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Our Mission

Mission Statement

Our students and families will become responsible self-directed, life long learners with the skills necessary to live successfully in a global society.

We will uphold our mission by:

- Ensuring that children gain the skills and confidence necessary to succeed now, and later in school and in life.
- Ensuring that parents are always welcome and are recognized as the first and most important educators of their children, and that they are given opportunities to participate in policy making and in other decisions about the program.
- Ensuring that only the most dedicated, compassionate professional staff are employed to work with children and families, and that they are provided educational opportunities to further their child and family developmental skills.
- Ensuring that developmentally appropriate, attractive, safe, nurturing environments are provided for children and families.
- Ensuring that a broad range of integrated services is provided, meeting the needs of children and families.
- Ensuring that the child's entire family, as well as the community, is involved in and benefits from the Head Start Program.

Our mission will be the guidepost by which all decisions are measured, for we believe that implementing this mission on a daily basis will equal success for children, families, staff and communities.

Program Descriptions

Head Start

The Anderson County Head Start Program is operated by the Preschool Department, an entity of Anderson County Schools. The program is governed by the Anderson County Board of Education and the Anderson County Head Start Policy Council. The Preschool Department also operates the After School Program and the State of Tennessee Early Childhood Program.

Head Start and Early Head Start^{1*} are comprehensive child development programs which serve children from birth to age 5, pregnant women, and their families. They are child-focused programs, and have the overall goal of increasing the social competence and school readiness of young children in low-income families. “Social competence” refers to the child’s everyday effectiveness in dealing with both his or her present environment and later responsibilities in school and life. Social competence takes into account the interrelatedness of social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

Head Start services are also family-centered, following the tenets that children develop in the context of their family and culture and that parents are respected as the primary educators and nurturers of their children. Head Start offers family members opportunities and support for growth and change, believing that people can identify their own strengths, needs, and interests and are capable of finding solutions.

To support the overall goal of improving social competence, Head Start embraces a core set of values, including commitments to:

- Establish a supportive learning environment for children, parents, and staff, where the processes of enhancing awareness, refining skills, and increasing understanding are valued and promoted;
- Recognize that the members of the Head Start community - children, families, and staff – have roots in many cultures. Head Start families and staff, working together as a team, can effectively promote respectful, sensitive, and proactive approaches to diversity issues;
- Understand that the empowerment of families occurs when program governance is a responsibility shared by families, governing bodies, and staff, and when the ideas and opinions of families are heard and respected;
- Embrace a comprehensive vision of health for children, families, and staff, which assures that basic health needs are met, encourages practices that prevent future illnesses and injuries, and promotes positive, culturally relevant health behaviors that enhance life-long well-being;
- Respect the importance of all aspects of an individual’s development, including social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth;
- Build a community in which each child and adult is treated as an individual while, at the same time, a sense of belonging to the group is reinforced;
- Foster relations with the larger community, so that families and staff are respected and served by a network of community agencies in partnership with one another; and

¹ 1999 Head Start Program Performance Standards and Regulations. Head Start Bureau

- Develop a continuum of care, education and services that allow stable, uninterrupted support to families and children during and after their Head Start experience.

The Head Start program has a long tradition of delivering comprehensive and high quality services designed to foster healthy development in low-income children. Head Start grantee and delegate agencies provide a range of individualized services in the areas of education and early childhood development, medical, dental, and mental health, nutrition, and parent involvement. In addition, the entire range of Head Start services are responsive and appropriate to each child and family's developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience.

State of Tennessee Early Childhood Program

The Tennessee Early Childhood Program is a state funded preschool for three and four year olds. The child's eligibility is based on the family's income, which must meet the financial qualifications for the free or reduced lunch program. The eligibility requirements for the free or reduced lunch program are issued by USDA on an annual basis. The state funded program enrolls forty children in classrooms across the county.

After School Program

The Preschool Department also operates the After School Program for preschool and school age children. Presently, after school care is available in several Head Start centers and also in the majority of Anderson County Elementary Schools. The After School Program hours extend the day to 6:00 PM.

Getting Started

Business Office

The Anderson County School's Business Office is located on the fifth floor of the Union Planters Bank building in Clinton, Tennessee.

The Business Office should be contacted for questions regarding the following:

- New Hire Paperwork (all newly hired employees must go to the Business Office to complete their new hire paperwork, fingerprinting, etc.)
- Health / Dental Insurance
- Benefits (sick leave, personal days, vacation, bereavement leave and holidays)
- Payroll / Time Sheets

Head Start Central Office

The Head Start Central Office should be contacted with questions regarding the following:

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Contact Person</u>
• Dental	Dental Coordinator
• Education / Classroom	Education Coordinator
• Employee Accidents	Director / Assistant Director
• Enrollment	Enrollment Coordinator
• Extended Care	After School / Extended Care Coordinator
• Facilities / Playground	Assistant Director
• Health / Computer	MIS / Health Coordinator
• In-Kind	Program Assistant
• Mental Health / Disabilities	Mental Health / Disabilities Coordinator
• Nutrition	Nutrition Coordinator
• Parent Involvement	Family / Community Coordinator
• Personnel Problems	Director
• Supplies	Program Assistant
• Travel	Fiscal Manager

Locate Required Resources in Your Classroom

The following resource books should be in your classroom:

- Teacher notebook
- The Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood
- The Creative Curriculum Developmental Assessment
- Connecting Content, Teaching, and Learning
- Core Knowledge Preschool

- Core Knowledge notebook-Autonomy, Social Skills & Work Habits
- Peak With Books
- Growing Up Safe & Strong curriculum
- “I’m So Glad You Asked” curriculum
- Head Start Performance Standards
- Personnel Policies (Anderson County Schools)
- Peace Education/I Care Cat
- Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs (NAEYC)
- Learning to Read and Write (NAEYC)
- National Head Start S.T.E.P. Teacher’s Manual
- Collage & Paper
- Painting
- Drawing
- Clay & Dough
- Craft & Construction
- Block Play
- Sand & Water Play

Setting Up Your E-mail Account

To set up your e-mail account, log onto the web site for Anderson County Schools, which is www.acs.ac. You will then choose the “Technology” sub-heading and follow the instructions under “register for an ACS e-mail account”. (Note: Your user name will be the first initial of your first name followed by your last name.) If you have questions, contact the MIS / Health Coordinator at the Head Start Central Office.

Setting Up Children’s Folders

There is a certain order for each child’s folder to be set up. This makes it easier to find forms and identify what is missing. Following is the order to be used, going from top to bottom, on each side of the folder. These required items must be filed in the children’s center folders. Check folders once a month to insure they are up-to-date and be sure to sign the “Review of Child’s Record” form each time a folder is pulled. Documentation of dates for all screenings must also be recorded in the folders.

Left Side of Folder

Staffing Sheet ... must be signed by parents and staff at each home visit, conference or IEP meeting

Record of Contact Sheet... documents all communication between staff and family. These forms must be kept up-to-date. All types of contact with the family (including anything concerning the child) must be documented, in writing, by the staff member making the contact.

Conference Forms ... must be completed for each conference

Individual Screening Record ... documents home visits, screenings, conferences and assessments

Letter Identification Score Sheet ... documents child’s recognition of the alphabet

Individual Goals from Creative Curriculum ... documents child's individual goals
Creative Curriculum Booklet & Observations ... these items will not be placed in the child's file
until the end of the school year
Examples of child's work from Portfolio
Permission Slips & Other Miscellaneous Paperwork

Right Side of Folder

Review of Child's Record
Application / Registration Forms
Agreement of Understanding
Immunization Record
Birth Certificate
Social Security Card
Health History
Family Assessment

Center Records Checklist

Use the "Center Records Checklist" as you review each child's folder for completeness. After completing the checklist, please forward it to your Family Advocate and they will check the office file for any items you may be missing.

Required Screenings

Initial required developmental screenings are to be completed by the classroom staff within the first 45 days of the child's enrollment. This also includes staggered dates. They must be completed no earlier than 30 days prior to the close of school. All screenings and screening dates must be documented in the child's folder.

1. Brigance Screening

- Teacher assistant conducts screening (all children must have a Brigance – this includes children transitioning into the program from the Early Head Start Program and children who enroll later in the school year).
- Screening forms are to be completed in triplicate. Place one in child's folder, give one to the Family Advocate to be placed in the Head Start office folder; and give one to the parent / guardian at conference.

Be sure to document, on each child's Brigance Screening Tracking form, when the screenings were completed.

2. Height / Weight

Teacher Assistant is responsible for completing this. The height / weight must be completed three times a year (in September, January and May). Be sure the scale is not on the carpet.

This information must be provided to the MIS / Health Coordinator at the end of September, January and no later than May 15th.

3. *Vision Screening*

Will be completed by school nurse, or other appropriately trained staff, who will come to the classroom and screen all children. Teachers need to prepare children for the screening process.

4. *Hearing Screening*

Will be completed by the school nurse, audiologist, or other appropriately trained staff, who will come to the classroom and screen all children. Please note that the dates of vision and hearing screenings that are documented on the child's physical or on the State Immunization Form can also be used.

5. *Speech Screening*

The teacher must talk with the school's speech pathologist and schedule a time for the children to be screened. The teacher must provide the speech therapist with a classroom roster and have the speech pathologist indicate "pass" or "fail". The teacher will then send a copy of this completed roster to the MIS / Health Coordinator. If a child fails the speech screening, further evaluation will be completed by the speech pathologist. Children who enroll after the initial screening must be screened within 45 calendar days of their enrollment. It is the teacher's responsibility to inform the speech pathologist when a new student enrolls and to track that the screening is completed with the 45-day requirement.

6. *Behavior/Social Skills checklist*

The lead teacher fills the behavior/social skills checklist out on each child within the first 45 days of enrollment. This tool provides valuable information regarding each child's personality and temperament and will aid the teaching staff in planning activities to help the year get off to a smooth start.

Required exams / assessments that are to be completed within the first 90 days of enrollment include:

- Physical – Parent is responsible (to be completed by family physician)
- Dental - Parent or Dental Coordinator is responsible for completing. Children receiving Tenn Care who are not already established with a dentist will be taken to the Health Department dentist with parental approval. Teachers need to prepare children by familiarizing them with the dental services and transportation to be received. Dental days will be assigned. Teacher Assistant will be responsible for accompanying children to the office. Teacher and Teacher Assistant will work together to schedule a volunteer during the time the Teacher Assistant will be out of the Center. Substitutes should not be used on dental days, if at all possible, and then only with prior approval from the Director or Assistant Director.
- Creative Curriculum – Teacher and Teacher Assistant are responsible for implementing.

- Letter Identification – Teacher or Teacher Assistant is responsible for completing. The 90-day time period does not apply, as this is to be completed by the middle of September and again by the end of April.
- National Reporting System – Education coordinator is responsible for completing. The 90-day time period may not apply, as the time limit for completion is yet to be determined.

Required Postings

Following are postings that are required for your classroom:

- Teaching Certificate or CDA Certificate (for both Teacher and Teacher Assistant)
- State Licensing Certificate
- Fire Drill documentation
- Justice For All poster
- Comptroller Poster
- LEP (Limited English Proficiency)
- Emergency Preparedness Plan (see general information)
- Menus (corrections should be made as necessary)
- Lesson Plans
- Parent Information (see Parent Involvement Section)
- “No Smoking” signs
- “Exit” signs
- Phone numbers for Emergency Response Systems (911, Sheriff’s Office, Ambulance Service, Fire Department, Poison Control etc.)
- Daily Schedule
- Classroom Opening and Closing Times
- Classroom Rules
- Sign to identify location of First Aid Kit

Other tasks needed for getting started:

- Set up Teacher Notebook (must be complete and up-to-date)
- Classroom Set Up (see “Setting Up Your Environment”)
- Check service date on fire extinguisher. Service is good for one year from the date “punched”. If service has expired or will expire during the current school year, please notify the Head Start Director.

General Information

Adult : Child Ratios

The adult to child ratios for children ages 3 years and older changed effective July 1, 2003. Since these ratios have been scheduled to take effect for many years, there will be no “waiver” period for complying with these rules. The Licensing Evaluator began monitoring for compliance with the new ratios on July 1, 2003 and will issue citations for any failure to comply. Remember that the Licensing Evaluator checks adult to child ratios at every visit, and violations of these ratios are considered to be “major” violations, which subject your center to penalties.

Single-Age Grouping

3 year olds is 1:9 with a group maximum of 18

4 year olds is 1:13 with a group maximum of 20

5 year olds is 1:16 with a group maximum of 20

Multi-Age Grouping

2 ½ - 3 is 1:9 with a group maximum of 18

2 ½ - 5 is 1:11 with a group maximum of 20

3-5 is 1:13 with a group maximum of 22

4-5 is 1:16 with a group maximum of 24

Home Visits and Parent / Teacher Conferences

The home visits and parent conferences are requirements as noted below.

Home Visits

Home visits are a Performance Standard requirement. The Lead Teacher must make at least two home visits per program year to each child in their class. These are usually done in August before the child comes to school and again in February. The Family Advocate goes with the Teacher on the required home visits. The first home visit is a “get to know you” visit and should always be a positive experience for all involved. The second home visit is a time to report on the child’s progress in Head Start and discuss plans for the next school year.

During the first home visit, the teacher or assistant will discuss the following information and forms with parents: updating information, address changes, keeping phone numbers current, emergency numbers, release of information, daily schedules, drop-off and pick-up information, medication policy, classroom volunteers, items needed such as change of clothes and towels or blankets for mat, staggered days (each child attends at least two days), emergency list for children, emergency phone numbers and emergency plans posted, monthly fire drills, and teacher notebooks.

During the first home visit, the Family Advocate will discuss the following information and forms with parents: updating information which includes having parents re-date and initial any forms previously signed and dated, interest survey, dental forms, partnership agreement, voter registration, items needed to complete child's file (such as physical, up-to-date immunization record, birth certificate, social security card and Tenn Care card), parent training, Policy Council meetings and center parent meetings.

Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are a requirement of the Performance Standards and at least two are required annually. The first parent conference is in October and the second parent conference is in April. The conferences are held in the classrooms. The Family Advocate attends these also and uses this opportunity to check with the family on social service needs they may have. Other parent conference may be schedule if needs arise such as M-Team or upon parent request.

