



Early Childhood Services  
**Parent/Guardian and Volunteer Handbook**  
*Head Start, Early Head Start & Pre-K*  
2023 - 2024

**Serving children and their families for 58 years**

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## A note from the Vice-President:

On behalf of all employees at East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP), I welcome you and your family to our early childhood education program.

EBCAP has provided services from Newport to East Providence for 58 years. We offer classroom-based services in seven different locations and home-based services throughout the East Bay area of Rhode Island, serving over 300 children every year. In the 2023-24 school year we will partner with the Middletown public school department to provide Head Start and Pre-K classroom services at the Aquidneck and Forest Ave Elementary Schools.

As the challenges of a global pandemic continue to affect children, families, employees and our communities, EBCAP continues to look for innovative ways to serve. The availability of comprehensive early learning and support services in the aftermath of a pandemic is more vital than ever for our children. A shout out to educators and parents who worked together to promote children's school readiness skills in the areas of motor/physical development; cognition; language/literacy and math skills; social/emotional development; and approaches to learning. Please reach out if you would like to learn more about a career in early childhood education.

In addition to our commitment to comprehensive services, we value quality. EBCAP early childhood centers participate in the Rhode Island Bright Stars Quality Rating system with 4 out of 5 centers attaining a 4-STAR rating and our East Providence site located at 386 Willett Ave achieved the highest Bright Stars award, a 5-STAR rating. We will be applying for STAR ratings once we settle into our new classrooms in Middletown. We are very proud of all our dedicated early childhood professionals who work together to achieve and maintain high quality ratings and a shout out to the employees who work at the Willett site, congratulations on this accomplishment!

The Office of Head Start conducted a review of our program in June of 2023. EBCAP received a Program Performance Summary Report dated 7/10/2023 which in part reads, "it has been determined that your program meets the requirements of all applicable Head Start Program Performance Standards, laws, regulations and policy requirements." Classrooms were also observed using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®). EBCAP teachers met the competitive threshold for classroom organization and exceeded the quality thresholds for emotional and instructional supports of young children.

We extend our sincere thanks to our staff, governing body, Policy Council, parents, agency leadership and community partners, who are instrumental in supporting our early childhood education services at the highest level of performance. We also thank the Office of Head Start, Region I leadership who continue to provide support and guidance to all the programs in New England.

We look forward to the 2023-2024 school year. We encourage you to ask questions about our program, child development and how we can best support you and your family. Ask your family advocate, home visitor or teacher about parent committee and Family Leadership Policy Council. These groups are your opportunity to participate in developing policy, planning activities, and evaluating services. We need your ideas and your voice!

We welcome your questions, comments, and suggestions as we work cooperatively to offer the best possible programs and experiences for children and families. I look forward to meeting each of you in the days and months to come.

With Best Regards,



Linda Laliberte Vice President, Head Start/Early Head Start  
401.437.0018 x 2103 / [lindal@ebcap.org](mailto:lindal@ebcap.org)

## Early Childhood Education Services Mission Statement

EBCAP Head Start provides high quality comprehensive early childhood education services for eligible families and children from prenatal to age five. We partner with parents to teach children the skills and abilities needed for success in school and life. Together with our community, we support parents to keep children safe, healthy and well.

### Consumer Bill of Rights

- You have the right to be informed of and help to access/apply for all services available at EBCAP.
- You have the right to be treated with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith.
- Your personal records are strictly confidential.
- You have the right to every consideration for privacy.
- You have the right to assistance and/or response in a timely manner.
- You have the right to refuse any or all services offered, and the right to be informed of the consequences of this refusal.
- You have the right to participate in parent committees and to elect representatives to the Policy Council. Policy Council meetings are open to all, you are welcome and encouraged to attend.
- EBCAP does not discriminate because of characteristics of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, political affiliation, sexual preference, religious beliefs, or disabilities.

EBCAP is committed to providing you and your child with a quality early childhood education experience. Despite our best efforts, disagreements may occur. If you have a concern about the services provided, you have the right to file grievances without fear of discrimination or reprisal against you, your child or any family member. You also have the right to be advised by EBCAP staff on how to voice your concern and the right to a prompt response. Procedures for lodging a complaint or a compliment can be found in this Handbook (*See page 8*) and in the Policy Council By-Laws. You may also access the Vice President by phone (401) 437-0018 ext.2103 or email [lindal@ebcap.org](mailto:lindal@ebcap.org). We value your input and respect your concerns.

### How Do I Help My Child Learn?

Every child has the power to succeed in school and in life, and every family member and caregiver can help. Children watch what we say and do and follow our example. Parent/caregivers are truly children's first teachers and this important role lasts a lifetime. At home, you can take steps to support your child's education. Research shows children do better when moms, dads, and families are involved at school.

### What Can Families Do at Home?

As a parent or a caregiver, no one cares more about your child's education than you. Get involved in your child's education at home. Here are simple tips that may be useful to you:

- **Play.** You may hear, or have even said yourself, “she’s only playing,” or “why bother sending them to preschool, all they do is play.” Play benefits children in many ways by providing opportunities for them to learn about themselves, confidence, self-esteem, social and emotional well-being and how to relate to the world around them. **Play** for a child **is** how they learn best.
- **Encourage Your Child to Read.** It's the single most important thing you can do to help your child succeed in school. Read aloud to your baby right from the start and make reading together part of your daily routine.
- **Talk with Your Child.** Take advantage of everyday opportunities to talk with your child. For example, when you are walking, riding in a car, eating dinner or shopping, talk about what happened at school; teachers can give you some topics to discuss. Teach your child new words every day, name the things in your home, neighborhood, and community. Visit local museums, zoos and parks; many have discount days for residents.

- Encourage Healthy Habits. Research shows that regular sleeping times, good eating habits, and physical exercise are critical for good growth and development. Keep routine meal, bed, and play times. This helps your child learn good habits and ensures (s)he will be ready to learn at school.
- Limit and Monitor Screen Time, Including TV Viewing, Computer/Other Electronic Device Use, and Video Game Playing. Set limits on time spent watching TV, using the computer/other electronic device, and playing video games. The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests that children under the age of 18 months should not watch television at all because of concerns it may affect early brain growth and skill development. From 18 to 24 months, children should have minimal screen time and only when watching with an adult who can engage them in conversation about the content. Children ages 2 and over should have limited screen time of up to one hour per day of high-quality programming. The more your child watches TV, the less (s)he develops an ability to entertain her/himself, and the less time (s)he spends on all the other important experiences (s)he needs to grow and learn.
- Coach, Prompt, and Praise Your Child. Provide specific descriptions and encouraging words to help motivate young children. “Try this puzzle piece.” “What would happen if you turned the piece around?” “I like how you put your things away.”

### **How Can I Work Best with Teachers, Family Advocates, and Home Visitors?**

Learn everything you can about EBCAP Early Childhood Educational Services. You know your child best and understand his/her needs. Review the *Parent Handbook* and save the electronic copy on your device or keep the hard copy in case you have questions. Talk with your child's teacher often and start talking right at the beginning of the school year. Contact the teacher or family advocate immediately if you notice a change in your child's behavior. If you have a question or a concern, set up a meeting to talk about the issue.

Parents may always request a team meeting to discuss concerns or needs of their child. A mutually convenient time and date can be arranged through their family advocate. We will request parental consent and a written release for referrals to programs and agencies outside EBCAP.

Teachers will provide you with activities to use with your child at home to help reinforce what (s)he is learning at school. Let teachers know your ideas on how to make home and classroom activities better for your child.

Drop off and pick up times can be very busy for teachers and are usually not good times to try to have private conversations with your child's teacher. Let your child's teacher know you would like to schedule a time to talk with her/him privately and when (s)he can give you her/him full attention.

