



INCA  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICES

# HEAD START PARENT HANDBOOK

Atoka, Johnston, Marshall, & Murray Counties  
Helping People. Changing Lives.

2022-2023





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# THE NEED TO KNOW



## Absences

Your child's attendance is important. Please notify your child's teacher about absence within a hour of the time the classroom opens. If your child will be absent please call the center and explain the absence. If your child is absent three (3) or more consecutive days without notifying the center or if your child has a pattern of irregular attendance the following will occur:

- Phone call or a home visit will be conducted by a Head Start staff member and center's director will be notified of the home visit.
- Each Head Start center will keep a record of all absences and family contacts.
- After 5 consecutive days of no parent contact, we will have no alternative than to assume that you have removed your child from our program and will have to fill the vacancy.

## Children's Personal Belongings

Children's personal belongings are kept in a single "cubby" or "locker" in the classroom and are to be removed and taken home at the end of each day. No money, food, candy, gum, and toys are to be brought to Head Start by the child.





# THE NEED TO KNOW

## Confidentiality

All of the children's progress and behavioral records will be kept in a folder and reviewed periodically by authorized Head Start staff. The children's folders will be placed in locked file cabinet to ensure confidentiality. Only authorized personnel such as the director, teachers, teacher assistants, program managers, administrative assistant, and the child's parents/guardians will have access to the child's folder.



## Behavior Management

Head Start staff use appropriate behavior management so that children learn self-regulation skills. Compliance is a priority in the classroom and teachers encourage compliance in three specific ways:

- Very specific praise (i.e., "That's terrific counting").
- A broken record (repeating a command 3 times using the same words in a neutral tone of voice).
- Simple choices using 2 choices, when-then, if-then, either-or (i.e., "you have two choices, you can either sit down in the swing or you can get off the swing").

Teachers are encouraged to use visual signs for frequently used instructions and arrange classroom seating to set disruptive children up for success (i.e., placing distractible children near the teacher).



## Behavior Management Continued...

Other behavior management techniques which are used in the classroom are:

- Tactical ignoring of inappropriate behavior which is not dangerous or destructive, while positive attention is given for appropriate behavior.
- Redirecting questions to direct a child back to a specific task by asking a casual question.
- Brief Rule Restatement. Rules are posted and visible in the classroom. A brief restatement involves reminding a child of the rule. (i.e., a child is using a loud voice in the classroom. The teacher restates the rule "quiet voices are used inside.")
- A child will not be expelled or unenrolled because of behavior.

## Late Child Pick-Up

If parent/guardians are going to be late to pick up their child, the parents/guardians must **notify the center by telephone prior to 3:00 p.m.** A child is considered at-risk when the child has not been picked-up within one-half hour after pickup time

## Open Door Policy

Parents/guardians have the right to request and receive information concerning their child. Parents/guardians not only have the right to visit the Head Start center, but are encouraged to do so in accordance with CDC Guidelines. Parents/guardians are encouraged to share their concerns or complaints with the classroom staff and/or Head Start center director.



# THE NEED TO KNOW

## Parent's Rights

- Parents may visit the center at any time. We have an "Open Door" Policy.
- Parents will be able to give input on their child's education.
- Parents may check their child's file.
- Parents may know how the child is doing on a regular basis upon request.
- Parents must give permission before services can be given.
- Parents have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- Parents may request that certain food be included on the menus when the annual review is done.
- Parents may remove their children for appointments.
- Parents may volunteer in the classroom.
- Parents may participate on committees.
- Parents may have lunch at the center when they participate in activities there.
- Parents will receive a copy of the Parent Handbook.
- Parents may request mental health services.
- Parents may request information needed for transition into elementary school.
- Parents may request help in meeting any family goals.
- Parents may choose not to participate without any fear of loss of other rights.
- Parents may help develop adult programs which will improve life for self and family.





# THE NEED TO KNOW



## Parent/Teacher Conference and Home Visit

The Head Start teacher will have **two (2) parent/teacher conferences** and **two (2) home visits** during the school year. During this time the parents/guardians and teacher will discuss the child's progress and make plans to work together on any areas of concern for the parent/guardians and the teacher.



## Releasing Child from Head Start Center

Parents have indicated on the enrollment data form names of persons who may pick up their child from the Head Start Center. The center **will not release the child to any other person** without written or verbal permission from the parent.



