



SENDCAA

HEAD START BIRTH TO FIVE

FAMILY HANDBOOK

2020 – 2021

Site	Address	Phone
Central Head Start	3233 University Drive South, Fargo	701-235-8931 1-800-618-8439
South Head Start	3329 University Drive South, Fargo	701-364-9331
Agassiz Head Start	1305 9 th Ave South Door #10, Fargo	701-446-3198
West Fargo Head Start	330 3 rd Avenue East Door #4, West Fargo	701-499-3030
Early Head Start	3600 15 th Street South, Fargo	701-298-6758
Lisbon Head Start	418 5 th Avenue West, Lisbon	701-683-3133 1-888-881-5043
Wahpeton Head Start	1202 Westmore Avenue, Wahpeton	701-642-9825

My child's Head Start information:

Site:

Center #:

Teacher:

Co-Teacher/Teacher Assistant:

Family contact:

Health contact:

Site Supervisor:

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PROGRAM INFORMATION

SENDCAA Mission Statement

To provide a range of services and activities designed to alleviate poverty and give low-income people the opportunity to improve their standard of living and achieve self-sufficiency.

Head Start Mission Statement

Creating a community of learners through nurturing children and engaging families.

Head Start Vision Statement

Building on a cornerstone of success that inspires all children and families to reach their full potential.

Program Options

Head Start Full Day: Starting the end of August through May

SITE:	Central and South Fargo		
WHEN:	<i>Monday through Friday.</i>	Core hours:	Monday - Friday 8:30am–3:30pm
SITE:	Wahpeton		
WHEN:	<i>Monday through Friday.</i>	Core hours:	Monday – Thursday 8:00am-3:00pm. Fridays 8:00am-11:30pm
Site:	Lisbon		
When:	<i>Monday through Friday.</i>	Core hours:	Monday - Friday 8:30am–3:30pm

Head Start Part Day: Starting the first part of September through May

SITE:	Central and West Fargo		
WHEN:	<i>Monday through Thursday.</i>	Core hours:	Monday – Thursday
		Mornings:	8:00am - 11:30am
		Afternoons:	12:00pm – 3:30pm
SITE:	Agassiz		
WHEN:	<i>Monday through Thursday.</i>	Core hours:	Monday – Thursday
		Mornings:	8:15am - 11:45am
		Afternoons:	12:15pm – 3:45pm

Early Head Start Full Day: Starting the end of August through July

SITE:	Early Head Start		
WHEN:	<i>Monday through Friday.</i>	Core hours:	Monday – Friday 8:30am-3:30pm

Head Start services are provided at **NO COST** to families through the use of federal Head Start funding. Family involvement activities offered throughout the school year are also provided at no cost to Head Start Birth to Five families.

Classroom Requirements

What to Wear

- Child should be wearing comfortable, simple clothes that the child can play in and get “messy” because the children go outside every day
- Tennis shoes

What to Bring

- Warm outdoor apparel including coat, mittens, hat, snow boots, and snow pants because the children go outside every day
- Please send an extra set of clothes to school, including pants, shirts, underwear, and socks
- Backpack

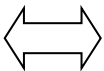
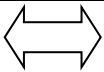
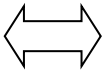
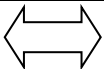
What to Leave at Home

- Food and beverages
- Toys
- Pets that are not professionally certified therapy animals
- Holiday cards
- Party favors

Invitations are optional but must include all children in the classroom. Teachers will not provide information nor distribute the items.

Our program refrains from celebrating religious belief holidays. Instead our program celebrates accomplishments, birthdays, Week of the Young Child, and much more.

Storm Warning Procedure

Your local public school district delays school by 2 hours.		Head Start Part Day Head Start Full Day Early Head Start	No morning classes Open at 10:30am Open at 10:30am
Your local public school district cancels school before 8:00am.		All Head Start classes are closed. Includes part day, full day, and Early Head Start.	
Your local public school district closes early due to deteriorating weather conditions.		All Head Start Classes will close early. Please update your phone numbers with staff so you can be reached, if needed.	
The SENDCAA Agency is closed.		All Head Start classes are closed. Includes part day, full day, and Early Head Start.	

Great Plains Back Pack Food Program

Children in our Fargo/West Fargo Head Start are encouraged to participate in the Great Plains Food Bank Backpack program. The Backpack Food Program will provide a bag full of kid-friendly, shelf stable food for your child to take home and eat over the weekend. They will receive foods like cereal, pudding, fruit, granola bars, microwavable meals, snacks and other items. With your approval, we will send a bag of food home with your child every Thursday or Friday while they are enrolled in the program.

Please know that there will never be a charge for this program; it's entirely funded through grants and private donations.

The Great Plains Food Bank fills these bags, SENDCAA Head Start does not have control over what gets put into the bag being distrusted. The Great Plains Food Bank and SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five are not responsible for any allergic reactions due to Backpack product. Please, read all labels before consuming. The food is provided by the Great Plains Food Bank.

