

OKALOOSA COUNTY  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START  
PARENT HANDBOOK  
2009-2010



Okaloosa County Head Start/Early Head Start is committed to the Diversity of Children, Families and Staff through the support of our Community for the Personal Growth and Development that will lead to a successful future.



Dear Parents,

WELCOME to Okaloosa County Early Head Start/Head Start Program. Our program is designed to provide you and your child with comprehensive early care and education services. These services include developmentally appropriate educational experiences, health, mental health and dental services. We provide family support services by offering parent training workshops on various topics, resource and referral information and most importantly a safe and secure environment for your child.

We encourage parents to participate in the Head Start Program through volunteering their time in the classroom or serving on the Policy Council. **Parents are a child's primary teacher** and when you assist teachers and other staff, you become a part of every achievement we strive for on behalf of your child and the program. **You are our most valuable resource.**

This handbook was prepared to assist you in your understanding as to how the Head Start Program works for you and your child. We ask that you read it and use it as a guide throughout the year in understanding the program's policies and procedures.

Again, welcome to Okaloosa County Head Start and thank you for giving us an opportunity to help you give your child a head start. We look forward to working with you and having a great year.

Sincerely,

*Ms. Janet Anderson Clark*

Executive Director

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## Head Start Center Sites



### Programs Operate Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Fort Walton Beach Center  
Main office- ages 3-5  
22 McGriff St.  
Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548  
Ph # 850-244-2606  
Fax # 850-244-0426

Niceville Center- ages 3-5  
1200 Valparaiso Blvd.  
Niceville, FL 32578  
Ph # 850-678-8461/6893  
Fax # 850-678-5935

Crestview- ages 3-5  
1198 W, Edney St.  
Crestview, FL 32536  
Ph # 850-682-2912  
Fax # 850-689-0193

Crestview- ages 3-5  
700 Bay Street  
Crestview, FL 32536  
Ph # 850-689-3645  
Fax # 850-689-3645

Laurel Hill- ages 3-5  
8264 Stokes Rd.  
Laurel Hill, FL 32567  
Ph # 850-652-4909  
Fax # 850-652-4909

Chester Pruitt Center – ages 3 -5  
15 Carson Drive  
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548  
Ph# 850-244-4959  
Fax # 850-244-1194

Fort Walton Beach EHS – ages 1-3  
22 McGriff St.  
Ft. Walton Beach, FL 32548  
Ph# 850-244-2606  
Fax# 850-244-0426

Edney EHS – ages 1-3  
1198 W, Edney St.  
Crestview, Fl. 32536  
Ph # 850-682-2912  
Fax # 850-689-0193

Lakeview EHS – ages 0-3  
227 Lakeview Dr.  
Crestview, FL 32536  
Ph# 850-682-5931  
Fax # 850-683-3694

Kennedy EHS – ages 1-3  
215 Kennedy Dr.  
Crestview, FL 32548  
Ph# 850-682-1992  
Fax # 850-683-1184

## Okaloosa County Head Start

Okaloosa County Head Start is a comprehensive child development program that serves children birth to age five, including those with disabilities regardless of the severity; and families who meet the Federal income guidelines. Enrollment is based upon Head Start Federal Income Guidelines.

- \* 90% of our families must meet income guidelines.
- \* Maximum of 10% of the slots is available for non-poverty children.
- \* Minimum of 10% of the slots must be for children with disabilities.

The Head Start Program operates under annual grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, and the Head Start Bureau.

Program staff plans activities and services, with the assistance of the parents, advisory committees, and other community resources to ensure that children and families receive needed services.



### Vision Statement

**Okaloosa County Head Start/ Early Head Start is and will be the Leader in Early Childhood Education through Exemplary Passion and Commitment from Staff. Okaloosa County Head Start/Early Head Start provides Cutting Edge Services and Support for our Families, Children and our Community**

## **Guiding Principles of Okaloosa County Head Start**

We believe.....

