



PARENT HANDBOOK

2025-2026



COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, INC.
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START OF
THE LEHIGH VALLEY
WWW.CSCINC.ORG

Head Start and Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley

Community Services for Children, Inc.

1520 Hanover Avenue

Allentown, PA 18109

Phone: 610-437-6000 | Fax: 610-437-6500

| Classroom Information | |
|--|--------------------------|
| Name of My Child's Site: | |
| My Child's Classroom: | |
| Site Address: | |
| Classroom Telephone Number: | |
| Classroom Hours: | |
| Classroom Teacher(s): | |
| Classroom Assistant Teacher: | |
| Manager of Teacher: | |
| Home Visitor: | |
| Manager of Home Visitor: | |
| Site Information | |
| To enter the building/site: | |
| Site Security information: | |
| Parking information: | |
| Emergency Evacuation site: | |
| Bus Information <i>(If applicable)</i> | |
| Bus Driver: | |
| Bus Stop: | |
| Bus Times: | AM Pick Up: PM Drop Off: |
| First Family Workshop Date: | |

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WELCOME TO HEAD START OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY



A Program of Community Services for Children

Congratulations & Welcome to Head Start/Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley!

Our Head Start/Early Head Start team is excited that you and your child enrolled in our program! Together, we will partner with you to help your child and family to be successful in learning and in life through experiences tailored to your strengths and needs. It will be a year full of new friends, new ideas, and growth for everyone in your family.

We look forward to our partnership and believe that by working together, we can achieve great outcomes for your child and family.



Sandra Genzel
Vice President of Preschool Services

Who We Are and What We Believe

Head Start/Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley is a program of Community Services for Children. We have been partners with parents, children, and families since 1965, when the program began. Over 1,000 families, each year, become part of our Head Start family. Together we plan and provide quality-learning opportunities in the classroom, at home with families, and in collaboration with community partners throughout the Lehigh Valley. This involvement has made Head Start/Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley a success story for 60 years.

You are now part of that story.

Our program is based on certain beliefs about children, parents, and families.

We Believe:

Every child is unique and has their own learning style.

Every child can achieve and reach their full potential.

You are responsible for your child and family.

You are your child's first and most important teacher.

Your child is part of a family.

Strong families make strong communities.

All family members need to grow and develop.

Children, parents, and families have great value and strengths.

School Readiness Pledge

We define school readiness as, children ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children.

In Early Head Start, we will work together to support your child's development to;

- self-regulate
- develop close, secure personal relationships with adults and peers
- demonstrate a sense of self confidence
- communicate effectively
- demonstrate curiosity in pay attention to and explore people and objects in their environment

In Head Start, preparing children and families for Kindergarten is a key focus of our program. Over the course of the school year, we will partner together to stimulate and support your child's growth and development in areas that are important for school success.

Together we will ensure that your child:

- writes and recognizes their name
- communicates information and asks questions
- names colors and shapes
- identifies alphabet letters and their sounds
- identifies numbers and understands basic math ideas like "more or less"
- shows appreciation for books and reading
- independently uses the bathroom including dressing, hand-washing and tooth-brushing

We will support your child in developing:

- relationships with other children and adults
- self-control when managing behaviors
- a positive attitude toward learning
- persistence (ability to stay focused on a task)

We are excited to continue with you on this journey of learning and we look forward to a positive school experience. As a team we can help your child develop the skills and attitudes necessary for school success.

Accreditation

Accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children

The **National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)** is the largest organization worldwide working on behalf of young children to raise the quality of programs for children from birth through age eight. A major strategy to implement the mission of NAEYC has been the accreditation of programs through a process by which programs meet NAEYC national standards of quality in early childhood established beginning in 1985. These Early Childhood Program Standards are based on the latest research on the education and development of young children. These standards address: Relationships, Curriculum, Teaching, Assessment of Child Progress, Health, Teachers, Families, Community Relationships, Physical Environment, Leadership and Management.



NAEYC accreditation is an extensive process that includes self-study, staff and parent questionnaires, and classroom and program portfolios to evaluate the program against the NAEYC standards and criteria. When the program has completed self-assessment and believes that it meets the standards, program documentation is submitted to NAEYC. There is then an on-site visit to review all of the material and documentation as well as to observe the classrooms in operation. The results of the site visit and observation are submitted to NAEYC where a panel reviews the information and makes the final decision. If accreditation is granted, it is for a period of five years with reports due annually.

NAEYC accreditation is given by facility. 100% of the long term Head Start classrooms are accredited. Because of site changes, newer classroom sites are in the process of accreditation.

Accredited by the Middle States Commission on Elementary Schools

Middle States Association (MSA) of Colleges and Schools Commission (CESS) began as a response to the call for better quality and accountability in the public schools. Accreditation acts as an external, objective validation of school quality. The Middle States Commission is now recognized by the national educational community as the leader in improving the quality of education through accreditation. MSA now accredits programs from early childhood through post-secondary institutions.



Middle States accreditation is a process that uses recognized standards for self-study and evaluation, for improvement and providing growth experiences for staff. When the program is ready, there is a rigorous peer review process. MSA-CESS has a multi-tier review process to ensure consistency, objectivity and quality. Recommendations are made by the team, the MSA-CESS staff, an advisory committee, the Membership and Accreditation Committee and finally the full Commission to make a final accreditation decision.

Accreditation is given to a program for a period of seven years. Accredited schools are committed to ongoing school improvement and the planning process continues throughout the duration of the accreditation term.

Program Descriptions

Early Head Start

Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley offers Prenatal, Home-Based, and Center-Based options.

Prenatal Services – The program supports pregnant women and their families by providing weekly 1.5-hour visits. Comprehensive services are provided to support healthy pregnancies and positive childbirth outcomes. Topics include:

- Prenatal care
- Nutrition during pregnancy
- Breastfeeding
- Supportive postpartum care for parents and infant
- Fully involving fathers in the lives of their very young children, and
- Nurturing and responsive care during infancy

Home-Based Services – Early Head Start offers comprehensive home-based services to families and children, birth to 3 years, in Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton.

- Home Visitor (Child Development Partner) visit families in their homes once a week for 1.5 hours, year-round.
- Home Visitor support parents as their child's first teacher.
- Families attend Family Play Group, which is an opportunity for infants and toddlers to participate in a group setting and for families to socialize with one another.

Center-Based Services – Early Head Start, in partnership with Lehigh County Children and Youth Services offers a therapeutic center-based setting to children birth to 3 years.

- Children attend 6 hours, 5 days a week, 243 days a year.
- Children are transported in small buses and assigned to a specific car seat.
- Each classroom is staffed by two qualified therapeutic teachers and an assistant.
- Therapeutic Teachers complete 4 home visits and 2 parent/teacher conferences per year.
- Comprehensive home visits are provided minimally once a month, to provide families education and support.

Head Start and Pre-K Counts

- Our Head Start of the Lehigh Valley and Pre-K Counts programs offer comprehensive educational services for children ages 3–5 living in Northampton and Lehigh Counties.
- Children attend school 5 days a week, classroom hours and duration vary by program and location.
- Each classroom is staffed by 2 qualified teachers, as well as an Early Education Manager to monitor quality.
- Teachers complete home visits and parent/teacher conferences per year with families.
- Transportation options vary by classroom, and some classrooms are self-transport only.
- Comprehensive Family Engagement home visits and education are provided to all of our Head Start families, as well as opportunities to participate in program governance activities.
- Services are provided at no cost to income-eligible families.



LEARNING AND GROWING TOGETHER

Learning is a life-long process. In our programs, we support all efforts made by children, parents, and staff to learn more and become the best each of us can be. We have included many opportunities for you and your child to grow and to develop a strong parent/child relationship. Together, with the support of highly qualified teachers and a positive learning environment, we can make sure your child enters school ready to learn!

Daily Routines

Establishing daily routines helps to support your child's learning and feelings about being at school.

Daily Schedule

The daily schedule varies depending on the tone of the classroom and the needs of each individual child. All activities are guided and supported by teachers.

We have included a sample daily schedule, so you can get an idea of what your child's daily activities might look like.

| Early Head Start – Center-Based | Head Start |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrival• Handwashing/diapering• Breakfast• Tooth brushing• Morning individual and group activities• Gross Motor• Handwashing/diapering• Lunch• Nap• Snack/diapering• Afternoon activities• Dismissal | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrival• Hand washing• Breakfast• Tooth brushing• Morning Group Meeting/Second Step• Individualized/Small Group/Self-Selected Activities• Gross Motor/I am Moving I am Learning (IMIL)• Hand washing/Bathroom• Lunch• Afternoon Meeting• Individualized/Small Group/Self-Selected Activities• Gross Motor/Outdoor• Wrap-Up• Dismissal |

Outdoor Experience

Your child will go outdoors daily to explore their community, the surrounding environment, and to participate in planned outdoor experiences. We view the outdoors as an extension to the learning that takes place in our classrooms.

We will not take children out if:

- There is a cold, heat, or air quality advisory
- Temperatures are 25 degrees or below
- Temperatures are 90 degrees or above

Clothing

Classrooms are busy places with many activities such as painting, water and sand play, cooking, and outdoor play.

- Comfortable play clothes that are all right for your child to get messy.
- Dress your child according to the weather (boots, hats, mittens, coats, etc.)
- Easy for children to fasten and unfasten themselves for trips to the bathroom.
- Sneakers, no open toed shoes like sandals and flip-flops.

If your child does not have sneakers, please speak with the Home Visitor and they may be able to problem solve ways to help.

Classroom Set-Up

The classroom is set up so that your child can be independent and free to explore materials and activities. Our classroom environments are safe, predictable, fun and provide all the important resources for school readiness.

Curriculum/Curriculum Areas

Our high quality early childhood programs prepare your child for with school readiness skills. In our Early Head Start Center-Based classrooms we use *Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Twos* and in our Home-Based program we use *Partners for a Healthy Baby*. Our Head Start classrooms utilize a nationally recognized curriculum to individualize for your child's development, *Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers* as well as *Second Step*, a social-emotional curriculum and Child Protection Unit. It is our goal to help each child feel good about themselves, have a positive attitude about school and learning, and acquire the skills needed to function in the world. Play and learning will help your child grow socially and academically.

We help by:

- Encouraging your child to explore and experiment.
- Using ground rules as a model for encouraging positive ways of behaving.
- Offering choices.
- Providing activities that your child can complete and help them to clean up by themselves.
- Speaking positively to each child.
- Planning for each child individually.
- Involving parents in their child's education.

We provide learning opportunities that promote proficiency in math, science, social studies, creative arts, language and literacy, physical development and social/emotional development. The curriculum aligns with PA Early Learning Standards and implemented by teachers who meet all credentialing regulations.

Ground Rules

The classroom environment promotes development when all members observe and follow classroom ground rules.

- We use quiet voices inside.
- We walk inside.
- We use gentle hands.
- Our work is returned to the shelves.

Assessment

You are the source of information regarding your child's interests, skills and abilities. Teachers gather your input before they start working with your child. Throughout the year, teachers observe your child's language, skill development, choice of materials and their progress.

In our preschool and Early Head Start programs, your child's teacher or Home Visitor use an assessment tool called the *Desired Results Developmental Profile* or DRDP to gather information to support children's learning and development twice a year while observing children as they spend time in typical everyday activities and routines. You can participate in the DRDP assessment in several ways.

- Share with your child's teacher or Home Visitor the skills you see your child use every day
- Talk with your child's teacher or Home Visitor about your child's strengths and areas you want to focus on, and any adaptations
- Ask any questions that you might have about the DRDP results
- Talk to your child's teacher or Home Visitor about what to expect from your child's development
- Make sure that your child's knows about the adaptations your child uses every day

The DRDP measures child progress over time in the following areas of learning:

- Approaches to learning-self regulation
- Social and emotional development
- Language and literacy development
- Cognition, including math and science
- Physical development-health

Additionally, Head Start will assess:

- History-social science
- Visual and performing arts
- English language development

Individual Planning

Written observations document your child's questions, their discoveries and their involvement with materials. This information, along with input from you, the parent, is used to develop your child's individualized school readiness profile. Regularly, we review each child's progress and use teaching methods and learning activities that are best for each child.

Positive Guidance, Philosophy and Strategies

We use the *Second Step Curriculum* to help your child feel safe, develop independence, and succeed in the Head Start classroom community. This curriculum will support your child's development in areas such as naming feelings, developing empathy and developing personal and social behaviors. It will also help your child develop problem-solving and conflict-resolution skills. Your child will build their self-esteem through a consistent routine, classroom ground rules, and positive relationships with teachers.

In addition to the *Second Step Curriculum*, the *Second Step Child Protection Unit* develops children's knowledge and skills for protecting themselves in unsafe and possibly abusive situations. Through a series of 6 themes, children will learn about ways to stay safe, rules for safety, and safe and unsafe touches. The *Second Step Child Protection Unit* and the *Second Step* program provide a comprehensive approach to help children feel safe and supported.

Positive Teacher – Child Relationships

- We believe that children have the right to be treated with dignity and respect.
- We ensure that any physical contact between a teacher or other staff member and a child is purposeful, appropriate, respectful, and nurturing.
- We believe in helping children with their development of self-control by using positive methods of guidance, such as:
 - Modeling respectful behavior,
 - Listening to children,
 - Redirecting children to activities that are more acceptable, and
 - Setting limits and reasonable consequences.
- We support the development of appropriate behavior and social skills for children by implementing the following practices:
 - Developing a positive, supportive relationship with each child
 - Establishing appropriate routines and expectations
 - Providing developmentally appropriate materials that promote children's engagement
 - Using positive attention and encouragement to support pro-social behavior
 - Teaching children about the expectations of the environment, using friendship and problem solving skills and developing a pro social classroom community.

Managing Challenging Behaviors in Head Start Classroom Settings

Our priority is maintaining a safe and nurturing environment for all children in our care. If your child exhibits challenging behaviors in the classroom, staff use positive child guidance and non-restrictive strategies to help them calm:

- Be at the child's level
- Validate the child's feelings
- Use a calm, soothing voice
- Offer preferred choices.

If your child displays physically dangerous behaviors (threatens serious physical injury to themselves or another person), teachers will restructure to maintain a safe environment for all children in the classroom. A staff member will call you to inform you of the situation and get your insight or support in the classroom. If your child cannot calm down and presents a danger to themselves or others, we may contact the county crisis office for further guidance. Our goal is to help each child have a positive and safe experience in our classrooms, and we will partner with you to develop a plan of action to support your child's success.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled throughout the year. At these conferences, you and your child's teacher can share and exchange information about your child's progress and development. You may request additional conferences at any time by contacting your child's teacher.

Teacher Home Visits

Teachers will complete home visits with each family to identify and plan for your child's learning at home and to assist in meeting your child's developmental goals. This gives you an opportunity to talk about your child's accomplishments as well as any concerns and plan for your child's ongoing development.

Classroom Pictures

Our programs do not arrange for class or individual child pictures to be taken. Out of respect for all of the children and families in the Head Start/Early Head Start program, we do not permit parents or visitors to photograph or videotape the children or classroom.

Transition Support

This year is an exciting one for you and your child! The staff will support you and your child as you prepare for the transition from Early Head Start or Head Start by:

- Providing information and support to help you be an advocate for your child,
- Providing materials that will help you support your child's development,
- Being a resource for activities and suggestions to individualize and practice skills at home,
- Supporting you in finding the best preschool program for your child after Early Head Start, and guiding you through the Head Start application process,
- Guiding you through the kindergarten registration process, and

- Encouraging you to visit the schools and to meet with the kindergarten personnel.

Classroom Participation

Parents are always welcome in the classroom. Visiting your child's classroom is an important way to show your child how important they are to you. This is a great way for you to understand how your child is growing and developing. It will also give you ideas on ways to be involved with your child at home. Your involvement in the classroom illustrates your commitment to education.

Confidentiality of Records

All information in the child's file is considered confidential. Information gathered about your child or family is for the purpose of providing services to your family. Families are informed of the Confidentiality Policy at the time of enrollment. A copy of the policy is included in this handbook.

Accessing Your Child's Records

We will only transfer your child's records to other agencies with specific written and signed consent. You may request to review or obtain a copy from your child's file. All requests must be made in writing and signed. A request for information form may be obtained from the teacher, Home Visitor, or at the main office. Please allow a minimum of 5 business days for requests to be processed. Release of records may take up to 45 days.

Attendance Information and Policy

Participating in Early Head Start or Head Start is a great time to start building a habit of good attendance! Studies have shown that children who attend school on time every day and participate in early learning are the most successful in school and in life. Parents – especially in the early years – are best positioned to ensure children attend school regularly, and to build that expectation.

Chronic absenteeism in early years leads to poor academic performance in 1st grade among all students and can result in the lowest levels of educational achievement by the end of fifth grade. Missing 10% of the school year, which can be just 2 days per month, may cause academic struggles for your child.

Here's what we will do in our center-based programs:

- Monitor your child's attendance and let you know how you are doing.
- Send you a message if your child is absent and we don't know why.
- Support you if your child is absent from school, even only one time.
- Help you evaluate the cause of your child's absence(s) and develop a plan to improve their attendance.
- Recognize parents whose children achieve excellent school attendance!

Here's what we will do in our Early Head Start home-based program:

- Schedule weekly 1.5 hour home visits on a day and time that work for your family,
- Provide a minimum of 46 home visits for families who are enrolled in Early Head Start 46 weeks or more,
- Offer you make-up visits for any missed or cancelled home visits, which may mean two visits in some weeks, at your convenience,
- Support you in problem-solving home visit attendance issues.

Here's what you need to do:

- Send your child to school on time every day or, in Early Head Start, complete your weekly home visits as scheduled.
- Schedule routine appointments after school hours or around your Early Head Start home visit, so your child can benefit fully from our programs.
- Contact the teaching staff before the classroom start time, if your child is going to be out and let the teacher know the reason. Let your Home Visitor know, if you need to reschedule a home visit.
- Plan family vacations during school closings.
- Celebrate excellent attendance each week with your child to help them develop a love of learning.

