

# WELCOME TO HEAD START

The Head Start program is operated in Goodhue, Rice, and Wabasha counties by Three Rivers Community Action, Inc. Three Rivers is a private, non-profit corporation which works with community partners to address basic human needs of people in our service area, thereby improving the quality of life of the individual, family and community.

Head Start was developed in 1965 to provide a stimulating learning environment in a group setting for children from income eligible homes. Head Start was designed to provide socialization and learning experiences to help prepare children for entrance into school.

The United States Government funds the program through the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) which sets up guidelines and rules by which all Head Start programs operate. Since 1988, Minnesota has funded additional children in Head Start through the Department of Children, Families and Learning.

Head Start is a comprehensive program which provides children with education, health, nutrition, mental health, and social services; and emphasizes parent involvement in all aspects of the program.

Parents have a key role in Head Start. They participate by planning programs, participating in parent education programs, volunteering in their child's classroom activities and on home visits. They are the link between children, staff, and neighborhood. The greater the parent involvement is, the greater the benefits are to Head Start children.

For the family of a Head Start child, the program offers the opportunity to connect with, and deal with issues such as health and dental coverage, and transportation. Our family support includes resource information and referral as well as assistance in meeting the families' goals.

This program is operated in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy which does not permit discrimination because of race, color, sex, age, handicap, or national origin. Any person who believes that he or she had been discriminated against in any USDA related activity should write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

## Administrative Staff

Kim Scanlan	Head Start Director
Stephanie Rezac	Head Start Coordinator
Karina Ceja	Head Start Coordinator
Tammy Vraspir	Head Start Coordinator
Melanie Schmidt	Head Start Coordinator
Diane Hinrichs	Program Assistant – Health Services
Amy Repinski	Transportation Director

## THREE RIVERS COMMUNITY ACTION OFFICES

Zumbrota Office:	Administrative Office 1414 North Star Drive Zumbrota, MN 55992 (507)-732-7391 <b>(800)-277-8418</b>
Faribault Office:	Town Square Family Resource Center 201 Lyndale Avenue Faribault, MN 55021 (507)-732-7391 <b>(800)-277-8418 ext.</b>
Wabasha Office:	611 Broadway Avenue Wabasha, MN 55981 (507)-732-7391 <b>(800)-277-8418 ext. 215</b>
Northfield Site:	Northfield Community Resource Center 1651 Jefferson Parkway Northfield, MN 55057 <b>(507)-664-3792</b>
Red Wing Site:	Colvill Family Center 269 East 5 <sup>th</sup> Street Red Wing, MN 55066 <b>(651)-385-8000</b>

## PHILOSOPHY

Head Start has a very specific educational philosophy. Our priority is to help children develop a positive self-image in the formative years. We consider all factors that affect the total child's development: social, emotional, intellectual and physical. Special emphasis is placed on the development of a positive self-image because if children feel good about who they are, it is easier for them to be happy, successful people. Priority is given to socialization, which helps children learn to relate well with each other and with adults. When a child learns the skills of positive socialization, he/she acquires a very useful tool for living. An important part of teaching positive self-image and socialization is the development of a child's skills in self-help, cognitive, social, emotional, language and large and small muscle areas.

## HEAD START SERVICES

**Administration:** The Three Rivers Board of Directors, Executive Director, Head Start Policy Council and the Head Start Director all have special roles in carrying out the planning, general administration, personnel administration, grant application process and the evaluation of the program.

**Social Services:** Head Start provides families with the necessary information to successfully maintain family life. The Family Partnership Agreement assists the family in its own efforts to improve the condition and quality of life. This includes family assessments, step-by-step action plans, and referrals to local social service agencies and other resources.

**Parent Involvement:** Head Start provides a program that recognizes parents as the primary educators of their children through positive parent activities and recognizing parent's rights. The program includes Policy Council, parent conferences, parent center committee meetings, parent-child activity days, home visits, and parent training.