- Children are the Priority of the Okaloosa county Head Start/Early Head start Program.
- In the personal growth and development of children and families
- In letting children express their individuality by teaching them to respect themselves and others.
- That children should be given the tools to maximize their learning potential
- The philosophy that student improvement begins with teacher improvement.
- In seeking new ideas and innovations to the Head Start program by Board members, Policy Council members, Community members and Staff members
- In advocating for public policy for the future of our children.
- That all children, families and staff deserve to be respected.
- In children receiving proper nutrition, health and dental care.
- In making a difference in the lives of our children, families, and staff.
- That individual who benefit from the Head Start program should give back to the program.
- In early identification and intervention of common risk factors for children and families.
- That open and honest communication is the key to success.
- That all staff should have the opportunity to be trained and advance within the program.
- In empowering the people around us.

## **Early Head Start serves children birth to age three and expectant families.**

### **Early Head Start Curriculum Model**

In Early Head Start it is important to have a clear framework for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. Okaloosa County Head Start uses the **Creative Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers** to ensure the services being delivered to our children and families are based on sound child development theories about how children develop and learn. The staff acknowledges the importance of establishing a partnership with parents and involving them in meaningful ways. We recognize that every individual is rooted in culture; has the right to maintain his or her own identity; and that culture and family are the core of children's social and emotional development.

### **Program Options**

#### **Centered-based Program**

Early Head Start services are delivered at centers located in Crestview and Ft. Walton Beach. Early Head Start provides services from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. **Parents are responsible for providing transportation.**

## **Head Start Pre-school serves children age three to five years and their families**

### **Services to children and families:**

In Okaloosa County Head Start, our classrooms provide children with wonderful and exciting opportunities to explore their environment as they develop the school readiness skills necessary for Kindergarten. The centers are equipped with an outstanding team of professionals to ensure that your children are being nurtured in a safe and secure environment.

### **Head Start Curriculum:**

Okaloosa County Head Start uses the **Creative Curriculum for Preschoolers**. Creative Curriculum is designed to meet the mandated developmental outcomes necessary for school readiness. The Galileo Developmental Assessment is used to track the children's developmental skill level and plan age appropriate activities for the classroom. The children become members of a classroom where they are encouraged to explore, work at their individual pace and approach to learning, as well as make discoveries about their world. Parents are invited to participate in their children's education activities at any time.

## **Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK):**

We, at Okaloosa County Comprehensive Head Start Program, are committed to enhancing the quality care and education services that we provide to our children and families. Thus, we will offer the Voluntary Pre-kindergarten (VPK) School Year Program, which requires the delivery of 540 instructional hours over a 9-month period, at designated Head Start Centers during the 2009-10 school year. The VPK program is FREE for all children who are 4-years-old on September 1, 2009. This program is designed to prepare four-year-old children for kindergarten and features high literacy standards, accountability, appropriate curricula, substantial instruction periods, manageable class sizes and qualified instructors. The VPK class schedule is Monday – Friday, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. Parents are responsible for their child's transportation to-and-from the VPK program.



## **Family Services 0-5:**

The Family Services area coordinates the outreach and recruitment for the program; determine the income eligibility of the applicants; and in collaboration with other departments, select, place and enroll applicants. Children are recruited and enrolled in the program without regard to race, sex, creed, color, religion, and national origin. This Services area also assists families in their efforts to improve the condition and quality of family life by helping them to establish goals for their families; by making them aware of community services/resources and guidance about how to use them effectively; as well as providing necessary training. Families receive services directly from the Family Services Specialist or through referrals to other agencies. The Family Services Department staff acts as advocates for families who must negotiate with other agencies in order to get the appropriate services

## Health Services:

The objective of the Health Services area is to promote optimum physical, dental, nutritional, and mental health of all children enrolled in Head Start. All families will be assisted in obtaining a medical doctor, dentist, and medical insurance for their child if needed. Health Services staff will ensure that all children have a health, developmental, and behavioral screening within 45 days of enrollment. NOTE: No screenings or examinations will be completed without prior approval from the parent.

Our goal is to ensure that each child, either through Head Start funds or other community resources, receives the following:



- \* Regular Well Baby Checks
- \* A complete physical
- \* Preventive health services
- \* Dental examination

## Immunization and Physical Policy:

Florida State statutes mandate that all children in a childcare setting have a current immunization form (DH Form 680 or DH Form 681-Religious Exemption from Immunization) on file at the center. It is also mandated that each child has a current physical exam documented on DH Form 3040, School Entry Health Examination. These forms are necessary before the child enrolls in Head Start. If either of these forms expires while your child is in the program, you will be notified approximately one month before the expiration date and reminded to take your child for the appropriate update. If this is not done, your child will not be able to come to the center until it has been accomplished. So please help us by keeping these items current. Your Family Services Specialist or Health Services Specialist can help you with this if needed.

