

Parent Handbook

Welcome to Head Start / Early Head Start 2015– 2016!

C.A.R.D. Head Start and Early Head Start want to make sure that all Parents and Guardians have information about important policies and guidelines within our program. This portion is provided to you to use as a handbook reference throughout the entire year.

Policies in this handbook include:

- Policy for Confidentiality
- Sibling Policy
- Participation Restrictions Criteria
- Motor Vehicle Safety Policy for Children
- Attendance Policy
- Policy for Abandonment
- Child Abuse / Neglect Reporting Procedures
- Field Trip Guidelines
- Guidelines for Visiting Animals
- Health Guidelines (including Head Lice Policy)
- Head Start Policy on Discipline
- Compliment and Complaint Procedure

Your Center's Information

Classroom: _____

Teacher: _____

FSR/FMS: _____

Phone #: _____

You will also find other very important information that will help to maximize the benefits you receive from participating in our fine program.

LICENSING: A **Compliance File** is kept at each center. The Compliance File is accessible to parents and available for review upon request.

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Policy for Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be maintained in Community Action Resource and Development Inc. (C.A.R.D.) Head Start at all times. The Head Start Community and Staff together determine what the confidentiality policy will be each year. This is done through parents attending Parent Committee Meetings, Policy Council, and Health Advisory Board Meetings. The Head Start centers and central office keeps locked files of all children's records and relevant family information. Managers and Specialists are responsible for keeping their files locked and keeping keys in an appropriate place. Lead Teachers in each center are the primary individuals responsible for keeping the key to confidential files in an appropriate place. In the absence of the Lead Teacher, the Assistant Teacher is responsible.

Head Start Parents are the primary source of information about themselves and their children. Information that is sought from Parents will be limited to what is essential for services. During the initial interview process of each Head Start family, confidentiality will be addressed by the Teaching and Family Support staff. At this time staff will discuss the need for **Release of Information forms (ROI's)**, written permission for all screenings /observations, and the need to discuss family information with other appropriate Head Start staff.

Parents and volunteers are prohibited for viewing records other than those of their own children. Children's health, education, and social services information records will only be accessible to Head Start staff and designated consultants or professionals on a "*need to know*" basis. When volunteering in the classroom, volunteers are prohibited from discussing children other than their own with the staff or other parents / guardians.

Staff may need to review records for:

- Updating records for each child
- Documenting social service referrals
- Follow up on medical/mental health/nutritional concerns
- Update growth charts & immunization records

Consultants may need to review records for:

- Assessing health records, screening results, nutritional concerns, social service needs, etc.
- Conducting reviews (SAAMS, protocol teams, etc.)

Consultants must present I.D. to staff and sign in the front of every folder they review

Managers and Specialists may need to review records for:

- Monitoring of staff in completion of proper forms (ex. Family Partnership Agreement, Head Start Application, Health/Dental/Nutrition/Mental Health forms, etc.)
- Follow up of services for children and parents such as referrals, DHS assistance, etc.

An authorization to release information (ROI) signed by parents will be used to give and obtain information to appropriate referral agencies for services.

No information will be released to anyone outside the program without written and signed consent from the family except in reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.

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Sibling Policy

The following sibling policy will be observed at Head Start and Early Head Start centers:

1. Siblings are not allowed in the classroom during program hours.
2. Siblings do not attend parties or special activities at the center.
3. If a parent, guardian, or other family member is volunteering to assist with a field trip, siblings may not accompany them.
4. If Parent Committee Meetings are held at locations other than the center, siblings may attend.

Please note: Parents are solely responsible for their Head Start / Early Head Start children and siblings during Parent Committee Meetings held at locations other than the center.

Participation Restrictions Criteria

C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start welcomes and encourages full parent and family involvement in all aspects of the program.

- Parents and guardians are expected to follow all HS/EHS policies and demonstrate appropriate behavior while in HS/EHS centers or attending HS/EHS events and activities.
- Parents and guardians who exhibit inappropriate behavior that disrupts the daily operation of the program, and have been advised of the inappropriate behavior but continues to exhibit the inappropriate behavior, may have restrictions placed upon their participation in the program. The child's participation will be unaffected, however.

Children in Motor Vehicle Safety Policy

The purpose of this policy is to protect innocent children from being injured or killed when left alone in a motor vehicle. NO children will be left unattended in a motor vehicle on Head Start/Early Head Start property.