**Education:** Head Start provides children with a learning environment and experiences which will help them develop socially, intellectually, physically and emotionally. Parents and teachers work together to develop an individualized curriculum for the child. Much learning takes place during center socialization class days, though learning activities are also provided for parents and children to pursue in their home.

**Health:** Head Start partners with parents, health professionals and community organization to ensure children's health needs (such as medical, dental, mental health and nutrition) are met. The program provides families with the necessary skills to link them to an ongoing health care system. Head Start also provides nutrition education, breakfast/snack, lunches, vision and hearing screenings, and health education. **IMMUNIZATION RECORDS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE CHILDREN CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE CLASSROOM.** Families will be expected to bring their child's immunizations up to date during the program year. Our goal is to have all children healthy and ready to learn..

**Special Needs:** Head Start provides a positive inclusion environment. Head Start performance standard 1305.6(c) requires at least 10% of enrollment opportunities be made available to children with identified special needs. Our program has funds to identify, assess, screen, serve, and refer all enrolled children. Many children in Head Start are also enrolled with other agencies and programs to best meet their individual needs.

### **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP):**

This program is administered by the USDA and the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning. It gives financial assistance to child care centers so that nutritious meals can be served. Three Rivers Head Start serves a breakfast or a snack, and contracts lunches from local school districts, hospitals and/or congregate dining sites. The goal of the program is to meet the nutritional needs of young children and increase the opportunity for children to eat a variety of nutritious foods. The meals and snacks served meet standards established by the USDA for the CACFP.



## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

**The Head Start staff are mandated reporters and are required to report any cases of suspected child abuse or neglect to the local child protection office at Social Services and to the Head Start Coordinator.**

## EDUCATION

**Curriculum:** Teaching Strategies Gold and Creative Curriculum is used to help teachers and parents work together to plan activities that focus on all areas of child development. This includes self-help skills, social and emotional development, creative development, motor activities, as well as cognitive and language skills.

**Outcomes:** In January of 2000, the Administration for Children and Families of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services sent out an information memorandum to Head Start grantees stating, "every Head Start program should have a well-balanced child assessment system aligned with their curriculum, that gathers data on children's progress in each of the eight domains of learning and development." Those domains include: language development, literacy, mathematics, science, creative arts, approaches to learning, social and emotional development, and physical health and development. Programs must gather and analyze data on thirteen specific domain elements or indicators in various language, literacy and numeracy skills. The purposes of this mandate were to be able to use the findings from the outcomes to provide a means of accountability, to use it as a tool for further program planning and improvement, and to use it to plan curriculum and document child progress in a systematic and objective manner.

When entering the Head Start program, children are given a developmental screening tool, a social-emotional screening tool, as well as vision and hearing tests. Furthermore, classroom teachers or site coordinators conduct an enrollment appointment prior to the child beginning to attend class. Information from all of these events gives teachers the groundwork needed to begin setting up their classroom to fit the needs of the children served.

Observation of children and data collection is continuous throughout the year to produce the best assessment results. Information gathered is reported three times per year. Teachers conduct conferences with parents and information on child progress in achieving outcomes may be shared at this time. Teachers use the information from the reports to make changes in classrooms and curriculum as needed. Data acquired from the observations are inputted into the Teaching Strategies Gold Assessment program and information is analyzed in detail through the reports provided by the TS Gold system. The information is considered when decisions are made regarding staff training, curriculum and allocation of funds. Strengths and weaknesses are identified and goals set for the following year.

**Early Literacy:** Our Head Start program utilizes "best practices" from Words Work and strategies and SEEDS of Emergent Literacy approaches to promoting school readiness. Our teachers have received training in best practices of early childhood literacy. The classroom environment focuses on phonological awareness, written expression, language development, print rich environments, letter knowledge and reading aloud.

**School Readiness:** Head Start works with parents and local schools to prepare children for kindergarten. We have school readiness goals that are created and work with developmental outcomes. Head Start works with parents to help them understand their role in helping their child learn skills and concepts at home. This is done by meeting on a regular basis with families. We provide them with information and tools on what and how to work with their child.