Get involved in your child's school and after school activities. Participate in family events, parent-teacher meetings, and goal setting with your family advocate or home visitor. Volunteer your time, talent and ideas. Most of all let your child know you care by the things you say *and* do!

### **Standards of Conduct**

We strive continually to provide a welcoming, safe, and appropriate learning environment for you and your child. We consider our facilities (inside, outside, and in the parking lot) to be “**kid zones,**” and as such will be governed by proper behavior at all times. To that end, we have listed below the most important expectations we have for acceptable behavior at our facilities:

- (1) Parents and staff are important role models for the children in our care. As such, they should treat each other with courtesy and respect at **ALL** times. Discussion of sensitive issues will take place in private areas only.
- (2) The use of profanity, verbal outbursts, or intimidation will not be tolerated. These behaviors may warrant disciplinary action or dismissal from the site.
- (3) Verbal threats will always be taken seriously and may result in police involvement.

- (4) Voices must be kept in the conversational range in all common spaces, as we should always assume that children are within earshot or napping.

## Parent Communication Procedure/Conflict Resolution

EBCAP is committed to providing quality services to children and families. We encourage open and honest communication of any problem, concern, suggestion or question and will respond in a timely and respectful manner. All complaints will be kept confidential and will only be shared with employees on a need-to-know basis to resolve the concern.

To maintain open communication, we ask that these steps be followed:

- (1) We encourage face-to-face, open and transparent communication to resolve an issue and ask that you speak directly to EBCAP employee(s) when you have a concern.
- (2) If the issue cannot be resolved at this level, we ask that the concern be discussed with a supervisor or manager.
- (3) If the issue is still not resolved, we ask that you put your concerns in writing and send to a program director or the Head Start Vice President.
- (4) We take your concerns seriously and want to give you our full attention. It may be that your concerns can only be discussed in a confidential setting. Ask to schedule a meeting as soon as possible so there can be discussion without interruption in a private setting.

*For very serious or critical concerns such as safety issues, breaches of confidentiality, or staff misconduct, contact the Head Start Vice President at 437-0018 x2103 or by email [lindal@ebcap.org](mailto:lindal@ebcap.org).*

## Confidentiality Statement

Confidentiality plays a major role in EBCAP Early Childhood Educational Services. In fact, most of our policies and principles are based on confidentiality.

All information about employees, parents, children, and volunteers obtained through observation or direct involvement in the program is strictly confidential. Such information will never be discussed outside of the agency or with any individuals not employed or related to our program, as is required by law. At times, it may be necessary to seek professional or outside guidance when dealing with a confidential situation. You will be informed if we need to meet with representatives of other agencies about your child. You will be asked to sign a Release of Information Form for us to talk with the agency. Confidentiality will be maintained, except in incidents of mandated state investigations, or an official court order, or if the safety of someone is at risk.

It can be very easy to break confidentiality. It is important and our professional obligation for both staff and volunteers to keep information confidential. If you have an issue or concern, it should be brought to an employee rather than another parent.

All records pertaining to EBCAP children and their families are confidential and are treated as such. Certain employees (and you will be told who) have the right to review such records. If you have a need to review your child's record, please ask your family advocate about the agency policy for this procedure included at the end of this handbook.

Staff will model confidentiality by discouraging any conversations or discussions that may lead to a breach of confidentiality. **Gossiping** is not permitted. There is no need to discuss one's personal opinions regarding another parent, family and child, or staff member. If you have a grave concern, you may discuss it in private with an employee.

Please think before you speak! If you think of all information as **CONFIDENTIAL**, you will reduce the chance of potential problems.

## Building Security

Please enter every EBCAP Early Childhood Center through the designated door. All visitors are required to sign-in when entering the building. Parents/guardians sign-in children in the classroom; that way we always know who is in the building and where children are in case of an emergency. We work hard to maintain a safe environment for the children, families, and staff of EBCAP. We ask that parents refrain from cell phone use in EBCAP Early Childhood Centers to maintain a safe and confidential environment. The use of cell phone cameras is prohibited.

If you bring a purse, backpack or jacket to EBCAP when volunteering, please check with your child's teachers or office staff and they will let you know where to store it. Please do not leave personal items unsecured. We cannot be responsible for them.

## Program Service Options

### Early Head Start (EHS)

EHS Center-Based: Year-round, classroom-based early care and education program for children ages six weeks to three years. Classroom group size is no more than 8 children. A primary caregiver model is used, assigning four children to each teacher to allow for more individual attention, nurturing experiences and continuity of care.

EHS Home-Based Program for Pregnant Women, Infants, and Toddlers: Our home-based program offers 1½ hour weekly home-based sessions for families. The home is used as the learning environment for infants and toddlers with exciting play sessions supported by a home-based visitor using the *Growing Great Kids* Curriculum.

In addition to home visits, families enrolled in the home-based program come together a minimum of two times per month in a socialization/play group.

Home-based services are also offered to pregnant people. A home-based visitor will provide weekly sessions to expectant families to review baby's development, family's needs and goals, healthcare, and ways to prepare for baby's arrival.

### Head Start (HS)

Center-Based, School-Year Only: Early Care and Education Classrooms for children 3-5 years old that operate six hours per day, five days per week, between September and June at no cost to families.

Head Start Center-Based Program with Child Care: Early Care and Education Classrooms for children 3-5 years old that operates five days per week, year-round, with before and after school childcare available.

Head Start Home-Based Program for children 3 – 5-years old: The Home-Based Head Start program offers Head Start services to children age 3 – 5 years old in their home. This program is specially designed to support children who are not able to participate in a center-based classroom due to health restrictions, behavioral health/developmental needs. Home-based services may also be provided to families who are not able to participate in a classroom program due to family needs. The goal of this program is to support healthy child development through parent coaching and support.

### Pre-Kindergarten

The Pre-K program offers six hours a day, five days a week, for a 180-day school year for 4-year-old children who live in Newport, Middletown, East Providence, Bristol and Warren. Other communities may be added as the state expands Pre-K programming. Entry into the Pre-K program is determined by a lottery that is run by the RI Department of Education (RIDE). Applications for the lottery can be found on the RIDE website and are typically available in the spring.



## Education Component

### Curriculum Philosophy

To provide each child an individualized learning experience, EBCAP Head Start considers each child's strengths, interests, needs, and learning styles. Working with parents, teachers individualize classroom lesson plans to provide meaningful experiences that support each child's school readiness skills.

We use the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF)* and the *Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards (RIELDS)* to provide the foundation for what children should know and be able to do. We support curriculum as a process that allows children to learn through play and interaction with their environment. Teachers organize the classroom by creating clearly defined, well-equipped learning centers that are arranged to promote independence, foster decision making and exploration, and encourage interaction with the environment.

### Early Childhood Curriculum Content

EBCAP teachers use the *HSELOF* and *RIELDS* to guide curriculum planning and to support ongoing assessment of each child's progress toward school readiness for all infants, toddlers and preschoolers. Domains identified in the *HSELOF* include physical development and health, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language development, literacy knowledge and skills, mathematics knowledge and skills, science knowledge and skills, creative arts expression, logic and reasoning, social studies knowledge and skills, and English language development. The *RIELDS* is aligned with this framework and both documents provide the content of what children should know, understand and be able to do to be successful in a preschool environment and prepare for later responsibilities in school and life.

90% of a child's brain develops before age 5! More learning and growth take place in the first five years of life than in any other period of life. Every interaction at home and at EBCAP Head Start promotes learning and development. Babies are born ready to learn, and adults can support learning and development through predictable daily routines, (hellos & good-byes, diapering, mealtimes, napping, etc.), a safe environment, nurturing relationships and classroom activities that promote interest, persistence and success for each child.

