



FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026-2027



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

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 (If applicable)	
Bus Driver:	
Bus Stop:	
Bus Times:	AM Pick Up: PM Drop Off:
First Family Workshop Date:	

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Welcome to Our Community

Congratulations and welcome! We are delighted that you and your child have joined one of Community Services for Children's preschool programs, Head Start, Early Head Start, or PA Pre-K Counts.

Our team is honored to partner with your family during this important stage of your child's development. Together, we will create meaningful learning experiences that build on your child's strengths, interests, and individual needs while supporting your family's goals and aspirations.

This year will be filled with opportunities to learn, grow, build relationships, and celebrate milestones. Your child will develop new skills, make new friends, and discover the joy of learning in a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment. We also believe families are children's first and most important teachers, and we value the unique strengths and experiences you bring to our learning community.

We look forward to building a strong partnership with you. By working together, we can create a positive, supportive experience that helps your child and your family learn, grow, and thrive.



Sandra Genzel

Vice President of Preschool Services

Who We Are and What We Believe

Welcome to Head Start and Early Head Start of the Lehigh Valley!

Head Start and Early Head Start are programs of Community Services for Children. Since 1965, we have partnered with children and families throughout the Lehigh Valley. Each year, more than 1,000 families become part of our Head Start community.

We believe families are children's first and most important teachers. By working together, families and staff help children learn, grow, and build the skills they need to be successful in school and in life.

Our teachers, home visitors, family engagement staff, health professionals, mental health consultants, and support staff are here to support your family's journey. Many of our staff are bilingual and reflect the cultures, languages, and experiences of the families we serve.

We are committed to building strong relationships with families. We will:

- Recognize and build on your family's strengths
- Respect your culture, language, and experiences
- Support the goals that are important to your family
- Share information and work together to solve problems
- Connect you with helpful resources and opportunities
- Provide opportunities for leadership, learning, and involvement

Family engagement is more than attending events or meetings. It is the partnership we build together every day to support your child's success.

We Believe

- Every child is unique and learns in their own way.
- Every child can learn, grow, and succeed.
- Families are children's first and most important teachers.
- Children learn best through play, exploration, relationships, and meaningful experiences.
- Play is an important part of how children develop confidence, creativity, problem-solving skills, and a love of learning.
- Strong relationships help children thrive.
- Every family has strengths and talents.
- Children learn best when families and staff work together.
- Families deserve respect, support, and opportunities to reach their goals.
- Strong families help build strong communities.
- Children and families grow when they feel welcomed, valued, and supported.

We are excited to partner with you and look forward to learning, growing, and celebrating successes together.

School Readiness Pledge

School readiness means:

- Children are ready for school.
- Families are ready to support learning.
- Schools are ready to welcome and support all children.

School readiness develops through strong partnerships between families, staff, and schools.

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

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 support your child's growth in ways that honor their individual strengths, interests, and developmental progress. Children develop skills at different rates, and our goal is to help every child build confidence, curiosity, independence, and a love of learning.

Children may develop skills such as:

- writing and recognizing their name
- communicating information and asking questions
- naming colors and shapes
- identifying alphabet letters and their sounds
- identifying numbers and understanding basic math ideas like "more or less"
- showing 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)

Accreditation

Community Services for Children's preschool programs are committed to providing high-quality services for children and families. Our program participates in nationally recognized accreditation and continuous quality improvement processes to ensure children receive safe, nurturing, and effective early learning experiences.

Our classrooms and program are regularly evaluated to ensure we meet high standards for:

- Child development and learning
- Health and safety
- Family partnerships
- Qualified staff
- Continuous improvement

Accreditation reflects our commitment to providing the highest quality services to children and families.

NAEYC Accreditation

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) recognizes early childhood programs that meet high standards for teaching and learning, family partnerships, health and safety, and continuous improvement. NAEYC accreditation reflects our commitment to providing engaging, developmentally appropriate experiences that support every child's growth and learning.

Middle States Accreditation

Middle States Accreditation recognizes organizations that demonstrate a commitment to quality, continuous improvement, and positive outcomes. Through ongoing planning, evaluation, and improvement efforts, Community Services for Children works to strengthen services and ensure the highest quality experiences for children and families.

Program Descriptions

Early Head Start

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

Prenatal Services

- Weekly 1.5-hour home visits for expectant families.
- Supports healthy pregnancies, childbirth, breastfeeding, postpartum well-being, father engagement, and nurturing infant development.

Home-Based Services (Birth–3)

- Available in Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton.
- Weekly 1.5-hour home visits year-round.
- Home Visitors partner with parents as their child's first teacher, support family goals, and connect families with community resources.
- Families also participate in regular playgroups to promote child development and parent connection.

Center-Based Services (Birth–3)

- Therapeutic program in partnership with Lehigh County Children and Youth Services.
- Children attend 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, 243 days a year.
- Classrooms are staffed by two therapeutic teachers and an assistant.
- Transportation is provided.
- Families receive regular home visits, parent-teacher conferences, and ongoing family support.

Head Start & Pre-K Counts

Head Start and Pre-K Counts provide comprehensive early learning services for children ages 3–5 in Lehigh and Northampton Counties.

- Children attend 5 days a week; schedules vary by program and location.
- Classrooms are staffed by two qualified teachers and supported by an Early Education Manager.
- Families participate in home visits, parent-teacher conferences, family engagement services, and opportunities for goal planning and program leadership.
- Transportation is available at some locations; others require family transportation.

Classroom Placement

Children enrolled in our center-based programs are placed in classrooms based on age, individual needs, classroom composition, and space availability. Classroom placements are thoughtfully planned to support children's learning, development, and relationships with peers. While family requests are considered whenever possible, specific classroom placements cannot be guaranteed. All services are provided at no cost to eligible families.

Learning and Growing Together

Children learn best through play, relationships, exploration, and meaningful experiences. We believe that learning happens at home, at school, and throughout the community as children interact with caring adults, engage with their environment, and follow their natural curiosity. Through play, children develop confidence, build relationships, solve problems, communicate their ideas, and learn about themselves and the world around them.

Our classrooms provide safe, nurturing, and engaging environments where children are encouraged to explore, ask questions, make choices, and learn at their own pace. We recognize that every child develops differently and that families are a child's first and most important teachers.

Together, families and staff partner to support children's social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language and literacy, physical well-being, problem-solving skills, creativity, and school readiness. We have included many opportunities for you and your child to learn, grow, and strengthen your parent-child relationship through shared experiences at home, at school, and in the community.

With the support of highly qualified, caring educators, strong family partnerships, and positive learning environments, we can help every child develop the skills, confidence, and love of learning needed for success in school and in life.

Daily Routines

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

Daily Schedule

Daily schedules provide a balance of routines, play, exploration, small-group learning, outdoor experiences, and child-directed activities. Teachers adjust activities to meet children's interests, developmental needs, and learning goals.

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
• Arrival • Handwashing/diapering • Breakfast • Tooth brushing • Morning individual and group activities • Gross Motor • Handwashing/diapering	• Arrival • Hand washing • Breakfast • Tooth brushing • Morning Group Meeting and social-emotional learning activities • Individualized/Small Group/Self-Selected Activities

• Lunch • Nap • Snack/diapering • Afternoon activities • Dismissal	• 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
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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

Children learn through movement, exploration, and play. Outdoor experiences support physical health, problem-solving, curiosity, social skills, and emotional well-being.

Whenever possible, children will spend time outdoors every day.

Clothing

Please dress your child for active learning and outdoor play. Children may participate in painting, water play, sensory experiences, gardening, and outdoor exploration.

Children should come prepared with:

- Comfortable clothing that can get messy
- Closed-toe shoes appropriate for running and climbing
- Weather-appropriate outerwear, including coats, boots, hats, gloves, or sunscreen as needed

If obtaining seasonal clothing presents a challenge, please speak with your Home Visitor, Family Engagement staff, or teacher. We will work with you to identify available resources.

Classroom Set-Up

The classroom is set up so that your child can be independent and free to explore materials and activities. Materials are intentionally selected to encourage curiosity, creativity, problem-solving, and independence. Teachers regularly adapt learning environments based on children's interests, developmental progress, and emerging skills. Our classroom environments are safe, predictable, fun and provide all the important resources for school readiness.

Curriculum

Our high-quality early childhood programs prepare your children for school by building 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 - How We Learn About Your Child's Growth

Families are their child's first and most important teacher. Throughout the year, teachers and Home Visitors observe children during everyday activities and routines to better understand their strengths, interests, and developing skills.

We use an assessment tool called the Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) to help us:

- Understand your child's growth and development
- Plan learning experiences based on individual strengths and needs
- Track progress over time
- Partner with families to support school readiness

You are an important part of this process. We encourage you to share observations, ask questions, and participate in conversations about your child's development.