The skills that we work on include increased vocabulary and early math skills. We also implement a variety of problem solving and social skills as well as classroom activities. Some of these activities include book reading, dramatic play, number games, music, science and more. Children have fun while they learn because children's play is their work.

**PROGRAM OPTIONS** The Head Start program year begins in September and ends in May. We have center-based classrooms in Faribault, Northfield, Red Wing, Wabasha, and Zumbrota.

Head Start is designed for children between the ages of 3 to 5, and licensed by the Department of Human Services Division of Licensing. Children in the center base program attend a Head Start center for 3 1/2 hours per day, 4 days per week. The center offers a variety of learning experiences and individual activities especially designed to promote intellectual, social, emotional, physical, and self-help skills. In some classrooms the teacher serves as the family advocate and some will be assigned a family advocate who is not the children's classroom teacher. The family advocate in partnership with parents, assists them in identifying their strengths, needs, supports and establishing family goals. The family advocate at monthly home visits provides support to families by assisting them in finding the resources they need. Teachers meet with families at school conferences and at home visits to review the child's progress and participation. Parents are encouraged to visit the centers anytime. Parents may review the Head Start program plan by setting up an appointment with the Head Start teacher.

## SELECTION

Criteria for selection is reviewed, revised and approved by Policy Council annually. The criteria are listed in the Policy and Procedure Manual. The selection process is complex. It is a rating system that assigns points based on the following criteria:

### Selection Criteria

Income of the family	Age of the child
Special Needs of the child	Family application history
Categorically eligible	
Other risk factors	

### Considerations

- Head Start must provide priority for enrollment to families who meet the definition of homeless under the McKinney-Vento act.
- Foster children and children whose family income includes certain forms of public assistance are automatically income eligible for the Head Start program, though are not automatically selected for the program.
- 10% of the enrollment opportunities must be made available to children with documented special needs.
- Head Start performance standards require us to give priority to income-eligible families who meet the federal income guidelines.
- 10% of the program enrollment may be over-income families
- Applications with a written referral from a medical professional, Social Services, Public Health or other collaborating partner will be given special consideration for the next available slot.
- Waiting lists will be maintained according to enrollment priority. Any openings in classes during the program year will be filled from the waiting lists.
- Children who were over-income during the program year will have their income re-verified. If two applications with equal weight on the priority list are received, the application that was received first will get the first opening.

## CLASSROOM SELECTION

Classroom selection will take into consideration collaboration with an ECSE class as needed, and transportation feasibility.

## ATTENDANCE AND TERMINATION POLICY

Federal guidelines require that children attend Head Start preschool center days at least 85% of the time. The following **MINIMUM** number of home visits, parent conferences, and center socialization days are required by the federal Head Start grant: **2 educational home visits, 2 parent/teacher conferences and 128 center socialization days.**

**Unexcused absence:** \* No phone call or explanation

### Excused absence:

- \* Communicable disease
- \* Hospitalization
- \* Death in family
- \* Serious illness or injury
- \* Health ailments (i.e. asthma)
- \* Emergency medical treatment
- \* Emergency family situation

## CENTER ATTENDANCE POLICY

Regular attendance is needed for children and families to gain the full benefits of being in the Head Start program. Your child is expected to maintain at least an 85% attendance record.

The teacher must be notified by telephone or through a written note when your child is absent. Unexcused absences will be followed up with a call from the teacher. The teacher/ family advocate and parent/guardian will work together to overcome obstacles that are preventing the child from attending Head Start. If the child's absence continues, a letter will be sent explaining the attendance policy giving the options of continuing involvement in the program.

Head Start staff will schedule a home visit or other contact if your child has **four (4) consecutive unexcused absences or three (3) non-consecutive unexcused absences in a 30 day period.** This visit/contact will emphasize the benefits of regular attendance and a plan will be developed and implemented to improve the child's attendance.

**If chronic absenteeism persists, your child may lose their space and their slot may be given to another child.** Your child would be placed back on the waiting list. Frequent absences due to illness will be reviewed by Head Start staff.

