Our mission is to coordinate and provide services for people with needs so that they can improve their quality of life.

Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start
710 East Main Street
West Plains, MO  65775
417-256-6147 – www.oaiwp.org

Head Start Program Year 2019-20
Approved by the Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start Policy Council May 7, 2019
Approved by the Ozark Action, Inc. Board of Directors July 23, 2019
OZARK ACTION, INC.
HEAD START PROGRAM
CONTACT INFORMATION

Head Start Center ________________________________________________________________
Preferred Phone #__________________________ Alternate Phone #______________________

INFORMATION FOR YOUR CHILD’S HEAD START CLASSROOM

Teacher ___________________________________________
Classroom Assistant(s) _________________________________________________________
Family Advocate ___________________________________________
Cook _________________________________________________
Center Manager ________________________________ Phone # ________________ or ___________
Your Center Manager can also be reached at the ________________________________ HS Center(s).

Classroom Hours _____________ to _______________ Center Hours _______________ to _____________
Bus Morning Pickup Time _________________ Bus Afternoon Drop Off Time _______________

Notes:

YOU MUST ALWAYS BE SURE WE HAVE YOUR MOST CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOU & YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSONS. THIS INCLUDES PHONE NUMBERS, ADDRESSES, AND WORK/SCHOOL SCHEDULES.

IF WE DON’T HAVE THE CURRENT INFORMATION, WE CANNOT CONTACT YOU IN CASE OF EMERGENCY!!!

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Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start is privileged and honored to be a part of your children’s early years, and we pledge to help your children get ready for kindergarten. But in the end, it comes down to this:

**Parents & Families shape their children’s lives – their sense of self, others, and the world – over the years and across the miles.**

<table>
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<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Fax</th>
<th>Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Alton Head Start</td>
<td>612 Andrews, Alton, MO 65606</td>
<td>417-778-7579</td>
<td>417-778-6054</td>
<td><a href="mailto:altonhs@oaiwp.org">altonhs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grovespring Head Start</td>
<td>9457 Highway 5, Grovespring, MO 65655</td>
<td>417-462-3333</td>
<td>417-462-9413</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ghs@oaiwp.org">ghs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. View Head Start</td>
<td>1402 East US Highway 60, Mt. View, MO 65548</td>
<td>417-934-6918</td>
<td>417-934-1593</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mtnviewhs@oaiwp.org">mtnviewhs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ava Head Start</td>
<td>Rt. 1 Box 500B, Ava, MO 65608</td>
<td>417-783-5217</td>
<td>417-683-5217</td>
<td><a href="mailto:avahs@oaiwp.org">avahs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Houston Head Start</td>
<td>1470 South Sam Houston Blvd, Houston, MO 65483</td>
<td>417-462-3333</td>
<td>417-264-2089</td>
<td><a href="mailto:houstn@oaiwp.org">houstn@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thayer Head Start</td>
<td>903 Walnut Street, Thayer, MO 65791</td>
<td>417-264-2089</td>
<td>417-264-2203</td>
<td><a href="mailto:thayerhs@oaiwp.org">thayerhs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bakersfield Head Start</td>
<td>357 State Highway O, Bakersfield, MO 65609</td>
<td>417-284-7333</td>
<td>417-284-7333</td>
<td><a href="mailto:OAIbakersfieldHS@oaiwp.org">OAIbakersfieldHS@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licking Head Start</td>
<td>123 Cedar Street, Licking, MO 65542</td>
<td>573-674-2961</td>
<td>573-674-2961</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lickinghs@oaiwp.org">lickinghs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Plains Head Start</td>
<td>2027 Clark Avenue, West Plains, MO 65775</td>
<td>417-256-8823</td>
<td>417-256-8823</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wphs@oaiwp.org">wphs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabool Head Start</td>
<td>807 Summit Street, Cabool, MO 65689</td>
<td>417-962-4086</td>
<td>417-962-4086</td>
<td><a href="mailto:caboolhs@oaiwp.org">caboolhs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mansfeld Head Start</td>
<td>604 West Commercial, Mansfield, MO 65704</td>
<td>417-924-8182</td>
<td>417-924-8182</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mansfild@oaiwp.org">mansfild@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willow Springs Head Start</td>
<td>409 West Main Street, Willow Springs, MO 65793</td>
<td>417-469-2893</td>
<td>417-469-2893</td>
<td><a href="mailto:wshs@oaiwp.org">wshs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainesville Head Start</td>
<td>South Highway 5, Gainesville, MO 65655</td>
<td>417-679-4340</td>
<td>417-679-2810</td>
<td><a href="mailto:gahs@oaiwp.org">gahs@oaiwp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mt. Grove Head Start</td>
<td>507 West 5th Street, Mt. Grove, MO 65711</td>
<td>417-926-5170</td>
<td>417-926-1472</td>
<td><a href="mailto:mtgrove@oaiwp.org">mtgrove@oaiwp.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ozark Action, Inc.</td>
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**Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start Management Office Staff:**
- Reta House, Head Start Director – rhouse@oaiwp.org
- Lana Stuart, Admin. Assistant/Transportation Coordinator – lstuart@oaiwp.org
- Claudia Ryan, Family Services Coordinator – cryan@oaiwp.org
- Karlene Carson, Staff Resources Coordinator – kcarson@oaiwp.org
- Angie Kinder, Special Services Coordinator – akinder@oaiwp.org
- Holly Tucker, Education Director – htucker@oaiwp.org
- Chasity Farris, Staff Support Specialist – cffarris@oaiwp.org
- Sherrie Gregory, Staff Support Specialist – sgregory@oaiwp.org
- Virginia Berry, Food Services Assistant – vberry@oaiwp.org

**Head Start Center Managers (Center Supervisors):**
- Michele Myers (Alton & Thayer Centers)
- Amber Smith (Cabool & Mt. Grove Centers)
- Betty Martin (Grovespring & Mansfield Centers)
- Susie Lay (Houston, Licking & Summersville Centers)
- Cathey Thompson (Mt. View & Willow Springs Centers)
- Rayetta Beach (West Plains Head Start Center)
- Wendy Vance, (Ava & Gainesville Centers)
- Holly Tucker (Bakersfield Center)
WHY IT MATTERS?

A National Commitment

*Head Start is the national commitment to give every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, an opportunity to succeed in school and in life. In the 50 years since its inception, Head Start has improved the lives of more than 32 million children and their families. Head Start alumni - or “Head Start babies,” as they often call themselves - are in all walks of the nation’s life.

*Educators, doctors, lawyers, military personnel, artists, engineers, religious and civic leaders, and scientists - from all across the country - remember Head Start as the place where, at an early age, they acquired a life-long love of learning.

*In addition to life and school preparedness, Head Start is also the nation’s laboratory for early learning innovation. Head Start offers a unique whole child/whole family program design coupled with a delivery system that includes local programs, national standards, monitoring, professional development, and family engagement. This has been the basis for many subsequent statewide and community initiatives.

32M+

Head Start has helped more than 32 million children and their families prepare for school and for life.

Source: National Head Start Association
Head Start programs promote school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families by supporting their development in a comprehensive way.

Over fifty years ago Head Start began as a program for preschoolers. Today 3- and 4-year-olds make up over 80 percent of the children served by Head Start programs each year. Early Head Start was created to serve pregnant women, infants, and toddlers.

Head Start programs support children’s growth and development in a positive learning environment through a variety of services, which include:

- **Early learning**: Children’s readiness for school and beyond is fostered through individualized learning experiences. Through relationships with adults, play, and planned and spontaneous instruction, children grow in many aspects of development. Children progress in social skills and emotional well-being, along with language and literacy learning, and concept development.

- **Health**: Each child’s perceptual, motor, and physical development is supported to permit them to fully explore and function in their environment. All children receive health and development screenings, nutritious meals, oral health and mental health support. Programs connect families with medical, dental, and mental health services to ensure that children are receiving the services they need.

- **Family well-being**: Parents and families are supported in achieving their own goals, such as housing stability, continued education, and financial security. Programs support and strengthen parent-child relationships and engage families around children’s learning and development.

**Children with Disabilities**

Young children vary in their skills, knowledge, backgrounds, and abilities. Effective teaching requires individualized teaching and chances to learn for all children to access, participate, and thrive in early learning settings. Individualizing for children who need more support helps ensure effective teaching for children with disabilities and other special needs across all the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework domains. Using children’s Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals is part of effective teaching, individualizing, and creating inclusive environments to support children’s positive outcomes. Source: ECKLC

Our agency believes in creating a “culture of care”, and therefore has established a Trauma Leadership Committee to help review policies and procedures in our agency.

The goal of this committee is to make sure we are maintaining a

**trauma informed approach**

in all that we do by demonstrating

**trauma informed values**

*(safety, choice, collaboration, trustworthiness and empowerment)*

in the relationships we have with children, families, staff, and the community.
Courteous and respectful behavior between and among all program participants is essential for OAI Head Start to achieve the program’s mission and to provide a safe and positive learning environment for the children, families, and staff.

Parents, guardians, volunteers, staff members, and anyone else involved with the program are expected to follow the Code of Conduct outlined below:

Standards of Conduct: All parents, guardians, volunteers, staff, and participants involved with the program will:

- Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from discriminating on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability or sexual identity.
- Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families and other associates.
- Leave no child “alone” or “unsupervised” while under their care.
- Volunteers are never left alone with a child or a group of children.
- Use positive methods of child guidance and not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, humiliation; not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.
- Conduct themselves personally and professionally in a manner that reflects positively upon the program’s reputation, the children, and families the program serves.
- Will not bring in outside food or beverages into the classroom, playground, or other areas where the children are present, and will follow the meal-time philosophy when eating with the children.
- Will not use cell phones in the classroom, playground, or other areas where the children are present.
- Not solicit or accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors or potential contractors if they are involved in the award and administration of contracts or other financial awards.
- Maintain courteous and respectful relationships with program associates, consultants, parents, guardians, volunteers, children, and other participants.
- Not use cell phones in the classroom, on the playground, on a field trip, or in any other situation when children are participating in Head Start classroom and/or learning activities.

OAI Head Start will not tolerate behavior by parents, guardians, volunteers, staff, other participants, or anyone else involved with the program that violates the Code of Conduct. Examples of violations include, but are not limited to the following:

- Threats to children, parents, guardians, volunteers, associates, consultants
- Physical or verbal punishment of a child
- Swearing or cursing
- Smoking, vaping, and use of oral tobacco products on Head Start premises
- Quarreling, verbal fighting, loud shouting, and displays of anger
- Bringing drugs, alcohol or weapons to program centers or events
- Physical violence; inappropriate or excessive displays of physical affection between adults
- Inappropriate dress (Example: low cut top, bare midriff, shorts or skirts shorter than three (3) inches above the knee, leggings/tights without a long top covering bottom, see-through tops without shirt underneath, open or low backs, spaghetti straps, tube tops, clothes with words or pictures inappropriate for young children)
- Any action that disrupts the Head Start program
Staff member violations are handled in accordance with agency policies. If a parent, guardian, or volunteer violates the Code of Conduct, OAI Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to:

- Restrict access to other children in the program, classrooms and activities
- Terminate the child’s enrollment
- Contact the Missouri Department of Social Services
- Contact the police
- Take civil or criminal action

Procedures:

(1) Any employee who witnesses a violation will speak directly with the person in private, when possible, and if safety is not an issue.
(2) When the safety of children or staff is threatened, an employee will call the police.
(3) Employees will report violations to the Center Manager (CM) immediately. In the absence of the CM, the OAIHS Management Office will be contacted.
(4) Program responses to the violation will be made by the Head Start Director.
(5) Employee violations of the policy will be handled in accordance with agency personnel policies.
OZARK ACTION, INC. HEAD START POLICIES

Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start - Management Office - 710 East Main Street - West Plains, MO 65775 (417) 256-6147

Ozark Action, Inc. (OAI) is a Community Action Agency that provides free services to children, families, and communities in Douglas, Howell, Oregon, Ozark, Texas and Wright Counties. Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start (OAIHS) serves 400 preschool children in our Head Start centers. There are 14 Head Start Centers in the six-county area. Maximum classroom enrollment is 20 children.

Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start does not exclude, deny benefits to, or otherwise discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, disability, age, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status in admission to, treatment of, participation in or receipt of the services and benefits under any of its programs, services and activities, or in employment or volunteer opportunities whether carried out by OAI directly or through a contractor or any other entity with which OAI arranges to carry out its programs, services and activities.

REGULATIONS AND LICENSING, – ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start Program must meet rules and regulations from the following government offices:

- Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers are state rules from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, and includes the MO Division of Fire Safety Inspection & the MO Child Care Sanitation Inspection.
- Meal and Nutrition Standards are set by the U.S. Department of Agriculture & the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- Ozark Action, Inc. policies and procedures come from OAI management and the OAI Board of Directors.

Our regulations may be reviewed at your local Head Start Center. You may ask for results of inspections and findings from Child Care Licensing. You may look at blank staff evaluation forms. We ask that any questions you have about OAIHS rules first be directed to your local center staff. It is possible that regulations or their interpretations change during the course of the year, and any such changes will supersede policies in this parent handbook.

ELIGIBILITY, APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT – HEAD START RECORDS

When you apply for your child to attend Head Start, their names are placed on our waiting list. OAIHS accepts children’s applications at any time of the year. Openings are filled using eligibility priority criteria including the age of the child, family income, special needs, parental status, and other needs such as high social service needs, referral from another agency, family health status, child’s health status, and family crisis. The criteria were reviewed with you when the center staff completed your child’s application.

Parents or guardians must provide documents that prove the family’s income and child’s birth date. Parents also provide social security numbers for all household members, emergency contact information, and information about the child’s health, including his or her immunization record. We will need an original or certified copy of your child’s official birth certificate within 60 days of the time he or she enrolls in the program.

Official birth records for children born in Missouri may be obtained at your local health department office. We will provide information on obtaining birth certificates from other states if needed. You will be working with local staff to complete your child’s file when he or she is accepted into the program. You will find a copy of the program’s confidentiality policy on page 42 of this handbook. Parents and legal guardians have the right to review their own child’s Head Start records at any time. Head Start records are confidential.

CHILD CUSTODY ISSUES

If your child is affected by a custody order that restricts either of his or her biological parents from being in contact with the child or from picking the child up at the center, we must have a copy of the legal documents (custody orders, divorce decree, restraining orders, etc.) for the child’s file and enforcement. If any other person is prohibited by law from being near your child, it is your responsibility to inform the OAIHS staff and provide legal documents for your child’s file.
**OZARK ACTION, INC. SEX OFFENDERS’ POLICY**

Through programs like Head Start, OAI provides schooling and focused educational programs to children throughout several counties in southern, Missouri. As an educational provider, OAI is committed to providing a safe and secure environment for learning. Sex offenders required to be listed on the Missouri Highway Patrol’s sex offender registry, or who have been found guilty of crimes for which the law currently requires offenders to be listed, regardless of when those crimes were committed, are not allowed on OAI property or at OAI activities, regardless of whether those activities are held on or off OAI property, unless access is required by law.

In accordance with Section 566.149, RSMo. and Missouri law, OAI also prohibits all persons who have been found guilty of violating the following provisions from being on or within 500 feet of any OAI building or activity, or on any vehicle used to transport children:

1. Any of the provisions in Chapter 566 of the Missouri Revised Statutes;
2. Incest, § 568.020, RSMo;
3. Endangering the welfare of a child in the first degree, § 568.045, RSMo;
4. Use of a child in a sexual performance, § 573.200, RSMo;
5. Promoting a sexual performance by a child, § 573.205, RSMo;
6. Sexual exploitation of a minor, § 573.023, RSMo;
7. Promoting child pornography in the first degree, § 573.025, RSMo;
8. Furnishing pornographic material to minors, § 573.040, RSMo;
9. Any offense committed in another state, a foreign country, or under tribal, federal or military jurisdiction that, if committed in this state, would be a violation listed above.

Despite the prohibitions in this section, the Center Manager or Designee may grant permission for a parent, guardian or custodian of a child to be on OAI property for the limited purpose of attending meetings with staff or in other situations where the child may benefit. Permission will be granted sparingly, if ever, and only in situations where the parent, guardian or custodian will be supervised at all times or will not be alone with a child. The Center Manager or Designee will inform staff members of the scope of the permission granted.

If a visitor prohibited from OAI property or events under this policy is on OAI property, staff will contact law enforcement and/or escort the person from OAI grounds and inform the person of the OAI policy prohibiting his or her presence. A visitor denied access to OAI property may communicate with the Center Manager or Designee in writing but will not be allowed back onto OAI property unless allowed by the Center Manager or Designee.

**WEAPONS**

Center-based programs should not have firearms or any other weapon on the premises at any time.

**PARENT ORIENTATION**

OAIHS Centers give each family the chance to learn about Head Start at orientation sessions scheduled before class begins or as soon as possible after classes begin. If you cannot attend the group orientation meeting, or if your child enrolls later in the school year, **you are entitled to a personal orientation.** Group orientations give children a chance to meet their teachers and look at the center, playground, and bus. Parent Orientations include a tour of the center, bus safety training, and information about the many opportunities all parents and guardians are given to be fully involved in Head Start. Our staff will also discuss program policies and will give you the chance to ask questions about your Head Start Program.

**CENTER SCHEDULES**

Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start works to make each center’s schedule best meets the needs of your local community. For example, your center may close when your public school closes for teacher training or holiday and spring breaks. When your public schools close because of weather conditions, the Head Start will be closed as well. Centers also close to allow our staff to attend required training and agency meetings. The local staff will provide you a class calendar and a daily schedule.

**OZARK ACTION, INC. HEAD START DISCIPLINE & BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION POLICIES**

OAI believes that ALL children should feel safe, respected, and cared for. Our classroom settings provide children with a consistent, developmentally appropriate, and trauma responsive environment to grow and learn to socialize with peers and adults. This atmosphere is conducive to a calm, non-disruptive learning environment. If conflicts do arise, it is our goal to respond in a way that assists children in making appropriate choices by offering progressive guidance techniques.

**The OAI Head Start Discipline Policy is outlined below:**

1. Corporal punishment will not be permitted. This includes spanking, shaking, jerking, hitting, grabbing, pinching, yanking, pulling, or pushing. Any physical discipline, punishment, or abuse by a Head Start employee is grounds for immediate dismissal.
2. Parents are not allowed to administer corporal punishment to their own child while on Head Start property.
3. Head Start staff are not permitted to make any verbalization that is loud, intimidating, or hostile in tone; that shames or demeans a child; or is derogatory or attacks a child’s character. Any such actions will be cause for staff disciplinary action, including termination.
4. **A child shall not be left alone unattended under any circumstances.** Leaving a child alone unattended is grounds for dismissal.
5. Logical consequences are simple and effective means of discipline. For example, a child may lose the privilege of playing in the small toy area or be removed from an activity that is of interest because of inappropriate behavior.
6. Basic needs such as food, warmth, or clothing will not be used as punishment or reward.
7. Physical restraint will not be used unless necessary to ensure the safety of the child, other children, and staff.
8. All discipline used at Head Start will be developmentally and individually appropriate for each child.
In some cases, an Individualized Support Plan may be needed for children who have persistent challenging or disruptive behavior. OAI Head Start knows parent involvement is imperative to a child’s success and therefore believes in collaborating with parents in developing a plan for addressing challenging behavior in the classroom.

These plans are created by a multi-disciplinary team that includes the child’s family, mental health consultants, the child’s teacher, the Special Services Coordinator, and the Center Manager. Plans are designed to ensure that strategies are:

- Matched to the purpose of the behavior
- Proactive
- Focuses on teaching new skills
- Long-term

**EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION**

You must make sure the center has up-to-date emergency contact information on file for your child at all times. There must be at least one (1) emergency contact, other than the parent/guardian, for each child. Contact the center anytime there is a change in:

- Your telephone numbers – home, cell, work, or message;
- A change in where you can be reached during the day, i.e. work, school, etc.;
- Your emergency contact persons or their addresses or telephone numbers;
- A change in custody agreements and/or any new legal restrictions or legal orders affecting any persons prohibited by law from picking up your child or being near your child.
- Your child’s insurance or Medicaid coverage;
- Your work or school schedule; and,
- Your child’s physician.

**YOU MUST ALWAYS BE SURE WE HAVE THE MOST CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION FOR YOU & YOUR EMERGENCY CONTACT PERSONS. THIS INCLUDES PHONE NUMBERS, ADDRESSES, AND WORK/SCHOOL SCHEDULES.**

**IF WE DON’T HAVE THE CURRENT INFORMATION, WE CANNOT CONTACT YOU IN CASE OF EMERGENCY!!!!**

**ACCIDENTS**

If your child gets hurt at Head Start, he or she will be taken care of immediately. If necessary, 9-1-1 will be called and emergency medical care will be obtained for your child. Parents will be given an insurance form to take to the doctor or emergency room. You, or your emergency contact person(s), will be contacted as soon as possible. For less serious accidents, first aid will be provided, and you will be notified. Staff members are trained in basic First Aid and CPR.

**EMERGENCY PROCEDURES & EVACUATIONS**

The children and staff practice fire, storm, earthquake monthly. Each center establishes lockdown procedures and hazardous material incident procedures. These drills are to be done twice per year. Your center will tell you about their specific plans. Bus evacuation drills are also practiced routinely. Emergency drill procedures and evacuation diagrams are posted in every OAI Head Start Center. It is important that children, volunteers, and center visitors know what to do in case of emergencies. Your staff will let you know about local plans such as where children will be taken in the event of a tornado warning or other such event. We urge all families to plan and practice emergency drills at home. In some cases, children and staff will be advised to “shelter in place” until emergency response officials give them permission to evacuate. If you would like information about emergency planning, contact the local center staff, or visit www.ready.gov
**PHYSICAL AND DENTAL EXAMINATIONS**

Your child needs a complete medical and dental examination every year. You were asked to take your child to the doctor and dentist when OAIHS accepted your child into the program. You can get Head Start physical and dental examination forms at your local center. Have your child's doctor and dentist complete the Head Start forms when they get their exams. Physical examinations must include a blood pressure reading, an anemia screening (hemoglobin or hematocrit), lead testing results, and any other screenings required by the Missouri Department of Health or the Head Start Program Performance Standards.

| CHILDREN’S PHYSICAL AND DENTAL EXAMS NEED TO BE DONE 30 DAYS FROM THE TIME HE OR SHE BEGINS HEAD START CLASSES. AFTER 45 DAYS, YOUR CHILD CANNOT COME TO THE CENTER UNTIL YOU PROVIDE PROOF OF THE REQUIRED EXAMS. |

**HEALTH SERVICES**

Head Start works with families to the greatest extent possible to arrange medical/dental examinations and follow-up treatment of health and dental problems for Head Start children before they go to kindergarten. *Head Start funds may be used for professional medical and dental assessments and treatment only when no other source of funding, such as Medicaid, MC+, or health insurance, is available.*

The Department of Social Services provides many services for Missouri children through the MO HealthNet for Kids (MHK) Program, the state's healthcare program for children. Two divisions within the department, the Family Support Division and the MO HealthNet Division coordinate to provide these services.