Definitions:

Child - Anyone under the age of 14

Unattended Child - A child who is not accompanied by an adult

Motor Vehicle - Any automobile, truck, truck-tractor, motor bus, or motor propelled vehicle not exclusively operated or driven on fixed rails or tracks.

Anyone who violates this policy shall be subject to the following:

- 1st Offense - Oral reminder from HS/EHS staff at your center
- 2nd Offense - Written reminder sent to your home
- 3rd Offense - Written notice to local law enforcement

Together we can keep children safe!

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Attendance Policy

To receive the full benefit of all the services provided through Head Start, daily attendance is required.

Please limit absences to instances such as illnesses or emergencies. It is important for you, the Parent or Guardian, to call the center in the morning if your child is unable to attend or will be late for class. Meals are ordered early in the morning and we want to make sure we order enough food.

When a child misses 5 days of class unexcused, the Attendance Coordinator will send a letter to the Parent / Guardian.

When a child misses 15 days of class unexcused, a second letter will be sent stating the child has been placed back on the waiting list until arrangements have been made for the child to attend on a regular basis.

Policy for Abandonment

Classroom hours vary from center to center. Please have your child arrive no later than 15 minutes after the start of class in the morning and be picked up no later than 15 minutes after the end of class in the afternoon. **These minutes are to be used only in emergency situations and require prior notification to center staff.**

Parents should discuss alternative child care with center staff to be sure your child has a safe alternate plan for unexpected emergencies. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to make sure emergency contacts are up to date at the center. Failure to pick up a child or make arrangements for alternative child care is considered *abandonment*.

First Occurrence:

- Call all home and alternate numbers provided by parent/guardian
- Discuss with parent /guardian consequences of failure to pick up child
- Teacher or center staff will notify DHS that child has been abandoned and request that the child be taken into their custody (after staff leaves for the day)

Second Occurrence:

- Call all numbers provided by parent/guardian
- After none hour, notify DHS or local police that the child has been abandoned and request that the child be taken into their custody

Child Abuse and Neglect

C.A.R.D. Head Start is required by Oklahoma Law to report injuries or behavior which may be suspicious of child abuse or neglect to DHS. It is our goal to work with parents and guardians to provide safety to all children.

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Guidelines for Visiting Animals

- Each animal may visit the classroom for no more than 2 days per month
- Animals may remain in the classroom no more than 8 hours per day
- All visiting animals must be properly vaccinated and free of disease
- All visiting animals must be properly caged or restrained during the visit
- Parents/guardians will be notified of visiting animals before visits
- Teachers must check health records and be aware of all allergy problems with all children before animals visit. If any child shows signs of allergic reaction during the visit, the animal must be immediately removed from the classroom.

If animals are kept as part of the classroom the following guidelines must be observed:

- Parents/guardians are advised of the presence of animals
- The animal must be in good health, not showing evidence of any disease, does not present a threat to the health, safety, and well being of children
- Local ordinances pertaining to animals on the premises are followed
- Animals are maintained in a visibly clean manner
- Any and all vaccinations must be current and on record at the center
- All reptiles are inaccessible to children
- Animals are restricted from areas where food is stored, prepared, or served
- All outdoor play areas are kept clean of any animal excrement or litter
- If an animal bites a child and the skin is broken, the Health Manager/Specialist, parent/guardian, and (if necessary) Health Department are notified. The incident is documented as other injuries would be
- Fish are the only animals permitted on a permanent basis in the classroom

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Health Guidelines

Head Start and Early Head Start centers require that we protect the health and safety of all children who participate in our program. Therefore, all children are visually inspected or checked for problems that may be harmful to themselves or others.

Please keep your child home if he/she has any of the following:

- Temperature above 100°F anytime within 24 hours before school (before fever medicine is given)
- Vomiting or diarrhea anytime within 24 hours before school
- Open and draining skin sores
- Unknown or unfamiliar rash
- Red, inflamed or draining eyes or ears
- Constant cough or nasal drainage
- Signs of pain – stomach ache, headache, sore throat, etc.
- Unusual tiredness, paleness or irritability
- Any infectious disease

When in doubt of your child's health condition, please play it safe for him or her and the other children at your HS/EHS center by keeping your child at home!