As a program, we are responsible for keeping our programs fully enrolled, to ensure continued funding from the state and federal governments. Absence for more than 10 days, consecutive or cumulative, may result in losing your child's slot in the program. If we work together, we can avoid this, by addressing any worries about your child's attendance upfront, developing a plan, and committing to improve attendance.

HEALTH, SAFETY, AND WELLNESS SERVICES

Illness

There are some illnesses that require you to keep your child home, for their sake as well as for the other children and staff. The following symptoms require that you keep your child at home, or would require you to come to the classroom to take your child home:

- **Fever 100.4° or above with additional symptoms of illness**, may return to school when they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication
- Several episodes of diarrhea (uncontrolled)
- Vomiting 2 or more times in a 24 hour period
- Severe cough with other symptoms (fever, difficulty breathing, wheezing)
- Rash with fever or behavioral changes
- Wheezing with severe cough
- Chicken Pox with open or non-crusted sores present
- Strep Throat, may return after two doses of antibiotic
- Measles, may return after four days onset of rash
- Pertussis, may return after five days of antibiotic treatment
- Conjunctivitis with other criteria (fever, pain)
- Hand-Foot-Mouth disease with fever, and/or excess drueling and/or open sores
- Other communicable diseases such as Covid-19, Influenza, and others as diagnosed by a doctor; if your child has a communicable disease, ask your doctor when they may return to school.

A physician's note is not required for your child to return to class.

Mental Health and Behavioral Health Services

Children in our programs will learn how to understand and manage their feelings, how to make friends and be friends, and how to solve problems with other children.

- Daily Head Start activities are designed to develop social and emotional skills through the *Second Step Curriculum* and following the *Conscious Discipline* program approach.
- Teachers implement strategies to help children in the classroom and partner with parents to gain insights, develop strategies, and address concerns.
- A Mental Health Professional visits the classroom and is available to support the child, the family, and the teachers with consultation, resources, referrals, and strategies to support social and emotional skills in the classroom and at home.
- Teachers and home visitors can recommend activities that foster positive family relationships.
- Home visitors coordinate services with community-based mental and behavioral health professionals and agencies, ensuring families have access to the resources they need.

Disabilities Services

Our programs collaborate with the Early Intervention in Lehigh and Northampton Counties, Carbon Lehigh Intermediate Unit #21, and the Colonial Northampton Intermediate Unit #20. As we identify learning concerns or developmental delays, we can access services to give specialized supports to a child with special needs in the classroom.

The staff will:

- Inform parents about the type of services available and have written permission for all referrals.
- Work with families to make referrals to local agencies.
- Work with parents to arrange for special testing, and if additional help is needed, to plan jointly for their child.
- Work with specialists to provide help for a child with speech, emotional, or other special needs.
- Work with staff, a child and parents in the classroom to help a child develop the skills they need.
- Schedule home visits to help families understand their child's behaviors and to promote productive social interaction.

Nutrition

- Children receive breakfast and lunch while at school. Snacks are provided in Early Head Start.
- All meals meet the Child & Adult Care Food Program and/or USDA Child Nutrition Program requirements and contribute to your child's nutritional growth and development.
- Examples of menus will be shared at the beginning of the year, monthly menus are posted in the classroom.
- The Home Visitor and/or Health Staff will contact you to discuss food allergies that you identified when your child was enrolled. Food allergies will be listed in the classroom for staff that serve meals.
- All meals are contracted through a licensed food service provider and are approved by a registered dietician. Provided meals are free of peanuts and pork.
- Due to the number of children with allergies and our need to keep your children healthy, do not send food into the classroom. These restrictions apply to both holidays and birthdays.
- If needed, special foods will be provided for children with dietary needs upon submission of requested documentation.

CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program)

When your child enrolls in Head Start/Early Head Start/Pre-K Counts they also enroll in the CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) and USDA Child Nutrition Programs. CACFP is a federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children and adults receiving day care.

Each day more than 2.6 million children participate in CACFP. Through CACFP, participants' nutritional needs are supported on a daily basis. The program plays a vital role in improving the quality of care and making it more affordable for low-income families.

CACFP facilities follow the meal patterns established by USDA:

- Breakfast consists of 3 components: milk, fruit or vegetable, and grain.
- Lunch consists of 5 components: milk, meat or meat alternative, fruit, vegetable, and grain.
- Snack consists of 2 of 5 components: milk, meat or meat alternative, fruit, vegetable, grain.

CACFP reimburses participating centers for serving nutritious meals to eligible children.

CACFP Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or

2. fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or

3. email:

program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Health Initiatives

In Early Head Start, home visitors will be sharing activities from *the Little Voices for Healthy Choices* program so you and your child can develop a strong foundation of healthy choices. *Little Voices for Healthy Choices* promotes brain and motor development, music, movement, nutrition, and sleep.

Throughout the year, you will hear about *I am Moving I am Learning* (I.M.I.L.), which promotes ways to ensure your child stays healthy for life. In our preschool programs, your child will learn how to keep healthy and participate in fun activities to keep your child moving. We also share nutrition tips with you and provide information on how your family can stay healthy.

Keep Children Healthy and In School

- Keep your child healthy by completing all preventive health care on time (physical, dental exams, immunizations, lead level, and hemoglobin level).
- Your child will need proof of a well exam, immunizations, lead level, and their hemoglobin level upon entry to the program. If you have difficulty obtaining this information, please contact the Home Visitor. Your child must have these completed and up to date within days of entering the program, in order to remain in Head Start.
- If your child has a medical problem, that affects the immune system and your doctor believes it is important to keep your child home when there is a communicable disease outbreak, please contact the Health Manager so we can keep your child healthy.

Hearing Screenings - An Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) machine is used for hearing screenings. It is a handheld device that evaluates the tiny echoes produced by the ear in response to a mild clicking sound delivered by the probe. Parents will receive results letters once their child is screened.

Vision Screenings - Children will be screened using evidence-based portable vision screeners (PlusOptix or Welch Allyn Spot). These devices can help quickly and easily detect vision issues on children as young as 6 months. Early Head Start children will be screened using an observation checklist based on developmental milestones. Parents will receive results letters once their child is screened.

Medication

- Medication is administered to a child, only with the current orders from a physician or certified nurse practitioner.
- We must also have written permission from you to give any medications to your child.
- Most medications can be given at home before school or after school.
- Medications must be in original container with childproof caps and must be labeled with all of the following information:
 - Child's name, physician's name, name of medication, expiration date, dosage instructions (frequency and amount), and how medicine is to be stored.
- All medication will be stored in a locked box out of the reach of children and the classroom staff will keep a daily medication log.
- Expired medications will not be administered and will be returned to the parent.

Accident/Injury/Emergency Procedures

- Classroom staff members will be certified in child CPR and First Aid and will be able to provide treatment for minor injuries.
- All classroom accidents will be reported to parents by classroom staff and an accident/injury report will be completed and maintained by the Health Manager.
- In case of a medical emergency, you will be contacted. If we cannot reach you, we will contact the person or persons listed on your child's emergency card. Please be sure this information is always up to date.
- If necessary, your child may be transported to the nearest hospital by ambulance.
- Your child's emergency medical information including insurance, medical provider, medications, food allergies, special conditions or restrictions will be sent to the hospital with your child. Let your teacher or Home Visitor know immediately if any of this information changes.

Child Abuse and Neglect

- Each one of us is responsible for helping to protect children.
- Every employee that works for Head Start is a mandated reporter and therefore obligated to report suspected abuse or neglect.
- The report must be made when the person has reasonable cause to suspect, based on their professional or other training and experience, that a child coming before them in their professional capacity may be an abused child.
- If you have a concern or suspect a child has been abused or neglected, please call Pennsylvania's ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313 to make a confidential report.
- As a parent, you may be faced with situations that are difficult to handle.
- We would encourage you to seek help before you are unable to cope with stress.
- By sharing your concerns with your child's Teacher or Home Visitor, we can provide you with support and referrals to community resources.

Safety of Children - Megan's Law Policy

Head Start and Early Head Start are committed to providing every child in our care with a safe experience. Our Megan's Law Policy is designed to ensure the safety of children.

- To protect the safety of children enrolled in the program and identify anyone listed as a sexually violent predator, the program will check all parents/guardians and named emergency contacts against the PA Megan's Law website on a monthly basis.
- If a parent/guardian or emergency contact is identified as a sexually violent predator through the website, the Director of Family and Community Engagement will be immediately notified.
- The Director of Family and Community Engagement will notify the parent/guardian of the information and inform him/her that program engagement with the known sexually violent predator will be adjusted to limit contact with children in the HS/EHS/Pre-K Counts program site as follows:
- He/she will not be permitted to enter any HS/EHS/Pre-K Counts facility during operational hours when children are present, including during drop-off or pick-up times.

- He/she will not be permitted to pick up/drop off children or be in the presence of groups of children at bus stops.
- He/she will not be invited into group activities with children (EHS Group Socialization, Parent Activity Days, child care, etc.).
- Accommodations will be made to ensure the individual is able to safely drop-off or pick-up their child in a reasonable manner.

Security

Providing a safe and secure environment is of the utmost importance to our program. Everyone who enters a Head Start or Early Head Start site has a role to play in maintaining children's safety. It is important that staff are aware of every visitor entering the facility.

- We ask that you do not hold the door open for others.
- In sites where there are multiple classrooms, you will only be granted access to the building by teachers in your child's classroom.
- Our staff are instructed not to allow entry to parents or visitors from different classrooms.
- Depending on the site your child will be attending, you will receive specific instructions on entering the building, as well as information about parking.

Help us to ensure the safety of every child in our care by following the safety guidelines at all times. If you have questions or concerns about security at your site, please speak with your child's teacher or Home Visitor.

Classroom Cameras

To enhance the safety, health and well-being of children, families and staff cameras are installed in approved classroom locations and other educational spaces like gyms, hallways and buses occupied by Head Start, Early Head Start and Pre-K Counts. Cameras only have visual recording capabilities to protect the privacy of individuals. The cameras are property of Community Services for Children (CSC) and access is restricted to authorized CSC staff, legal and/or law enforcement.

Evacuation/Lockdown Procedures

Safety in the classroom is our upmost priority. Emergency Preparedness procedures are updated and submitted annually to the Emergency Management agencies for both Northampton and Lehigh Counties. Emergency situations could happen at all times. In an effort to keep our students safe, we practice drills regularly through the school year. This includes the following drills:

- Fire Drills
- Lockdown Drills—used when there is an identified threat outside and inside the building
- Evacuation Drills—moving students to another safe locations when the classroom building is not safe

- Shelter—used when the need for personal protection is necessary during events such as tornados

Communication, cooperation and understanding in emergency situations are key. Additionally, classrooms located in school district buildings will follow the school district emergency preparedness plans.

Weapon-Free Environment

- Community Services for Children (CSC) is committed to providing a safe and secure workplace for employees and environment for children and prevent exposure to gun violence.
- No person, including employees, contractors, temporary workers, parents, guardians, vendors, volunteers or visitors will enter any CSC/Head Start of the Lehigh Valley premises in possession of any form of weapon even if the individual is licensed to carry a concealed or unconcealed weapon.
- Law enforcement agents authorized by federal, state, or local laws to carry weapons in the performance of their duties are permitted to enter CSC premises with their weapons.
- CSC will notify the local authorities for any individual entering the premises in violation of the Weapon-Free Environment policy.

Standards of Conduct

- All program staff adhere to a strict standard of conduct to ensure the well-being of all children.
- We promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.
- We follow confidentiality policies concerning information about children and families, as described in our Confidentiality Policy.
- We ensure that no child will be left alone or unsupervised.
- Positive methods of child guidance are used.
- We do not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation.
- In addition, we do not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.
- In addition to standards of conduct for staff, employees have the right to work in an environment free of verbal or physical intimidation, harassment, assault, or threatening behavior.

FAMILY GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

This year is a very special opportunity for YOU as well as your child. As a parent, you may be looking for solutions to some of these common concerns:

- Understanding your child better.
- Changing your financial picture.
- Improving relationships with the people you care about.
- Setting and reaching some of your goals.
- Feeling healthier or making sure your family is healthy.
- Being a more effective parent.

Individual Home Visiting Services

- Your Home Visitor will come to your home weekly or monthly, based on the program option and the needs of your family.
- She/he will help you to use your strengths and problem solving skills to think about, work on, and solve problems or challenges that you face.
- Parents will develop a Family Partnership Agreement to focus on the goals they wish to achieve and develop a plan on how to meet these goals.

Family Development

In our program we will use a Family Development Approach with families. We know that all people and families have strengths and deserve support. Families must choose their own goals and methods of achieving them. We believe that successful families maintain a network of support with extended family, friends, and others; spiritual organizations; cultural and community groups; schools and agencies; and nature. We will use the Family Development Approach to partner with you to identify your strengths, choose your own goals, access services you identify, and build support for your family within your community.

Parent Engagement – Family Workshops

All of the parents of enrolled children are members of a Family Workshop and are invited to a monthly meeting. This group is made up of only parents who have children currently enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start. We cover areas of child development, parenting, health, safety, nutrition, parent and family relationships, personal development, and employment.

- You will decide on topics of interest to discuss and learn about.
- You will have the chance to help plan parent trainings and activities.
- You will have the ability to connect with other parents in your child's classroom.
- You will have an opportunity to evaluate how the program is working, identify possible areas for improvements, and help us make program services more responsive to your family's needs.
- You will elect members to represent them at Policy Council, our primary parent policy-making group.

Nurturing Parenting

Nurturing Parenting is an evidence-based curriculum designed to build nurturing skills to promote positive parenting attitudes and practices. Elements of the curriculum are integrated into Family Engagement home visits and Family Workshops.

Nurturing Skills:

- Communication between parents and children
- Making good decisions
- Growth and development of children
- Handling feelings
- Developing empathy
- Ways to handle stress and anger
- Understanding discipline and techniques
- Establishing daily routines
- Appropriate use of rewards/punishments

In addition, we offer **Nurturing Parenting Workshops** for families and caregivers with children enrolled in the Head Start program. Flyers will be distributed informing parents of workshop schedules and locations. All of our services are free of charge.

Translation

Translation services are available to any family whose primary language is not English. Please let your Home Visitor know if it would be helpful to have this assistance.

Other Resources

Where can I find information about early education needs or paying for child care?

- Early Learning Resource Center (ELRC) - <https://elrc-csc.org/region-14/>

Where can I find a Head Start or Early Head Start program in another area?

- <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>

What school should my child attend?

- <http://www.greatschools.org/school-district-boundaries-map>

ClassDojo

- Parents will connect with their child's classroom on a web-based platform called ClassDojo.
- Teachers and home visitors will share classroom specific information on ClassDojo including what your child is learning while at school.
- On ClassDojo, the program will communicate with parents about available community resources, educational information, program events, and any last minute changes to the program/classroom schedule.
- Parents may respond in comments about topics that are of interest.
- Parents and program staff may communicate through ClassDojo using the messaging feature.

Read-A-Book

- Head Start and Early Head Start promote literacy in both our Head Start classrooms and in the home.
- Read-A-Book is an at home literacy activity designed to encourage reading aloud to your child and in the process earn books to enhance your in home library.
- In the **At Home Activity Worksheet section** of the Parent Handbook you will find the Read-A-Book log, simply mark a star every time you read aloud to your child.
- Throughout the year your Home Visitor will check-in with you to see how often you are reading aloud and to give you encouragement.
- Periodically, parents who are actively tracking each time they read aloud will receive a new book as an incentive.
- At the end of the year parents who have read at least 72 times will be entered in a drawing to win a place at the Parent Recognition Event and a collection of books for their home library.

Celebrations

Developmentally appropriate activities for preschoolers are things that they can see, touch, taste, hear, smell and explore with their whole body. Holidays are abstract concepts and do not have meaning for your preschooler in everyday life, even though they have meaning for you, as an adult.

- Our programs model respect and show appreciation for each child and their family's individuality.
- Our programs provide an environment that respects and supports culture, gender, language and family composition, and supports each family's practice of their traditions in their home.
- We do not "celebrate" birthdays, religious or cultural holidays in our classrooms.

Families Experiencing Homelessness

Head Start/Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley works with families to provide resources for support in times of need. If you are experiencing homelessness, you can do the following:

- Speak with your Home Visitor or teacher about available resources in the community
- Call the 2-1-1 hotline, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Dial 2-1-1 or (855) 567-5341.
- Refer to your Community Resource Book provided by your Home Visitor.

Parent Responsibilities

- Involve yourself in your child's education
- Communicate regularly with teachers
- Talk to your child about school
- Provide medical and dental care as needed
- Maintain medical records for yourself and for the school
- Keep program informed of changes to family and emergency contact information
- Provide feedback about your program experience, interests, and needs through response to periodic surveys.

Parent Rights

- Parents have the right to review their children's records.
- Parents have the right to know about and attend meetings concerning their child.
- Parents must give permission for the release of their child's and family records.
- Parents have the right to discuss concerns and questions with Head Start staff.
- Parents have the right to expect a timely response.
- Parents have the right to make changes to consents and information release permissions during the school year.
- Parents have a right to know that child and family's records are kept in locked, restricted file cabinets.

Parent Inquiry or Concern

We want you to have a rewarding and satisfactory experience in our programs. If you should have a question or concern that you would like to bring to our attention, please explain directly to the staff person with whom you have contact. If you are unable to resolve your concern or inquiry then you may contact the supervisor of the staff person.

Family Participation Guide in Classrooms and All Program Settings

In order to have a safe, positive, educational environment, the following ground rules apply:

- All posted classroom rules must be followed while in the classroom.
- Participants must wash their hands before entering the classroom, after using the bathroom, and before meals to ensure healthy practices.
- No outside food or drink is allowed in the classroom or agency owned vehicles.
- Potentially dangerous items are not allowed into the classroom, including medications, cigarettes, and lighters, and weapons of any kind. Leave personal belongings at home whenever possible.
- Use of cell phones in the classroom is not allowed. During meetings, they should be placed on vibrate.
- Confidentiality must be maintained at all times.
- Participants will not discuss children or families outside of the classroom, including posting information about the program on social media sites, such as Facebook.
- Please schedule an appointment with the Teacher if you have questions or concerns. Please do not use classroom time for personal discussions.
- Siblings are not permitted to participate in classroom activities.
- Taking pictures or videos in the classroom is not allowed.
- Loud or offensive language is not allowed in the classroom.
- Behavior issues in the classroom will be addressed by and shared with the family by program staff.
- Participants will not be left alone with children at any time.