Through the MO HealthNet for Kids program, children receive full, comprehensive coverage including primary, acute and preventative care, hospital care, dental and vision care as well as prescription coverage. Whether your child is currently enrolled in MO HealthNet for Kids or you're interested in learning more about the program, a webpage has been created to help you find information from all three divisions including how to apply, who is eligible, what benefits are offered and how to find a doctor in your area. Visit [https://dss.mo.gov/mhk/](https://dss.mo.gov/mhk/)

**HEALTHIER CHILDREN HAVE AN ADVANTAGE**

*They have more fun at play. They do better at work.*

*They get along better with others. They do not tire as easily.*

*They lose less school time due to illness.*

Please tell Head Start about health risks your child may have, especially if they may require special health or safety precautions. OAIHS may request a doctor's statement concerning a child's illness, injury, or health condition. This request may be made to either confirm the reason for the child’s absence or to document that the child’s attendance does not pose a significant health risk to the health or safety of the child and anyone who may come in contact with the child.
**MEDICATION**

Head Start staff cannot give non-prescription medication to children. If the medicine can be given at home, it should be given at home. Prescription medication can be given at the center *only with permission of the Head Start Director* and only if absolutely necessary. These guidelines must be followed:

If Medications MUST be given at Head Start then an H5 Medication Administration Consent form must be completed by the child’s physician. The H5 and any supporting documentation (see below) must be on file before medicine can be given to the child. The H5 form includes the following:

| 1. Name of Medication as it appears on the medication bottle/container & strength | 4. When to give the medicine & note if the medicine must be given at a specific time. | 7. Parent’s signature |
| 2. Dose | 5. What the medication is to be given for | 8. Special instructions, i.e. please call parent before administering medication… |
| 3. Route | 6. Side effects | 9. Physician’s signature or written order signed by the prescribing provider. This can be a separate form but must be with or attached to the H5 form. |

*All prescriptions need to match the written order exactly as it is prescribed. Be cautious of off brand names! The prescribing doctor or provider should include off brand names on the order!*

**TRANSPORTING MEDICATION**

Medications must be brought in by parents/guardians or hand delivered to the bus monitor. Students cannot have the responsibility of bringing a medication to school in their backpack, etc. **DO NOT PUT MEDICATION IN THE CHILD’S BACKPACK.**

Some medications will need to be transported with the child every time they leave the center. Medication must be transported in a lock box. Have a plan in place and make sure your team is aware of it so the medication isn’t forgotten.

Medication must be in the **original container.**

Staff counts and documents the quantity of the medication or if it’s an unopened bottle of pills, take note of the quantity in the bottle. For liquids, you can document how many mL’s are present when brought in.

Controlled substances should be counted, logged (both in and out), and recounted at least weekly to make sure there is no drug diversion.

If medicine can be given at home, it should be given at home. One of these options might work for your child:

**IF THE PRESCRIPTION CALLS FOR THE MEDICINE TO BE GIVEN:**

- **1 TIME A DAY** The medicine can usually be given before or after the child is at Head Start
- **2 TIMES A DAY** The medicine can usually be given before school and at bedtime
- **3 TIMES A DAY** The medicine can usually be given before school, after school & at bedtime
**IMMUNIZATIONS**

Missouri Child Care Licensing says children cannot attend any center that cares for more than ten children unless the child has been adequately immunized against vaccine-preventable childhood illnesses. Head Start staff will let you know if your child needs shots before he or she can come to Head Start, as well as what shots he or she will need in the coming school year. Your child’s shots must be kept up-to-date throughout his or her time in Head Start.

**Children ages 4-6 need the following immunizations:**

- Hepatitis B
- Haemophilus Influenzae B (Hib)
- Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV)
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (DTaP)
- Poliovirus (Polio)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Hepatitis A
- Rotavirus (RV)

The number of doses varies for each shot. See the Missouri Immunization Schedule at:


Missouri’s immunization schedule is compatible with the current recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP). Some of these vaccines may be given in combination, meaning fewer shots. You may contact your local health department and ask them to help get your child’s immunization status in compliance. Call the number below for your county:

- Douglas County Health Department (417) 683-4174
- Howell County Health Department (417) 256-7078
- Oregon County Health Department (417) 778-7450
- Ozark County Health Department (417) 679-3334
- Texas County Health Department (417) 967-4131
- Wright County Health Department (417) 741-7791

For more information, please call the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services’ Immunizations Program at 800-219-3224 or visit [www.health.mo.gov](http://www.health.mo.gov).

**Exemptions:** Parent/Guardian and Medical exemptions are allowed. The appropriate exemption card must be on file. The parent/guardian must obtain the proper exemption card from their local health department office (see above). **Unimmunized children are subject to exclusion from child care/preschool when outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases occur.**

**ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

The following regulations are from the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Homes and Child Care Centers:

(A) Each child shall be observed for contagious diseases and for other signs of illness on arrival and throughout the day.

(B) Each child’s parent(s) shall be notified immediately when any contagious disease occurs in the facility.

(C) Unusual behavior shall be monitored closely and parent(s) shall be contacted if the behavior continues or if other symptoms develop. These behaviors include, but shall not be limited to:
   1. Is cranky or less active than usual;
   2. Cries more than usual;
   3. Feels general discomfort or seems unwell; or
   4. Has loss of appetite.

(D) The parent(s) or his/her designee shall be contacted when signs of illness are observed. Unless determined otherwise by the parent(s) or provider, a child with no more than one (1) of the following symptoms may remain in care:
   1. A child with a temperature of up to one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100°F) by mouth or ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit (99°F) under the arm;
   2. After an illness has been evaluated by a physician, medication has been prescribed and any period of contagion has passed as determined by a licensed physician;
   3. When it has been determined that a child has a common cold unless the director and the parent(s) agree that isolation precautions should be taken;
   4. When a child has vomited once with no further vomiting episodes, other symptoms, or both; or
   5. When a child has experienced loose stools only one (1) time with no further problems or symptoms.

(E) If children exhibit any of the following symptoms, they must be sent home:
   1. Diarrhea—more than one (1) abnormally loose stool. If a child has one (1) loose stool, s/he shall be observed for additional loose stools or other symptoms;
   2. Severe coughing—if the child gets red or blue in the face or makes high-pitched croupy or whooping sounds after coughing;
   3. Difficult or rapid breathing (especially important in infants under six (6) months);
   4. Yellowish skin or eyes;
   5. Pinkeye—tears, redness of eyelid lining, irritation, followed by swelling or discharge of pus;
   6. Unusual spots or rashes;
   7. Sore throat or trouble swallowing;
   8. An infected skin patch(es)—crusty, bright yellow, dry or gummy areas of the skin;
   9. Unusually dark, tea-colored urine;
   10. Grey or white stool;
   11. Fever over one hundred degrees Fahrenheit (100°F) by mouth or ninety-nine degrees Fahrenheit (99°F) under the arm;
   12. Headache and stiff neck;
   13. Vomiting more than once; and
   14. Severe itching of the body or scalp, or scratching of the scalp. These may be symptoms of lice or scabies.

(F) Parental contact and the decision made shall be recorded and filed in the child's record. (G) The ill child shall be kept isolated from the other children until the parent(s) arrives. (H) The caregiver shall be in close proximity to the child until the parent(s) arrives. Close proximity means that a caregiver is close enough to hear any sounds a child might make that would indicate a need for assistance.

**A child may be excluded from the center if:**

1. The child's illness, injury, or contagious condition prevents him or her from participating in routine activities.
2. He/she is not immunized. Unimmunized children are subject to exclusion from child care/preschool when outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases occur.
3. The child's illness, injury, or contagious condition requires more care than the staff can provide without compromising the needs of other children.
4. Keeping the child at the center may be a significant risk to the health or safety of the child and/or anyone who may come in contact with the child.
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

OAI Head Start staff members are mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect.

This means we are required by Missouri Law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect to the Missouri Department of Social Services/Family Support Division. If you have questions, contact your local center manager or the OAIHS Management Office in West Plains (417-256-6147).

Child abuse and neglect happens in all types of families—rich and poor, city and rural. More than one million children each year are victims of child abuse and/or neglect. Child abuse or neglect may be:

- Physical Abuse—non-accidental injuries from shaking, beating, burning, biting, etc. It may result in welts, burns, fracture, internal injuries, or death.

- Sexual abuse—occurs when an adult uses a child for sexual stimulation through exhibitionism, fondling, incest, or rape. Sexual abuse may or may not involve physical contact between the adult and child. It is estimated that over 500,000 children are affected by child sexual abuse annually.

- Emotional Abuse may include excessive yelling, teasing and name-calling. Adults may place demands on a child that he or she cannot possibly meet. Children may be subjected to shameful forms of punishment or lack of love, guidance and support. Victims of emotional abuse may exhibit extreme behavior changes, have inappropriate social or emotional development, or be unattached to their parents.

- Child Neglect can be defined as a lack of attention. The child may be shown little or no feeling. Many times the child is not provided with proper food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or education.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT HOTLINE 1-800-392-3738 (to report or for information about counseling)

PARENTAL STRESS HOTLINE 1-800-367-2543 (on-line, 24 hour crisis counseling)

OMC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CARE 1-800-356-5395 (24 hour CRISIS HOTLINE)

PARENT LINK 1-800-552-8522 (Parent Link provides answers to any parenting questions. All calls are confidential within the limits of the law.)
Trauma Smart Information for Caregivers

What is Trauma Smart? Trauma Smart is a program created by Crittenton Children’s Center to provide support to children who have experienced trauma as well as the parents and teachers who love them.

Un-resolved trauma in childhood can have life-long effects and is linked to adult aggression, substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, and suicide. Trauma Smart helps resolve the effects of trauma so children can live confident, productive lives.

OAIHS has been part of Trauma Smart since Fall 2016.

What is trauma? Trauma can be one event or a series of events that frighten, confuse or hurt a child. Some examples are:

- Death of a loved one
- Painful or extended medical procedures
- Separation from family or caregivers
- Physical or sexual abuse
- Dog or cat bites
- Violent crime
- Incarcerations or arrest of a loved one
- House fire or car accident
- Hurricane, tornado, or flood

How can adults tell if their child is suffering the effects of trauma?

- Change in sleep pattern, nightmares or night terrors
- Frequent crying, anxiety, nervousness
- Change in eating habits
- More quiet than normal; withdrawn
- Frequent temper tantrums
- Aggressive behavior toward other children, animals, or adults
- Loss of prior skill; acts younger than chronological age
- Trouble separating from caregivers

What can parents do?

- Remain calm.
- Soothe and comfort your child.
- Encourage children to express all of their emotions
- Maintain a consistent routine. Children need to know what comes next.
- Prepare your child ahead of time for any changes to routine.
- Avoid violent TV, movies, games, or books.
MENTAL HEALTH – To Love, Work & Play

People who are mentally healthy get the most out of life. This requires knowledge, appropriate social behavior, and good personal health. In other words, mental health is the capacity to cope with all of life’s circumstances - the highs and lows and the joys and sorrows. We all have good days and bad days; the difference is how we get through them and our how we continue to build successful social, coping, and life skills.

Head Start families have the same challenges faced by all families. However, many Head Start families are facing extreme stress. Head Start works with families to help identify, refer, and get treatment services to people in immediate need. As a society, and in Head Start, our intention is to provide services and support to assist and educate people to move towards happiness and productivity.

OAI Head Start contracts with community mental health professionals. These experts observe Head Start children in the classrooms, make recommendations to the staff, and, if needed, make referrals for children to get further evaluation, counseling, or play therapy. A mental health consultant will visit your child’s center in the fall and the spring. The center staff will let you know the dates of the visits. The consultant will review children’s records, observe children in the classroom, and meet with staff regarding their observations. Your child’s teacher will discuss the results of the mental health screening with you. Parents are invited to meet with the mental health consultant in the spring. We encourage you to take advantage of this opportunity to discuss your child’s development with the consultant. For more information on program mental health services, or if you have questions or concerns, talk to your child’s teacher, your Center Manager, or contact the Head Start Management Office.

HEAD LICE POLICY

Every week Head Start staff check all children for head lice and nits (eggs) in the classroom. If a child is found to have live bugs, the parent will be contacted and asked to pick the child up. If nits are found, you will be notified. It is important to treat your child before s/he returns to school so that s/he does not miss learning opportunities at Head Start. You will be provided information on how to treat your child and prevent future infestations. Our staff will support you as you go through the process.

Head lice are spread mostly by direct head-to-head contact. The sharing of hats, combs and other hair accessories, may also spread head lice, but this is rare. Head lice have nothing to do with cleanliness or parenting skills.

This policy takes into consideration recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National Association of School Nurses.

SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENT

Head Start works with the local school districts, county health departments, and community agencies to see that children receive speech, hearing, vision, and developmental screenings. Preschool children are screened in the following areas:

- MOTOR SKILLS – catching, jumping, hopping, cutting, building, matching
- CONCEPTS SKILLS—identifying body parts, naming colors, naming letters, counting, positioning; identifying concepts like big, small, long, short, etc.
- LANGUAGE SKILLS—articulation; giving personal data such as name, age, sex, city, street, phone number; remembering (clapping numbers, sentences); naming nouns (cat, plane, TV); name verbs (sleep, fly, drive, comb); classifying foods; problem solving; sentence length.
- BEHAVIORAL OBSERVATIONS are also made during the testing time.

If your child’s screening results are low in any area, alternative intervention strategies may be tried. Alternative intervention strategies are ways parents and teachers can help the child grow in these areas. If intervention strategies are used, your child will be rescreened at a later date. If more testing is needed, your child’s teacher will talk to you about her concerns. You may be advised to request the local school district to evaluate your child. This will let you know if your child qualifies for early childhood special education services. It is our responsibility to let you know immediately if we suspect that your child may have health or developmental concerns. It is your responsibility to let us know about any health or developmental concerns you have about your child. We must work together.
**CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES**

By law, at least ten percent of children served by Head Start Programs must have diagnosed disabilities. OAIHS works with local schools and community agencies to mainstream children with special needs, such as speech or language delays, autism, hearing loss, hyperactivity or behavioral difficulties, developmental delays, and physical handicaps. Head Start staff members receive training to help them work with disabled children and their families. Head Start rules say children with suspected special needs are to be evaluated (or assessed) by their local school district. In Missouri, the request for the evaluation must come directly from parents or guardians. Head Start staff will support and assist parents through this process. Special Needs services are provided by local school districts to children who meet criteria established by the State of Missouri. If your child has a disability, or if you have concerns about your child’s development, please talk with the center staff. You may also call the OAIHS Special Services Coordinator at the Head Start Management Office (417-256-6147).

**OUTDOOR PLAY**

Children and staff spend some time outside each day, weather permitting. Children will be healthier if they are outside often. During bad weather, indoor physical activities are planned to help meet the children’s physical needs. Please provide appropriate clothing such as jackets, coats, caps, mittens, gloves, warm shoes, etc. for your child. Please label your child’s outer clothing; sometimes children wear identical coats and jackets, and it’s difficult for the staff to know what clothing belongs to what child.

**SUNSCREEN POLICY**

Sun safety is an important health habit! Children can experience a sunburn in less than 15 minutes while playing outdoors. Even on cloudy days, up to 80 percent of the sun’s harmful UV rays can penetrate your skin. The American Academy of Dermatology reports that increasing intermittent sun exposure in childhood and during one’s lifetime is associated with an increased risk of squamous cell carcinoma, basal cell carcinoma, and melanoma. Even one blistering sunburn during childhood or adolescence can nearly double a person’s chance of developing melanoma later in life, while 5 or more blistering sunburns in late adolescence increases one’s melanoma risk by 80% and nonmelanoma risk by 68%.

Head Start has adopted a sunscreen policy that requires staff to apply sunscreen, with parent/guardian permission, to all children 30 minutes prior to going outside when planning to be outside more than 20 minutes during the months of April-October.

For more information, refer to the article How Can I Protect My Children from the Sun? from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). [https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/children.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/skin/basic_info/children.htm).
**NAPTIME**

Children enrolled in extended day classrooms may nap (i.e. “rest time” or “brain-break”) in their classroom. Preschool age children usually need some amount of rest during the day to provide downtime for their bodies to rejuvenate. Communication will occur between parents and staff on or before the first day of school regarding the child’s current rest time routine. Children’s nap schedules may vary depending on age or individual needs. A naptime routine is established from the beginning of the school year, with a time to rest usually after lunch. Teachers go through a similar routine every day for children to understand what is expected of them so they can feel safe and secure. Preschool children who do not sleep shall rest on cots or mats at least thirty (30) minutes, but shall not be forced to remain on cot or mat for longer than one (1) hour. They shall then be permitted to leave the napping area to engage in quiet play (19 CSR 30-62.182). Provisions are made for children who are early risers, late sleepers, or who do not need a nap (e.g., books, puzzles, or quiet activities). The naptime environment is calming with soft music and dim lights with cots/mats at least 3 feet apart. Children will be supervised during rest time. Individual cots/mat, sheets, and blankets are provided for the children and laundered at least once a week and more frequently as needed (19 CSR 30-62.092). *No video recording will be conducted during this time of the day.*

**WINTER WEATHER.**

When the public school in your community is closed **DUE TO WEATHER**, your Head Start Center typically will be closed. Occasionally, our drivers may believe the road or parking conditions are too dangerous even if public schools are open. Each center has its own procedure for notifying parents about center closings. The local center staff will tell you how they will let you know when the Head Start Center will be closed. If it begins snowing, sleet, or icing when children are at the center, staff may decide it necessary to dismiss class early for the children’s safety.

**FIELD TRIPS**

Field trips will be taken during the year. You must give your permission for your child to go on each field trip. Children will be transported by bus and the field trips will be limited to 45 miles one way. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to go along as supervisors. Parents are responsible for children, such as siblings, who are not enrolled in Head Start. You must stay with the classroom group during the field trip. If you want to take your child to another area, you will have to sign him or her out. Head Start cannot provide transportation for children who are not enrolled in the program.

**NUTRITION**

OAIHS participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and follows all CACFP guidelines. A committee of Head Start cooks develops the menus. The program’s Nutrition Coordinator is responsible for evaluating and approving the menus. The menus must meet the guidelines established in the CACFP guidance and Head Start Performance Standards. Menus are provided to parents monthly.

Nutrition education is an important part of our Head Start Program. Meals are served family-style at Head Start. Staff members and adult volunteers eat with the children and encourage them to try new foods and enjoy a wide variety of foods. Children serve themselves and participate in clean-up activities. Good manners and self-help skills are taught and modeled at mealtime. Children participate in food activities, in the classroom and at mealtime, which are both educational and fun. Staff uses the food activities to reinforce concepts such as colors, textures, size, shape, numbers, etc. Children also learn how food relates to their growth and development as well as about food safety and safe “cooking” practices.

Children are never forced to eat a certain food, **but they must be served all food items from the menu on their plates**. If there is a medical reason (such as an allergy or disease) why your child cannot eat certain foods, you must notify the center staff. You will have to provide the center with a written statement from your child’s doctor noting the medical reason your child cannot eat the food(s). Your doctor must also list foods that we may substitute in place of the food(s) your child cannot eat.

Outside foods may be brought to the center only on special occasions. We have prepared a list of approved food items family members may bring in for a celebration. The celebration policy, along with the approved food list, is on page 25.
WHY IS ATTENDANCE SO IMPORTANT?

It is very important that children maintain good school attendance, and Head Start is a great place to get them in the habit of getting to school on time every day. We expect children to attend Head Start every day unless they are ill (see pages 15 and 18) or if there is a family emergency. Attendance is a key factor in a child’s school performance. The following article is from www.attendanceworks.org.

10 Facts About School Attendance

- Absenteeism in the first month of school can predict poor attendance throughout the school year. Half the students who miss 2-4 days in September go on to miss nearly a month of school.
- Over 7 million (1 in 7) U.S. students miss nearly a month of school each year.
- Absenteeism and its ill effects start early. One in 10 kindergarten and first grade students are chronically absent.
- Poor attendance can influence whether children read proficiently by the end of third grade or be held back.
- By 6th grade, chronic absence becomes a leading indicator that a student will drop out of high school.
- Research shows that missing 10 percent of the school, or about 18 days in most school districts, negatively affects a student’s academic performance. That’s just two days a month and that’s known as chronic absence.
- The academic impact of missing that much school is the same whether the absences are excused or unexcused. Suspensions also add to lost time in the classroom.
- Students who live in communities with high levels of poverty are four times more likely to be chronically absent than others often for reasons beyond their control, such as unstable housing, unreliable transportation and a lack of access to health care.
- When students improve their attendance rates, they improve their academic prospects and chances for graduating.
- Attendance improves when schools engage students and parents in positive ways and when schools provide mentors for chronically absent students.
- Most school districts and states don’t look at all the right data to improve school attendance. They track how many students show up every day and how many are skipping school without an excuse, but not how many are missing so many days in excused and unexcused absence that they are headed off track academically.


IMPORTANCE OF ARRIVING ON TIME

We strongly encourage you to bring your child to school on time so that they may participate in all daily opportunities and activities. Our classroom is structured with a consistent daily schedule and routine that supports the High Scope Curriculum. Our goal is to maximize the time that our educators have to spend with your child, in order to provide them with a high-quality learning experience. Please speak with your Family Advocate if you have any concerns or need any special accommodations.
ATTENDANCE POLICY

We may **drop a child if the child is expected to be absent for 10 consecutive class days for any reason.** The child can be put on the waiting list to be re-accepted when he/she is able to return.

We may **drop any child whose overall cumulative attendance is below 85%** after the first 60 calendar days of enrollment.

We may **drop any child who is expected to be absent due to travel five or more consecutive class days.** The child can be put on the waiting list to be re-accepted when he/she is able to return. If there are extenuating circumstances, such as safety concerns or family emergencies, these absences will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The Center Manager may make a recommendation to keep the child enrolled in the program to the Head Start Central Office for approval. Situations are handled on a case-by-case basis.

It is very important that parents or guardians contact the center when the child is going to be absent. In addition to the affect absenteeism has on the child, it also impacts the classroom, bus route, and staff work load. Head Start must track all absences. The Family Advocate or other designated staff member must contact, or attempt to contact, the family when a child is absent three consecutive days.

If a child is absent for five consecutive class days without the parent notifying the center, and after staff has made all reasonable attempts to contact the family during this time, the child may be dropped from the Head Start program.

**Parents/Guardians of children who are at 90% average daily attendance after 60 calendar days, or at any time thereafter, or those with chronic absenteeism issues, will work together with the teacher and family advocate on an attendance plan for the child. The family advocate and/or teacher will follow up with the family regularly.**

If a make-up class day is scheduled for Friday, parents must be contacted prior to that day to ensure children will be attending. If less than 85% will be attending, then the make-up day should be scheduled for another time.

**Center closings due to infectious illness will be decided on a case by case basis** because of the numerous variables that must be considered. However, any time 5 or more children per class are absent due to illness, it must be brought to the attention of the center manager. Each day absenteeism is high, the center manager must make a decision as to whether or not to continue operation or close down to allow the illness to pass before recommencing. Documentation justifying the decision to continue operation in the face of high absenteeism should be submitted to the Head Start Director with the weekly meal count and attendance forms.

*Enforcing attendance policies is not intended to be punitive to parents or children. It is intended to ensure that we help the most children we can with the resources we have. No matter how much a child needs Head Start or how justifiable the absence, a child is not being helped by Head Start when he or she is absent. Instead, the slot is closed to another child who would attend and receive benefit. We are paying staff, buying food, running a bus for a full classroom even if children do not attend. This is an expensive waste of limited dollars. No child is more important than another. Our goal is to help as many children as we can at all times with the dollars we have.*

DROPPING OFF & PICKING UP CHILDREN AT THE CENTER

If you bring your child to the Head Start Center, it is very important that you bring him or her inside the building. **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO ENTER OR LEAVE THE CENTER ALONE.** Please talk to the teacher or other staff member so that she knows your child is in the building. Do not bring your child more than 10-15 minutes before class begins. The Head Start center's doors are to be locked from the outside at all times. As a safety precaution, you will have to ring the bell and a staff member will let you in.

Children are not released to any person, other than parents or legal guardians, without written permission from the parent or guardian. If staff does not know the person to whom they are releasing the child, they will ask for I.D. No child will be left at their home or drop-off location until an authorized ADULT is seen by the driver. A busing schedule will be available to parents and guardians upon request two weeks after classes begin. We want all children to be safe.
TRANSPORTATION

OAIHS provides transportation to and from the Head Start Center to the greatest extent possible. We are restricted by time and distance and, unfortunately, we cannot pick up all children in some areas. Parents and guardians may transport their children or designate other individuals to transport their children. If you move during the year, or if the pick-up/drop-off location changes, we may not be able to continue busing your child. OAIHS will make every effort to continue transporting your child. However, additional time or distance may mean that we can no longer transport your child. If this occurs, you will have the option of transporting your child to the center or to a location on the bus route where he or she can be picked up.