Individual Planning

Written observations document your child's questions, their discoveries and their involvement with materials. Family observations, priorities, and goals help guide learning experiences both at home and in the classroom. This information, along with input from you, the parent, is used to develop your child's individualized individual learning goals. Regularly, we review each child's progress and use teaching methods and learning activities that are best for each child.

Positive Guidance

Strong relationships help children feel safe, confident, and ready to learn. We teach social-emotional skills through caring relationships, positive guidance, classroom experiences, and evidence-based curricula such as *Second Step* and *Conscious Discipline*. This curriculum will support your child's development in areas such as naming feelings, developing empathy and developing positive social skills and 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.

Relationships First

- 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 more acceptable activities, 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.

Supporting Children's Social, Emotional, and Behavioral Development

Children are still learning how to manage big feelings, solve problems, communicate their needs, and get along with others. These skills develop over time and with practice. Our role is to teach, support, and guide children through these learning experiences in safe, respectful, and caring ways.

We use positive relationships, supportive teaching practices, social-emotional learning, and strong family partnerships to help children develop these important skills.

When children are having difficulty managing emotions or behavior, staff may:

- Get down to the child's level
- Acknowledge and validate feelings
- Offer comfort and reassurance
- Provide choices when appropriate
- Teach calming, communication, and problem-solving skills
- Adjust the environment or routine to support success
- Help children reconnect with learning and relationships

When Safety Concerns Arise

At times, a child may become so upset that they are at risk of hurting themselves or others. When this happens, staff will take immediate steps to keep everyone safe and provide support to help the child regain control.

We will contact you to share what occurred and seek your insight and partnership in supporting your child. In some situations, you may be invited to help with your child's transition into the classroom or participate in developing strategies that support success at school.

If a child continues to present an immediate risk of serious harm to themselves or others and additional support is needed, the program may consult with community crisis services or other professionals to determine the most appropriate next steps.

Our goal is always to help every child feel safe, successful, and included. We will work together with you to develop a plan that supports your child's growth and participation in the program.

Commitment to Inclusion

We believe every child deserves to feel welcomed, valued, and included. We celebrate each child's unique strengths, abilities, culture, language, and experiences, and work with families to provide the individualized supports children need to learn, play, and thrive alongside their peers.

When concerns arise, we partner with families and support professionals to identify strategies that promote positive relationships, learning, and successful participation.

Suspension and expulsion are prohibited except in very limited circumstances involving a serious safety threat. Before considering any change in placement, we work with families to explore all available supports and services to help every child succeed.

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

Home visits are an important opportunity for families and teachers to build relationships and work together to support children's learning and development.

During home visits, families and staff may:

- Discuss child development and school readiness
- Celebrate strengths and accomplishments
- Share goals and concerns
- Explore activities that support learning at home
- Strengthen the partnership between home and school

Home visits help ensure that learning is connected across home and classroom experiences.

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.

We help families develop the knowledge and confidence to advocate for their children as they transition to preschool, kindergarten, and beyond.

Families may receive support understanding school systems, evaluations and screenings, educational rights, community resources, and child development.

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.

Families can participate in many ways, including:

- Sharing family traditions, talents, and experiences
- Reading books
- Participating in family events
- Contributing ideas and feedback
- Supporting learning at home
- Serving in leadership roles

We recognize that every family engages differently based on their interests, schedules, and responsibilities.

Families as Partners

Welcome! We are excited to partner with you during this important time in your child's life. We believe every family has strengths, talents, and experiences that help children learn and thrive. Building strong relationships with families is at the heart of everything we do. As we get to know you, we want to learn about your family's interests, hopes, and goals, while supporting the things that matter most to you.

As your child grows and develops, you may also be thinking about your own goals for yourself and your family. Whether you want to learn more about your child's development, strengthen family relationships, improve your financial situation, focus on health and wellness, continue your education, explore employment opportunities, or work toward another personal goal, we are here to support and encourage you. Family Goal Planning is completely voluntary. You choose whether to participate, what goals are important to you, and how much support you would like from staff. Together, we can build on your family's strengths and celebrate progress every step of the way.

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.

Families are experts on their own lives and are responsible for identifying the goals that matter most to them. Staff partner with families through a strengths-based Family Development Approach that focuses on relationships, family voice, problem-solving, and access to community resources.

Family Well-Being

We recognize that children's success is closely connected to family well-being. Our staff partner with families to identify strengths, reduce barriers, access resources, and achieve goals that are important to them. Support may include assistance with housing, food, health care, employment, education and training, mental health services, and parenting resources.

Individual Home Visiting Services (Head Start & Early Head Start)

As part of our **Head Start and Early Head Start** programs, families receive individualized home visiting services to support children's learning and family well-being.

- Your Home Visitor or Family Engagement Professional will meet with you **weekly or monthly**, depending on your program option.
- During visits, staff will partner with you to build on your family's strengths, address challenges, and support your child's development.

- Together, you will create a Family Partnership Plan based on your goals and identify steps and resources to help achieve them.

Parent Engagement – Family Workshops

All families with an enrolled child are invited to participate in monthly Family Workshops. These workshops provide opportunities to connect with other families, learn about topics that support children and families, and help shape program activities.

Together, families:

- Choose topics of interest related to child development, parenting, health, safety, nutrition, family relationships, personal growth, and employment.
- Help plan family workshops, trainings, and activities.
- Build relationships with other families in the program.
- Share feedback to help improve services and ensure they meet the needs of children and families.

Head Start and Early Head Start families also elect parent representatives to serve on the Policy Council, the program's primary parent leadership and decision-making body. Policy Council representatives work in partnership with program leadership to help guide policies, planning, and program oversight.

Nurturing Parenting

We provide families with opportunities to learn and practice positive parenting skills through home visits, Family Workshops, ClassDojo resources, and Nurturing Parenting Workshops. The Nurturing Parenting Program is an evidence-based curriculum that promotes healthy parent-child relationships and positive parenting practices.

Topics include communication, child development, empathy, managing emotions, stress and anger, positive discipline, establishing routines, decision-making, and age-appropriate guidance and expectations.

In addition to integrating these concepts into everyday family engagement services, we also offer Nurturing Parenting workshops for families and caregivers throughout the year. All parenting education and resources are provided at no cost to enrolled families.

Read-A-Book

Reading with your child every day is one of the most important things you can do to support language, literacy, school readiness, and a lifelong love of learning. Just a few minutes of reading together each day helps build vocabulary, strengthen relationships, spark imagination, and prepare children for success in school and beyond.

To encourage daily reading, all families are invited to participate in our Read-A-Book Program. Use the Read-A-Book Log in your Parent Handbook to track each time you read aloud with your child. Throughout the year, staff will celebrate your family's reading efforts and may provide free books to help build your home library.

Families who read aloud with their child at least 72 times during the program year will be entered into a drawing for special recognition and a collection of books to continue building their home library.

Celebrations

To create an inclusive, developmentally appropriate environment for all children, **we do not celebrate birthdays or holidays in our classrooms.**

- We respect and honor each family's unique culture, traditions, language, and beliefs.
- Please do **not** send birthday treats, goodie bags, balloons, party favors, or gifts for children or staff.
- We love to celebrate learning and family connections! Parents and caregivers are encouraged to visit the classroom, participate in parent-child activities, volunteer, and attend family events throughout the year.
- Families are also welcome to share their culture, traditions, stories, music, art, or language as part of children's learning experiences.

Families Experiencing Homelessness

We work with families to provide resources for support in times of need. If you are experiencing homelessness, you can do the following:

- Speak with your teacher or home visitor 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 the program and available on our website.

Translation and Interpretation Services

We are committed to communicating with families in the language they understand best.

- Translation and interpretation support is available for families whose primary language is not English.
- If you would like language assistance, please let program staff know.
- We use a variety of resources, including bilingual staff, community partners, interpretation services, translation technology, and communication tools to help support communication with families.
- ClassDojo includes built-in translation in more than 180 languages, making it easier for families and staff to communicate throughout the year.
- We will make reasonable efforts to provide translated information and interpretation for meetings and other important communications whenever possible.

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://headstart.gov/center-locator>

What school should my child attend?

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

Parent Employment Opportunities

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

Family Participation

We encourage families to be active partners in their child's learning. You are welcome to participate in home visits, Family Workshops, classroom activities, field trips, and other program events. Your involvement helps strengthen your child's learning and builds connections with our program community.

Volunteers

Volunteers support children's learning and program activities. Individuals volunteering six (6) or more hours per week are required to complete an application, volunteer orientation, tuberculosis (TB) screening, and any required background clearances before serving.

Volunteer orientation covers confidentiality, child safety, mandated reporting, professional conduct, and other program expectations.

If you are interested in volunteering, please speak with your child's teacher or home visitor.

Your Voice Matters

Your ideas, experiences, and feedback help shape our program.

As a parent or caregiver, you know your child better than anyone else. We value your knowledge, insights, and goals for your child and family. Throughout the year, we invite you to share your thoughts, ask questions, offer suggestions, and participate in decisions that support your child's learning and development.