- Allow staff to provide any first aid, needed by a child.
- If you are interested in assisting classroom staff in daily routines (i.e. preparing for meal service, helping with hand washing/tooth brushing, reading to the children), please speak with the Teacher for further guidance and support.
- If you are planning to volunteer or participate in your child's classroom for 6 or more hours a week, you will need to talk with your Home Visitor about completing a TB test and receiving the required clearances.
- In alignment with the CSC Code of Conduct, parents, caregivers, and visitors are not permitted to engage in harassing or violent behavior towards other parents, children, or program employees. Any violent or harassing behaviors may result in the individual's inability to participate fully in certain aspects of programming.

Parent Employment Opportunities

Head Start/Early Head Start parents are encouraged to apply for positions posted by Community Services for Children, Inc. for which they are qualified. All positions require the ability to obtain TB, PA Child Abuse Certification, PA Criminal Certification, National Sex Offender Registry Verification, and FBI Certification. Current openings are posted on the parent bulletin board and are available at www.cscinc.org

Parent Participants

We highly encourage parents to partake in all program activities, such as Family Workshops, home visits, and classroom visits during program hours. This will allow you to develop your skills, observe your child's growth, and contribute to the Head Start/Early Head Start Community.

Volunteers

Volunteers perform tasks that staff would normally do. They have specific assignments and schedules that are tracked. Interested volunteers must apply and obtain the necessary clearances to qualify.

- PA Criminal Background Clearance
- PA Child Abuse Clearance
- FBI Federal Criminal History Clearance
- National Sex Offender Registry Verification
- Current Mantoux Tuberculosis (TB) results

Volunteers are provided with thorough orientation regarding program expectations and standards, which include the Code of Conduct, confidentiality, Child Abuse and Mandated reporting, and other relevant areas pertinent to their placement.

If you are interested becoming a Volunteer or have any questions, please contact your Home Visitor.

Become a Parent Leader! Policy Council Membership

What is Policy Council?

Policy Council is a group of parent volunteers who work with Management Staff and the Board of Directors to implement services for children and families in Head Start/Early Head Start. Other parents vote in members at their Parent Meeting and have responsibilities as the site's parent leader. Policy Council is a great way to advocate for children and families in your community as well as an opportunity to learn and grow!



What does a Policy Council Member do?

- Attend monthly Parent Meetings and share the Policy Council meeting report
- Attend monthly Policy Council meetings held the second Thursday of each month and other meetings as assigned
- Participate in monthly Policy Council phone calls
- Develop relationships with other parents at your classroom/site or Family Play Group to understand the interests and needs of others
- Coordinate times with your Home Visitor and teacher to greet other parents in the classroom and invite them to participate in Parent Meetings
- Spend time in the community representing the program
- Become familiar with the various ways to advocate
- Provide valuable feedback about the community and services provided by the program
- Find ways to participate or volunteer in the program

How do we make it possible to attend Policy Council?

- Policy Council meetings are held via Zoom to support parent participation across the Lehigh Valley with minimal disruption to daily routines.
- Chromebooks are available on loan for parents who need a device.
- If a meeting is held in person, child care and transportation support are provided.
- Language interpretation is available upon request.

What do Policy Council members gain from the experience?

- Leadership and advocacy skills
- Experience with public speaking (as desired)
- Opportunities to learn, grow, and make new connections inside and outside of the program

How can I become a member?

- Talk with your Home Visitor about your interest
- Express your interest at the September Parent Meeting
- Run for election

If you have any questions about Policy Council, please contact your Home Visitor.

PROGRAM OPERATIONS

Snow/Emergency Closings

If our classrooms are closed due to inclement weather, the closings will be announced as **Head Start of LV/PreK/SafeStart** on local media outlets.

- All closing information is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.wfmz.com. To receive closings via text message, please log onto www.wfmz.com and follow the instructions.
- An automated SchoolMessage@childplus voice/text message will be sent to all parents for whom we have a current phone number. Updates may also be posted on ClassDojo.
- You may call Community Services for Children's main line (610) 437-6000 – the automated greeting will be updated as to any delays/closings.
- Remote learning may be offered when classrooms are closed due to weather or emergency situations.

The safety of children, parents and staff is important to us. If we change hours for reasons of weather and safe travel, we expect all children to be picked up within the announced times.

Fees

Consistent with federal regulations, there are no fees charged to participating children and families for program services. This includes meals served, transportation, activities, and classroom or program supplies.

Smoke Free Environment

- It is important that we serve as role models to the children and do our best to ensure their overall health and well-being.
- Under the Head Start regulations, smoking can never be done in view of the children, whether they are walking to the playground or riding the bus.
- Therefore, the Donley Children's Campus at Community Services for Children, and all Head Start classroom locations have been deemed smoke free environments.
- Please refrain from smoking in and around the classroom facilities.
- We respectfully request that you refrain from smoking during home visits to protect the health and well-being of our staff and your family.



Change of Information

If a change of name, address, phone number, emergency contacts, health providers, health conditions, family situation, child care, or other related information occurs during the year, you must notify the teachers or Home Visitor immediately. A change of address or child care may affect your eligibility for transportation services. You may be asked to update the Emergency Contact-Parental Consent form.

Child's Legal Name

A child's legal name, as it appears on their birth certificate, will be used unless the parent/guardian provides legal documentation of a name change.

Child Custody

It is our intent to meet the needs of children, especially when the parents may be experiencing situations such as divorce, separation, or remarriage. Parents are jointly and individually responsible for the support, care, nurturing, welfare, and education of their child.

- Neither parent is presumed to have a right to custody or decision making over the other parent, unless there is a court order.
- Parents must provide the program with a copy of the child's birth certificate or other legal document showing the names of natural parents or guardians as well as a court order showing the rights of the natural parents or other individuals.
- The court order must be the complete and most recent court order concerning the child. Updated and amended versions must be provided to the program as soon as possible.
- A child may be released to either parent unless a court order prohibits release to a particular parent. A copy of the order prohibiting release will be kept on file at the center.
- Parents must accept that the program and its employees will not play favorites.
- Parents should not attempt to put their child's teacher or other program staff in the middle of their disputes.
- In case of conflicts, the proper authorities will be contacted.

Head Start Classroom Placement

Classroom placements are based on availability. Some of our Head Start classrooms are mixed 3, 4, and 5 year-olds. All classrooms have a mix of gender and individual needs. Placement requests are taken into consideration but no guarantees will be made.

Pedestrian Safety

Whether your child rides the school bus, walks to school, or arrives by car, your child should know about Pedestrian Safety. Some things you should talk to your child about include:

- Remind your children to look for a crosswalk before crossing the street and to hold an adult's hand.
- When crossing the street, stop at the curb or edge of the road. Look left, then right, and then left again for moving cars before crossing. Keep looking left and right until you are safely across the street.
- If you live in a busy traffic area, please give yourself plenty of time to cross the street safely.
- If your area has sidewalks, teach your child to stay on them at all times.
- Young children should never go to the bus stop without an adult.

- Remind your child to wait for the bus or the car to come to a complete stop before approaching the vehicle.

Van Safety

Occasionally, we may transport you and your family to appointments or meetings in agency mini-vans. For your safety and the safety of your children, please follow these rules when riding in one of the vans with our staff:

- Be outside waiting for the van 5 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time.
- Hold your child's hand or carry your infant when walking to and from the van.
- Cross in front of the van.
- Always use age and weight-appropriate restraints or car seats for yourself and your children.
- Infants should be in rear-facing car seats in the back seat. Place all children and infants in the rear, never in the front seat with the driver.
- If you are pregnant and there is a shoulder belt, place the shoulder belt across the chest between the breasts and away from the neck. Never place the lap belt above or on the belly. Never place the shoulder belt behind the back or under the arm.
- Do not eat, drink, or smoke in the van.
- Use "inside voices" in the van.
- Before leaving the van, check for personal belongings.
- Staff cannot talk on the phone while operating the vehicle.

Bus Services (designated classrooms only)

- Speak to your Home Visitor at any point throughout the year if you want to opt into bus services, if available.
- Our bus drivers are professionals trained specifically to drive children.
- In addition to the driver, a Bus Monitor is present on every bus run.

Bus Safety Responsibilities

- Buses are equipped with a video surveillance system.
- Arrive at your bus stop 5 minutes before your scheduled time and allow 5 minutes after the scheduled time in case the driver is delayed.
- Wait for the bus outside of your vehicle on the door side of the bus.
- Hold your child's hand when walking to and from the bus door.
- Keep all personal items at home (unless child requires a diaper bag).
- Each child will be secured in a restraint before the bus moves.
- If you miss the bus in the morning, take your child to school. Children are only picked up/dropped off at the designated stop.
- Parents or any other adult are not permitted to be on the bus unless invited to ride the bus to the classroom.
- Maintain the 10-foot safety zone around the perimeter of the bus to ensure that the driver can always see you.
- Cross in front of the bus – never behind the bus.

- Children will practice emergency bus evacuation drills, scheduled for September, March and May.
- No food is permitted on the bus.
- Do not bring pets to the bus stop or classroom [during arrival and departure](#).

Self-Transporting Your Child

We expect YOU to bring your child to school each day and to pick up your child in the afternoon. This means so much to your child. However, we do understand that there may be times when you can't pick up your child and someone other than yourself may be needed. If this happens, we expect you to follow the guidelines below to protect your child.

Arrival

- The Teacher or Assistant Teacher will greet you and your child as you arrive each day.
- For your child to get the most out of the Head Start/Early Head Start experience, have your child arrive on time.
- Teaching staff will mark your child as present or absent at the beginning of each school day.
- Separating for the day may be a difficult time for you and/or your child; these are natural feelings.
- Staff is available to support you and your child during this transition.
- Staff will help you to get your child involved in the classroom activities.
- Once your child is engaged in his or her work, separating will be easier for both of you.
- Always be sure to say "Good-bye" and remind your child that you will return and when you will return.
- If you have a regular routine or ritual to say "Good-bye," (a hug, a touch, an affectionate word), you will provide a sense of security for your child, even if there are tears.
- If someone besides yourself is bringing your child to school, please explain the process to them. We will also help by going through it with them.

Departure

- All parents, guardians, and emergency contacts must bring photo ID every day to ensure the safe release of children.
- It is important for your child's well-being that you arrive on time to pick up your child.
- Staff will be available to greet you again at the end of your child's school day.
- Teachers will mark students as dismissed at the end of each school day.
- During arrival and departure, do not bring pets of any kind to the classroom.

Late Pick-Up

During class time children are engaged in learning and play. They are often tired and excited to go home to see their parents and share about their busy day. It is important that your child be picked-up at their scheduled end time, whether from the classroom or at the bus stop. If, after an hour, a child is unmet and we are unable to reach you or a designated emergency contact, we may need to contact the police to ensure your child is returned home safely.

Emergency Contacts

People you have identified as emergency contacts will be responsible for taking your children to or from school or the bus if you are unable to do it yourself. It is important that you keep emergency contact information updated at all times.

- Make sure the people you identify as emergency contacts are aware that you have provided us with their name and contact information and that they are willing to take on the responsibility.
- All emergency contacts must show photo identification before we release your child.
- Emergency contacts must be people who live locally and can be reached during the day.
- If you know in advance that someone else will be picking up your child, please give staff a note in the morning identifying the person who will be picking up your child.
- Call us if there is an emergency during the day that prevents you from coming to the classroom, we will need to know who will be picking up your child.

Safe Release of Children

- Staff will not release children to anyone, including parents, who appear under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- We will not release children to anyone except a parent or legal guardian unless you have identified that person as an emergency contact.

PROGRAM ENROLLMENT CONSENTS AND PROCEDURES

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY 2025-2026 PROGRAM YEAR

Confidentiality is the process of protecting the privacy of information shared by and about a family and using that information only to benefit the family while enrolled in a program at Community Services for Children, Inc.

Families have the right to protection of personal information by all staff of Community Services for Children, Inc.

The following guidelines shall apply:

1. Parents/Guardians are the primary sources of information about themselves and information sought from them is limited to that which is essential in providing services to their family. Only information essential to provide services is recorded and maintained in records that are locked or otherwise electronically safeguarded.
2. Parents/Guardians have the right to view their own files by contacting the Teacher, the Early Education or Early Child Development Manager, or the Family Engagement Manager.
3. Volunteers are prohibited from reviewing family records. Interns at Community Services for Children, Inc. may review records to the extent necessary to provide services to the child/family or to participate in their training.
4. Child and family records are open only to assigned staff, funding source representatives, collaboration partners, reviewers, auditors and interns, as assigned, to the extent necessary to provide services and evaluate outcomes.
5. Information shared among staff about a family is done in a private, confidential setting. This policy is implemented with the utmost respect.
6. Families are informed of the Confidentiality Policy during program registration and/or at Family Orientation. Staff receive annual training related to confidentiality and agency policy.
7. No verbal and written information is released to anyone outside the program without written consent from Parents/Guardians, except in regard to suspected child abuse and neglect, court requests and in emergency situations.
8. Other agencies and individuals are consulted only with the family's consent, and within the limits of that consent, to exchange information which may include coordination of services and/or advocacy to benefit the family.
9. In accordance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), health information provided to the agency is used to verify and provide special education services; to provide referral information and to plan appropriate health services with parents/guardians. Child or Pregnant Enrollee health information is not disclosed to anyone without written consent, except where required by law; suspected child abuse and/or neglect; to public health/legal authorities to prevent or control disease; or in response to a valid court order.
10. Health information (i.e. physical, dental, immunization, allergies, and medical conditions) may be shared between collaborating school districts, collaborating health partners and providers, food vendors and Community Services for Children, Inc. for purposes of planning or determining health services and developing Child Health Plans.
11. In accordance with applicable laws, special protection is maintained to ensure child abuse related and legally restricted health information remains private. The information is securely stored electronically and/or in a locked cabinet.

Reviewed and approved by Policy Council March 10, 2022

Reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors March 16, 2022

**CIVIL RIGHTS COMPLIANCE
PARENT AWARENESS
2025-2026 PROGRAM YEAR**

Admission to Community Services for Children, Inc., including USDA Child Nutrition Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, is open to all eligible children regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. All meals served to children under the Child and Adult Care Food Program are served at no separate charge regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. There is no discrimination in admission policy, meal service or the use of facilities. In accordance with applicable Federal and State civil rights laws and regulatory requirements, you and your children, as a client of this facility, have the right:

- To be provided services at this facility and to be referred for services at other facilities without regard to your race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age or sex.
- To file a complaint of discrimination if you feel you have been discriminated against on the basis of your race, color, religious creed, handicap, ancestry, national origin, age or sex. Complaints of discrimination may be filed with any of the following:
- To file a complaint regarding meal service, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027), found online at [AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form \(ENG\)](#) and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by mail, fax, or email using the contact information provided below:

Provider

Community Services for Children, Inc.
1520 Hanover Avenue
Allentown, PA 18109
610-437-6000

Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission

Executive Offices
333 Market St., 8th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17101-2210
717-787-9780

Department of Public Welfare

2432 N. 7th St.
Harrisburg, PA 17110
717-787-2324

DPW Bureau of Equal Opportunity

Northeast Region
100 Lackawanna Avenue, 3rd Floor
Scranton, PA 18503
570-963-4342

Office of Civil Rights

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
801 Market St., Suite 9300
Philadelphia, PA 19107-3134
800-368-1019
Fax: 202-619-3818
Email: ocrmail@hhs.gov

USDA/CACFP Discrimination Complaints

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410
Phone: 866-632-9992
Fax: 202-690-7442
Email: Program.Intake@usda.gov

PA Bureau of Equal Opportunity

Room 225 Health and Welfare Boulevard
P.O. Box 2675
Harrisburg, PA 17120
717-787-1127
Fax: 717-772-4366
Email: RA-PWBEOAO@pa.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
PARENT AGREEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING
2025-2026 PROGRAM YEAR**

Based on Pennsylvania's Child Protective Services Law, child abuse means intentionally, knowingly, or recklessly causing bodily injury, serious physical neglect, sexual abuse or exploitation, mental injury or death through any act or failure to act by a parent or caretaker. Certain acts also constitute child abuse even if there is no resulting injury or condition. These acts are listed below:

- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child
 - Unreasonably restraining or confining a child
 - Forcefully shaking, slapping or striking a child under the age of one
 - Interfering with the breathing of a child
 - Leaving a child unsupervised with a known sexual offender or predator
- ❖ Any person may make a report of child abuse if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse. It is not necessary to have proof that a child is abused or neglected before making a report.
- ❖ There are also people who must report suspected abuse- these individuals are called "mandated reporters." **Mandated reporters are required by law to report suspected child abuse immediately to Pennsylvania's ChildLine based on their professional training and/or experience.**
- ❖ Every employee who works for Community Services for Children, Inc. is a mandated reporter, based on the Child Protective Services Law.
- ❖ **Reports must be made when a person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse based on regular contact with the child in the course of the person's employment or as the person directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child.**
- ❖ Programs with Community Services for Children, Inc. comply with all Federal and State laws regarding child abuse and neglect.
- ❖ If a mandated reporter fails to report a suspected case of abuse or neglect on purpose, he/she may be penalized with a misdemeanor of second degree up to a felony of second or third degree.