## Mental Health:

Our agency recognizes that healthy social and emotional development depends upon how children view themselves, and that the behaviors that adults demonstrate are those which will be internalized and emulated by children. Therefore, the program offers the

following mental health services to assist in promoting mental wellness in children, families, and staff.

- Classroom and individual observations/recommendations
- An on-site mental health consultant
- Group and individual education on mental health issues
- Provide special help for children with atypical behavior/development
- Utilization of other community mental health services as needed

## Nutrition:

Good nutrition in the first few years of life plays a vital role in a child's abilities to learn and to do well in school. It is also a basis for lifelong nutrition habits. At Head Start we follow the USDA Child Nutrition Program Guidelines and the Head Start Policies on nutrition.

This means providing:

- Two (2) nutritious meals- Breakfast and Lunch
- Afternoon snack
- Nutritional activities in the classroom
- Formula or breast milk as chosen by the parent

**All food served in the Head Start Program must be prepared at the center or be commercially prepared.** Our performance standards require that the food served must be high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. Therefore, we will not be providing candy and other "junk food" at the centers. **Please do not send any food to the center or to your child's classroom. We will not be able to accept it.**



## Disabilities:

The Okaloosa County Head Start Program serves children who meet the State of Florida eligibility requirements for Exceptional Student Education and the Florida Department of Health, Children's Medical Services-Early Intervention. Services are provided to meet the special needs of children with disabilities at the Head Start Center when possible. Services are provided by licensed, certified professionals as required by law. For infants and toddlers, Head Start contracts with Sacred Heart Development, Education & Intervention (DEI) Program to provide early intervention therapies and services. Parents need to provide the Head Start Disability Department with copies of any evaluations/medical reports related to the child(ren)'s disability or sign the Release of Information form so we can request the necessary information. Parents are provided copies of all Individualized Education Plan (I.E.P.), Individualized Family Services Plan (I.F.S.P.) and related paperwork on their child.

## Transportation 3-5 Pre-School ONLY!

The transportation component provides safe and effective transportation for children/families for field trips, medical/dental appointments, special services and limited services to and from school.



### **Message to Parents**

Our goal is to keep our children safe while traveling to and from school. We need your help in this important task. When you transport your children to and from school, please ensure that your child is seated in the proper child restraint seat in accordance with Florida State law.

### Head Start Transportation Safety Rules

1. Please have your child ready to board the bus upon its arrival. Escort your child to the bus for boarding.
2. An adult must accompany a child when crossing the street at all times. Parents must use proper street crossing procedures: **Stop and look both ways before crossing the street to ensure there are no vehicles coming.**

3. All children must be seated immediately in their seat belts and remain in it at all times.
4. Please contact the center if your child is not to be picked up.
5. Parents must provide prior notification to the center if someone other than the individuals listed is to pick-up the child from the bus. Proper identification will be required before the child is released to someone other than the parent/guardian.
6. Know the Danger Zones of the bus. They are as follows: Both sides of the bus. Front and back and within ten feet around the bus. Never walk behind or beside a school bus. These are blind zones and the driver will not be able to see you.
7. Food, toys, backpacks, animals and glass containers are prohibited at all times on Okaloosa County Head Start school buses.

**These things are very important in making the school bus ride to and from school both fun and a safe experience.**

## SCHOOL BUS SAFETY RULES

1. Wear bright clothes so the bus driver can easily see you.
2. Line up quietly at the bus stop without pushing or yelling.
3. Stay away from the curb or road until the bus driver stops and signals it's safe to get on.
4. Stay out of the school bus danger zone- the area 10 feet around the bus on all sides.
5. Use handrails to get on and off the bus.
6. Obey the bus driver and stay quietly in your seat; no fighting or shouting.
7. Keep aisles clear. Put belongings in your lap or under the seat.
8. Never throw anything in the bus or out the windows.
9. Don't stick your head, hands or legs out the window.
10. If you need to cross the street, do so in front of the bus -never behind it- and wait until the bus driver sees you.

