons must dress in a manner for the school environment that is neither a distraction nor a safety issue to themselves or others and must abide by Five County Child Development Program, Inc. policies and procedures as written.

We respectfully request that parents and designated persons who drop off and pick-up children to and from school or attend the agency's field trips follow all policies and procedures regarding parental dress code with

the expectation of the following:

- **No sleepwear** to be worn (loungewear, pajamas, gowns, boxer shorts, etc.)
- No beach wear
- No clothing that reveals any inappropriate areas
- No clothing with profanity, obscene language or gestures
- No exposure of under garments



Center Director/Head Teacher will have complete and final judgment on all matters concerning the interpretation of the standardized dress policy. Matters concerning appearance and dress, not specifically covered in the policy, shall be within the discretion of the administration.

Policy and Procedures:

1. Family Advocates or Family Engagement Staff will discuss with parent the dress code policy during interview/enrollment process.
2. Each parent will sign Parent Dress Code Policy and Parent Handbook Form stating they understand and will follow dress code policy.
3. Each parent will receive a copy of the Parent Handbook with policy outlined.

Dress code policy and procedure will be discussed during the Parent Orientation.

Parents not adhering to dress code policy and procedure must meet with Center Director/Head Teacher to address concerns. Parents and/or designated person(s) will be requested to vacate the premises and upon return be in full compliance of the dress code policy. The parent or designee must abide by the dress code when entering the centers.

Janet Moak– Family Service/ERSEA Director

1. Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance activities shall be the operational responsibility of the Family Service/ERSEA Department. Recruitment activities shall be on-going to ensure the neediest children and families are reached and receive priority.
2. Family Service and Education staff will work jointly to monitor each child's attendance. If a child is at risk of missing ten percent (10%) of school days per year, the Family Service staff will work with the family to develop appropriate strategies to improve attendance. If your child will be late, let the center staff know as soon as possible, or **before 8:30 a.m.** If unforeseen circumstances arise that may cause your child to miss school, please contact your child's Family Advocate to discuss your situation. In addition, Early Head Start families will complete an Attendance Survey in May (after Head Start classes are closed) to identify their child's attendance in June and July as the EHS classes will remain open.
3. The Family Service and PFCE Departments will collaborate with parents to establish individualized Family Partnership Agreements.

Non-Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of the Five County Head Start Program to implement affirmatively equal opportunity and non-discrimination to all qualified applicants, employees and clients without regard to race, creed, color, sex, national origin, or disabilities.

Drug-Free Work Place

It is the policy of the Five County Head Start Program to prohibit the use, sale, or dispensing of drugs and narcotics on agency premises. This policy covers all illegal drugs, alcohol, and legal drugs which impair an employee's ability to perform their job. The agency recognizes the harmful effects of drugs and narcotics on the individual user, abhors the unacceptable role model, such as persons present to the clients we serve and will not tolerate or continue the employment of drug users.

Smoking Policy/Smoke Free Environment

It is the policy of the Five County Head Start Program that no smoking is allowed at any time in all spaces utilized by the program. Employees found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

Head Start Fund Raising is Prohibited

Contact the Center Director/Head Teacher or Family advocate if you have questions concerning fund raising.

Disorderly And Disrespectful Conduct

It is the policy of Five County Head Start to provide an environment that is free of violent acts or threats. This

includes, but is not limited to, (in person, social media or by phone) intimidating or violent behaviors, maltreatment and bringing weapons onto the center’s property. Additionally, offensive comments, actions, or behavior toward other families, staff or children will not be tolerated. Center Director/Head Teacher will have complete and final judgment on all matters concerning interpretation on this policy and is authorized to call local law enforcement if needed. **Violators of this policy may be banned from the Head Start property.**

CHILD PICK-UP PROTOCOL POLICY

It is the policy of Five County Head Start that only the parents/guardians or authorized persons on the release form can pick-up their child from Head Start and Early Head Start centers, this includes the Head Start bus drop-off points. We ask you to list **ALL** release names at the time of enrollment and include people that may need to pick up the child in case of an emergency. As referenced early, our centers close at 3:30pm please make sure your child is picked up no later than 3:30pm daily. If parents are having challenges picking up at this time, we will implement the following steps which are discussed with each family at enrollment. The first occurrence will include meeting with the parents to identify barriers, strategies for improvement, and to reference the policy again. The 2nd occurrence, the parent will be given a written warning and on the 3rd occurrence, a child is not picked up by 3:30pm a referral will be made to the Department of Child Protection Services. Early Head Start and Head Start children will not be released to any individual whom staff has reasonable suspicions to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Please note, families whose children are enrolled at the Mamie Martin Center (Brookhaven, MS) the time differs from the other centers in our service area due to our partnership with Mamie Martin Elementary school’s pick-up and drop off protocols. Mamie Martin’s Head Start children must be dropped-off between 7:10 - 8:00am and picked-up between 1:50 - 2:15pm. If the Head Start children leave with older siblings from Mamie Martin Elementary School in the car line, they must be picked up no later than 3:00pm.

Head Start and Early Head Start Car Seat Policy

Parents are required to properly install and place their baby, toddler or child in a car seat on delivery and departure from the center. The safest place for your child’s car seat is in the center of back seat. The chest clips should be even with the child’s armpits. Make sure there is no slack in the buckle or straps. Contact your Family Advocate for more information on car seat safety.

Car Seat Recommendations by www.nhtsa.gov

Use the information below to help you choose the type of car seat that best meets your child’s needs or print out NHTSA’s car seat recommendations for children.

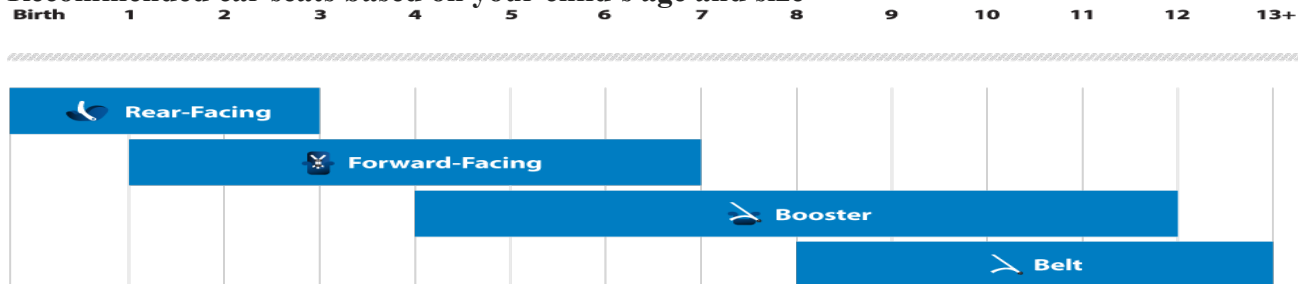
Select a car seat based on your child’s age and size, then choose a seat that fits in your vehicle, and use it every time.

