



2025-2026

PARENT HANDBOOK



Head Start



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Improving Lives. Empowering Communities.

Our Philosophy

Here at the Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, we look to provide comprehensive services to underprivileged or disadvantaged children and expectant families in the areas of Health, Education, Nutrition, Family Services, Disability, Mental Health, Early Literacy and Transportation.

Our Mission

The mission of Waccamaw E.O.C. Head Start/Early Head Start is to enhance the quality of life for children and families through education and support services.

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Head Start / Early Head Start Parents,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Waccamaw EOC, Inc. (WEOC, Inc.), I welcome all new and returning parents and guardians of WEOC, Inc.'s Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

We are pleased with the admission of your child to WEOC, Inc.'s Head Start program, where you will collaborate in your child's early education, school readiness preparation, and social/emotional development.

Our staff looks forward to working with your child and you as your child's first educator. This handbook contains valuable content that provides you with specific information about the operating procedures for our Head Start/Early Head Start and WEOC programs, as well as guidance on how to participate.

Our staff continues to work tirelessly to ensure that our centers and facilities maintain a healthy and safe environment for you, your children, and our staff.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our programs continue to diligently review and revise safety protocols according to guidelines from the CDC, DHEC, and OHS. During Parent Orientation, staff will explain new policies and procedures regarding the transportation of children to and from our centers.

We welcome and encourage you to become involved in the various activities offered throughout the year. Feel free to suggest ideas or ask questions; we encourage your

participation. You will receive important information in several ways, including quarterly newsletters, the resource directory, the parents' handbook, and during parent meetings, among others.

We are excited this year about having all our new and returning children dressed in their program-approved, color-coordinated uniforms for our Center-Based program options.

Again, the Board and I are enthusiastic about welcoming you to WEOC, Inc.'s Community Action Agency Head Start/Early Head Start Family. We thank you for allowing us to support you in giving your child(ren) a head start.



JAMES PASLEY
WEOC CEO/Executive Director



LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Parents and Guardians,

It is with immense pleasure to welcome you to the Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council (WEOC), Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Program school year! As the Program Director, I am truly honored to lead this phenomenal program dedicated to nurturing your child's early development.

We firmly believe that the early years are the most crucial for establishing a strong educational foundation. A cornerstone of this foundation is the powerful partnership between home and school. As the renowned educator Dorothy Rich wisely stated, "The most important thing a school can do is to create a partnership with parents." This partnership is not just beneficial; it's vital for ensuring your child's optimal educational experience and success. We echo the sentiment of James P. Comer, who emphasized, "No significant learning can occur without a significant relationship." We strive to build those significant relationships with each of our families.

Our dedicated staff at WEOC, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start is committed to continuous learning and implementing best practices through ongoing professional development. This ensures we are equipped with the latest skills and knowledge to best serve your child's unique needs. We also warmly welcome and encourage your involvement through our Parent Committee and Policy Council. This collaboration is essential for strengthening the ongoing connection between home and school, creating a unified support system for your child.

To keep you informed and engaged, we've prepared this parent handbook. It's filled with helpful information about our program services, school announcements, and policies and procedures. We encourage you to review it thoroughly. Maintaining clear and consistent communication between home and school is paramount to our program's success, so please don't hesitate to contact the WEOC, Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start Office at 843-234-4100 with any questions you may have.

We are excited to embark on a successful and productive school year with you and your child. We're integrating new technology, implementing cutting-edge best practices to support academic growth, and utilizing individualized instructional strategies to meet every child where they are. Thank you for your cooperation, support, and valuable suggestions for improvement.

We look forward to a year of growth, learning, and strong partnerships!

Carletta Scott Isreal

CARLETTA SCOTT ISREAL
Head Start/Early Head Start
Program Director





Leadership Team



James Pasley

WEOC Executive Director
james.pasley@weoc.org



Carletta Scott Isreal

Program Director
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Nancy Moore

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Shanta Dixon

Literacy Mentor Coach Specialist
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Steve Rosetto

Facilities Specialist
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Family Services Team

Our Family Services Team is here to be your dedicated partner. They work to build a strong, supportive relationship with your family, focusing on your unique strengths and goals. Think of them as your guide to resources, connecting you to valuable community services for everything from parenting support to housing or employment assistance.

They'll help you set and achieve family goals, understand your child's development, and navigate transitions. Our team is committed to your family's well-being and success, providing a confidential space for any questions or concerns.

Shelia White Dicks

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Tiara Estinvil

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General Operations and Contact Information

Early Head Start

Early Head Start is a federally funded community-based program designed to provide intricate care and developmental support for infants and toddlers ages six weeks to 36 months. The program was designed in 1994 by an Advisory Committee on Services for Families with Infants and Toddlers formed by the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

In addition to providing or linking families with needed services—medical, mental health, nutrition, and education—Early Head Start provides a place for children to experience nurturing relationships and ongoing routines. Infants and toddlers are provided exceptional care in an environment that is safe and inviting. They are also offered developmental experiences conducive to optimal success. Upon reaching the age of 3 years, the children are transitioned to Head Start where they are met with sustained support and are encouraged to continue their developmental journey.



Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded, community-based program dedicated to promoting the school readiness of children from birth to age five from low-income families. Established in 1965 as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, the program supports the comprehensive development of children in a family-centered approach.

Beyond offering educational services, Head Start connects families with vital resources, including health, nutrition, and mental health support. It provides a stimulating and secure environment where children build foundational skills and cultivate positive relationships. Children in Head Start are given opportunities for enriching developmental experiences that prepare them for kindergarten and beyond. Many children transition to Head Start after participating in Early Head Start, ensuring a continuum of support throughout their early developmental years.