Your child may be sent home from school if he/she has any of the following:

- Elevated temperature of 100°F or more
 - Vomiting 2 or more times since admission that day
 - Diarrhea or loose stools
 - Constantly crying, fussiness, unexplained lethargy
 - Symptoms of illness such as red throat, constant cough, red inflamed eyes or ears, rashes, contagious conjunctivitis, drainage from eyes, ears, etc.
 - A reportable illness or contagious condition that has not been sufficiently treated to reduce the health risk to others
 - Break out with Chicken Pox, lice, and/or nits*, scabies, ringworm or impetigo that appears untreated and contagious to others.
- *Head Start has a nit-free policy**
- Significant respiratory distress
 - A bacterial infection such as Streptococcal pharyngitis (“strep throat”) or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of antimicrobial therapy (antibiotics)
 - Difficulty participating in program activities comfortably
 - Any condition requiring more care than HS/EHS staff can provide without compromising the health & safety of other children

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Health Guidelines (continued)

C.A.R.D. Head Start / Early Head Start Head Lice Policy and Procedures

C.A.R.D. HS/EHS has a **Nit – Free Policy**: All nits must be removed from the hair shafts before the child can return.

When screening a child reveals that a child has head lice, the parent will be notified and asked to pick up their child. The child will be excluded from the center until treated with a head louse shampoo. When the child returns, the teacher will check/re-check the child to assure that the child is lice and nit free before the child can be readmitted to class. The Parent will be responsible for following the head lice treatment calendar (H054A - can get a copy from the center staff). The calendar includes the following steps:

- Use of lice treatment shampoo
- Comb out lice/nits from hair, using a lice comb
- Check other members of the household for lice or nits (treat if infested)
- Clean entire home
- Perform lice/nit re-checks and comb daily for 7-10 days

If lice is found on the 10th day re-check, the parent will repeat use of lice treatment shampoo, combing lice/nits out, check other members of the household for lice/nits, clean household and begin another lice/nit re-check and comb daily for 7-10 days.

If lice is found on the 2nd 10 day re-check, the parent will be given a Medical Referral (H037) requesting the child be taken to their health provider for assistance, bringing the results to the center before the child can be readmitted.

If you have further questions, please contact your County Health Department or the Oklahoma State Department of Health

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Head Start Policy on Discipline

Our goal is to teach self-regulation. This is achieved by:

- Building self esteem
- Teaching children to resolve conflicts peacefully
- Positive redirection and providing choices
- Setting good examples and limits for the children
- Encouraging children to talk about feelings and validate them
- Teach children how to deal with feelings in a positive way
- Being fair and non-judgmental
- Being consistent
- Supporting the development of self-regulation
- In only certain instances, positive time out is used

Compliment and Complaint Procedure

Compliments

Compliments from Parents and Community Partners are welcomed and appreciated. When a verbal or written compliment is received, the local Center Supervisor or Representative will forward documentation to the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Manager who will then present the documentation to the Head Start/Early Head Start Director.

Complaints

1. When a verbal or written complaint is received from a Parent or Community Partner, it will be brought to the attention of the local Center Supervisor or Representative. If that person is involved or unable to resolve the issue, the Parent, Family and Community Engagement Manager will be contacted for advice, assistance or intervention.
2. If resolution is not obtained, the Center Supervisor and PFCE Manager will notify the HS/EHS Director for assistance
3. If resolution is still not obtained, the situation may be presented to the Executive Director, and then to the Policy Council as a whole. This will be in the form of a formal written grievance. If mutual resolution is reached between the complainant and administrative staff, no further action is required. The process will be documented and filed at the central office.

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C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start School Success & Readiness Plan

Setting School Readiness Goals

C.A.R.D. leadership understands that these goals will be broad statements that articulate knowledge and skills for preschool children entering kindergarten. The goals will address social and emotional development, language and literacy, physical development and health, approaches to learning, and cognitive development including mathematics and science. The goals are as follows:

Domain HS/EHS	Goals	Objective
Social & Emotional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will recognize and regulate emotions, attention, impulses, and behavior	1(a)
Language Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will use language to communicate needs and express ideas with adults and peers; understand and begin to use oral language for conversation and communication	9(a)
Literacy Knowledge and Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will demonstrate knowledge of print and its usage	17(a)
Approaches to Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will demonstrate persistence in learning and discovering	11(a)
Cognitive and General Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will begin to investigate their environment to discover what objects and people do, how things work and how they can make things happen	11(d)
Physical Development and Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Children will control small muscles for such purposes as using utensils, self-care, building, writing and exploring	7(a)

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C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start School Success & Readiness Plan *(continued)*

Community Action Resource & Development Head Start and Early Head Start Early Childhood Education and Development

Content Area: Early Childhood Education and Development
Child Outcomes 641 A (g) (2) (A)

Community Action Resource & Development Head Start/Early Head Start will collaborate with parents in order to implement a developmentally appropriate curriculum, which supports each child's individual pattern of development and learning. C.A.R.D. uses Creative Curriculum, which is based on sound child development research, which tells what to expect of children at a given stage of development. Creative Curriculum uses an environmentally based approach that is responsive to the needs of diverse communities and cultures represented in the Head Start program. It allows staff and parents to modify the environment to make it increasingly challenging and relevant while building on the children's changing needs, interests, skills and abilities.