### **Confidentiality:**

One of the most important policies that have been established at Head Start 0-5 is our policy of confidentiality. All children's files are maintained in locked cabinets and are available to the parent/guardian during regular office hours. Only with your written permission, will we send any records or information to any other agency or individual.



## Illness:

Do **not** send your child to school if he/she has a fever or is generally ill. If your child has any communicable disease such as: chicken pox, pinkeye, strep throat, etc., please keep him/her at home until the child's doctor or nurse gives him/her permission to return to school. After three days of absences because of a communicable disease, you must bring to school A Return To School Notice from your child's doctor or Health Department. This will ensure Head Start that your child is well enough to return to school without his/her illness affecting the other children.

Teaching staff will follow the **When to Keep Your Child Home Policy**. Teacher will document child's illness and complete the parent letter informing you when child is eligible to return to school if a child is sent home from school ill.

Teachers will perform a daily health check on each child as the children enter the classroom. This check is a 30 second head to toe assessment of the child.

## Administering Medicine:

**Only prescribed medicine** in the original container showing the child's name, physician, administration instructions, and all pertinent information will be accepted by Head Start Staff.

Parent / Guardian must:

- \* Administer the first dose of medication at home.
- \* Bring medicine in to the center.
- \* Fill out an **Authorization to Dispense Medication** form.
  - \* These permission forms are valid for one month only.
  - \* One form must be filled out for each medicine.
- \* Special permission for medication that is required on a continuous or as needed basis, such as inhalers for asthma, may be obtained from the physician.
- \* Over the counter medicine such as Tylenol, cough syrup, etc., requires a doctor's note.



## When To Keep Your Child Home

Symptom	May return to Childcare	Requires M.D. Note
<b>Fever</b> Auxiliary - 100 Oral - 101 Rectal - 102	After fever has subsided for at least 24 hours. (A child sent home from school should remain home the following day). Fevers are usually accompanied by other symptoms which may be reason for exclusion	<b>No</b>
<b>Vomiting</b> 2 or more times in 24 hours	24 hours after last episode	<b>No</b>
<b>Diarrhea with fever</b> <b>Diarrhea without fever</b>	24 hours after fever free When able to contain in a diaper or not Exhibiting other symptoms	<b>Yes</b> <b>No</b>
<b>Skin Rash/Irritation</b>	With medical note stating the child is not contagious and may return	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Ringworm</b> <b>Ringworm on Scalp</b>	24 hours after treatment is started. Must be covered while in center. Cannot be covered/contagious	<b>No</b> <b>Yes</b>
<b>Impetigo</b>	24 hours after treatment is started	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Chicken Pox</b>	6 days after the onset of rash and/or once sores have dried or crusted	<b>No</b>
<b>Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease</b>	After fever has subsided for 24 hours	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Fifth's Disease</b>	With a medical note stating child is not contagious	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Strep Throat</b>	24 hours after treatment is initiated/ 24hours without a fever	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Scarlet Fever</b>	With medical note stating child may return / 24 hours without a fever	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Measles</b>	6 days after onset of rash	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mumps</b>	9 days after onset or swelling subsides	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Lice</b>	When child is louse free and the parent has provided a dated receipt and box from treatment	<b>No</b>
<b>Scabies</b>	24 hours after treatment initiated and with a note stating child may return	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Nasal Drainage (Rhino rhea) with fever</b> <b>Nasal Drainage (Rhino rhea) without fever</b>	24 hours after fever free  Will remain in the classroom unless specified by the physician	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Pinkeye/ Conjunctivitis</b>	24 hours after treatment started with a note stating child is not contagious	<b>Yes</b>
<b>Mouth sores with drooling</b>	When sores are dried or with medical note stating is not contagious and may return	<b>No</b>
<b>Signs of possible severe illness</b> , unusual lethargy, persistent crying, uncontrolled coughing, difficulties breathing	When child can participate comfortably in child care setting	<b>Depends on diagnosis</b>

## Attendance Policy – Absences:

The following reasons are considered to be excused absences:

1. Illness.
2. Temporary family situations.
3. Medical / Dental and clinic appointments (including immunizations).

It is the responsibility of the parent to notify their child's teacher when they know in advance that their child will be absent/late or as soon as the parent is aware the absence/tardy is going to occur. This can be done by contacting your child's center and speaking to either their teacher or to your Family Services Specialist. When the **child is absent three (3) consecutive days without notification, a conference will be conducted with the parent and the Family Services Specialist. Continuous excessive absences (excused or unexcused) may result in the child being terminated from the program.** It is imperative that you understand the importance of your child attending school on a regular basis so that he/she will become familiar with the daily routines and learn the responsibility of attending class on a regular basis.