Requisitions

Requisition forms for materials and/or maintenance requests should be completed by the teacher and/or assistant and delivered or faxed to the office by Wednesday morning. The orders will be filled by Friday morning and can be picked up at the office. Any requisitions received after Wednesday morning may be filled the following week. Please plan ahead, if special items (such as cooking ingredients or seasonal supplies) are needed, please give 1-2 weeks notice. Items usually in stock include:

- Paints;
- Crayons;
- Markers;
- Paper;
- Some craft items; and
- Basic office supplies

E-mail

Because we are "spread out", the best means of communication is via e-mail. It is the teacher and teacher assistant's responsibility to check e-mail twice each day. We recommend you check it in the morning, before children arrive, and in the afternoon, after children have gone home. Please do not do this during the day, as we do not want to detract from your time with the children.

Instructions for Sending E-mails with Attachments

1. Insert diskette into the appropriate drive of your computer (usually "A Drive").
2. Open Microsoft Word (double-click the icon with the large "W") or other appropriate program.
3. Click on "File" then click on "Open".
4. Click on the drop down box (downward arrow) where it says "look in".

5. Click on the appropriate drive (usually "A Drive").
6. Move cursor to the file you want to open ("lesson plans", for example).
7. Click on the "Open" box in the lower right corner of your screen.
8. Your document will open and you can make any necessary changes.
9. Then save your document to the diskette by clicking on "File" and then clicking on "Save As".
10. Then go down to where the screen says "File Name" and type in the new name for your document (example: "lesson plans 092003" because if you don't change the name then you will save over your blank document and you won't have a blank document to use later.
11. After you have typed in the new name for your document, verify under "Save In" that you are saving it to the "A" drive, then click on "Save".
12. To attach your document and send it as an e-mail, click on your icon for Microsoft Internet Explorer (this is usually the small "e" on the lower, left portion of your screen).
13. Your system should open to your "acs" home page (Anderson County Schools).
14. Click on "e-mail" in the top-middle portion of your screen.
15. Enter your user name and password then click "okay".
16. Click on "new" to send a new message.
17. At the prompt for "To" type in the e-mail address of the person you are sending to.
18. If you don't know the e-mail address of the Anderson County School's employee that you want to send e-mail to and you are using an internal (school system's) computer, you can click on "To" and it will bring up the "Find Name" feature. Then you can go to the "Last Name" block and type any portion of the person's last name (for example, "lar" for Larson). Then click on "Find" and the system will bring up every employee whose last name begins with "lar". Move the cursor to the employee you want to send the e-mail to then click on "To" and "Close". Then it will bring up the e-mail screen and will show the name of the person you highlighted under the "To" field. You will be at the same point now as you would be at the end of item "16" above. If you choose the name this way, you will only see "Lesa Larson" in the "To" field (not llarson@acs.ac).
19. Click on the paperclip (which allows you to attach a document to the e-mail).
20. Click on "Browse".
21. Click on the drop down box (downward arrow) where it says "look in".
22. Click on appropriate drive (usually "A Drive").
23. Move cursor to the file you want to open (lesson plans, for example).
24. Click on the "Open" box in the lower right corner of your screen.
25. Click on "Attach" then click on the "x".
26. The system will then take you back to the e-mail screen and you will see the item you selected (lesson plans, for example) beside the "Attachment" field.
27. If you want to type a note, you can do that.
28. Then click on the "Send" button and exit out of Microsoft Internet Explorer.

If you have any questions, please contact the MIS / Health Coordinator or Program Assistant.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

All Anderson County Schools have an Emergency Preparedness Plan unique to their facility that is kept on file in the Principal's Office. The Head Start teacher shall review the Emergency Preparedness Plan for their school at the beginning of each school year. The Teacher is responsible for following the procedures in the Emergency Preparedness Plan. The plan provides procedures for the Head Start staff to follow in cases of nuclear or bomb threat, civil disturbance, earthquake, fire, tornado, and other severe weather.

Emergency preparedness drills will be conducted in order to give instruction and practice in proper actions by staff and students. The teacher shall conduct one fire drill each month and record it on the appropriate form that should be visibly displayed in the classroom. Three additional safety drills are required during the school year. These drills may include inclement weather, earthquakes, intruder or other emergency drills that do not require full evacuation.

Substitute Teachers

If a staff member is going to be absent they must make arrangements for a parent volunteer (whenever possible) or substitute to fill in for them. Be sure your co-worker is aware that you are going to be absent. If every effort has been made to find a substitute and failed, you may then contact your Family Advocate for assistance. Teachers and teacher assistants should have a substitute list and list of parent phone numbers at home in case of illness or emergency. The substitute teachers must be approved by the School Board before serving as a substitute.

**BOTH TEACHER AND ASSISTANT CAN NOT BE ABSENT AT THE SAME TIME
UNLESS UNAVOIDABLE DUE TO EMERGENCY SITUATIONS.**

School Closings Due to Inclement Weather

Anderson County Schools has 13 snow days available in the event of inclement weather. Should there be weather-related cause for schools to be closed, it will be broadcast on the local TV or radio station and will include staff information. The Head Start staff is not required to report to school unless otherwise directed. If the staff is not required to report to work, the Director of Schools will determine the pay status of 188-day contract employees for that day.

End of Year Check – Out Procedure

Each teacher will be required to collect and account for the items listed on the “End of the Year Checklist”. A staff coordinator or the director will come to the classroom and complete the checklist with the teacher. This will be completed at some point during the last two days of the school year, after the children have completed their school year. The teacher is responsible for the resources / materials made available to her.

This process allows the program to maintain a complete set of resources for each classroom. Refer to “Locate Required Resources in Your Classroom” for more information.

Policies and Procedures

Confidentiality

All employees are expected to exercise confidentiality of information concerning children, children's records, employee situations, and families. Any breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary measures or termination. Confidential information should never be discussed when children are present.

Keep in mind the following:

- Student emergency phone numbers and addresses must be secured and out of sight of non-staff individuals. Student phone numbers and information cannot be shared with anyone, other than staff.
- Student folders must not be left unattended and must be stored in a locked cabinet. Do not leave folders out when you are absent from the room.
- The teacher & teacher assistant must not discuss individual children or families in the presence of other children or parents. This includes phone calls and contacts with the family advocate.
- Please advise parents not to openly discuss their child or any other child's behavior or situation. If needed, staff should discuss with parent in a private area away from other students.
- If a member of law enforcement or the Department of Children Services requests student information, always ask for appropriate identification. The teacher or teacher assistant should notify the Director or Assistant Director about this agency's contact by the close of the school day.
- Annually, all staff shall sign a Standards of Conduct Policy that includes a confidentiality statement.

Child Abuse and Neglect

By Tennessee Law, anyone who suspects the occurrence of child abuse or neglect must report it to the local law enforcement agency or the Department of Children Services.

If you observe suspected abuse or neglect please do the following:

1. Call the Department of Children Services and report your suspected incident and then contact the Preschool Assistant Director and report what you have done; or
2. Call the Preschool Office and report the suspected incident to the Head Start Assistant Director. The Assistant Director will go to the center and assist the staff member in reporting the incident.

NOTE: Option 2 is offered to staff to assist in protecting the center staff's close relationship with the child's family. In no way does this procedure for reporting an incident take away the teaching staff's right or responsibility to report an incident. It is strictly set up in this manner to protect the teacher/family advocate's relationship with the Head Start family.

The Assistant Director plans and implements the system for complying with the child abuse and neglect requirements and laws. In the absence of the Assistant Director, the Director or Family and Community Coordinator may assist staff.

3. Inform the school principal that a report has been made and that staff from the Department of Children Services may be coming to the school. The principal needs to be informed in the event that there are consequences resulting from the parents suspecting that the report came from the Head Start classroom staff.
4. The teacher should objectively document the incident on a separate contact form and keep it filed separately from the child's folder and in a locked place.
5. All documentation about the incident and the report shall be kept in a separate file in the Head Start Office. At the end of the child's enrollment in Head Start, the documentation will be placed in the child's comprehensive Preschool file.
6. Keep the Assistant Director informed of any actions that are taken about the case.
7. If a representative from the Department of Children's Services or a law enforcement officer comes to your classroom, ask for a work identification card or badge.

Biting Policy

Biting is a developmental stage that all children experience and usually outgrow by three years old. Young children sometimes bite because they lack the language skills needed to express their needs and wants. The Preschool Program has developed a list of procedures to follow if you have this situation occur in your classroom.

Take care of the victim by cleaning the wound with anti-bacterial soap. If possible, the biter should help clean the wound, hold the ice pack, or sooth the victim with a pre-moistened towelette. This helps the biter take responsibility for their action. The victim should get plenty of attention ... a hug and perhaps a sticker for bravery!

Talk to the biter about the incident firmly, but not harshly. Make sure the child is paying attention. Keep the talk short and to the point. A long lecture is not necessary and probably will not be understood.

If necessary, separate the biter from the group until the child can control the biting and rejoin the other children. This time out should never be longer than five minutes. Have a clean rubber toy available for the child to bite. After a biting incident occurs, you might say, "You may not bite

people, but you can bite the toy when you need to bite.” Under no circumstances would this be done to humiliate the child. If the child resists, do not force it.

Have clay, bubbles or play dough available. Pounding, rolling, and hitting play dough will help release hostile feelings. Finger painting and easel painting also help a child who feels angry. Blowing bubbles is also appropriate.

Give lots of praise and attention for good behavior. The more attention children receive for good behavior, the less likely they are to misbehave. A child with a serious biting problem may not be able to go all day at first without biting, so make sure you reward the child often for behaving well.

Keep the parents informed and call them to report the incident. Encourage the parents of the biter not to punish the child at home for biting that occurs in your classroom. You should report that you handled it and that the child should not be reprimanded again. If necessary, ask parents if anything has changed at home that might be causing the child to be more hostile.

Once a child has begun biting, the child will be shadowed. This means that the teacher assistant will follow the biter closely to prevent this behavior from reoccurring. A child will not be dismissed from our program for biting.

If a child bites a second time, a parent conference is required and the Family Advocate should attend. Contact the Director or Assistant Director to notify them of the conference date.

Notify the child’s (victim’s) parents on the day the incident occurs, before the dismissal time. Parents are likely to get angry and ask, “Who did this to my child?” Accept their anger calmly and explain that biting is a common way for children to deal with frustration. Describe what you are doing to keep the child from being bitten again. Ask for parental support in dealing with the problem. Maintain confidentiality when asked to disclose the identity of the biter.

Give an objective account of what happened on the “accident / incident report”. Record details such as time of day and where the incident took place (example: block area). The report must be faxed to the Head Start office before the end of the day.

Field Trips

Beginning with school year 2003-2004, new changes have come to the Anderson County Head Start Program regarding transportation of our preschool children. Due to these new National Transportation regulations, the following field trip policy will be enforced.

1. There will be no field trips that involve the transportation of children on a school bus.
2. Field trips may occur in which parents transport their own child to the location and stay with the child during the field trip (for example: zoo, museum, etc.). Head Start will pay the activity fees of the parent and child. There will be no reimbursement to parents for transportation costs. In order to participate in a field trip of this type, at least 50% of the

parents must make a commitment to attend. For children who cannot go on the field trip, a regular school day will be provided. The teacher assistant will remain with the children who do not attend the field trip. It is important that at least 50% of the parents commit to the trip.

3. Teachers should also consider arranging to bring resources such as exhibits and projects to the center for presentations. For example: Knoxville Zoo, Ijam's, etc.
4. Field trips should be planned at the monthly parent meeting. This allows for parental input into the planning of the trips. The teacher should assist in this planning to ensure that all trips meet regulations of the Head Start program. Prior to the field trip, adults should be reminded of all appropriate standards of conduct, which includes, but is not limited to, the use of tobacco products in the presence of children, and unacceptable language. Both will not be tolerated. Field trips should not be scheduled on parent meeting days, Policy Council meeting days, or parent training days. Check with the office before scheduling a field trip.
5. Field trip requests must be turned into the Preschool Director at least three weeks in advance, and approval received before the trip is taken. No late requests will be honored.
6. Any time children leave the school grounds it is considered a field trip and a request must be submitted. All documentation must be included on the proper field trip form. The expenses for the trip should be documented on the form. Receipts for checks are due to the Fiscal Assistant within one week from the time the trip is taken.
7. The Head Start Program will pay for one adult per child to attend field trips.
8. Field trips are a special time for the Preschool student and their parent(s). Parents are discouraged from taking other younger or school age children on Head Start field trips. Since parents are transporting their own preschooler, they will have the final decision on whether siblings will accompany them on the field trip.
9. Field trips are not meant to duplicate basic life experiences or to infringe upon individual beliefs/preferences of families.
10. No more than one field trip should be planned per semester.
11. In order to keep trip costs down, teachers are encouraged to take USDA lunches from the school cafeteria. Student lunches may not be given to adults. Adult meals may also be ordered from the cafeteria.

Standards of Conduct Policy

Each employee is required to read the Standards of Conduct Policy each year (as it is a living document and will be revised from time to time to meet changing needs). You will then be required to sign statements as noted at the end of this list.