Always refer to your specific car seat manufacturer’s instructions (check height and weight limits) and read the vehicle owner’s manual on how to install the car seat using the seat belt or lower anchors and a tether, if available.

To maximize safety, keep your child in the car seat for as long as possible, as long as the child fits within the manufacturer’s height and weight requirements.

Keep your child in the back seat at least through age 12.

Recommended car seats based on your child's age and size



Birth-12 Months

Your child under age 1 should always ride in a rear-facing car seat. There are different types of rear-facing car seats:

Infant-only seats can only be used rear-facing.

Convertible and all-in-one car seats typically have higher height and weight limits for the rear-facing position, allowing you to keep your child rear-facing for a longer period of time.

1 – 3 Years

Keep your child rear-facing as long as possible. It's the best way to keep him or her safe. Your child should remain in a rear-facing car seat until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the rear-facing car seat, your child is ready to travel in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether.

4 – 7 Years

Keep your child in a forward-facing car seat with a harness and tether until he or she reaches the top height or weight limit allowed by your car seat's manufacturer. Once your child outgrows the forward-facing car seat with a harness, it's time to travel in a booster seat, but still in the back seat.

Children's Attendance Policy

Parents are encouraged to send their child/children to school every day they are able and on the scheduled days. The school readiness outcomes and success of your child is affected each day they are absent. Please send your child to school each day they are able to attend, **no less than 90%** of school days. **Extreme absences could result in your child losing their slot in the program. Attendance plans and contracts are utilized as a result of poor attendance.**

My Responsibilities as a Head Start and an Early Head Start Parent

- To notify the center by 8:30am if my child will be late or absent.
- To send my child to school each day they are able to attend, **no less than 90%** of school days. Attendance is very important, and your child should not miss days unless they are ill.
- To learn as much as possible about the program to take part in major policy decisions.
- To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and my child/children's lives.
- To take part in the classroom as an observer or a volunteer worker and to contribute my services in any way I can toward enrichment of the total program.
- To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, Parent Committees, or serving on the Policy Council and explain the program to other parents and encourage their full participation.
- To welcome teachers and staff into my home to discuss ways in which they can help me increase my interactions with my child's growth and development at home in relation to the school experience.
- To work with the family advocate, teachers, staff, and other parents in a cooperative way.
- To guide my child/children with solidity, which is both loving and protective.
- To offer constructive criticism of the program, to defend it against unfair criticism and to share in evaluating it.
- To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development and my skills in area of possible employment.
- To become involved in community programs which will help to improve health, education and recreation for all.

My Rights as a Head Start Parent

1. To take part in major policy decisions affecting the planning and the operation of the program.
2. To help develop adult programs which will improve daily living for me and my family.
3. To choose whether or not I participate without fear of endangering my child/children's right to be in the program.
4. To be informed regularly about my child/children's progress in Head Start and Early Head Start.
5. To expect guidance for my child/children's Head Start or Early Head Start teachers and staff, which will help with total individual development.
6. To learn about the operation of the program, including the budget, the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.
7. To take part in planning and carrying out programs designed to increase my skill in areas of possible employment.
8. To be informed about all community resources concerned with health, education and the improvement of family life.

Important Parent Information

- Parent, guardian, or authorized individual must be at the drop-off location to receive the child/children.
- Parents are encouraged to send their child/children to school every day they are able on their scheduled days. The

school readiness outcomes and success of your child is affected each day they are absent. Please send your child to school each day they are able to attend.

- If you bring your child to school, please have them at school by 8:30am so they can take part in a full day of activities. **Notify the center before 8:30 a.m. if your child will be late or absent.** If you do not notify the center, the center staff must attempt to contact you to determine the child's well-being.
- Parents/guardians are asked to attend parent meetings.
- Please do not send an unauthorized person to receive your child from the school, they will not be allowed to pick up the child unless you have added their name on the release form.
- Please send **two large towels** by your child for rest and relaxation time.
- If your child is on medication that has to be taken at school, you must send written permission-dated and signed, and in the original container. Give the medication to a staff member.
- **Please do not send your child to school sick.**
- If your child is allergic to any foods/milk, the Nutrition Staff should be notified along with documentation from your family doctor.
- Food cannot be brought into or carried from the center.
- All parents are encouraged to volunteer. Volunteers must complete an application and sign an oath of confidentiality form and those who volunteer 120 hours must provide documentation of finger printing, criminal background check.

Parent Activity Policy

The Family Services and PFCE Departments will work in conjunction to assure "Parent Activities" are in compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards. The parent activity funds are allotted to provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects.

Parent Activity Fund Narrative

Parent committees are allocated a specific amount from the Parent Activity Fund to develop and implement parent projects and activities. The Parent Activity Fund is money set aside in the program budget to provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects. The Parent Committee is allocated a specific amount from the Parent Activity Fund based on the number of children at their site. For example, with a \$5 per child parent activity fund, the fund would be \$300 for a center with 60 children. The Parent Committee decides how to spend the funds and then request approval from the Policy Council.

Specific examples of the kinds of activities supported by the Parent Activity Fund include:

- * The fee to pay for a special speaker to present at a Parent Committee meeting.
- * Including parents on a field trip to the zoo and paying their entrance fee.
- * Paying the registration fee and expenses for a Parent of the Year to attend the State Head Start Association conference.
- * Purchasing ingredients for a cooking class for parents on low-budget nutritious meals or Chinese cooking or some other special food interest.
- * Including a family photo evening when the school photographer comes to take children's photos and using the parent activity dollars to pay some or a portion of the additional cost for the family portraits.
- * The Parent Activity Fund should be spent on the basis of project relatedness. The Parent Activity Fund must not be used for activities that are *solely* for entertainment. Entertainment can be defined as cost of amusement, diversion, social activities, ceremonies, and incidental cost relating thereto, such as meals, lodging, transportation, and gratuities. However, the Parent Activity Fund can be used for expenses where entertainment may play an incidental part in the activity. Spending must always be for program-related expenses or the spending would be unallowed.

Source: eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/fiscal-management/article/parent-activity-funds-narrative

PROCEDURES FOR SCHEDULING EVENTS

1. Parents at the center level will propose and vote for activities that provide parents the opportunity and experience in planning, developing and implementing their own projects.
2. The Center Supervisor or Family Advocate will contact Family Service/ERSEA Director for approval of activities to assure compliance within the Agency's guidelines.

3. A request would then be made for approval from the Policy Council.
4. Parents will be notified by written communication of the schedule of activity.