C.A.R.D. will provide a variety of activities which address the Head Start Early Learning Framework in an integrated way; using intentional instruction and scaffold learning throughout the day to enhance and encourage growth and development, forming the foundation for School Readiness and later School Success. (45 CFR 1304.3)

Performance Objective:

To identify and create goals and program plans for improving school success and readiness; by aligning the Revised Child Development and Early Learning Framework and the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines from the Oklahoma Department of Education; including requirements and /or expectations of the schools the children will attend. Alignment is inclusive of the ongoing assessments and curricula in the program.

School Readiness *defined:* Children possess the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning in life. It is our belief that C.A.R.D. promotes school readiness by providing a safe and nurturing environment which enables children to be given intentional opportunities to develop socially and cognitively by providing educational, health, nutritional, social and other services to enrolled children.

Every child arrives with diverse strengths rooted in his or her family's unique culture, language, beliefs and heritage. It is our goal to build upon these strengths while incorporating the school readiness goals.

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C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start School Success & Readiness Plan *(continued)*

School Readiness Initiative:

The “Improving Head Start School Readiness Act of 2007 “ has initiated a more structured look as Early Head Start children move into Head Start. C.A.R.D. believes School Readiness begins with our youngest children and pregnant mothers. Teachers/Educators and Home Visitors interact with parents and children to demonstrate strong relationship building skills as well as healthy living skills respecting their diversity.

C.A.R.D. believes School Readiness begins with our youngest as stated above, however we also know and recognize school readiness goals begin in earnest with our oldest children, the four year old students.

The creation of School Readiness Goals was and is an ongoing process, which involves the Education Committee, teachers/educators, parents and collaboration with the public schools.

C.A.R.D. understands these goals will be broad statements that articulate knowledge and skills for children. As Community Action Resource & Development sought to begin the process of setting School Readiness Goals; we first consulted the surrounding and collaborating public schools to ensure we would be on the same page. We consulted the Head Start Act of 2007, and we met with the Education Committee and staff to ensure we all understood the definition of School Readiness to ensure the children in our program achieved and exceeded expectations.

The development of the child includes:

- * Physical Development and Health
- * Social and Emotional Development
- * Approaches to Learning
- * Language and Literacy
- * Cognition and General Knowledge

These five areas are linked together, as the development in one area often affects the development in another. This developmental *continuum* is true for children with disabilities as well. We maintain that when children have adequate nutrition, are immunized, receive appropriate educational and social support and have learning problems identified and remedied early, they have far greater success in school and life. A child’s development varies widely from 0-5 years of age. The School Readiness Goals will incorporate the areas of development which lays the groundwork for the foundation of the Early Learning Outcomes Framework and Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines for Infants, Toddlers and Twos as well as the Oklahoma Early Learning Guidelines for Three-Five. (Oklahoma Core Competencies for Early Childhood Practitioners)

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C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start School Success & Readiness Plan *(continued)*

Operational Procedure:

C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start has created school readiness goals and plans as appropriate, to be reviewed annually, or as needed.

C.A.R.D. Head Start/ Early Head Start focuses on the development of children ages 0-5 years in the areas of physical, social emotional and intellectual development. The program's focus is on developing the child, enhancing and developing skills, self-esteem and academic preparation.

Data related to school success and readiness will be collected quarterly for analysis, which will assist in knowledge of recommended trainings for professional development, and changes needed in the program.