## HOME VISIT ATTENDANCE POLICY

A parent or guardian will notify the teacher/office of an inability to keep a home visit appointment. At the first missed home visit, the teacher will leave a note at the door informing the family of the missed visit and will follow up with a phone call. **Missed home visits must be made up within 2 weeks.** All home visits must be completed by the last week of April.

Head Start staff will contact families who have missed two scheduled home visits or fail to comply with program requirements. After the second unexcused missed home visit, the teacher will leave a note informing the family that this is the second unexcused missed home visit, and that a letter will be sent explaining the parent participation agreement and to develop a plan to complete the home visit.

## CHILDREN'S FILES/CONFIDENTIALITY

The children's files will be maintained at the main Head Start office in Zumbrota with Head Start teachers keeping copies of some information in their classroom/office. **ALL FILES ARE CONSIDERED PRIVATE.** Parents will have the right to see their child's file upon written request. The Tennessee Warning you have signed lists the information that can be shared with other professionals. If information must be shared with individuals not listed in the Tennessee Warning, parents will be asked to sign a "Release of Information" form which will inform parents of the content of the information being shared, and to whom the information is going. All requests for information will go through the main Head Start Office in Zumbrota.

All participants should understand that teachers or any other employee of Three Rivers will not discuss another participant in the program. Please respect their inability to discuss others with you. Due to data privacy and requirements for parental consent, **no photograph or video recording will be allowed** to be taken by camera, cell phone or any recording device, during Head Start activities, except by Head Start employees. It is also important to remember as a volunteer, you agree not to discuss the participants or occurrences that take place at the program with others. Any information in regards to the participants within Head Start is **CONFIDENTIAL.**

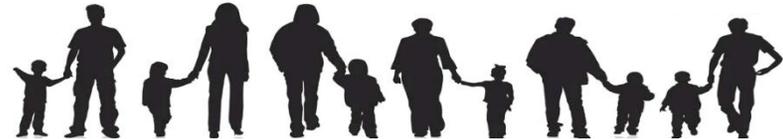
## RESEARCH AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

The staff shall get signed parental permission before each occasion of research or public relations activity involving children.

## SOCIAL SERVICES

Head Start can help your family with needs you may have. If a family's needs exceed our program's capabilities, the family is referred to other agencies or programs that are able to assist them. Our responsibility is to assist the family in finding the agency or program which can best meet their particular needs. Determining how to best meet a family's needs through social service agencies is an ongoing process with each family.

The advocacy role is a vital function of each Head Start staff. Each family's circumstances will be handled individually. Head Start staff will advocate for the family as they are referred to other programs and services.



## CHANGE OF NAME, ADDRESS AND/OR PHONE NUMBER

When a name, address or telephone number is changed, the parent must notify the Head Start Teacher AND the Bus Driver. The Teacher will notify the main Head Start office in Zumbrota.

*Transportation Reminder: Notice of a new pick-up or drop-off location (i.e. moving or new day care) must be added to your child's transportation information form at least ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE.*

## HEALTH

**Physical Assessment:** According to Head Start regulations, children must the following:

1. Growth Assessment
2. Vision Screening
3. Hearing Screening
4. Hemoglobin or Hematocrit
5. Blood Pressure
6. Developmental Screening
7. Speech and Language Screen
8. Lead Level (all first year, and second year at risk children)

**Children must have a record of this physical exam on file within 30 days of the first day of class or they will not be able to attend class until it is completed.**

**Immunizations:** Minnesota Statute 1978 123.70 requires that all children entering a Minnesota school or preschool program be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, measles, mumps and rubella. These requirements can be waived only if a properly signed and notarized medical or conscientious exemption is filed with Head Start and the Department of Health. **To meet Head Start requirements, children must have the following number of immunizations:**

	3-4 years of age	4-6 years of age
Polio	3	4
DTaP	4	5
MMR	1	2
Hepatitis B	3 shot series	--
HIB	3-4	3-4

(If the HIB is administered after age 15 months, only one dose is required)

Varicella: 1 dose prior to entering childcare or school

**A child's immunization records must be on file before a child can come to class.** Parents must agree to bring children up-to-date with immunizations if they are behind schedule.