### Early Head Start Daily Schedule

Each infant is on his/her own schedule developed in conjunction with parents. Schedules will change in response to the child's needs and changes in growth and development. A good daily schedule for infants will contain the following components: arrivals & departures, feeding, diaper changing, dressing, indoor & outdoor play, and sleeping. A good schedule also offers a balance of activities: time with others, time alone, one-on-one time with an adult; quiet time, active time; and activities chosen by the child and activities chosen by adults.

A good daily schedule for toddlers will contain all the same components. However, the schedule for toddlers will be more predictable than for infants and contain more opportunities for group activities such as mealtimes and playtime.

Here is a sample schedule for toddlers. Notice that several activities frequently take place at the same time.

#### Early Morning

- Greet parents and children.
- Wash hands, check diapers
- Help children and parents say good-bye. Encourage children to explore the environment and materials in their own way.
- Breakfast offered 8:45 - 9:15 am.
- Clean up and wash hands

<b>Late Morning</b>	Change diapers and use toilet, wash hands, brush teeth. Child directed play, open ended art and sensory activities, indoor/outdoor gross motor time, and music and movement.
<b>Midday</b>	Lunch, 11:30 - 12:00. Change diapers and use toilet, wash hands. Read stories, play naptime music. Help children prepare for nap. 12:00-2:30.
<b>Late Afternoon</b>	Child-directed play, music and movement, indoor/outdoor gross motor.

### Head Start & Pre- K Daily Schedule

Our classrooms provide time and opportunities for children to experience and respond creatively to their world. The learning environment is social in nature, providing a secure and stimulating climate for all children. It provides time and opportunities for children to take appropriate risks and to explore and investigate their world. Children have experiences which encourage them to interact with others, to develop interpersonal skills, and to work and learn cooperatively. The environment is based on developmentally appropriate practice which responds to the natural curiosity of young children, reaffirms a sense of self, promotes positive dispositions toward learning, and helps to build increasingly complex skills in the use of language, problem solving, and cooperation. Teachers prepare the environment so that it provides stimulating, challenging materials and activities for children. Then teachers closely observe to see what children understand and pose additional challenges to push their thinking further.

Another important concept considered by teachers in a preschool classroom is individualizing activities for the children in the context of both small and large groups. Therefore, each classroom will have many similar features but will also look different because of those individual differences. You can expect to see each room set up with clearly defined, well-equipped interest areas. These can include but are not limited to dramatic play, blocks & building, table toys/manipulatives, art/drawing, water/ sensory play, library/books, music/movement/circle and outdoor and/or indoor active play areas.

Here is a sample schedule for Head Start & PreK:

Early Morning	Arrival (combined classes in full day), free play Cleanup, go to individual classrooms bathroom/hand washing/breakfast preparation Breakfast, cleanup Large group activity (circle, story, music & movement, etc.)
Late Morning	Small group activities (centers, projects, etc.) Gross motor activities (playground, gym) Bathroom/hand washing/lunch preparation
Midday	Lunch Transition to rest time (bathroom, wash hands, brush teeth, quiet activities, cot preparation, etc.) Rest time Transition to getting up (bathroom, quiet activities, put away cots, wash hands, snack preparation, etc.)
Late Afternoon	Snack, cleanup Afternoon activities (centers, outside play, etc.) Afternoon playtime, dismissal (combined classrooms in full day)

## **Child Assessment**

EBCAP Early Childhood Educational Programs use a multi-method approach to monitor and assess children's progress. Teaching Strategies GOLD On-line Assessment System is used to collect observational and anecdotal information on each child. To ensure that an accurate and individualized developmental profile is created for each child documentation is collected on an ongoing basis. Information is collected using various methods including checklists, rating scales, parent and child interviews, and formal and informal observations. This information is used to identify learning goals for each child, drive curriculum and lesson planning decisions, and provide families with regular updates on their child's progress. Families receive formal reports on their child's progress three times during the year, November, March and May. Teachers share information on a continuous basis during informal conversations and through materials sent home including work their child has completed and ideas to extend learning at home.

All teachers receive ongoing training on how to utilize Teaching Strategies GOLD On-line Assessment System as well as on the RI Early Learning and Development Standards, which are a guide for what children should know and be able to do on a continuum from nine months to 5 years of age. They use these tools and their knowledge of child development and of each child in their class to make assessment decisions.

## **Transition to Kindergarten**

As children prepare to leave EBCAP Early Childhood Programs and move on to kindergarten, we want to make sure that the child and family are prepared for that significant change. Information is shared with families throughout the school year on their child's progress and school readiness. Information is shared with parents about kindergarten registration, including the time, location and what they will need to complete the registration process.

## **Supervision of Children**

Children will be under the direct supervision of staff at all times including, but not limited to classroom activities, toileting, resting or sleeping, mealtimes and outdoor play. No child will ever be left alone or unsupervised while in our care. Rhode Island Department of Human Services licensing ratios will be maintained throughout the day. The staff will be positioned to see all areas where children may be playing and will move around as needed to monitor children's activities and ensure their safety. Staff members are aware of the whole group even when working with individual children or small groups.

It is our policy that at school doors are open by adults only. Please help us to remind children that only adults open doors at school.

## **Positive Discipline and Child Guidance Policy**

EBCAP believes in a positive approach to child guidance and behavior management. Teachers are provided training on how to support children's social interactions and emotional regulation using positive, non-punitive methods of guidance and discipline such as re-direction and calming strategies like deep breathing. Classrooms support all children's social and emotional development by implementing the following strategies:

- Develop clear and consistent age-appropriate rules and expectations for children and, to the extent possible, engage children in the rule setting process;
- Work with children to teach them to solve social problems;
- Reduce the potential need for discipline by anticipating and eliminating sources of trouble whenever possible; and
- Respect and acknowledge children's feelings.

EBCAP Early Childhood Education staff or volunteers will not use methods of discipline that would be considered punitive or potentially harmful to children. This includes but is not limited to:

- Isolation to discipline a child;
- Corporal punishment;
- Withholding food as a punishment or using food as reward;
- Utilizing toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child;
- Using any form of emotional abuse, including public or private humiliation;
- Using any form of verbal abuse, including profane, sarcastic language, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or child's family; or
- Take away outside/gross motor play as punishment.

We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teachers on a consistent basis and to share information about things that are happening that could potentially impact behavior. Teachers will keep parents informed about their child's success and needs in the classroom throughout the year. Teachers and family advocates can support parents to identify resources both at EBCAP and in the community if they have concerns about their child's social/emotional development.

### **Biting**

Since biting can be an issue in infant/toddler classrooms, we would like to share the following information:

- Biting is a developmental stage which many children go through. There are many reasons why children bite one another. Regardless of the reasons why children bite, it is perfectly understandable for parents/guardians to be concerned and even upset when their children bite or are bitten.

#### ***For the child who has been bitten:***

- Area is cleaned with soap and water, and ice is applied to area.
- Parents/guardians are notified immediately if the skin has been broken.
- If skin is not broken, parent/guardian will be notified at pick-up time with an Illness/Injury Report. This form will also be saved in your child's electronic file.

#### ***For the child who bites:***

- Teachers will immediately redirect the child to another area of the classroom.
- The child will be watched for other attempts at biting or possible causes for the behavior.
- If the bite results in broken skin, the parent/guardian will be contacted immediately.
- If skin is not broken, the parent/guardian is notified at pick-up time with an Illness/Injury Report. This form will also be saved in your child's electronic file.
- The child will not be punished or humiliated for biting.