Data collected is listed below:

- Head Start Program Information Report (PIR) for the current school year
- Health/Dental exams and screenings
- Disabilities (Individualized Family Service Plans [IFSP's] and Individualized Educational Plans [IEP's])
- Mental Health (behavior plans, referrals)
- Professional Degreed staff (# of each type)
- Education (child) PIR
- Family and Community Partnerships PIR's (family goal setting, social services and referrals)
- Education Outcomes Report

Educational Child Outcomes:

- Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment data will be analyzed for fall, winter and spring, and recommendations for professional development, curricula and parent involvement are made for upcoming quarter and school year to follow. Early Head Start will have a similar process analyzing the data collected four times a year.
- Alphabet Knowledge Checklist, number concept and shape forms which is incorporated in Teaching Strategies GOLD to enhance Letter Knowledge, number concepts and shape recognition and will strengthen the underlying literacy skills goals utilized alongside Creative Curriculum Literacy and STEP.
- Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) scores are documented by CLASS observers and reviewed by Head Start Program staff. The results help determine concerns and recommendations for staff and training.
- Monitoring results from Ongoing Monitoring and Self-Assessment are utilized for program planning and staff development.
- Dual Language Learners - A survey is completed on non-English speaking children and reviewed as well as the Language Survey completed on every child. Spanish as well as English are spoken in classrooms where there is a need, to develop and strengthen the child's first language while developing academic proficiency in both languages.

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C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start School Success & Readiness Plan *(continued)*

Transitions:

Change is HARD! Parents are supported in becoming their child's advocate as they transition both into Early Head Start or Head Start from home or other childcare settings. Transition begins at the time of Application. Family Service Workers meet and engage with parents to help them complete the application and discuss the needs of each family. Parents are encouraged to attend the Open House and Parent Orientation. Families will also receive a home visit from the Teacher/Educator prior to the child's enrollment. The Family Service worker will meet with the family and assist in setting goals within 45 days of entry date.

EHS Transition:

Early Head Start transitions look a bit different from some Head Start transitions. EHS serves very young children and expectant moms, and the program is "year round", so there may not be large group experiences of transitions such as Open House, etc. Each family is supported through the many transitions which occur during a family's time in the program. Transitions come in *many* forms. Here are a few examples:

- From expectant parent to active parenting of a new baby
- From child being at home with a parent to being in a classroom
- From being in the classroom to being in a home based program
- Going from EHS to HS or another pre-K program

Early Head Start journeys with the family through the transition process, and the plan for the transition is specific to that family and child. Temperament, individual needs and family needs are considered in the joint planning that is typically done at a parent conference or home visit, and the strategies chosen. Parents have specific roles and responsibilities in carrying out the transition. A well-planned transition can make a difficult change happen more smoothly.

When a child is around 2 years old, EHS staff members start talking about the transition that will take place at age 3, and by age 2 ½, parents are asked to start planning that "goodbye" even though it's tough to think of the baby as "no longer a baby!"

Kinder Transition:

As Parents assume a larger role as their child's first and important teacher, there will be initiatives to support the role of the parents as their advocate and teacher. There will be parent meetings, which involve local school staff informing parents of what their expectations are as the child enters kindergarten. When possible, some classrooms will do field trips to visit the local kindergarten classrooms. With signed permission from parents, information can be sent to the next school placement. Families will receive *transition information* with informative documents for parents as well as activities they can accomplish with their child during the summer months to assist in preparation of their child's school readiness. They will receive assessment reports as well as a *portfolio* with samples of their child's work.

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C.A.R.D. Head Start/Early Head Start School Success & Readiness Plan *(continued)*

Special Education:

The Disability Manager, Content area Managers, Family Service Workers, Teachers/Educators and Specialists support parents of children with disabilities by providing information on connecting families with the services provided by the early intervention agencies and the local education agencies. Parents are informed of their rights and are actively involved during the special education referral process. Transition meetings are held for each child on an IEP/IFSP.

Special Needs:

C.A.R.D. welcomes children who have special needs. To ensure compliance with the congressional and ACYF mandate C.A.R.D. actively seeks to serve children with disabilities in the program. (At least 10% of enrolled children)

Activities to accomplish this goal include:

- Recruitment through child find outreach
- Use information provided by parents from medical professionals that include diagnoses; or a copy of an IEP/IFSP to determine services needed and enrollment eligibility
- Conduct parent conferences to discuss concerns, results of any evaluations, and available services
- Obtain parental consent in writing to refer child for further evaluation; discuss results with parents
- Decision making team made up of the parent, staff, and service provider(s) meets regularly to discuss diagnoses, placement, treatment and follow up of services, with all matters handled professionally and kept confidential
- Head Start/ Early Head Start staff will work with parents, schools, Sooner Start and other agencies to secure resources for services to be provided
- Training will be provided for staff and parents of special needs children, as well as individual consultations when needed.