***Varicella:***

*Minnesota State law now requires children aged 18 months to 5 years to obtain the varicella (chicken pox) vaccine before entering childcare or school. If the child has already had varicella disease (chicken pox), then you will need to document the month and year the child had varicella disease on the immunization form.*

**Dental Screening:** According to Head Start regulations, children must have an annual dental examination and follow-up care. **The initial dental examination and treatment must be completed within 45 days of the first day of class.**

**Health Education for Parents:** Head Start provides educational information and referral for parents in the area of preventative health. Topics include toothbrushing, nutrition, immunizations, child growth and development, obesity and safety.

**Health Education for Children:** Curriculum in the classroom and home helps the child to develop knowledge of his/her own health and self-care. Tooth brushing, hand washing, proper nutrition and safety are practiced daily.

**Nutrition:** During the center/socialization time the following will be served: a breakfast or snack and lunch meal which meet the USDA guidelines. Food is provided by either the local school, hospital or congregate dining center. Full menus are posted in the classroom.

### **Civil Rights Statement:**

“In accordance with Federal law and U.S Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (Voice) or (202)720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

## MENTAL HEALTH

One goal of mental health for Three Rivers Head Start is to provide children, families, and staff with a supportive environment in which to grow, learn, interact, and explore. The main focus is on the development of positive self-esteem and the prevention of mental health problems.

When entering the Head Start program, families participate in the ASQ:SE (Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social and Emotional) – a social and emotional screening tool for their child. Furthermore, a licensed psychologist(s) works with the program on a consultant basis and may observe children in the classroom setting, provide parent and staff training, meet with parents to discuss areas of concern or answer questions, assist families in accessing mental health resources, and will work with staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of mental health issues and child development.

Head Start provides opportunities for parents and children to increase their abilities and self-esteem by learning new skills in problem solving and conflict resolution, experiencing leadership roles, building positive relationships, and learning techniques for stress management.

## POLICIES FOR SICK CHILDREN

An ill child will be removed to a private area within the classroom with a cot, pillow, and blanket. This area will be within hearing and sight range of staff. The parent will be notified immediately. The center will utilize the local clinic or hospital emergency room for emergencies. The parent must notify the center within 24 hours when a child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease. Parents will be notified of infectious communicable diseases the same day the teacher is notified.

***CHILDREN WHO HAVE HAD AN ELEVATED TEMPERATURE OF 100 DEGREES OR HIGHER, OR HAVE RECEIVED FEVER REDUCTION MEDICATION WITHIN 24 HOURS OF CLASS TIME WILL NOT BE ALLOWED AT THE CENTER.***

Head Start staff have a current First Aid and Infant/Child CPR certification. All centers and transportation vehicles have emergency first aid supplies on hand.

**Medications:** Head Start will not administer medication to children in the center. Only in exceptional cases where failure to take prescribed medication could jeopardize the child's health will giving medication be allowed. In order for medication to be given under these circumstances, the following will be required:

All prescription medication must be in the original prescription bottle and a medication authorization/permission slip must be signed by the parent and the prescribing physician.

Medication needs to be brought to the center by the parent and **cannot** be transported by the child or the bus driver. The teacher and parent will count the medication and note quantity on a medication log.

**Accidents:** All accidents, excluding minor abrasions, will be reported to administrative personnel immediately. An accident report will be filled out by the classroom staff stating what happened, where, when, and the first aid measures taken.

**Parent Notification:** The parent/guardian will be notified of any medical procedure given for an accident or an illness when the child is attending a Head Start center socialization day.