There are many ways to share your voice, including:

- Talking with your child's teacher, Home Visitor, or Family Engagement staff
- Participating in home visits and parent-teacher conferences
- Attending family workshops and parent meetings
- Completing surveys and program evaluations
- Volunteering in your child's classroom or at program events

Head Start and Early Head Start families also have the opportunity to serve as Policy Council representatives. We encourage all families to share ideas and feedback to help us continually improve services for children and families.

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 and 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.

Communicating with Us

Communication and Partnership

Strong partnerships begin with open, respectful communication. By working together and sharing information, we can better support your child's learning and well-being.

You can expect us to:

- Treat your family with respect and care.
- Listen to your questions and value your knowledge of your child.
- Share information about your child's learning and development.
- Respond to concerns in a timely manner.
- Protect your family's privacy.

We ask families to:

- Share important updates about your child or family.
- Ask questions and share concerns early.
- Read and respond to program communications when possible.
- Participate in home visits, conferences, and other opportunities to support your child's success.
- Treat staff and other families with kindness and respect.

Who Can Help?

Who Can Help?	What They Can Help With
Teacher(s)	Your child's learning, daily classroom experiences, including attendance, routines, and developmental progress.
Family Engagement Staff (<i>Family Engagement Partner – Head Start, Family Engagement-Enrollment Specialist – Pre-K Counts, Child Development Partner – Early Head Start Home-Based, or Therapeutic Family Coach – Early Head Start Safe Start</i>)	Partners with family to support child development, family well-being, family goals, home visits (when applicable), and connecting you with other program services, such as health, mental health/disabilities, transportation, and enrollment.
Family Engagement Manager	Provides additional support with family engagement services, concerns, and community resources.
Early Education Manager	Supports classroom quality and helps address classroom questions or concerns.
Health Services Staff	Partners with Family Engagement staff to coordinate health screenings, required health documentation, and follow-up services.
Mental Health Consultant	Partners with families and staff to support children's social-emotional development and well-being.
Transportation Staff (<i>where applicable</i>)	Works with staff to coordinate bus routes, transportation changes, and transportation-related questions.

Not sure who to contact? Start with your child's teacher or Family Engagement staff. We'll make sure your question gets to the right person.

ClassDojo

ClassDojo is our primary family communication platform and the easiest way to stay connected with your child's classroom and our program.

With ClassDojo, you can:

- Receive program-wide announcements, including weather delays and closings.
- See classroom updates, photos, and learning activities.
- Stay informed about events, family workshops, and reminders.
- Access family resources.
- Schedule conferences or meetings.
- Ask routine questions and communicate with program staff.

ClassDojo includes built-in translation in more than 180 languages, making it easier for families and staff to communicate. We encourage every family to download the app, get connected, and stay involved. If you need help, ask your child's teacher or Home Visitor.

Please do not use ClassDojo for health information, disability or special education information, mental health concerns, custody or legal matters, sensitive family situations, formal complaints, or emergencies. For these matters, please contact your child's teacher, Home Visitor, or supervisor by phone, in person, or during a scheduled meeting.

Reporting Absences

Please contact your child's teacher or classroom as soon as you know your child will be absent or arrive late. Early communication helps us ensure your child's safety, maintain accurate attendance records, and plan for the day.

Weather Delays, Closings, and Emergency Notifications

The safety of children, families, and staff is our highest priority. If classes are delayed, closed, or dismissed early due to weather or another emergency, families will be notified through:

- **ClassDojo** (primary communication method)
- Community Services for Children's main line: **(610) 437-6000** (recorded message)
- Local media outlets and **WFMZ** (Head Start of LV/Pre-K/Safe Start)

We make every effort to announce delays and closings as early as possible. Because many of our classrooms operate in partnership with school districts and community locations, decisions may occasionally be delayed while we coordinate with our partners and assess local conditions.

If the program closes early, families are expected to pick up their child within the announced timeframe to help ensure everyone's safety.

Updating Your Information

Please let us know if your family experiences changes that may affect your child, such as:

- A move or change of address

- Changes in family routines
- Illness or hospitalization
- Changes in custody arrangements
- Birth of a sibling
- Family separation or loss
- Changes in emergency contacts

Keeping us informed helps us better understand your child's needs, provide appropriate support, and ensure we continue to serve your child and family effectively.

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.

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.

Legal Names and Preferred Names

We want children and families to feel welcomed, respected, and comfortable in our program. Staff will gladly use preferred names, nicknames, and pronunciations whenever possible in daily interactions.

Official program records and documents must use the legal names of children and parents/guardians as they appear on enrollment, health, educational, and other legal documents.

If there is a legal name change for a child or parent/guardian, please notify the program and provide appropriate legal documentation so records can be updated. Families are encouraged to share preferred names and pronunciations so that staff can respectfully address children and family members throughout the program year.

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. Information is shared only when necessary to support services, ensure safety, meet legal requirements, or with parent/guardian consent. 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.

Parent Questions, Concerns, and Feedback

We welcome your questions, ideas, and concerns. Most concerns can be resolved through open communication and working together.

If you have a question or concern, please:

1. Talk with the staff member involved.
2. Contact the staff member's supervisor if your concern is not resolved.
3. Contact program leadership, including the Assistant Director, Director, or Vice President, if you need additional support.

You may share questions, concerns, or suggestions at any time. We are committed to listening, treating families with respect, and working together to support children and families.

If your concern is not resolved, you may submit a formal complaint in writing to program leadership. Written complaints will be reviewed and addressed in a timely manner.

Health, Safety, and Wellness

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 drooling 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.

Health Requirements

Our programs follow state and federal health requirements to support the health, safety, and well-being of every child. Families are responsible for providing required health information and documentation, while program staff work alongside families to monitor requirements, answer questions, and connect them with resources when needed.

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.
- 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.

Hearing Screenings

All children receive a hearing screening appropriate for their age to help identify possible hearing concerns as early as possible. Most screenings are completed using a safe, non-invasive device that measures the ear's response to sound. Infants and young toddlers may be screened using age-appropriate developmental observation methods. Families will receive the screening results and, if needed, information about recommended follow-up care.

Vision Screenings

All children receive a vision screening appropriate for their age to help identify possible vision concerns. Preschool children are typically screened using an evidence-based vision screener, while infants and young toddlers are screened using age-appropriate developmental observation methods. Families will receive the screening results and, if needed, information about recommended follow-up care.

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.

Our program believes that strong relationships support healthy development. Mental health services are designed to support children, families, and staff through prevention, consultation, education, and early intervention.

Services may include:

- Classroom observations and consultation
- Family support and problem-solving
- Referrals to community resources
- Social-emotional skill building
- Support during periods of stress or transition

Collaboration with families and service providers; Families may ask for help any time.

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 support to a child with developmental concerns 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 evaluations, 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 specialized services.
- Work with staff, a child, and parents in the classroom to develop individualized supports.
- Schedule home visits to help families understand their child's behaviors and to promote productive social interaction.

Nutrition

- Children receive nutritious meals and snacks appropriate for their program. All meals meet Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and/or USDA Child Nutrition Program requirements.
- All meals are prepared by a licensed food service provider, approved by a registered dietitian, and are peanut- and pork-free.
- Menus are shared with families and posted in each classroom.
- Staff create positive mealtime experiences by encouraging children to try new foods while respecting their hunger and fullness cues.
- For infants and toddlers enrolled in Early Head Start, staff partner with families to support individualized feeding plans, including breastfeeding, formula feeding, feeding schedules, and the introduction of solid foods based on each child's developmental readiness.
- Infants are always held during bottle feedings. Bottles are never propped or placed in cribs or other equipment.
- Families providing expressed breast milk should label each container with the child's full name and the date the milk was expressed.
- Staff partner with families to support food allergies, dietary needs, and nutrition concerns. Families should notify the program of any changes as soon as possible.
- Special meals or food substitutions are provided when appropriate documentation is received.
- To help keep all children safe, please do not send food into the classroom unless requested by the program.
- Information about allergies, dietary restrictions, and feeding plans is kept confidential and shared only with staff responsible for your child's care.

CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program)

Community Services for Children participates in the **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** and other applicable USDA Child Nutrition Programs. Through these programs, eligible children receive nutritious meals and snacks that meet federal nutrition standards and support healthy growth and development.

Meals are planned to meet USDA meal pattern requirements and include a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and milk appropriate for each child's age and developmental needs.

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, audiotape, 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

Throughout the year, children and families participate in activities that promote healthy habits, active play, and overall well-being.

In Early Head Start, families explore healthy routines through Little Voices for Healthy Choices, which supports brain and motor development, music and movement, nutrition, and healthy sleep habits. In our preschool programs, children participate in I Am Moving, I Am Learning (I.M.I.L.), which encourages physical activity, healthy eating, and lifelong wellness. Families also receive nutrition information and ideas for supporting healthy habits at home.