### **The Incredible Years® Classroom Strategies, Conscious Discipline and PBIS**

**The Incredible Years® (IY)** is a research-based program that is designed to teach children how to regulate their emotions, engage in social interactions with peers and adults, and solve social problems. Teachers are provided with training specific to the IY model and are supported to implement the strategies in the classroom. If you would like to know more about IY ask your child's teacher, family advocate, or education coordinator.

The Preschool classrooms utilize the Incredible Years® Dinosaur School which is a social emotional curriculum. The curriculum uses direct teaching and modeling strategies to support children's

development of social skills. Dinosaur School is embedded in the classroom through weekly whole and small group lessons.

**Conscious Discipline** is a research-based model for supporting children’s social and emotional development. It promotes a compassionate culture using the Conscious Discipline Brain State Model to help understand children’s behavior and teach them appropriate ways to express their emotions. This highly effective approach is proven to increase self-regulation, sense of safety, connection, empathy and intrinsic motivation in both children and adults.

**PBIS: Busy Bees** - PBIS stands for Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports. The mission of PBIS is to establish a program-wide culture that supports children, staff, and families in implementing and maintaining proven, consistent, and positive practices that encourage pro-social behaviors. These behaviors, when reinforced, result in increased learning and a positive school climate. We have identified 3 school-wide expectations that we reinforce in all classrooms, they are Be Safe, Be Kind, and Be Helpful.

### **Classroom Placement and Program Modification**

EBCAP Head Start attempts to identify the most appropriate classroom for each child and minimize the number of transitions a child experiences during their time at Head Start. However, sometimes it is necessary to move a child to a different classroom to better meet the needs of the child, classroom, or program. There are also occasions when a modified program option, such as a shortened day or week or a move from center-based services to home-based services, is recommended for a child. Our goal is to support every child and family to be successful during the time they participate in Head Start.

Your child’s classroom placement, program option, or schedule can be modified during your child’s participation in the Head Start program. Please meet with Head Start staff to discuss any proposed changes and the reasons for the change.

When a change in classroom is required, a transition plan is developed with input from the parent(s)/guardians to facilitate the smoothest transition possible. Some reasons a child may be moved are:

- The child no longer qualifies for full-day childcare and is transitioned to a part-day classroom or Early Head Start home-based services.
- The child has been approved to receive Kids Connect services and is transitioned to a classroom where there is Kids Connect support in place.
- The child is not demonstrating success in their current placement and the team, which includes the teachers, education coordinator, family advocate and parent/guardian, agree that a different classroom may be better for the child.

When a change in a child’s program (full day, school day or home-based) or schedule is required, a transition plan is developed with input from the parent(s) to facilitate the smoothest transition possible. Some reasons a child’s program or schedule may be modified are:

- There is non-payment of childcare fees in a full-day program.
- The family’s needs have changed, and a full-day placement is no longer needed or is now needed.
- The child is having significant difficulties adjusting to the classroom environment and his/her behavior poses a risk to his/her safety or the safety of other children and adults in the classroom.
- There is a failure to comply with RI childcare licensing regulations or Head Start Program Performance Standards regarding health examinations/immunizations or the EBCAP attendance policy.

## Attendance Policy

East Bay Community Action Program will support each family to promote regular attendance in our Early Childhood Educational Programs. We expect to see every child, in school, on time, every day that they are healthy. Performance Standards state, “When the monthly average daily attendance rate falls below 85 percent, a Head Start program must analyze the causes of absenteeism. In circumstances where chronic absenteeism persists and it does not seem feasible to include the child in either the same or a different program option, the child's slot must be considered an enrollment vacancy”.

All families will be encouraged to register for five days per week. If parenting/bonding time will interfere with a five-day schedule, the ERSEA Specialist and advocate will meet with the family and document the rationale for an individualized schedule, which will be approved by the Leadership Team.

Children enrolled in the Pre-K Program are expected to attend five days per week for a six-hour school day. Parents of Pre-K children will be asked to sign a contract agreeing to the attendance expectations defined by the RI Department of Education. Children who accrue 20 unexcused absences, as defined by the RI Department of Education, are in jeopardy of losing their slot.

In the home-based option, families agree to participate in a weekly visit in their home with their assigned Early Head Start or Head Start home-based visitor. The home visit must take place with a legal guardian of the child enrolled. Families and home-based visitors should provide at least 24 hours’ notice when they need to reschedule a home visit, unless an emergency arises. Our program is best able to support families toward their goals when home visits happen at least 85% of the time. Socialization playgroups are offered twice each month. Families are strongly encouraged to attend the groups to support their child’s developing social and emotional skills and overall school readiness. If transportation to socialization is a barrier, the families may discuss options with their home-based visitor.

## Attendance Monitoring

We ask parents to contact the center when your child will not attend school.

- If a child is unexpectedly absent from school and a parent has not contacted the program within one hour of program or scheduled start time, Office Assistants will contact the parent through the primary number on file to ensure the child’s well-being.
- If the parent is not reached within two hours of program or scheduled start time, Office Assistants will try to contact the family through all numbers/email addresses on file.
- If the parent is not reached after trying all family contact information on file, Office Assistants will inform the team including family advocate that follow up is required.
- The team including family advocate will continue to follow up with family, including but not limited to a visit to the home to ensure the child’s well-being.

*It is essential for the parents to share your most updated contact information with the program, including what is the most effective way to get in touch with you for specific time.*

## What Can Parents Do?

Bring your child to school every day. Drop off and pick up your child on a consistent schedule. Talk to your child’s teacher or your family advocate if you need assistance to develop a schedule for your child. When you bring your child to school consistently, you are helping him/her learn how to be successful in the world. This will lay the foundation for future success in school and in life.

If a schedule change is unavoidable, let your child’s teacher know as soon as possible. The teacher can explain to your child what is happening to help relieve his/her stress. “Daddy called me and he will pick you up after we go outside today.” “Mommy told me you are coming to school after circle time tomorrow. When you come to school tomorrow, we will be getting ready to go on a walk.”

We ask parents to call, text or email the center by the scheduled start of the school day if your child will be absent or late.

There is a charge for late pick-up. (*See page 25*) Always call to let us know if you are unavoidably delayed. Children become anxious when they see other children have left for the day.

### **Open Door Policy**

Parents/Guardian are welcome to visit our program. You may help your child transition into the classroom if she/he seems to need help. Let us know if you would like to read or do an activity with a group of children. Your teacher can help you plan and schedule the activity. If you would like to volunteer on a regular basis, speak to your child's teacher to help you schedule an appointment with the Family Engagement Specialist.

### **Appropriate Dress for Children**

Please dress your child in play clothes for their day at school. Young children need real experiences in all the elements and all the seasons. This means they will be playing in sand, water, paint, glue, glitter, playdough, clay, dirt, and other "stuff," both inside and outside throughout the day. While teachers do their best to keep children clean, their clothes can and will get messy. Do not send your child to school in "dressy clothes."

Active indoor and outdoor play is an important part of the curriculum. Children will be going outside on a daily basis. Please send your child with clothing appropriate for the season – heavy coats, hats, mittens, boots in winter; a medium weight jacket and sweater or sweatshirt, a hat or baseball cap, sneakers or rubber soled shoes, and rain jacket. No open-toed shoes, shoes with slippery soles, or flip-flops please. Children can run, jump, and play more comfortably and safely in sneakers or rubber soled shoes.

Each child needs at least one change of clothing each day in case of messes or accidents. These can be brought back and forth or left in the child's cubby or locker. Children learning to use the toilet should bring at least **two** changes of clothing, including socks, daily. Please check your child's back-up clothes regularly to make sure that they still fit and are appropriate for the current season.