**Head Start is mandated by the Federal Government to meet a required 85% average daily attendance while school is in session.**

**VPK parents are required to complete an absence report each day their child is absent from VPK.**

## Late Policy:

School hours are from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and to 5:00 p.m. if your child is enrolled in VPK. Children need to be on time everyday for school and picked up on time. Tardiness causes disruptions in the classroom, prevents concentration on classroom activities, and leaves the child at a disadvantage due to getting a late start. We do understand there will be some isolated instances when your child is going to be dropped-off or picked-up late. However, when this occurs, please contact the Head Start Center so the teachers may schedule their day accordingly.

## Emergency Procedures:

If an injury occurs, the following steps will be taken:

1. A Staff member will call 911.
2. First aid will be given until emergency personnel arrive.
3. Staff will contact parent/guardian, and document times of contact/attempts.
4. Child will be made as comfortable as possible.
5. The Director and Health Services Staff will be notified immediately of the accident.
6. The child will be assessed by emergency personnel and taken to the nearest hospital if so indicated.
7. Parent / Guardian have the right to remove the child to transport to the hospital or seek other medical treatment.
8. A staff member with the child's health and medical information will accompany the child if the parent / guardian are not present.
9. Proper documentation (to include an accident report) should be turned-in to the Director.

**\*\* PARENTS\*\*.**

***\*\*It is important to notify us immediately when you move, change your telephone number or change jobs!!\*\****

**Non-Emergency Procedures:**

If a non-emergency occurs, the following steps will be taken:

1. Staff will contact the parent/guardian as listed on the emergency card within ten (10) minutes of the incident, documenting times of contact/attempts.
2. The Health Services Specialist/Director will be notified of the incident. Should they be unavailable, the Director's designee will be notified of the incident.
3. The child will be made as comfortable as possible until the parent arrives.
4. Parent/Guardian has the right to remove the child should the situation warrant.
5. Proper documentation, to include the incident report, should be completed by the attending staff member(s) by the end of the workday and signed by the parent. The signed report will then be turned-in to the Director.

**Dress Code Policy:**

**For children:** Parents, please dress your child in clothing that is appropriate for school activities. All children will participate in outdoor activities on a daily basis unless it is raining. Also, we ask that you **not** dress your child in opened-toe sandals or flip-flops. **THIS IS A SAFETY HAZARD!** We have lots of sand and playground equipment that can trip-up little toes. **Please dress them in a tennis shoe or shoes that cover the entire foot.**

**For parents:** Parents, we ask that you remember that Head Start is a place of business, and that you dress appropriately (i.e. no sleep wear, clothing that shows excessive cleavage, etc.) when dropping-off and picking-up your child, as well as during any other visit to one or more of our centers.

**Persons Authorized to Pick-up Child:**

Children will only be released to adults 18 years and older that are listed on the emergency card. Photo identification will be required (if not personally known) before the child is released.

It is your responsibility to update your emergency card for the following reasons:

- Address
- Telephone number
- Legal custody of the child
- Day time emergency contact person and telephone number
- Place of employment
- Additional persons for pick up
- **All updates must be done in person, no phone calls or letters**

## Withdrawal Procedures:

In the event you wish to withdraw your child from the Head Start 0-5 Program, please be sure to let us know you are no longer in need of our services. **Please notify either the classroom teacher or your Family Service Specialist so we may formally withdraw your child.** This allows us to immediately fill the vacancy with a child from our waiting list.

## Child Abuse and Neglect:

According to HRS/PL 175-17 (10-82), it is the legal responsibility of Head Start Staff to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Children and Families in accordance with Florida Law and Head Start Performance Standards. Training in the prevention of child abuse and neglect is provided during the year for parents and staff.