Help Keep Children Healthy and Ready to Learn

- Help keep your child healthy by scheduling routine preventive care, including well-child exams, dental exams, immunizations, and required health screenings, including lead and hemoglobin testing.
- Families are responsible for providing required health records and keeping them up to date throughout the program year. If you need help obtaining health care or documentation, please contact your Family Engagement staff.
- If your child has a medical condition that affects their immune system or places them at higher risk during an outbreak of a communicable disease, please notify the Health Services team so we can partner with you to support your child's health and safety.

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

- Protecting children is everyone's responsibility.
- All Head Start, Early Head Start, and Pre-K Counts employees are mandated reporters and are required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect.
- If you suspect a child is being abused or neglected, call **Pennsylvania ChildLine** at **1-800-932-0313** to make a confidential report.

- Parenting can be challenging. If you or your family need support, please talk with your child's teacher, Home Visitor, or Family Engagement staff. We can connect you with resources before challenges become overwhelming.

Safety of Children – Megan's Law

The safety of children is our highest priority. To help provide a safe environment, the program conducts regular checks of parents, guardians, and authorized emergency contacts against the Pennsylvania Megan's Law website.

If a parent, guardian, or emergency contact is identified as a sexually violent predator, the program will follow its Megan's Law procedures, notify the child's parent or guardian, and implement appropriate safety measures. These may include restricting access to program facilities, bus stops, and activities where children are present while ensuring reasonable arrangements are made for the safe arrival and departure of the child.

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 help maintain a safe and secure environment, Community Services for Children (CSC) uses video cameras in approved classrooms and other designated areas, such as gyms, hallways, and buses serving Head Start, Early Head Start, and Pre-K Counts. Cameras are installed only in approved locations and are not present in every classroom.

Cameras record video only (no audio) to help protect the privacy of children, families, and staff. Recordings are the property of CSC and may be accessed only by authorized CSC staff or as required by law.

Emergency Preparedness

The safety of children is our utmost priority. Emergency preparedness plans are reviewed annually and coordinated with local emergency management agencies. Staff are trained to respond to emergencies, and children participate in age-appropriate emergency drills throughout the year.

Drills include:

- Fire
- Lockdown
- Evacuation
- Shelter-in-Place (for severe weather or other emergencies requiring everyone to remain safely inside)

If an emergency occurs, staff will follow established emergency procedures and communicate with families as soon as it is safe to do so. Classrooms located in school district buildings also follow the emergency procedures of the host school district.

Active Supervision

Your child's safety is our highest priority. Staff use active supervision throughout the day by staying alert, positioning themselves to see and hear children at all times, counting children frequently, and closely monitoring children during classroom activities, outdoor play, meals, rest time, and transitions. These practices help prevent injuries, keep children safe, and support a secure learning environment.

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 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.

Smoke-Free Environment

To protect the health and safety of children, all Head Start, Early Head Start, and Pre-K Counts classrooms, program facilities, playgrounds, buses, and outdoor program areas are smoke-free. Smoking and the use of tobacco or electronic smoking devices are not permitted on program property or in the presence of children during program activities.

Standards of Conduct

The safety and well-being of children are our highest priorities. To ensure a safe, respectful, and nurturing learning environment, all program staff follow the Standards of Conduct outlined below:

- 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.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance

Participating in Head Start, Early Head Start, or Pre-K Counts is an important opportunity for children to build a strong foundation for learning and lifelong success. Every day your child participates provides opportunities to build relationships, develop routines, learn new skills, and explore the world around them. Regular participation helps children benefit fully from the educational, health, family support, and social-emotional services available through our program.

Research shows that children who miss significant amounts of school in the early years are more likely to experience challenges with learning, reading, and school success in later grades. Missing just 10% of the program year, about two days per month, can make it harder for children to stay connected to learning, routines, and relationships.

We understand that families sometimes experience challenges related to transportation, health, housing, employment, family emergencies, or other circumstances that affect attendance and participation. Our goal is not perfection, it is partnership. We are committed to working with families to identify solutions and support every child's consistent participation.

Our Attendance Partnership

Attendance and participation are a shared responsibility between families and the program.

Families Can Help By:

- Helping their child participate regularly and arrive on time whenever scheduled.
- Notifying the program as soon as possible if their child will be absent, arrive late, or be unable to participate in a scheduled program activity.
- Scheduling routine appointments outside of program hours whenever possible.
- Planning vacations during scheduled program breaks whenever possible.
- Communicating with staff about challenges that may affect attendance or participation.

We Will:

- Monitor attendance and participation to ensure children receive consistent services.
- Contact families when a child's absence or missed program activity is unexpected to confirm the child's well-being and determine how we can help.
- Work with families to understand barriers, identify solutions, and connect them with program or community resources when appropriate.
- Celebrate improvements and recognize regular participation.

When Attendance Becomes a Concern

If attendance or participation becomes inconsistent, we will partner with your family to understand what is happening and identify ways to support your child's regular participation. This may include developing an attendance success plan and connecting your family with helpful resources or services.

If your child has repeated unexcused absences, including reaching 10 unexcused absences during the program year, we will schedule a meeting with you to review attendance, discuss any challenges your family may be experiencing, and develop or update your attendance success plan.

If attendance concerns continue despite repeated outreach, documented support, and ongoing partnership efforts, enrollment may end in accordance with program policies and applicable regulations. Before any enrollment decision is made, we will review the attendance history, communication, and supports provided to ensure every reasonable effort has been made to partner with and support your family. Ending enrollment is always considered a last resort.

Excused and Unexcused Absences

An absence may be considered excused for reasons such as:

- Illness or injury
- Medical, dental, behavioral health, or therapy appointments
- Family emergencies
- Death in the family
- Court appearances or legal obligations
- Religious observances
- Transportation disruptions beyond the family's control
- Severe weather or unsafe travel conditions
- Other approved extenuating circumstances

Absences that do not meet these criteria may be considered unexcused. If you are unsure whether an absence is excused, please contact your child's teacher, Home Visitor, or Family Engagement Partner.

Flexible Instructional Days and Alternative Learning

When weather, emergencies, public health concerns, or other circumstances prevent in-person programming, the program may implement a Flexible Instructional Day (FID) or provide alternative learning opportunities. Families will be notified as early as possible through communication methods such as ClassDojo, email, text, or phone.

During a Flexible Instructional Day, staff will provide guidance, learning activities, and support to help children continue learning. Children who participate in assigned FID learning activities according to program expectations will be counted as present for attendance purposes.

Transportation, Drop-Off, and Pick-Up

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.
- Please walk with your child to the bus stop; 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, staff may transport families to appointments or program-related activities in agency vehicles. To help ensure everyone's safety, please:

- Be ready 5 minutes before your scheduled pick-up time.
- Supervise your child when entering and exiting the vehicle, and cross in front of the van.
- Ensure all passengers use seat belts and age- and size-appropriate car seats. Children must ride in the rear seats, and infants must ride in rear-facing car seats according to state law and manufacturer guidelines.
- Pregnant passengers should wear the lap belt low across the hips, below the belly, and the shoulder belt across the chest and between the breasts.
- Follow staff instructions, use inside voices, and help keep the vehicle clean.
- Staff cannot use a phone while driving.

Bus Services (designated classrooms only)

- CSC bus service to classrooms is limited to SafeStart and a small number of Head Start classrooms based on your class assignment and address.
- Bus service is optional, and families may opt out of transportation if assigned to a bus route.
- If you want to learn more about receiving bus transportation, please talk to your teacher or home visitor to see if it is an option for your child.
- CSC bus drivers are certified, professionally trained School Bus Drivers who receive ongoing training and support from a certified trainer/manager; all buses are staffed with a monitor who is also the Assistant Teacher.

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.

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. For the safety of children, families, and staff please park in designated spaces during pick up and drop off and refrain from letting your vehicle idle.

Drop-Off

- Please park in safe, designated areas only. These differ by site and your teacher/home visitor will review expectations at the start of the program year.
- Arriving on time is important. Not all sites can accommodate early/late arrivals, so please be there as close to classroom start time as possible.
- Late arrivals can impact your child's learning and classroom operations. If you know you'll be late, please contact the classroom in advance so the teacher is aware.
- Late arrivals may result in your drop-off being delayed until staff can meet you and your child at the entrance.
- Separating for the day can be a difficult time for children and/or for you; this is natural and expected and we will help you through this transition.
- If someone else is bringing your child, please remind them of the process and let the teacher know to expect someone new with your child.

Pick-Up

At the end of each program day:

- Please arrive on time to pick up your child. Classroom staff will dismiss children to an authorized adult at the designated pick-up location.
- For health and safety reasons, please leave pets at home or in your vehicle during dismissal.
- Anyone picking up your child must present a valid photo ID and be listed on your child's Emergency Contact/Authorized Pick-Up List.
- If someone not listed as an emergency contact will pick up your child, you must provide verbal authorization using the phone number on file. The authorized individual will be required to present a valid photo ID before your child is released.