Please inform your child's teacher or family advocate if you need appropriate seasonal clothing. We can help.

### **Outdoor Temperature Policy/Air Quality Alert Procedures**

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing, suitable to both the weather & active play. Your child will be going outside every day unless there is active precipitation or the air quality is rated as unhealthy. In order to maintain licensing ratios at all times, there can be no exceptions to going outdoors. Our staff will utilize Enviroflash at <http://www.enviroflash.info/> to check for weather-related health alerts. Air quality tells us how clean or polluted the air is, and what associated health effects might be a concern. Teachers are made aware of weather alerts, and outside time may be reduced if unhealthy conditions such as extreme cold, extreme heat, or poor air quality occur. The amount of time each classroom spends outside is based on State Regulations. Please note that staff regularly monitor children's responses to weather while outside.

### **Toys and Other Items from Home**

Although many children wish to bring toys and other items to school, we ask that these things be left at home. All our classrooms are well equipped with toys and materials for children to explore and engage with during the day. We have found that children become very upset when their toys are lost, broken, or used by other children at school. We are unable to ensure the safekeeping of these items and ask for your cooperation in keeping them at home.

Parents may provide a blanket for rest time and (if desired) a special stuffed animal. **\*\*Please remember to label your personal belongings.\*\***

### **Jewelry in the Classroom**

To provide a safe environment, we ask that children not wear jewelry while at the center, *the only exception are post earrings with a safety back system*. Children under age 3 should *not* wear hair beads. If a child does arrive at the center wearing jewelry, the parent/guardian will be asked to remove the jewelry; otherwise, we will remove it and put it in their backpack or cubby. Although we will make every effort to secure the jewelry in a safe place, we cannot assume responsibility for it.

### **Prohibiting Outside Food in Classrooms**

EBCAP Early Childhood Centers prohibit outside food and drink in preschool and infant-toddler classrooms. This policy was developed to protect the health and safety of children and staff who may have severe allergies and to maintain compliance with USDA balanced meal requirements. Therefore, no food or beverages may be brought into the classroom by adults or children. This includes food traditionally connected with birthday and holiday celebrations. Classrooms will recognize children's birthdays in ways that do not involve food such as with special plates, hats, or songs. Please be mindful that all classrooms are nut free environments.

### **Policy Prohibiting Animals in Early Childhood Program Buildings**

EBCAP does not allow animals or pets in our building, with the exception of service dogs. This is for the protection of individuals with allergies as well as for the safety of young children who are not yet aware of how to interact with animals. Classrooms may have fish as part of their science learning center.

### **Special Services**

EBCAP regards parents/guardians as the primary educators and most powerful influence in the lives of their children. It is therefore the goal of the Special Services component to maximize the involvement of parents in the development of their child, and to assist parents in acquiring special services for their child when needed. EBCAP is a general education setting that strives to meet the educational needs of all children. To do this, we work closely with resources in the community to support children with needs that may require more specialized services. Some such resources are public schools, early intervention programs, and community mental health centers.

It is the responsibility of the Special Services Coordinator to coordinate screenings in the areas of speech and language, cognitive, motor and social/emotional development for all children. Teachers, home visitors, or family advocates complete the Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3) and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social Emotional (ASQ-SE2) for all children at the time of registration or within 45 days of the child's entry into the program. *Pre-K families will only complete the ASQ-SE2*. The use of these tools helps teachers gather baseline assessment information on each child that is then used to support individual goal setting and classroom lesson planning. The ASQ-SE2 is also part of the Child Outreach screening process that is provided by public school departments. Child outreach screenings are done onsite by the local school departments for the pre- school children. Results are shared with EBCAP staff, and families receive letters from the Local Education Authority (LEA). The LEA also has the responsibility to rescreen those children who fall into the rescreen category.

All screenings are done *only* after parents/guardians have signed permission. Family advocates explain the process and answer any questions at registration. Parents may also request a meeting with the special services coordinator.

If there is a need for further evaluation, EBCAP staff will provide parents with information and/or assistance to receive this service. EBCAP staff are available to attend meetings with community providers and to provide relevant information regarding your child's development. We will continue to support families through the process to qualify and plan for individualized services. In most cases, special



education services can be provided to children at their EBCAP site, and education staff will work with special service providers from Early Intervention or the public school to plan appropriate classroom activities that support the child's individualized goals.

If you have a concern about your child's development, please share this with your family advocate, teacher or the special services coordinator. We are available to provide support, advocacy, education, and information about resources in the community.

## Health Services Component

### Physical Health

School readiness begins with health. EBCAP Early Childhood Programs help participating families recognize the importance of continuous preventative care and early identification of health concerns. Together with families, the Health Services Team ensures that children are up to date on immunizations and RI's Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment (EPSDT) schedule, learn healthy habits, and can access the care they may need.

Federal and State Regulations, require that parents of children enrolling in our center-based program, must submit the following documentation:

- An up-to-date immunization record and copy of the last well child check or physical exam are due prior to entry to center-based programs. Children in foster care or experiencing homelessness may be able to enroll while their parents/guardians gather this paperwork.
- If your child had a lead screening at 12 months and/or 24 months please ask your child's doctor to provide a copy of the results.
- If your child had a hemoglobin or hematocrit screening at 12 months, please ask your child's doctor to provide a copy of the results. Children at risk may also need documentation of a TB screening.
- Rhode Island's EPSDT Schedule recommends Well Child Checks at 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, and 30 months. These doctor's visits are program requirements because they are necessary in maintaining your child's health.
- For children entering Head Start, a physical is required once every 12 months/year beginning at 36 months.
- Current Dental Examination – preventative oral healthcare for young children is essential for a child's behavioral, speech, language, and overall growth and development. Dental exams are required by age 1 year (when the first tooth erupts) and every 6 months thereafter. Parents are responsible for providing a copy for each dental exam and whenever any treatment is provided.

### Nutrition

Center-based children are provided breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack daily. The meals/snacks are currently provided by a caterer. Formula and infant foods are also provided to infants under 12 months of age. Solid foods for infants in a center-based classroom are provided based on developmental readiness. Head Start also seeks to support breastfeeding mothers. Working with the family to meet their needs, Head Start is able to accommodate a safe and private place to pump and nurse, separate freezer or refrigerator space for safely storing breastmilk and an open-door policy that enables mothers to nurse as they are available and comfortable. A Nutritionist reviews the menus submitted by the caterer to ensure compliance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. For the safety of EBCAP children and staff, no food or beverages from home are allowed in classrooms. Food items sent from home, with the exception of pumped breastmilk, will be returned to parents.

The Health Services Team facilitates workshops on topics requested by the parents. We also provide one-on-one counseling for families seeking assistance with issues including diabetes, food allergies, infant

food introduction, breastfeeding, picky eating, and weight management. Newsletters are sent home monthly with program information, as well as recipes and other health/nutrition related topics.

### **Creating a Community of Health**

The Health Services Team facilitates the Health Services Advisory Committee. Participants include parents, local healthcare professionals, community partners, state health department officials, and staff. The Committee meets for one-hour three times per year to review policies, procedures, address community concerns, and works to improve the functioning of the health and nutrition program components. Please consider joining this important committee. Parent input is essential for a high-quality program.

Please feel free to contact the Health Services Team with any questions you may have regarding health and nutrition. The listing of their phone numbers is in the front of this handbook.