## Corporal Punishment:

Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as a form of discipline. This includes, but is not limited to, spanking, slapping, pinching, jerking, pulling hair, etc. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities. Isolation in which the child is left totally unattended is forbidden. The use of corporal punishment and/or total isolation of any child **will not be tolerated** in Head Start by staff or parents.

**Head Start is a No Spanking Zone** and parental discipline should be handled in your own home. Parents are also asked to refrain from using harsh words with their child to include cursing while on Head Start property. Children under the age of eight (8) should not be left unattended in your vehicle. All Head Start employees are mandated reporters who are required to report these occurrences to the proper authorities.

## Inclement Weather:

Okaloosa County Head Start, in most cases, follows the Okaloosa County School District when deciding to close school due to severe weather or unforeseen circumstances. Listen to local radio stations or Channel 3 TV to find out if Okaloosa County Head Start will be closed. The following procedures will be followed when these situations occur:

- ❖ Announcement to the media will be made
- ❖ Parents' day time contact phone will be called
- ❖ Children receiving bus service will be loaded on the bus after the announcement of closing and start their route.



### **Communication System:**

Communication between parents and Head Start staff is very important. We will do the following in order for us to ensure parents are informed about opportunities for their children, as well as their families, within the program and training.

- ❖ Children will bring home a monthly newsletter.
- ❖ Children will bring home notes and permission forms to be signed and returned.
- ❖ All parents are invited to attend various monthly meetings and training opportunities.
- ❖ Send change of phone number and/or address as soon as possible so that we can contact you in times of an emergency.
- ❖ Teachers are required to have two home visits and three parents - staff conferences per school year with all enrolled children.
- ❖ Family Services Specialists will schedule bi-monthly contacts to ensure Head Start provides the necessary services to families. These contacts can occur in the staff's office, parent's home, or via telephone, whichever is most convenient.
- ❖ Parents are welcome to visit the center daily at any time.

## Pre-school classroom schedule:

8:00 a.m.	Children's arrival and welcome
8:05-9:00	Hand washing / Breakfast / Teeth brushing
9:00-9:10	Sing-a-long
9:10-9:20	Planning Time
9:20-9:50	Learning Centers/ Activities
9:50-10:10	Clean- up
10:10-10:20	Recall
10:20-10:35	Small Group
10:35-11:00	Outside Time
11:00-12:00	Hand washing / Lunch / Teeth brushing
12:00-12:30	Circle / Story Time
12:30-1:30	Rest Time
1:30-1:45	Snack Time
1:45-2:00	Prepare for dismissal

## Rights and Responsibilities of Head Start Parents

1. Participate in the process of making decisions about the nature and operation of the program.
  - A. Attend monthly Parent Committee meetings during your child's enrollment.
  - B. Be kept informed of current activities / events in the program.
  - C. Be a member on the Policy Council, Health Services Advisory or Education Services Advisory Committees.
2. Participate in the classroom as a **VOLUNTEER!**
  - A. Visit the center at any time.
  - B. Help plan and assist in activities with the children.
3. Assist in developing and implementing parent activities that will be beneficial to the family and community.
4. Work with your children at home and in cooperation with Head start Staff.
  - A. Welcome and participate in home visits and conferences with the Head Start staff to share information and ideas.

*(Rights and Responsibilities continued)*

- B. Discuss what ideas you have for the center.
- 5. You have the right to be treated with respect from Head Start staff. You have the responsibility to respect Head Start staff. Parents/Guardians and staff should respect the health, safety, and emotional well-being of children at all times. Disorderly conduct and/or verbal abuse from either party will not be tolerated. Parents/Guardians threatening or committing verbal and/or physical abuse of staff, children, parents, or others on Head Start property may find the following action(s) taken against them:
  - A. Legal Action.
  - B. Parent/Guardian barred from the Head Start Program and their children removed from the program.
- 6. If you have a concern/issue with the classroom activities you need to:
  - A. Request a parent/teacher conference.
  - B. If issue is not resolved to mutual satisfaction, you can request a conference to include a Manager.
- 7. If you have a concern/issue with the Head Start Program you may need to:
  - A. Schedule a conference with the appropriate staff involved.
  - B. If the issue is not resolved to mutual satisfaction, you can request a conference to include a Manager.
- 8. If after completing 6 & 7 you feel that you have not been treated fairly, you have a right to file a parent complaint. (Please ask for form from the Family Services Specialist).
- 9. Parents/Guardians have a right to appeal any decision(s) to the Executive Director. The decision of the Executive Director will be final.