Late Pick-Up

If you will be late picking up your child, please notify the classroom as soon as possible.

To ensure your child's safety, staff will make every effort to contact you and the individuals listed on your child's Emergency Contact List. If we are unable to reach an authorized adult and your child has not been picked up within a reasonable period of time, we may contact local law enforcement or child protective authorities, as appropriate, to ensure your child's safety.

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.

Wrap-Around Child Care

Families using a child care provider for before- or after-program (wrap-around) care must provide the child care provider's contact information and the names of all staff members who may be authorized to pick up their child.

Child care staff must present a valid photo ID before a child will be released to them. Parents are responsible for keeping authorization information current and communicating any changes to both the program and the child care provider.

Family Rights and Responsibilities

Family Responsibilities

Families play an important role in their child's learning and success. We ask families to:

- Participate in their child's education and learning.
- Communicate regularly with teachers and program staff.
- Support their child's attendance and participation.
- Ensure their child receives needed medical and dental care and provide updated health information and required documentation.
- Keep the program informed of changes to contact information, emergency contacts, or family circumstances that may affect their child's participation.
- Share feedback through surveys, meetings, and other opportunities to help improve program services.

Family Rights

Families are valued partners and have the right to:

- Review their child's records.
- Participate in meetings and decisions regarding their child's education and services.
- Provide written consent before their child's or family's information is shared, except as permitted or required by law.
- Ask questions, share concerns, and receive a timely response from program staff.
- Update consent forms and information-sharing permissions at any time during the program year.
- Expect that child and family records will be maintained securely and accessed only by authorized staff.

Child Custody and Legal Documentation

We recognize that families have many different legal and caregiving arrangements. Our goal is to support every child while following applicable laws and court orders regarding custody, decision-making, and the release of children.

- Unless a court order says otherwise, both parents generally have equal rights to their child's education, records, and participation.
- Please provide copies of any current court orders or legal documents that affect custody, educational decision-making, or who may pick up your child.
- Notify us and provide updated legal documents whenever changes occur.
- We will follow the most current legal documentation on file when releasing a child or making decisions about access.
- Staff cannot interpret legal documents or become involved in family disputes.
- If a child's safety is at risk, staff will follow program procedures and contact the appropriate authorities when required.

Family Participation in Classrooms and Program Activities

Families are welcome and encouraged to participate in classroom activities, home visits, and other program events. To help provide a safe, respectful, and positive learning environment for all children, families, volunteers, and staff, we ask that everyone:

- Follow classroom and program expectations shared by staff.
- Wash hands upon entering the classroom, after using the restroom, and before meals or activities involving food.
- Leave outside food, drinks, medications, tobacco products, vaping devices, alcohol, weapons, and other potentially hazardous items outside the classroom and agency vehicles, unless approved by staff.
- Respect the privacy of children and families by maintaining confidentiality and not sharing information, photos, or videos on social media or other public platforms.
- Refrain from taking photographs or videos in classrooms or program activities unless authorized by the program.
- Silence or place cell phones on vibrate and limit their use during classroom activities and meetings.
- Use respectful language and behavior at all times and follow the CSC Code of Conduct. Harassing, threatening, or violent behavior toward children, families, volunteers, or staff will not be tolerated.
- Discuss questions or concerns privately with program staff rather than during classroom activities.
- Remain under staff supervision at all times and do not supervise or discipline children other than your own unless directed by staff.
- Follow staff directions regarding children's health, safety, and daily routines, including first aid and emergency procedures.

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.

Nondiscrimination Statement

We welcome and value every child and family. Community Services for Children provides services and employment without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. We are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment where every child and family feels welcomed, valued, and supported.

Forms and Resources

Community Services for Children, Inc.

PARENT COPY

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY 2026-2027 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 & NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

Parent Information
2026–2027 Program Year

Community Services for Children, Inc. (CSC) follows all federal and state civil rights laws. Admission to CSC programs, including the USDA Child Nutrition Programs and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), is open to all eligible children. Meals are served to enrolled children at no separate charge. CSC does not discriminate in enrollment, meal service, or the use of facilities.

YOUR CIVIL RIGHTS

In accordance with federal and state law, CSC does not discriminate based on:
Race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Under Pennsylvania law, additional protections may apply, including religion, ancestry, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

You and your child have the right to:

- Receive services and benefits without discrimination
- Be treated with dignity and respect
- File a complaint if you believe discrimination has occurred

HOW TO FILE A DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINT:

USDA / CACFP (Meal-Related Complaints) If you believe you or your child were discriminated against in relation to meal service, you may file a complaint with USDA. You may: • Complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) Available online at: https://www.fns.usda.gov/civil-rights/filing-complaint • Or write a letter that includes all required information Submit by mail, fax, or email to: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC 20250-9410 Phone: 866-632-9992 Fax: 202-690-1278 Email: CR-Info@USDA.gov	Pennsylvania Civil Rights Complaints You may also file a complaint with: Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission (PHRC) 333 Market Street, 8th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17101 Phone: 717-787-9780 Website: www.phrc.pa.gov Program or Service-Related Complaints You may contact: Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Health and Human Services 801 Market Street, Suite 9300 Philadelphia, PA 19107 Phone: 800-368-1019
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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS
PARENT AGREEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING
2026-2027 PROGRAM YEAR

Child abuse is defined as any willful act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual injury that causes or is likely to cause the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. Child neglect is defined as a caregiver's failure or omission to provide a child with care, supervision, and services necessary to maintain the child's physical and mental health. Neglect is also a failure to protect a child from abuse, neglect, or exploitation by another person. Certain acts also constitute child abuse even if there is no resulting injury or condition. These acts are listed below:

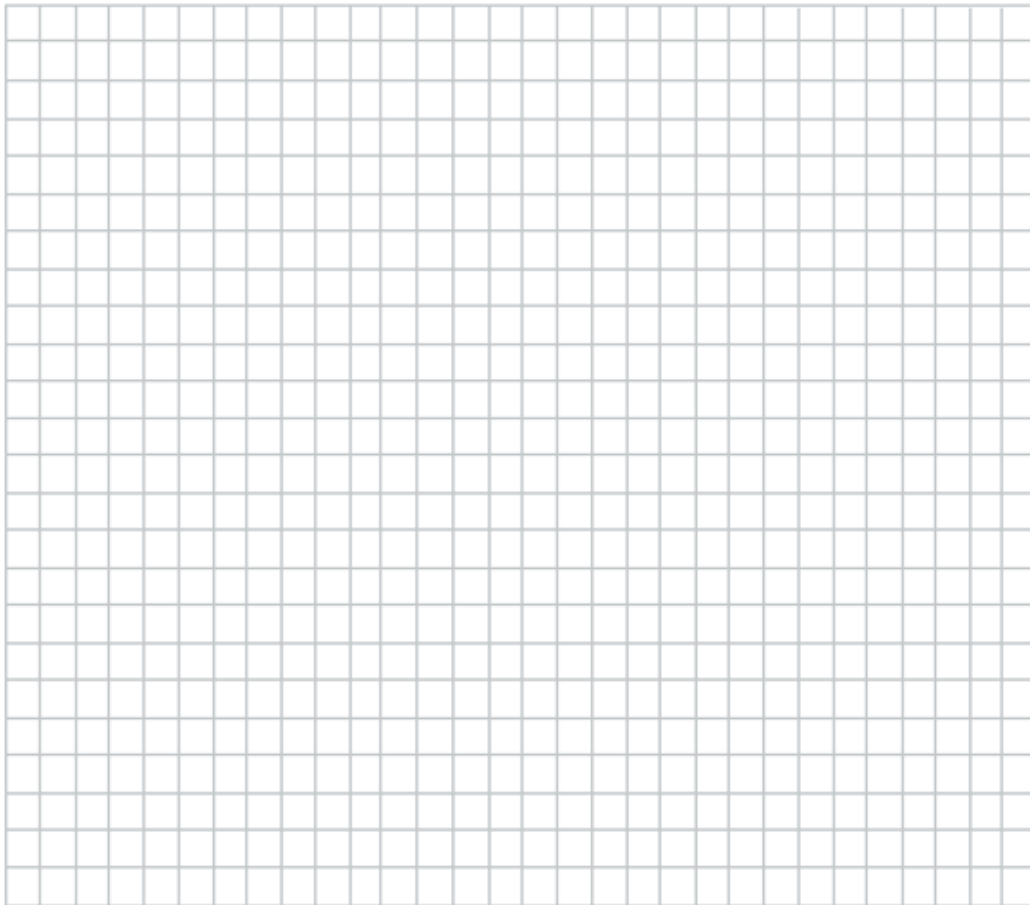
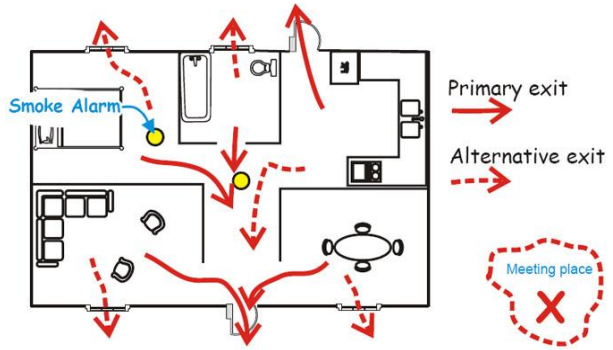
- Kicking, biting, throwing, burning, stabbing or cutting a child
 - Unreasonably restraining or confining a child
 - Forcefully shaking, slapping or striking a child under the age of one
 - Interfering with the breathing of a child
 - Leaving a child unsupervised with a known sexual offender or predator
- ❖ 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

Home Fire Safety

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.