Hours of Operation

For Children

Monday - Friday

Head Start - 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM

Early Head Start - 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM

For Staff

Monday - Friday

Admin Office - 8:30 A.M. – 5:00 PM

Early Head Start - 8:00 A.M. – 4:30 PM

Holiday Closings

NEW YEAR'S DAY

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY

PRESIDENT'S DAY

GOOD FRIDAY

SPRING BREAK

MEMORIAL DAY

JUNETEENTH DAY

JULY 4th WEEK (EHS CLOSED)

2ND WEEK IN AUGUST (EHS CLOSED)

PRE-SERVICE TRAINING FOR STAFF

LABOR DAY

ELECTION DAY

VETERANS DAY

THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY



Center Directory

Andrews Head Start Center

Lead Teacher: Debbie Rhue
County: Georgetown
Address: 13072 County Line Road
Andrews, SC 29510
Phone: 843-264-3419
Fax: 843-264-5511

Green Sea Head Start Center

Center Supervisor: Chantel McNeil
County: Horry
Address: 1131 Green Sea Road N.
Green Sea, SC 29545
Phone: 843-756-4768 or 4770
Fax: 843-756-4771

Chavis Early Head Start Center

EHS Interim Supervisor – Shelia W. Dicks
County: Williamsburg
Address: 2811 S. State; Highway 41/51
Hemingway, SC 29554
Phone: 843-558-7307 or 7308
Fax: 843-558-7539

Lane Head Start Center

Center Supervisor: Vacant
County: Williamsburg
Address: 175 Edwin Road
Lane, SC 29564
Phone: 843-387-5893, 5897, 6310
Fax: 843-387-5898

Chavis Head Start Center

Lead Teacher: Vacant
County: Williamsburg
Address: 2811 S. State Highway 41/51
Hemingway, SC 29554
Phone: 843-558-7307 or 7308
Fax: 843-558-7539

Longs Head Start Center

Center Supervisor: Briana Knapp
County: Horry
Address: 131 Freemont Road
Longs, SC 29568
Phone: 843-399-3220 or 3401
Fax: 843-399-2029

Choppee Head Start Center

Center Supervisor: Shiquanna Knowlin
County: Georgetown
Address: 8055 Choppee Road
Georgetown, SC 29440
Phone: 843-485-4231 or 4232
Fax: 843-485-4234

Waccamaw Head Start Center

Lead Teacher: Ebony Evans
County: Horry
Address: 2050 Highway 501 East
Conway, SC 29526
Phone: 843-349-7825 or 7827
Fax: 843-349-7826

Georgetown Head Start Center

Center Supervisor: Cynthia Washington
County: Georgetown
Address: 410 S. Kaminski Street, Building C
Georgetown, SC 29440
Phone: 843-545-1272 or 1390
Fax: 843-545-1410

Myrtle Beach Head Start

Boys and Girls Club of the Grand Strand
County: Horry
Address: 1000 Dunbar Street, Myrtle Beach,
SC 29577
Phone: 843-839-1278
Fax: 843-839-2949

How We Learn and Grow

Staff to Child Ratio

Each Head Start classroom is staffed with one teacher, one assistant and a volunteer when possible.

- Four year old classes have up to twenty (20) children with a ratio of ten (10) children to one (1) staff.
- Three (3) year old classes are limited to a maximum of seventeen (17) children with a ratio of nine (9) children to one (1) staff.

Each Early Head Start classroom is staffed with two (2) caregivers and a volunteer when possible. An Early Head Start classroom has eight (8) children with a ratio of four (4) children to one (1) staff.



Our Curriculum

The Creative Curriculum balances both teacher-directed and child-initiated learning, with an emphasis on responding to children’s learning styles and build on their strengths and interest. This curriculum applies the latest theory and research on best practices in teaching and learning and the content standards developed by state and professional organizations. While keeping the original environmentally-based approach it clearly defines the teacher’s vital role in connecting content, teaching, and learning for preschool children.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool translates new research and theory from the field of early childhood education into a practical, easy-to-understand approach to working with children and their families. It is a comprehensive curriculum with a clear organizational structure and a particular focus on interest areas.

“Play is the work of young children”

Play provides the foundation for academic or “school” learning. It is the preparation children need before they learn highly abstract symbols such as letters (which are symbols for sounds) And numbers (which are symbols for number concepts). Play enables us to achieve the key goals of our early childhood curriculum. Play is the work of young children.

Our Philosophy

The philosophy behind our curriculum is that young children learn best by doing. Learning isn’t just repeating what someone else says; it requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in.

In their early years, children explore the world around them by using all their senses (touching, tasting, listening, smelling, and looking).

In using real materials such as blocks and trying out their ideas, children learn about sizes, shapes, and colors and they notice relationships between things.

In time, they learn to use one object to stand for another. This is the beginning of symbolic thinking. For example, they might pretend a stick is an airplane or a block is a hamburger. These early symbols, the stick and the block, are similar in shape to the objects they represent. Gradually children become more and more able to use abstract symbols like words to describe their thoughts and feelings. They learn to “read” pictures which are symbols of real people, places, and things. This exciting development in symbolic thinking takes place during the pre-school years as children play.

Our Curriculum Goals

The most important goal of our early childhood curriculum is to help children become enthusiastic learners. This means encouraging children to be active and creative explorers who are not afraid to try out their ideas and to think their own thoughts. Our goal is to help children become independent, self-confident, inquisitive learners. We are teaching them how to learn, not just in preschool, but all through their lives. We are allowing them to learn at their own pace and in the ways that are best for them. We are teaching them good habits and attitudes, particularly a positive sense of themselves, which will make a difference throughout their lives. Our curriculum identifies goals in all areas of development:

Social: To help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are a part of a group.