Our Bus Rules are in place for the safety of your children. Thank you for helping us to keep your children safe by making sure they understand and follow the Bus Rules.

• Our bus drivers strive to provide a regular bus schedule. Once the bus route is established, they will give you a time to expect them in the morning and in the afternoon. However, there are times when the schedule is affected by events like trains, accidents, uncooperative children, etc. Please allow ten minutes before and ten minutes after the designated pick-up and drop-off times.

• Your child must be ready to leave when the bus arrives. If the driver does not see anyone at the bus stop location within one minute of arrival, he or she will leave. The driver will wait a maximum of three minutes at your bus stop. If your child is not on board the bus within three minutes, the bus will leave. Drivers may not backtrack to pick up children who are not ready to get on the bus on time.

• Parents must provide, in writing, a list of authorized persons to whom the program can release children. These individuals must be at least 18-years-old except when the parent/guardian has a written permission form on file giving authorization for a child to be released to an individual between the ages 12-17. This permission form must state the age of the authorized individual.

• We will not release your child to anyone if their name is not on your list, even if the individual is at your home. If we do not know the person who is getting your child off the bus or from the center, we will ask for I.D., and if the I.D. cannot be produced, we will not leave the child. If there is a change to the list of authorized people to whom we can release children (addition or deletion), you must let us know about the change in writing.

• Each afternoon, it is your responsibility to make sure the driver knows that you or another authorized individual is present and responsible for the child. If the driver does not see an adult, your child will be returned to the Head Start Center. If this happens, you must notify the Head Start Center as soon as possible. If a child is still at the center one-and-one-half hour after the end of classroom time, Head Start staff will have no choice but to contact the proper authorities (see policy on next page).

• As a general rule, drivers are not able to pick up or deliver children to different locations than usual if the change adds TIME or MILES to the regular bus route.

• When your child will not be riding the bus, please notify the bus driver PRIOR to the time the bus leaves the center. Your driver will tell you the departure time and the phone number you need to call.

• Staff members are responsible for the children on the bus. The driver and monitor also have full authority over any adult passengers. Parents must work with staff to make sure their children are cooperative and well behaved on the bus. A child who is disruptive or who is not behaving properly may pose danger to others on the bus. A child whose behavior poses a threat to himself, another child, volunteer, or staff member may not be able to continue riding the bus. If this occurs, parents and staff will work together to develop an individualized Support Plan (page 11).

• If a gate needs to be opened, please come with your child to open the gate. The driver and monitor cannot leave the bus or van unattended.

• All children are in a safety restraint system.

• There are times when the driver may need to give you a message or note. Please try to come to the bus in the morning and afternoon.
CHILD DROP-OFF AND PICK UP RELEASE

Under no circumstances will children be released to an anyone not authorized by the parent/guardian in writing. These individuals must be at least 18-years-old except when the parent/guardian has a written permission form on file giving authorization for a child to be released to an individual between the ages 12-17. When the individual is between 12-17, the permission form must state his or her age.

Parents are responsible to ensure they add any additional individuals authorized to pick up their child in case of emergencies to their child’s file. Please notify your Family Advocate if you need to make any additions or changes to the file. Our release policy states the following:

1. Release of children to anyone other than a parent or legal guardian:
   a. Staff must consult the child’s contact/pick up/release to information to determine whether the individual is authorized to receive the child.
   b. Staff will ask for I.D. if they don’t know the person getting the child. If the individual is not authorized to receive the child, or is unable to present photo identification, staff is not to release the child and is to follow the procedures listed below.

2. Child Release Contingency
   a. In the event a child is not picked up by an authorized person at the expected time, staff members will adhere to the following procedures:
      i. Parents will be called at all telephone numbers listed on the child’s emergency contact sheet
      ii. If the parent is not reached, an emergency contact person must be contacted and asked to pick up the child.
      iii. If after 15 minutes no return calls are made from a parent/guardian or emergency contact, try calling each contact for a second time.
      iv. If no contact is made during the second phone call attempts wait 20 more minutes and if the parent/guardian or emergency contact has still not called or arrived to pick up the child, staff must contact the Police or Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child.
     v. The center staff must ensure the safety and well-being of the child at the center until the parents or outside authorities receive the child.

3. After one hotline report due to a no show or no call, or two different occasions of the parent being more than 15 minutes late picking up the same child, or two different occasions of no one being at the home or drop-off location, the Family Advocate will arrange a meeting between the parents, teacher, center manager, and central office staff if needed to discuss these occurrences and develop an action plan to address any situations contributing to the incidents, including the possibility of not allowing the child to ride the bus.

4. If parent does not comply with plans set forth in a meeting between the parents and staff and do not select another program option, the child may be removed from the program and placed on a waitlist.

5. OAIHS staff must allow a child to be released to an adult listed on the child’s birth certificate if the certificate is provided unless there is court documentation preventing the adult from assuming care of the child.

6. A child may not be released when the assigned person to pick up the child is showing visible or verbal signs of the following:
   a. Possible intoxication or drug use. Signs may include but are not limited to:
      i. Strong smell of alcohol
      ii. Unable to stand and walk well (if the individual does not have a disability that would alter their walking or stature.)
      iii. Slurring of words
      iv. The individual tells a staff member they have recently taken an illegal drug.
   b. Loses consciousness (sleeping/ fainting) in the OAIHS Head Start Building or parking lot.
      i. If the situation requires police or a report of possible abuse/neglect, the OAIHS Child Abuse/Neglect policy will be referred to.
   c. The adult has confided in a OAI Head Start Staff member that they are having thoughts of suicide, harming themselves or others.
      i. 9-1-1 must be contacted immediately upon this information being divulged.
      ii. The conversation must be documented by the staff member.
   d. Severe distress that may cause harm to themselves or others, or cause them to be unable to safely operate a vehicle.

April 2019
SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND CELEBRATIONS

Parents and local staff work together to plan and conduct special activities and celebrations. In addition to traditional celebrations, each center may have one monthly Birthday Celebration. Parents are not required to donate supplies or treats. However, if parents want to send special treats to the center on a celebration day, they may do so. In keeping with our focus on good nutrition, we ask you to send food or treats from the list of approved items below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CELEBRATION LIST!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Mini Ice Cream Cones (1 per child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Mini Ice Cream Sandwiches (1 per child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Small Mini Cupcake (1 per child)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Danimals Yogurt Smoothies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Danimals Yogurt Squeezeables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Danimals Yo-tubes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yogurt (1 container)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jello (1 container)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applesauce (1 container)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh Fruit (Strawberries, Grapes, Peaches, Blueberries, Blackberries)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oranges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bananas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raisins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goldfish Crackers (preferably individually packaged)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Granola Snack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple Sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Popcorn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretzel Sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun Baked Chips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NON-ENROLLED CHILDREN IN THE CENTER

Due to Missouri Child Care Regulations, children who are not enrolled in Head Start cannot be in the center during class time unless there is a special occasion or if you are stopping by very briefly. You must be responsible for and supervise the non-Head Start child at the center.

COMMUNICATION

A goal of the Head Start Program is to develop effective two-way communication with parents and guardians. Head Start must keep parents informed about what is happening in Head Start. Parents must share their comments, concerns, questions, and suggestions with Head Start staff. Some effective ways to keep the communication lines open are described below. A parent or guardian with a complaint is asked to refer to the Parent Grievance Procedure printed on pages 48-49 of this handbook.

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media, particularly Facebook, is arguably the most commonly used form of communication in today’s society. We understand that many of our parents use Facebook to let their family and friends know what’s going on in their daily lives. However, there are also parents & guardians concerned about legal custody issues, their family’s privacy, or their child’s safety. They do not want their child’s picture posted on the internet. For this reason, we ask that you do not post or share those photos that might include other Head Start children on the internet.

If you have questions or concerns, they should be discussed with staff and not posted on social media.
VISIT THE HEAD START CENTER

One of the greatest benefits Head Start offers parents is the opportunity to observe your child participating in Head Start activities. We want and need ideas and suggestions from parents, and we encourage you to share your ideas with us. Anyone visiting the center for any reason will be asked to sign in and out. This is a safety precaution and is required by licensing rules.

PARENT NOTES

The center will send home notes announcing special events like field trips, parent meetings, community events, immunization clinics, etc. Parents are also notified when a contagious disease (not colds!) occurs in the center. Individualized notes may be sent to parents about matters concerning only their child. If your child brings a backpack to school, please make a habit of checking daily for notes.

NEWSLETTERS

Parents receive regular newsletters containing articles on many different subjects, program menus, and program news. These newsletters are compiled at the Management Office and distributed to the centers. Your child will bring the newsletter home.

HOME VISITS & CONFERENCES

Your teacher and family advocate schedule regular home visits, with your permission, to support what your child is learning at the center and to offer parents an opportunity to be involved with Head Start activities in the comfort of their own home. A home visit should last 45-55 minutes. During the home visits, the teacher will discuss your child’s progress and seek your input about your child and the program. The teacher will share home learning activities for you and your child as well as guidance and assistance on child development. You may also discuss the Family Outcomes Assessment that addresses the strengths and goals for your family, as well as your Family Partnership Agreement. Staff will provide information and make referrals to other agencies when you have a need or interest in a particular area.

The teacher and family advocate are not visiting to “inspect” your home. That is not Head Start’s job. They are visiting to get to know you and your child better. They are visiting you to make the Head Start experience better and more complete for you and your child. We do ask family members to refrain from smoking during the visit when the Head Start staff is present.

Head Start recognizes that the PARENT is the FIRST and MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER a child will ever have. In addition to home visits, your child’s teacher will ask you to attend two parent conferences at the center during the year. Parents may request additional home visits and conferences when they feel the need to do so, and teachers may do the same.

NO TOBACCO & VAPING POLICY

The OAI Head Start Program prohibits the use of tobacco products at all times on Head Start property or space used by Head Start. This includes classrooms, staff offices, kitchens, restrooms, and parent or staff meeting rooms. This also includes meeting space, hallways, outdoor play areas, and vehicles used for transporting children, as well as all indoor areas in which children are exposed during field trips and other activities occurring off Head Start property. To the greatest extent possible, when field trips are planned in outdoor areas, we will utilize facilities or activities that promote a non-smoking policy. When planning an outdoor activity where smoking is allowed, staff must have written permission from the parent/guardian for the child to attend.

This includes cigarettes, cigars, and oral tobacco products. This policy also includes “vaping.” Do not use vaporizers or similar devices on Head Start property.

If you leave the property to smoke, be sure you are in area where children cannot see you.

If you would like information on the dangers of second-hand smoke, smoking, or on how to quit smoking, contact your doctor or local health department. You may also visit www.smokefree.gov.
TIPS FOR PARENTS

REST & SLEEP—Preschoolers need 10—12 hours of sleep each night. Plenty of rest is very important for their good health. It is the parents’ responsibility to see that children have a regular bedtime routine. Parents are also responsible to screen TV programs and videos that might cause children to have restless sleep or nightmares. There are many studies showing that lack of sleep (too little or too restless) contributes to children’s behavioral issues. Think about this: How do you feel when you don’t get enough sleep?

CLOTHING—Dress your child in comfortable play clothes he or she can handle easily. The staff will notify you about special events, like “picture day,” when you might want your child to dress up. Children will play outside each day if at all possible. Send labeled coats, sweaters, and hats appropriate for the weather. A light sweater or jacket worn in freezing weather is not appropriate. Try putting mittens or gloves on a string fastened to the back of the child’s coat so they don’t get lost. It is a good idea to send a set of extra clothes and underwear (for each season) in case your child has an accident.

SHOES—A lot of kids think cowboy boots and dress-up shoes are pretty cool. However, these kinds of shoes, along with sandals and flip-flops, are not good for playing. They may have slick soles that make climbing on playground equipment or running difficult or even dangerous. We recommend that your children wear athletic-type shoes so he or she can easily – and safely – run and play.