- ☐ Find two ways out of every room.
- ☐ Keep bedroom doors closed at night.
- ☐ Carefully check if door is warm.
- ☐ Stay low to the floor – crawl to safety.
- ☐ Pick a safe place to meet outside.
- ☐ Call 911 from the nearest phone outside.
- ☐ Do not go back in the house for anything.
- ☐ Practice the fire escape plan.



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.



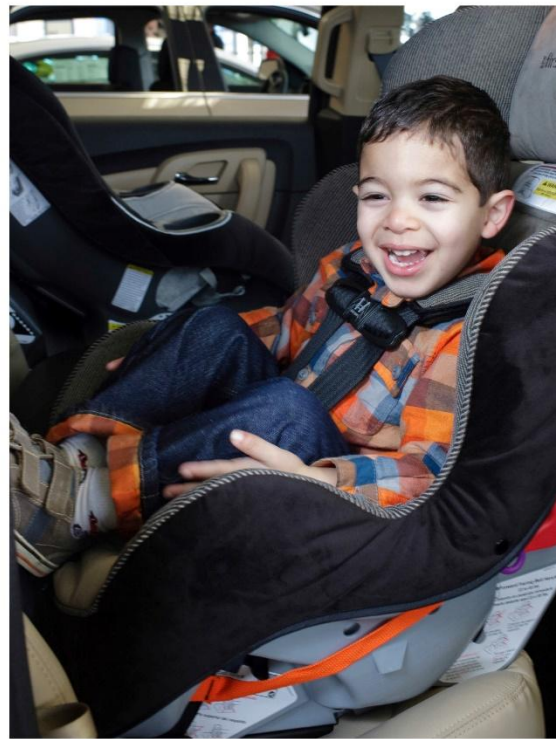
BASIC CAR SEAT SAFETY

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

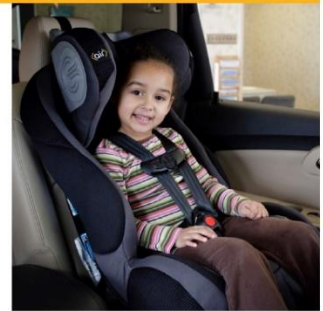
- My child always rides in a back seat and never in front of an air bag.
- My child always rides in a car seat made for his or her size and age.
- My child sits facing the back of the car in his or her car seat.
- The harness straps are snug on my child, and I can't pinch the buckled strap at the shoulder.
- 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	
☐	☐	Windows have protective screens, guards, or locks.
☐	☐	Stairways have safety gates to prevent falls.
☐	☐	Harmful products are stored in containers with child-safety caps and out of reach.
☐	☐	All prescription and over-the-counter medicines are stored in containers with child-safety caps and out of reach.
☐	☐	Emergency numbers for police, fire, rescue squad, and poison control center are kept by the telephone or stored in your cell phone.
☐	☐	Entrance doors have locks.
☐	☐	Smoke detectors are installed and working.
☐	☐	A working fire extinguisher is kept in an easy to find location.
☐	☐	There are no walls with peeling paint. Rooms with freshly painted walls have been well ventilated for at least 2-3 days.
☐	☐	Any exposed electrical outlets have been covered.
☐	☐	All sharp objects (such as knives and scissors) are stored out of your child's reach.
☐	☐	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.
☐	☐	Yard and play space are free of holes, stones, broken glass, nails, tools and other litter.
☐	☐	Candles are in solid holders and are carefully extinguished when through using.
☐	☐	We have developed an emergency fire escape plan.
☐	☐	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!**

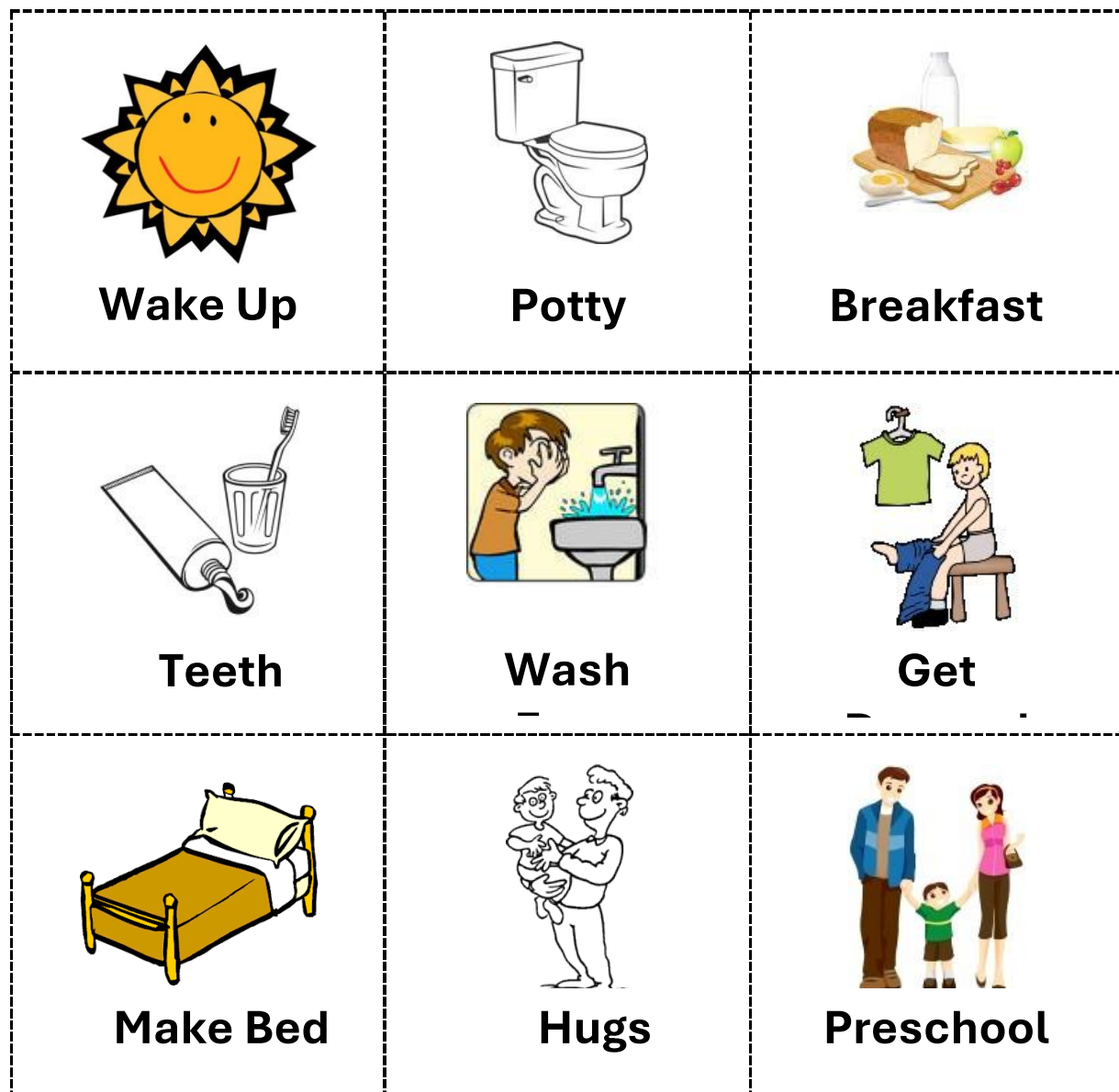
FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: WWW.HEALTHYCHILDREN.ORG/ENGLISH/SAFETY-PREVENTION

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.

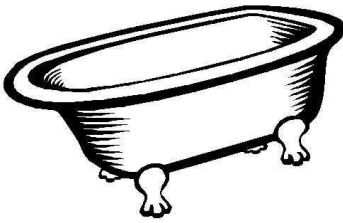
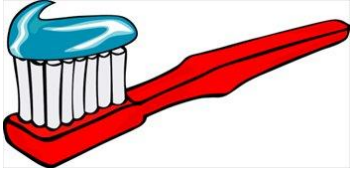
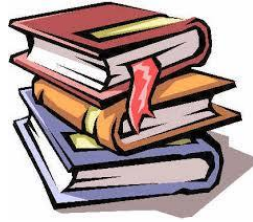


Bedtime Routines

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.