CHILDLINE Phone Number

1-800-932-0313

**PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT
2025-2026 PROGRAM YEAR**

Participation in a program at Community Services for Children, Inc. includes the following:

1. A commitment to good attendance and to work with staff on attendance improvement when challenges arise.
2. Participation in all scheduled classroom and educational activities.
3. Participation in home visits, Parent-Teacher Conferences, mental health consultation services, and/or other services with assigned program staff.
4. Participation in remote program services when offered, including remote learning, home visits, Parent-Teacher Conferences, mental health consultation services, meal pick-up/delivery when in-person services are temporarily suspended.
5. Transportation in private staff cars and agency insured vehicles to and from classrooms, program locations, medical/dental providers and other sites as possible.
6. Consent to release my child to the emergency contact person(s) I have designated if I am unable to receive my child after school or in case of illness. I will provide updated information to the program when changes occur by contacting the program staff with whom I have the next contact.
7. At times, children may be photographed or videotaped individually or in a group for program activities related to the following: home, classroom or program activities, child safety, staff development training, educational curriculum use, special projects with companies, colleges, or groups to promote the program or for educational purposes, which can include promotional media such as newspapers, TV, billboards, social media or brochures. (Personal information, including name and address, will not be disclosed, without written permission from one parent/guardian). ****Your consent for your child to be photographed or videotaped included on the Registration Packet Signature Page.***
8. Educational, nutritional, medical/dental (including hearing/vision), social-emotional, and developmental screenings, as required by Head Start Program Performance Standards, PA Pre-K Counts Statutes, Regulations and Guidelines and other related credentialing bodies.
9. Review of my child's health records such as physical exam, dental exam, immunization, allergies, and medical conditions records to ensure my child's health and well-being.
10. Consent to receive emergency medical and/or dental treatment at the nearest emergency room in case of serious illness, accident or injury and/or time does not permit my personal presence and consent. ****Your consent to your child receiving emergency medical care is included on Emergency Contact/Parent Consent form.***
11. Consent to receive important program alerts such as school closings, early dismissals, school delays, program reminders, and attendance follow-up via phone call, text message and/or e-mail through both ClassDojo and ChildPlus. I will keep the program informed of my current contact information to receive such communication. ****Details on how to remove or modify your communication preferences is available on the Emergency Contact/Parent Consent form.***

REGISTRATION PACKET SIGNATURE PAGE 2025-2026

By initialing next to the following policies, I agree that the policy was reviewed with me/us by Community Services for Children, Inc. Staff. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of each item.

_____ **Confidentiality Policy:** I understand that confidentiality is the process of protecting the privacy of information shared by and about a family and using that information only to benefit the family while enrolled at Community Services for Children and that I have the right to protection of personal information by all Community Services for Children staff.

_____ **Civil Rights Compliance:** I understand that admission to programs at Community Services for Children, including USDA Child Nutrition Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program, is open to all regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. All meals served to children under the Child and Adult Care Food Program are served at no separate charge regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. There is no discrimination in admission policy, meal service or the use of facilities.

_____ **Child Abuse Reporting Requirements:** I understand that any person may make a report of child abuse if there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse. There are also people who must report suspected abuse. These individuals are called *Mandated Reporters*. *Mandated Reporters* are required by law to report suspected child abuse immediately to Pennsylvania's ChildLine based on their professional training and/or experience. Every employee that works for Community Services for Children are *Mandated Reporters* based on the Child Protective Services Law. It is not necessary to have proof that a child is abused or neglected before making a report. Reports must be made when a person has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is a victim of abuse based on regular contact with the child in the course of the person's employment or as the person directly responsible for the care, supervision, guidance, or training of the child. I further understand that programs offered at Community Services for Children comply with all Federal and State laws regarding child abuse and neglect.

_____ **Participation Agreement:** I do hereby give my consent for my child to be enrolled and participate in programs offered at Community Services for Children. I understand that participation in the program and related events are voluntary. I have read, understand, and give permission for the items in the agreement. Each item has been explained to me by a Community Services for Children staff member.

To be completed by the Parent/Guardian:

- Our family receives the following: ☐ TANF ☐ SSI ☐ WIC ☐ SNAP
- At least one parent/guardian is an active duty member of the United States military: ☐ YES ☐ NO
- At least one parent/guardian is a veteran of the United States military: ☐ YES ☐ NO
- More than one language spoken in the home: ☐ YES ☐ NO
- Our family has a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence: ☐ YES ☐ NO
- Permission for my child to be photographed or videotaped: ☐ YES ☐ NO
- We opt-in to receive electronic communication from the program (text, email) and will provide updated information in order to receive ongoing program information: ☐ YES ☐ NO

I have been informed of the policies stated above, understand, agree, and received copies of each.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Name of Staff Reviewing Form

CONSENT FOR DATA EXCHANGE 2025-2026

I understand that information regarding my child, _____, is confidential and may not be shared without my consent or other legal obligations.

I, _____, do consent to the exchange of information regarding my child's enrollment and progress while enrolled in programs at Community Services for Children.

Please initial below next to each data exchange:

_____ Child's name, DOB, address, emergency contacts, allergies, immunizations, medical conditions, and other information required by school districts with whom CSC is collaborating to provide services within a district building to ensure my child's safety at all times.

_____ Educational records/assessment data, and developmental/health screening data gathered while enrolled in CSC programs with the collaborating school district for the purpose of supporting transitions into kindergarten.

_____ Enrollment status, classroom location and times with Early Intervention, Intermediate Units, or other service providers to support continuity of services.

_____ Child's name and enrollment status to the Early Learning Resource Center of Lehigh or Northampton County for the purpose of coordinating services when requested.

This consent is voluntary and I understand that I can withdraw my consent for my child at any time by sending an email to *ProgramOperations@cscinc.org*. Unless I withdraw this consent, this authorization will be in effect for the duration of my child's enrollment with Community Services for Children.

By signing below, you are confirming that you read, understand and agree to the above data exchange information as initialed.

Reviewed and approved by Policy Council March 9, 2023

Reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors March 15, 2023

Every family needs to develop its own escape plan because every family house and every family is different. Here are some tips you can use to develop your own Fire Escape Plan.

-
- The diagram shows a room layout with various furniture and fixtures. A yellow circle labeled "Smoke Alarm" is located near the top left. Red arrows indicate the primary evacuation route, starting from the smoke alarm and leading to the "Primary exit" (a solid red arrow pointing right). A dashed red arrow indicates an "Alternative exit" (a dashed red arrow pointing right). A red "X" marks a "Meeting place" (a red X inside a dashed red circle) located outside the room.

This image shows a full page of blank graph paper. The grid consists of small, uniform squares formed by thin, light gray lines. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

Fire Safety

Home fires can start and spread quickly, which is why we all need to be careful and educated when it comes to fire safety. Just a little bit of planning can make a big difference for your family.

Top Tips

1. Working smoke alarms reduce the chances of dying in a fire by nearly 50 percent. They are a critical first step for staying safe, but in order to be effective, they have to be working properly. For the best protection, install smoke alarms on every level of your home and in every sleeping area.
2. Teach kids never to play with matches and lighters. Make a habit of placing these items up and away from young children.
3. Create and practice a home fire escape plan with two ways out of every room in case of a fire. Get a stopwatch and time how fast your family can escape. The kids will love it.
4. Children should know how to respond to the sound of a smoke alarm. Teach them to get low and get out when they hear it. A child who is coached properly ahead of time will have a better chance to be safe.
5. Use common sense in the kitchen. Limit distractions when cooking and don't leave a hot oven or stovetop unattended.
6. Blow out candles before you leave the room or before you go to sleep.



Adapted from Safe Kids Worldwide handout, *Fire Safety Tips*.

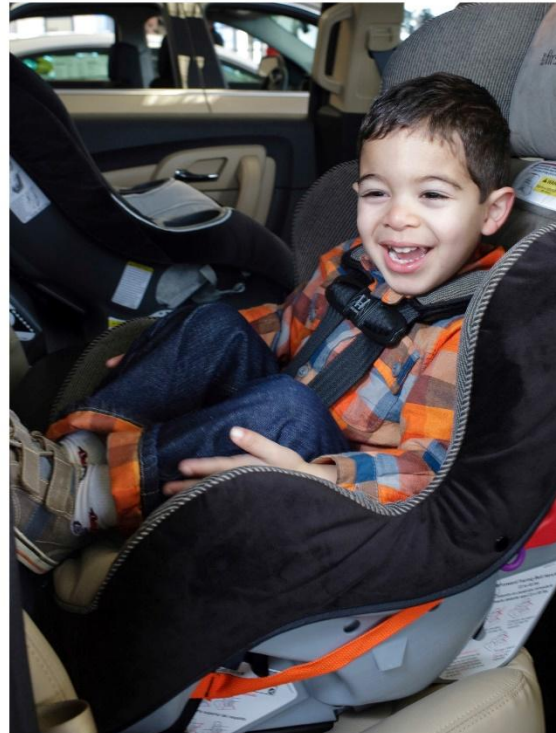
BASIC CAR SEAT SAFETY

Don't put your child at risk – buckle up the right way on every ride!

**SAFE
K:DS**
WORLDWIDE™

All children must use a car seat, booster seat or seat belt.

- My child always rides in a back seat and never in front of an airbag.
- Everyone in my car buckles up on every ride using the right car seat, booster seat or seat belt for each person's age and size.
- My child's car seat has all of its parts, labels and instructions and has never been in a crash.
- I follow the instructions for my car and my car seat so that my child is buckled in right.
- I never leave my child alone in a car.



Proud Program Supporter

www.safekids.org

GENERAL MOTORS

Babies under 2 use rear-facing car seats

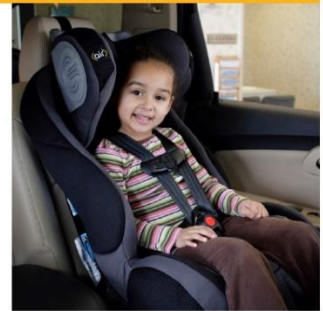
- My child always rides in a back seat and never in front of an air bag.
- My child always rides in a car seat made for his or her size and age.
- My child sits facing the back of the car in his or her car seat.
- The harness straps are snug on my child, and I can't pinch the buckled strap at the shoulder.
- My child's car seat is buckled tightly in the car and doesn't move more than one inch when I pull it at the belt path.
- My child uses a bigger rear-facing car seat until he or she outgrows the harness. Many harnesses go to 35, 40 or 45 pounds.



Toddlers and big kids use forward-facing car seats

If my child is over age 2 AND has outgrown the weight and height limits for the rear-facing seat:

- My child always rides in a back seat.
- My child always rides in a car seat made for his or her size and age.
- The harness straps are snug on my child, and I can't pinch the buckled strap at the shoulder.
- My child's car seat is buckled tightly in the car and doesn't move more than one inch when I pull it at the belt path. I use the top tether designed for the car seat.
- My child uses this car seat until he or she outgrows the harness. Many harnesses go to 50 pounds or more.



Older, bigger kids use booster seats

If my child has outgrown the weight and height limit of the forward-facing car seat:

- My child always rides in a back seat.
- My child always rides on a booster seat using a lap and shoulder seat belt.
- The lap belt sits low on his or her hips, not the stomach.
- The shoulder belt is on my child's shoulder – not on the neck, under the arm or behind the back.
- The seat belt is snug, flat and comfortable on my child.
- My child may be between 8-12 years of age before the seat belt fits without a booster.



Kids ready for seat belts

If my child has outgrown the booster seat:

- My child always rides in a back seat until age 13.
- My child always uses a lap and shoulder seat belt.
- The lap belt sits low on my child's hips, not the stomach.
- The shoulder belt is on my child's shoulder – not on the neck, under the arm or behind the back.
- My child's back is firmly against the vehicle seat back, his or her knees bend at the front edge of the vehicle seat, and he or she can sit this way for the whole ride.
- The seat belt is snug, flat and comfortable on my child. If the seat belt does not fit right, my child must use a booster seat.



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Home Safety Checklist

The following checklist is designed to ensure your house is safe enough for your child.

Take some time to walk around your home to check on the following safety issues.

If you have any concerns about additional safety measures, you may wish to contact your Home Visitor or local Health Bureau for more resources.

Yes **No**

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Windows have protective screens, guards, or locks. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Stairways have safety gates to prevent falls. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Harmful products are stored in containers with child-safety caps and out of reach. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All prescription and over-the-counter medicines are stored in containers with child-safety caps and out of reach. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Emergency numbers for police, fire, rescue squad, and poison control center are kept by the telephone or stored in your cell phone. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Entrance doors have locks. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Smoke detectors are installed and working. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A working fire extinguisher is kept in an easy to find location. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | There are no walls with peeling paint. Rooms with freshly painted walls have been well ventilated for at least 2-3 days. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any exposed electrical outlets have been covered. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | All sharp objects (such as knives and scissors) are stored out of your child's reach. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any heavy objects such as TVs or drawers that your child could pull over on top of him or herself are secured or have been removed. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Yard and play space are free of holes, stones, broken glass, nails, tools and other litter. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | Candles are in solid holders and are carefully extinguished when through using. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | We have developed an emergency fire escape plan. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | A Basic First Aid Kit is kept in an easy to find location. |

Basic First Aid Kit

Though major medical implements should be left to the professionals, basic first aid supplies will come in very handy for any household. Cuts and bruises pop up from time to time and it's important to be able to handle them quickly and with ease.



BASICS

- ☐ Bandages (multiple sizes)
- ☐ Non-Stick Gauze
- ☐ Adhesive First Aid Kit
- ☐ First Aid Cream
- ☐ Tweezers (for splinters)
- ☐ Ice Pack
- ☐ Thermometer (in case of fever)
- ☐ Aloe

MEDICINES

- ☐ Calamine Lotion
- ☐ Ibuprofen
- ☐ Acetaminophen

EMERGENCY



- ☐ Doctor's Phone Number
- ☐ Emergency Contact Information
- ☐ Local Hospital Information

Gather up the items you may already have. Make a list of the items you may need to purchase – all of these items can be found at the local dollar store. Use a recycled coffee can, plastic diaper wipe container, or shoe box to put all of the items together in an easy to find location.



SUMMER SAFETY

WITH CHOOSY



- Limit sun exposure between 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM
- Apply sunscreen SPF 15 or greater to child's skin that aren't covered in clothing
- Reapply sunscreen every 2 hours, or after swimming or sweating
- Put on sunscreen 30 minutes before going outdoors

- Families should attend community fireworks displays run by professionals rather than using fireworks at home
- Use insect repellents containing DEET when needed to prevent insect-related diseases
- The current AAP and CDC recommendation for children older than 2 months of age is to use 10% to 30% DEET
- Children should wear hats to protect against ticks when walking in the woods, high grasses or bushes. Check hair and skin for ticks at the end of the day

- Your child needs to wear a helmet on every bike ride, no matter how short or how close to home
- When purchasing a helmet, look for a label or sticker that says the helmet meets the CPSC safety standard
- Metal, rubber and plastic products can get very hot in the summer, especially under direct sun
- Make sure slides are cool to prevent children's legs from getting burned
- Do not allow children to play barefoot on the playground



- Prevent injuries from flying objects, such as stones or toys, by picking up objects from the lawn before mowing begins
- Do not allow children to ride as passengers on ride-on mowers
- Do not pull the mower backward or mow in reverse unless absolutely necessary, and carefully look for children behind you when you mow in reverse



**HAVE A FUN
AND SAFE
SUMMER!**

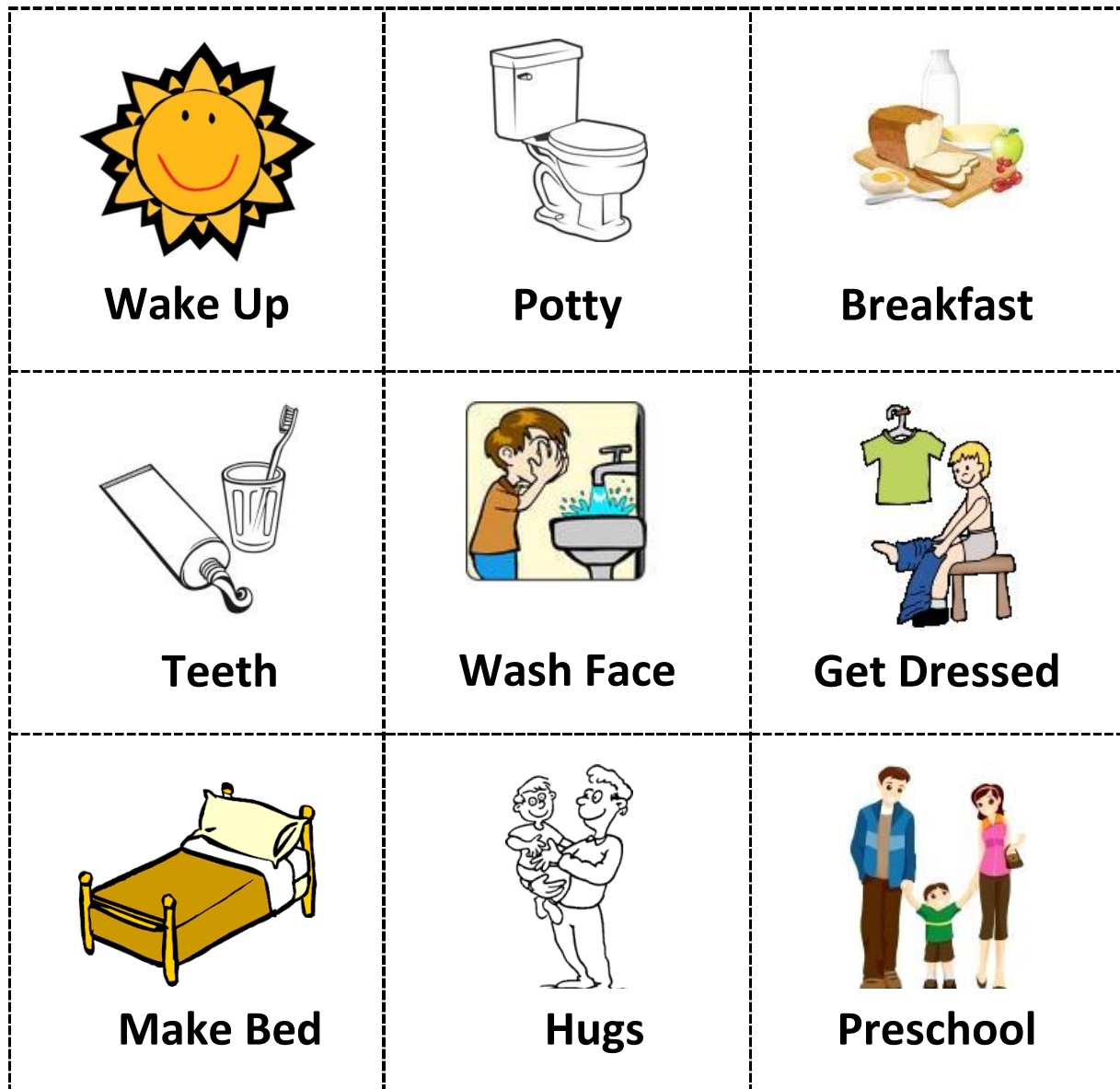
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.HEALTHYCHILDREN.ORG/ENGLISH/SAFETY-PREVENTION

Morning Routines

Routines give children a sense of security and help them develop self-discipline. Young children need a predictable sequence to their day in order to feel secure and put at ease any worries they may have about the unknown.