SET A GOOD EXAMPLE—The best way to get your child to practice good health habits is to practice them yourself. Encourage other family members to do the same. Children learn by watching others.

PERSONAL CLEANLINESS—Bathing, tooth brushing, hand washing, and hair care are important. The feeling of being neat and clean makes a real difference to a child’s self-esteem and self-confidence. Remember body and breath odors are offensive to others. The other children will notice, and children can be brutally honest.

ILLNESS—Our regulations require that you keep your child home when he or she is ill. This is one way to make sure that “little” illnesses stay little and to make sure illnesses do not spread to others. You must notify the center when your child will be absent due to illness. Remember that children who are kept home because of illness should be treated like they are sick. Limit TV and other activities. Be sure that most of the child’s time is spent resting quietly in bed. It is amazing how quickly children learn they are able to “get out of something” they don’t want to do by pretending to be sick.

TV & OTHER MEDIA—Most kids today are plugged into devices like TVs, tablets, and smartphones well before they can even ride a bike. Technology can be part of a healthy childhood, as long as this privilege isn't abused. For example, preschoolers can get help learning the alphabet on public television, grade schoolers can play educational apps and games, and teens can do research on the Internet. But too much screen time can be a bad thing:

• Children who consistently spend more than 4 hours per day watching TV are more likely to be overweight.
• Kids who view violent acts on TV are more likely to show aggressive behavior, and to fear that the world is scary and that something bad will happen to them.
• Teens who play violent video games and apps are more likely to be aggressive.
• Characters on TV and in video games often depict risky behaviors, such as smoking and drinking, and also reinforce gender-role and racial stereotypes.
That's why it's so important for parents to keep tabs on their kids' screen time & set limits to ensure they're not spending too much time in front of a screen. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends these guidelines for screen time:

- **Babies and toddlers up to 18 months old:** No screen time, with the exception of video-chatting with family and friends.
- **Toddlers 18 months to 24 months:** Some screen time with a parent or caregiver.
- **Preschoolers:** No more than 1 hour a day of educational programming, together with a parent or other caregiver who can help them understand what they're seeing.
- **Kids and teens 5 to 18 years:** Parents should place consistent limits on screen time, which includes TV, social media, and video games.
- **Media should not take the place of getting enough sleep and being physically active.**


“Young children can’t tell the difference between fantasy and reality. Your preschooler’s rich imagination is a big part of his normal development, but that means it is usually hard for him to tell the difference between what’s real and what’s imaginary. Preschoolers cannot always understand that what they see on television is made up, especially when it looks so much like real life, so it’s especially difficult for them to distinguish between television violence and real-life violence.” Quote from “What We Know About Young Children, TV and Media Violence.” Website: [http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/what-we-know-about-young-children-tv-and-media-violence](http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/what-we-know-about-young-children-tv-and-media-violence)

**Screen Time Policy** – In the classroom, children should be participating in active, engaging, and hands-on experiences. During inclement weather, alternative IMIL experiences should be planned for children to participate in lieu of outside time. This can include indoor obstacle courses, music and movement without screen time, dancing with scarves, tumbling with mats, bowling, etc.

Classrooms are limited to a maximum of 30 minutes of combined screen time per week. The video must tie in to the topic of study, include discussion, and present educational information to increase school readiness. The 30 minutes of screen time includes YouTube clips, Gonoodle, yoga, etc.

In addition, classrooms may request 2 movie days per year. These must be pre-approved through the Education Director by email with title of movie, time length, and rating. Identify learning concepts that will tie in and be discussed.
OAIHS uses the High Scope curriculum approach. Research based and child focused, the High Scope Curriculum uses a carefully designed process — called "active participatory learning" — to achieve powerful, positive outcomes. Within the curriculum there are three main areas of focus to support children’s learning:

- adult-child interaction;
- classroom layout and materials;
- the daily routine.

Teachers carefully construct learning experiences that increase child outcomes in the following learning domains:

- approaches to learning;
- physical development and health;
- math;
- social studies;
- social and emotional development;
- language, literacy, and communication;
- creative arts;
- science and technology.

All of these areas of development are key to school readiness.

We use the COR Advantage online assessment tool to find out where your child’s development is with specific school readiness objectives. This tool provides your child’s teacher with information that allows them to intentionally plan individualized learning opportunities to support your child’s growth and development. Assessment, planning, and family engagement are the key to your child’s future school success.

To ensure your child’s success in school, parent and family engagement is a must! You can help prepare your child for kindergarten and beyond by becoming involved in the curriculum and learning process. Here are some ways you can help:

- Talk with your teachers during drop off and pick up.
- Read to your child nightly.
- Ask your child what they are doing in school each day.
- Utilize home visits and conferences to give your input and set goals for your child’s learning.
- Involve yourself with take home activities to extend learning from the classroom into your home.
- Volunteer in the classroom... 5, 10, 15 minutes... It all counts in the eyes of your child!

OAI Head Start encourages every parent to learn more about the High/Scope Curriculum. Talk with your child’s teacher about how children learn at Head Start. Ask the teacher what you and your child can do at home to encourage learning. Any time you have questions about the curriculum and activities at Head Start, discuss them with your child’s teacher, parent/teacher associate, or center manager.
Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five - A guide to what children should know and do in five central developmental domains

WHAT WILL MY CHILD LEARN?

The curriculum framework that is used by our program is based on the philosophy that children learn best by being actively involved in their environment. This includes exposure to and experiencing diverse languages both through peer to peer and staff to child communication in the child’s primary language while concurrently facilitating acquisition of the English language. What seems to be “just play,” is really the way a child develops his/her own process of learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHEN CHILDREN DO THIS:</th>
<th>THEY ARE LEARNING TO:</th>
<th>WHEN CHILDREN DO THIS:</th>
<th>THEY ARE LEARNING TO:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Put blocks in trucks and dump them out</td>
<td>Understand size, weight, and number concepts (Math) (Science)</td>
<td>Operate a computer mouse</td>
<td>Improve their coordination skills (Physical Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put on dress-up clothes</td>
<td>Use their small muscle skills (Self-Help) (Writings)</td>
<td>Talk about changes in plants, people, and things outside as seasons change</td>
<td>Sharpen observation skills (Science)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finish a puzzle</td>
<td>Complete a task (Study Habits) (Self-Esteem)</td>
<td>Catch and throw balls</td>
<td>Coordinate eye and hand movements (Physical Development)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make play dough</td>
<td>Recognize cause and effect (Science) (Logical Thinking)</td>
<td>Gather paper, scissors, and glue for a project</td>
<td>Plan and carry out a task (Study Habits), (Independence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make boats sink</td>
<td>Recognize cause and effect (Science) (Logical Thinking)</td>
<td>Pour without spilling</td>
<td>Use their small muscle skills (Physical Coordination)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turn pages from beginning to end</td>
<td>Read a book from left to right (Reading and Writing Readiness)</td>
<td>Make a salad for the family or bake muffins for breakfast</td>
<td>Take pride in their accomplishments (Self-Esteem)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watch bread dough rise or butter melt</td>
<td>Understand that foods can change their physical status (Science)</td>
<td>Find ways of moving across the rug without using their feet</td>
<td>Think creatively to solve problems (Independence) (Problem Solving)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create different sounds by putting more (or fewer) beans in cans and shaking them</td>
<td>Explore cause and effect (Science) (Logical Thinking)</td>
<td>Use blocks and wooden animals to create a zoo</td>
<td>Recreate the world around them (Geography) (Social skills)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Try out a computer program together with another child</td>
<td>Share and play cooperatively with others (Social Skills)</td>
<td>Pretend to be grown ups</td>
<td>Understand their experiences better (Abstract Thinking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sort pictures that are same</td>
<td>Match and classify (Math)</td>
<td>Scribble on paper</td>
<td>Use writing as a means of communication (Reading and Writing)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OZARK ACTION, INC. HEAD START SCHOOL READINESS GOAL SUMMARY

Here are the annual school readiness goals for OAIHS. These are goals for the program as a whole. Teachers and parents/guardians work together to establish children’s individual goals.

### APPROACHES TO LEARNING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will display an active and eager attitude to learn with persistence and regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will participate in a range of activities that allow for creative and imaginative play and expression.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children with disabilities will be supported at their individual level of development, according to their IEP and/or assessment derived needs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will engage in positive relationships and interactions with adults and children, including supporting conflict resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will display increased ability to adapt to changing situations and display an increasing sense of identity and belonging.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LANGUAGE AND LITERACY - COMMUNICATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will listen to and understand increasingly complex language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will use appropriate conversational skills to communicate ideas, feelings, and questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Dual Language Learners will show development in receptive and expressive English language skills.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### LANGUAGE AND LITERACY - LITERACY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will recognize language consists of letters, sounds, and syllables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will explore books and their characteristics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children will use writing as a means of expression and communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COGNITION – MATHEMATIC DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will display an understanding of numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships, and number systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will display an understanding and apply their knowledge of shapes, patterns, size, position, direction, and physical environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Children will display an increased ability to describe, collect, organize, classify, measure and compare their physical environment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### COGNITION – SCIENTIFIC REASONING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will display an understanding of numbers, ways of representing numbers, relationships, and number systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will understand people and how they relate to others and the world around them.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOAL</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Children will display growing strength and dexterity in motor movements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Children will display knowledge and understanding of appropriate health practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Be an active partner in your child’s educational activities.

VOLUNTEERING AT THE HEAD START CENTER

The Head Start Center must have parent participation and volunteers. Parents, other relatives, family friends, and community members are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom or at the center whenever possible. You will be asked to complete a Volunteer Application (Form PFC 2), complete a Missouri Family Safe Care Registry Form, and provide a copy of your social security number and photo ID. Regular volunteers must complete a TB Risk Assessment form approved by their doctor or health department, and they must submit a request for a background check. Persons wishing to volunteer in the center’s kitchen must provide a completed TB Risk Assessment form before working in the kitchen. Some volunteers will be asked to undergo a more thorough background check based on the number of hours she or he spends in the centers.

We recognize that as the parent of a young child (or children), you have commitments that may keep you from becoming a regular volunteer at the center. Please know parents can drop by anytime – you do not have to commit to spend a full day at the center. Maybe you can stop by at lunchtime or stay a few minutes when you pick up your child and read a story to the children. When you participate in parent meetings and other parent activities, the time spent counts as volunteer time. The time you spend on the home learning activities we provide give you the opportunity to work with your child to help him or her get ready for kindergarten. The time you spend on the “homework” sent home by your child’s teacher can be counted as volunteer time. If there is anything we can do to make it easier for you to participate more in Head Start, let us know. We will work with parents to the greatest extent possible to encourage full parent engagement.

WHAT IS IN-KIND?

Head Start Programs are required to match 25% of its federal funds every year. This is called the non-federal share, or IN-KIND. Most of the matching funds come from parents’ donations of their time and resources that enhance the program and the education of children. The Head Start program accepts IN-KIND contributions in the form of goods, services, and volunteers’ time. Only services and goods that benefit Head Start may be claimed as IN-KIND.

IN-KIND is donated time, services, and goods, and it can be money. Head Start receives credit towards matching the federal grant for your time. A monetary value is given to allowable time.

All classrooms have IN-KIND forms on which to keep a record of your donations of time, services and contributions. There are also forms for you to keep track of the time you spend working with your child on his or her “homework,” which includes activities from the teacher, the at-home reading log, and the I AM MOVING – I AM LEARNING (physical activity program) log.
How can you help with **IN-KIND**?

- Volunteer your time at the center. You can help in the classroom, the kitchen, on field trips, or with cleaning & maintenance.
- Read and do learning activities **at home** with your children.
- Read or tell a story.
- Get materials ready to use for a project.
- Be a member of the Policy Council.
- Participate in Smart Connections & other parent activities.
- Volunteer time at family activities.
- Donate center materials - anything Head Start would normally buy.
- Share a hobby or talent.
- Attend parent meetings or programs.
- Help staff recruit children and families.