Emotional: To help children experience pride and self-confidence, develop independence and self-control, and have a positive attitude towards life.

Cognitive: To help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills such as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, and use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.

Physical: To help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

The activities we plan for children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and talk with children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of our curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.

Our Approach to Literacy

Research shows that early literacy activities are imperative for all children to be able to read fluently by the third grade. It shows that children who cannot read well by the third grade rarely catch up with their peers. Waccamaw E.O.C., Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start promotes literacy for the families they serve. Information and trainings are offered throughout the school year with ideas for how to enhance literacy development in the home. Reading daily with children is the most important way to build language skills. Be a great role model by reading along with your children. Make reading a fun-time. Allow siblings to read to the little ones. This will foster the enjoyment for reading and will help increase older siblings reading skills. As children are being read to, they hear new vocabulary and new concepts; this will inspire children to want to read.

Waccamaw E.O.C., Inc. Head Start/Early Head Start uses a researched based curriculum, the Creative Curriculum, to give children a solid foundation in Language and Literacy Development along with the other areas of development: Social-Emotional, Physical, Cognitive, Mathematics,

Science and Technology, Social Studies, Art and English Language Acquisition. The curriculum empowers teachers with strategies to support early literacy development through:

- Talking, Singing, Playing with Language
- Reading
- Storytelling and Story Retelling
- Writing
- Meaningful Play
- Studies: Using Literacy to Learn

The Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework addresses the domain of Language and Literacy skills through various sub-domains. The sub-domains are accomplished throughout the early learning years of development before children enter kindergarten. These sub-domains for Literacy are as follows:

- Attending and Understanding
- Communication and Speaking
- Vocabulary
- Emergent Literacy
- Phonological Awareness
- Print and Alphabet Knowledge
- Comprehensive and Text Structure
- Writing

School Readiness

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children’s learning, and schools are ready for children. Historically, Head Start often has led the early childhood field with a strong, clear, and comprehensive focus on all aspects of healthy development, including physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, all of which are essential to children getting ready for school. All agencies are required to establish school readiness goals which are defined as “the expectations of children’s status and progress across domains of language and literacy development, cognition and general knowledge, approaches to learning, physical health and well-being and motor development, and social and emotional development that will improve readiness for kindergarten goals and appropriately reflect the ages of children, birth to five, participating in the program. Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and in life.

For parents and families, school readiness means they are engaged in the long-term, lifelong success of their child. Head Start recognizes that parents are their children’s primary teachers and advocates. Programs are required to consult with parents in establishing school readiness goals. As Head Start programs and schools work together to promote school readiness and to engage families as their children make the transition to kindergarten, schools will be ready for children.

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It’s incredible to see the progress my child has made thanks to the curriculum at Head Start. She comes home so excited to tell me about her day, and I’ve really noticed how much her creativity and social skills have blossomed.

- HEAD START PARENT



Home Visits and Conferences

Parents are their children's first teachers and your input in their education is essential. Therefore, you are encouraged to be fully engaged in all Home Visits and Parent/Teacher Conferences. These conferences and visits will cover your child's developmental progress, classroom adjustments and integration of our other components. Home Visits and Parent/Teacher Conferences are held at least three times during the school year. It is our goal to build respectful relationships with each of our parents and develop a broad understanding of every child in our program. Home Visits and Parent Conferences will support your role as the primary teacher and caregiver.

Developmental Screenings

As part of our commitment to providing high-quality, comprehensive early childhood education and family support, Waccamaw EOC Head Start/Early Head Start utilizes the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ-3) and the Ages & Stages Questionnaires®: Social-Emotional, Second Edition (ASQ:SE-2) to support your child's healthy development and school readiness. All children will receive a developmental screening within 45 calendar days of entering school. Additional screenings may be conducted throughout the year if developmental concerns arise or if requested by parents or staff.

The ASQ-3 is a developmental screening tool designed to identify your child's strengths and any areas where they may need support. It focuses on five key developmental areas:

- Communication – How your child understands and uses language
- Gross Motor – How they move their arms, legs, and whole body
- Fine Motor – How they use hands and fingers to do tasks
- Problem Solving – How they explore, play, and figure things out
- Personal-Social – How they interact with others and take care of themselves

The ASQ:SE-2 is a screening tool designed to understand your child's social and emotional development. It focuses on your child's social-emotional development, including:

- Expressing emotions
- Managing behavior
- Building relationships
- Coping with changes and challenges

Early identification of developmental delays or concerns allows us to provide timely support and connect families with appropriate resources. The screenings are not tests. They are tools that guide us in learning more about your child and how to support their learning and well-being.

Both the ASQ-3 and ASQ:SE-2 are parent-completed questionnaires that takes about 10-15 minutes to complete. Staff are available to assist with any questions.

THANK YOU
LEANS

Music
La Música



Our Daily Schedule

Predictable environments offer children a sense of security and responsibility. In a setting such as Waccamaw E.O.C., Inc. Head Start/ Early Head Start classrooms where arrival, small group time, work time, meal time, rest time and departure are dealt with consistently by teachers offering children a sense of security and responsibility. Secure children thrive in organized environments where teachers follow a schedule that is consistent, yet flexible enough to respond to children's individual needs.

The daily schedule blocks out time and establishes a sequence for routines and experiences. When the daily schedule suits the children's individual and group needs, classroom life proceeds smoothly and enjoyable for everyone. A good schedule for preschool children is balanced. It offers choices and a range of activities, some initiated by children and others planned by teachers.