Getting children out of the house on time with their clothes in order, teeth brushed, tummies full, and ready to learn can be challenging. Developing a predictable morning routine will help everyone to start the day on track.

Activity: To create a morning routine with your child, cut out the picture cards below and arrange them in the order that makes sense for your family.

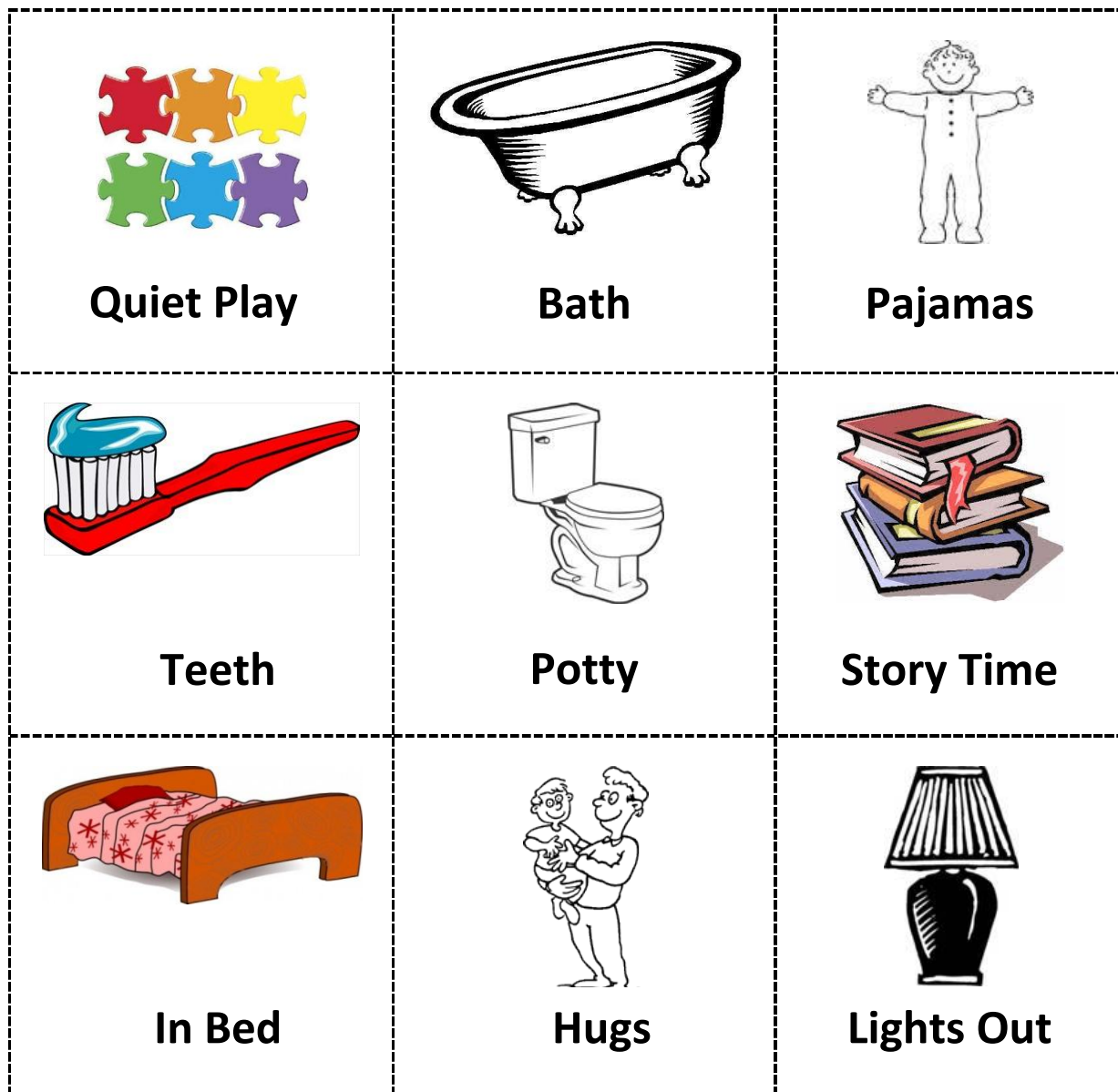


Bedtime Routines

Sleep is a vital need, essential to a child's health and growth. Preschoolers generally need around 10 to 13 hours of sleep within a 24 hr. period. A nightly routine is a great way to ensure that your preschooler gets enough sleep.

Bedtime routines help children learn to transition from the busy activity of the day to settling down for sleep. Bedtime is a time to teach children how to soothe themselves and how to relax. Consistent routines can make evenings less stressful and far more fun -- for everyone!

Activity: To create a bedtime routine with your child, cut out the picture cards below and arrange them in the order that makes sense for your family.



Ground Rules

1. We use quiet voices inside.



2. We walk inside.



3. We use gentle hands.



4. Our work is returned to the shelves.

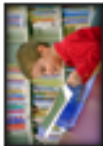




READ-A-BOOK





Child's Name: _____

| | Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 |
|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| September | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| October | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| November | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| December | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| January | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| February | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| March | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |
| April | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ | ☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆ |

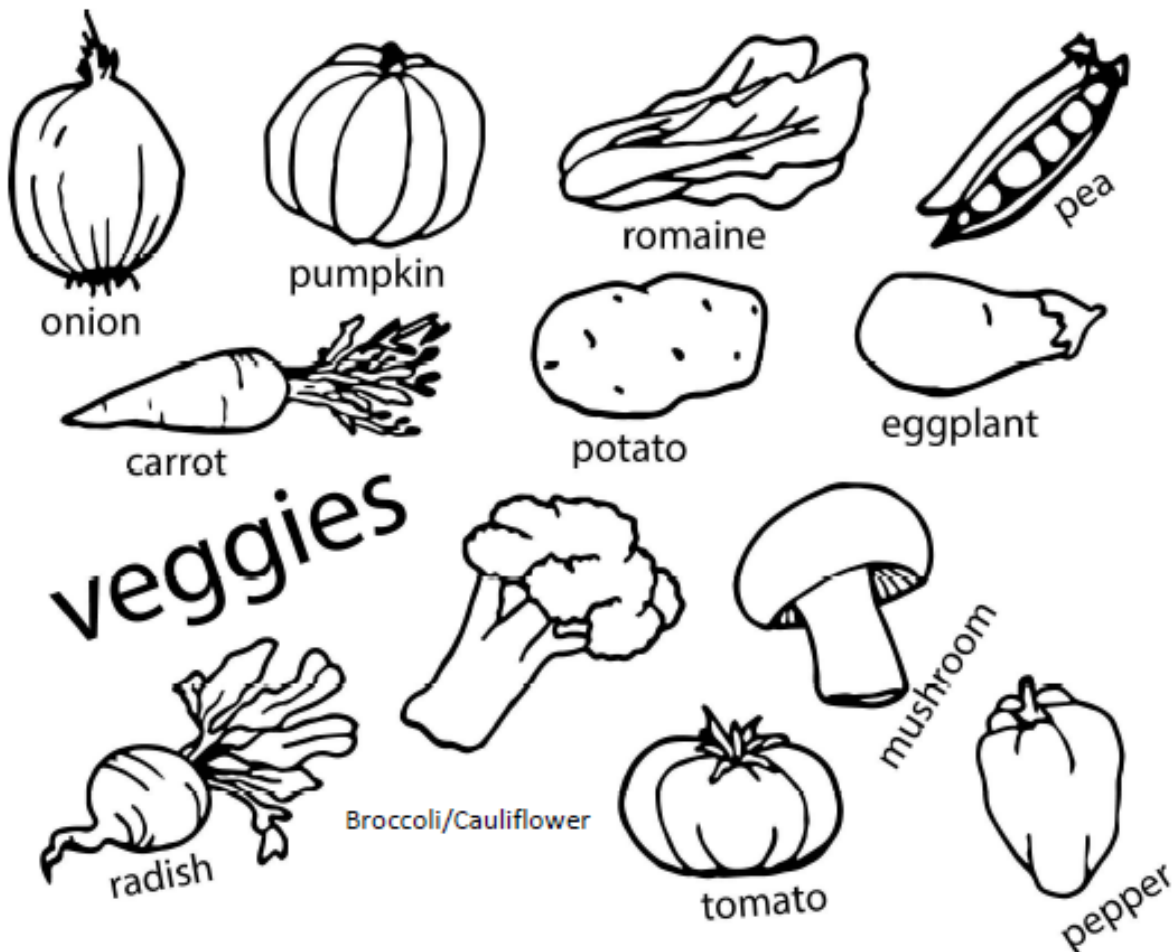


Fill in a star each time you read aloud with your child at home, in the classroom, or at the library.

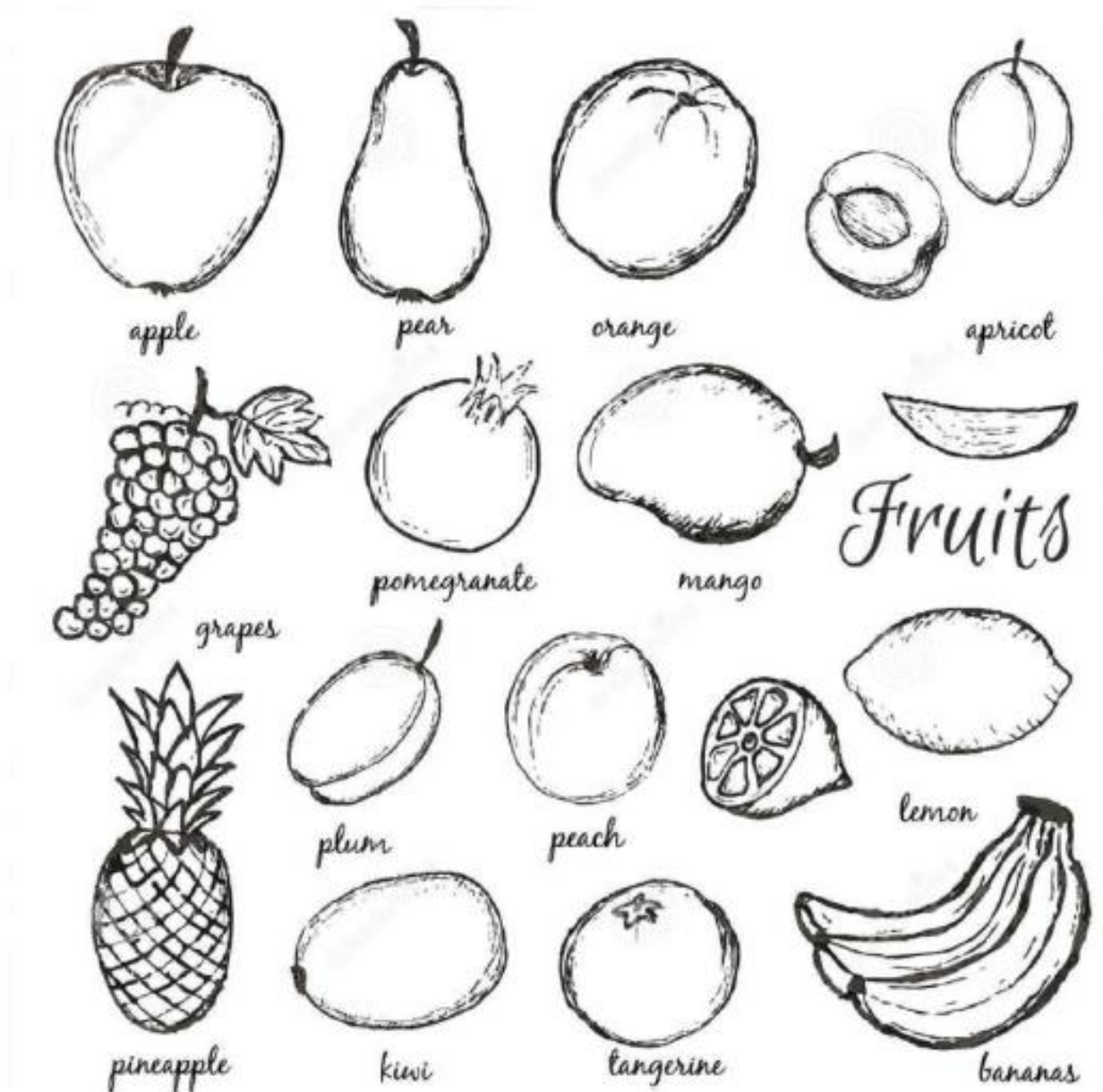
Health at Home Month Activity Log

| Week 1 | Week 2 | Week 3 | Week 4 |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Track the number of plants- fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, seeds, and whole grains-your family eats this week.</p> <p>Color in the star below when you complete this week's healthy challenge!</p>  | <p>Take or draw a picture of you and your family sitting together for a meal.</p> <p>Color in the star below when you complete this week's healthy challenge!</p>  | <p>Take or draw a picture of your favorite meal you had this week on the MYPLATE and schedule family meal planning time.</p> <p>Color in the star below when you complete this week's healthy challenge!</p>  | <p>Take a picture of, or draw three ways your family will work on eating healthier.</p> <p>Color in the star below when you complete this week's healthy challenge!</p>  |

How many plants can your family try in a week?



Eat your vegetables, fruits, beans, whole grains, nuts, and seeds! If you saw something you ate, color it in or write them down! Count them all and write your number on the line on the next page!



Don't forget to count things like grains (rice, oats, quinoa), nuts, seeds, legumes (peanuts, peas, lentils) and beans!

We tried ____ plants!

Family Meal Time Reflection

A recent study found that parents who had high stress jobs, but still made it home in time for dinner with their families, experienced reductions in stress levels and maintained a higher employee morale at work despite reporting major stress at work.

Experiment with your family to see if meal times can help you improve your own stress and improve the bonds you have with your family.

On a scale of 1-10 (1 = no stress, 10 = very stressed),

How high was your stress level before your family meal together?

How did you feel after mealtime with your family? Did the number change?

What did you talk about or do together that made you feel happy?

Is mealtime with the family something that helps you feel better? If so, why?

Share what you find with your Home Visitor and talk about some of the ways you could schedule family meals together, if you find that this would be good for your family.



CREATE A GROCERY GAME PLAN

WEEKLY CALENDAR

| | SUN | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI | SAT |
|-----------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|
| BREAKFAST | | | | | | | |
| LUNCH | | | | | | | |
| DINNER | | | | | | | |
| SNACKS | | | | | | | |

NOTES:



CREATE A GROCERY GAME PLAN

GROCERY LIST

| FRUITS | GRAINS (BREADS, PASTAS, RICE, CEREALS) |
|--|---|
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
| DAIRY (MILK, YOGURT, CHEESE) | VEGETABLES |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |
| PROTEIN FOODS (MEAT, SEAFOOD, BEANS & PEAS, NUTS, EGGS) | OTHER |
| <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> | <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> |

NOTES: _____

Family Goal Tracker

Please write or draw three ways your family will work on eating healthier.

Our family will work on...



Our family will work on...



Our family will work on...



Is your child getting enough sleep?

The American Academy of Pediatrics endorses the following guidelines to developing healthy sleep habits:

| AGE | RECOMMENDATION |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Infants 4 months to 12 months | 12 - 16 hours (including naps) |
| 1 to 2 years | 11 – 14 hours (including naps) |
| 3 to 5 years | 10 – 13 hours (including naps) |
| 6 to 12 years | 9 – 12 hours |
| 13 to 18 years | 8 – 10 hours |

Getting the right amount of sleep for your child’s age on a regular basis leads to improved attention, behavior, learning, memory, emotional regulation, quality of life, and mental and physical health.

Missing as little as 30 to 60 minutes of sleep per night can have a big impact on your child’s overall health and well-being. Signs that your child may not be getting enough sleep include:

- Being sleepy at the wrong time of day (e.g., after waking in the morning)
- Having trouble paying attention during the day
- Falling asleep very quickly (within a few minutes) when given the chance
- Excited or antsy at the wrong time of day (e.g., just before bedtime)
- Easily frustrated and quickly irritated
- Trouble keeping his impulses in check



If you are concerned that your child is not sleeping enough, please discuss your concern with your child’s pediatrician and talk to your Home Visitor about establishing a bedtime routine.

In addition to these recommendations, the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that all screens be turned off 30 minutes before bedtime and that TV, computers and other screens not be allowed in children's bedrooms.

Adapted from materials available on the American Academy of Pediatrics and National Sleep Foundation websites.



WHAT DOES A SAFE SLEEP ENVIRONMENT LOOK LIKE?

The following image shows a safe sleep environment for baby.



Room share: Give babies their own sleep space in your room, separate from your bed.



Use a firm, flat, and level sleep surface, covered only by a fitted sheet*.



Remove everything from baby's sleep area, except a fitted sheet to cover the mattress. No objects, toys, or other items.



Use a wearable blanket to keep baby warm without blankets in the sleep area.



Place babies on their backs to sleep, for naps and at night.



Couches and armchairs are not safe for baby to sleep on alone, with people, or with pets.



Keep baby's surroundings smoke/vape free.

Make sure baby's head and face stay uncovered during sleep.



*The Consumer Product Safety Commission sets safety standards for infant sleep surfaces (such as a mattress) and sleep spaces (like a crib). Visit <https://www.cpsc.gov/SafeSleep> to learn more.



NIH

National Institutes of Health
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services



SAFE SLEEP FOR YOUR BABY

Reduce the Risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)
and Other Sleep-Related Infant Deaths



Place babies on their backs to sleep for naps and at night.