## **Health Policies and Procedures**

### **Required Health Files for Children**

The Rhode Island Department of Human Services (DHS) – Child Care Center and School Age Program Regulations for Licensure requires the following information is maintained in each child’s file:

- Current parent/guardian home address and telephone number, work and/or school address and telephone numbers;
- Current written parental/guardian authorization for the release of the child to named individuals who must be ages 18 and over;
- Names and contact information of the individuals to whom the child may be released;
- Evidence of up-to-date well-child/physical exam (a grace period of 90 days is granted to children in foster care and children who are experiencing homelessness);
- Up-to-date immunization record (a grace period of 90 days is granted to children in foster care and children who are experiencing homelessness);
- Written authorization from the parent/guardian for emergency medical treatment;
- For children with special health conditions, medications with doctor’s order/plan that is current and properly labeled;
- Other relevant health documents, i.e., allergies, medical conditions, etc.

When a child’s emergency enrollment paperwork and/or medical paperwork/medication is outdated or expired and repeated attempts have been made to obtain this information, a child may be suspended from the classroom until an appointment card to get the child updated is submitted by the parents. This requirement is to ensure the health and safety of all children and staff in the center.

### **Procedure for Serious Accidents or Illness**

#### **First Aid:**

- A first aid kit is available for each classroom and is kept with the class at all times. The first aid kit is inventoried monthly and restocked as needed. The first aid kit is reviewed quarterly to ensure proper condition of materials.
- At least fifty percent of all staff members on-site are trained under the most recent guidelines of the American Heart Association in pediatric cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and pediatric first aid. A choke-saving poster, that outlines the Heimlich Maneuver, is prominently displayed in any area where children eat. One staff member trained in the use of the Heimlich Maneuver for Infants and Toddlers is always on-site.
- Illnesses and injuries are documented on an Illness/Injury Report. A parent/guardian must sign the

written Illness/Injury Report at pick-up time. Parents/guardians are notified of injuries on the same day of the injury. The injury, first aid, and parent/guardian communication are recorded on the Illness/Injury Report, and a copy of the form is saved into your child's file. If parents choose to seek medical care for their child following an injury, please notify center staff.

### **Emergency Medical Attention:**

- If the injury requires immediate emergency medical attention, staff will call 911. Staff will notify the parent/guardian and the manager on site. If staff are unable to contact the parent/guardian, they will call the child's emergency contact(s). Staff will continue calling parents/guardians until they speak with them.
- A staff member familiar with the child will accompany the child on rescue and wait with the child until the family arrives.
- Staff will complete a **Client Incident Form** for the child's file, and copies should be provided to the Health Services Team, Human Resources Department, and the parent/guardian.

### **Exclusion and Return of Children Related to COVID-19**

- As we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Office of Head Start requires all Head Start programs to have a COVID-19 policy. Please see the addendum for the most recent COVID-19 policy, including information on exclusion, testing, wearing masks, and notification of exposure.

### **Exclusion of Children for Other Health Reasons or Illnesses**

A child's success in the classroom begins with the child being healthy and able to participate fully in activities to support learning and development. EBCAP Early Childhood Services will only deny admission or send a child home because of illness if it is necessary to protect the health and safety of the child, their classmates, and staff.

If any of the following signs or symptoms of illness are present, staff will contact the family so that their child can go home:

- Child cannot participate comfortably in regular activities.
- Child's illness creates a need for additional care that is greater than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.
- Fever of 100.4° F or higher taken axillary.
- Diarrhea defined as watery stools or decreased form in stool that is not associated with changes in diet 3 times in 8 hours. Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper and toilet trained children if the diarrhea is causing soiled pants or clothing. Child can return to school after 24 hours with no episodes of diarrhea without using any antidiarrheal medication.
- Vomiting more than 2 times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-infectious condition and the child remains adequately hydrated. Child can return to school after 24 hours with no episodes of vomiting without using any antinausea medication.
- Mouth sores with drooling unless the child's primary provider states that the child is noninfectious.
- Presence of new skin condition/rash with or without fever should be evaluated by the child's doctor to diagnose the rash, determine if it is contagious, and develop a treatment plan. Some common rashes in young children include: impetigo, scabies, ringworm, molluscum contagiosum, Fifth's Disease, allergic reactions, and psoriasis. Depending on the diagnosis and treatment plan, staff will provide guidance on how long the child must remain home.
- Child's symptoms pose a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.

Other signs and symptoms of illness will be reviewed with the Health Services Team on a case-by-case basis and a determination will be made based on recommendations from resources such as *Caring for Our*

*Children, Managing Infectious Disease in Child Care and Schools: A Quick Reference Guide*, Head Start Performance Standards, and/or consultation with the Pediatric Consultant Provider.

### Procedure for Excluding a Child Due to Illness

1. **Illness/Injury Report:** Staff will complete the Illness/Injury Report and provide a copy to the parent/guardian. The other copy will be saved in the child's file.
2. **Decision to Exclude Child:** Staff will contact the Health Services Team or Education Coordinator to make a final decision on exclusion. If the Health Services Team or Education Coordinator are unavailable, staff should make the final decision on exclusion.
3. **Contact Parent/Guardian:** Staff will contact the parent/guardian. If unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff will contact emergency contact(s). It is the parent's responsibility to keep updated phone numbers for themselves and emergency contact(s) current.
4. **Develop a Plan:** Staff will discuss the signs and symptoms of illness with the parent/guardian and make a plan for next steps, such as seeing a doctor for diagnosis, treatment, and tentative plans for return.

### Criteria for Return to School after Hospitalization, Surgery, and Out Patient Care

**Emergency Medical Treatment and Hospitalization:** If a child visits a hospital emergency department, urgent care center, or is hospitalized because of illness or injury, the parent/guardian must provide a copy of the aftercare summary for that visit before the child can return to school. If the aftercare summary is not available, the parent can consult with their children's primary care provider to obtain documentation of a safe return to school date and any restrictions or supports needed at school.

**Surgical Procedure Requiring Anesthesia:** If a child undergoes a medical procedure that requires anesthesia, the child must remain at home for at least 24 hours following the procedure and until their provider clears them to return to school. The parent/guardian must provide a copy of the surgery discharge paperwork before the child can return to school. The Health Services Team will partner with the Education Director and Education Coordinator for the center to determine if reasonable accommodations can be made in the classroom to meet the needs of the child while recovering and how to implement those accommodations.

**Medical Appointment for Illness:** If a child visits a medical provider because of illness or injury, the parent/guardian must provide a doctor's note with a date when the child is cleared to return to school. The doctor's note should include as many of the following details as possible: diagnosis (if contagious); prescribed treatment or medication; restrictions or supports needed at school. If necessary, the Health Services Team will utilize the child's medical release form to follow up with the doctor's office to gather additional information.

Timelines for return to school vary by illness and are determined in consultation with staff and the child's doctor. If the child was seen by a doctor, a note from the doctor stating that it is safe for the child to return is needed. When additional information is needed for return, a member of the Health Services Team may utilize the child's medical release to consult with their doctor. This table gives *examples* of timelines for return after some common illnesses.

Diagnosis	Child Must Stay Home Until
Scabies	Treatment has been given
Strep throat or other strep infection (streptococcal pharyngitis)	After 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started

Pertussis	After 5 days of prescribed antibiotic treatment
Head lice	After first treatment has been given. Depending on the severity of the case, children may need to leave before the end of the program day.
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	Fever free for 24 hours without fever reducing medications and well enough to participate fully
Pink eye (bacterial conjunctivitis)	Health care professional is consulted for return timeline and may depend on starting treatment

**Chronic Health Conditions**

Children with documented chronic health conditions or illnesses will have a written Individual Health Plan (IHP). The IHP is developed with the child’s parent/guardian, teacher, other members of the Head Start staff, and with input from the child’s doctor. The IHP will include reasonable accommodations and supports in daily activities, including meals and snacks, playing, sleeping, toileting, etc. It may also include information about medication administration and what to do in the case of a medical emergency.