MATBus Public Transportation

City bus stops are conveniently located within walking distance of each of our sites and can provide affordable and reliable transportation for your family to and from school. We accept applications for semester bus passes twice a year, once in the beginning of September and once in December. If your family would benefit from a MATBus pass please notify your Family Advocate right away.

Parent / Community Complaint Procedures

These are the steps to follow, if you or member of the community has a concern or problem regarding your child's services associated with the SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five Program. Over the course of the academic year, you may have concerns that you would like to share with us. Most issues can be fixed by talking directly with the school staff on-site. Step 1: Please first talk with your Classroom Teacher or Family Support Staff about your concerns or complaints. Step 2: If you follow Step 1 and feel your concern is not addressed appropriately, please speak with the Site Supervisor at your child's site.

After following the first two steps, you may request a meeting with the Program Director if the concern or complaint is not addressed to your satisfaction. To request a meeting, please call: 701-235-8931.



Seesaw Parent Communication

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five utilizes Seesaw to communicate what's happening in the classroom and at the site with parents. Staff will share classroom information, send updates on what's happening at a program level, and will send reminders of important events. It's a quick and efficient way to stay connected and know what your child is doing at school.

Safety

At Head Start Birth to Five we prepare children and staff incase emergency circumstances arise.

Throughout the year we practice:

- ✓ Monthly Fire Drills
- ✓ Shelter in Place Tornado Drills
- ✓ Emergency Lock Down Drills
- ✓ Administrative Lock Down Drills
- ✓ Bomb Threat Drills
- ✓ Shelter in Place Hazmat Drills

In case of a real emergency each site has a safe place for evacuation. Each family would be called by staff and notified of where to pick up their child. In these instances, safety of yourself and your child is our highest priority. We will keep your child safe until you are able to safely pick him or her up. If you do not have a phone, we will attempt to reach someone on your emergency contact list to pick up your child.

We recommend that each family practice fire and tornado drills at home and to have a plan of where to go for safety in case of a real fire or tornado.

Security Cameras

To ensure safety for the children, staff and parents, cameras and microphones have been installed in each classroom environment at the Central Center, South Center, and will potentially be added to the Early Head Start Center over the 2020-2021 program year. Cameras have also been installed on the playgrounds, hallways, and to oversee the parking lots at the listed above sites.

They will also be used for staff training and professional development. Please see Project Director with questions or concerns.

Drop off and Pick Up Safety

Please follow our rules and expectations regarding drop off and pick up safety to keep all of our families safe:

- **Drive slow and alert when entering or exiting our lots.** Please yield to all pedestrians in our lots and stay alert looking for small children. Drivers should avoid cellphone distractions while in our lots.
- **Cars must be parked in designated parking areas.** Cars may not be parked in the entrances blocking walkways or drive thru areas. If you are not in a parking spot, you cannot park there.

- **Children must not be left unsupervised in vehicles.** It is extremely dangerous for any children to be left alone in a vehicle. Fatalities have resulted when children were left alone in cars. It is essential that young children are supervised at all times.
- **Children must hold an adults hand when walking in the parking lot.** The parking lot is very busy during transitions. It is essential that young children hold an adult's hand at all times. Children often have no concept that they could be hit by a car and what the result of that would be.
- **Children are not to open the doors or gates.** Our policy is that 'adults only' open doors. This includes vehicle doors, building doors and playground gates.
- **Children must be with an adult at all times.** Children must stay with their parent/guardian until they have been signed in with the teacher and must remain with their parent after they have been signed out with the teacher. Adults please walk at a pace your child can keep up with.
- **Parent/Guardian(s) must refrain from cellphone use while dropping off or picking up your child.** We ask that you are present and aware of your surroundings while you are driving and escorting your child to and from the building to stay alert for possible dangerous situations.
- **Parent / Guardians and release to contacts are not under the influence of drugs and alcohol.**
- **All families must be respectful of others.** We ask that all parents set good examples for our children while on our premises by speaking and acting respectfully toward staff and other families.

If you are having issues with other parents/guardians abiding by these rules please talk with a staff person and allow us to handle the situation.

Education

Social-Emotional Development

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five realizes that the earliest years set the stage for lifetime emotional well-being, social skills and competencies. We strive to create an environment where all children leaving Head Start Birth to Five have the skills and knowledge they need to be emotionally healthy, socially competent, and ready to learn.

We do this by using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire which both Parents/Guardians and Teachers fill out: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE) is to guide us in:

- Providing a positive classroom environment.
- Developing social-emotional goals for all children.
- Identifying social-emotional developmental concerns early on.
- Supporting families and center staff working together to address challenging behaviors.
- Assisting families in:
 - Understanding typical social-emotional development.
 - Developing and using positive guidance techniques.
 - Understanding the link between family and child mental health and wellness.
 - Developing a nurturing environment.
 - Identifying and strengthening young children's protective factors and increasing resilience.