Stay smoke- and vape-free during pregnancy, and keep baby's surroundings smoke- and vape-free.



Feeding babies human milk by direct breastfeeding, if possible, or by pumping from the breast, reduces the risk of SIDS. Feeding only human milk, with no formula or other things added, for the first 6 months provides the greatest protection from SIDS.

Use a sleep surface for baby that is **firm** (returns to original shape quickly if pressed on), **flat** (like a table, not a hammock), **level** (not at an angle or incline), and **covered only with a fitted sheet**.



Stay drug- and alcohol-free during pregnancy, and make sure anyone caring for baby is drug- and alcohol-free.



Avoid products and devices that go against safe sleep guidance, especially those that claim to "prevent" SIDS and sleep-related deaths.



Feed your baby human milk, like by breastfeeding.



Avoid letting baby get too hot, and keep baby's head and face uncovered during sleep.



Avoid heart, breathing, motion, and other monitors to reduce the risk of SIDS.



Share a room with baby for at least the first 6 months. Give babies their own sleep space (crib, bassinet, or portable play yard) in your room, separate from your bed.



Get regular medical care throughout pregnancy.



Avoid swaddling once baby starts to roll over (usually around 3 months of age), and keep in mind that swaddling does not reduce SIDS risk.



Keep things out of baby's sleep area—no objects, toys, or other items.



Follow health care provider advice on vaccines, checkups, and other health issues for baby.



Give babies plenty of "tummy time" when they are awake, and when someone is watching them.



Offer baby a pacifier for naps and at night once they are breastfeeding well.



For more information about the Safe to Sleep® campaign, contact us:

Phone: 1-800-505-CRIB (2742) | Fax: 1-866-760-5947

Email: SafetoSleep@mail.nih.gov

Website: <https://safetosleep.nichd.nih.gov>

Telecommunications Relay Service: 7-1-1

NIH Pub. No. 22-HD-5759 | August 2022



TIPS | for parents of Preschoolers

Read early and read often. The early years are critical to developing a lifelong love of reading. It's never too early to begin reading to your child! The tips below offer some fun ways you can help your child become a happy and confident reader. Try a new tip each week. See what works best for your child.

■ **Read together every day.**

Read to your child every day. Make this a warm and loving time when the two of you can cuddle close.

■ **Give everything a name.**

Build your child's vocabulary by talking about interesting words and objects. For example, "Look at that airplane! Those are the wings of the plane. Why do you think they are called wings?"

■ **Say how much you enjoy reading.**

Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him or her. Talk about "story time" as the favorite part of your day.

■ **Read with fun in your voice.**

Read to your child with humor and expression. Use different voices. Ham it up!

■ **Know when to stop.**

Put the book away for awhile if your child loses interest or is having trouble paying attention.

■ **Be interactive.**

Discuss what's happening in the book, point out things on the page, and ask questions.

■ **Read it again and again.**

Go ahead and read your child's favorite book for the 100th time!

■ **Talk about writing, too.**

Mention to your child how we read from left to right and how words are separated by spaces.

■ **Point out print everywhere.**

Talk about the written words you see in the world around you. Ask your child to find a new word on each outing.

■ **Get your child evaluated.**

Please be sure to see your child's pediatrician or teacher as soon as possible if you have concerns about your child's language development, hearing, or sight.

Visit www.ReadingRockets.org for more information on how you can launch a child into a bright future through reading.

Help Your Child Learn to Love Reading

Read Aloud

Research shows that the single most important activity for building successful readers is reading aloud to children.

Be a Role Model

It's important for children to see you reading signs, information on food boxes, the newspaper, coupons, etc.

Limit Screen Time

Guide and limit the kinds of technology your child uses each day by moderating "screen time" (which includes TV, videos, DVDs, computers, video games, and handheld devices). Instead involve them in fun activities that they can explore, use their senses, and "be involved" in.



Talk to Your Children

Listen and talk to your child about what they are doing and feeling. Talking with children gives them a sense of belonging and an understanding of language.

Look for Books Together

Make trips to the library regular outings. Talking about books stimulates curiosity and imagination.

Stock Up

Have lots of different materials that have print on them available for children to play with: food boxes, junk mail, maps, coupons, magazines, and handmade books. This motivates children to want to read.

Making Up Stories

Let children make up stories, let them "read the pictures" and read aloud to you.

Ask Questions

Ask questions about the stories you read. How do the characters in the story feel? What might happen next in the story? What do you remember about the story?

Learn More

Ask your librarian about good books written for your child's age and books about topics that interest your child.

Use Your Kindergarten I Come Calendar

Choose activities from the calendar as often as you can to encourage learning in your home.

Make Mealtime a Family Time

Family meals allow your preschooler to focus on the task of eating and give you a chance to model good behaviors.

It takes a little work to bring everyone together for meals. But it's worth it and the whole family eats better.

- Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young. This way, it becomes a habit.
- Plan when you will eat together as a family. Write it on your calendar.
- You may not be able to eat together every day. Try to have family meals most days of the week.



Make family meals enjoyable

- Focus on the meal and each other. Turn off the television. Take phone calls or texts later.
- Talk about fun and happy things. Try to make meals a stress-free time.
- Encourage your child to try foods. But, don't lecture or force your child to eat.
- Involve your child in conversation. Ask questions like:

- What made you feel really happy today?
- What did you have to eat at lunch today?
- What's your favorite veggie? Why?
- Tell me one thing you learned today.
- What made you laugh today?

*Cook together. Eat together.
Talk together. Make
mealtime a family time.*

- Have your child help you get ready to eat. Depending on age, your child may be able to:
 - Help set the table
 - Put pets, toys, or books in another room
 - Turn off the TV
 - Pour milk (with help)
 - Put down place mats
 - Hand out napkins and silverware
 - Pick flowers for the table
 - Clear the table
 - Wipe the table

Make Food Fun!

Picky eating is temporary and there are many things you can do to deal with picky eating in a positive way. One way is to make food fun!

Get creative in the kitchen:

- Name a food your child helps create. Make a big deal of serving "Dawn's Salad" or "Peter's Sweet Potatoes" for dinner.
- Cut a food into fun and easy shapes with cookie cutters.
- Encourage your child to invent and help prepare new snacks or sandwiches. For example, make your own trail mixes from dry cereal and dried fruit.
- Have your child make towers out of whole-grain crackers, spell words with pretzel sticks, or make funny faces on a plate using different types of fruit.

Community Services for Children, Inc.

- Jazz up the taste of vegetables with low-fat dressings or dips. Try hummus or bean spread as a dip for veggies.

Science Technology Engineering Math

Did you know that when you cook a meal at home you are a scientist? You will also be using technology. And you've become a mathematician and maybe even an engineer? And this is all happening while you are doing an everyday task!

Your children are very much the same. Everything they do involves learning, and much of the learning involves science, technology, engineering and math . . . referred to as **STEM**.

So how do you "teach" these things? At this age, children are learning by trial and error. They try something. If it works – they celebrate; if it doesn't work, they need to be encouraged to try it again in a different way! That's what an engineer does. You can tell them they did a great job and that now they can try to do it another way that might work better. It is in the trying that they are learning.



Every interaction you have with your child is an opportunity for them to learn something. So work at this at home by asking your child questions, even if you do not know the answer! Encourage your child to think creatively. Whenever possible, try to find answers together by looking them up or experimenting.

Take time as often as possible to stop by your classroom. Look around the room and ask the teacher about things you see...or, ask your child to tell you about pictures or projects that you see!

Science Technology Engineering Math

Kid Friendly **STEM** Fruit Smoothie

Makes: 2 servings

Ingredients:

2 cups fat free or low fat milk
½ cup frozen fruit (peaches, berries, or mango)
1 small banana

Directions: Blend all ingredients in a blender until smooth.



S = blend liquid and solid to make liquid **T** = blender, try mixing it with a spoon

E = try making it with different fruits **M** = 2 cups + 1 cup + 1 banana = how much?

Cyber Safety

The internet is a wonderful tool that has opened up a world of information for anyone who has access to a computer. Even very young children can learn to use a computer and access fun, educational programs. Parents must teach them to use technology safely, right from the start.



The basics of Cyber Safety begin with you. Model what you want your children to do. If you are on your phone or computer many hours a day, and spend little time interacting with other people, including your children, they will want to do that, too. If you are too engrossed in your technology to respond to your child when they speak to you, your child will begin ignoring you when you talk to them, too. Your Head Start child is a little young to be using the internet, but there are things to teach them now that

will help them learn that there are rules and that those rules are created to keep them safe. Here are some very basic messages to begin to teach even your preschooler:

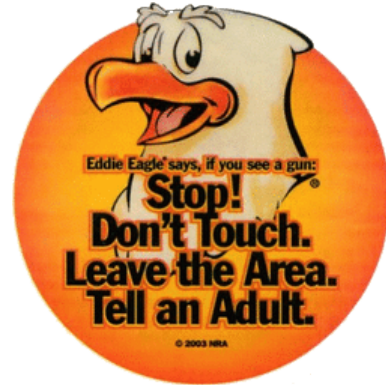
- Always get permission from your parents before using the computer or internet, and get an adult to type in the address in the address bar.
- Never give out your name, age, where you live or other information unless you are told to do so by your parents or teacher.
- Do not give your user name or password to anyone, not even your best friend or another family member, without your parent's permission.

For more detailed information on Cyber Safety, go to www.attorneygeneral.gov and search for Cyber Safety.

Gun Safety

Just as important as teaching your child to safely cross the street, gun safety should be part of every family's safety education. Children are exposed to guns on TV and through toy guns all of the time. So they think guns are safe and fun. Help them learn that what they see on TV is not real, but that real guns can hurt them. It is important to teach your child some very basic rules to keep them safe if they ever come across a gun:

- STOP
- DON'T TOUCH
- LEAVE THE AREA
- TELL AN ADULT



Secondhand Smoke

Secondhand smoke is smoke from burning tobacco products, such as cigarettes, cigars, or pipes. There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure; even brief exposure can be harmful to health. Children can suffer health and behavior problems from being around parents and caregivers who smoke.

| Risks | Preventing Risk |
|--|--|
| <p>Exposure to secondhand smoke during pregnancy increase risk to both you and your baby, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Miscarriage• Low birth weight• Premature birth• Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) <p>In children, secondhand smoke causes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ear infections• More frequent and severe asthma attacks• Respiratory symptoms (for example, coughing, sneezing, and shortness of breath)• Respiratory infections (bronchitis and pneumonia)• A greater risk for sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) | <p>You can protect yourself and your family from secondhand smoke by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quitting smoking if you are not already a nonsmoker• Not allowing anyone to smoke anywhere in or near your home• Not allowing anyone to smoke in your car, even with the windows down• Making sure your children's day care center and schools are tobacco-free• Seeking out restaurants and other places that do not allow smoking (if your state still allows smoking in public areas)• Teaching your children to stay away from secondhand smoke• Being a good role model by not smoking or using any other type of tobacco |

Ready to quit smoking?

Call **1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669)** for support in quitting, including free quit coaching, a free quit plan, free educational materials, and referrals to local resources.

Adapted from materials available on the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website and in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook

Substance Misuse

Substance misuse refers to the inappropriate use of any type of drug, both legal and illegal. This includes medications prescribed by a doctor. When parents or caregivers misuse substances, children are impacted.

| Risks | Preventing Risk |
|---|--|
| <p>Exposure to substance misuse, including prescription drugs, during pregnancy increase risk to your baby, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stillbirth • Preterm delivery • Birth defects • Developmental delays • Challenging behaviors • Neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) <p>Children who grow up with a parent who misuses substances are more likely to experience the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse • Neglect • Child welfare referral • Foster care placement | <p>You can help to keep your children drug free by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate caring. • Talk to your children about their day and activities. • Raise children without any violence. • Discuss drugs, their dangers and ways to avoid them with your children not to your children. • If you drink, model appropriate drinking. • No drinking under the age of 21 means No drinking. • Do not have or allow illegal drugs in your home. Keep prescription and over the counter drugs in a locked box and out of the reach of children. • Don't back off from your values. Stand your ground. • Say "yes" to a healthy lifestyle. • Talk with and listen to your children. • Have fun as a family. • Know your kids friends and their parents! |

What is addiction?

When people who use drugs can't stop taking a drug even if they want to, it's called addiction. Even when a person is aware of the harm the drug is causing, the urge to use again is too strong to resist. Addiction is a disease of the brain. Drugs change the way the brain works and cause problems like mood swings, memory loss, even trouble thinking and making decisions.

Ready to get help?

Call 1-800-662-HELP (4357) at any time for drug and counseling treatment near you. Substance abuse services available to children and adults across Pennsylvania can also be found on the following website: <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/MA-Mental-Health-and-Substance-Abuse.aspx>

Adapted from materials available on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC) website, Easy-to-Read Drug Facts available at easyread.drugabuse.gov and in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook

How to Be a Good Advocate for your Child: Tips for Parents

1. Get Involved, Be Informed

- Know the facts of your child's situation including their strengths, weaknesses and the views of those who work with your child in school.
- Know your rights and legal procedures.
- Get to know the people who work with your child. Build positive relationships and contribute to the school environment.
- Stay informed about what's happening in your school.

2. Keep Records

- Keep copies of everything you get or send to the school.
- Keep a record of conversations: date, time, name and position of the school personnel and any decisions reached.
- Organize your records in a notebook or binder.

3. Prepare

- Think about what you'd like to see happen to solve a problem you or the school are having.
- Know what kind of meeting is scheduled to discuss concerns. Ask what will be discussed and who will be present.
- Bring someone to help you at the meeting. If you can't locate an advocate, bring a friend or neighbor.
- Bring records, evaluations, and contact information for other professionals that work with your child.
- List questions that you want answered to keep your focus during the meeting.

4. Use Meeting Time Effectively

- Be polite and courteous at all meetings. Be on time and respect time limits.
- Acknowledge when good things have happened and special efforts have been made.
- Ask questions and take notes.
- Say what you want in your own words. Be clear, and concise.
- Take time to make good decisions
 - Repeat what they say to make sure you understand.
 - End meetings with a plan of action or "next steps."
 - Get a summary of what was agreed to and who was present.

5. Follow Up

- Keep track of deadlines and communicate with program staff.
- Report on progress as well as problems.

6. Remember:

- You are the expert on your child.
- Focus on the problem, not the people. Avoid getting sidetracked by personal conflicts. Bring the focus back to your child.
- Make sure the school staff speak clearly and don't get bogged down in jargon you don't understand—ask questions when you are unsure about what's being said.

Community Services for Children, Inc.

- There may be more than one way to get what your child needs. Work towards problem solving as a team.

Head Start of the Lehigh Valley acknowledges that parents are their child's first and most important teachers! You can help us keep the ball rolling by continuing to teach your child at home!

For some ideas that are fun and easy to do at home, go on line to <https://papromiseforchildren.com>. Here you will find the calendar <https://papromiseforchildren.com> pictured below, as well as many other informative articles and activities.

The Kindergarten Here I Come! Activity Guide for families of three and four year olds are intended to get them ready academically and emotionally for kindergarten.



The activities are based on the Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. You can download a copy online or request a hard copy!

Here are some samples of fun things you'll find:

- Play shape and color hunt with your child. Ask your child to "find something in the house that is shaped like a circle." Or, "find something that is blue." Do the same thing with other shapes and colors.
- Use stuffed animals or dolls to act out things your family likes to do together.
- Look through magazines or catalogs with your child for pictures of children doing different things. Talk about each picture. "What is the child doing in this picture?"
- Take your child to the grocery store. Look at apples and talk about the different colors, shapes and sizes. Use words like same and different.

Effective Parenting Tips

1. **Set a good example:** Children often learn how to act by observing how their parents act. For example, if parents handle frustrations well, their children will probably learn to handle their own frustrations well. If parents swear and become upset when things don't go well, their children may learn to act the same way.
2. **Verbal and physical affection:** Frequent hugging or cuddling between parents and their children is very important. Say "I love you" every day! Positive affection should be provided on a regular basis.
3. **Be consistent and predictable:** Children function best when they know what to expect. Parents should make it very clear exactly what are and are not acceptable behaviors. Management of children's behavior from one day to another should not vary according to parental mood.
4. **Relaxation Corner:** Create a cozy space with a pillow, stress ball, etc. and direct your child there when they need a few minutes to be alone and calm down. Use this instead of time out when your child needs a break, so they learn coping skills in moments of stress.
5. **Helpers:** Let your children help with as many everyday tasks as possible. Most children enjoy spending time helping their parents, and it can also be a good learning experience. With younger children, "helping" may involve pretend work in the same area.
6. **When-Then:** Reward your child for following through on a specific behavior, "When you finish picking up your toys, then we can read a book together."
7. **Brag Calendar:** Hang a calendar on the refrigerator or near your child's bed. Each day, write on the calendar one positive statement about your child. Read the calendar to your child often to build self-esteem.
8. **Play:** Spend time playing or being silly with your child every day. Your child will be more cooperative, your relationship will grow in a positive way, and you will be more relaxed too!

Developmental Stage: Preschooler

Between the ages of 3 to 6 years, the preschooler reaches out to the world for new experiences, friends, and accomplishments.

| Areas | Common Behaviors and Skills |
|--|---|
| Large Muscle Development (Gross Motor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes longer steps when running and walking. • Catches large ball. • Hops on one foot. |
| Small Muscle Development (Fine Motor) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can draw, use scissors and begin to color. • Can begin to read. • Copies shapes. • Can paint with broad strokes. |
| Intellectual Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the period of functional language by learning objects and people with symbols. • Asks a lot of questions about names of objects and activities <i>"What is that?"</i> • Asks questions about purpose: <i>"Why does it rain?"</i> |
| Language Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary grows from 900 words at three years to 2, 000 words between 5 and 6 years. • By the age of five, uses complete sentences. • Uses "because, how, and why" to interpret cause and effect. • Children love to giggle with "toilet talk." |
| Social-Emotional Development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are highly social and want to play with other children. • Children initiate activities due to the need to gain mastery. • If children are made to feel stupid or silly about their activities, feelings of guilt can develop that last a lifetime. • Children play and have imaginary friends. • Most preschooler boys play with boys and girls play with girls around the age of 6 years. • Night time bed wetting can occur. • Fears can develop about monsters and scary people. • Masturbation is normal. |

Establishing Nurturing Parenting Routines

Nurturing Parenting Routines provide children and parents with a consistent, predictable and caring way of family life.