**Head Start Parents** make the most valuable **IN-KIND** contributions. Any time you participate in the Head Start classroom, parent meetings, family activity nights, or other activities, the time you spend can almost always be counted toward meeting **IN-KIND** totals. Each hour you spend working in Head Start, or participating in other program activities, has an **IN-KIND** value of at least $14.96 per hour. If you attend a Parent Meeting from 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., then you have made an **IN-KIND** contribution of $22.44 (1 ½ hour x $14.96 = $22.44) to your Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start Center.

We set an **IN-KIND** goal for families every year. **This year's goal is $2755 per family.** You say, “How can I do this.” Here’s how:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IN-KIND ACTIVITY</th>
<th>HOURLY RATE</th>
<th>TOTAL IN-KIND</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Home Visits: 2 per year x one-half hour each</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent meetings – 4 meetings per year x 1 ½ hours each</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
<td>$89.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Volunteer – 4 hours per month x 9 months</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
<td>$538.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Field Trips – 2 trips per year x 2 hours each</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
<td>$59.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Special Events” – 2 events x 2 hours each</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
<td>$59.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Home Learning Activities – 4 hours per week x 36 weeks (homework, reading log, physical activity)</td>
<td>$14.96</td>
<td>$2,154.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL IN-KIND CONTRIBUTION FROM ONE FAMILY</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,917.20</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES?”** We want children to continue their learning at home. There are several things you may be already doing that can count towards our in-kind goal. Anytime you read to your children, the time counts as in-kind *when you write it down* on the **AT HOME-READING LOG**. When your children are running and playing, it very likely counts as “I am Moving, I am Learning” or IMIL. IMIL is Head Start’s program to encourage good health and physical activity. Your center will send you a form to write down IMIL activities. They will provide you examples of what counts and will answer questions you have about the **I AM MOVING, I AM LEARNING timesheet**.

In addition to this, your teacher will send you **FAMILY HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES TIMESHEETS**. You can call it homework. These activities are tied to what the children are doing in their classrooms. Children benefit when their parents/caregivers work with their teachers to continue their learning at home. Home learning activities generate a substantial portion of our In-kind requirement.

In order for these home learning activities to count as in-kind, **YOU MUST WRITE THEM DOWN**! If you read Green Eggs and Ham to your child every night, write it on the **At Home Reading Log** every night. If you and your child walk the dog around the block every day, write it on the **I am Moving, I am Learning** timesheet. Spend time with your child doing the homework and write it down on the **Family Home Learning Activities Timesheet**.

**TURN IT IN!** To count the learning activities as in-kind, you are doing, the center must have your completed homework sheets. If it isn’t written down and signed by you, we can’t count it. Please help us with this.

If our Head Start program fails to meet our In-Kind Goal, our funding can be cut.
Community members and other family members are also valuable contributors of **IN-KIND**. Many grandparents volunteer in our centers and program activities. Many businesses contribute supplies. Free or discounted services or space may be counted as an **IN-KIND** contribution. Head Start Parents can help get the word out to the community and to family members about the importance of **IN-KIND**. OAI employees cannot provide **IN-KIND**. We are always happy to meet people who want to help make a difference for young children and their families. If you know someone who might be willing to come read a story to the children, or have the children visit their farm to see the animals, or present information to the parents about a community issue, please let us know.

**If we don’t document your volunteer time & contributions completely, we cannot count them as **IN-KIND**!**

We ask you to sign forms like the center visitors’ log at the center and the home activities timesheet to document **IN-KIND**. Your contributions of an hour here and a half-hour there really add up. So **please**, be sure that you always sign in when you participate in any Head Start activity. The staff will show you the forms that need to be completed and will answer your questions about in-kind. **Please remember that the center sign-in sheet and the **IN-KIND** sheet are two separate forms.**

Your children need you to spend time with them reading, playing, and doing “homework.”

Head Start needs you to do the activities with your children, write down the time, and return the timesheets to the center. Thank you.
WHY IS PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IMPORTANT?

Back in 1965, the Head Start founders knew PARENTS must be given opportunities and encouragement to be engaged in every part of Head Start. It was – and still is – a truly unique idea to require parents to be involved in the decision-making process.

**Head Start believes parents & families must be involved because:**

- **Parents know more about their own children than anyone else.**
- **Parents understand their communities and neighborhoods.**
- **Parents know people in the community who can help.**
- **Parents are the best advocates for Head Start.**
- **Parents learn about being part of a decision-making group and can use this knowledge to serve their community.**
- **Parents are residents of their community. Therefore, they are responsible for their community.**
- **Parents want to improve programs serving their families.**
- **Parent involvement helps ensure that Head Start is responding to the needs of the families and children we serve.**
Parent, Family and Community Engagement

Parent and family engagement in Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children. The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework (below) is a road map for progress in achieving the kinds of outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families. The PFCE Framework was developed in partnership with programs, families, experts, and the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. It is a research based approach to program change that shows how an agency can work together as a whole—across systems and service areas—to promote parent and family engagement and children’s learning and development.

We work with families because we know it’s the most meaningful and long-lasting way to help the children. When we talk about Family Partnership Agreements and Family Goals, we are hoping that you will learn something, or do something, that will make your life better for you and your children. It is our goal and desire that all families achieve positive outcomes, not just in Head Start, but in the future.
Family Support Services
The Head Start/Early Head Start Family Support Principals are based on the following staff-family interactions:

**All families need support.**

Every family regardless of its level of income, educations, or self-sufficiency requires support to deal with the challenges posed by today’s society. Seeking and using support are critical family strengths, not deficits in family functioning.

**Each family is unique.**

Families are diverse in composition, economic status, cultural/ethnic background, and in the values, beliefs, and practices they follow. Families are supported best when appreciation and respect are shown for family differences.

**The goal of working with families is to strengthen, not substitute for, family responsibilities.**

Families have core responsibilities for their members that society cannot replace but can support through resources and services. Family responsibilities include economic support, health care and protection, education and socialization, and family maintenance.

**Families benefit most from family-centered support and services.**

Family hopes, interests, strengths, and concerns need to be the primary focus of staff who work with families. The priorities and choices of families are the driving forces in decisions about ways to provide support and services.

Healthy families do not live in isolation; they are part of larger systems. Healthy families need, use, and foster relationships with extended family members, friends, community groups, social organizations, schools, etc. One of the best ways to support families is to help develop relationships with others in the various systems that surround them.

**Building Blocks to Family Support:**

- Initiate relationships with families through conversations, not through formal interviews.
- Make the family the senior partner in setting priorities.
- Identify family strengths.
- Involve all family members, as well as key players, in activities to support the family.
- Help the family acquire new skills.
- Encourage the family to expand its network of support.

**Parent Education**

The Head Start Performance Standards require that each Head Start program present mandated parent education topics each year. The topics may be offered in different venues; some topics would be better received through individual meetings, resource materials, or group presentations. Parent Education topics which are covered throughout the year include:

- Nutrition Education
- Mental Health Education
- Child Development Education
- Pedestrian Safety
- Child Abuse Awareness
- Substance Abuse Awareness
- Domestic Abuse Awareness
- Health Education
- Community Resource Awareness
- Additional Parent Education opportunities may be available by request.
COMING THIS FALL

SMART CONNECTIONS is the parent part of Head Start – Trauma Smart. Our centers will provide Smart Connections workshops in the centers beginning in the fall. Smart Connections is open to Head Start parents, guardians, and caregivers.

Parenting is the hardest job there is!

Talking to other parents and teachers helps.

Remember, you are not alone.

We are all in the same boat.

For more information about how Smart Connections can help you and your children, talk to your family advocate or center manager.
HOW CAN FAMILIES BE ENGAGED IN HEAD START?

* Participate as an observer or volunteer in the Head Start Classroom
* Do learning activities with their children at home
* Be an active participant in Parent/Teacher Conferences
* Help with Center Maintenance, Cleaning and Decorating
* Attend Parent Committee Meetings
* Read the Notes, Letters, and Other Materials that are Sent Home
* Participate on the Policy Council
* Volunteer in the kitchen
* Read to their children every night
* Actively Participate in Home Visits
* Help with drop-off & pick-up times.
* Visit the Head Start Center
* Go on Field Trips with the class
* Suggest & help plan Children’s Activities
* Prepare Classroom Materials at Home
* Recruit Volunteers
* Suggest and Help Plan Parents’ Activities
* Share Special Talents, such as Music or Art, with the children
THE RIGHTS OF HEAD START PARENTS INCLUDE

- To always be treated with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- To feel welcome and included in the Head Start Center and Classroom.
- To take part in policy decisions that affect operation of the Head Start Program.
- To take part in program planning that affects the operation & future of Head Start.
- To offer suggestions for classroom and center learning activities for the children.
- To develop activities for themselves, including parent education sessions and family activities, designed to improve their lives and their children’s lives.
- To choose whether or not to participate in the program’s activities without fear of endangering their child’s participation and progress in Head Start.
- To be informed regularly of their child’s progress and to be asked for their ideas and input concerning the child’s progress in the program.
- To receive advice and guidance from the teacher concerning their child’s progress and overall development.
- To have the opportunity to learn about and participate in the operation of the Head Start Program through the local Parent Committee and Policy Council.
- To participate in activities designed to identify personal and family strengths and to set personal and family goals to make daily life better.
- To be informed about available community resources that may help individuals and families.
- To provide information and feed-back to Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start that helps us evaluate and improve our services to children and families.
RESPONSIBILITIES OF HEAD START PARENTS INCLUDE

- To make sure their child is well-rested and ready to come to Head Start.
- To make sure their child has regular attendance at Head Start.
- To see that the child’s physical, dental, and immunization appointments are completed in a timely manner and that the necessary documentation is turned in to the program staff.
- To guide children in a loving, protective, and firm manner, and to set an example they want their children to follow.
- To make sure you have told staff about your child – his or her toileting habits, eating habits, health, behavior, etc.
- To accept opportunities made available by the Head Start Program which can improve the daily lives of their child, their family, and themselves.
- To take part in the classroom, whenever possible, as an observer, a volunteer, or a paid employee, and to contribute ideas, talents, and services to enrich the program for everyone.
- To learn as much as possible about program activities in order to participate in the decision-making process.
- To provide parent leadership by taking part in the Parent Committee through participating in elections, parent meetings, and parent projects. Remember – parents must work TOGETHER!
- To explain the program to other parents and community members and to encourage participation in Head Start.
- To work with staff in a cooperative manner, to attend scheduled conferences, and to welcome staff into the home. When parents and staff work together, each child’s and family’s overall Head Start experience is enriched.
- To offer constructive criticism of the program to the appropriate staff, to defend the program against unfair criticism, and to share in the evaluation of the program.
- To take advantage of programs designed to increase knowledge of child development, parenting skills, literacy, and employment skills.
- To become involved in programs which improve health, education, and recreation for the local community.
- To communicate suggestions, ideas, compliments and concerns about their child’s progress and about the program to the Head Start program and staff.
**PARENT ENGAGEMENT IN PROGRAM DECISION-MAKING**

Head Start Parents are given many opportunities to participate in decision-making, also known as *program governance*. Parents and staff work together to help each individual child and family get the most benefit from Head Start. Regular opportunities for parent and staff interaction include center visits, home visits, conferences and parent meetings. Parents are welcome to visit or volunteer at the Head Start Center. Parents should always feel free to discuss their suggestions and concerns with the center staff. Parents are encouraged to participate in the program’s policy-making groups.

**WHAT IS THE POLICY COUNCIL?**

- *The Policy Council is the decision-making group for the Head Start Program.*
- *It is made up of Head Start Parent Representatives, elected by their local Center Committees, and Community Representatives. ONE Parent Representative and ONE Parent Alternate represent each Head Start classroom.*
- *Policy Council elections are held at the centers in August or September, or when vacancies occur.*

The Policy Council meets in West Plains monthly from September through May. The Policy Council works with the Head Start Director, Management Staff, and the OAI Board of Directors to develop, review, and approve or disapprove certain policies and procedures as outlined in the Head Start Program Performance Standards. The Policy Council serves as a link between the Head Start Program, Head Start Center Committees, Head Start Parents, and the local communities.