Along with the ASQ:SE, we use the Conscious Discipline model. See next page to learn more about Conscious Discipline.

Screenings

Development and Social-Emotional Screening

Each child in SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five is required to participate in a developmental and mental health screening. This must be done within 45 days of the child's enrollment in the program. This will be done by SENDCAA Head Start staff or public school staff.

The developmental screening consists of different sections. Children are screened in the areas of:

- Language (how well a child understands what is being said as well as the development level of the child's spoken language).
- Cognitive Skills (colors, numbers, reasoning/problem solving ability).
- Gross Motor (balance, jumping, etc.) and Fine Motor (grasping, manipulation of items).
- Speech (a child's ability to use speech sounds in words).
- Social-Emotional-ASQ:SE Preschool and Infant/Toddler Program (done by parent(s)/guardian(s) and teacher(s)).
- Accessing resources needed to resolve stressful events or child mental health concerns.

The screening looks briefly at a broad range of skills. When scores indicate a referral for services, the information is shared with you. Additional testing is sometimes completed. SENDCAA Head Start and school districts work together to provide the best developmental opportunities for young children. Special services are provided to children who qualify for them at no cost to the parent(s)/guardian(s). Preschool Special Education teachers and therapists meet with SENDCAA Head Start teachers during the year as consultants. If you have any additional concerns, please talk to your child's teacher or call the Mental Health/Disability Coordinator at SENDCAA Head Start.

We also employ a Mental Health and Disability Coordinator who provides classroom consultation. This individual is a Licensed Mental Health Professional who specializes in working with young children and families. She visits classrooms regularly to observe and support teachers and children in their social-emotional growth. She is also available to support families with concerns, education, guidance, and community resources as needed. Please let your child's Teacher or Education Coordinator know if you would like to meet with our Mental Health and Disability Coordinator.



Conscious Discipline

Conscious Discipline is an emotional intelligence program pioneered by Dr. Becky Bailey that teaches children to respond, rather than react during life events. Everyday life events are used as teachable moments and guide children to develop self-control, utilize tools for conflict resolution, boost self-esteem, and foster positive relationships and social skills. It is also based on current brain research, child development information and best educational practices.

Our program also provides opportunities for parents to learn more about Conscious Discipline throughout the school year. For more information on Conscious Discipline please talk to your child's teacher or visit: www.consciousdiscipline.com.

We welcome you and your child to our School Family!

School Readiness

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children. Our program has a comprehensive focus on all aspects of healthy child development, which results in school readiness.

We recognize that parents are their child's primary teacher and advocate. For parents and families, school readiness means that they are engaged in the long-term, lifelong success of their child.

Our school readiness goals appropriately reflect the ages of children birth to five.

Approaches to Learning

- Children will learn and follow classroom rules, routines and directions.
- Children will use strategies to handle strong emotions (e.g. like seeking an adult, removing self, deep breaths).

Language and Literacy

- Children will demonstrate receptive and expressive language skills and communication.
- Children will demonstrate knowledge of the alphabet.

Social and Emotional Development

- Children will express levels of emotions and behaviors that are appropriate.
- Children will engage in positive relationships with adults and children.

Cognition and General Knowledge

- Children will use math concepts (numbers & shapes) during daily routines and experiences.
- Children will use observation and manipulation to ask questions and make predictions to better understand information.

Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development

- Children will demonstrate control of small muscles for self-care, using utensils, building and writing.
- Children will learn and use safe, healthy behaviors.

Head Start and Early Head Start track child progress towards school readiness by utilizing our curriculum, *The Creative Curriculum*, assessment tool, *MyTeachingStrategies* and *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*.

Home Visits and Conferences

Parents and teachers are partners working together to help children grow and learn. Family visits are scheduled four times (2 conferences & 2 home visits) throughout the year. Additional conferences may be scheduled as needed or by parent's request. You and your child's teacher will:

- Identify your child's strengths and needs along with your family's strengths and goals.
- Evaluate your child's progress.
- Set goals and plan activities that will help your child grow.
- Review community resources and information available.

Head Start Education

Curriculum

Head Start utilizes *The Creative Curriculum for Preschool*, the curriculum is based on five fundamental principles:

- *Positive interactions and relationships with adults provide a critical foundation for successful learning*
- *Social-Emotional competence is a significant factor in school success.*
- *Constructive, purposeful play supports essential learning.*
- *The physical environment affects the type and quality of learning interactions.*
- *Teacher-family partnerships promote development and learning.*

Physical Environment

The physical environment of a classroom has a profound effect on individual children, the group as a whole, and the teacher. Our top priority is creating a safe, comfortable and well-designed space for the children in our classrooms.

The Head Start classrooms are divided in to interest areas. Children are able to spend time each day exploring and experimenting in the interest areas.