 Quiet	 Bath	 Pajamas
 Teeth	 Potty	 Story
 In Bed	 Hugs	 Lights

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	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆	☆☆☆☆☆☆☆☆

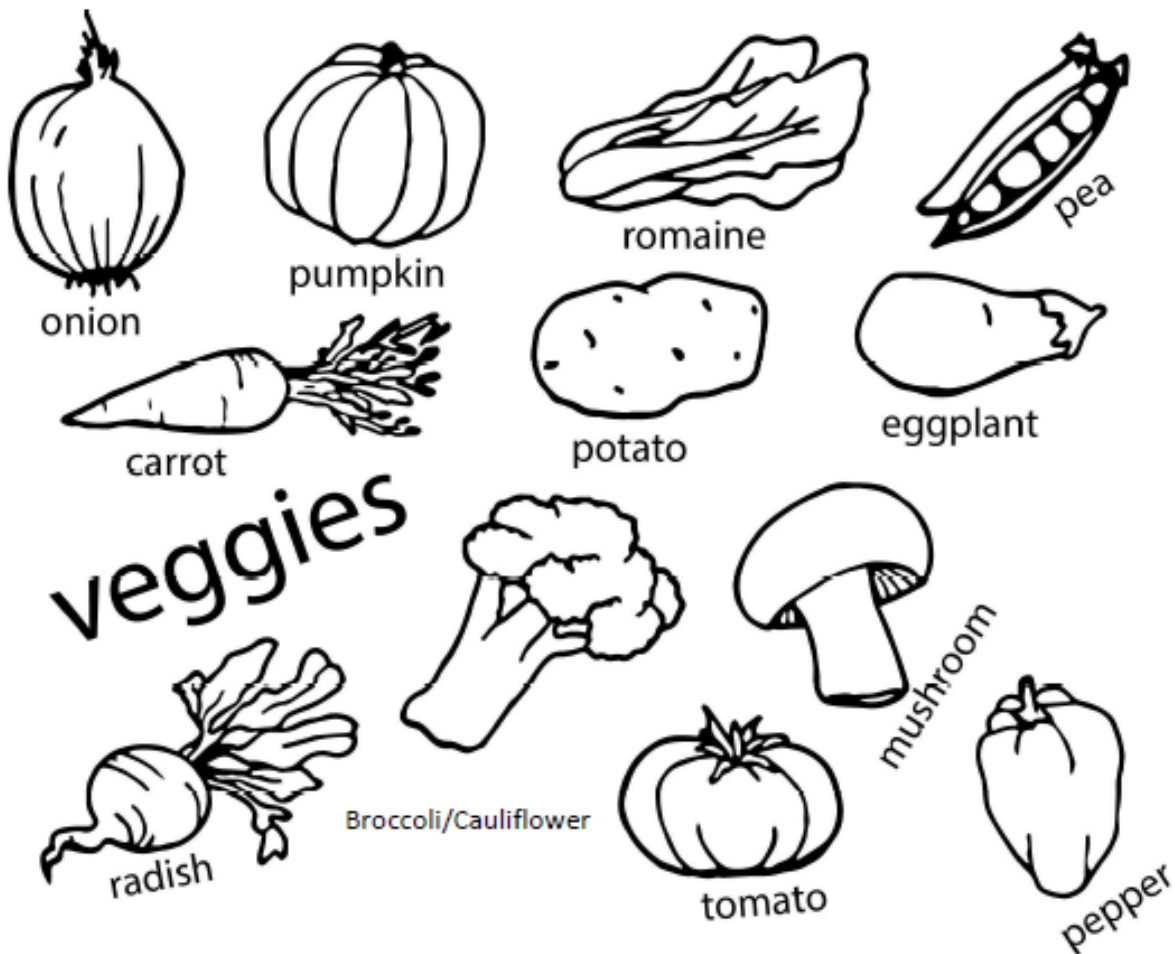


Fill in a star each time you read aloud with your child at home, in the classroom, or at the library.

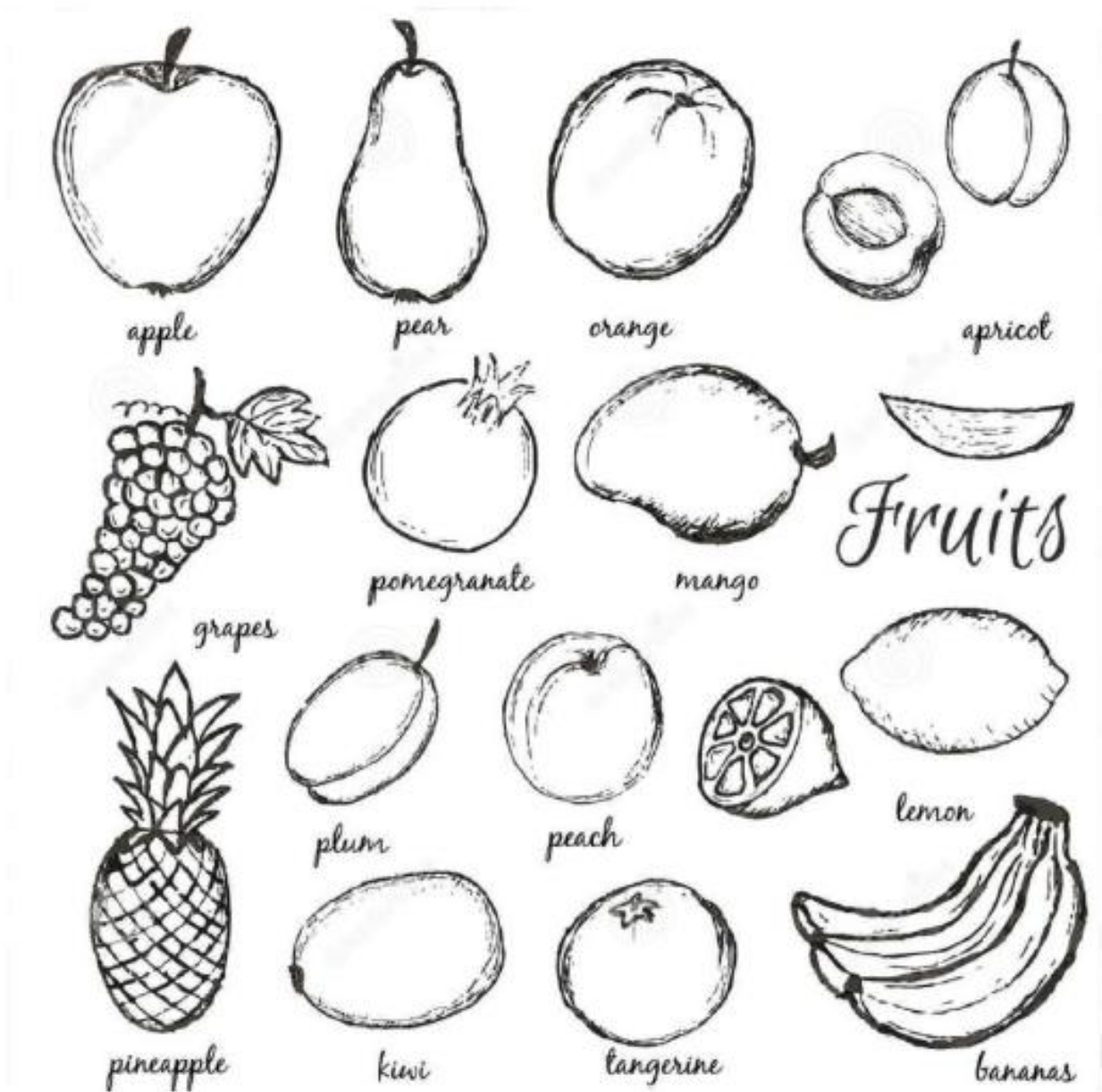
Health at Home Month Activity Log

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

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)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

DAIRY

(MILK, YOGURT, CHEESE)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

VEGETABLES

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

PROTEIN FOODS

(MEAT, SEAFOOD, BEANS & PEAS, NUTS, EGGS)

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

OTHER

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

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.