### **WHEN IS MY CHILD TOO SICK TO COME TO SCHOOL?**

**Please keep your child at home if she or he:**

- has a temperature of 100 degrees F orally, or if fever reducing medication has been given within 24 hours of class time
- exhibits flu symptoms such as diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours of the class time
- has a severe cold and/or cough
- has inflammation and/or drainage from the eyes (conjunctivitis "pink eye")
- has strep throat (or other bacterial infection such as impetigo) and has not had at least 24 hours of medication for the infection
- has a rash that you cannot identify or has not been diagnosed by a doctor
- has head lice which has not been treated
- has a contagious disease such as chicken pox, measles, mumps, etc.

Please notify your teacher that the child will be absent from class and the reason for the absence. If you have any doubt about whether or not to send the child to school, please keep them home.

## BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

The Head Start program will create an atmosphere that encourages and develops self-esteem within the children. When a problem arises with a child or group of children, a staff member will:

- A. Provide each child with a positive model of acceptance.
- B. Tailor discipline procedures to the child's developmental level.
- C. Redirect children.
- D. Teach children acceptable alternatives.
- E. Protect the safety of children and staff.
- F. Provide immediate and directly related consequences.

Head Start believes in a positive approach to discipline, therefore all staff and volunteers are expected to comply with the following practices:

No child will be handled roughly.

No child shall be hit.

No child shall be humiliated, shamed or labeled.

No child shall be punished for lapses in toilet training.

No language used shall be threatening or frightening to a child.

Withholding of meals, light, warmth, clothing, and medical care shall not be used as a form of punishment.

Parents are not to discipline or verbally abuse their children in the Head Start Center or on the Head Start buses.

Parents and staff can work together to develop a behavior plan to address persistent unacceptable behavior.



## PARENT INVOLVEMENT

**Parent Center Committee:** A parent center committee is comprised of parents of enrolled Head Start children. The role of the parent center committee is to further parent involvement and interest in all parts of the program. Activities include: volunteering in the children's educational program, sharing ideas for socialization days, planning field trips, and representing their group on the Policy Council.

**Policy Council:** The Policy Council is actively involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of the Head Start Program. Parent center committees choose or elect representatives and alternates to the Policy Council; one (1) representative and one (1) alternate per parent center committee. Representatives keep the information flowing back and forth between parent center committees and the Policy Council represents the parent center committee in policy-making decisions.

**Volunteering / Inkind:** Parents make the **BIG DIFFERENCE** in the Head Start experience. **Parent Involvement can be separated into two categories: There are activities that 1) primarily benefit the parent and their child: or 2) provide a good or service to benefit the program.** A parent involvement activity that primarily benefits the parent and child is not considered an allowable cost for inkind match. An activity that provides a good or service to benefit the program is considered an allowable cost. Examples of parent involvement activities that provide a good or service to benefit the program include participation in the health services advisory committee, or other committee; participating in outreach efforts for recruitment, participating in community partnerships with other parents or community members; supporting a lending library, health fair or other program activity; providing assistance in a classroom or on a fieldtrip; or assisting with interviewing potential new staff members.

Head Start requires that 25% of all federal monies be matched in the form of parent time and community donations of time and materials (INKIND). Any parent or community member that is volunteering in the classrooms on a regular basis, two or more times per week or on an ongoing basis, must complete a BCA check, as well as a Mantoux (tuberculosis test) and have it on file if they are to be with the children or a group of children .

If you choose to be a regular volunteer, additional orientation and training will be provided. A volunteer's time and talent is very valuable to Head Start!

## TRANSPORTATION

**Route Schedule:** The route will begin promptly each day at the same time for the individual sites. The schedule will become quite regular after the first two weeks. **Please allow approximately 15 minutes leeway for both pick up and drop off.**

**Pick-Up:** Your child will be picked up from home or the designated child care provider. The driver will wait no longer than one (1) minute. Please have your child ready, escort him/her to the bus, and help buckle your child in the car seat or seat belt.

**Drop-Off:** A parent or guardian must meet your child when he/she is brought home from school. The driver will not leave your child at home until an adult listed on your child's Transportation Information Form takes them off the bus. If there is no one to meet your child after school, your child will be returned to the center.