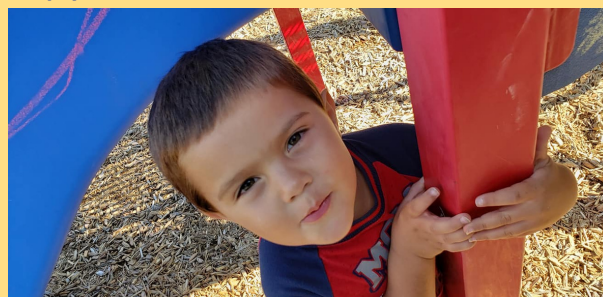


# HEALTHY AND HAPPY

## Child Abuse/Neglect

State Law #335 requires that anyone suspecting child abuse and/or neglect to report it. All Head Start staff and parents will be given a copy of the state law to review to clearly define to parents the following:

- The State Law on Child Abuse and Neglect
- Reporting Procedures
- Follow-up Procedures



## Communicable Disease Policy

The following communicable diseases will require exclusion from the Head Start center. Children may return to Head Start by bringing a release signed by a physician.



- |                     |                                   |
|---------------------|-----------------------------------|
| • COVID-19          | • Fever (100.4 or more)           |
| • Chicken Pox       | • Diarrhea (uncontrolled)         |
| • Ringworms         | • Vomiting                        |
| • Fifth Disease     | • Rash                            |
| • Measles & Rubella | • Lice                            |
| • Mumps             | • Sore Throat (uncontrolled)      |
| • Pinworms          | • Eye Discharge (Pink Eye)        |
| • Scabies           | • Flu                             |
| • Tuberculosis (TB) | • Severe Coughing                 |
| • Shingles          | • Hepatitis (yellowish skin/eyes) |



# HEALTHY AND HAPPY



## Health

The Federal Head Start Performance Standards require that each child have an up to date physical exam and a dental exam each year they are in Head Start. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide a current physical and dental or to make an appointment within the **first 45 days of enrollment**. If you need help in applying for Sooner Care or in locating a Physician or a Dentist please contact your Area Supervisor.



## Nutrition

INCA complies with requirements set forth by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Child/Adult Care Food Program (USDA/CACFP), Oklahoma State Licensing, National Performance Standards, and Agency policies and procedures for meal guidelines.





# HEALTHY AND HAPPY

## Regulations Include:

- Staff and families work together to identify each child's nutritional needs.
- Nutrition assessment questionnaire is filled out on each child enrolled.
- Children, staff and volunteers eat together, sharing the same menu to the fullest extent possible. Special medical/dietary needs can be supported, with a statement from a recognized medical authority. The restriction and substitution shall be listed.
- Breakfast, lunch, and supplement will be served. Please check with your child's teacher for scheduled times.
- Staff pre-plate to ensure components and serving sizes.
- Staff and volunteers encourage, but never force or reward a child with food.
- Staff promotes effective dental hygiene.
- Nutritional services contribute to the development and socialization of enrolled children.
- Family style meals are implemented.
- Staff/volunteers promote school readiness, by increasing self-help skills.
- Agency must post compliance with all applicable Federal,
- State, Tribal, and local food safety and sanitation laws.
- Staff utilize resources/activities to enhance both children and families nutritional experiences.
- Caregivers and children thoroughly wash their hands before and after meals.
- All medications are inaccessible to children and stored in a manner which prevents contamination of food.
- First aid kits are taken on field trips.





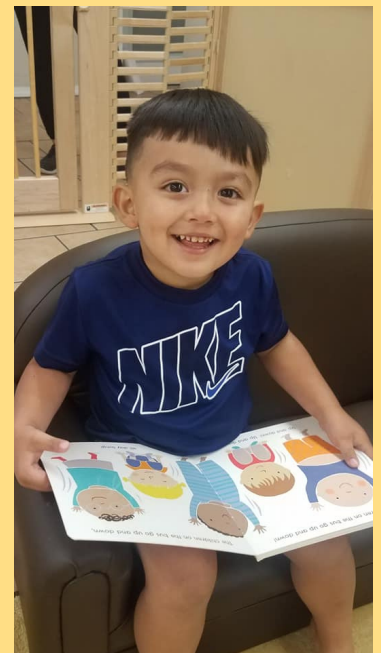
## Storing and Administering Medicine

Administration of medication will only be given with a doctor's prescription, and a parent/guardian completed authorization form. Medication must be in the original container and must be a current prescription.