What is “Early Childhood Mental Health”?

“Early Childhood Mental Health” refers to the **healthy social and emotional development** of a child from birth to 5 years; and a growing field of research and practice is devoted to the:

- Promotion of healthy social and emotional development;
- Prevention of mental health problems;
- Treatment of the mental health problems of very young children in the context of their families

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What is “Early Childhood Mental Health”? (continued)

All children and families may benefit from mental health services, because promoting healthy development and preventing problems in all areas of development is a good thing. Social and emotional development is observed in how children regulate their emotions, in play and behavior and in relationships with their friends and the adults in their lives. So, just like we make observations (and ask parents about their observations) regarding other areas of development, (like how your child uses his hands to manipulate learning materials), staff and parents are also making observations about social and emotional development, (like how the child plays, calms himself or herself when upset, negotiates conflicts, and maintains appropriate focus on learning experiences). Social and emotional development is critically important to school success! Yes, it is more important than learning your numbers or the alphabet!!!

For more information on this topic, contact your HS/EHS staff or visit:
<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/early-childhood-mental-health/>

Parent and Family Support Groups:

Families are offered referrals for and given information to encourage participation in family support groups during the school year if interested. This year, “Circle of Security” is being offered. This educational program looks at children’s behavior from a “bonding” perspective. We also have the opportunity to plan and offer parent networking groups such as Circle of Friends, and parenting classes such as “The Incredible Years” and “Triple P” (Positive Parenting Program). All of these groups are offered to C.A.R.D. Head Start and Early Head Start families free of charge!

Parent, Family & Community Engagement:

Your child’s school readiness is affected by many things. C.A.R.D. HS/EHS knows that in order to have the best outcomes for your child, several things need to work well. By enlisting the parents in the school readiness success process, the door is opened for parent involvement. Parent and family engagement in Head Start and Early Heads Start is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, supporting strong relationships between parents and their children, and nurturing ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

The Framework we use identifies these main areas for Family Engagement Outcomes:

- Family Well Being - Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security
- Parent-Child Relationships – Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child’s learning and development
- Families as Lifelong Educators – Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school and in their communities
- Families as Learners – Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training, and/or other experiences that support their parenting, career and life goals

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Parent, Family & Community Engagement: *(continued)*

- Family Engagement in Transitions – Parents and families support and advocate for their child’s learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including EHS to HS, EHS/HS to other early learning environments, and HS to kindergarten through elementary school
- Family Connection to Peers and Community – Parents and families form connections to peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhance social well-being and community life.
- Families as Advocates and Leaders – Parents and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, and community and state organizing activities to improve children’s development and learning experiences.

The Framework targets outcomes for children to be ready for school and sustain development and learning gains through third grade. Parents are encouraged to serve on Content Area Advisory Committees, Center Parent Committees, Policy Council, as volunteers and most importantly, to have a voice in their child’s learning. C.A.R.D. Head Start’s Philosophy is that parents are the child’s first and most important teachers. Parents are provided the opportunity for individual and family goal setting and to participate in all areas of the program.

For more information about the Framework, visit: <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/family>

Monthly Training for Parents:

Topics of parental interests are presented throughout the school year such as Child Development, Behavior and Guidance, Nutrition, Fire Safety, Immunizations etc. Parents are also notified they may attend Staff In-Service Trainings, and 1st Aid & CPR trainings. Parent training opportunities are also offered at monthly center Parent Committee Meetings.

As the annual C.A.R.D. Head Start/ Early Head Start plans are being updated, results from the self-assessment and ongoing monitoring are utilized to ensure best practices and compliance with federal and state regulations. Community Collaborations with the Public Schools are revisited each year and updated. With the analysis of the Outcomes data, we are seeking information concerning needed materials, equipment, and staff training necessary to support children’s growth in school readiness skills. We expect data analysis to indicate areas in need of improvement and to identify those areas where C.A.R.D. Head Start has successfully prepared children to excel in learning.

Transportation:

C.A.R.D. Head Start / Early Head Start is unable to offer daily transportation services. However, we do encourage parents to carpool. When attending parent meetings it is a great time to make friends and possibly get a carpool started. We also encourage families to contact your local Community Action Agency for information on transit systems near you. Many communities have free or low cost public transit. Please contact your HS/EHS center for the telephone number of the Community Action Office nearest you. Remember a parent should always accompany their pre-school children while crossing the street.