Head Start Daily Schedule

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00 a.m.	Arrival/Preparation for Breakfast
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast/Personal Needs
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Large Group/Read Aloud
9:30 a.m.-10:50 a.m.	Choice Time/Small Group
10:50 a.m.-11:20 a.m.	Outside Time/Physical Activity
11:20 a.m.-11:30 a.m.	Preparation for Lunch/Nursery Rhymes
11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.	Lunch Time/Personal Needs
12:00 p.m.-12:30 p.m.	Outside Time/Physical Activity
12:30 p.m.-1:30 p.m.	Rest Time
1:30 p.m. -1:45 p.m.	Snack Time
1:45 p.m. -2:00 p.m.	Prepare for Departure
2:00 p.m. -3:00 p.m.	Teachers Planning Time
3:00 p.m.	Teachers Departure
4:30 p.m.	Center Closed

Early Head Start Daily Schedule

Early Morning

8:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

- Arrival/Greet Parents and Children
- Communication with Parents, Complete BB form
- Daily Health Check, Hand Washing
- Help Children and Parents say Good-Bye
- Breakfast
- Individual Diapering/Toileting/Hand washing
- Preventive Dental Care
- Encourage the children to Explore the Environment and material in their own way
- Individual Activities (Teacher-directed, Self-initiated)
- Meeting Creative Curriculum Goals

Late Morning

9:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

- Individual Nap
- Individual Activities
- Outdoor play, Buggy ride, Walk
- Meal *Preventive Dental Care
- Individual Diapering/ Toileting/ Hand Washing

Midday

11:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Lunch

Afternoon

12:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

- Afternoon Routine Care
- Individual Diapering/Toileting/Hand Washing
- Preventive Dental Care
- Individual Nap
- Individual Activities
- Outdoor Play, Buggy Ride, Walk
- Meal/Snack individualized to meet each child's needs
- Meeting Creative Curriculum Goals
- Wake up and cuddle time
- Help Parents and Children reunite and Leave for Home

How We Manage The Environment

Discipline and Behavior Management

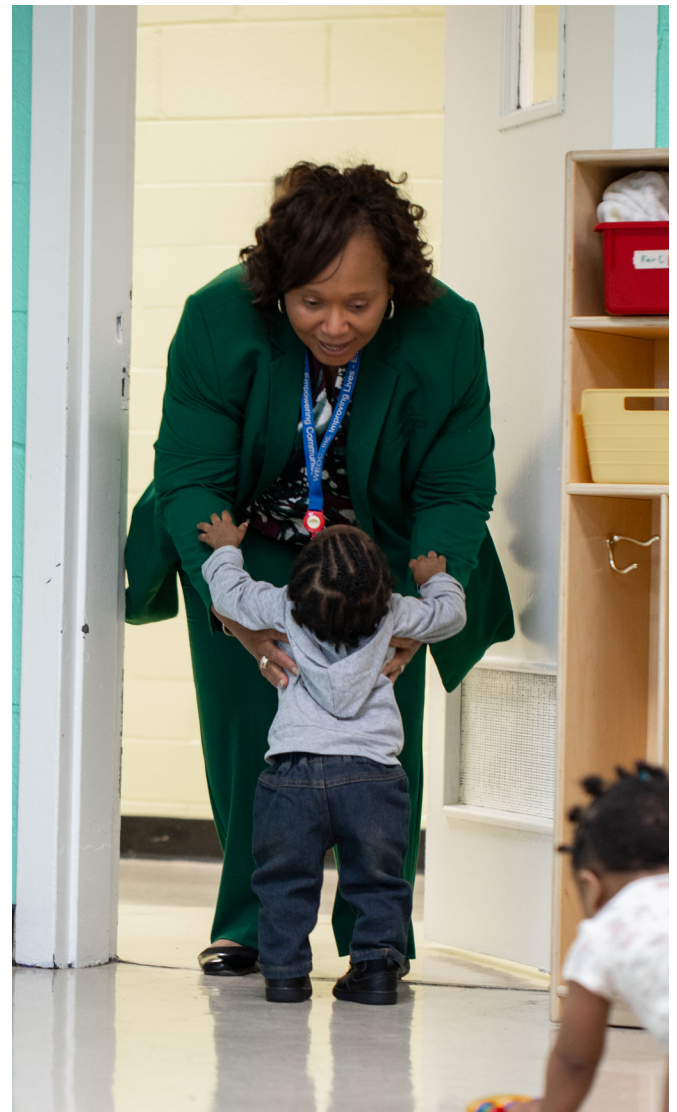
The use of corporal punishment is forbidden in the HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM. Teachers may not totally isolate children, withhold physical activity or use food as a reward or a method of punishment. Behavioral expectations are based on age and development; teachers use consistency, fairness and patience. Encouragement and redirection are used to influence positive behaviors. If necessary, a parent will be asked to assist if there is a constant behavior problem.

Waccamaw EOC Head Start/Early Head Start program is committed to fostering the social-emotional development and well-being of all children.

Consistency.

Fairness.

Patience.



Dress Codes

Children

- All children should be neat and clean.
- All children should be dressed appropriately for the weather and the classroom environment.
- Beads and other small hair pieces (such as bobby pins) should not be worn in any child's hair.
- Children are allowed to wear post/stud earrings only. All jewelry such as hoops/dangling earrings, necklaces or bracelets are not allowed.
- Children should not wear any type of shoes that do not buckle, tie or fit securely such as flip flops or heels. Closed in shoes are preferred and crocs must be worn in sport mode.
- We ask that children do not wear rompers/jumpsuits to lessen the chances of an accident when using the restroom.
- The Dress Code Policy for WEOC, Inc. Head Start Students is navy bottoms and white or red tops. Children are to wear uniforms Monday-Thursday.