**\*\* Bus Drivers will not honk horns to let parents know that the bus has arrived to pick-up or drop-off their child. Parents must be watching/waiting for the bus. The driver will only wait one minute past the scheduled pick-up time before he drives off.**

**Riding the Bus:** While riding the bus, your child will be expected to observe the following rules:

1. All children will be required to wear seat belts while on the bus. Children less than eighty (80) pounds will be in a safety seat.
2. Candy, gum, beverages, and food are not allowed on the bus.
3. If your child brings a "share and tell" item to school, it must be secured in the child's backpack or it will be taken away.
4. Please keep your Transportation Information Form up to date. **A minimum of a 24 HOUR NOTICE is required for any changes in drop-off or pick-up location. Notice of a new pick-up or drop-off location (i.e. moving or new day care) **must be added to your child's Transportation Information Form at least ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE.****

If an emergency arises during the day and you will not be able to meet your child, you should have a friend, relative, or neighbor meet your child at the bus. **THESE PEOPLE MUST BE LISTED ON YOUR HEAD START TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION FORM.** Emergency contacts will

be allowed to pick the child up at the Head Start center, as the bus will only be able to drop off children at regular drop-off sites.

**No-Shows:** If the child "no-shows" two days in a row, the bus will not go back to the residence until the parent/guardian has called the Head Start teacher to confirm transportation is needed. After five total no-shows, the parent will have to meet with the teacher and Transportation Director before any type of transportation will resume.

**Training:** Children and parents must visit the bus driver and bus during the Pre-Service Open House to receive Safety Education ***BEFORE*** the child can begin to ride the bus. If the child starts during the middle of the school year, the child and parent must line up a time with the Transportation Director to receive Safety Education before the child will be allowed to start riding the bus. There are no exceptions. Safety Education Forms will need to be signed by the driver and parent. One copy will be placed in the child's main file in Zumbrota, a second will be on file in the Transportation Office, and the third copy will be provided to the parent/guardian.

**Weather:** If the community that Head Start serves cancels school because of inclement weather, Head Start centers will operate. Head Start closures will be made by the Transportation Director when inclement weather conditions arise. In the event that a site closes, parents or child care providers will be notified by phone and children will be taken home as soon as possible. Announcements may be made on the following radio stations: KDHL, KCUE, KWMB, KROC, and KRCH.

**Liability:** Children will be covered by liability insurance while participating in all aspects of the Head Start program.

**General Discipline of Head Start Students on buses:** Children are expected to follow general rules of conduct when riding their bus. This will be reviewed with children and parents prior to riding the bus. In the event a child is unable to follow the rules, the general plan of discipline is as follows:

First Offense ~ 1 day suspension

Second Similar Offense ~ 1 week suspension

Third Similar Offense ~ 2 week suspension

Fourth Similar Offense ~ to be determined by the Transportation Director

## UNAUTHORIZED PICK-UP

Children enrolled in Head Start **WILL NOT** be released when the following situations are present:

1. An individual wanting to pick up the child is not an individual authorized on the Head Start Transportation Information Form.
2. An individual who is approved to pick up the child but is incapacitated due to alcohol usage, drug usage, or other conditions that impair their judgment.

When the above situations occur, staff will attempt to reason with the person to have an alternate pick up the child. If this is unsuccessful, staff will call 911 and request police assistance. If this occurs, the teacher will immediately notify the Head Start Director and the parents/guardians involved.

*If an emergency arises during the day and you will not be able to meet your child at the bus, you should have a friend, relative, or neighbor meet your child at the bus.*

### **THESE PEOPLE MUST BE LISTED ON YOUR HEAD START**

**TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION FORM.** *Emergency contacts will be allowed to pick the child up at the Head Start center, as the bus will only be able to drop off children at regular drop-off sites. Changes in pick-up, drop-off or contact numbers already listed on the transportation Information Form need to be made by the parent and communicated to transportation.*



## CLEAN AIR POLICY

Head Start must prohibit smoking at all times in all space utilized by the program (Head Start Performance Standard 1304.2(3)). This includes classrooms, staff offices, kitchens, restrooms, parent and staff meeting rooms, hallways, outdoor play areas, and vehicles used for transporting children. This includes field trips, neighborhood walks, or other outdoor group activities when Head Start activities are taking place.