1. Be knowledgeable about your job description.
2. All employees are expected to exercise confidentiality of information concerning children, children's records, employee situations, and families. Any breach of confidentiality will result in disciplinary measures or termination. Confidential information should never be discussed when children are present.
3. Take care of all paper work concerning your job application, W-4 form, TB test, health requirements, and payroll procedures. Health requirements, address, and phone number must be up-dated as needed. A physical is required every three years for all Center employees. All employees are required to attend the annual training on bloodborne pathogens and medication policy provided by Anderson County Schools. In-service training documentation must be kept up-to-date and turned in to the Head Start office at least two weeks prior to each licensing.
4. You must sign in and out accurately and daily on the appropriate form. All office positions are 8 hours or less per day. Teachers work 7 1/2 hours and assistants work a maximum of 8 hours daily. No one may accrue over 40 hours per week or work past the assigned hours without the Director's prior approval.
5. Comfortable clothing may be worn for center work but absolutely no short shorts or mini skirts. No tube tops, halter tops, or spaghetti strap tops are allowed. Midriffs or cleavage must not show. Shoes must be worn at all times by both staff and children. Office staff should dress appropriately for their work and the image of the program. Walking shorts or dress shorts may be worn in the office.
6. No gum, candy, soft drinks, or juices in the presence of the children. If you must have a soft drink during work hours it is to be in a sipper mug with a lid so that children cannot see it.
7. Each staff member is a reflection of Anderson County Schools and our Head Start Program. You must conduct yourself accordingly.
8. It is considered inappropriate for an employee's spouse, girl/boy friend, or other family members to spend time at the center unless they are an age-appropriate volunteer. You are at work and should not be distracted from the children. Head Start employee's children may join them after school hours.
9. Using any form of physical punishment will not be tolerated. This includes hitting, shaking, jerking, pulling hair, and pinching. Ridicule or embarrassment of children or abusive verbal discipline/profanity is not allowed. Discipline will not involve total isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs. Any of these actions toward children will result in immediate suspension without pay, pending action of the executive director of the Anderson County School Board and the Policy Council. **POSITIVE METHODS OF CHILD GUIDANCE WILL BE USED.**

10. While on duty, you are responsible for the children in your group. Their safety and well being are your most important consideration. **CHILDREN MUST NEVER BE OUT OF YOUR SIGHT!!!** Children shall be in the presence of an adult at all times. When with the children you should be interacting with them, not the other staff members or visitors; this includes on the playground and in the gym. The teacher assistant must go with the group of children to the special classes such as gym, library or music.
11. Both the teacher and teacher assistant must go with the children to meals. The only exceptions are as follows; if a parent volunteer is present and goes to the meal time with the teacher assistant or if the number of children in attendance has dropped to 10 children or below, one staff member can be with the children. The classroom behavior for that day should be taken into consideration before allowing the above exceptions. **One staff member MUST take a food tray and eat the same food as the children, at the children's table.** Food left over from meals or snacks must not be removed from the classroom. Food must be disposed of in the garbage. Failure to comply with these supervision guidelines will result in immediate suspension, pending action of the executive director of the Anderson County Board of Education and the Policy Council.
12. Staff members will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.
13. Staff members shall have knowledge of room/center organization; this includes procedures for opening and closing rooms and the building and carrying out of basic scheduled activities.
14. Staff members will be knowledgeable of fire, tornado and other weather-related safety procedures, and all emergency preparedness procedures. Policies and plans for action for emergencies will be posted. Emergency evacuation routes should be posted. Emergency procedures (fire drills, etc.) should be practiced regularly. Up-to-date family contact information and authorization for emergency care for each child will be readily available.
15. Employees must adhere to the Anderson County School Board's tobacco policy and state regulations. There is to be no smoking in the school or Head Start buildings at any time. If you take a smoking break, all children must be fully supervised and you must smoke in an area that is not visible to either children or parents.
16. **ABSENTEEISM:** When you cannot report to work you must phone your lead teacher or coworker as soon as possible, but no later than your expected time to begin work. Lead teachers should notify the Head Start Office. Each staff member is responsible for keeping an up-to-date list of substitutes in their area and making every possible effort to arrange for their own volunteers/substitutes. If you are unable to do so you should call your lead teacher or the Head Start Office. All appointments and community activities should be arranged around scheduled work hours. You have agreed to be a team member at one of our sites. The effectiveness of our program depends upon your commitment to be at work CONSISTENTLY.

17. Employees must be able to lift children and lift/move classroom equipment and furniture weighing up to 50 pounds (classroom arrangement, cleaning, disabled children, playground equipment, etc.), except where physical handicaps are pre-existing when hired or upon written request from a physician for temporary restrictions.
18. All broken electronic items that require physical inventory in the center should be reported to the Head Start Office. The office must be notified for approval and for documentation on inventory before any material or equipment is destroyed or thrown away.
19. The center and playground should be inspected for unsafe conditions **daily**. Any unsafe conditions should be reported to the Principal or Director immediately.
20. Staff members will be evaluated annually. Copies will be kept in individual personnel files.
21. A thirty-day mandatory written notice is required upon resignation. Only the Director has the right to waive this notice.
22. All employees are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness/orderliness of the room/rooms in which they work.
23. The classroom teacher shall record, daily, the attendance for each child. A total child count should be recorded and should be checked against the meal totals. Head Start staff will also keep an accurate count daily of adults who eat breakfast and/or lunch. This includes staff and parents. These counts should be turned in to the Head Start Office no later than the last working day of each month.
24. KEEP WAITING TIME for your group to a minimum. Be prepared for all activities. Prepare and plan for all transitions.
25. If chocolate milk is a choice for your program it should be used for snack time ONLY, not with meals.
26. All parents are required to provide a change of clothing for their children. If children soil their clothing and clean clothing is available, employees are required to change the child. Parents should be called ONLY when a change is not available.
27. The more time children spend in the gym or on the playground, the less appropriate it is for them to have free play. An organized game or activity should be implemented whenever more than one class is in a play area.
28. Age-appropriate lesson plans should be posted and should be available upon request to parents, Director, and licensing personnel. All lesson plans are to be sent to the Education Coordinator by Monday of the implementation week.

29. Time sheets should be filled out accurately and completely and signed by the employee and the lead teacher. Time sheets should be filled out with an ink pen instead of a pencil. They should be turned in to the school office or Head Start Office at the appropriate time. Failure to do so will result in late payment of payroll. No employee should sign a time sheet for another employee.
30. Only "G" rated movies will be shown (no exceptions). A maximum of 30 minutes a day of television or movies may be used in each classroom. Television is discouraged except for special occasions, as children should be actively involved.
31. Center employees should call the Head Start Office only at naptime except in cases of emergency. **ALL** personal calls should be limited to 3 minutes. All central office staff is instructed to call the centers only during naptime, except in emergencies. **No long distance calls are to be made without prior approval from the Head Start Office. Any unapproved calls will be charged to the individual making the call.** Personal cell phones must be turned off during school hours.
32. No employee will solicit or accept cash donation from any person or company. No employee will encourage parents to solicit or accept cash donations from any person or company. Any person or company indicating a wish to donate to the Head Start Program should be referred to the Director.
33. There will be no fund raising activities by any teacher, classroom, or parent group.
34. Attendance sheets, monthly center reports, in-kind reports, time sheets, leave requests, end of the year check lists and any other required paperwork is to be completed and turned in to the appropriate person/office by the due dates.
35. No Head Start child will be sent home because of behavior problems without the prior permission of the Director, Assistant Director or Education Coordinator. If the Director or Assistant Director cannot be reached, the teacher assistant is to be assigned to the child in a one-to-one situation.
36. All Head Start related records and documents, whether hand written or entered into the computer, become the property of the Head Start Program. All furnishings, supplies and materials purchased with Head Start funds are the property of the Head Start Program. Any person who leaves employment with the Head Start Program will not remove any records, documents, furnishings, supplies, materials or teacher resources that are the legal property of the Head Start Program from the premises.
37. Employees must be familiar with and follow the Program's policies and procedures for:
 - a. Methods for handling cases of suspected or known child abuse and neglect;
 - b. The administration, handling, and storage of medication for children and staff;
 - c. Contagious illness;
 - d. Administration of first aid and/or CPR;
 - e. Grievance procedure for employees; and

- f. All other policies and procedures as noted in the Anderson County School's Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, the Head Start Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, Head Start Performance Standards, and the Licensing Requirements for Childcare Centers.

38. Be aware of, follow, and enforce all state/federal guidelines and school rules.

39. All parents, volunteers, consultants, and substitutes are to follow all program policies and procedures when present in the program.

After receiving the Standards of Conduct Policy, each staff member is required to sign statements indicating they have read and understand the policy and have received a copy for their records. Each staff member is also required to sign stating that they have no prior arrests and /or convictions for violent felonies, child abuse, or neglect. Each staff member is also required to sign stating that they have received a copy of the policy regarding alcohol and drug abuse and that they do not use illegal drugs either on or off duty.

Staff Evaluations

All new certified staff and all classified staff will be evaluated annually by the appropriate supervisor and shall establish annual goals to improve individual performance skills. Evaluations shall be used to inform employees of their performance, as an aid to improving performance and as a basis for continuing employment. The first classroom observation will be made during the staff member's initial 90-day probationary period.

Tenured and non-tenured teachers shall be evaluated according to the Anderson County Board of Education policy (S. B. P. 5.111). Non-tenured teachers shall be observed at least three times per year. After each observation, the evaluator shall provide feedback to the teacher concerning the observation and note deficiencies. The evaluator shall make recommendations for improvement. All non-tenured teachers will be notified of their employment status for the next school year on or before April 15.

Tenure status is granted to certified teachers after three years of successful performance reviews and the recommendation of the Director of Schools.

Resignation

If a teacher makes the decision to resign, according to School Board Policy S.205, they must be given an exit interview with the Director of the program. If an exit interview is not possible, and exit assessment will be given to the employee to be completed and mailed back to the program in a self-addressed stamped envelope. A thirty-day mandatory written notice is required upon resignation. Only the Director has the right to waive this notice.

Releasing Children

Center staff members are responsible for the safety and well being of Preschool children from the time a child enters the center until the child is picked up. Children may be released to an authorized adult only and will be allowed to leave the center under the following conditions:

- (a) with the parent; or
- (b) with an individual listed on the emergency information section of the application or custody authorization; or
- (c) if a person other than the parent or an individual listed on the emergency sheet comes to the center, the teacher or teacher assistant must have written or verbal permission from the parent. (If a request is made by the parent over the phone, the teacher or teacher assistant should be confident that they are speaking with the parent.) When the individual arrives at the center they must provide a picture identification, be recognized by the child and the child must know them by name.

School Board Policies

After completion of the ninety-day probationary period, full-time employees will be eligible for:

Sick Leave

Employees earn one day of sick leave for every twenty days worked. Sick leave can be used for illnesses, medical appointments, family illness, death of a relative or funeral, if bereavement leave is not available. Any other circumstances need to be approved by the Director.

Personal Leave

Employees earn two days of personal leave per school year. Personal days can be used for any reason. At the end of the fiscal year, personal days that have not been used rollover into sick leave.

Vacation

Vacation is available to 260-day contract employees only.

Bereavement

Staff is entitled to take three days of bereavement leave for the death of a member of their immediate family, to a maximum of six days in any given school year. Immediate family is defined as parents, spouse, children, siblings, grandparents, grandchildren, stepparents, foster parents, stepchildren, and parents-in-law. Bereavement will not be deducted from the accumulated sick leave or personal leave. Bereavement leave days must be taken consecutively.

Holidays

As directed by the School calendar.

Professional Leave

Head Star personnel who wish to attend a workshop, conference, educational activity or event that is directly related to preschool programs or their particular job, may apply for Professional Leave. Professional Leave is leave beyond sick, vacation, or personnel leave. A Professional Leave form is available from the Head Start Office or Principal's Office and must be submitted in duplicate a minimum of two weeks prior to the date of the activity. Exception: If the request involves overnight travel, the Professional Leave form is due prior to the first day of the month because it requires approval from the Board of Education.

The Professional Leave form must be filled out completely with all details concerning registration fees, travel, per diem, hotel, etc. Attach a copy of the activity announcement that includes a description of the event and send it to the Preschool Director.

Once the event has been approved the Fiscal Assistant can provide information on how to request a travel advance to pay for the fees in advance. When travel advances are made, it requires that the staff member come to the office to complete a written request.

Professional Leave Follow-up

Within three days of the event, the staff member must turn in verification of participation in the professional event or activity along with a receipt for lodging and registration fees. All travel forms must be submitted at this time. The per diem rate is as follows: mileage is at a rate of \$0.25 per mile; Breakfast is \$6.00; Lunch is \$9.00 and Dinner is \$15.

Paperwork

Sign-In and Sign-Out Sheets for Classified Staff

CLASSIFIED STAFF in centers housed within a school shall follow the school's sign-in and sign-out procedures. In addition to that, all classified staff (regardless of whether you are housed within a school or in a Center located off school campuses), must use the sign-in and sign out forms provided by Head Start Office. You must sign in and out daily. These forms must be turned in no later than the Tuesday following the Tuesday you turned in your time sheet. The dates on the sign-in and sign-out form must correspond with the dates on your time sheet.

Sign-In and Sign-Out Sheets, Leave Reports and Leave Requests for Certified Staff

CERTIFIED TEACHERS housed within a school shall follow the school's procedures and deadlines for submitting their leave reports and leave requests. For certified teachers in Centers located off school campuses, your leave reports and leave requests are due to the Head Start Office (no later than noon) on the 15th of each month (covering the period for the 1st – 15th) and the last day of the each month (30th or 31st and covering the period for the 16th – 30th or 31st). If a substitute is used, their time card must also be turned in along with the leave reports and leave requests.

Leave Reports, Time Sheets and Leave Requests for Classified Staff

Leave reports, time sheets and leave requests for CLASSIFIED STAFF are normally due on every other Tuesday of the week before a payday, unless otherwise notified due to a Holiday schedule. Substitute time cards are due at the same time. Substitutes cannot be paid without a time card turned in following this procedure. Since time sheets are due on Tuesdays for the period that does not end until the following Friday, we realize there will be instances where a staff member will be absent, unexpectedly, after the time cards were turned in. When this occurs, you must call the Program Assistant IMMEDIATELY and fax the appropriate leave request. The Program Assistant will then notify the Business Office.

When a staff person expects to be absent they should notify their assigned school and co-workers as soon as possible. The staff person that is absent is responsible for arranging for a parent volunteer or substitute, if necessary, for the duration of their absence.

Children's Attendance Reports

The children's attendance reports are due to the Head Start Office on the last day of the month. (The Family Advocate can assist with this requirement.) When a child has been absent for three days a contact must be made to the family (either a phone call or a home visit). The contact must be documented on the contact sheet in the child's folders. On the attendance sheet it must state why the child was absent. *It can't just say "SICK"*. It should state high fever, cold, flu, asthma attack, pinkeye or strep throat, etc. If a child is sent home for an illness, it must also be documented on the attendance sheet.

Meal Count Reports

Meal count reports must be turned in to the Head Start Office on the last day of the month. All meals, for both children and adults, must be recorded accurately. The accuracy affects the program's USDA reimbursement for meals we serve.