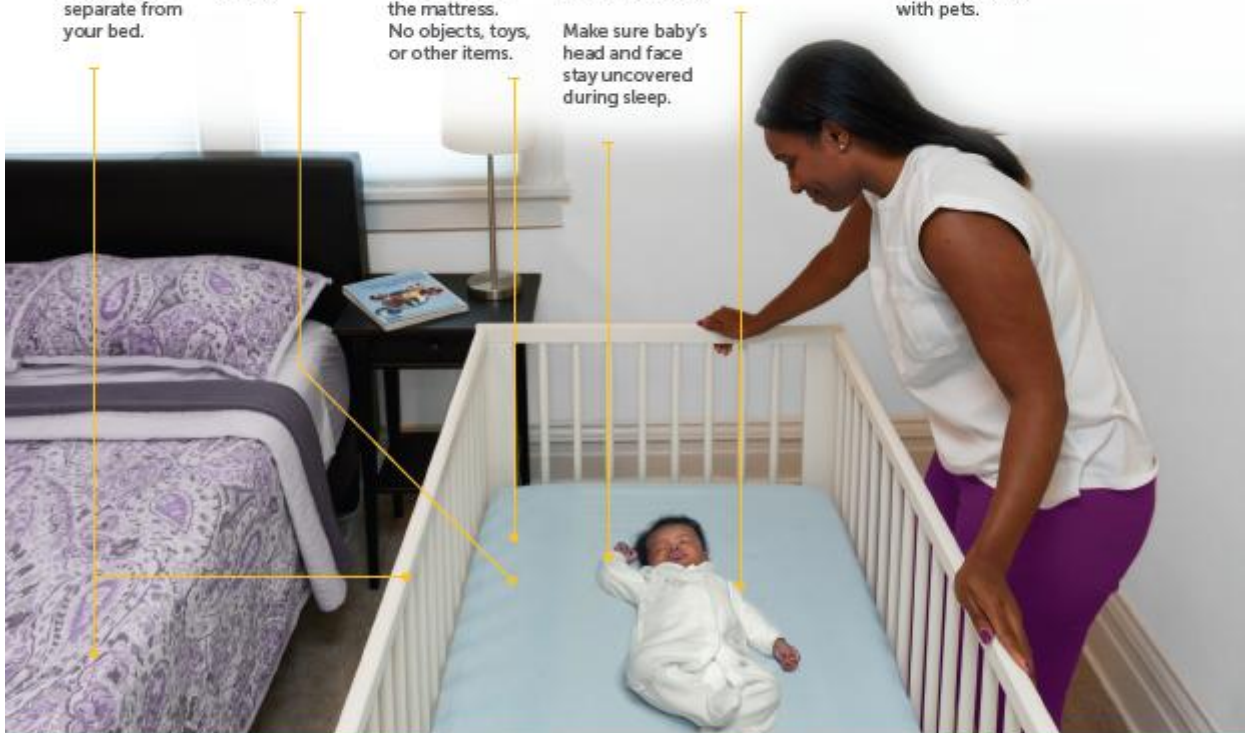
Place babies on
their backs to
sleep, for naps
and at night.



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



Keep baby's
surroundings
smoke/vape
free.



*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

Coriell-Kennedy-Krieger National Institute of Child Health and Human Development



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

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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

- Have your child help you get ready to eat. Depending on age, your child may be able to:

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| ○ Help set the table | ○ Pour milk (with help) | ○ Pick flowers for the table |
| ○ Put pets, toys, or books in another room | ○ Put down place mats | ○ Clear the table |
| | ○ Hand out napkins and silverware | ○ Wipe the table |
| ○ Turn off the TV | | |

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.
- 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:

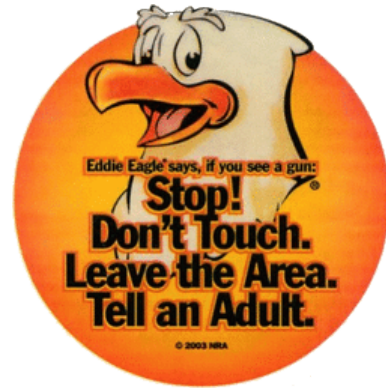
- Always get permission from your parents before using the computer or internet, and get an adult to type in the address in the address bar.
- Never give out your name, age, where you live or other information unless you are told to do so by your parents or teacher.
- Do not give your user name or password 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
Exposure to secondhand smoke during pregnancy increase risk to both you and your baby, such as: • Miscarriage • Low birth weight • Premature birth • Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) In children, secondhand smoke causes the following: • 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)	You can protect yourself and your family from secondhand smoke by: • 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
Exposure to substance misuse, including prescription drugs, during pregnancy increase risk to your baby, such as: • Stillbirth • Preterm delivery • Birth defects • Developmental delays • Challenging behaviors • Neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) Children who grow up with a parent who misuses substances are more likely to experience the following: • Abuse • Neglect • Child welfare referral • Foster care placement	You can help to keep your children drug free by: • 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.

- 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

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 learns 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)	• Takes longer steps when running and walking. • Catches large ball. • Hops on one foot.
Small Muscle Development (Fine Motor)	• Can draw, use scissors and begin to color. • Can begin to read. • Copies shapes. • Can paint with broad strokes.
Intellectual Development	• 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	• 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	• 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?

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?

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
• “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”	• “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](#).

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

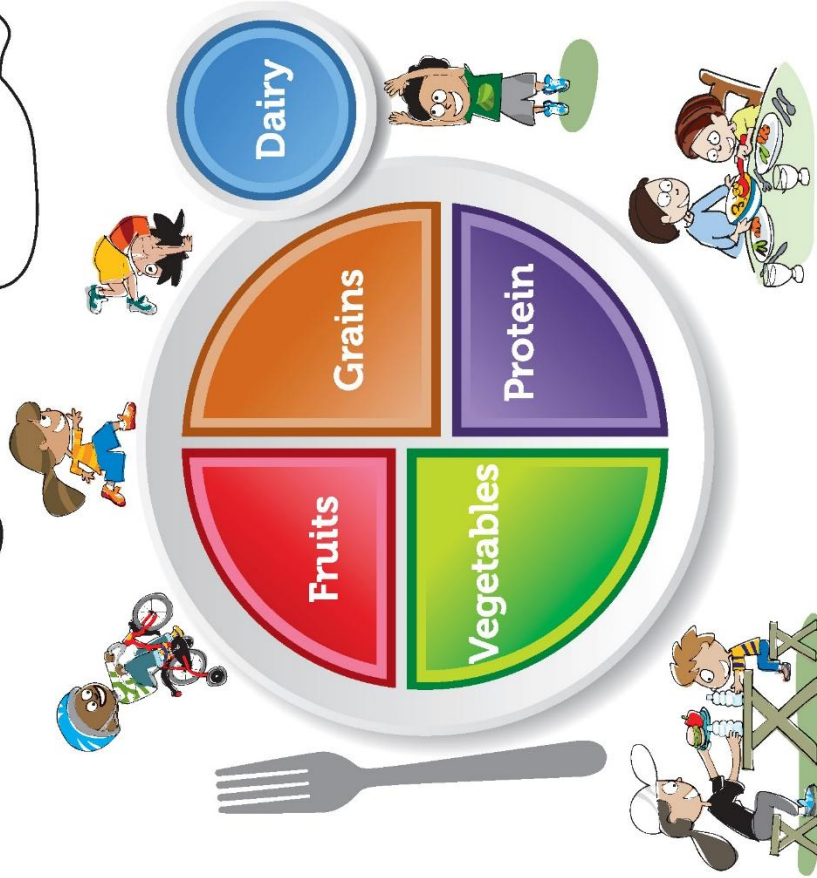
- *Why? Questions.* When young children ask “**why?**” questions, they are being scientists! As a parent, you don’t have to have the right answers to help your child learn about STEM. You can respond by saying, “**That’s a good question. How can we find out together?**” Have fun and be co-discoverers.
- *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



Choose **MyPlate.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.



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.

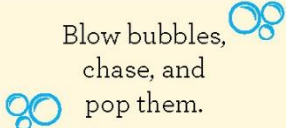




United States Department of Agriculture

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>.



Example:
Spaghetti Dinner

The Five Food Groups (Include all 5)

	Fruits 	Vegetables 	Grains 	Protein Foods 	Dairy 
	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**](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

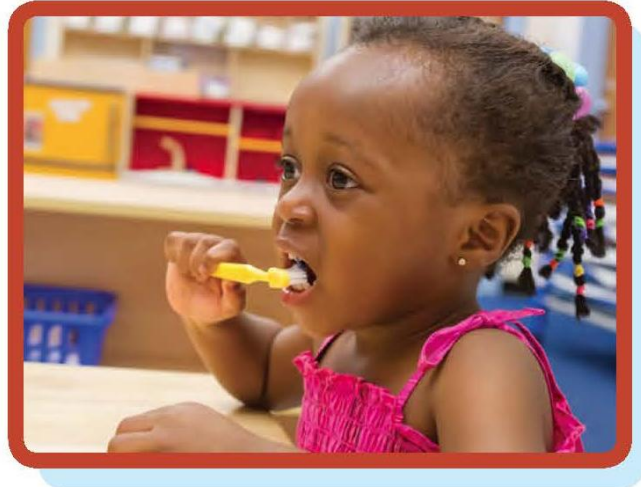
Why Is It Important?

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				DTaP
Hib* Haemophilus influenzae type b		Hib	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 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 travelling 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



American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

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