The Interest Areas are as follows:

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>*Blocks</i> | <i>*Discovery</i> |
| <i>*Dramatic Play</i> | <i>*Sand and Water</i> |
| <i>*Toys and Games</i> | <i>*Music and Movement</i> |
| <i>*Art</i> | <i>*Cooking</i> |
| <i>*Library</i> | <i>*Computers</i> |

Daily Schedule

A daily schedule establishes the consistency that helps young children predict the sequence of events and thus to feel more secure and more in control of events.

Each classroom will have a daily schedule posted for parents/guardians to view, and also a picture daily schedule for children in the classroom.

In the Head Start classrooms you will notice a balance of active and quiet activities throughout the day. Children will spend time in the classroom and outdoors. There are two to three read-aloud books read daily. Teachers also include times to teach literacy and math skills throughout the day.

Typical schedules include:

Group Meeting

Choice Time

Read-Aloud

Small and Large Group

Meal Time

Outdoor Play

Rest Time (Full-Day Classrooms)

Children will also learn lifelong healthy habits like hand-washing, tooth-brushing, dressing for the weather, staying safe, healthy food choices, and much more!

Early Head Start Education

Curriculum

Head Start utilizes *The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos*. This curriculum helps teachers appreciate and find joy in the everyday discoveries that delight a child—the sound a rattle makes; the leaves blowing in circles by the wind; the ball that unexpectedly rolls across a child's path; the ants marching across the pavement. It is a comprehensive curriculum that helps teachers achieve the very best classroom for children under three. If the interactions children have are nurturing, consistent, and loving, and the experiences they have are appropriately challenging, then infants, toddlers, and twos grow and flourish. In our classrooms at Early Head Start, children learn to trust and joyfully explore their surroundings, making discoveries and developing a sense of themselves as capable learners and caring human beings.

Physical Environment

The classroom environment will vary considering the age of the children in that particular classroom. Overall, we consider the need to keep children safe and healthy, in addition, teachers think about arrangements for mixed-age groups, and for children with disabilities when arranging their classrooms.

Daily Schedule

At Early Head Start you will notice that schedules are flexible and adaptable to meet the individual needs of all children. The schedules set an unhurried, child-directed pace for the routines and experiences of the day. There is a balance between active and quiet times. Children are provided with opportunities to spend time in a small group of 2-3 children, children go outdoors twice a day in full-day programs (except for the infant room).

Children will also learn lifelong healthy habits like hand-washing, tooth-brushing, dressing for the weather, staying safe, healthy food choices, and much more!

We welcome YOU into the classroom at any time and strongly encourage your involvement in the classroom. You can be involved by: coming in to the classroom to read your favorite book to the children, sharing a tradition, or joining your child in his or her daily routine. Please further discuss this with your child's teacher. If you have any curriculum suggestions, we would love to hear them.

Program Transitions

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five implements strategies and practices to support successful transitions for children and their families transitioning either within our program or out of our program. Whether transitioning between classrooms, sites or on to kindergarten, our program implements age appropriate strategies to help children & families be successful in the transitioning process.

Early Head Start

In order for our program to function efficiently and for children to make the most of our program, transitions must occur. Your child will transition between the aged classroom levels once they are within 2 months of age of the next room pending the next available opening and the program's assessment of their developmental readiness. Opting out of transitions to the next age level is not an option. Our program staff will provide extra supports as needed to ensure a successful transition for your child, your family and the program.

As your child approaches age 3 we will work with you to ensure eligibility to transition to our Head Start program. If your family is deemed over income and is unable to continue on to our Head Start program, you will have 60 days from the day your child turns 3 to transition out of the program. Staff will work with you to help explore other options for your family. Children who are eligible for Head Start will move to the next available opening once they are 3.

Head Start

The main goal of Head Start Birth to Five is to prepare your child for kindergarten. The transition to kindergarten is a very big change for your family and for your child. Our program staff recognize this big transition and use many strategies to prepare your child and your family for kindergarten including:

- ✓ Helping you identify your neighborhood school
- ✓ Sharing information from public schools on kindergarten registration
- ✓ Sharing information on kindergarten round-up events in the community
- ✓ Taking trips to visit kindergarten classrooms
- ✓ With parent permission, sharing relevant information with your child's kindergarten teacher to ensure a successful transition occurs

Moving out of Town

If you plan on moving out of our service area (i.e. Minnesota) please notify staff as soon as possible so we can work with you to make your transition to your next home as smooth as possible. Children who remain in the area but have moved across the services border to Minnesota will have 60 days to transition out of the program. Staff will work with you to help explore other options for your family.