Parents

- All parents should be neat and clean.
- All parents should be dressed appropriately for the school environment. (No pajamas, nightgowns, tank tops/camisoles or pants hanging down below the waist)
- Parents should not wear hair rollers or bonnets into the school environment.



How We Keep Children Healthy

Health Services

At Head Start, your child’s health and well-being are a top priority. We provide comprehensive health services designed to support their physical, dental, and mental health, ensuring they are healthy and ready to learn. Our program offers essential screenings, connects families with medical and dental homes, and provides nutritious meals and snacks. We work closely with parents to address individual health needs, promote healthy habits, and link families with community resources for ongoing care.

Specifically we provide:

- Vision, hearing, and speech screenings and follow-up treatment if needed.
- Dental examination every six months and preventive care and treatment if necessary.
- Physical examination and treatment if necessary (including Lead Screening).
- Early Head Start well child check-up and immunizations at 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18 and 24 months of age.

Screenings

45 Days	Immunizations Speech Hearing	Blood Pressure Height/Weight Vision	90 Days	Physical Examination Dental Examination Lead Screening
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Care for Mildly Ill Children

If your child becomes ill or is injured while at school to the extent that he/she requires medical attention, we will take your child to the doctor. However, we will contact you first. We would like for you to accompany your child if possible. In the event we are unable to locate you and the situation warrants immediate attention, the staff will act as deemed necessary.

Dispensing Medication

Medication prescribed by a physician will be given during school hours with written permission from the parent. Medication **MUST** be in its original container having the name of the medication, child's name and the dosage.

Medication may be administered at Head Start/Early Head Start when needed. Parents must complete a written medication permission form. A Health Care provider must complete a physician instruction form for the medication. Only medications prescribed by a doctor or health care provider in the original container with complete instructions will be given. Medications can be given "only" as written on the container. If different instructions are given temporarily by the doctor, they must be put in writing and signed by the doctor. No over-the-counter medications will be given unless accompanied by a written request from the doctor or health care provider.

Persons designated to give medication are as follows:

- Health Manager or Nurse
- Center Supervisor, Center Supervisor Designee or Trained Staff.

Medications will be stored under lock and key to prohibit unauthorized access.



Emergency Medical Plan

While we hope emergencies never happen, we are fully prepared to act swiftly and effectively if a medical emergency arises. We have clear protocols in place and staff are regularly trained in first aid and emergency response to ensure your child's safety.

In case of an emergency that requires medical treatment, the following procedures will be implemented:

- Head Start Staff will make the child comfortable in a reassuring manner.
- Health Manager, Family Services Workers or Nurse will notify the parents/guardian or persons listed on the health record for emergency notification.
- Health Manager or Center Supervisor/EHS Manager will call 911 to transport injured or sick child to the emergency room.
- A Head Start/Early Head Start Staff must accompany the child and take the health information along with signed emergency treatment form to the emergency room.
- A parent must be present to obtain complete treatment for ill or injured child.
- The Head Start/Early Head Start Staff at the hospital will assure transportation of child and parent.
- Teaching Staff will complete accident report within 24 hours and file in classroom files and forward copy to Center Supervisor.
- The Health Manager/Nurse, or designated staff, will review and ensure that a copy of the report is forwarded to the Head Start Office.



Communicable Diseases

We understand that navigating communicable diseases can be challenging for families, and we are here to support you every step of the way. Our Head Start program has clear policies in place to help prevent the spread of illness and keep all children and staff healthy and safe. These guidelines are designed to protect our entire learning community while respecting your family's individual circumstances.

Communicable Disease Guidelines:

Chicken Pox – Child may return to school 5-7 days after the last vesicle has dried.

Diphtheria – Child may return to school 1-2 days with antibiotic treatment.

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) – Child may return to school 5-21 days after exposure.

Tetanus – Child may return to school within an average of 8 days after treatment.

Impetigo – Child may return to school 2-5 days after treatment or until lesions are healed.

Rubella – Child may return to school within 3-5 days.

Roseola Infantum – Child may return to school within 1-2 days after treatment.

Mumps – Child may return to school 9 days after treatment.

Ringworm – Child may return to school 24 hours after treatment begins.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) – Child may return to school 24 hours or 1 day after treatment begins.

Head Lice – Child should remain at home the first 24 hours and one day after treatment begins.

Scarlet Fever – Child should remain at home until the day after treatment begins.

Jaundice – Child should remain at home until treatment is completed and the attending physician states child may return.

Tuberculosis – Child may return to school after treatment has begun and the attending physician states child may return.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus – (RSV) – Child may return to 3-5 days after exposure if temperature is less than 99 degrees.

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD) – Child may return to school 3-5 days after exposure and blisters has cleared.

Diarrhea – Child must remain home until diarrhea has stopped and child is fever free.

Mental Health

Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. is committed to supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of all children, families, and staff involved in our Head Start and Early Head Start programs. If a teacher has concerns about your child's learning style or behavior, they will first speak with you to share observations. The teacher may then refer the concern to the Lead Teacher, Center Supervisor or Early Head Start Coordinator for further observation and support. Together, you and the staff will work to develop a plan that supports your child's needs.

If additional support is required, a referral to an outside agency may be recommended. No referrals will be made without your knowledge and written consent. We also encourage parents to bring up any concerns they may have about their child with the teacher or Family Services Worker at any time.