Mississippi's Child Abuse Law

“In accordance with Section 43-21-105 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, Annotated, “Abused Child means a child whose parent, guardian or custodian or any person responsible for his care or support, whether legally obligated to do so or not, has caused or allowed to be caused upon said child sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, emotional abuse, mental injury, non-accidental physical injury or other maltreatment. Provided, however that physical discipline, including spanking, performed on a child by a parent, guardian or custodian in a reasonable manner shall not be deemed abuse under this section.”

Any person who knows or has reason to suspect abuse or neglect of a child by a parent, legal custodian, caregiver, or other person(s) responsible for the child’s care, is required by law to make a report to the Mississippi Department of Child Protection Services. See Section 43-21-105 and Section 43-21-353 of the [Mississippi Code](#) for more information.

Five County Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

All Head Start and Early Head Start employees are required to report child abuse and/or neglect, no matter where the abuse occurred on or away from the Head Start premises, to the 1-800-222-8000 Hotline, in accordance with the agency’s Child Abuse Plan. Accusations of child abuse or neglect, including corporal punishment and isolation, against a Head Start employee by a parent, staff, volunteer, etc. should be immediately reported to the Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-222-8000 and then to the Family Service/ERSEA Director, Early Head Start Director (if the incident happens in EHS) and the Executive Director. The agency must report each allegation to the Child Abuse Hotline, Licensure Agency and the Regional Office.

Child Abuse and Neglect -Why Head Start Should Be Involved?

There are many reasons why early childhood program personnel become involved in child abuse and neglect, treatment and prevention. Among them are the facts that Head Start works with and for children. The law and policy require their involvement and professional responsibility demands it and that they have a deep sense of personal commitment to the children in their care.

Child Abuse and Neglect is a community problem; its solution requires community action to report suspected child abuse to Mississippi Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-222-8000.

Definition And Responsibilities of Policy Council

A. What is a Policy Council Representative?

A delegate from the local center who speaks for and voices the concerns and suggestions of the parents of the center they represent. The Policy Council is a board of parent representatives who help make decisions about the Head Start and Early Head Start Program.

B. Duties and Responsibilities of the Policy Council

Policy Council and a Policy Council Committee at the delegate level, must use ongoing monitoring results, data on school readiness goals and other information to conduct its responsibilities.

The Policy Council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions about each of the following activities: Activities to support the active involvement of parents in supporting program operations, including policies to ensure that the Head Start agency is responsive to community and parent needs.

Program recruitment, selection and enrollment priorities.

Applications for funding and amendments to applications for funding for programs, prior to the submission of applications.

Budget planning for programs expenditures, including policies for reimbursement and participation in Policy Council activities.

Bylaws for the operation of the Policy Council.

Program personnel policies and decisions regarding the employment of program staff, including standards of conduct for program staff, contractors, and volunteer including the criteria for the employment and dismissal of program staff.

Developing procedures for how members of the Policy Council of the Head Start agency will be elected. Recommendations on the selection of delegates and the service area for such agencies.

Who may/may not serve as a policy council member?

Parents serving on the Policy Council committee must be elected by the current Head Start and Early Head Start parents. In accordance with Revised Head Start Program Performance Standards, Subpart D 1304.50 (b) (6), no person can serve as a member of the Policy Council while any member of their immediate family (as defined below) is employed in the Five County Child Development Program.

HUSBAND, WIFE, FATHER, MOTHER, BROTHER, SISTER, SON, DAUGHTER, FATHER-IN-LAW, MOTHER-IN-LAW, SON-IN-LAW, DAUGHTER-IN-LAW, SISTER-IN-LAW, BROTHER-IN-LAW, AUNT AND UNCLE.

If you have a sibling employed at another center, you cannot serve.

An employee who has been terminated from the agency cannot serve on the Policy Council.

A person cannot serve more than (3) years on the Policy Council.

You must have a child currently enrolled in the Head Start and Head Start program. (This includes those who are legal guardians)

Policy Regarding the Rights of a Parent to Visit and Remove Their Biological Child from School

The following Five County Child Development Program policy reflects the rights of parents as mandated by law and reduces the need for the school to interfere in the private circumstances of families.

Biological parents have the right to visit their child in school while participating in Head Start classroom activities and field trips. They also have the right to remove their child from school during the day or at the end of the day. **Only a court order specifically stating that a parent is not to visit or to remove a child can overrule such rights.**

The divorce of parents and the granting of custody to one of the parents does not overrule the right of the other parent to participate in classroom/program activities or to remove the child from school property.

Grievance Procedure for Parents and Community Concerns

The following steps will be taken to resolve parent or community concerns:

All Head Start and Early Head Start parents or the community at-large shall have the right to present a complaint or grievance in accordance with the Policy Council By-Laws. Steps:

- Report complaint or grievance to the Center Supervisor. Most conflicts can be resolved at the center level.
- If the issue is not resolved at the center level take the following steps:
- Report the complaint to the Family Service/ERSEA Director.
- The Family Service/ERSEA Director will attempt to resolve all complaints or grievances with parents.
- If the Family Service/ERSEA Director is unable to resolve a grievance or complaint, she must inform the Executive Director.
- The Executive Director will attempt to resolve all grievances.
- If unable, the Head Start Director will contact the Policy Council Chairperson who will contact the Policy Council Complainant/Grievance committee and make recommendation to resolve the complaints.
- The complainant will be notified in writing of the decision of the Policy Council Grievance Committee. If the complainant is not satisfied with this decision, it may be appealed to the Board of Directors.

Promoting Regular Attendance Procedures

The Head Start Program Performance Standards states that **we must track attendance**. If a child is unexpectedly absent and a parent has not contacted the program within one hour of program start time, the program staff must attempt to contact the parent to ensure the child's well-being.

Parents are asked to notify the center by 8:30 a.m. if their child is going to be late or absent and please let the staff know when the child is expected to return. If the parent does not notify the center by 8:30 a.m., the staff must attempt to contact the parent to ensure the safety of the child. Parents are encouraged to send their child/children to school every day. The outcomes and success of your child is affected each day they are absent. Please send your child to school each day they are able to attend, **no less than 90%** of school days. Extreme absences could result in your child losing their slot in the program.

The following steps are to be adhered to, to comply with the performance standards.

- Teachers report to the Family Advocate when a child is absent or attendance is irregular.
- A program must implement strategies to promote attendance. At a minimum, a program must: (a) Provide information about the benefits of regular attendance; (b) Support families to promote the child's regular attendance; (c) Family Service staff will conduct a home visit or make other direct contact with a child's parents if a child has multiple unexplained absences (such as two consecutive unexplained absences).
- Staff shall inform parents of Average Daily Attendance (ADA) that must be maintained and the impact attendance has on the child and the program. And maintain contact case notes in child's folder.