Family

Family Rights

- For staff to be committed to keeping your child safe and healthy while in their care.
- To be treated with dignity and respect.
- To expect a high quality, comprehensive child development program that includes: developmentally appropriate education, nutrition and health, special services within program specifications and opportunities for growth in social competence.
- To expect all records to be kept confidential, except with your written consent and as required by law.
- To communicate with staff and support staff about child/family needs and concerns.
- To participate in the following activities:
 - Volunteer in child's classroom/center

- Attend field trips
- Family education opportunities
- Health and dental screenings and follow-ups
- Policy Council and Parent Committees
- Health Services Advisory Committee
- To receive SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five services free of charge.
- To be informed of health and developmental screening results done at Head Start Birth to Five.
- To be provided with information pertaining to Health and Safety, menus, education and disciplinary action, and Policy Council.
- To have complaints handled efficiently, confidentially, and in a timely manner.
- To elect Policy Council representative(s) for each site.
- To have input into the direction and quality of the program through:
 - Family and Community Partnerships.
 - Policy Council.
 - Self-Assessment surveys.
- To know the names of staff and be informed of staff changes.
- To be informed of services and resources available through the Head Start Birth to Five program.
- To be informed/referred to community resources and services available to children and families not available through Head Start Birth to Five.
- To review your child's file, upon request. Requests may only be honored up to 1 year after your child's last day of enrollment.

Family Responsibilities

- To help keep our facilities and school family safe at all times.
- To treat staff with dignity and respect.
- To express concerns about your child or family if you would like assistance or referrals.
- Attendance
 - Maintain your child's regular attendance at school.
 - Drop off and pick up your child at school on time each day.
 - Have a plan in place to ensure an authorized, coherent release to contact is available if you are not.
- To complete the health requirement of the program
 - Keep scheduled medical and dental appointments (related to referrals made on your behalf by the program to providers in the community).
 - Call Head Start Birth to Five Health/Family Support Coordinator as well as the provider if you need to cancel referred appointments.
- To provide support for the program by:
 - Signing In-Kind documentation when attending activities and volunteering.
 - Participating in homework activities and Head Start Body Start calendar activities.
- To provide child emergency contact information and update as information changes.
 - Anyone listed and authorized to pick up your child will be asked to provide a valid picture ID.
- To attend open house, 2 home visits and 2 conferences with center staff.
- To help build your child's self-image by:
 - Treating your child with dignity.
 - Teaching good health habits and how to have pride in his/her appearance.
 - Developing language skills by conversation and reading.
- To show your child you value his/her time at Head Start Birth to Five by asking questions about the day.

Attendance Requirements

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five is a school readiness program designed to teach our students how to be successful in school. An important factor in school success is establishing a regular routine of attendance. This means attending each scheduled school day with on-time arrival and pick-up.

Our program has an extensive waiting list for enrollment slots and it is our responsibility to our community to ensure the students enrolled in our program are utilizing them effectively. Frequent absences can put a student's enrollment at Head Start Birth to Five in jeopardy.

Outlined below are our attendance requirements to maintain enrollment in our program:

Communication

- Students must be signed in and out of the center daily
- Parent/Guardian must contact their child's Teacher or Family Advocate if their child is going to be absent or running late
- If our program does not receive a call from the parent/guardian regarding a student's absence, the program will call the parent/guardian, the student's emergency contacts, or make a home visit to follow-up on the absence(s)

Arrivals and Pick Ups

- Students must arrive on time and be picked up on time. On time arrivals and pick-ups are essential to the routines of each classroom, the student's meal participation, and the student's developmental progress.
- Students will not be released unless the person picking up is listed on that student's emergency contact list as an approved "Release To" contact. This approved person must present a photo ID for verification. Only custodial parent/guardian can make changes to this list.
- If staff believe the parent or release to contact is under the influence of drugs or alcohol dispatch will be notified and an abuse/neglect form filed.
- If a student has not been picked up on time, staff will attempt to contact the parent/guardian and any emergency contacts listed for the family. After 45 minutes of no contact, staff will assume the family is in crisis and will be calling law enforcement to conduct a welfare check.

Chronic Absenteeism

- An enrolled student must maintain a monthly attendance rate of 85%, meaning a student cannot be gone from school, excused or unexcused, more than 15% of the days in session for the month. If a student's rate drops below this level, the parent/guardian will be required to meet with their Family Advocate to complete an Attendance Action plan.
- If attendance issues continue and no progress is made by the family, the child will be removed from their spot.

Consecutive Unexcused Absences

- If a student has four consecutive unexcused absences, staff will complete a home visit to check on the student's well-being. This could put the family and student in jeopardy of being removed from the program.
- If ten calendar days have elapsed and a parent/guardian has not made contact, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

If attendance guidelines are not followed, a student's slot may be forfeited.

Family Engagement and School Readiness

Head Start Birth to Five welcomes and encourages parents to be actively involved in their child's school experience. Children have a more positive experience when their parents are involved. Parents are their child's first and most important teacher.

Family Services

- SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five works in partnership with parents to identify strengths and family goals.
- Family Advocates are available to talk to about resources and services in our community.