## OUTDOOR PLAY

Head Start believes that outside play is an extension of the indoor learning environment. Children who are well enough to come to school are expected to play outside. The children are better able to play safely outside if they are wearing tennis shoes (fall, spring) and/or boots (winter). NO sandals or flip flops please.

Children will be taken outdoor daily **unless**

- The outside temperature, factoring in the wind chill is below zero.
- The outside temperature by determination of the heat index, is above 90 degrees.
- It is raining or snowing and the precipitation will quickly go through the children's clothing.

“Do children really need fresh air and exercise to grow properly? “ These are answers that parents, providers and health professionals gave to the question.

- \* Our bodies need sunlight to produce vitamin D.
- \* Lack of exercise causes obesity.
- \* Air quality in our homes is more polluted than outside air according to the EPA.
- \* Lack of sun can cause depression in some people.
- \* Children need fresh air and the outside environment to help develop their immune system
- \* Have you noticed that when children begin to get cranky, just a short walk outdoors usually makes them happy?

## SIBLINGS IN THE CLASSROOM

No siblings will be allowed to attend or participate in typical class days or classroom activities.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children will be discouraged from bringing personal belongings, including money, to the center (except on Share n' Tell, VIK or Star of the Week days). Parents will be asked to cooperate, as precious items can get lost or broken. Check with the teacher before any item is sent with the child. If a child brings an item, it must be clearly marked with the child's name. Head Start is not responsible for lost or damaged toys. All toys will be shared. Any toy inappropriately used will be removed until the end of the day, and a request will be made not to bring the item again. **Parents are not allowed to send snacks or candy to the center. NO CHEWING GUM, NO GUNS OR VIOLENCE-ORIENTED TOYS WILL BE ALLOWED.**

## CLOTHING

- Please dress your child in washable, comfortable clothing.
  - Shoes must always be worn in the classroom. Due to safety reasons, please do not send your children in sandals, flip flops or slippers. When winter weather requires boots, children must also have a pair of shoes to wear in the classroom.
  - Children need to be dressed appropriately for the weather conditions, as we plan a number of outside activities all year round. Children are taken outdoors daily. Children will not be outside under the following circumstances: raining, snowing heavily, temperature or wind chill is below zero or the heat index (configured by combination of temperature and humidity) is higher than 90 degrees. In the winter months, boots, hats, mittens, snow pants and a warm coat are appropriate.
  - Each child must have one labeled change of clothing at the center at all times.
  - In the winter months, boots, hats, mittens, snow pants and a warm coat are appropriate.
  - All outdoor clothing should be labeled with the child's name.
- Each child must have one labeled change of clothing at the center at all times

## HOLIDAY POLICY

Head Start understands that holidays and religious activities are an integral part of family life. However, with the diversified population that we serve, we are unable to fairly observe these occasions during center time and socialization days. Head Start, for example, will not conduct Valentine exchanges, Halloween costume parties, gift exchanges, or serve birthday treats. Instead Head Start will celebrate the seasonal changes that take place during the year. Holiday activities may take place on home visits, if parent initiated.

## FIELD TRIPS

Parents will be notified of field trips in advance so they can make plans to participate. Permission slips will be necessary for all field trips. If a permission slip is not signed and returned, the child cannot participate in the field trip. Children unable to participate in the field trip will not be allowed to remain at the center due to teacher / student staffing ratios. Therefore, parents will need to pick the child up and make alternate care arrangements for the day.

## PETS

Pets will not be allowed in the classroom on a daily basis. Parents may be permitted to bring in a pet with the teacher's permission for a special event. The teacher will notify parents when an animal will be in center.