- Gathering valuable input from parents based on their observations of their child.
- Conducting observations by a qualified mental health professional for children who may show signs of behavioral or emotional concerns.
- Helping parents understand and respond appropriately to their child's behavior.
- Strengthening nurturing and supportive relationships both at home and in the classroom.
- Increasing parent awareness and understanding of common mental health topics.
- Ensuring parents are kept fully informed about any actions that may be taken regarding their child's behavioral or emotional development.
- Providing support for parents who identify concerns about their child's behavior.
- Offering consultations and guidance to both parents and teachers.
- Educating staff on typical child development and identifying behavior that may require additional support.
- Promoting children's emotional wellness through individual and group support activities, when needed.
- Raising awareness of children's mental health needs among staff and families.
- Assisting in the coordination of services for children with atypical behaviors or developmental patterns.



Children With Disabilities

Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. is committed to providing comprehensive support services for children with disabilities across the Georgetown, Horry, and Williamsburg school districts. Children are encouraged to participate fully in all program activities, with adaptations made to suit their individual abilities.

The primary goal of our Disability and Mental Health Services is to promote positive self-esteem, foster respect for individual differences, and help children develop appropriate social skills. Our Head Start and Early Head Start staff work diligently toward these goals by adhering to the objectives outlined in the Head Start Performance Standards

- Maximizing each child's potential through tailored services.
- Increasing staff and parent understanding of child growth and development.
- Supporting the emotional, cognitive, and social development of all children.
- Encouraging mental health activities aligned with children's developmental stages.
- Connecting families and staff with appropriate services and community resources.

Our Head Start/Early Head Start Special Services team supports children with disabilities, their families, and staff through a variety of initiatives:

- Creating individualized service plans.
- Actively recruiting children with special needs, conducting developmental assessments, and making referrals to Local Education Agencies (LEAs).
- Collaborating with Health Services to provide mass screenings for Head Start and Early Head Start participants.
- Coordinating formal evaluations for identified children.
- Engaging both parents and staff in the development and implementation of Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs).
- Ensuring facility accessibility for all children.
- Offering transition support for children with disabilities as they move into Head Start and later into kindergarten.

Approximately

1 in 6
Children

have a developmental delays

Approximately

15% of students

received special education and/
or related services



Nutrition

The emphasis on nutrition is to improve all aspects of the child's growth and development and to identify the problem areas and needs that must be addressed as it relates to nutrition.

The nutrition assessment data (height, weight and hemoglobin/hematocrit) will be obtained on each child. Children who are found with weight that is above the ninety-fifth (95th) or below the twenty-fifth (25th) percentile and whose hemoglobin/hematocrit is below normal (34% or 11%), the Nutrition Manager will provide parents with nutrition education materials and treatment strategies that can be followed at home to support the assessment and screening process. Parents will also be provided with information on other local resources such as the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman Infant and Children (WIC). Problems will be identified and resolved to the best of our ability.

Provisions will be made for children with food allergies, food intolerances, religious or personal reasons or special medical diet.

In order to protect the health and safety of our children, foods prepared outside the center are prohibited. Outside food poses potential risk to children with food allergies and may cause food-borne illness. Because nutritional needs are met during mealtimes, parents will not be allowed to bring or send extra food for their child.



Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

How We Approach Transportation

Bus Riders

We are incredibly grateful and proud to offer bus transportation for your children, recognizing the vital role it plays in getting them safely to and from our program. While this service provides convenience and accessibility, it comes with essential safety rules and policies that we must all follow. These guidelines are in place to ensure every child's well-being and a secure environment for everyone on board:

- Parents are asked to notify the Head Start Center when a child will not be attending school.
- Parents are asked to notify the Head Start Center one week in advance if moving out of the area.
- When there is a change or transportation problem in the pick-up or drop-off of a child, a written notice must be given to the bus driver, Center Supervisor or Family Services Worker by the parent each family is allowed ONE bus change per year.
- Children should be dressed and ready when the bus arrives. All bus routes begin at 7:00 AM.
- When a child misses the bus, it is the responsibility of the parent to have the child at the center as soon as possible to avoid missing daily routines. Children attending sites located in public schools should arrive by 8:15 AM. This rule also applies to children using private transportation.
- The bus is NOT allowed to wait any longer than three seconds at each stop.
- Adults MUST accompany children crossing the street "in front of the bus".
- Only Head Start children, staff and other authorized volunteers will be allowed to ride the bus.
- No eating, drinking, or smoking is allowed on the bus.
- Children should not bring any articles such as book bags, food, money, pencils, toys, etc. on the bus. These items could pose danger/injury to the child and/or others.
- A custodial parent, legal guardian, or designated adult who is listed in the child's Family Services records by the parent MUST be in place at the time of drop-off. A picture ID must be presented by any adult unfamiliar to staff in order to receive the child.

Car Riders

These guidelines are in place to ensure every child's well-being and a secure environment for drop off and pick up:

- Parents, guardians or designated persons **MUST** accompany child into the center and deliver him/her directly to the classroom staff. This is necessary in order for Head Start/Early Head Start to assume responsibility for child/children.
- Head Start/Early Head Start requires that the person who drops off and/or picks up the child **MUST** sign the child in and out upon arrival and departure. At the time of departure, a picture ID must be presented by any adult unfamiliar to staff in order to receive the child/ren; must be at least 18 years old to pick up a child.
- Each child is required to attend school every day unless he/she is sick or there is a family emergency. Please contact the center or your Family Services Worker if your child will be absent or tardy.
- Please allow your child to benefit from a full day of activities which are scheduled from 8:00 AM until 2:30 PM. Early Head Start daily activities are scheduled from 8:00 AM until 3:00 PM. It is the responsibility of the parent to have the child at the center as soon as possible to avoid missing daily routines.
- If a child is continuously picked up late, a conference with the parent and Family Services staff will be held.