**Medication Administration Policy and Procedure**

This policy was written to encourage communication between the parent, the child’s health care provider and the child care provider to assure maximum safety in giving medication to children who require medication while in child care.

For the safety of the children enrolled in our program, medication administration will be limited to situations where an arrangement to give medicine outside child care hours cannot be made. This policy is intended to ensure safe administration of medication to children with chronic conditions, mild illness, or special health needs for whom a plan has been made and approved by the Health Services Director or Health Services Specialist.

Almost all children require medication at some point in time. Administration of medication poses a liability and an extra burden for staff, and having medication in the facility is a safety hazard. Administration of Prescription and Non-prescription medication requires clear, accurate instructions from the medical provider and knowledge of why the child needs the medicine during the school day.

**Policy**

- Staff, who have completed a standardized training course in medication administration, will administer medications. Medications must be given at home whenever possible and administered to children in care only when required, in accordance with State regulations. Any medications prescribed for twice a day must be administered at home and cannot be given at the center.
- The first dose of any medication must be given at home and with ample time before the child returns to child care to observe the child’s response to medication.
- Medication will only be given when ordered by the child’s health care provider and with written consent of the child’s parent/legal guardian. A **Medication Authorization Form** (see attached) must be completed before medication can be given. Medication Authorization Forms are located in each center.
- Any prescription or over-the-counter medication brought to the child care center must be specific to the child who is receiving the medication, in its original container, have a child-resistant safety cap, and be labeled with the appropriate information as follows:
  - ⦿ **Prescription medication** must be in the original packaging and have the original pharmacist label that includes the pharmacist’s phone number, the child’s full name,

name of health care provider prescribing the medication, name and expiration date of the medication, the date it was prescribed or updated, dosage, route, frequency, and any special instructions for administration and/or storage. These orders unless otherwise noted, will be good for one year.

- ⊙ **Over-the-counter (OTC) medication** must have the child’s full name on the original packaging, and the manufacturer’s original label with dosage, route, frequency, and instructions for storage and administration, and expiration date. OTC medication must have a health care providers note/order documenting when the medication is to be given to the child, length of time to be given, and for what symptoms. These orders will be good for one year.
  - ⊙ **PRN or “As needed” non-prescription medication** (ex. Acetaminophen) will only be given if a health care provider’s note is provided, and the parent completes authorization to administer. The health care provider note must state specific reasons, times when this medication can be given, and period of time for administering the medication. PRN medications will not be administered if the symptoms they are prescribed for are not present. Except for use of Emergency medications (Epinephrine, Glucagon, and Benadryl for allergic reaction) the child’s parent/guardian will be contacted prior to PRN medication administration to determine if/when the child last received this medication at home.
  - ⊙ **Emergency rescue medications** (Epinephrine, Glucagon, Diastat) require first aid training in order to administer. All staff will be trained to administer emergency rescue medications that are required for children in their care. 911 must be called whenever emergency injectable medications are administered. Emergency medications are stored safely in the classroom backpack and kept with the children at all times.
  - ⊙ **Nonprescription Sunscreens, Diaper Creams, and Insect Repellents** require written parent/ legal guardian consent but do not require a written order from a health care professional.
- For children who receive medication on a long-term daily basis, the teaching staff or a member of Health Services Team will advise the parent/guardian one week prior to the medication needing to be refilled to avoid doses being missed.
  - For children requiring controlled substance medications (Adderall, Ritalin, etc.) to be administered during the school day, parents will work with the Health Services Team, Family Advocate, and Education Coordinator to plan for providing medication and completing paperwork on a weekly basis.

## Receiving Medication

When a parent/guardian brings medication to the center, the Health Services Team must be informed and the following steps must be taken:

1. The parent/guardian, with assistance from Health Services Team, Family Advocate, or teaching staff, completes a **Medication Authorization Form**. These forms can be found in each center. The parent/guardian must complete all areas and sign this form in order to give permission for staff to administer medication to their child. The Health Services Specialist or Health Services Director must be contacted any time a medication is brought to the center.
2. Health Services Team, Family Advocate, or teaching staff will complete a **Receiving Medication Form**, complete the Safety Checklist section, sign, date and have the parent/guardian initial.
3. The Health Services Team completes a **Medication Administration Record** and lists potential side effects. Teaching staff or Managers trained in medication administration sign this form.
4. A copy of the **Medication Authorization Form, Receiving Medication Form, and Medication Administration Record** is kept in the classroom health binder. The paperwork is also saved in the child’s file.
5. Medications that are considered controlled substances (Ritalin, Adderall) will have a **Medication Inventory for Controlled Substances** form completed in the presence of the person delivering

the medication to the facility. Alert the Health Services Specialist or Health Services Director immediately. No more than 5 days' worth of medication will be allowed to remain at a facility.

6. The Health Services Team enters medication and other pertinent health information into the child's electronic file. This information is provided in the classroom health binder and is posted in the classroom behind a classroom sign to maintain confidentiality while ensuring that teaching staff have this information readily available.

## Safety Policies and Procedures

### Drop Off / Pick Up Policy and Procedures

The safety of our children is a priority at EBCAP. This includes the drop off and pick up of children to and from our classrooms. Please be aware that the following policies and procedures will be strictly enforced and monitored by our staff. Your cooperation will help us to keep children safe.

#### Child Drop Off Policy

- Parents/Guardians are to go to the classroom to drop off and pick up their children.
- Let a teacher know when you bring your child into the classroom. Children must be signed in.
- It is important to inform the teacher if your child had a difficult night, a recent injury, or if you have important information that will assist us in helping the child in the classroom.
- Children should be dropped off and picked up as scheduled. Children cannot be dropped off more than 10 minutes prior to the scheduled start of the school day.

#### Child Pick Up Policy

- Your child's emergency card will identify the people you authorize to pick up your child when you are unable to do so. Per RI Childcare Licensing Regulations, anyone you have authorized to pick up your child must present a picture ID and be 18 years old or older. They will be asked to follow the sign-out procedure in the classroom. We may ask for verification of age.
- **Unauthorized persons will not be allowed to pick up children from our classrooms.**
- Head Start **must** have copies of custody orders or restraining orders that are in effect to enforce them. If there are any changes in custody or restraining orders, please inform your family advocate or teacher immediately and bring in a copy within 24 hours of change. These orders cannot be enforced until they are on file. Each classroom keeps a list of the restraining orders and custody orders, and this information is noted on the child's emergency card.
- Parents or persons designated on the emergency card must come into the classroom and let a teacher know they are taking a child home. Children must be signed out.
- It is important that you keep the emergency card updated and keep telephone numbers current. Parents/guardians may add to or remove people from the pick-up list at any time. **Changes must be made in person with EBCAP staff.**
- We will only allow someone who is not listed on your child's emergency card to take a child when the following steps are followed.
  - When there is an emergency and you call with instructions to release your child to a person not listed on the emergency card, the teacher/family advocate will call you back on the number we have on file for you.
  - You must be able to give us the "code word" that you provided upon registration. It is important that you remember this word; that it not be some word others would easily know and do not share this word as it will be used to verify your identity. Based on the information you provide, the emergency pick up person must present a picture ID and must be at least 18 years of age. If you would like to add this person to your child's authorized list for future pickup, you must make the necessary changes to your child's emergency card..

- Even though a person may sign-in/drop-off your child to the classroom, they will not be allowed to pick up unless they are on the emergency card.