Sheanda Davis- Parent, Family and Community Engagement Director

Family Engagement in Head Start and Early Head Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships and ongoing learning and development for parents or guardians and their children. Research has shown that children whose families involve them in learning at home are more successful in school. In addition, you personally benefit from involvement as well. We make every effort to involve parents in all aspects of every service area in the program. Parents or guardians are the most important people in a child's life.

Parent, Family and Community Engagement Service Area will work with families to do the following:

- To complete a Family Training Needs Survey:
- Assigned Family Service staff will work with families to complete the Family Intake Assessments
- Assigned Family Service staff will work with families to establish and implement a Family Partnership Agreement process that is jointly developed to identify strength, needs, interests, and goals. Families will review their individual progress, revise goals, and evaluate on an on-going basis until goal completion.
- Offer the opportunity for parents to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum.
- To provide information about the importance of regular attendance of children
- To provide information and resources on the benefits of bilingualism and biliteracy.

As a parent or guardian, you are so vitally important to your child; you are also vitally important to growth and excellence of our Head Start and Early Head Start program. We want it to be the best it can be for your child. No one knows your child like you, so attend meetings, share your opinion and communicate with the program staff and most of all, your child.

Get Engaged

- Attend and participate in parent meetings.
- Volunteering or observing in your child's classroom.
- Get involved with the Policy Council to become a part of the decision-making process for the agency.
- Participate in Parent/Teacher Conferences and Home Visits.
- Participate in center Family Engagement Activities (Read-A-Book Day, Mom Monday, Father Friday, Expectant Family Group sessions, and Teen Parent groups, etc.).
- Reading the newsletters and information Head Start and Early Head Start offers.
- Partner with your assigned Family Service staff about how you can become involved and develop parent/family and children's goals.

Teen Pregnancy & Parenting

Mississippi teen pregnancy was ranked number 2 in the nation with 25.6% in 2021. Teen pregnancy can cause significant repercussions on health, the economy, and society at large. In teenagers, pregnancies are more likely to lead to miscarriage, illness, stillbirth, and even death. Teen pregnancy is also associated with increased social and financial costs through the short-and long-term effects on teenage parents and their children.

Our Pregnant Moms Program will offer expectant moms the opportunity to work with our expectant mom specialist individually and participate in learning from the Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum. The Partners for a Healthy Baby is a research-based parenting curriculum developed by a multidisciplinary FSU faculty team with expertise in obstetric medicine, early childhood development, psychology, infant mental health, social work, and early intervention. Once mom has given birth and infant meets requirements the baby will be enrolled in our Early Head Start Program.

Father Engagement

Join our Dad's Dream Team

Our Head Start and Early Head Start encourages participation of the fathers/father figures involved in the lives of

Head Start children. Our program will make effort to reach out to and include fathers, supportive male family members and/or male caregivers in parent engagement activities. Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for men to volunteer in the program, participation in father engagement activities and provide input on designing special initiatives to improve the interaction of men with children. Our program celebrates and enhances the male parenting role by: Join our Dad's Dream Team

- Encouraging responsible fathering/male role modeling.
- Helping children and men relate and connect.
- Educating men about parenting.
- Creating opportunities for individual and group male involvement and leadership.

Engaging Parents with School Readiness

As a parent, I promise to do the following:

- Participate in center parent activities and volunteering at the center when able. Read to my child daily and review my child's displayed work.
- Keep the teacher and family service staff informed of home, health or situations which may cause a change in my child's behavior or performance (Parents and Staff as partners).
- Give input in the development of my child's individualized education plan, carry out and reinforce appropriate activities in my home to help my child achieve listed goals.

Tina Johnson, MHA-Mental Health/Disability/Transition Director

All children with disabilities have the right to a free, appropriate, public education and the child's parents have the right and responsibility to be involved in the decision-making process regarding their child's education. Parents and their children have the right to (a) non-discriminatory screening, (b) notification of any meetings concerning their child's placement, (c) placement of their child in the least restrictive environment, (d) appropriate educational and therapeutic services for their child, (e) a written Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) if the child has been diagnosed as having a disability, (f) due process hearing if their child is not receiving appropriate services. "Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007 defines "disability" as (A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being regarded as having such an impairment. Head Start and Early Head Start provides services to eligible children regardless of any disabling condition. The goals of the Five County Disabilities Services Area are to:

1. Ensure that children with disabilities receive the full benefits of the Head Start and the Early Head Start experience, including provision of required special education and related services and the opportunity to learn and develop in an inclusive setting with peers.
2. Ensure that at least ten percent of the program's funded enrollment consists of children professionally diagnosed as having a disability.
3. Collaborate with state and local agencies to provide services for children with disabilities.

For record keeping and reporting purposes we follow the diagnosis as defined by Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) defines a child with a disability and at-risk infant or toddler. In our Head Start program a child with a disability aged 3 to 5 is a child with intellectual disabilities, hearing impairments (including deafness), speech or language impairments, visual impairments (including blindness), serious emotional disturbance (referred to in this chapter as "emotional disturbance"), orthopedic impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or specific learning disabilities; experiencing developmental delays, as defined by the State and as measured by appropriate diagnostic instruments and procedures, in 1 or more of the following areas: physical development; cognitive development; communication development; social or emotional development; or adaptive development. Whereas an infant or toddler with a disability in our Early Head Start program is defined as an "at-risk infant or toddler" under 3 years of age who would be at risk of experiencing a substantial developmental delay if early intervention services were not provided to the individual. They are designed to meet the developmental needs of an infant or toddler with a disability, as identified by the individualized family service plan team, in any 1 or more of the following areas: (i) physical development; (ii) cognitive development; (iii) communication development; (iv) social or emotional development; or (v) adaptive development. It is our practice here at Five County to screen all infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children within 45 days of enrollment for speech, language, hearing and vision.

Mental Health

The overall goal of the Head Start and Early Head Start program is to bring a greater degree of social competence in children of low-income families. The mental health area promotes mental wellness by providing direct services which includes evaluation and treatment of children and their parents. Our approach is innovative and comprehensive to support the whole family. This approach allows the promotion of positive mental health practices therefore, enhancing the self-esteem, self-sufficiency, and independence of our Head Start and Early Head Start staff, its parents, and children through prevention, identification, referral and treatment. Social-emotional development is the key to overall school readiness. Five County fosters a positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) system to guide children in developing appropriate behaviors.