In-Kind Forms

In-kind forms must be turned in the last day of the month. Any services or goods received by the Head Start program are considered in-kind services. The purpose of these forms is to document these services or goods received by the classroom. At least 20% of the total Head Start budget must come from in-kind services. The collection of data and proper completion of the in-kind forms for centers is a joint effort between the Teacher, the Teacher Assistant and the Family Advocate. The in-kind packet consists of a "principal" sheet which requires a signature and a number of hours donated for the month from the school principal, vice principal, secretary, custodian, librarian, music teacher, nurse, physical education teacher, speech teacher and any other school employee who donates time to the program. The packet also includes a form for parents or others to sign as they donate time or items to the program. They must also list the number of hours, the date, their relationship to the child, the item donated and the value of the item donated. Please be sure these are accurate and turned in on the due date as the Program Assistant must compile reports from all the locations and submit this information to the Fiscal Assistant and Director in a timely manner.

Parent Sign-In Sheets

The parent, or other authorized adult, must sign when they drop off and pick up their child. By signing this sheet, the adult transfers responsibility for the child to the Head Start staff. The Head Start staff is responsible for the child until an authorized adult signs the child out of the classroom. These sheets are to be turned in along with the in-kind packet on the last day of the month.

Purchases or Reimbursements

Purchases or reimbursements for items for the classroom must have prior approval from the Fiscal Officer. If you do not have prior approval, you will not be reimbursed for your expense. Invoices and receipts must be signed by the staff person to be reimbursed and these should be turned in to the Head Start Office as soon as possible.

Field Trip Requests

Field trips requests must be submitted a minimum of three weeks before the date of the field trip.

Center Parent Committee Meetings

Center parent committee meeting notices, agendas, minutes and sign-in sheets must be turned in to the Family and Community Coordinator at the end of the month. The Teacher and Family Advocate are to work as a team on conducting and documenting these meetings.

College Class Request

Any staff member planning to take a college class paid for by the Program must complete the College Class Request form and turn it to the Preschool Office. A list of staff the Program will pay for must be sent to Roane State Community College. When the class is completed, the staff member must give a copy of the grade and/or transcript to the office. **Our program pays for one course and one textbook per semester.**

Travel Forms

Travel forms for reimbursement should be turned in to the Head Start Office at end of the month. If the total is less than \$10.00, reimbursement can be requested for two months.

Accident Reports

Accident reports on children and employees are to be faxed to the Head Start Office as soon as possible but absolutely no later than the end of the workday when the accident occurred.

Supplies or Maintenance Needs

Requests for needed supplies or maintenance must be submitted on the appropriate requisition form. See the section on “requisitions” under general information for more information.

Child’s Classroom Folder

The child’s classroom folder must include all appropriate forms and other documentation. Refer to the section on “setting up children’s folders” under getting started for more information.

Classroom Documentation Requirements

Classroom documentation must be kept in a locked file for 3-5 years. This includes any paper notes, school newsletters, field trips, etc. This documentation is a requirement for monitoring and auditing purpose.

Training Documentation

All Staff must keep a Training Documentation form up-to-date with training they have received during the year. These forms must be turned in at the end of the school year. This is a Performance Standard and a State Licensing requirement.

Training and Staff Development

Training

The Head Start program is committed to providing quality training for its staff as an on-going process. All training necessary to enable staff to adequately perform their job responsibilities and to meet the requirements of the Performance Standards is provided. A minimum of ten days in-service training for certified and CDA lead teachers is required by the school system. In addition, teachers and teaching assistants receive one-half day of training per month. State licensing requires that teachers and lead teachers receive 18 hours of annual in-service training. Teaching assistants must receive 12 hours of annual training. A minimum of half of these requirements must be met by attending training and/or workshops provided by trainers other than the regular program staff. Each staff member is responsible for keeping documentation of training attended and turning the documentation / certificates in to the Head Start office at the end of the school year. Because we are federally funded, there is some training that is mandated by the government. Other training will be scheduled throughout the year as needed. The following is a list of required training for center staff.

Bloodborne Pathogens	Mental Health Education
Child Abuse and Neglect	Mental Health Training
CPR / First Aid Training	Nutrition Education
Dental Education	Orientation
Domestic Violence	Performance Standards
GED Literacy	Policies and Procedures
Health and Safety	Substance Abuse

Non-certified lead teachers are required to have their CDA. This training involves college coursework and homework assignments, as well as the development of a portfolio. The program, except when scholarships are available, will cover the cost. A monetary supplement will be issued in increments upon completion of the coursework.

College courses should be selected in a subject that will improve or enhance job performance, or will apply toward an Associate's or Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education. Upon the completion of the Associate's Degree, the lead teacher will receive a pay supplement. The awarding of funds for coursework is based on availability of Training and Technical Assistance funds. It is the responsibility of the staff member to select the desired course or courses, and to request funds from the Head Start Director. Upon completing the course, the employee must furnish the Director with a copy of that semester's transcript, which may be obtained from the college.

Job Descriptions

Teacher

1. Know Performance Standards, Anderson County Board of Education and Head Start Program policies and procedures, and State Licensing Requirements.
2. Ensure that all policies and procedures are maintained and adhered to, inclusive of, but not limited to, job descriptions, administrative instructions and memos, child abuse and neglect policy, safety requirements, and discipline procedures.
3. Assist in planning and conduct a program of education for Head Start children whereby their development is ensured and skills are developed according to each child's needs.
4. Complete the first individual educational assessment (Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment) within 90 calendar days of the child's entry into the program. Two more checkpoints for assessment are required during the school year (dates determined each year).
5. Implement the "Growing Up Safe and Strong" curriculum on a weekly basis and document lessons on the tracking form.
6. Prepare daily lesson plans on a bi-weekly basis. Lesson plans should include, but not be limited to, a balance of adult directed and child initiated activities, large and small group activities, and activities to promote social, physical, and emotional development, cognitive and language skills, emerging literacy and numeracy development. Plans should also integrate aspects of health, nutrition, and mental health into program activities.
7. Plan and implement activities that develop curiosity, creativity, and a zeal for learning, as well as stimulating the ability to think.
8. Consistently administer classroom management techniques approved by the Director.
9. Supervise all center staff and volunteers on a daily basis, support their delivery of job responsibilities, and report any problems to the appropriate supervisor if a solution cannot be reached at the center level.
10. Encourage good eating habits by sitting with the children. If designated to eat with the children, be willing to eat the same meal as served to the children.
11. Make needed medical, dental, and psychological referrals through proper channels and document that needs are met.
12. Coordinate and monitor all classroom operations and services to comply with recognized early childhood practices, Performance Standards, and State Licensing Requirements.

13. Ensure that children's folders contain required items and keep all necessary documentation up-to-date.
14. Participate in staffings and parent conferences on children and families as needed to ensure that each child and family receives services and progresses toward self-sufficiency. Ensure a minimum of 2 home visits and 2 parent conferences per child per year.
15. Meet with program area coordinators, family advocates, and/or supervisors routinely to coordinate compliance with policies and the timely completion of services at the center including, but not limited to, IEP's, educational screenings, assessments, home visits, health services, mental health services, disabilities services, and special needs.
16. Maintain records of accidents at center and file accident reports in the school office before the end of the day. The Head Start office should receive a copy of the report by the end of the day in which the accident occurs. The principal and Director should be notified immediately of all serious accidents.
17. Ensure that all necessary materials for the classroom are prepared and arranged.
18. Serve as a role model for parents, volunteers, and other staff members regarding adult/child interaction, language, discipline techniques, and career development.
19. Welcome parents and assist them in organizing and conducting parent and center meetings.
20. Assist parents in planning and conducting appropriate field trips within the guidelines of the Anderson County Board of Education and the Policy Council.
21. Notify parents, community participants, and agencies of Head Start events.
22. Provide accurate information to parents and community agencies regarding Head Start goals, objectives, and services, as needed.
23. Advocate for needed family services and the development of community resources when possible.
24. Maintain center communication through regular daily planning involving all center staff.
25. Assist with providing orientation on center operations, policies, and job descriptions for new staff and volunteers.
26. Conduct or assist coordinators or supervisors with the evaluation of new employees during the probationary period, that is the initial 90 days of employment, by providing input on job performance. Also participate in the annual evaluation of center staff.
27. Recruit volunteers, refer and coordinate with the Family and Community Coordinator.

28. Recruit community agency resources and in-kind contributions.
29. Willingly participate in a minimum of 10 days of professional development activities as required for state licensing and in all such activities as required by the Head Start Program and the Board of Education.
30. Attend and participate in staff meetings and training to discuss policies and procedures related to Head Start services and attend job related professional training.
31. Assist in presenting training on the job and at in-service training sessions, if requested.
32. Inspect the center facilities and grounds daily to ensure all licensing, fire, health, and environmental standards are maintained.
33. Follow all procedures in emergencies and implement and document routine fire and emergency drills.
34. Monitor food services provided at the center and make needed changes to menu.
35. Assist with food catering, if necessary.
36. Request necessary equipment and supplies.
37. Request any special maintenance or repairs to equipment or facility via principal, with a copy to the Head Start office.
38. Collect and transmit all center-related reports and ensure that all reports from the center including, but not limited to, in-kind and attendance are completed accurately and on time. Sign all center time sheets.
39. When absent from the classroom, scheduled or unscheduled, exhaust all possibilities for a volunteer prior to calling a substitute.
40. Maintain a flexible working schedule to meet program and family needs from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. or later, during the completion of homevisits and conferences.
41. Be responsible for the general cleanliness of the classroom and restrooms if applicable. Assist in the care of equipment and supplies, prepare bulletin boards, arrange furniture, and perform other duties necessary to the upkeep of the classroom environment and to meet state licensing standards
42. Be responsible for lifting children and moving or lifting classroom furniture and equipment weighing up to 50 pounds.
43. Assist in maintaining up-to-date documentation in all areas related to Performance Standards.

44. Assist in conducting the Head Start Self Study.
45. Maintain confidentiality regarding Head Start families, employees, and services.
46. Respond positively when provided with constructive feedback for improving job performance.
47. Conduct job with professionalism including attendance, confidentiality, supportiveness of program, and maintenance of a positive work attitude.
48. Complete special assignments as requested by principal or Director.
49. Assist with basic operation of center such as answering the phone, taking messages, assisting parents and visitors, picking up supplies, and making copies.
50. Demonstrate work habits, which comply with the Anderson County Board of Education personnel policies and procedures.
51. Perform all other reasonable, job related duties as requested by the Director, Director of Schools, and Board of Education.

Teacher Assistant

1. Have a working knowledge of all Performance Standards for the Head Start Program and program policies and procedures.
2. Cooperate with the teacher so that both adults work as a team.
3. Assist the teacher in lesson planning and carrying out daily activities for the children, including organizing, preparing, and distributing materials and serving snacks.
4. Take sole responsibility for a small or large group of children for short periods of time.
5. Assist in the supervision of continuing activities related to extending skills such as working with students in the use of programmed materials and manipulatives.
6. Assist in supervising children in the lunchroom, restrooms, hallways, library, special area classes (such as music and physical education area), on field trips, and on the playground.
7. Consistently administer classroom management techniques approved by the Director.
8. Administer the Brigance to every child within 45 calendar days from the child's entry into the program.

9. Willingly participate in a minimum of 12 hours professional development activities as required for state licensing and in all such activities as required by the Head Start Program and the Board of Education.
10. Attend in-service training, staff meetings, child staffings, and parent meetings as needed.
11. Share information with the teacher that is gained from casual contacts with parents.
12. Provide information to teacher concerning student performance and effectiveness of instruction by way of Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment.
13. Write regular observations on each child that covers four developmental domains and place in assessment notebook as required by education coordinator.
14. Assist teacher and family advocate with:
 - a. Medical and dental services to children
 - b. Keeping accurate records on children.
 - c. Other assignments/requests asked by the teacher, principal, or Director.
15. Prepare and present the "I'm So Glad You Asked" curriculum to children on a weekly basis. Document the dates lessons are presented on appropriate form.
16. Be responsible for maintaining up-to-date training records that will be turned in at the Director's request.
17. Be responsible for the general cleanliness of the classroom and restrooms if applicable. Assist in the care of equipment and supplies, prepare bulletin boards, arrange furniture, and other duties necessary to the upkeep of the classroom environment and to meet State Licensing requirements.
18. Maintain up-to-date CPR and First Aid certification and be willing to assist in administering these. Head Start teaching assistants are encouraged, but not required to maintain or work consistently toward a valid CDA.
19. Maintain confidentiality and protect the privacy of Head Start children and families.
20. Encourage good eating habits while sitting with the children. If designated to eat with the children, must be willing to eat the same meal served to the children.
21. Be responsible for lifting children and moving or lifting classroom furniture and equipment weighing up to 50 pounds.
22. Maintain a peaceful, harmonious, and workable relationship with teacher and volunteers, thereby providing a healthy and conducive atmosphere for the education and development of young children.

23. Be a role model for parents, children, and volunteers in the classroom.
24. Assume the responsibilities of lead teacher in the absence of the teacher.
25. Dress appropriately according to the Standards of Conduct for the Head Start Program.
26. Be willing to accompany children on regular or emergency visits to the dentist.
27. When absent from the classroom, either scheduled or unscheduled, exhaust all possibilities of a volunteer prior to calling a substitute.
28. Maintain a flexible working schedule to meet program or family needs between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. or later, during the completion of homevisits and conferences.
29. Demonstrate work habits, which comply with the BOE personnel policies and procedures.
30. Assist with the basic operation of the center such as answering the phone, taking messages, assisting parents and visitors, picking up supplies, and making copies.
31. Maintain in-kind reports, student sign-in / sign-out records and other paperwork as required.
32. Perform all other reasonable job related duties as requested by the teacher, principal, Director, Director of Schools, or Board of Education.

Family Advocate

1. Read, understand, and implement the following:
 - a. Performance Standards
 - b. Agency Policies and Procedures
 - c. State Licensing Procedures
 - d. Child Abuse and Neglect Policy
2. Provide an open line of communication between parents and center staff and parents and central office staff.
3. Keep personnel file up-to-date with current physical, *college transcript, current grades, etc.
4. Assist with center emergencies in the absence of center staff and notify central office immediately.
5. Assist the center staff with finding a substitute when necessary and serve as a substitute teacher when there is an emergency.
6. Attend appropriate pre-service and in-service training.
7. Maintain confidentiality and professionalism when dealing with Head Start families, staff, and the general public.