Policy Council representatives must take their positions very seriously and be prepared to devote the time needed to learn about Head Start, ask appropriate questions, study materials, and provide ideas. In order to accomplish everything required of the Policy Council, there are sub-committees that work on specific items of business and report back to the full Council with recommendations. Each Policy Council member may sign up to serve on as many committees as he or she desires. *Council members must recognize that there is a clear-cut difference between serving on the Policy Council and running the day-to-day operation of Head Start – that’s the Head Start Director’s job.*

Policy Council Parent Representatives have important responsibilities. They must attend the monthly Policy Council meetings as well as local Parent Committee meetings. If a situation arises that prevents a representative from attending a Council meeting, he or she must inform their center and the alternate representative so that the alternate can attend the meeting and represent the classroom. It is very important that each Head Start classroom is represented each month. When a classroom is not represented at two meetings in a row, centers may be asked to elect a new representative and alternate.

Policy Council Representatives must study the materials provided by OAIHS in order to make informed decisions. Representatives serve the needs and concerns of their local Center Committees and the communities, while remembering the Council as a whole must make decisions based on what is best for the ENTIRE Head Start Program. The need for cooperation and a good working relationship between the Head Start Director, the Head Start Staff, the local Parents, and the Policy Council is essential. *EVERYONE wants what is best for the children and families served.*

Any Head Start Parent who is interested in serving as a Parent Representative should make this interest known to the family advocate, teacher or center manager. *Policy Council Representatives cannot be related to any Ozark Action, Inc. employee or a member of the OAI Board of Directors. Policy Council representatives may serve on the council as a voting member for five one year terms in his or her lifetime.*

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WHO IS THE PARENT COMMITTEE?

ALL PARENTS AND LEGAL GUARDIANS OF CHILDREN ENROLLED IN THE HEAD START CENTER ARE MEMBERS OF THE PARENT COMMITTEE.

HOW DOES THE PARENT COMMITTEE WORK?

Parents work with program staff and meet regularly to learn, exchange ideas, plan activities for the children and the parents, and provide ideas and suggestions on how the program can best serve children, families, and communities.

Our program wants parents to plan activities for themselves that will be of the most interest and benefit to them. Staff members will work with parents to provide guidance and advice as needed concerning program requirements and regulations, budget concerns, past experiences, new ideas, etc.

Parent Committees are formed and officers are elected in August or September. Officers must remember that they are elected to provide leadership and organization to the committee, not to rule the committee. Parent Committee meetings should be planned in such a way that parents learn something that will help them do the most important job they will ever have – that of being a parent. Information that will help parents must be provided. Why? Because…. Local center meetings must be held at a time and place that is CONVENIENT TO THE GREATEST NUMBER OF PARENTS & GUARDIANS IN THE CENTER. It is important to keep those who cannot attend meetings informed of committee activities and to provide them with every opportunity to be involved in the Head Start Program.

Center meetings should be friendly, comfortable, and efficient. If the committee is to be effective, parents and staff must WORK TOGETHER. Disagreements will occur; when this happens, everyone must remember the most important question:

What is best for our children, families and communities?

Local committee meetings should be ENJOYABLE! Have some FUN! Get to know one another. The group will work better if everyone is getting along and having FUN!

ORGANIZATION OF THE PARENT COMMITTEE

Each committee holds its Annual Meeting in August or September. Committee Officers and Policy Council Parent Representatives and Alternates are elected at this meeting. Parent Committee Officers are: President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Vice-Secretary-Treasurer, Parent Committee By-Laws describe the duties of each officer.

WHAT ARE PARENT COMMITTEE BY-LAWS?

The committee bylaws are written rules that apply to the organization and operation of all OAI Head Start Parent Committees. A copy of the by-laws is posted at every OAI Head Start Center. Any parent may request a copy of the by-laws; ask a center staff member or contact the Family Services Coordinator at the OAIHS Management Office in West Plains, 417-256-6147.
WHAT ARE MEETING GROUND RULES?

Ground rules are basic rules the group determines that it will not break. The reason ground rules are needed is to make ALL parents feel comfortable, included, and productive, while allowing the meeting to progress effectively and democratically. Common ground rules every group should follow include:

➢ Treat other people the way YOU want to be treated.
➢ Everyone is allowed to express his or her own opinion.
   ➢ Everyone is to respect that opinion, even when it differs from your own.
   ➢ Always start and end the meeting on time.
➢ Members (including officers) are not allowed to bully one another in any way.
➢ Members will show respect for one another by listening to the person who has the floor.
   ➢ Only one person should be talking at a time.
➢ To avoid interruptions, cell phones should be put on “vibrate” during the meeting.

BASIC RULES OF ORDER FOR MEETINGS

Basic Rules of Order are meeting procedures based on Roberts’ Rules of Order and parliamentary procedures. The Basic Rules of Order below are the most common, and the most important, rules used in formal business meetings. These rules are used in many settings, so understanding them may be helpful to you in the future.

➢ Only ONE subject should come before the group at a time.
➢ Each topic should be debated freely with meaningful discussion. If you don’t know something about an issue, ask questions. Never be afraid to ask a question.
➢ The will of the majority is sought, but all opinions should be voiced. The majority should always strive to solve the issues the minority raises. COMPROMISE!
➢ Each member has equal rights and responsibilities.
➢ You and your ideas are as important as anyone’s.
➢ The GROUP makes decisions based on what is best for the entire program.

The Ground Rules & Basic Rules of Order are Common Courtesy.

Always treat the other members of your group the way you want them to treat you.

Democracy does not mean you get your way. Democracy means you get your say.
HEAD START FAMILY ENGAGEMENT & PARENT ACTIVITIES

➢ Head Start Performance Standards say parents must be offered opportunities to learn about many different subjects, including health, mental health, nutrition, community services, child development, family literacy, advocacy, and the transition of their children to kindergarten. Center meetings need to be planned with these topics in mind, as well as the interests of the local parents. Each family is asked to complete a survey telling the program about their interests. Opportunities for parents to learn about these topics may also be offered through referrals to other community agencies and organizations.

➢ Smart Connections, the parent piece of Head Start Trauma Smart, will be offered at your center. Some centers do the workshops in conjunction with the parent meetings. OAIHS encourages every parent to participate in Smart Connections.

➢ One feature of Parent Meetings is the PARENTING FOCUS. A staff member will lead a short discussion about a common parenting issue, such as communicating with children, positive discipline techniques, safety issues, instilling self-esteem, dealing with picky eaters, etc.

➢ Family Activity Nights will be held throughout the year. Families are invited to come out and have a good time while they are learning together.

➢ Workdays may be held so the parents and others can come together to work on special projects. Examples include crafts, making gifts for the children, working on classroom materials, doing maintenance work at the center, etc.

➢ Parents and volunteers are invited and encouraged to attend In-Service Training sessions with the staff members. In-Service sessions are held monthly in West Plains. Transportation from the local centers is available. A schedule of the In-Service sessions and topics will be provided to parents and posted at all OAIHS Centers.

When planning parent activities, remember:

• Family & Parent activities should be held at a time and place most convenient to the MAJORITY of parents.

• Family & Parent activities should be planned to meet the parents’ interests and to meet program requirements.

• Family & Parent activities should offer parents information or experiences that are useful to them.

• Meals or snacks should be offered at Family & Parent activities.

• Family & Parent activities should offer the parents and staff time to get acquainted with one another.

• Family & Parent activities should be PRODUCTIVE!

• Family & Parent activities should be FUN!
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

TO ALL PARENTS AND GUARDIANS OF OZARK ACTION, INC. HEAD START CHILDREN:

The Head Start Program requires many files to be completed on your child and family. All information concerning Head Start families, children, and staff members must be safeguarded to assure confidentiality. The persons who have access to those files are:

- Any official representative of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Federal Head Start Monitoring or Review Teams, and the United States Department of Agriculture/Child Care & Adult Food Programs.
- Any official representative of the Missouri Department of Health & Senior Services/Bureau of Child Care.
- The Auditor(s) of Ozark Action, Inc.
- Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start Center Staff.
- Head Start Mental Health Consultants.
- Head Start Nutrition Consultant.

In addition to the persons listed above, Ozark Action, Inc. C.S.B.G./Outreach Office Staff may access family partnership agreement information in the file.

NO VOLUNTEER WORKER WILL HAVE ACCESS TO THESE FILES!

Only with the parent's or guardian's signed consent will any information be shared with any agency or person not listed above, except in cases of mandated reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect or when information is subpoenaed by a court of law.

Your child’s file is maintained at the Head Start Center for two years after he or she leaves the program and then transferred to the Head Start Management Office in West Plains. Child files are kept in locked cabinets at the Head Start Centers and the Management Office.

Head Start staff members, consultants, and volunteers are to abide by the program's standards of conduct which state that information about Head Start children, parents, families, and staff members must be kept confidential.

Photographs of Head Start children may only be released by the program with written permission of a child’s parent or legal guardian.

Parents and guardians who would like more information on the types of information considered confidential may discuss the matter with program staff. A specific list of the types of information considered confidential is included in the program's Volunteer Handbook.

By signing for this Parent Handbook, you are indicating that you have been informed of the Confidentiality Policy.
Discuss the problem with the appropriate staff member, with the involvement of their supervisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IS THE PROBLEM SOLVED?</th>
<th>YES—END</th>
<th>NO, then:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Center Manager notifies the Family Services Coordinator. If the situation involves a personnel issue, the Center Manager follows Ozark Action, Inc. policies. Program management staff try to resolve the problem directly or through channels.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Center Manager and Family Services Coordinator inform the Head Start Director of the situation. The Head Start Director attempts to solve the problem.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Parent Committee Chairperson at the center is notified and places the issue on the Parent Committee meeting agenda, provided that the matter is not related to a personnel action or other confidential matter. The Chairperson should invite all involved persons to the meeting, and the Parent Committee should listen to all sides of the issue. Only parents/guardians of the enrolled child(ren) can be present during the discussion. The Chairperson discusses the Center Committee’s findings and options with the Head Start Director, and they try to resolve the issue.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The problem is referred in writing to the Policy Council’s Personnel and Grievance Committee. Only parents/guardians of the enrolled child(ren) can be present during the discussion. The committee attempts to resolve the problem and reports to the Policy Council.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Policy Council hears the Personnel &amp; Grievance Committee’s report, reviews the issue, talks to those involved, and votes on the committee’s report.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The matter is referred to the Ozark Action, Inc., Executive Director.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The matter is referred to the Ozark Action, Inc. Board of Directors.</strong></td>
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Key:
Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start – Parent Concern/Problem/Grievance Record

Parent/Guardian Name _____________________________________________ Center _______________________

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU ARE NOT IN ANY WAY THREATENING YOUR CHILD’S SAFETY OR ENROLLMENT STATUS BY STATING YOUR CONCERNS AND, IF NECESSARY, FILING A FORMAL GRIEVANCE. PARENTS/GUARDIANS HAVE THE RIGHT TO STATE CONCERNS, PROBLEMS, AND FILE GRIEVANCES WITHOUT FEAR OF ANY RETRIBUTION ON THE PART OF THE PROGRAM OR AGENCY.

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<th>WHAT IS THE ISSUE (in words of the parent/guardian/complainant)?</th>
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<td>WHAT IS THE ISSUE (in words of staff members involved)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IS THE ISSUE RESOLVED?  If yes, what is the proposed solution?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IF THE ISSUE IS NOT RESOLVED, WHAT DOES THE PARENT/GUARDIAN/COMPLAINTANT WISH TO HAPPEN? N/A Meet w/management staff Conference call w/management staff Other (in words of parent/guardian/complainant):</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Did a staff member review the OAI HS Parent Grievance Procedure with you? ________

Do you wish to file a grievance at this time? ________

Parent/Guardian Signature(s) ____________________________ Date ______________

Staff Signature(s)  ____________________________________________

Report Dates: To Center Manager ________ To Management Office ________

Follow-up Requested? ________ What?

It takes all of us—PARENTS, FAMILIES, COMMUNITIES, AND STAFF—to make Head Start the best it can be for our children.

You never stand as tall as when you bend to help a child.

Ozark Action, Inc. Head Start Program