Transition

Successful transitions are rooted in our program's ability to develop and implement a collaborative team approach. That begins with fostering continuity of care your infants, toddlers, and their families from home to Early Head Start, from Early Head Start to Head Start or other preschool program, and finally to the local education agency that operates kindergarten. Transition is an ongoing process and is made easier by recognizing the parent as an advocate for their infant, toddler, or preschool-age child. The transition process from Early Head Start to Head Start begins no less than six months prior to the child's 3rd birthday. Our transition team will assist families in the transition and enrollment process to Head Start, such as pertinent documentation that is needed for Head Start applications. For the children who are enrolled in our Head Start program, we believe in the same philosophy as Early Head Start and their transition from Head Start to public school. Our transition team will begin the process by engaging with you- the parent, communicate as appropriate with the children about transition and the teaching staff will read books about change and transition. We schedule field trips to the new setting, either the Head Start center or the school district. At both locations, we plan for a tour of the facility, classrooms, and meet teachers or school personnel. We provide an opportunity for you to ask questions, establish relationships with the new staff, and to promote high self-esteem in the child.

Latasha Harrien, Ed.S. - Education/Early Childhood Development Director

The agency's goal is to ensure that our children possess readiness in the skills of cognition, language and literacy, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and perceptual, motor, and physical development. Intentional and meaningful activities are offered throughout the learning environment. To ensure positive child outcomes and school readiness, the curriculum, the assessment tool, and intentional teaching practices are in alignment with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Mississippi Early Learning Standards for Classrooms Serving Infants through Four-Year-Old Children. Our teachers ensure school readiness for our children entering preschool and kindergarten by implementing goals from the school readiness domains by effectively helping our children acquire the social competence, which sets the foundation in acquiring all other school readiness domains.

When children enter our program, teachers administer the Denver II Screener to assess their performance on various age-appropriate tasks. Once they are acquainted with their teachers, the children are assessed three times per school year using the Teaching Strategies GOLD ongoing assessment tool.

The agency would like to encourage parents to:

- Develop a positive attitude toward their child's learning.
- Establish sensible rules for your child to follow.
- Teach your child positive social skills (good manners and respect for others).
- Communicate and interact positively with your child.

Be Engaged and Involved in Your Child's Education

TITLE: Personnel Policies: Use of Corporal Punishment and Isolation as Disciplinary Measures in Head Start Classrooms AUTHORITY: 1302.90 (c) Head Start Performance Standards.

Purpose:

The Issuance sets forth the policy forbidding the use of corporal punishment and total or extended isolation as disciplinary measures in Head Start programs.

Background:

Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as discipline measures. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, etc. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities as a punishment measure. Isolation includes, but is not restricted to, confining the child to a small area, retaining the child in the classroom when other children go to play, or restricting the child from having meals with their peers. Physical punishment and total isolation are not consistent with the Head Start Program Performance Standards. These Standards define goals of increased social competence, establishment of patterns and expectations of success for the child and the enhancement of dignity and self-worth within the child.

Action Required:

The utilization of corporal punishment and total isolation of the child is not consistent with these objectives and cannot be tolerated in our Head Start or Early Head Start programs. Isolation in which the child is left totally unattended is unacceptable. If it is necessary to isolate a child from a group, adult supervision will be maintained and the isolation period will be minimal. The Head Start Program Performance Standards prohibit the use of meals as punishment, thus isolation at meal times is forbidden.

Head Start Sample Daily Schedule I

7:30-8:30 TEACHER PLANNING

7:45 -8:30 ARRIVAL: Children participate in quiet activities and prepare for breakfast (**handwashing and toileting**).

8:30-9:00 BREAKFAST and CLEAN-UP: Children will assist with serving breakfast and they will be encouraged conversation.

9:00-9:10 TOILET and TOOTH BRUSHING/HANDWASHING

9:10-9:25 MORNING MEETING: Teachers brings the group together for singing songs and fingerplays, group discussion, and sharing news.

9:25-10:25 WORK TIME: Children will extend play and learning in selected interest area.

10:25 – 10:30 CLEAN – UP: Children put away toys and materials in each interest area and **TOILET/HANDWASHING**

10:30 – 10:55 CIRCLE TIME/STORYTIME: Teachers brings the group together to discuss and participate in theme related activities and read and discuss a storybook, using props to help children to retell stories.

10:55 – 11:25 OUTDOOR PLAY: Children extend learning outdoors through play, exploration, and discovery.

11:25 – 11:30 PREPARATION FOR LUNCH: Children toilet/wash hands, and assist teachers in setting table.

11:30 – 12:00 LUNCH AND CLEAN – UP: Children and teachers prepare tables for lunch. Teachers encourage conversations about the day's events, the meal, and topics of interest to the children. Teachers guide children in cleaning up after lunch.

12:00 – 12:15 TOILET AND TOOTHBRUSHING: Children brush teeth, use bathrooms, wash hands, place cots, and prepare for rest.

12:15-1:15 REST TIME: Children rest on cots. Teacher will provide quiet activities for children who do not sleep.

1:15 – 1:25 TOILET/HANDWASHING: Children use bathroom and wash hands after getting up from resting.

1:25 – 1:55 OUTDOOR PLAY: Children extend learning outdoors through play, exploration, and discovery.

1:55 – 2:15 GROUP TIME: Help children reflect on the day's activities and discuss plans for the next day.

2:15 --2:30 SNACK TIME: Children serve themselves and participate in conversation with each other. Children clean up and prepare for dismissal/departure.

2:30 – 2:45 DISMISSAL/DEPARTURE: Children load on the buses to go home (some children are picked – up by parents).

2:45--3:30 TEACHER PLANNING

Early Head Start Daily Schedule

Times	Activity
8:00 am - 8:45 am	Early morning activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arrival ✓ Diapering and Toileting/Handwashing ✓ Breakfast/Feed on demand ✓ Scan and count
8:45 am – 9:00 am	Morning Activities/ Meeting Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Large group activities ✓ Cognition skill development ✓ Language and communication skill development
9:00 am – 10:00 am	Learning centers/experiences <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Individual play/exploration and discovery ✓ Teacher-directed/child-initiated activities
10:00 am - 10:10 am	Transition/Clean Up/Diapering and Toileting/Handwashing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Prepare for outdoor play
10:10 am - 10:45 am	Outdoor constructive learning through play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perceptual, Motor, Physical Skill Development ✓ Active Supervision ✓ Scan and count
10:45 am - 11:05 am	Transition indoors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Scan and count ✓ Handwashing from outdoors ✓ Diapering and Toileting/Handwashing
11:05 am - 11:15 am	Transition for Lunch / Story Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diapering and Toileting/Handwashing ✓ Setting the Table
11:15 am - 12:00 pm	Lunch Time (Family Style- teacher sits with the children and converses using advanced language) Feed on demand
12:00 pm – 12:15 pm	Transition/ Rest Time Preparation Scan and Count
12:15 pm - 1:45 pm	Rest Time/Nap/Quiet activities Scan and Count
1:45 pm - 2:00 pm	Wake Up Transition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Diapering and Toileting/Handwashing
2:00 pm - 2:30 pm	Snack Time Activities/Feed on demand <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Social conversations/Language and communication skill development ✓ Scan and count
2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	Indoor or Outdoor constructive learning through play <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perceptual, Motor, Physical Skill Development ✓ Social conversations ✓ Transition indoors/handwashing ✓ Scan and count
3:00 pm - 3:30 pm	Transition/Good bye time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Social conversations ✓ Table toys ✓ Diapering and toileting/Handwashing

Note: Children arriving after the scheduled breakfast time will be served upon arrival.