8. Assist with social service duties including, but not limited to:
 - a. Recruitment of children and families;
 - b. Obtaining and documenting in-kind contributions;
 - c. Conducting Community Assessment as requested by Coordinators;
 - d. Obtaining dental forms, health/developmental history, all required screenings, family needs assessment, parent interest survey and other documentation needed to complete the child/family central office record;
 - e. Informing families of any needed follow-up from medical or educational screenings;
 - f. Verifying and documenting child's height and weight three times a year;
 - g. Holiday food basket/gift registration and distribution;
 - h. Helping family set goals and documentation regarding family partnership agreement;
 - i. Helping family in finding a medical and dental home;
 - j. Distributing Community Resource Booklet and providing information on accessing services;
 - k. Coordinating and/or providing transportation services for scheduled appointments for health needs of parent and/or child when no other source is available;
 - l. Maintaining confidential and accurate central office records on the children/families in your assigned caseload; and
 - m. Completing the Family Advocate's Monthly Report for Family and Community Coordinator.
9. Make two home visits per family and attend two parent conferences per year with each family. The teacher will also attend these meetings.
10. Visit each classroom a minimum of two times a week to:
 - a. Meet and greet parents;
 - b. Observe and interact with children during the day;
 - c. Provide the classroom teacher a weekly two-hour planning period;
 - d. Share/observe a meal with children and staff;
 - e. Follow-up and document three consecutive days absence on child;
 - f. Document behavioral concerns and report to appropriate coordinator (documentation should be on-going over a period of time ... until progress is made);
 - g. Complete a monthly Center Checklist to be turned in to the Director;
 - h. Deliver materials, memos, newsletters, etc. from central office to center staff; and
 - i. Deliver various paperwork to office from center, including but not limited to, staff monthly reports, attendance, menus, time sheets, etc.
11. Be responsible for seven center parent meetings with teaching staff by providing:
 - a. An agenda and sign-in sheet;
 - b. An educational training for parents;
 - c. A form for notes/minutes that lists training topic and items discussed; and
 - d. Provide documentation of parent meetings and turn in as directed.
12. Assist with Parent Center activities, on a rotating basis, with other Family Advocates.

13. Perform all other reasonable job related duties as requested by the Director, Director of Schools and/or Board of Education.

Parent Involvement

Parent Involvement

The Head Start philosophy that parents are the primary educators of their children is strongly upheld by the Anderson County Head Start Program. The program makes every effort to assist the parents in this important role by offering opportunities in planning programs for children and parents at the center and county level. Parents also participate in the county-wide operation of the Anderson County Head Start Program through the Policy Council and they are encouraged to continue their educational growth through various programs offered in the county. The Head Start program is designed to offer activities of interest to the parents as well as the children.

- POLICY COUNCIL- The Policy Council is the governing body for the Head Start Program. The council must consist of at least 51% current Head Start parents with the rest of the members representing the community and agencies in the county. Each program option is to be represented on the Policy Council. The Council must approve the yearly budget, staff hiring, program plans, policy and procedures, current enrollment, and any other activities that may be undertaken. Each site elects a representative and alternate representative to serve on the Council. The Policy Council meets monthly with component committees having called meetings as needed.

The Policy Council is formed at the beginning of the school year. The parent center committees send representatives, along with other community representatives, from Anderson County. The Policy Council meets regularly as needed for the purpose of approving program plans, budget items, program options, hiring staff, and discussing program concerns from the individual centers. These meetings are conducted by the chairperson, utilizing parliamentary procedures, which includes the secretary recording the minutes. Minutes are kept on file in the Head Start Office.

- CENTER PARENT MEETINGS- The center parent meetings are held at each site on a monthly basis. There must be 7 meetings during the school year for preschool classrooms and 9 for Early Head Start classrooms. The meetings are to keep parents informed of the classroom activities and to get parent input about the curriculum. This is a time for the teaching staff to make requests of the parents for classroom or playground volunteering, field trip assistance, etc. The Performance Standards requires that parents have input into their child's curriculum development. The teaching staff and Family Advocates are to work together on planning the center parent meetings. The Family Advocate will prepare an educational parent training as a piece of the Center Parent Meetings.

Parent-center committees are formed at the classroom level. These committees conduct the business of the centers. They decide how to use parent activity monies. They also plan special activities for children like field trips and class parties, as well as decide on classroom and playground items to be requested. The parent center committee also receives training in a wide variety of topics which include child development, dental care, health care, personal safety, mental health, parliamentary procedures, literacy program, drug prevention, nutrition, stress management, and other topics as decided by the parent center committee. These

meetings are conducted by the chairperson, utilizing parliamentary procedures, which includes the secretary recording the minutes. Minutes will be maintained at each center with a copy being sent to the Head Start office.

- PARENTING CLASSES- Parenting classes are usually offered during the fall and early spring of each school year. These classes can be offered on a weekday evening for 6 weeks or on Saturdays depending on the parent's choice. These classes are designed to improve parenting skills. Program Coordinators and Family Advocates facilitate the classes and are trained instructors in a variety of programs that are used including "Active Parenting", "The Bowdoin Method", "21st Century Exploring Parenting" and "Parent to Parent".
- COFFEE BREAK WORKSHOPS - Workshops are held on a variety of topics based on our Parent Interest Surveys. These workshops are held during the day and evening hours to accommodate the parents' schedules. Childcare is provided. These workshops are usually held at the PARENT LEARNING CENTER. The Family Advocates conduct these workshops and usually have a craft activity for the parents to experience. Another aspect of the workshops is ADULT FIELD TRIPS. There are usually two or three planned during the school year. The Adult Field Trips are to events or places of interest to the parents such as the Women's Expo or Oak Ridge Mayfest.
- HOME VISITS are a Performance Standard requirement. The Lead Teacher must make at least two home visits per program year to each child in their class. These are usually done in August before the child comes to school and again in February. The Family Advocate goes with the Teacher on the required home visits. The first home visit is a "get to know you" visit and should always be a positive experience for all involved. The second home visit is a time to report on the child's progress in Head Start and discuss plans for the next school year.
- PARENT CONFERENCES are a requirement of the Performance Standards and at least two are required annually. The first parent conference is in October and the second parent conference is in April. The conferences are held in the classrooms. The Family Advocate attends these also and uses this opportunity to check with the family on social service needs they may have. Other parent conference may be schedule if needs arise such as M-Team or upon parent request.

DOCUMENTATION OF PARENT CONTACTS - All staff are required to document contacts with families of children currently enrolled in the Head Start Program. This includes documenting all conferences, home visits, parent's center visit (to volunteer), field trips, and any notes or letters that are sent home. All notes and letters sent home are to be copied and put in the child's folder. This is a safety measure for all staff.

Any correspondence that is sent to every family, such as newsletters or meeting announcements, can be kept in one central file to be turned in at the end of the school year. This is a requirement to document training and correspondence.

Parent involvement is an important component of the center-based option. The Head Start staff must be committed to involving the parents in all aspects of the educational program for their children. It is important for the teacher to establish as much communication with each parent as possible. This is done in many ways, including:

- Home visits – at least two per year are required to discuss enrollment, the child’s progress and family needs and/or concerns;
- Parent volunteers - in the classroom, encouraged and scheduled regularly;
- Parent conferences – two per year to review the child’s educational development;
- Notification of parent meetings, parent activities, special class activities / trips, etc; and
- Parent newsletters.

Parent meetings will be scheduled in the morning or just before pick-up in the afternoon. In centers where the majority of parents work, meetings will be scheduled to accommodate their needs.

Parents are encouraged and assisted in continuing their education by the Head Start staff. They are provided information on literacy programs, GED classes, Workforce Network, and community colleges in our area. Also parents are encouraged to participate in special parenting programs that are available through Head Start such as parenting classes, Coffee Break Workshops, Policy Council, and Center Parent meetings.

Anderson County Head Start makes every effort to reach the parents and help strengthen the family unit by meeting and exceeding the Performance Standards and state licensing regulations. Therefore, it is the responsibility of all Head Start staff members to actively solicit parent involvement in the program. Parents are to be encouraged and welcomed to participate in all activities in the classroom.

Parent Involvement Annual Calendar

August

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council approves new staff hiring (if needed)
- Preschool families 1st home visits
 1. Partnerships Agreements begin
 2. LIEAP sign-up
 3. Voter registration
 4. GED registration
- Preschool parents and child 1st visit to the classroom

September

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Preschool 1st Parent Center Meetings (1st & 2nd week)
- Child Find
- Policy Council Training
- Volunteer training

- Family Advocate Meetings begin
- Parent Learn Center Opens (last week in Sept. 1st week Oct.)

October

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council approves Policy Council Committee Reports
- 1st Policy Council Meeting for New Parents Representatives
- 1st Parent Conferences at centers (F.A. & Teachers)
 1. Partnership Agreements updated
 2. Commodities registration
 3. Habitat or Helping Hands sign-up (Oct. or Nov.)
 4. Holiday Assistance registration
- Parenting Classes –Active Parenting (6 weeks or Saturday)
- Fall Picnic Event (pending final authorization)
- 2nd Center Parent Meeting
 - Family Advocates & Coordinators M-Team Needy Families

November

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council Committees formed
- 3rd Center Parent Meeting
- Health Advisory Committee Meeting - Fall

December

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Bear Lady visits centers
- Holiday Assistance/Angel Tree distribution

January

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Program Self-Assessment started – P.C. Rep. visit centers
- Policy Council Committees meet to finalize self-assessment
- Community Assessment Started
- 4th Center Parent Meeting (or February if necessary due to weather)

February

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council Approves Program Self-Assessment
- Policy Council Approves Community Assessment
- 2nd Home-visit conducted (F.A. & Teachers)
 1. Partnership Agreement updated
 2. Green Thumb registration
- Family Advocates & Coordinators M-Team Needy Families - updated
- Staff works on Preschool Grant
- 4th Center Parent Meeting (if rescheduled from January)

March

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council Approves Preschool Grant
- Preschool Grant Mailed
- Parenting Classes – (Active Parenting 6 weeks on Saturdays)
- 5th Center Parent Meeting
- Parent Learn Center Activities Close end of month

April

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Health Advisory Committee – Spring
- 2nd Parent Conferences
 1. Partnership Agreement updated
 2. Kindergarten registration
- Family Advocates attend all Kindergarten Registration sites
- Family Advocates recruit for next year and update files for returning children (3 year olds)
- 6th Parent Center Meeting

May

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Family Day Picnic
- Policy Council approves Early Head Start Grant
- Policy Council approves Selection Criteria
- 7th Parent Center Meeting (if needed)
- Compile records

June

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council Personnel Committee Interview new staff (if needed)
- Literacy Grant Due
- Policy Council approves Early Childhood Grant

July

- Newsletter 1st week of month
- Policy Council approves new staff hiring (if needed)
- School Board Training

Family Advocates turn in Monthly Reports the first week of each month.

Health Guidelines for Healthy Children

Immunization Records

Immunization records are required and should be current. The immunization record will be filed in the child's central office record and center record. **BE SURE THAT THE CHILD'S DOCTORS NAME AND PHONE NUMBER ARE IN THE CHILD'S APPLICATION!**

Physicals

Physicals are required on all children. Head Start children are required to have a physical within 90 days of enrollment. Physicals will be filed at the central office.

Dental Examinations

Dental examinations are required to be performed, by a licensed dentist within 90 days of enrollment. Proof of a dental examination will be kept on file at the central office.

On the days children are scheduled for transportation to the health department for dental treatment, children should be prepared to leave when the van arrives. This includes being taken to the restroom and having their teeth brushed. In the event of cold weather, the children should have their jackets / coats ready. The teacher assistant, or parents who have volunteer training, will accompany the children in the dental van.

Brushing Teeth

Children are required to brush their teeth daily after both meals(breakfast and lunch). A small amount of toothpaste should be placed on the bottom of a Dixie cup and the child should place the toothpaste on the brush. The child should brush for at least 1 minute (or up to 2 minutes). Only one child should be brushing at a time. After brushing, the brush should be dried with a paper towel and returned to the toothbrush holder then covered with a Dixie cup. The toothbrush holders should be cleaned weekly with a mild disinfectant.

Hand Washing

Frequent hand washing with soap and water is necessary to prevent the spread of disease. Children and adults should wash their hands before eating or preparing breakfast, snack, and lunch, after toileting, after handling animals, and before and after water/sand play, and after coughing, sneezing and wiping noses. Set a good example and teach children how and when to clean their hands.

Bleach Water Solution

A bleach water solution of 1 part bleach to 10 parts water should be used to clean tables daily. This solution should be changed every 4 hours to ensure the cleaning strength of the solution.

Tables should be washed with a soapy water solution in order to remove dirt and debris before sanitizing. Tables should be washed before and after any meal or snack.

Diapering Procedure

1. Make sure to have all supplies ready (fresh diaper, clothing, wipes, gloves)
2. Place paper or disposable towel on changing table where child's bottom will be.
3. Hold child away from your body when picking him up. Use only hands to carry him as to avoid contaminating your own clothes.
4. Gently lay child on changing table.
5. Put on gloves and remove soiled diaper and/or clothes. (Put disposable diapers in a plastic lined receptacle and put soiled clothing in a plastic bag to send home at end of day.)
6. Clean child's bottom with a clean wipe. Be sure to clean front to back.
7. Remove the disposable covering from beneath the child and discard. Remove gloves properly and dispose of them now.
8. If you are applying cream, use a new glove or swab.
9. Diaper and dress the child.
10. Wash the child's hands with soap under running water.
11. Return child to play area.
12. Clean and disinfect the diapering area, equipment touched and faucets.
13. Wash your hands and use paper towel to turn off faucet.
14. Record and report any concerns to parent (unusual odor, color, or consistency).

General Health Guidelines

A visual exam of each child by the teacher or assistant should be completed as the child enters the classroom (unusual skin condition, possible fever, nose drainage, coughing, wheezing, mood).

Consider the following guidelines to determine if a "sick" child should be sent home:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or more by axillary method;
- Inflammation of the eyes;
- Communicable disease;
- Unknown rash
- Vomiting;
- Diarrhea; and
- Child's activity level - if it is very different than his/her normal (lethargic, sleepy, irritable) activity level.