Parents as Partners

- Stay active and involved in your child's school life.
- Attend school meetings. Go to parent-teacher conferences.
- When you meet the teacher, tell him/her something positive about your child.
- Read all materials that comes home from school. The classroom newsletter will have important information.
- Read to your child for at least a few minutes each day.

Parent Involvement

- There are many ways to be involved in Head Start, including volunteering in the classroom, sharing your culture or a special talent, and participation in program management.
- Parents are encouraged to visit their child's center anytime during hours of operation.

Parent Committee

- All parents are automatically members of your Head Start site's Parent Committee and are encouraged to be active members.
- Meeting will be held throughout the year at your child's site.

In-Kind

- All Head Start programs must receive in-kind support from local sources in addition to their federal funding.
- In-Kind support is defined as a donation of time, skills, and/or goods from a parent, community member, or another agency to benefit the Head Start Birth to Five program.
- Parents give the most by volunteering their time to SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five.
- Staff will have you sign an in-kind form when you attend parent events or volunteer.
- Weekly in-kind activities, you will have to sign the classroom in-kind binder.

Policy Council

The SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five Policy Council is a decision-making parent group mandated by the Head Start and Early Head Start Program.

The Policy Council includes representation of elected parents in our program and local community members who work closely with our program and our families. Together Policy Council members serve as a link for families in our program to management. Policy Council members meet once a month to approve agency policies, hiring of staff, grant applications and more!

- **What are the benefits of serving on Policy Council?**
 - Have a voice in the programs at SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five.
 - Gain knowledge and experience towards your own educational and employment goals. Policy Council is a great resume booster!
 - Learn how to advocate for your child in the education system.
 - Become more informed about our program and other community services.
 - Meet and form friendships and partnerships with other parents and staff.
 - Free childcare for your kids!
 - A free meal for Policy Council members and attending children.

- Giving back to the program that provides high quality education for your child.
- **No Experience Necessary! Talk to your teacher or family advocate today with any questions or flip the page to get started!**
- **That sounds great! How do I run?**
 - If you would like to be considered for this very important position, please speak with your Health/Family Support Coordinator. A ballot will be available the first few weeks of school with names and information about the parents who are running for council within your child's site.

Health Services Advisory Committee

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five program provide Health Services in partnership with families and community health organizations. Together they support the health and safety of children and their families. Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) help Head Start Programs make decisions about Health Services.

- **Who can join?**
Any Head Start Parent can become a member of our HSAC and no experience is required, just willing to attend our annual meeting.
- **Want to know more?**
Talk to your Health/Family Support Coordinator for more information.

Family Confidentiality Procedures

Parents, families and their children have a right to privacy and confidentiality. Whether a volunteer or a teacher, confidentiality is required by law. This is violated if staff or volunteers discuss a child or family in inappropriate places or situations.

When discussions involve personally identifiable information that is confidential, the parties should be sure that legitimate educational interest is involved. If the discussion involves information that is rumor, opinion, or hearsay, chances are that confidentiality is in question, and the parties have moved from professionalism to gossip.

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five follows federally mandated Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (*HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (**FERPA) confidentiality and family permission rules.

Each staff member, volunteer, substitute or student is required to read and sign the Standards of Conduct at the start of his or her employment or volunteer experience. This demonstrates that they understand and agree to abide by the confidentiality policy and of FERPA and HIPAA. The standard of conduct is included in the Family Handbook and parents will be asked to sign before volunteering in their child's classroom.

Release of Information

In the event that parents are separated or divorced, either or both parents may request their child's educational information through a written request, unless SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five is in possession of a court order prohibiting a parent from receiving information.

Any information being released to newspapers, magazines, and television or radio reports, via telephone, email or in person regarding Head Start may be released only through Head Start administrative staff who have been formally designated by the Program Director.

Any sharing of any information or data will always be compliant with the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Act.

Data must be secure and access limited only to the specific individuals approved and assigned to work with Head Start students or families. This is to ensure that no data is released or reported in any manner that would allow the identification of individuals.

*Confidentiality of all data found in health records is required under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Public Law 104-191.

**Confidentiality of information contained in educational records is required under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. 1232(g).

Mandated Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five are mandated reporters under this law. The employees are not allowed to discuss their suspicions with parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to reporting the matter to county Social Services nor are they allowed to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. Head Start takes this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. Child Protective Services is designed to protect the welfare and best interests of all children. As mandated reporters, the staff of Head Start Birth to Five cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Community resources are available to help parents and families under stress. We are here to help and support you, but we still have an obligation to report suspected abuse or neglect.

Health and Nutrition

Preventive health services are important in SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five, and for this reason, all children are required by federal guidelines to have complete dental and physical exams within the first 90 days of enrollment. Children enrolled in EHS have more frequent well-child exams the first two years of life. When health problems are discovered, the Health/Family Support Coordinator help the families seek treatment right away. A medical/dental home (a place where your child receives ongoing, accessible and continuous health care) must be found. Ask your Health/Family Support Coordinator for information if you are in need of a medical home.