Tanya Feazell, LPN -Health Services Director

The goal of health services is to help identify and address any medical conditions that may hinder your infant, toddler, or preschool-age child from reaching their potential in kindergarten readiness by collaborating with parents/guardians, center staff, and community partners. Health services provide support by addressing individual child health needs. Collaboration with parents and community partners is the foundation for the success of our children and health services. Parents are encouraged to join our Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) and be a voice for their child's health and safety needs. Head Start and Early Head Start must ensure a child's health status is up-to-date. Parents or guardians must provide all appropriate health information concerning the child during the application process (ex. *Seizure Action Plan, Asthma Action Plan, Diabetes Medical Management Plan*). The child cannot be enrolled until documents have been received. If a child's health status changes during the year, (ex. child is diagnosed with allergies or asthma), the parent is required to submit documentation reflecting these changes. If documents are not submitted, the child will be excluded from the program until they are received.

Medical and Dental Home: It is the goal of Five County Head Start and Early Head Start to ensure every child has an established medical and dental home. A medical and dental home are the health care and dental providers the child sees for a routine appointment. An After-Hours Clinic is not considered a medical or dental home. Information is collected at the time of enrollment. If a parent does not identify a medical or dental home source, the Family Advocate will assist families in establishing a source of care or one will be assigned.

Healthcare Coverage: The Family Advocate will assist families with obtaining a source of healthcare coverage if one is not identified during enrollment. Parents are to inform their Family Advocate when there is a change in the status of the child's healthcare coverage.

The Early Head Start Newborn Visit:

The newborn visit, required by Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), focuses on the well-being of the parent and the baby and is to be scheduled within two weeks after the baby's birth. This visit does not replace the well-child checks therefore they include:

- Address families' questions
- Assess the health of parent and baby
- Offer resources and provide referrals as necessary
- Offer support outside of medical appointments
- Assess postpartum recovery and screen for depression indicators.

Well-Child Exams and Dental Exams: Head Start and Early Head Start REQUIRES all children to have a current well-child and dental exam. Parents are encouraged to submit documentation prior to enrollment and ongoing. If you are having problems scheduling these or are without insurance, please call your family advocate. The agency will provide, through contractual services, any well child and dental exams not provided by the child's pediatrician or dentist. Parents are encouraged to accompany their child for these exams. Well child and dental exams must be updated according to periodicity and annually from the date of service. The Family Advocate, Center Supervisors, or the Health Services Director will send a written reminder to parents/guardians 30 days prior to expiration. Parents choosing not to receive services or provide required documentation must sign a denial form. This form releases Five County Child Development Program, Inc. of any responsibilities for services not rendered. The well-child exams consist of the following:

- ❖ Growth assessment (height and weight)
- ❖ Blood pressure
- ❖ Lead test (not screening)- newly enrolled children only
- ❖ Hemoglobin (Iron) blood test- newly enrolled children only
- ❖ Hearing screening
- ❖ Vision screening

**** Lead levels are checked at 12 & 24 months. Children ages 24-72 months who have not been previously tested must receive a blood lead test. Hemoglobin/Hematocrit- checks begin at 9 months and are repeated between 15 months and 4 years. If your child receives(ed) WIC, a copy of these results may be obtained from the local health department.*

Immunizations: All children are required to have a current immunization record (Form 121) on file. If a child is exempt from receiving immunizations due to medical or religious reasons, a *Certificate of Medical/Religious*

Exemption (Form 122) must be on file. Form 122 **MUST** be signed by the District Health Officer or representative.

- ❖ If a child has a temporary *Certificate of Immunization* (Form 121) on file that expires during the school year, the child **MUST** receive all necessary immunizations and an up-to-date Form 121 must be submitted to the Center Director/Lead Teacher, Early Head Start Liaison, or Family Advocate. If an up-to-date Form 121 is not submitted, the child will be temporarily excluded until documentation or proof of a scheduled appointment has been submitted. If the child is unable to receive the immunizations at that time, a temporary Form 121 may be submitted until the child is able to receive the immunizations.
- ❖ Children with a Certificate of Medical/Religious Exemption who are not adequately immunized will be excluded from school if there is a threat of vaccine preventable diseases occurring in the community. The child will be excluded until the infectious disease is no longer present or is no longer a threat to the safety and welfare of the child or other children in the school (*Mississippi State Department of Health, n.d.*). For example, if a child has not been immunized against chickenpox and there is an outbreak, the child will not be allowed to return to school until the outbreak is over.

Medication Administration: If a child is **REQUIRED** to take medications during school hours, a *Medication Administration Form* and *Parental Consent for Medication Administration Form* **MUST** be completed **PRIOR** to any medication being given at school. The child's first dose of a medication must be given at home. Medication **MUST** be brought to the Head Start or Early Head Start Center by the parent/ guardian. Medication placed in the Head Start child's backpack or given to the Head Start Bus Monitor will not be accepted. Medication requirements are as follows:

- ❖ Medication must be in its original container.
- ❖ The prescription label must be intact and include the following:
 - Child's Name
 - Date
 - Time (how often to give it)
 - Dosage (how much)
 - Route (oral, injection etc.)
 - Name of medication
 - Name of physician prescribing medication
- ❖ Over the counter medications will not be administered to any child without a prescription from a physician. Prescribed over-the-counter medication must be brought to the Head Start or Early Head Start Center by the parent and must be in the original container.
- ❖ Only trained staff will give medication.
- ❖ Staff cannot give expired medication or give medication past the stop date, even if there is medication remaining.

COVID-19 Policy

To reduce the spread of COVID-19, Five County Child Development will follow recommendations from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Mississippi State Department of Health for pandemic outbreak. Our exclusion policy for ill children, staff, family members, and visitors will become stricter.

Procedure: To prepare for illness, we will:

1. Identify reliable sources of information such as the Mississippi State Department of Health and the CDC www.cdc.gov.
2. Decide how families and staff will be contacted in the event of closure.
3. Educate staff and families about prevention, for example: The COVID-19 vaccine, wearing mask, hand washing, staying home if you're sick, and coughing or sneezing into your sleeve.
4. Improve cleaning and disinfecting: Surfaces, furniture, and toys may require increased attention.
5. Encourage families to consider their options for backup childcare plans if a closure occurs.
6. Keep supplies on hand including soap, paper towels, tissues, toilet paper, and cleaning/disinfecting supplies.
7. Plan for staff absences.