Standardized fact sheets about common communicable childhood illnesses are located in the white classroom notebook.

Feel free to make copies of these fact sheets for your parents. **REMEMBER THAT WE DO NOT DIAGNOSIS A "SICK" CHILD'S ILLNESS.** Never tell a parent or guardian that a child has a certain disease. At no time, should a hand written note be sent home unless approved by

the central office. Teachers make documentation on the attendance sheet that the child was sent home and also record the contact in the child's center record.

When sending a child home, talk to the parent about the importance of making sure the child is "fever-free", "diarrhea-free" and "vomit-free" before returning. If a child is taken to a physician and prescribed medication, the child must be on the antibiotic for at least 24 hours before returning to the classroom (48 hours in the case of strep). On occasion, if a health concern persists, the Director may request that a child be seen by a physician prior to returning to the center.

Management of Communicable Disease

All staff members are trained in First Aid and to recognize the signs of communicable disease and other illness. Each child shall be observed daily.

Signs of illness include the following:

1. temperature of 100 degrees or more by axillary method
2. skin rash
3. diarrhea and/or vomiting two times or more in a 24 hour period
4. evidence of lice infestation, scabies or other parasitic infestation
5. severe coughing
6. difficult or rapid breathing
7. yellowish skin or eyes
8. evidence of conjunctivitis (pinkeye)
9. stiff neck
10. untreated infected skin patches
11. unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
12. sore throat or difficulty in swallowing
13. complaints by child, fussiness
14. "listless" behavior
15. symptoms of a cold
16. decreased appetite

When a child exhibits one or more of behaviors 1-12, a determination will be made by the teacher, regarding the discharge of the child to a parent. If the child is to be dismissed, the parent will be notified and the child must be picked up within the hour.

If the above listed behaviors 13-16 are noted, but none of the first twelve signs are observed, the parent will be informed and it will be their decision whether the child will remain in the care of the Center or be discharged. If the child remains at the Center but their condition worsens or they cannot participate in an activity, the parent will be notified to pick the child up within the hour. The child is to remain in the classroom until picked up by the parent or designated person. (Staff members are to practice good judgment when making the decision to send a child home. For example, if a child vomits it does not necessarily mean the child has a stomach virus. The vomiting could be the result of excessive crying or sinus drainage.)

In cases in which the parent cannot be reached, the emergency number listed by the parents will be called. The child will be released to that person.

Teachers must document in the child's folder and on the attendance roll sheet why the child was sent home.

Re-admittance to the Center is allowed after 24 hours of normal axillary temperature (below 99) and/or no other signs of illness for 24 hours, or by a doctor's signed statement. (In the case of a parasitic infestation, a child is re-admitted when all evidence of the infestation is gone. The child should be checked by the teacher before being allowed to return to the classroom. This should be done privately, away from other children and parents.)

Children returned to the Center with signs of illness or disease will be refused admittance.

Antibacterial soaps are available at all hand washing facilities for staff and children. Paper towels are available for drying hands. Cots, tables, toys, etc. are disinfected regularly. Good nutrition and appropriate health habits are encouraged by the staff. (Note: antibacterial soap must be used, not antibacterial cleaners that do not require water.)

Lice Control

Teachers and teaching assistants should be watchful for signs of lice or nits, such as excessive scratching of the head, especially behind the ears and lower neck area. Nits are also noticeable on the hair at times. (A nit cannot be flipped off or brushed off. A nit has to be pulled off the hair shaft.) Sometimes children will have dry, flaky scalp. This should not be mistaken for nits.

If a live louse is found, please place it on a piece of tape, and keep it for the nurse to see. If you find live lice or nits, please call our Head Start nurse for assistance.

For classrooms located in the elementary schools, please be aware of any outbreaks of lice in the school. You may have children with siblings in other grades of the school. Be watchful of signs of lice or nits.

If you find a live louse or nit, the following steps should be followed:

1. Place the louse or nit on a piece of tape for the nurse to see.
2. Call the Head Start nurse to come and check the child.
3. Our program nurse will make the determination if the child has lice.
4. If the child is determined to have lice or nits, the teacher will call the parent to come and get the child.
5. Our program nurse will inform the principal about the lice-infected child. (The child may have other siblings in the school.)
6. The teacher should complete a check of all children in the room. If more cases are found, lice information should be sent home to parents of all students.
7. After the parent has followed the prescribed treatments and all nits have been removed, the child may return to school.
8. If you are on an elementary school site, the principal or the principal's delegated person shall approve the student to be nit free for return to school. (If you are not housed in an elementary school, the teacher is responsible to okay the returning.)

Prescription Medication

In general, we feel that a child on medication needs to be at home. However, some medication must be given over a specific number of days, even though the child has improved. Parents may request, under these circumstances, that the child be given medication while at the Center.

No medication vitamins, or special diets are administered unless instructions to administer such items are written, signed and dated by a licensed physician and are prescribed for that child. This applies to over-the-counter pain relievers as well as prescription medicines.

There are special forms that must be completed by the physician, parent and staff who administer the medication. No medicine, vitamins or special diet can be administered without this completed form.

All prescription medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name, name of drug, dosage, administration directions, date and physician's name. A "Medication Authorization Physician's Statement" and "Parent Permission Form for Giving Medication at School" must be on file for any child on prescription medication. All medication will be kept in the principal's office. (Note: For classrooms located away from a school facility, the medication will be kept in a locked file cabinet or locked office.)

Staff members and regular volunteers should leave medications (both over-the-counter and prescribed) in their vehicles. If staff or volunteers bring them into the classroom, they should be put in a locked file cabinet. This includes medications kept in purses or pockets. They must be locked up at all times.

Each center will be equipped with a standard first aid kit to keep in the classroom. When children and staff are away from the room, staff should carry the modified first aid kit that contains gloves, wet wipes, band-aids, and other essential first aid equipment as outlined in the Universal Precautions procedures.

Accidents or Incidents

In the event of an accident or incident, a report should be completed the day of the accident/incident and a copy sent to the central office. The report will be filed in the child's center record.

Menus

Menus (including breakfast, lunch, and snack) should be posted in the classroom weekly for parents to view. Any food substituted on the menus must be documented. Chocolate milk should be served at snack time only (unless chocolate milk is the only choice available). Children arriving after 8:30 a.m. should be served breakfast at home before coming to the center. In the event that a child arrives after this time and has not eaten breakfast, please see that the child is provided breakfast. If a child comes to the center more than three times late without

breakfast, then special attention may be needed with the family situation. Talk with the family to see if there are special needs. You may also want to ask your family advocate for assistance.

Children requiring special diets must have documentation from their physician.

Mental Health

A mental health consultant is available to provide assistance to staff and families in several categories, including:

- Training for staff and parents;
- Individual conferences with staff who need assistance working with specific situations within their caseload, and parents who have family and/or child development concerns; and
- A minimum of two observations of all children in the classroom setting (or home setting, on request is required), to determine needs for assistance, intervention, or evaluation.

Classroom Observation by Mental Health Consultant ... At least twice annually, the mental health consultant will visit each class or group for the purpose of observing children's behavior, interaction skills, etc.; and to discuss concerns with teaching staff. Observations will be pre-arranged with the mental health coordinator, and the consultant's presence in the class should not detract from the planned activity. The mental health consultant will be observing the Head Start classroom as a whole, not any one particular Head Start child. Observation of a particular child may not be done without the parent's written permission. If a teacher has specific concerns to discuss with the consultant, this should be done privately, before the children arrive, if possible. Information from these observations will be shared, privately, with the teacher by either the mental health coordinator or the Head Start Director. The mental health consultant will complete the classroom observation form as well as make any additional notes or comments necessary. The mental health consultant will forward this information to the mental health coordinator.

At any time, the teacher may request assistance, or an observation of any individual child, if she feels there is a need. The teacher should provide documentation of the behavior exhibited. The Family Advocate will discuss the needs of the particular child with the mental health coordinator. The mental health coordinator is responsible for requesting the mental health consultant to make a special observation on the child in question. Unless it is dire circumstances, the mental health or education coordinator will observe the child and determine if the mental health consultant needs to do an observation on the child. If there is a need for the child to be observed by the mental health consultant, then a written permission form must be signed by the parent. The Head Start teacher is responsible for getting the permission slip signed by the parent. The permission form should be sent to the mental health coordinator to be filed in the child's office folder. Following the consultant's observation, a meeting will be held with the parent to discuss the findings and any follow-up that may be needed.

CONFIDENTIALITY WILL BE MAINTAINED AT ALL TIMES!

Working with Children

Rewards

Rewards must be group-oriented. Children with behavior problems must not be excluded. Under no circumstances, should candy or any food item be used as a reward, nor should food be withheld as a punishment.

Worksheets

Worksheets (dittos) are developmentally inappropriate in preschool classrooms and are not allowed. Under Creative Curriculum guidelines, educational activities should be hands on and child-directed and/or oriented. Children learn best through active exploration of their environment facilitated by the teacher.

Television and Videos

Television/video watching should be done on a limited basis. Children have ample opportunity to watch videos and/or television at home. It is Head Start's objective to use classroom time for appropriate activities such as literacy, numeracy, book reading, science, and art exploration.

Watching videos would only be appropriate under special circumstances such as a schedule change and/or if inclement weather has persisted over time. Watching television/videos should not be a daily activity such as during toothbrushing, putting out cots, or at dismissal time.

When watching videos is permitted, an additional quiet activity must be provided for those children not interested in the video. Recommended videos should be theme-related, music-related, and educational. Cartoons and Disney movies are discouraged. Only "G" rated movies will be shown (no exceptions). Thirty minutes is the maximum amount of time children should watch a video, when the decision is made to show a movie. Television is discouraged except for special occasions, as children should be actively involved.

Naptime

A calm, quiet atmosphere should be created in order to provide a restful experience for the children. Adult voices should reflect the intended mood of naptime. Children should be allowed to look at a book at naptime; this may be the only time during the day that a child will choose a book.

A suggested activity for the beginning of naptime is for the teacher, after the children are lying on their cot, to read softly to the children and have the children visualize or form the pictures in their head while the story is read. The teacher should walk around the room while reading the story to assure that all children are able to hear the story.

Children have different sleep patterns and different ways of falling asleep. Playing quiet music, rubbing a child's back, or just sitting near a restless child often helps.

If you are having a particular problem with a child at rest time, consult the child's family. Perhaps they could offer some insights that would help you meet the child's needs.

For the most part, naptime should begin at 12:15 p.m. and end at 1:30 p.m. Cots must not be put out before noon. Naptime should last no more than one and a half hours.

Naptime is the only time that just one person can supervise preschoolers. (Another adult must be on the premises so that an emergency can be met immediately.) Always remember to follow the adult to child ratios.

Toilet Training

Head Start children are not required to be toilet-trained upon entering our program. There will be times when you will have to assist a child(ren) in your class with this important skill. Work with the parents to provide consistency and strive to make this a stress-free teaching opportunity for the children. For diapering guidelines, see page 47.

Outside Playtime

Children must go outside everyday, as weather permits. Outside play should be part of the daily schedule and is an important part of the child's learning experience. Preferably, children should be allowed to experience a variety of weather conditions, so long as they are properly dressed and the length of time outside is adjusted to the weather conditions and the age of the children. *The minimum expectation is that children go outside when the temperature is between 40 degrees and 95 degrees and it is not raining.* Consideration should be given to heat index factors and wind chill factors. If stormy conditions occur while outside, the children should be brought in immediately. Staff must be alert for signs of dehydration, heat stroke, frost bite, etc., dependent on the season.

Pools of any type are never allowed.

Outdoors, staff shall interact with the children in a manner that will ensure adequate supervision of activities and will facilitate the development of age appropriate physical and social skills.

Birthday Celebrations, Classroom Parties and End-of-Year Parties

Children are allowed to celebrate their birthdays at school. Please encourage parents to bring appropriate snacks or treats during the afternoon snack time. Please ask parents to inform you if they intend to have a birthday celebration and ask them to keep it to a minimum.

Please check with your supervisor/principal as to their policy for classroom, holiday and end-of-year parties. It is important that you follow their policy and understand that holiday celebrations can sometimes be a stressful time for children and can also add stress to the classroom environment. You should use your best judgment in deciding how to celebrate holidays. All cultures and beliefs should be recognized. Parents should be a part of the celebration planning

and process. If parties are planned, please keep the celebration to a minimum. Refreshments must be pre-packaged (store bought) and appropriate for Head Start children. No homemade items (food) can be brought into the classroom. Sodas (soft drinks) are not allowed in the Head Start classroom.

A Nurturing Environment

Children respond best in a nurturing environment. Tone of voice, body language, and attitudes send clear messages to the children and set the tone of the classroom. Approach the children with respect by physically communicating at the child's level and give gentle reminders instead of harsh reprimands. Remember that you set the tone for the classroom.

Special Area Classes

One staff member must accompany children to all special classes. A staff member must accompany the class to music and/or physical education whenever the school staff provides these activities.

Home Visits

Two home visits are required annually and should be made by the Family Advocate and teacher.

Conferences

Head Start is required to hold two parent conferences.

Meals and Snacks

Both teacher and teacher assistant will accompany children to breakfast and lunch. At no time can the children be left with only one caregiver during meals unless there is a low number of children in attendance.

Accurately record the number of adults and children who eat breakfast, lunch, and snack.

If a child is going to leave before the snack is served, do not count him for the afternoon snack.

A child must eat his snack in the room; he cannot take it with him. Encourage the parent to sit down with the child and let him have the snack in the Center.

Menus must be posted in the room and substitutions must be noted on the menus. Cafeteria managers should distribute dated menus monthly. Milk must be recorded on the menu for each meal. Staff should be aware of USDA requirements for meals and snacks and report to the office immediately if these requirements are not adhered to.

New Children

New children will be enrolled in your classroom as children leave the program due to re-location and so on. It is important to orient a new child and his/her family into your room as soon as possible. Having extra materials on hand (name tags, name cards, birthday signs, and helper signs, for example), ready to be labeled with the child's name, will help them feel they belong. Be sure to take time to help the new child learn where their belongings are kept, learn the rules, get familiar with the classroom centers and learn the children's and teacher's names. Be patient with the new child and remember that the more time you spend up front helping them feel comfortable with you and the routine, the better off it will be for everyone.