Physical Examination

Has your child had a physical exam in the last year? Please communicate with the Health/Family Support Coordinator so she can send for those records. If your Head Start child needs a physical exam the Health/Family Support Coordinator can assist you with making an appointment if needed. SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five will **NOT** pay costs if you take your child to your doctor for a physical exam. If you do not have medical coverage for your child, please visit with the Health/Family Support Coordinator.

Dental Examination

Has your child had a dental exam in the last year? Please communicate with the Health/Family Support Coordinator so she can send for those records.

Each child enrolled in the Head Start program is required by federal guidelines to have a dental exam. If your child needs a dental exam or dental follow-up the Health/Family Support Coordinator may assist you in making those appointments. SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five will **NOT** pay costs if you take your child to your dentist. A parent/guardian needs to be present when the child goes to the dentist.

Height and Weight

Your child's height and weight are monitored throughout the year by the Health/Family Support Coordinator.

Immunization

In the State of ND children are required to show proof of immunization before entry into preschool. Children who are not fully immunized according to state requirements have until October 5th 2020 to receive any missing immunizations or 30 calendar days from entry date into school or they must be excluded from our program.

Hearing Screening

During the early years, children are learning many things. Language is a very important part of their education. Even slight problems with a child's hearing can cause them to experience gaps in their learning. For this reason, we include hearing screenings as part of our developmental screenings. Your child's hearing will be completed within 45 days of entry into our program. If your child is experiencing hearing or ear problems, three things may happen:

- ✓ We may wait a month and then repeat the screening.
- ✓ You may be asked to take your child to a doctor to determine if there is a medical problem.
- ✓ Your child may need a complete hearing evaluation. We will discuss these steps with you if they become necessary and give you names of professionals whose services you might use.

If you have any questions about your child's hearing, please discuss those with the Health/Family Support Coordinator at SENDCAA Head Start.

Vision Screening

A vision screening will be completed by the SENDCAA Head Start Health/Family Support Coordinator within 45 days of entry into our program. If any concerns are found (per our procedures), the child will be referred to an eye doctor of your choice for follow-up. SENDCAA Head Start may be able to help you obtain glasses for your child if necessary.

Health and Dental Services

If your child has a medical assistance number (Cass, Richland, or Ransom County) Social Services will pay for health and dental care services for your child.

Please keep your Health/Family Support Coordinator informed whether your child has or doesn't have a source of health insurance.

SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five may assist in coordinating health and dental services with families. Any additional assistance and/or payment for health or dental services must have prior approval by the Head Start Director. Please speak with your Health/Family Coordinator for more information.

Appointments

When you make an appointment for a well child exam and/or dental exam it is very important to keep those appointments. If you cannot keep the appointment, call the dentist or clinic and call SENDCAA Head Start. If possible call early so the dentist can give someone else your appointment time. Please help SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five maintain a good reputation by keeping your appointment, arriving at your appointment on time, and canceling an appointment, if you have a necessary conflict.

Parents/ Guardians who fail to call the dental office to cancel their child's appointment will not be seen again at that dental office.

Medication Administration

Parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete a *Medication Administration form* in order for medications or OTC (over-the-counter) medications to be given at SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five. The parent/guardian and the child's licensed health care provider must sign the *Medication Administration form*.

Any medication sent to school or being sent home must be handed to the adult responsible for transporting the child for safekeeping. Please do not send medication with your child or put it in your child's backpack. Non-emergency medication sent to SENDCAA Head Start Birth to Five will be kept in a locked box or cabinet, and out of reach. Emergency medication will be kept out of reach. Any medication needing refrigeration will be stored in a locked box while refrigerated.

Head Start/EHS will no longer have Epi-pens on site. If your child is required to carry an Epi-pen for a health condition, the parent/guardian will be responsible to supply HS/EHS with an Epi-pen to keep on site for their child.

Head Start/EHS staff will carry a cell phone with them at all times when out of their classrooms to call 9-1-1 in case of an emergency.

Any prescription medication or OTC medication i.e. Ibuprofen, Tylenol, etc., brought to Head Start must be in the original container with the name of the medication, prescription label, strength, dosage that needs to be given, time medication needs to be administered, etc. Most pharmacies will provide a second bottle if needed. All medications will only be given with a completed *Medication Administration form* signed by the parent/guardian and the child's licensed health care provider. If necessary, Head Start can contact health care professionals for clarification. All prescriptions must be reviewed and have a new *Medication Administration form* signed by the parent/guardian and the child's licensed health care provider at the beginning of every program year, and throughout the year as needed.

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) can provide education to designated staff that will be giving the medication. First dose of medication always given by Parent/Guardian. Parents are encouraged to give as many scheduled medication doses at home.