To respond to illnesses, we will:

1. Require families to notify the Center Supervisor of confirmed cases/exposure of children and families.
2. Conduct *Daily Health Checks* at the time of check-in, prior to the parent or guardian signing their child in.
3. Children who exhibit any symptoms of COVID-19 (runny nose, cough, body aches, fever, diarrhea) prior to check-in or during the school day will be excluded until symptoms resolve or the child is cleared to return to school by a healthcare provider.
4. Require staff to stay home if they have signs of illness (runny nose, cough, body aches, fever, diarrhea). They will remain home until their healthcare provider or Mississippi State Department of Health regulations determine if it is safe for them to return.
5. Communicate with staff and families about the extent of illness in our program and any changes that may need to be made to our usual routine.

Daily Health Checks: Teachers will complete a daily health check on all children for:

- ❖ Obvious Signs of Illness
- ❖ Complaint of Illness by Child or Parent
- ❖ Hair (free of lice) ● Eyes (red, matted)
- ❖ Runny Nose or Severe Cough
- ❖ Rash Bruises, Cuts, Sores
- ❖ Appetite Change
- ❖ Vomiting
- ❖ Fever
- ❖ Diarrhea Bowel or Bladder Concerns
- ❖ Changes in Behavior

*** *If the staff has any concerns, you will be notified and asked to pick up your child if necessary.*

Communicable Diseases/Illnesses: Communicable diseases such as strep throat are common in any school setting. If your child contracts any communicable disease, please contact us immediately. All calls are kept confidential to ensure your child's privacy. State law requires the agency to report certain communicable diseases to the local health district. When exposure notices are sent home, they will inform you that your child may have been exposed to an infectious illness, what symptoms to look for, and appropriate treatment guidance. At no time will we ever disclose a child or family's name in an exposure letter. The following are symptoms suggestive of common communicable diseases.

Children with these symptoms should be kept at home. Should any of these symptoms be noted while the child is in school, teachers will contact the parents immediately; and the child will be excluded from school until symptom free. The child may be placed in a separate area where they will be supervised until the parent arrives to take him/her home. Items and facilities used by the ill child including toilets, toys, and other classroom items, shall not be used by any other person until those items and facilities have been thoroughly cleaned. Children with the following symptoms will be excluded:

- ❖ Fever of at least 100°F under arm (axillary), 101°F orally, 102°F rectally AND who also have one or more of the following: ♣Headache ♣Earache ♣Sore throat ♣Rash ♣Fatigue ♣Cough

For infants under 4 months, a temperature of 100°.

- ❖ Vomiting on 2 or more occasions within 24 hours.
- ❖ Diarrhea- Frequent (3 or more episodes in a 24-hour period) runny, watery, or bloody stools. A child who is not completely toilet trained and has diarrhea will be excluded regardless of the cause.
- ❖ Any suspected communicable infection of the skin or eyes such as impetigo, MRSA, Pinkeye, and scabies.
- ❖ Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered and 24 hours have passed since starting treatment if treatment is necessary per doctor's orders.
- ❖ Fatigue, irritability, continuous crying, or confusion that prevents participation in regular activities, such as sleeping or resting more than usual for that child, not wanting to eat, or multiple cold symptoms that keep the child from regular activities, due to being too uncomfortable.

Following an illness or injury, children will be readmitted to the program when:

- ❖ They no longer have any of the above symptoms.

- ❖ They have been without fever for 24 hours without being treated by fever reducing medications such as acetaminophen (Tylenol) or ibuprofen.

Please do not give your child medication for a fever and bring them to school if the child was running a fever the night before.

- ❖ 24 hours have passed since starting appropriate treatment for the condition.
- ❖ They no longer have significant discomfort and can participate in regular activities.

Following surgery or injury requiring medical care, a note from the physician stating that the child may return to routine activities is required.

Medical and Dental Emergencies: Parent/Guardian will give consent for emergency treatment during enrollment. (Head Start Permissions Form) must be maintained on all children. Parents will be notified in case of an emergency involving their child. Each Center Supervisor shall ensure that all staff understands and follows policies and procedures relating to illness, injuries, first aid and emergencies. All staff, whose main responsibility is working with children, must be currently certified in Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED through the American Red Cross. One staff person currently certified in pediatric First Aid/CPR must be with the children at all times. It is recommended that substitute staff and parents/guardians who volunteer on a regular basis be currently certified in Adult and Pediatric First Aid/CPR/AED. In a serious or life-threatening emergency, one staff member will stay with the child and, if necessary, provide First Aid or CPR. Another staff member will contact 911 and try contacting the parent. If the parent cannot be reached, staff will try to contact the child’s alternate emergency contact person. In the event of an emergency, staff will implement the Emergency Procedures Plan. As a parent or guardian, it is important that you provide correct contact information for your child; and communicate any changes in contact information to program staff at your child’s center. A copy of the Emergency Procedures Plan is available at each center if you would like to view the plan.

Accident/ Incidents: Situations that occur at Head Start are reported the same day by staff to the center supervisor and the parent or guardian by phone call or note if unable to reach the parent by phone. Health checks are performed daily by staff to ensure no child enters the center with cuts, bruises, or unexplained medical conditions.

NUTRITION

HADASSAH DEVINE, NUTRITION DIRECTOR

Meal Schedule for all Centers

Breakfast.....	8:30 A.M.
Lunch.....	11:30 A.M.
Supplemental Snack.....	2:00 A.M.

*Five County nutrition services identify the nutrition history of each child. Our objective is to promote healthy child development through nutrition-related assessment, family eating patterns, children's feeding schedules and preferences and Community nutritional issues. (1302.44)

*Five County ensures that families are provided a variety of information related to identifying nutritional needs. (1302.44) (a) (2) (vii). It is also our objective to provide for the determination, referral and follow-up for children to identify a nutrition deficiency. (1302.44)

*Five County respects cultural and religious food preferences. (1302.44) (a)

*Five County Nutrition serves two nutritious meals and one supplemental snack each day that follows the strict guidelines of the CACFP, Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care facilities and the Head Start Performance Standard.

*If a child is diagnosed with allergies and requires a special diet, parents must provide a written statement from their medical specialist prior to the first day of school or at the time of diagnosis. This must be done each calendar school year.

*A 4 to 12 weeks cycle menu is approved by Child Care license to ensure the quality of meals served at all centers.

*A Nutrition Assessment and a CACFP enrollment form is required for all Head Start and Early Head Start children.