Rainy Day Activities

There may be times during the school year when the weather is uncooperative and you and the children are unable to go outside. It is recommended that you have a folder or box of ideas that you can use for this purpose. Ideas include gross motor games, fun and easy art activities, special music CD's, puppet stories, or unique manipulative games in order to get the children's attention. These would be activities that only get pulled out when you need a distraction or a diversion from chaos. These suggestions will help make your rainy days go smoother.

Lead Teacher Responsibilities

The following is a list of responsibilities for the lead teacher that pertains to the classroom and directly working with children. You will note that there is a lot of overlap between lead teacher and teacher assistant.

- Set up your e-mail account
- Sign in and out daily
- Set up children's folders
- Prepare lesson plans and send a copy to education coordinator
- Teach lessons from "Growing Up Safe & Strong"
- Letter Identification screen - 2 times per year
- Take daily attendance via the computer (Child Plus)
- Home Visits
- Parent/teacher conferences
- Keep documentation of staff training
- Keep documentation of contacts with families
- Arrange the classroom to best meet the children's needs
- Keep classroom clean, organized and clutter free
- Rotate materials in centers
- Get own substitute when needed
- Complete children's accident reports as needed
- Observe children & write down observations for the purpose of assessment
- Enter assessment data in computer
- Keep area clean and clutter-free
- This list is not comprehensive and subject to change

Teacher Assistant Responsibilities

The following is a list of responsibilities for the teacher assistant that pertains to the classroom and directly working with children. You will note that there is a lot of overlap between lead teacher and teacher assistant.

- Set up your e-mail account
- Sign in and out daily
- Take children's height/weight data 3 times per year
- Complete Brigrance screening on all children entering the classroom
- Attend special area classes (music, P.E., library, etc.) with children
- Teach lessons from "I'm So Glad You Asked"
- Keep classroom clean, organized and clutter free
- Plan and prepare small group activities (on lesson plan)
- Assist with rotation of materials in centers
- Assist with letter identification screen
- Meal count Attendance
- In-kind reports
- Get own substitute when needed
- Keep documentation of staff training
- Complete children's accident reports as needed
- Ensure children brush their teeth daily
- Ride in van with children for dental exams
- Observe children and write down observations for the purpose of assessment.
- Keep up with portfolio contents
- Attend required staff training
- Assist with letter identification screening
- Keep area clean and clutter-free
- This list is not comprehensive and subject to change

Curriculum

Creative Curriculum

Various guides are used as resources with “The Creative Curriculum” being the primary source. This curriculum is used as a framework for an integrated teaching approach that includes social-emotional development, physical development, cognitive development and language development. This curriculum provides a comprehensive view of an appropriate preschool environment complete with suggested ideas and activities for center enrichment.

The Education Coordinator will provide the teachers with resources that will support and enhance the teacher’s lesson planning opportunities. The teacher may use these resources for specific ideas, or may modify ideas from the guide or develop activities of her own relating to the lesson and objectives to be taught.

Creative Curriculum ... Required Classroom Areas

Your room must have the following centers:

- Block center
- Housekeeping center
- Puzzles and games center (or manipulatives)
- Book area or library center
- Sand and water table – available daily with a variety of materials rotated
- Writing and Drawing center
- Art area
- Easels – available 3-5 times a week
- Science center/table
- Computers (if available)

Please refer to the Teacher Notebook for additional information on required centers.

Developmentally Appropriate Practice

According to NAEYC Guidelines the Anderson County Head Start endorses Developmentally Appropriate Practices. We believe children learn best through active exploration, hands on learning activities and child directed play through age appropriate centers set up throughout the classroom. Nurturing relationships between staff and children are essential to establishing environments that foster children’s social-emotional well-being.

(Refer to handout on Developmentally Appropriate Practice activities in Teacher Handbook)

“Growing Up Safe and Strong”

“Growing Up Safe and Strong” is a personal safety curriculum from the Tennessee Department of Human Services. This is REQUIRED to be taught to 3, 4, and 5 year olds. This curriculum is to be

implemented by the Classroom Teacher. There are 31 lessons, which are to be taught on a weekly basis by the teacher. There is a manual and props. (Please refer to the Teacher Handbook for the documentation tracking form for “Growing Up Safe and Strong”.)

“I’m So Glad You Asked”

“I’m So Glad You Asked” is a prevention curriculum for 3, 4, and 5 year olds. This curriculum addresses issues such as prescription medications, cleansers, alcohol and cigarettes. It is a valuable tool to use for children who may come from dysfunctional families. This is a requirement of the Anderson County Head Start and is implemented by the Teacher Assistant. There is a manual and puppets to support this curriculum located in the classroom. (Please refer to the Teacher Handbook for the documentation tracking form for “I’m So Glad You Asked”.)

Classroom Checklist

The Family Advocate will complete, monthly, the classroom checklist for their classrooms. The classroom teacher will sign off on the checklist and the Family Advocate will give the checklist to the Director. The checklist will be used as a monitoring tool to ensure that appropriate practices are continually occurring and state and federal regulations are followed in the classroom.

Nutrition Activities

Two nutrition/cooking activities **are required** per month that relate to your bi-weekly theme. This should include nutritionally sound recipes that encourage the children to make good nutrition choices. If you need recipes or ideas, please contact the education coordinator.

Cultural Diversity

Cultural and other individual differences should not be ignored. Teachers need to bring each child’s home culture and language into the shared culture of the school so that children feel accepted and gain a sense of belonging. The contribution of each child’s family and cultural group should be recognized and valued by others. Intentional planning for cultural diversity also includes dolls, books, posters, cooking activities, dress-ups and small group activities that are representative of other cultures.

The Early Childhood Initiative

The education of every child in America has become a top priority for our federal government. The “Good Start, Grow Smart” program emphasizes the importance of early literacy to promote school readiness. The program also adds an assessment, the National Reporting System, to be used to measure the progress of Head Start children. The early literacy initiative disseminates information to preschool programs about best practices and strategies for teaching pre-reading skills and language development.

Peace Education

The Anderson County Head Start program has selected the *Peace-Making Skills For Little Kids* program as a guide for teachers to establish a classroom environment where children become friends, learn to work and play cooperatively, and to respect the interdependence of all living things. A resource book is provided in all Head Start classrooms along with the “I Care Cat” puppet, posters, and cassette tape of songs.

Classroom Environment

Setting Up Your Classroom Environment

Establishing a climate of safety, security, and acceptance is essential and necessary for children who spend a lot of time in the classroom. Children thrive in classroom environments that are nurturing and predictable. Home-like settings, complete with soft materials, such as lamps, rugs, pillows, plants, animals, family photographs and artwork provide such a place. Send a message to your class that you value the same ideals.

Classroom Arrangement and Organization

- Head Start classrooms should be safe, accessible, comfortable, age-appropriate, culturally sensitive, and welcoming.
- The environment should promote each child's physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development.
- Identifiable centers for different activities and materials should be well organized, uncluttered, labeled and easily accessible for the children. These include areas such as blocks, art, books, housekeeping and dramatic play, sand and water play, puzzles, games and manipulatives.
- Low, open shelves should be used to allow the children to see and select their own materials.
- Active and noisy areas should be separated, as much as possible, from the more inactive, quiet activities.
- The children's work/art should be properly displayed at the child's vision level, with their name and date and children should be encouraged to sign their own work/art.
- Photographs of the children, both while in the classroom and with their families, should be displayed.
- Teacher and teacher assistants should work together to organize the materials and arrange the room so the above activities can take place effectively.
- Items in the classroom should be labeled and identified for the children by the teacher and teacher assistant. This helps promote a "print-rich" environment and stimulates literacy in the classroom.
- Every attempt should be made to keep the classroom environment and center free from clutter.
- Materials not in use should be organized and stored in such a manner as to make them easily accessible to the teacher and the teacher assistant.

Parent Corner

Each Classroom is to have a "**Parent Corner**" or assigned parent space. This is a requirement of the Head Start Performance Standard. The Parent Corner is an area designated for parents to receive regular up-dated information. Some classrooms have the "Parent Corner" in the area where parents sign their children into the classroom in the morning. Other classrooms have used part of their bulletin board space as the parent information area. There needs to be a sign stating "Welcome Parents" and a sign indicating parent information. The Family Advocate and teaching

staff use this area to post notes of parent meetings, Policy Council Meetings, PTO meetings, classroom activities, the current newsletter and any information from the elementary school, etc. The latest Policy Council Meeting minutes are also posted in the parent corner. The Family Advocates will place informational brochures in this area and replace or add to them as needed.

Safety and Cleanliness

Teachers and teacher assistants should follow the Head Start Performance Standards guidelines (Section 1304.53) for a safe and healthy learning environment. This includes daily cleaning of tables, shelves, counters, chairs and floors. Toys and materials should be removed at least monthly and the shelves cleaned (dusted). Parent volunteers would be a great help in room/material cleaning. A clean, clutter-free environment sends the message to children, parents, and classroom visitors that Head Start promotes cleanliness and organization.

Electrical wall outlets should be covered with child safety devices. Cabinets storing cleaning supplies and potentially hazardous materials should be secured with child protection locks. Electrical cords/wiring should be concealed and secured to prevent tripping and tangling.

End-of-Year Classroom Preparation

Teachers and teacher assistants should work together to prepare the room for the end-of-year closure. Materials and supplies should be secured for the summer months and room furnishings should be dealt with according to you supervisor/principal's guidelines. Materials used for the last few weeks of the year should be adequate to ensure proper classroom activities. All classroom centers should be stocked until the last attendance day for the children. Children should not be left unsupervised while the teacher and teacher assistant prepare the room for the end-of-year closure. All items needed for classroom and end-of-year checkout should be readily available for the Director, Assistant Director and Education Coordinator.

Classroom Management

Children's Attendance

In order to maintain the performance standard requirement of 85% daily attendance and in order to get the most out of their Head Start experience, children need to be in regular attendance. If this does not happen, the office may be forced to increase your enrollment to 20 in order to maintain the 85% attendance quota. Please encourage parents to bring their child every day and to let us know if their child will not be attending (illness, trip, appointment, etc.). If one of the children in your classroom misses 3 consecutive days, it is the teacher's responsibility to contact the parent. If a parent cannot be reached, you must try to contact the parent through the emergency numbers listed in the child's folder. If you are unsuccessful, let your family advocate know and it will be necessary to make a home visit.

Supervision of Children

Both teacher and teacher assistant must be with children at all times. The only time that children can be left with only one caregiver is during naptime or when there are few enough children to meet the adult-child ratio. For example, one teacher may be left in charge of the class when part of the class has gone to the dentist and the remaining number of children does not exceed the adult-child ratio. Efforts should be made to arrange for a parent volunteer to assist the teacher with the class on dental days.

When the children go to special classes the teacher assistant must accompany children in order to maintain the adult-child ratio and to make sure there is an adult present that they are familiar with. If the teacher assistant is absent the teacher should accompany the children. Do Not Send the Substitute.

Both the teacher and teacher assistant must go with the children to meals. The only exceptions are as follows:

1. if a parent volunteer is present and accompanies the teacher assistant to the meal, or
2. if the number of children in attendance has dropped to 10 or below.

The classroom behavior for that day should be taken into consideration before considering the possibility for an exception as mentioned above. **One staff member MUST take a food tray and eat the same food as the children, at the children's table.** Head Start will pay for the teacher assistant's meal. If the assistant does not wish to partake of the meal, the teacher may receive the free meal. If a staff person eats something different than what the children eat, they must wait until the children are down for naptime. They must then leave the classroom to eat their lunch. Failure to comply with these supervision guidelines will result in immediate suspension, pending action of the executive director of the Anderson County Board of Education and the Policy Council.

Staff should be actively involved with the children during classroom time and outdoor play. Paperwork, phone calls and other tasks should be left until the children are on their mats for naptime. **Cell phones must be turned off and put away during school hours.** Staff should

position themselves in the classroom and on the playground so that they can see all children at all times. Staff should not gather and talk with other adults while supervising the children.

The children should never be left alone or allowed to leave the classroom to go to the bathroom or deliver a message alone.

Daily Schedule

A daily schedule must be posted in the classroom. The daily schedule should alternate between active and quiet activities. The schedule should include:

- Small group activities
- At least one hour for center time
- At least one hour for naptime
- At least thirty minutes for outdoor play
- At least thirty minutes for breakfast
- At least thirty minutes for lunch
- At least fifteen minutes for an afternoon snack
- Lunch must not be scheduled any earlier than two hours from the end of your breakfast meal
- Time must be allowed for the children to brush their teeth after the lunch meal

Classroom Rules

Classroom Rules must be posted in the classroom using both pictures and words. The rules must:

- Be concrete and simple;
- Be age appropriate;
- Be limited to no more than five rules; and
- Children should be allowed to help make the rules as they are more likely to remember them if they help make them.

Transitions

Many children have difficulty making transitions from home to school or from one activity to the next. It is important to let children know what is coming and to give them warnings. They need to know what to expect and what is expected of them. Teachers should always be prepared, so that children are not kept waiting while transitioning from one activity to the other.

The following are suggestions of how to help children make transitions:

- The daily routine should have as few transitions as possible.
- Plan the routine so that active times alternate with quieter times and there is a gradual increase or decrease in the tempo of the activity.

- Provide warnings before the activity changes – one at ten minutes, then five minutes, then one minute. These warnings can be a signal (bell, lights) or an adult speaking with a group of children.
- Not all activities require the same amount of clean-up time, so some centers, such as blocks, should begin first.
- Clearly signal the end of work time and the end of outside time so that everyone is aware.
- Review what will happen during the transition time before children start to move.
- Once the children have gathered, help them make up special ways to move to the next activity – sing a song, hands up in the air, touch ears, etc.
- Start the next activity right away, even if all the children have not gotten there yet. This lets them know that something fun is going to happen next, so it pays to get there quickly.
- Do not forget to give positive reinforcement when things go well.
- Lining up and mass “bathrooming” should be avoided if at all possible. The teacher assistant should take half of the class at a time to the bathroom while teachers give small group instruction to the rest of the children.
- When dismissing children from large group or table activities to line up, be sure to select small numbers of children at a time. For example: “All boys wearing blue” or “girls with long hair” or “the children whose name starts with B” may line up.