Late Pick Up

We ask that parents make every effort to have designated persons to pick up their child on time. The following procedure is used when a child is not picked up at the end of the day:

- Center staff will notify the Center Supervisor of child/children who are left at the center after dismissal or at the completion of the bus route.
- After three incidents of not picking up your child/children on time, a conference will be held with the parent and appropriate staff to support parents in identifying resources to resolve the issue.
- Under no circumstances will a staff member take a child to his/her home. If an authorized parent/caretaker can be reached, but does not have transportation to pick the child up or for any reason that a child is not picked up from his/her stop upon delivery, that child will be transported back to the center on the bus only. Under no circumstances will a child be transported in any type vehicle other than a bus or authorized vehicle.
- The Supervising Teacher/Caregiver or administrator will post a sealed note on the center door addressed to the parent indicating where the child has been taken.
- After following the proper protocol and all attempts to contact parent and emergency contacts have failed; further actions may be authorized by Director or Family Services Manager.

How We Keep Children Safe

Mandated Reporting

Our staff are considered mandated reporters of child abuse and neglect and are required to make a report of any reasonable suspicion of abuse or neglect.

Emergency Drill Plan

An evacuation plan is posted in each classroom at every Head Start/Early Head Start Center. All staff will become familiar with the plan prior to the beginning of the school year. Our emergency drills include signals such as: prolonged blasting of the fire alarm, flashing emergency exit signs and/or the ringing of a bell. Following the emergency signals, all persons will leave the building in an orderly manner and assemble approximately 50 feet from the building. Teachers will conduct a roll call according to the class rosters. The Center Supervisor and/or designated person will be responsible for checking the building and allowing staff and children to return into the building.

Safety Drills: The program shall comply with the State Fire Regulations and Codes. Fire, tornado and hurricane drills will be conducted monthly. Procedures for evacuating the building are posted at each site. Additionally, a stocked evacuation bag containing needed supplies is located at each site.

Emergency First Aid/CPR: In case of minor injury, staff will administer basic first aid using only water for cleansing and a Band-Aid and/or ice pack for covering. The parent will be notified immediately. The incident will be documented on the Injury Report Form with a copy given to the parent. There is at least one staff trained in CPR/First Aid per class and at least one CPR/First Aid certified staff on the premises at all times.

Safety. Protection. Well-being

Tracking

Diligent supervision of children is critical to preventing accidents and ensuring safety. All staff are to observe, support, and enforce the following steps regarding the supervision of children.

Children must be in visual supervision by two (2) qualified staff/volunteers at all times. Staff will call the roll and count children before leaving the classroom and before leaving any outside areas.

Active supervision of children includes staff positioning and repositioning themselves as the children move throughout the environment. Visual supervision must be maintained at all times including secluded play areas, tunnels, playhouse, and areas of high traffic and high mobility.

Inclement Weather

If Head Start/Early Head Start is being dismissed because of inclement weather or any other emergency, it will be announced over the radio and television stations. When inclement weather (heavy rain, ice, snow, etc.) occurs prior to the opening of school, you will receive timely updates on possible closures or delays.



How We Engage Families & Communities

Our Commitment

The Family Services Component will serve as a link between Head Start/Early Head Start and the child's family. Contacts will be made with each family to become better acquainted. The Family Services Staff works closely with families to help them with concerns relating to health, nutrition, disability, employment, child care, and education. Families with special concerns/needs not related to Head Start/Early Head Start content areas will be referred to other community resources for assistance.

The Family Services Staff will also monitor attendance on a daily basis. They will contact the family of a child who is absent or whose attendance is irregular. We look forward to building a partnership with our parents during the upcoming year. We invite you to visit the Family Services office in your local Head Start/Early Head Start Center.

Policy Council Representatives

As a chosen leader you will learn about how Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) operates, the mandates we have to follow and internal policies and procedures to ensure we meet or exceed Federal Performance Standards. Performance Standards are the guidelines that all HS/EHS programs must meet. How each program meets the Performance Standard is individualized to the need and resources of their community. Policy Council members will have many opportunities for direct involvement in:

- Promoting school readiness for preschoolers
- Decision-making in planning, and operating the program
- Developing and planning activities for parent and family engagement
- Advocating for Head Start and early childhood education

Policy Council is responsible for program design and operations, long and short term goals, approving hire recommendations, policies, funding applications and activities that support school readiness, and parent and family engagement.

Head Start/Early Head Start Parent Rights

As a parent of a child in Head Start or Early Head Start you have the following rights:

- To take part in major policy decision affecting the planning and operation of the Head Start program.
- To help develop adult programs that will improve daily living for you and your family.
- To be welcome in the classroom and into other areas of the program.
- To be informed regularly about child's progress in Head Start/Early Head Start.
- To be treated with respect and dignity.
- To expect guidance for my child from the Head Start Staff which will help his/her total individual development.
- To be able to learn about the operation of the program, including the budget and the level of education and experience required to fill various staff position.
- To take part in planning and implementing programs designed to increase parent skills in areas of possible employment.
- To be informed about all community resources concerned with health, education, and improvement of my family's life.
- Open Door Policy-free and full access must be granted to parents of children enrolled unless court order stipulates otherwise. The visit must not disrupt instructional activities or classroom routines

Head Start/Early Head Start Parent Responsibilities

As a parent of a child in Head Start or Early Head Start you have the following responsibilities:

- To learn as much as possible about the program and to take part in major policy decisions.
- To accept Head Start as an opportunity which can improve my life and my child/children life.
- To take part in classroom as an observer, a volunteer, or as a paid staff and to contribute my services in whatever way I can toward enrichment of the total program.
- To welcome teachers and other staff into their home to discuss ways in which parents can help in the development of their child/children at home in relation to school experience.
- To work with the teachers, support staff and other, parents in a cooperative manner.
- To offer constructive suggestions to the program, to defend it against unfair criticism and to share in evaluating it.
- To send your child to Head Start everyday he/she is able to attend.
- To notify the center when your child will be absent.
- To send a note or doctor's excuse when you child is absent from the center for three or more consecutive days.
- To notify the Family Services Staff when there is an emergency situation or change in household status such as death of a family member, addition of persons living in the household, change in TANF status or benefits, move to new address, marriage or separation of parents, change in telephone number(s), etc.