**Helpful Hints for Parents:**

- ❖ Make sure your child is at school every day unless he or she is ill or there is an emergency family situation.
- ❖ Dress your child in Play Clothes. **Children will be required to be in closed toe shoes at all times.**
- ❖ Spend time at your child's center. **VOLUNTEER!**
- ❖ Attend and be active at your Parent Center Committee meetings and activities.

- ❖ Do not let your child bring toys, money, etc., unless the teacher has a show-and-tell activity.
- ❖ Do not let your child bring dangerous items to school such as: Guns (even toy ones), sharp objects, lighters; nail clippers, knives, fingernail files, etc.



### **Parent Involvement:**

The Parent Involvement Services area is to support parents as prime educators of their children and to assist families to become self-sufficient. This Services area serves as a linkage between parents, child, and staff to enhance and increase participation of parents in every phase of the program.

Ways for parents to be involved are:

- ❖ Be an active Parent Committee member
- ❖ Volunteer time at your child's center
- ❖ Become active on the Policy Council, Health Services Advisory Committee, or Education Services Advisory Committee



### **Parent Activity Fund Instructions:**

Okaloosa County Comprehensive Head Start Child Development, Inc. has monies available for parents to participate in an activity. This fund is for parent use only.

Parents will be notified how much money is in the parent activity fund at the beginning of each school year. The amount may vary from year to year. A Parent Center Committee can vote to use the monies collectively (all Centers' monies in one account) or separately (each individual Center's monies in separate individual Center's account). Note: monies will be divided based on the enrollment size of the center.

Parents will provide input/suggestions on the use of the parent activity fund at the beginning of the school year and submit to the Family Services Department. The results of the suggestions will be reported immediately to the parents after the Family and Community Partnership Managers compiles all of the suggestions.

Guidelines for the funds are:

1. This fund is for parents use only.
2. The parent activity must be educational.
3. Speakers, training, seminars, conferences, banquets (cost of food and/or travel could be covered).
4. Trips to museums, or the like, to provide parents with ideas or information for parent/child activities.

**This information can be found on page 170 of the Performance Standards 1304.50(d) (iii).**



# OKALOOSA COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE HEAD START CHILD DEVELOPMENT, INC.

## 2009-2010 School Year Calendar

Day	Dates	Event
Monday	July 27, 2009	Teachers Return/ Planning Days
Monday	August 10, 2009	All Staff Pre-Service
Monday-Thursday	August 17-20,2009	Staggered part-day classes
Friday	August 21, 2009	Parent Orientation Day
Monday	August 24, 2009	First Day All Students/VPK
Monday	September 7, 2009	Labor Day Holiday
Wednesday	October 7, 2009	Early Release Day
Monday	October 26, 2009	Student Holiday / Staff Dev.
Wednesday	November 4, 2009	Early Release Day
Wednesday	November 11, 2009	Veterans Day Holiday
Monday - Friday	November 23-27, 2009	Thanksgiving Holidays
Wednesday	December 2, 2009	Early Release Day
Friday	December 18, 2009	Student Holiday / Staff Dev.
Monday – Friday	December 21 – Jan. 1, 2010	Winter Break Holidays
Monday	January 4, 2010	Classes Resume
Wednesday	January 6, 2010	Early Release Day
Monday	January 18, 2010	Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday
Monday	January 25, 2010	Student Holiday/Staff Dev.
Wednesday	February 3, 2010	Early Release Day
Monday	February 15, 2010	President’s Day Holiday
Wednesday	March 3, 2010	Early Release Day
Friday	March 26, 2010	Student Holiday / Staff Dev.
Monday – Friday	March 29– April 2, 2010	Spring Break Holidays
Wednesday	April 7, 2010	Early Release Day
Wednesday	May 5, 2010	Early Release Day
Monday	May 31, 2010	Memorial Day Holiday
Thursday	June 10, 2010	Last Day for Head Start Students/VPK