Nurturing routines have four important features:

1. Feelings of trust and security.
2. Demonstrating caring for oneself and others.
3. A strong sense of “Personal Power.”
4. Feelings of positive self-worth.

There are several important practices that go into establishing Nurturing Parenting Routines:

- Gentle touch
- Praising your child
- Happy, pleasant facial expressions
- Having a sense of caring
- Having fun and a sense of humor

Steps in Establishing a Nurturing Bedtime Routine

- Identify a consistent time your child will be going to bed.
- Make a nice, relaxing bath time part of the night routine for going to bed.
- Dress your child in clothes especially for bed time.
- Help your child get dressed for sleep in their bedroom, not in other rooms of the house.
- Have your child brush their teeth every night as part of the nurturing bedtime routine.
- Spend time with your child reading stories.
- Choose bed time stories that are happy and pleasing – books which add comfort, not discomfort.
- When you’re finished reading, tell your child it’s time to go to bed.
- Tuck your child in and sing a song or tell your child a “power story” by highlighting all of their efforts or accomplishments of the day!



If your child should begin to cry during the night, go into their room and find out what the problem is.

Adapted from materials available in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook

Rating My Nurturing Parenting Skills

Use the chart below to rate your skills in the start section to see what areas you'd like to improve in!

Directions:

Mark your responses in the columns START. When you complete your program, you can record your responses in each area in the column marked END to see how much you've grown.

Ratings:

- 1 = I need lots of improvement
- 2 = I need some improvement
- 3 = I have average skills in this area
- 4 = I have good skills in this area
- 5 = I have really good skills in this area

| Rating My Nurturing Parenting Skills | | |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| | Start | End |
| 1. Attachment: Having unconditional love for your children. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 2. Empathy: Helping your children meet their basic needs. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 3. Nurturing Yourself: Finding time for yourself and taking care of yourself. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 4. Gentle Touch: Holding, rocking, touching and massaging your children. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 5. Discipline: Using techniques other than spanking or shouting to teach and guide your children. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 6. Expressing Feelings: Recognizing and expressing your feelings in positive ways. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |
| 7. Expectations: Having appropriate expectations for yourself and your children. | 1 2 3 4 5 | 1 2 3 4 5 |

Understanding and Handling Stress

Good Stress...

The emotional response to the normal demands of life.

Bad Stress (or distress)...

When the demands of life cause great suffering and pain.

Tips on How to Handle Stress...

- Exercise.
- Take hot baths.
- Learn to relax.
- Eat healthy foods.
- Have a positive attitude and outlook.
- Set realistic expectations for yourself.
- Feel good about yourself.
- Get organized.
- Have friends!
- Have a sense of humor!

Try this...

Identify five stressors (things that cause stress) in your life:

What is one thing you can do differently to prevent these stressors from affecting the quality of your life?

Identify five stressors in your children's lives:

What can you do to help your children reduce their stress?

Adapted from materials available in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook.

The SPICES of Life

Reflection Activity

1. Using a scale from 0-3, rate each need area:

0= Not Met; 1= Low; 2 = Average; 3 = High

| Need | Rating (circle one for each need) | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Social | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Physical | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Intellectual | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Creative | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Emotional | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Spiritual | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 |

2. What I can do to get my needs met:

Helping Children Handle Their Feelings

Here are some tips for helping your children handle their feelings...

- Let children know that feelings are okay.
- Label the feeling you see or think you see.
- Encourage your children to talk about how they are feeling.
- Ask questions but don't tell children not to feel that way.
- Brainstorm what, if anything can be done.
- Honor children's desires.
- Teach children appropriate ways to express their feelings energy
- PRAISE your children when they express their feelings appropriately!

Empathy

Empathy is the ability of parents to care about their children.

Parents with Empathy...

- Help their children get their needs met.
- Try to figure out what their children are feeling.
- Hold and rock children when they need to be comforted.
- Try to understand what their children are thinking.
- Respond to their children in a caring way.

Try this...

Children learn empathy from watching their parents from the way their parents treat them. Develop a plan for building empathy by completing the following statements:

1. Things I can do to model empathy are...

2. One non-empathic behavior I do that I definitely want to stop is:

3. What is one thing that you can do instead to model show empathy?

Adapted from materials available in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook.

Being Aware of our Labels for Ourselves and Our Children

How can we change our self-imposed labels?

| | |
|---|----------------|
| Write down a negative label you have for yourself: | |
| What do you do (or not do) to get that label? | |
| What positive label would you like to have instead? | |
| List 3 behaviors you can do to promote your new positive label: | 1. 2. 3. |

Every time you behave as your new label, give yourself a reward, such as reading a favorite book, taking a bubble bath, praising yourself out loud, or calling an old friend to tell them about how proud of yourself you are. Reinforcing your efforts is an excellent way to change labels and grow.

How can we change negative labels we place on our children? (for multiple children, do this on several different sheets of paper)

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Write down a negative label you have for your child: | |
| What do they do to get that label? | |
| Write down the behavior you'd like to see instead: | |
| Then give that behavior a label: | |
| 3 ways you can help your child perform the new behavior: | 1. 2. 3. |

Every time you see your child behaving in the desired way, tell your child how proud you are of their efforts, and hug them with the compliment. Continue to focus on the desired behavior. Consistent support is the key to change that will last over time.

Building Your Child's Self-Worth

- ❖ Put them in situations where they can succeed
- ❖ **Expect them to succeed and not fail at tasks**
- ❖ When they do not succeed, find out why
- ❖ **Use praise for doing statements to acknowledge accomplishments and efforts**
- ❖ Share your children's accomplishments and efforts in the presence of others
- ❖ **Be a good role model and praise yourself for your own accomplishments and efforts**
- ❖ Avoid using negative labels for children, such as "stupid" or "lazy"
- ❖ **Use only positive labels that will improve self-worth, not damage it**
- ❖ Show respect for your children's feelings and opinions, even if you don't agree with them
- ❖ **Have a special plate or cup at dinner time that is awarded to a family member for their efforts or accomplishments**
- ❖ Use terms like "thanks for cooperating!" or "I appreciate your help" to let children know that you are pleased with their behavior.

Rewards and Punishments

A reward is a consequence that helps teach and guide children to behave properly.

Rewards are a necessary part of discipline to guide and teach children right from wrong. A reward lets children know they have pleased their parents.

There are five major techniques that work well as rewards...

1. Praise

- Telling children they are special is praise for “being!”
- Telling children you like their behavior is praise for “doing!”

2. Nurturing Touch

- Gentle hugs, back rubs, holding and gently rocking your child are all nurturing touches!

3. Privileges

- Staying up a little later, extra time watching TV or playing video games, or an extra story before bed time are all privileges.

4. Objects

- Almost anything ranging from stickers to toys can be object rewards.

5. Allowance

- Use allowance with older children for the purpose of teaching them how to manage money.

Using Punishments to Guide Children

Punishment...

Is a negative consequence that helps teach and guide children to behave appropriately. It is a way of guiding children and teaching them right from wrong.

Here are five types of punishment that work well...

1. Calm down time in a safe quiet space within your eyesight. An appropriate length of time is typically one minute per year in age.
2. Being grounded is being confined to the yard or home for a brief period of time.
3. Disappointment from parents is a statement or look of concern.
4. Pay back. If you make a mess, you clean it up.
5. Loss of a privilege. If you misuse a privilege, you lose it and need to earn it back.

Communicating Thoughts and Feelings

The key to healthy communication is to communicate your thoughts and feelings in a way that does not purposefully hurt someone, or encourage someone to think less of themselves.

We are responsible for the way we feel.

I statements are expressions about me and are clear statements about how I feel, think or need.

- "I am angry."
- "I need a hug."
- "I want some quiet time."

You messages are about someone else. When you use you messages to put the blame on someone else, you do not accept responsibility for you own feelings, thoughts or needs.

- "You make me angry."
- "He made me feel upset."
- "She made me feel sad."

Appropriate Use of You Messages

You messages are used appropriately in five ways:

1. To give choices.
"Carson, you have a choice. You can clean your room now, or you can clean your room later. However, if your room is not cleaned by 6:00PM, you can't watch TV tonight. It's your choice."
2. To give praise.
"You must feel very proud."
"You did that so well!"
3. To gain clarification.
"You don't seem to like the movie."
4. To ask questions.
"Are you hungry?"
5. To reflect feelings.
"Darlinda, you seem to be feeling very sad."



Adapted from materials available in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook.

Praising Children and Their Behavior

Praise is a verbal or non-verbal way of letting children know how proud parents are of them or their efforts.

Praise can be...

- a compliment,
- a facial expression,
- or a form of gentle touch.

Research shows that children who are praised often...

- Have a positive self-worth,
- treat others in a positive way,
- are more popular in school,
- get better grades,
- and feel good because they pleased their parents!

There are two types of praise. Praise for **being** and praise for **doing**.

1. Praise for being lets children know parents value them for who they are!
2. Praise for doing lets children know parents value them for what they do!

Use praise for being and doing separately. Don't put the two types together!

Saying, "I really love you because you try so hard" lets children think you only love them when they try hard.

Steps in Praising:

1. Focus your attention on the child.
2. Move close to the child, if possible.
3. Try to get on the child's level.
4. Gently touch your child.
5. Look Pleasant.
6. Offer your praise.
7. Offer a hug.

Adapted from materials available in the Nurturing the Families of the World: Nurturing Parenting Easy Reader Handbook.

Examples of Praise for Children

Praise for Being – the highest form of praise that anyone could receive. It tells children that they have value and worth. Praise for Being lets children know you value them for who they are. This is unconditional and given freely at any time. They do not have to do anything to earn this, and it is a powerful parenting practice for building positive self-worth in children.

Praise for Doing – this lets children know that you appreciate and value their efforts and behaviors. Children love to please their parents. When they hear Praise for Doing, they know they have pleased mom and dad. You can praise children for something they tried and completed, or even something they tried, but did not quite finish completely. If you acknowledge their efforts, they will be more likely to try again.

Can you think of some ways you can use the *Praise for Being* statements in the future to help your children understand that you value and appreciate them unconditionally for who they are?

How can you use the Praise for doing examples in the future to help your children feel good about something they have done or tried?

| Praise for Being examples | Praise for Doing examples |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “I love you”• “I am happy to be your mom/dad”• “You are special”• “You are a great kid”• “I am so proud of your determination”• “You are beautiful”• “You are so smart” | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• “You buttoned your buttons, good job!”• “Nice job cooperating with your sister”• “it is nice to see you try so hard”• “You did really well in school”• “You did a good job”• “Your painting is very nice”• “I like how nicely you cleaned your room” |

TALK, READ AND SING TOGETHER EVERY DAY!

TIPS FOR USING LANGUAGE AT HOME AND IN THE COMMUNITY

Here are eight things you can do every day to help your child learn your family's language and become successful in school!

USE YOUR NATIVE LANGUAGE AT HOME

The easiest, most important step is to use your home language every day. Many families worry that using their home language will confuse their children. In fact, children can easily learn several languages at the same time. They have an easier time learning English when they have a strong foundation in their first language.



TELL STORIES AND SING SONGS

Your family has a rich heritage to pass on to your children. Stories, chants, rhymes, poems, sayings, and songs from your childhood are an important part of their heritage. Share these with your children and have fun!

TELL STORIES AND SHARE BOOKS TOGETHER

Read a book to your child every day—in whatever language you feel most comfortable—beginning at birth. And if you don't feel comfortable reading words, you can point out the pictures in the book and talk with your child about them.

CHECK OUT MATERIALS IN YOUR LANGUAGE FROM THE LIBRARY

Look for books, DVDs, and music in your language. If they don't have what you want, ask the library staff to help you find what you need.

TALK ABOUT YOUR TRADITIONS AND CULTURE

Visit your child's classroom or child care provider. Share your language and traditions, including family songs and games. Encourage your child to retell family stories and share your heritage with their teacher, friends, and others.

LOOK FOR ACTIVITIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Attend cultural festivals and concerts and meet other families who speak your home language. Join with other families and organize your own events!

CONTINUE USING YOUR HOME LANGUAGE AS YOUR CHILDREN GROW OLDER

Sometimes children start to prefer English as they get older. Talk with your children about the benefits of speaking two languages. Continue using your language, even if your children respond in English so you keep your lines of communication open.

DON'T FORGET THAT YOU ARE KEY TO MAINTAINING YOUR HOME LANGUAGE

Parents and other family members are the most important people in your children's lives. What you value, your children will learn to value. Help them learn that your family's language and culture are something to be proud of and to treasure. Remember the benefits of your home language and remain committed to continuing to use it, no matter your child's age.

THE BENEFITS OF BEING BILINGUAL

Researchers have found that speaking multiple languages at home provides a great benefit to young children. Speaking in your home language to your children from the time they're born helps build their young minds and prepare them for success in school and beyond. Developing the child's home language provides the foundation for reading and writing, preparing children to be biliterate.

THINKING SKILLS

Individuals who are bilingual switch between two different language systems. Their brains are very active and flexible. Research shows that compared to their non-bilingual peers, bilingual people have an easier time understanding math concepts, solving word problems, using logic, focusing, remembering, making decisions, and learning other languages, among other critical thinking skills.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

Being bilingual helps children maintain strong ties with their family, culture, and community. All of these are key parts of a child's developing identity. They make new friends and create strong relationships using their second language—an important personal skill in our increasingly diverse society. Research has found that babies raised in bilingual households show better self-control, which is a key indicator of school success.

LEARNING

School readiness and success for children who are dual language learners are tied directly to mastery of their home language. So use your home language every day! Because bilingual children are able to switch between languages, they develop more flexible approaches to thinking through problems. People who use more than one language appear better at blocking out irrelevant information, a benefit that may exist as early as seven months of age.

LONG-TERM SUCCESS

Globally, bilingual and biliterate adults have more job opportunities than adults who speak only one language. Bilingual and biliterate individuals have the opportunity to participate in the global community in more ways, get information from more places, and learn more about people from other cultures.

You can find more tips like these—as well as videos, information, and more—on Too Small to Fail's website, www.talkingisteaching.org.

For more resources on promoting early learning in young children who are learning more than one language, please visit [Head Start's National Center for Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness](http://HeadStart'sNationalCenterforCulturalandLinguisticResponsiveness).

Every child develops at his or her own pace, but if you are ever worried about your child's development, don't wait! Acting early can make a big difference. Remember, you know your child best. Talk with your child's doctor if you have concerns. Get tips to help you prepare at cdc.gov/Concerned.



LET'S TALK, READ AND SING ABOUT STEM!

TIPS FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Children begin discovering the world around them from the moment they are born. When you talk, read and sing with your child, you're helping her learn. It can be as simple as counting your baby's toes during bath time, asking your toddler a question about the sky, or encouraging preschool-age children to build with blocks! In fact, very young children can learn some of the basic concepts underlying **science, technology, engineering and math** (STEM). You can discover STEM with your child in many ways. Talk, read, sing, play, sign or use other ways to communicate – whatever works best for your family.



For children with disabilities or developmental delays, communicate with your service providers and keep each other informed of your child's individual learning style and methods you are using to make your child's language environment as rich as possible.

While we provide some tips, we know every child is unique. As always, you should do what is best and developmentally appropriate for your child.

WHAT IS STEM?

"STEM" stands for **science, technology, engineering and math**. STEM can refer to the subjects individually or one or more working together, but can also mean a way of doing things that includes solving problems, asking questions and exploring the world around us.

For example, children learn about the concept of technology when they're exploring tools or simple machines. These can be items they use every day like a pair of scissors, or things they might see like the wheels of a car as they walk outside.

For young children, we focus on STEM through exploration, play and building curiosity about the world and the way things work. STEM learning is important for everyone and can happen anytime, anywhere. The real-life skills that people develop when learning STEM help make everyone better problem-solvers and learners.

For parents of children who are learning English or speak another language themselves, talk about STEM in your **home language**, in English, or both. Research shows that bilingual children have an easier time understanding math concepts and developing strong thinking skills. When families use their native language, it helps children foster a rich sense of self. Bilingual students have certain cognitive and social benefits that facilitate success in school and life.

*Source: Zelasko, N., & Antunez, B. (2000).
If your child learns in two languages.
National Clearinghouse for Bilingual
Education.*



The following tips include **STEM words** (in bold) that you can use with your child.

TIPS FOR INFANTS

- *Let's Observe the World!* Observing is important in **science**. Everywhere you go, talk about what you see and describe what your baby is looking at or pointing to: "Wow, I see that **big, blue** truck too! Look at the black spinning wheels! **How many** wheels does it have all together? **1, 2, 3, 4** wheels. **Four** wheels **all together**."
- *Use All Your Senses.* At the grocery store, discover the smell, feel and taste of different items with your child. Hold an orange and say, "What does an orange look like? Feel like? It's **round** and **smooth**." At home, hold a dish towel and say, "A dish towel is a **rectangle** and **feels soft**." Encourage your baby to explore these objects with their senses.
- *Count, Rhyme and Sing.* Use **numbers** as you go about your day together. Sing simple number songs like "**One, two**, buckle your shoe." Repetitive songs like "The Wheels on the Bus" or "Los Cinco Hermanitos" help babies learn **patterns** too!
- *Would You Like More?* During meal time, you can teach about the idea of "**more**" – the first step toward understanding **addition**. As you feed your baby, pause and ask if she wants **more**. Wait to see how she responds to your questions and follow her cues.
- *Link Words with Actions.* When you move your baby from one position or place to another, put words to your actions. Say "**up, up, up**" when you lift your baby from the changing table, crib, or floor. When you place him down, say "now **down** you go to play!" These simple words build the foundation for later math and engineering skills.