### Information included on the prescription must specify:

- Child's name
- Name of medication
- Date prescription was filled
- Dosage/time to be given
- Physician's name Medication will be stored as directed (i.e., locked medicine cabinet). Each center will have a locked medicine cabinet designated by staff for the proper storage of medication.

Parent must sign an authorization form before medication can be given. A designated staff person will administer medication. A medication chart will be maintained by the designated staff member. This chart will include date, time, child's reactions to medication, and initials of staff administering medication and a witness.







# HEALTHY AND HAPPY

## Tobacco Free Environment

INCA Community Services recognizes its responsibility to promote the health, welfare, and safety of employees, program participants, volunteers, and visitors, and to serve as a positive example to the people we serve and our community.

**Policy:** Due to the acknowledged hazards arising from the use of tobacco products: it is the policy of INCA Community Services to provide a tobacco-free environment for all employees, program participants and visitors. For the purposes of this policy, "tobacco" is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, clove cigarette, e-cigarettes, orbs, sticks and any other smoking product spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip chew, snuff, in any form. The use of any tobacco product shall be prohibited on any and all properties owned, used or contracted for use by INCA Community Services, including but not limited to all buildings, land and vehicles owned. This includes parking lots. In recognition of the importance of modeling health behaviors, tobacco use is prohibited in any area (on-site or off-site: including Head Start field trips) that is within sight of Head Start participants. The policy remains in force at all times, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There will be no tobacco use at any off property worksite-sponsored meetings or events.

**Procedure:** Employees, program participants, volunteers, visitors and vendors will be informed of this policy through signs posted in facilities and agency owned vehicles.





## Parent Committee Meeting

Parent committee meetings are held a **minimum of four (4) times** per year to help the Head Start staff develop and operate components of the Head Start Program, including daily activities and planning special occasions/events, holiday planning, etc. Parent committees are composed of Head Start parents/guardians and will focus on providing opportunities for engagement in learning activities involving Education, Health Services, Nutrition, & Transition activities.

## Volunteer

You can become a Head Start volunteer and learn more about child development. This experience may later qualify you for training which can help you find employment in the child care field.

### Volunteer Job Summary

Classroom volunteers, as permitted by current CDC guidelines, will support the classroom staff in providing a stimulating and complete learning environment and supervision for the preschool-aged children served. The teaching staff is well trained, but are always in need of additional "eyes and ears." Assisting in the classroom decreases staff-child ratios and increases individual education.

### Benefits

- Friendships are gained with children, parents and staff.
- A reference will be provided when and if seeking employment.
- Training is provided and childcare skills are learned.



# GET INVOLVED

## Policy Council

The purpose of the Policy Council shall be to promote the objectives of Head Start, share information with parents at center committee meetings, and along with Board and Staff participate in program planning and decision making. The INCA Head Start Policy Council will have a regular meeting at a **minimum of five (5) times a year** at the Head Start Training Center in Tishomingo, unless otherwise indicated.

### Membership:

INCA Head Start Policy shall consist of representatives of current Head Start parents and community representatives. Total voting membership of Sixteen (16)—twelve (12) parents and four (4) community representatives.

Parent Representation: Three (3) representatives will be elected in each county for a total of twelve (12). Three (3) alternates will be elected in each county. Members and alternates are encouraged to attend the meetings on a regular basis.

Community Representatives: up to four (4). The elected parent members must approve the community representative. A quorum shall consist of seven (7) voting members. At least 51% of members present must be parent members. A quorum has to be present in order to conduct business. No family members as defined by INCA Personnel Policies of INCA staff members shall serve on the Policy Council in a voting capacity. An INCA Board Member will be appointed to serve as liaison between Board and Policy Council and a Policy Council member will be appointed to serve as liaison between Policy Council and Board.



# CONTACT US



## AREA 1

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### **Sherrie Adams**

### **Teresa Workman**

### **Sandy Bonham**

Executive Director

Head Start/Early Head Start Director

Education Manager/Mental Health/CACFP

Health/ Disabilities Manager Nutrition/Purchasing

Teacher/Practice Based Coach

Transportation/Facilities Manager

Compliance Officer

Family Engagement Coordinator/Area Supervisor

ERSEA Manager/Area Supervisor

Family Engagement Coordinator/Area Supervisor

## KEY STAFF

# INCA HEAD START'S MISSION

INCA Head Start/Early Head Start is dedicated to providing excellence in education by investing in the future of families in rural communities, thus empowering them with skills and knowledge to meet challenges throughout life.



Visit us Online:



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[incacaa.org/headstart](http://incacaa.org/headstart)