Child Nutrition Policy

- Staff work together to identify each child's nutritional needs taking into account staff and family discussions concerning;

- Information about family eating patterns including cultural preferences, special dietary requirements for each child with nutrition-related health problems, feeding requirements of infants and toddlers and each child with disabilities.
- Each child in a part-day center-based setting must receive meals and snacks that provide at least 1/3 to 1/2 of the child's daily nutritional needs. Each child in a center-based full-day program must receive meals and snacks that provide 1/2 to 2/3 of the child's daily nutritional needs, depending upon the length of the program day.
- All children in morning center-based settings who have not received breakfast at the time they arrive at the center, must be served a nourishing breakfast.
- Each infant and toddler in center-based settings must receive food appropriate to his or her nutritional needs, developmental readiness, and feeding skills, as recommended in the USDA meal pattern.
 - Infants are held while being fed and are not laid down to sleep with a bottle.
 - Feeding schedules and amounts and types of food provided, meal patterns, new foods introduced, food intolerances and preferences, voiding patterns, and observations related to developmental changes in feeding and nutrition must be shared with parents and updated as needed.
 - Promote breastfeeding, including providing facilities to properly store and handle breast milk and make accommodation, for mothers who wish to breast feed during program hours, and if necessary, provide referrals to lactation consultants.
 - Infants and young toddlers must be fed "on demand" to the extent possible or at appropriate intervals.
 - All toddlers, preschool children, and staff will eat together family style.
- For 3 to 5 year-olds in center-based settings, the quantities and kinds of food served must conform to the recommended USDA requirements.
- Children brush their teeth once during the day.
- Children are offered various age appropriate nutrition experiences in the classroom.
- Safe drinking water is available to the children during the program day.

Illness Guidelines

- Please call if your child is going to be absent. We will call you if we do not hear from you.
- If your child becomes ill while at school, you or your indicated alternate will be contacted and asked to take your child home.
- Children with the following symptoms/illness should stay home or will be sent home until improved, treated or diagnosed as non-contagious:
 - Symptoms and signs of possible illness such as lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing or other unusual signs for the child.
 - A child with chicken pox will not be allowed to return to Head Start Birth to Five until all lesions have crusted over.
 - Fever with behavior changes or other symptoms. Fever is a temperature above 101°F (taken by any method) in infants age 3 months and older. Infants younger than 2 months of age with a temperature above 100.4°F (taken by any method) with or without behavior changes or other symptoms require exclusion and immediate medical attention.
 - Vomiting- 2 or more times in 24 hours.
 - Diarrhea- stool not contained in diaper; "accidents" for toilet trained children; stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above what's normal for child.
 - Impetigo- until treatment is started and lesions are covered.

- Head lice (can return after treatment) *Agassiz and West Fargo Early Childhood Center sites must adhere to school district policies and be nit free before returning to school.
- Scabies- until treatment is completed.
- Any unexplainable rash- with fever or behavior change.
- Suspected strep throat- until treated for 12 hours.
- Other at our discretion– if child does not feel well enough to participate in the usual center activities or illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide.
- A child's temperature should be normal for 24 hours without medication to reduce fever prior to returning to Head Start Birth to Five. Even a child with a serious infection may show no signs of fever upon waking in the morning.
- Children with vomiting or diarrhea should not return to Head Start Birth to Five until they have been symptom free for 24 hours.
- If your child is exposed to something contagious away from Head Start Birth to Five, please notify us.
- If your child has a positive (+) Mantoux, medical clearance in writing from a physician must be given to attend.
- We require a written order from a health care provider if you do not want your child to play outdoors.
- Please call your child's center or the Health Staff if your child is injured at home.
- The program does not deny admission to a child, nor exclude any enrolled child from program participation for a long-term period, solely on the basis of his or her health care needs or medication requirements unless keeping the child in care poses a significant risk to the health or safety of the child or anyone in contact with the child.

Medical Emergency Procedure

In the event where an immediate medical emergency is required, the following emergency procedure will be utilized:

- All staff are trained and certified to perform first aid and CPR as needed. A medical response team will be called such as 9-1-1 and/or the Poison Control Center if a poison emergency occurs. (1-800-222-1222)
- Emergencies that require staff to call 9-1-1- include but are not limited too
 - Child is lifeless or not breathing
 - Child is having difficulty breathing
 - Child is unconscious
 - Change in the child's mental status (unusual behavior, difficulty waking up)
 - Seizures, if a child has never had one or if the seizure is longer than five minutes
 - Sudden severe pain
 - Major trauma or injury
 - Suspected spinal or neck injury
 - Severe burns
 - Uncontrolled bleeding
 - Allergic reaction
 - Poisoning call the poison emergency number above
- Staff will follow dispatcher's recommendation on how to proceed with care.
- The parent/ guardian will be called as soon as possible, and no later than 30 min after the emergency call has been made. If unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff will go down the list and start calling the emergency contact numbers.
- A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with the child until the parent/guardian or emergency contact has arrived.