- *All of our nutrition staff is ServSafe certified which ensures that all guidelines are followed to ensure that our children receive a healthy and nutritious meal.
- *Parents are invited to join our annual Menu Planning Committee each Spring. Their input is both welcomed and vital to the success of our nutrition program.
- *In Head Start all meals are served family-style, including for those children in Early Head Start as solids are introduced. All children, staff and volunteers will eat together while socializing in a relaxed atmosphere.(exception; meals will be altered during a pandemic at which time proper protocols will be followed).
- *Children enrolled in the Early Head Start program will be provided formula, unless the child is receiving breastmilk. It is permissible for mothers who are breastfeeding to bring in breast milk and it will be properly labeled and stored to feed your infant. In addition, you will not be required to bring formula, dry cereal, bottles, or sippy cups for your child. These items will be provided for the children. Formula and pureed infant food will also be provided and our Nutrition and Health Services staff along with the Family Advocate will work with you to ensure we have food options available as your child is introduced at specific intervals. Bottles and sippy cups will be properly labeled with your child's name and sterilized onsite. For your older toddlers, we will follow the Head Start process referenced above and according to solid food introduction.
- *All Planned Parent committee or agency school trips must be approved by the Mississippi Department of Education Office of Child Nutrition and a permission to travel request must be submitted to the nutrition director outlining the destination of the trip, departure time, lunch and return schedule. Once received the request will be forwarded to MDE/OCN for approval.
- *Food should never be used as a reward or punishment in any of our centers. This is strictly prohibited.
- *Good nutrition helps cultivate good dietary habits at an early age, promoting a better quality of life.
- *Five County nutrition supports and encourages families to make healthy food choices that include a variety of fruits and vegetables, lean nutrients, rich sources of protein such as poultry, fish, beans, eggs, low-fat dairy, and whole grains that should be served throughout the day.

TRANSPORTATION

Evelyn Strickland, Transportation Services Director

1. Head Start children will be returned to the place they were picked up. If there is a change in pick-up or drop-off location a written notice must be given a day in advance, except in case of an emergency.
2. Parents should notify the center when a child will not be attending class.
3. Should the child miss the bus; the parents must transport child to the next pick-up location or center. No bus will stop in route to load or unload children.
4. When a child is returned to the authorized destination, the parent or an adult must meet the bus to assure proper release of the child. The authorized person must sign "School Bus Attendance Record" before the child is released.
5. If there is no one at the authorized location, the child will return to the center and it will be the parent's responsibility to pick their child/children up at the center no later than 3:30 pm.
6. If a child has to cross the street to load or unload the bus, they must be accompanied by an adult.
7. The child must cross in front of the school bus at all times.
8. There will be no eating food, drinking or smoking on the bus.
9. Toys should **not** be sent to school with the child.
10. There will be a bus monitor on the bus at all times while transporting children.
11. All bus passengers must wear seatbelts/child restraints.
12. Parents who transport their child to Head Start must accompany the child into the building for proper release.
13. The bus monitor may determine if a child is ill at the time, he or she boards the bus. A sick child will not be permitted to ride the bus until the condition of the child has improved.
14. Transportation will not be provided for Early Head Start families.

MAINTENANCE & FACILITIES

Clevie Brent, Maintenance Director Ronnie Walker, Head Custodian

1. Assure that outdoor play area is arranged to prevent any child from leaving the premises and getting into

unsafe and unsupervised areas.

2. Conduct a safety inspection weekly to ensure that each facility's space; lighting, ventilation, heating and other physical arrangements are consistent with the health, safety and developmental needs of children.
3. Assure that all facilities meet licensing requirements.
4. Provide center-based environment free of toxins and other air pollutants as well as soil and water contaminants.
5. Provide for maintenance, repair, safety and security of all Head Start and Early Head Start facilities, materials, and equipment.
6. Assure that no child is present during spraying of pesticides or herbicides.
7. Provide appropriate indoor and outdoor space that is conducive for all program activities.
8. Assure that all roofs are in good condition.
9. Assure that all bathrooms are ventilated from sewage gas.
10. Assure that all facilities have smoke and carbon dioxide detectors installed.

Five County Child Development Program

Privacy Policy and Procedures Annual Notice

Protecting Families Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Privacy of Children and Family's Records

- Five County Child Development Program has established this privacy policy and procedures to protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information (referred to as PII hereafter) of the families and children we serve.
- It is the practice of this agency to ensure our children and families PII is protected at all times. When not in use, the children and families paper records are stored in locked file cabinets at the centers and the Family Service Office. Paper records are maintained for one year after the child leaves the program. After the one-year time period all paper records are destroyed.
- Five County staff and other agencies reviewing PII will sign an oath of confidentiality form. This form is an oath to refrain from discussing PII, written or verbally to unauthorized persons or agencies without written consent of the parent/guardian. Termination may result if Five County staff violates this oath.
- Five County uses the ChildPlus Data System to ensure that the digital PII pertaining to our children and families are protected and secure with two step login, strong passwords, inactive timeouts, firewalls and monitoring.
- Five County requires a signed and dated consent form from the parent or guardian before releasing any PII at the parent's request. The parent or guardian will be required to show identification to Head Start staff. The consent form must include specifically which documents may be disclosed, reason of disclosure, and to whom it may be disclosed. Granting consent is voluntary on the part of the parent and may be revoked at any time.
- Five County does disclose information without parental consent on a need-to-know basis with Head Start or Early Head Start staff and other contractors that help us to provide services for the children and families; such as public school staff, Head Start or Early Head Start consultants (dietician, mental health, medical, education, disability), Emergency Management System, police, Health Department, Department of Human Service, Child Protective Services, foster care workers, caseworker, qualified auditors, researchers or reviewers.
- In case of a health emergency, such as a food allergy, PII may be disclosed to protect the health and safety of the child or family.
- Five County must report to appropriate agencies suspected or known child abuse and neglect.
- Additionally, if requested through subpoenas, federal or state entities or court orders, Five County must comply with said orders.
- Parents have the right to inspect the child's records on site and amend inaccurate information. Parents are not allowed to take original documents of their child's records off-site, copies only.
- Five County will only disclose the information that is deemed necessary for the purpose of the disclosure.

FIVE COUNTY CHILD DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, INC.

This institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider



Five County Child Development Program, Inc.

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Prentiss, MS 39474

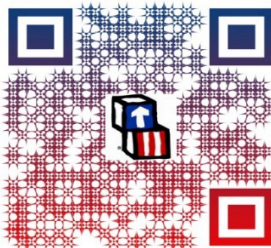
601-792-5194 phone

601-792-8140 fax

Visit our website at www.fivecountyhs.org



Like our Facebook page at [Five County Child Development Program Inc. 1965](https://www.facebook.com/fivecountyhs.org)



Please share this QR code with family and friends that wants to complete a new Head Start or Early Head Start

Pre-Application for their child.