TIPS FOR TODDLERS

- *Let's Count Cars.* When walking down the sidewalk or in a parking lot, count the cars together as you pass them: "**1, 2, 3, 4, 5**. We passed **five** cars to get to the store." You can also count buses or other vehicles together while you are outside.
- *Explore Sizes.* Ask your child to **compare** the sizes of measuring spoons when cooking. Use words like **smallest, small, medium, big, bigger, and biggest** to describe each spoon.
- *Whole and Half.* At meal time, show your child a **whole** piece of toast and cut it in **half**. Then say, "These two pieces are the same size. They're called **halves**."
- *Let's be Scientists!* At the grocery store, have your child hold two different pieces of fruit in their hands. Ask, "Which one is **heavier**? Which one is **lighter**?" Ask other questions that encourage observation and description, like "Which fruit is red? Can you find the yellow fruit?" Exploring together builds skills for future **scientists**!
- *Compare Amounts.* At dinner, compare the size of your food portions. Say, "You have **more** carrots than I do. I have **fewer** carrots than you."
- *Cause and Effect.* Stand in the bathroom and turn the lights off and on. "When I flip the switch **up**, the light goes on! What will happen if I flip it **down**?" They are learning about technology!
- *What Rolls?* Spheres are **round, three-dimensional** shapes. Look around your environment for something that is a sphere and **predict** what would happen if you dropped it on the ground. Would it roll? Bounce? Spin? If it's safe to do so, drop the sphere and check your **prediction**!
- *Enjoy a Shape Snack.* Offer a **square** (or **rectangle**) cracker. Cut a piece of cheese into a **triangle**. Talk about and trace each shape with your finger before you eat it.
- *Count Hugs & Kisses.* Before putting your toddler to bed, ask if they want two kisses or three kisses. **Count aloud** as you give each kiss. You can count hugs too!
- *Sing about STEM!* Songs with **repeated phrases** like "Old MacDonald Had a Farm," "Wheels on the Bus," or "Los Cinco Hermanitos" can teach children about patterns.

TIPS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

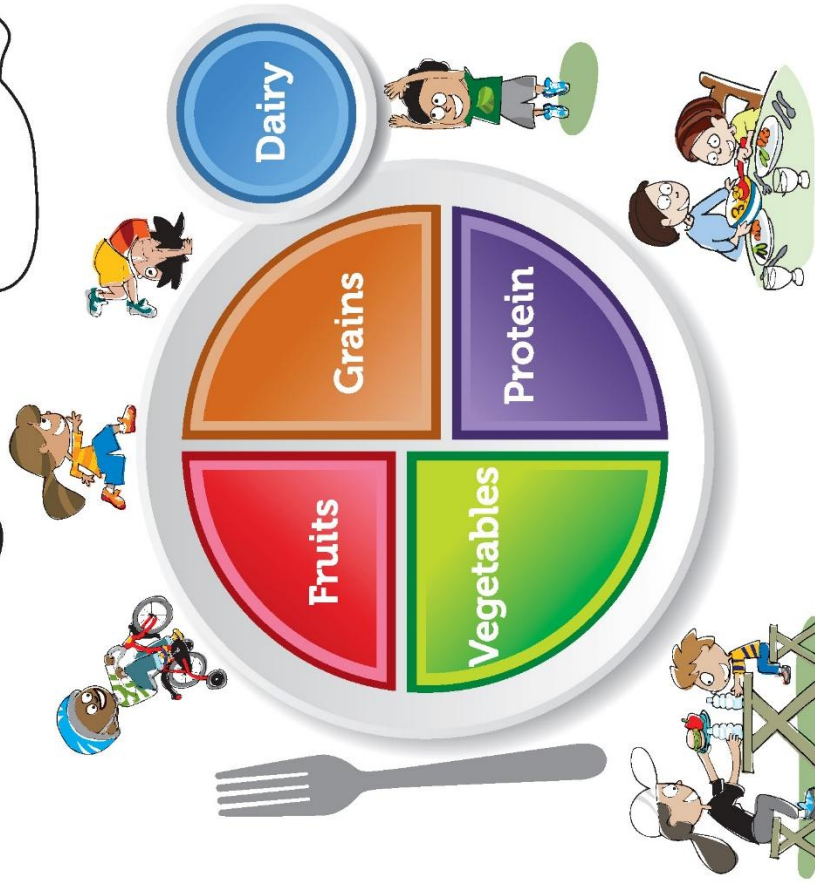
- *Why? Questions.* When young children ask “**why?**” questions, they are being scientists! As a parent, you don’t have to have the right answers to help your child learn about STEM. You can respond by saying, “**That’s a good question. How can we find out together?**” Have fun and be co-discoverers.
- *Laundry Time is Talk Time.* When folding laundry with your child, make a **pattern** with socks. Line them up like this: **big, small, big, small, big, small**. Then, have fun **matching** the pairs of socks together. Every time you find the right pair, say, “It’s a **match!**”
- *Setting the Table.* While setting the table, ask your child tell you **how many** forks you need for everyone to have one, and then count them out loud together. You can talk about **texture** too. How does a napkin feel **compared to** a plate?
- Sing simple **number songs** and nursery rhymes like “Counting in Twos,” “One Banana, Two Bananas,” “Five Little Monkeys,” and “Tres Pececitos.”
- *Let’s Measure.* In the kitchen, point out and read the lines on the measuring cups and spoons as you prepare dinner. Talk about how **half** the onion gets used for the soup. Let your child fill and pour using different measurement methods: **one cup** of cornmeal for the cornbread; **two tablespoons** of oil to cook the chicken.
- *Go on a Shape Hunt.* You can discover shapes all around you. “The window is a **rectangle**. Look, it has **four sides** and **four corners**. Let’s see **how many** rectangles we can find.” Or, “The mirror is shaped like an **oval**.” It’s fun to make shapes too. Using a stick, draw a shape in sand or dirt while at the park. See if your preschooler would like to try. Practice making **BIG circles** and then **little** ones, **BIG squares** and **little** ones, etc.
- *Math Walk and Talk.* Take a math walk on the way to the bus. As you walk, play a game where you and your child need to take “**four big** steps,” find “**six** pebbles” or touch “**seven** green leaves.” Ask and work together to solve how many questions, such as “**How many** steps from the front door to the sidewalk?”
- *What Comes Next?* You can use snack time to make patterns: place a strawberry, a cracker, and a slice of cheese in a repeated line across the plate. On a walk, use a **BIG-step, little-step pattern**. Ask your child, “What comes next?”
- *Let’s Build!* Give your child safe, everyday **materials** like cardboard, tubes, string, fabric and tape. You can also provide simple **tools** and machines like scissors, rulers and wheels. Allow your child to get creative and work together to **build, engineer** and **problem solve!** After you finish building, talk together about why you built the **design** the way you did and what tools made it easier.





United States Department of Agriculture

Healthy ^{for} Eating preschoolers



ChooseMyPlate.gov

Get your child on the path to healthy eating.



Offer a variety of healthy foods.

Choose foods from each MyPlate food group. Pay attention to dairy foods, whole grains, and vegetables to build healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

Be mindful of sweet drinks and other foods.

Offer water instead of sugary drinks like regular soda and fruit drinks. Other foods like hot dogs, burgers, pizza, cookies, cakes, and candy are only occasional treats.

Focus on the meal and each other.

Your child learns by watching you. Let your child choose how much to eat of foods you provide. Children copy your likes, dislikes, and your interest in trying new foods.

Be patient with your child.

Children enjoy food when eating it is their own choice. Some new foods take time. Give a taste at first and wait a bit. Let children serve themselves by taking small amounts. Offer new foods many times.

Cook together.

Eat together.

Talk together.

Make meal time family time.



Healthy ^{for} Eating preschoolers

Daily Food Plan



Use this Plan as a general guide.

- These food plans are based on average needs. Do not be concerned if your child does not eat the exact amounts suggested. Your child may need more or less than average. For example, food needs increase during growth spurts.
- Children's appetites vary from day to day. Some days they may eat less than these amounts; other days they may want more. Offer these amounts and let your child decide how much to eat.

| Food group | 2 year olds | 3 year olds | 4 and 5 year olds | What counts as: |
|--|-------------|--------------|-------------------|--|
| Fruits | 1 cup | 1 - 1½ cups | 1 - 1½ cups | ½ cup of fruit? ½ cup mashed, sliced, or chopped fruit ½ cup 100% fruit juice ½ medium banana 4-5 large strawberries |
| Vegetables | 1 cup | 1½ cups | 1½ - 2 cups | ½ cup of veggies? ½ cup mashed, sliced, or chopped vegetables 1 cup raw leafy greens ½ cup vegetable juice 1 small ear of corn |
| Grains Make half your grains whole | 3 ounces | 4 - 5 ounces | 4 - 5 ounces | 1 ounce of grains? 1 slice bread 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal flakes ½ cup cooked rice or pasta 1 tortilla (6" across) |
| Protein Foods | 2 ounces | 3 - 4 ounces | 3 - 5 ounces | 1 ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce cooked meat, poultry, or seafood 1 egg 1 Tablespoon peanut butter ¼ cup cooked beans or peas (kidney, pinto, lentils) |
| Dairy Choose low-fat or fat-free | 2 cups | 2 cups | 2½ cups | ½ cup of dairy? ½ cup milk 4 ounces yogurt ¾ ounce cheese 1 string cheese |

Some foods are easy for your child to choke on while eating. Skip hard, small, whole foods, such as popcorn, nuts, seeds, and hard candy. Cut up foods such as hot dogs, grapes, and raw carrots into pieces smaller than the size of your child's throat—about the size of a nickel.

There are many ways to divide the Daily Food Plan into meals and snacks. View the "Meal and Snack Patterns and Ideas" to see how these amounts might look on your preschooler's plate at www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers.html


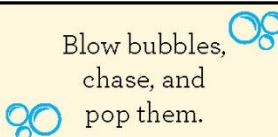









United States Department of Agriculture

Move, Play, Have Fun!

Try these fun activities below. Cross them off as you and your family enjoy each one. Make up your own! How many can you do?

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
|  Ride bikes or scooters. | Play "Simon Says." | Go swimming, toss water balloons, or run through the sprinkler. | Walk to school. |
| Play hopscotch. | Blow bubbles, chase, and pop them.  | Play with a hula hoop. | Kick a soccer ball back and forth.  |
| Play "Catch 1-2-3." Count aloud how many times the ball is caught. | Play sock basketball (toss rolled socks into a laundry basket). | Race to the nearest tree or other landmark. | Jump rope. |
| Take a walk after dinner and look for a specific shape, like circles or triangles. | Hop! Place a broomstick on the floor. Stand on one side with both feet together. Jump over the stick and back 10 times. | Play volleyball with balloons. Keep a balloon afloat by hitting it back and forth.  | Play "ABC Jacks." With each jumping jack, say the letters of the alphabet in order. |
| Say the days of the week as you touch your toes. |  Go on a bug (or leaf, or different-colored cars) hunt. | Have a treasure hunt and see how fast everyone can find clues. | Play some music and have a family dance party. |
| Play on a playground. | Take the dolls (or dog or action figures) for a walk. | Play tag. | Rake leaves, build a snowman, sweep, or garden.  |
|  Walk through the mall on a rainy day. | Choose your own activity: _____ | Play "Follow the Leader." | Go skating. |



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<http://teamnutrition.usda.gov>

Parents

Children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Make family time "active" time.

Menu Planner for Families

Help your family create a dinner menu for the week.

Visit <http://www.choosemyplate.gov> to learn what foods belong to each food group.

Visit our online Recipe Box: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fncs-recipe-box>.



The Five Food Groups (Include all 5)

| | Fruits  | Vegetables  | Grains  | Protein Foods  | Dairy  |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|--|--|
| Example: Spaghetti Dinner | Peaches | Broccoli Tomato sauce | Whole-wheat pasta | Lean (92% lean, 8% fat) ground beef | Fat-free milk Parmesan cheese |
| Sunday | | | | | |
| Monday | | | | | |
| Tuesday | | | | | |
| Wednesday | | | | | |
| Thursday | | | | | |
| Friday | | | | | |
| Saturday | | | | | |

Parents

Milk Matters. Children of every age, and adults too, need the calcium, protein, and vitamin D found in milk for strong bones, teeth, and muscles. Remember to offer fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk at meals. If you offer soy milk, check the Nutrition Facts label to be sure your soy milk has about 300 mg of calcium (30% of the Daily Value).

Meet MyPlate

The **MyPlate** icon reminds us that we need to eat and drink foods from the five food groups. **Fruits**, **Vegetables**, **Dairy**, **Grains**, and **Protein Foods** are important for good health. **MyPlate** shows the food groups in different sections of the plate. Does this mean that foods need to be separate on your plate? No way! Some of our favorite healthy foods are a mix of food groups. What food groups are in your sandwich or taco?

Good nutrition today means a stronger tomorrow!

Building for the Future with CACFP

This day care receives support from the Child and Adult Care Food Program to serve healthy meals to your children.



Meals served here must meet USDA's nutrition standards.

Questions? Concerns?

Call Community Services for Children at (610) 437-6000

Learn more about CACFP at USDA's website:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov>

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United States Department of Agriculture
Food and Nutrition Service FNS-317
November 2019

Choose Healthy. Choose WIC!



WIC provides free nutrition information, healthy foods, breastfeeding support and referrals to eligible pregnant and postpartum women, infants and children under age 5.

Get started online at
PAWIC.COM or call:

1-800-WIC-WINS
(1-800-942-9467)



"WIC has helped me make healthier choices for my family, and I can save on my grocery bill." -- WIC Mom

Even if you receive SNAP, MA or TANF, you may also apply for WIC.

Foster children under age 5 qualify for WIC.

WIC helps working families and the unemployed.

Pregnant?
No need to wait.
Apply now!

WIC Income Guidelines

| HOUSEHOLD SIZE | *MONTHLY INCOME (Approx.) |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | \$2,096 |
| 2 | \$2,823 |
| 3 | \$3,551 |
| 4 | \$4,279 |

For each additional family member, add \$728.

*Income (before taxes) effective July 1, 2022. For each unborn infant, add one to household size.

WIC does not require proof of citizenship.

PA WIC is funded by the USDA.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



HD0512P Rev. 7/22

ORAL HEALTH

Tips for Families from the National Center on Early Childhood Health and Wellness

You Can Promote Good Oral Health By:

- Knowing how to make sure you and your family have healthy mouths and teeth
- Helping your children learn good mouth and teeth habits

Why Is It Important?

When Children Have a Healthy Mouth, They:

- Can speak clearly
- Can eat healthy foods
- Feel good about themselves

Having a Healthy Mouth Also Means:

- Healthy growth and development
- Being able to focus and learn
- A pain-free mouth
- Lower dental care costs for your family



Things You Can Do to Help Your Child

- Brush your child's teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day.
- If your child is younger than 3 years, brush with a smear of fluoride toothpaste.
- If your child is age 3 to 6 years, brush with a pea-size amount of fluoride toothpaste.
- Young children will want to brush their own teeth, but they need help until their hand skills are better. Brush children's teeth or help children brush their teeth until they are about 7 or 8 years old.
- Be a role model for oral health! Brush your teeth with fluoride toothpaste twice a day (in the morning and at bedtime) and floss once a day.
- Serve healthy meals and snacks like fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk and milk products, whole-grain products, meat, fish, chicken, eggs, and beans.
- Limit the number of snacks your child has in a day.
- Do not give your child food for rewards.
- Take your child to the dentist for a check up by her first birthday and keep taking her.
- If your child has not gone to the dentist take him.
- Ask your dentist what you can do to keep your mouth and your child's mouth healthy.
- Make sure to go to the dentist as often as your dentist would like you to go.
- Let your child care, Early Head Start, or Head Start program know if you need help or have questions about oral health.



ADMINISTRATION FOR
CHILDREN & FAMILIES



NATIONAL CENTER ON
Early Childhood Health and Wellness

2023 Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth Through 6 Years Old

| VACCINE | Birth | 1 MONTH | 2 MONTHS | 4 MONTHS | 6 MONTHS | 12 MONTHS | 15 MONTHS | 18 MONTHS | 19-23 MONTHS | 2-3 YEARS | 4-6 YEARS |
|---|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------|------------------|
| HepB Hepatitis B | HepB | HepB | | | HepB | | | | | | |
| RV* Rotavirus | | | RV | RV | RV* | | | | | | |
| DTaP Diphtheria, Pertussis, & Tetanus | | | DTaP | DTaP | DTaP | | DTaP | | | | DTaP |
| Hib* Haemophilus Influenzae type b | | | Hib | Hib | Hib* | Hib | | | | | |
| PCV13, PCV15 Pneumococcal disease | | | PCV | PCV | PCV | PCV | | | | | |
| IPV Polio | | | IPV | IPV | IPV | IPV | | | | | IPV |
| COVID-19** Coronavirus disease 2019 | | | | | | | | COVID-19** | | | |
| Flu* Influenza | | | | | | | | | Flu (One or Two Doses Yearly)* | | |
| MMR Measles, Mumps, & Rubella | | | | | | MMR | | | | | MMR |
| Varicella Chickenpox | | | | | | Varicella | | | | | Varicella |
| HepA* Hepatitis A | | | | | | HepA* | | HepA* | | | |

FOOTNOTES

RV* Administering a third dose at age 6 months depends on the brand of Hib or rotavirus vaccine used for previous dose.

COVID-19** Number of doses recommended depends on your child's age and type of COVID-19 vaccine used.

Flu* Two doses given at least 4 weeks apart are recommended for children age 6 months through 8 years of age who are getting an influenza (flu) vaccine for the first time and for some other children in this age group.

HepA* Two doses of Hep A vaccine are needed for lasting protection. The 2 doses should be given between age 12 and 23 months. Both doses should be separated by at least 6 months. Children 2 years and older who have not received 2 doses of Hep A should complete the series.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. If your child misses a shot recommended for their age, talk to your child's doctor as soon as possible to see when the missed shot can be given.

2. If your child has any medical conditions that put them at risk for infection (e.g., sickle cell, HIV infection, cochlear implants) or is traveling outside the United States, talk to your child's doctor about additional vaccines that they may need.

Talk with your child's doctor if you have questions about any shot recommended for your child.



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Call toll-free: 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
Or Visit: cdc.gov/vaccines/parents



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