Family Engagement

The functions of the Family Engagement content area represent an organized method of assisting and supporting parents for growth, so they can identify their own strengths, needs and interests, and find their own solutions. Parents and Family Services staff form engagement agreements that are driven by parent's identification of their own family's strengths and needs. We collaborate with partners in our local communities. In order to provide the highest level of services to children and their families The engagement agreement process provides opportunities for families to set goals and design an individual approach for achieving those goals. The Family Services component is responsible for the following:

- Family goal setting
- Accessing community services and resources
- Parent involvement in educational, health, nutrition, and mental health activities
- Parent involvement in community advocacy
- Parent involvement in transition activities
- Parent involvement in home visits
- Providing opportunities for training
- Assist or provide opportunity to establish Health Advisory Committee
- Conduct Family Engagement Agreement Process
- Recruitment and enrollment regardless of race, sex, creed, color, religion, or national origin
- ERSEA process: E-Eligibility, R-Recruitment, S-Selection, E-Enrollment, A-Attendance

Parent or Community Grievance

Head Start/Early Head Start recognizes the importance of establishing procedures for handling grievances in an orderly equitable manner. The program has established the following procedures for filing grievances. The aggrieved parent or community person has a right to file grievances under these procedures without fear of reprisal.

A Parent/Community grievance must first be discussed with the Center Manager. Every effort will be made to settle the problem at this level. In the event the grievance is not resolved at this level, an appeal may be made to the appropriate manager on the next level of staff personnel.

The appeal to the next level of the program must be presented within ten (10) working days from the date of action upon which the grievance is based.

The written grievance must contain the following:

- A statement describing the grievance action
- The date of the grievance action
- The date the matter was brought to the attention of the staff person
- The action taken by the staff person concerning the grievance
- The relief request by the aggrieved parent/community person

If the grievance is not resolved within fifteen (15) working days at this level, an appeal may then be made to the Head Start/Early Head Start Director's level. In the event the Head Start/Early Head Start Director is the staff person who hears the grievance at the previous level, the next step of the appeal shall be made to the Executive Director.

The appeal to the Executive Director must be made within ten (10) days of the decision of the Head Start/Early Head Start Director. If needed, the next step of appeal shall be to the Policy Council. The Policy Council may schedule a hearing date or refer the matter to a special committee appointed to hear the matter. The meeting at this level shall be conducted within forty-five (45) working days from the date the appeal is received by the Policy Council. The appeal shall be in writing and a copy provided by the aggrieved parent/community person to the Executive Director. The Executive Director and/or the Head Start/Early Head Start Director will provide the Policy Council with all documents relevant to the grievance. The hearing shall be conducted as informally as possible and within the time constraints and manner set by the Policy Council or committee appointed to hear the grievance. The aggrieved parent/community person will be responsible for presenting the grievance within these guidelines to the Policy Council.



Parent Committee Officers

Each Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) center elects a Parent Committee at the beginning of each school year. The role of the Parent Committee assists in organizing activities throughout the year, provide support to the staff when needed by volunteering, and aids in recruiting children for the HS/EHS program. The Parent Committee is made up of the following:

President - Conducts the monthly Parent Meetings and helps coordinate center activities

Vice President - Works with President and stands in at monthly Parent Meetings when the President is unable to attend

Secretary - Takes minutes of each monthly Parent Meeting and reads back the previous month's meeting minutes

Health Advisory Representative - Assist the Health Manger with sharing important health information & policies with other parents



Parent and Community Volunteers

All Head Start Volunteers are encouraged and given the opportunity to participate in the classroom and other program activities. Parental involvement is an essential component of the Head Start program. We are grateful to the family and community members, who volunteer, assist and support Head Start.

Head Start needs volunteers! Please contact your Child's Teacher, Center Manager or Family Services Worker and tell them you are interested in volunteering. Waccamaw Economic Opportunity, Inc. will implement health and safety guidelines in accordance to CDC recommendations and agency policies.

How you can volunteer:

- Assist in the classroom
- Read to children
- Assist with escorting children on field trips
- Supervise playground activities
- Decorate bulletin boards
- Teach music or art activities
- Assist with health screening
- Assist with menu planning, meal preparation and serving
- Assist teacher with nutrition activities
- Assist parent or children who have disability
- Assist with recruitment of Head Start/Early Head Start Children
- Help make parents aware of community resources
- Monitor buses

It takes a *village* to raise a child.

We know you are your child's first and most important teacher and we are proud to be part of your village, partnering with you to nurture your child's bright future.

Thank you for being an invaluable partner in your child's early learning journey. Here at the Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council Head Start and Early Head Start, we are honored to walk alongside you, supporting your family's growth and your child's development every step of the way. Remember, this handbook is just one tool; our dedicated staff, and especially your Family Services Team, are always here to answer questions, offer guidance, and connect you with resources. We believe in your family's strength and look forward to celebrating many more milestones together as your child continues to learn, grow, and thrive.



Waccamaw Economic Opportunity Council, Incorporated
The Community Action Agency Serving Horry, Georgetown and Williamsburg Counties