Guidance and Discipline

The use of corporal punishment is not permitted. Also a child’s playtime can *never* be taken away as a punishment. Head Start children should be redirected, taught problem-solving skills, given choices and time-out should be used sparingly and only when deemed necessary.

Teacher and Teacher Assistant Working Together

The teacher and assistant should work together as a team. The teacher and assistant should plan classroom activities together whenever possible. A classroom will run more smoothly when there is a good working relationship between the classroom staff. Please be respectful of your co-worker by treating them with respect in front of the children and parents. Also show consideration for your co-worker by being dependable and on time for work.

Behavior Management

Four steps to socialization:

- Establish a relationship of trust with child.
- Prevent discipline problems in advance
 - First – what might be causing the problem?
 - Look at the environment
 - Look at structure of the day
 - Are there any negative behavior triggers
 - -long waiting times?
 - -not enough materials?
 - -treating children unfairly?
- Give children time to learn social behavior

- Use appropriate guidance strategies for developmental age

Four goals of misbehavior:

- Attention – they want it all
 - learn every child’s name
 - find opportunities to encourage every day
- Feel powerless
- Feel they are being treated unfairly
- Do not understand/feel inadequate

Remember, from a child’s point of view:

- “Sometimes I like being and playing alone.”
- “I need a predictable routine.”
- “Please arrange the room to meet my needs (not yours).”
- “I will make lots of ‘learnings’, not mistakes.”
- “Get down on my level (physically, emotionally, socially).”
- “I need lots of patience and hugs.”
- “It’s all about making learning fun.”

Socialization Techniques

1. Observe children, read the situation, then act.
2. Change the environment – add or reduce materials
3. Offer choices – create a balance of power.
4. Help children with tantrums – be there for the child.
5. Focus on “do’s” instead of “don’ts”.
6. Model appropriate behavior.
7. Provide acceptable alternatives.
8. Appreciate and encourage pro-social behavior.
9. Firmly share concerns about hurting.
10. Help children make connections.
11. Teach words to express strong emotions.
12. Use hugs and humor.

Writing Lesson Plans

Lesson Plan Guidelines

Following are guidelines for your lesson plans.

- Implemented on a 2 week (bi-weekly ... every two weeks) rotation with appropriate preschool themes
- Same form must be used by all classrooms
- Must be posted in classroom
- Must reflect implementation of special curriculums with documentation of completion:
 - “I’m So Glad You Asked”
 - Growing Up Safe and Strong
 - Peace Education/ I Care Cat
 - Cultural diversity must be evident in plans
 - Nutrition/Cooking – incorporated every two weeks
- Each child’s individual pattern of development and learning must be supported. This is done by documenting on the lesson plan form (“Children to Observe”) specific goals for children and what objectives to work on with particular children. **This is a Head Start performance standard requirement.** It is required that children’s individual needs be identified as goals on the lesson plan. This serves as a reminder that all children develop at their own pace and need to be recognized as such. This also serves as a reminder for teachers to work on children’s goals throughout the year.
- Must plan open-ended, process-oriented activities
- Should address all areas of development
- Bi-weekly plans will be copied and sent to education coordinator by Monday morning of the first week plans will be implemented

Small Group Activities

Teacher and teacher assistant should plan for one activity per day. These activities should be process-oriented (avoid having children “make” something with a pre-conceived product outcome). No coloring books.

Since lessons will be planned two weeks at a time, plan a combination of small group activities that include art, science, literacy, and counting. Planned teacher time should also be spent in centers, in order to facilitate children’s growth in the areas of social, physical, cognitive, and language development.

Activities and materials should be planned ahead of time. Invite children to participate; do not force. Whoever plans the small group activity is responsible for planning, preparing, implementation, cleaning up, and displaying the art (if that is the activity) on the wall or bulletin board.

Be sure to have plenty of materials for each child. Label the children's work with their name or initials and date. If possible, children should be allowed to sign their own work.

Large Group Activities

This time is designed to involve children as a large group to promote basic preschool concepts, fun, creativity, attention-building, and respect for others. However at the beginning of the year, group time should be very short so as not to frustrate you or the children; work to expand and lengthen this time as the year progresses. You should consider splitting your children into a younger and an older group, thus being able to work on skills and concepts that are more appropriate to the age group. Length should be 5-15 minutes at the beginning of the year but no more than 25-30 minutes by the end of the year. Group time plans need to be carefully planned and thought out in detail for success. Plan for a "transition -in" and "transition-out" activity.

Group time is typically used for *identifying helpers*, updating the calendar, and determining the weather for the day. To save time during group, consider enough helpers for half of the class and let them be the helpers for the week. Essentially, children will have the opportunity to be a classroom helper two weeks of each month. This should be done on Monday.

Appropriate calendar activities include:

- Identifying day of week
- Counting;
- Patterning; and
- Keep this time age-appropriate and short.

Other effective group time activities include songs, finger plays, stories, flannel board stories, music/movement activities, simple learning games, discussions involving the children, drama, story re-creations, puppets, and so on.

Books

Five books should be listed on the lesson plan form that coincides with the bi-weekly theme. These five books should be read each day to reinforce ideas, concepts, and familiarity of story. In summary, a minimum of five books must be read daily.

Center/Materials Planning

The center/materials planning form is used for teacher planning purposes. This will help you develop your centers based on your bi-weekly theme and will help keep your classroom environment fresh and current.

Cultural diversity must be reflected throughout the room through multi-cultural dolls, books, posters, children's artwork, and in the housekeeping area.

Blocks

- A good number of each size and shape of wooden blocks must always be out.
- Other type of blocks may include: cardboard “brick” blocks, waffle blocks, Legos, colored blocks, soft cushion blocks and large hollow blocks. However, they are not to be out at the same time.
- Add props to the block area based on theme. The following props can be added to the block center but should not be out at the same time:
 - Dollhouse people, and furniture
 - Animals
 - Dinosaurs
 - Barn, tractors, farm animals
 - Cars, trucks, airplanes, road signs
 - Maps
 - Writing materials
 - Construction books

Refer to the resource “Block Play” for further ideas.

Housekeeping

- This area is very important in your classroom. When planned carefully, imaginary play will keep children’s interest for a long time.
- Housekeeping should always be a part of your classroom (NAEYC requirement) and if at all possible should include the following: sink, stove, refrigerator, table & chairs, rocking chair, pots & pans, pretend foods, food containers, aprons, pot holders, telephones, dolls, baby beds, washer & dryer, iron & ironing board, etc.
- Be sure to frequently include dress-ups such as pants, dresses, shirts, jackets, accessories, purses, shoes, hats, scarves, ties, jewelry, keys, play money, costumes. Please wash dress-ups as appropriate after their use and before putting them away.
- Consider the seasons of the year and reflect these changes in the housekeeping center. For example, in the winter, a brightly flowered tablecloth and spring flowers in a vase would not be appropriate. Dress-ups would include coats, scarves, mittens and snow boots.
- Be sure to add language and print to this area. Phone books, cookbooks, magazines, recipe cards and junk mail are appropriate literacy props for the housekeeping center.
- Work to ensure that this area looks full and inviting. Be careful that this area doesn’t not have too many of one thing in it (i.e. plates, food). Children will have difficulty using the materials appropriately.
- Related housekeeping ideas include
 - Grocery store
 - Restaurant
 - Ice cream parlor
 - Hospital/Doctor office
 - Post office
 - Spaceship
 - Gas station/car wash
 - Pizza Hut
 - Carnival/circus
 - Zoo/farm
 - Business office
 - Beach

Hair salon	Veterinary office
Fire station	Campsite
Vacation/Travel agency	
Story setting (Goldilocks & The Three Bears)	

Book Area

- This area must always be visible.
- Display books carefully and model proper care of books. No more than 20-25 books should be out at a time to keep clutter and misuse of books under control.
- Refer to the children's interests for book selection.
- Include different types of books such as concepts, picture books, stories, prose/poetry, multi-cultural, and so on.
- In addition to the above, consider magazines, books on tape flannel board stories, and story telling props.
- Be sure to include soft, comfortable materials in this area such as lamps, plants, pillows, soft furniture, beanbags, stuffed animals, throw rugs, blankets, and other items that make the area "cozy". Pictures on the wall should also be considered.
- Rotate books every two weeks.

Writing Area

- This area should be big enough for 1-2 children and should include a variety of writing materials.
- Alphabet and number posters should be displayed at the child's eye level.
- Writing materials include: pencils, crayons, colored markers, colored pencils, chalk, various sizes of paper, calendars, carbon paper, scissors, hole punch, pipe cleaners for letter forming, stamps, stickers, envelopes, typewriter, maps, laminated name cards, greeting cards, note cards, rulers, post-its, book-making supplies, pads of paper. Rotate these materials.

Art Area

- Available daily. Children should be able to freely explore in this center.
- Playdough (homemade or a variation of) should be included and changed as it hardens.
- Art table materials include: scissors, glue, a basket full of collage materials, popsicle sticks, markers, crayons, stencils, etc.
- Art Easel
 - Easel must always be out and set up next to water source, if possible.
 - Make fresh paint weekly and replenish as needed.
 - At the beginning of the year, provide 1-2 colors at a time until children get comfortable with using paint. Add more colors as the year progresses.
 - Vary colors, remembering to frequently include black, brown, white, gray, etc. Vary size and width of brushes and occasionally rotate brushes with sponges, toothbrushes, or cotton swabs for example. Vary sizes, weight, and shapes of paper

- Put a vinyl tablecloth under the easel to catch paint spills or use a newspaper on the easel for easier clean-up.
- Make easel painting available 3-5 times per week.
- It is necessary to be aware of children in this area. Be sure to write child's name and date their creation.

Sand and Water Table

- Sand and/or water must be available daily (NAEYC requirement).
- Careful planning in this area will ensure great opportunities to observe children using their cognitive skills.
- Sand and water table must be changed out every two weeks, in conjunction with the theme.
- When water is in the table, it must be emptied daily.
- Put a vinyl tablecloth under table to help keep water under control. Have old towels handy.
- Ideas include:

Water – sink/float	Sand (bury pennies)
Mud	Dig for worms, dinosaur bones
Ice	Bubbles
Beans	Rice
- Refer to the resource “Sand and Water” for further ideas.

Puzzles and Games

- Be sure the shelf looks full and inviting.
- Do not use puzzles with missing pieces. Choose 8-10 puzzles with varying degrees of difficulty. Include some simple knobbed puzzles or 4-5 piece puzzles for special education needs.
- Include 8–10 games, lotto cards, stringing beads, peg boards, counting bears, pattern cards, and cause and effect toys, for example. Choose a variety.

Science Table

- Take advantage of this very “hands-on” area for exploration and discovery of science, nature, ecology, and creative materials.
- Ideas for this area include:

Magnets	Magnifying glasses
Toothpick sculpting	Egg carton or styrofoam sculpting
Cornstarch/plaster exploring	Animals
Plants	Seasonal experiments
Sensory experiments	

Computer Area

- This area should only be available to the children when there are enough adults in the classroom to allow the teacher or teacher assistant to interact with individual children on the computer.
- Children need to be taught how to properly care for the computer, printer, and software. Games must be safely stored to prevent undue damage.

Assessment

Assessment Overview

Creative Curriculum Developmental Continuum Assessment consists of observing children in the areas of social & emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Ongoing assessment helps teachers focus on all aspects of each child's development and gives them a way to ensure that all children are making progress. Each child is to be observed in the four developmental areas throughout the year with three data collection points (as specified by the education coordinator).

Locate the resource - "Connecting Content, Teaching, and Learning" - and keep it handy throughout your observations. Refer to it often! This will be the best way to sharpen your skills.

Observations

Observations are important because documentation proves what you are doing and gives you validation as a competent teacher. It is not a reflection of teacher effectiveness but a guide to appropriate planning for individual needs. Keeping observations will help you become more intentional and provide enriching opportunities for learning. Teacher and teacher assistants will work together to observe children and keep documentation.

Guidelines for writing observations

- Be specific. Be objective.
 - What did the child actually do?
 - What did the child actually say?
- Don't draw conclusions or editorialize.
- Identify the setting – note date, time, and location
- Be brief – only two or three sentences
- Focus on the child
- *Observation sample – 8/28/02 – during morning free play, several children were playing with pretend food. Anthony brought some eggs over and dumped them onto my plate. I suggested he count them. As he counted, he touched some of them and finished with "6" (there were 8 total).*

#34 – level 1

Assessment details

- Put a "group section" in the front of your notebook – write out the activity; list the children involved in the activity and then refer to "group section" in each child's profile, indicating level. This way the observation (activity) only needs to be written once.
- At **least** once a week, you must organize your observations by placing them in each child's folder or behind their tab and must determine objectives met. This

will save you so much time and frustration rather than waiting to organize it right before the due date

- Level III needs to be accounted for even if you feel a child has reached that level. It is important that you are certain about a child being at this level, especially those moving into kindergarten. BUT remember, all children are not expected to be at level III on the last checkpoint.
- When documenting, watch for “skills that the child will keep”, not just a one time occurrence.
- If you know that a child meets a specific objective – make a quick anecdote in the child’s profile booklet, but only sparingly.
- Lesson plans must reflect the Creative Curriculum objectives – this will make it easier.

Creative Curriculum.net

This is the internet version of the assessment. You will be able to enter all information into any computer with internet access as long as you have your user name and password. Observations must still be kept in a classroom notebook.

Portfolio

A portfolio is a collection of child’s work, gathered over a period of time that provides teachers and parents with a picture of a student’s learning. Samples of children’s work should be included with the assessment. This supports what is going on in the classroom and gives you a way to determine the progress of the children. Decide the best way for you to keep up with each child’s portfolio contents (folders, notebook with pocket inserts, etc.). Teacher and teacher assistant will work together on this but it is the teacher assistant’s responsibility to stay on top of it and ensure it gets done.

Include the following:

- Photo of child/family – August, May
- Self–portrait – August, January, May
- Cutting sample – August, January, May
- Writing sample of name – August, January, May
- Dictated stories – October, January, May
- Paintings – December, May
- Art samples (no stencils or worksheets)
- Letter I.D. checklist – September, April