If a person arrives at the center and appears to be impaired or is in a heightened emotional state, every attempt will be made to convince the individual not to drive a vehicle. Children will not be released to the person, and persons listed on the emergency card will be called to pick up the child. If the person insists on driving, the police will be notified. If a parent insists on taking a child, the police and DCYF will be notified.

### **Policy and Procedure for Children Not Picked Up at the End of Their Scheduled Day**

At the end of the school day, we expect that your child be picked up on time. If an emergency arises and you know you will be late, it is important that you call the center. If a parent/guardian has not notified us that they will be late, is considerably late or if there is a pattern of late pick-up, the following actions will be taken:

1. Staff will first attempt to contact parents/guardians using phone numbers listed on the emergency card.
2. If unable to reach parents/guardians, persons designated on the emergency card will be contacted to pick up the child.
3. Contact attempts will continue for 45 minutes from the end of the school day. If we are unable to contact anyone to pick up the child after 45 minutes, DCYF and/or the local Police Department may be called.
4. The parent will be asked to sign a late slip anytime they pick up their child late.

### **Head Start School Day Only Children**

- After three (3) occasions of a child not being picked up on time, parents/guardians will be required to attend a team meeting with designated staff members to discuss solutions for late pick-up.
- If a parent/guardian refuses to attend a team meeting and/or if late pick up continues, the parent/guardian will be charged a childcare fee for non-Head Start time at \$1.00 per minute following a 10-minute grace period. The grace period will be revoked if there is a pattern of late pick up.
- Childcare fees are payable **within one (1) week of receipt.**
- In the event that payment is owed and all efforts to recoup delinquent payment have been exhausted to no avail, EBCAP reserves the right to turn the account over to a collection agency.

Parents/guardians who need before or after school childcare should contact their family advocate to discuss a transfer to an opening in a classroom or center that offers child care. Family advocates will also assist families to apply for a Rhode Island Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) voucher.

### **Full Day Child Care & PreK Children**

Parents of children enrolled in aftercare and Pre-K will be given a warning the first time they pick up their child late, after closing time or after the child's contracted hours. Starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> late pickup, parent/guardian will be charged additional childcare fees at \$1.00 per minute or at the next level of the fee schedule, whichever is less. A ten (10) minute grace period will be allowed to accommodate unusual circumstances. The grace period will be revoked if there is a pattern of late pick up. In addition, the steps listed above will be followed if a parent/guardian cannot be reached.

***Children may become upset when they are left at the center. Staff will provide reassurance in a warm and nurturing manner to make the child feel safe and comfortable.***



## School Cancellations and Closings

All cancellations are communicated to families using *Blackboard Connect*, an automated system that will call and text your phone with a message about school/classroom closings, late openings, early dismissals, emergencies, and special events. It is important that we have an updated telephone number so that *Blackboard Connect* messages can be received and we can reach you in case of an emergency.

In addition to BlackBoard Connect, you can see announcements on local TV stations. You can sign up for text alerts at [www.ribroadcasters.com](http://www.ribroadcasters.com). You can choose text and/or e-mail alerts. We are listed under Pre- Schools/Day Care as **East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP) – Head Start**.

Weather related classroom closures will usually be in conjunction with the public school district in which a center is located.

## Delaying Opening Due to Weather

When inclement weather causes road conditions to be unsafe early in the morning but weather is expected to improve by late morning, EBCAP will delay opening rather than close classrooms and lose a whole school day. Delaying until 10:00 provides time for municipalities to clear the roads, for our parking lots to be cleared and for employees to get to work safely.

When a school district(s) announces a delayed opening, Head Start sites in the district(s) that have delays will delay opening for children until 10:00a.m., unless otherwise notified. All meals, including breakfast, will be served.

The decision to delay the opening of Head Start centers will be made as early as possible and is based on the local school districts' announcement of their delay. Should conditions appear to worsen as the morning progresses, the decision to close sites to children may be made. All delay and closing announcements will be made as early as possible and information sent out to families via the Blackboard Connect system.

## Car Seat Safety

Child Restraint Law - RI General Law-31-22-22 - Any person transporting a child under the age of eight (8), less than fifty-seven (57) inches in height and less than eighty (80) pounds in a motor vehicle operated on the roadways, streets, or highways of this state, shall transport the child in any rear seating position of the motor vehicle properly restrained in a child restraint system approved by the United States Department of Transportation under Federal Standard 213. If the child is under eight (8) years old but at least fifty-seven (57) inches in height, or at least eighty (80) pounds the child shall be properly wearing a safety belt and/or shoulder harness approved by the Department of Transportation pursuant to Federal Standard 208 in any rear seating position of the motor vehicle. For this section, applying to all parts of this section, "rear seating position" means any seating positions located behind the driver and front seat passenger. Under this subsection, a child can only be seated properly restrained in the front seat if:

1. The vehicle is not equipped with a back seat or
2. All rear seating positions are being utilized by other children.

If you would like more information on car seat safety or need assistance in obtaining car seats, please see your family advocate.

## Pedestrian Safety for Your Child

EBCAP seeks to maintain a safe and healthy environment for every child and adult in our program. Pedestrian accidents are a serious safety problem for young children that result in tens of thousands of injuries and hundreds of deaths each year.

Fortunately, if we work together, Head Start parents, caregivers, and staff can do a lot to prevent these tragedies. Know the facts: Young children are not small adults.

1. Children move quickly and can run into the street or parking lot without warning.
2. Children are unaware of danger. They need and deserve an adult to watch out for them.
3. Children are short. This makes it difficult for them to see motorists and for motorists to see them.
4. Children cannot judge a car's speed and distance. They believe cars can stop instantly.
5. Children think if they can see the driver, the driver can see them.
6. Children have underdeveloped peripheral vision (seeing to the sides) and may not see a car coming or backing up.

### **BE SAFE WHEN YOU ARE NEAR PARKED OR MOVING VEHICLES**

- **Supervise, supervise, and supervise!** Parents and caregivers must watch toddlers and preschoolers closely when near parked or moving vehicles. To supervise properly, you must be within arm's reach of your child, not watching from a distance. Always hold your child's hand or have them hold onto your pocket.
- Young children learn by watching adults. Parents and caregivers are obligated to set a good example. Always STOP at the edge of the curb or parking lot before crossing. Always look LEFT, RIGHT, and LEFT again for moving cars. Always look for signs that a car is about to move (rear lights, exhaust smoke, sound of motor, wheels turning), and never walk behind a vehicle that is backing up. This is a good opportunity to start talking to your child about what you "look for" to determine if it is safe to cross.
- Drivers should observe speed limits at all times. When driving to and from Head Start, motorists should always expect that a child may run into the road or parking lot.

### **EBCAP Policy to Protect Children**

This document serves to inform all parents that EBCAP Head Start employees, as well as all Rhode Island private citizens are mandated to adhere to *Rhode Island State Law (40-11-1: Chapter 11\*)* regarding the reporting of suspected or known cases of child abuse and neglect.

- EBCAP staff are required by RI State Law to report to the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) all suspected or known cases of child abuse and/or neglect (which includes reporting of children left unattended in cars).
- All abuse and neglect reporters are granted immunity as long as they report concerns in good faith in accordance with state law.
- EBCAP is not a child abuse and neglect treatment agency. Staff will not undertake their own investigation or treat causes of child abuse and neglect.
- As mandated by RI State law, EBCAP staff will cooperate fully with a DCYF investigation.
- EBCAP staff will support families' understanding and compliance with DCYF policies and procedures.

If you have any questions about this policy, please see your family advocate/ home visitor or contact the family development director.

*\*RI State Law 40-11-1: Chapter 11:* The public policy of this state is to protect children whose health and welfare may be adversely affected through injury and neglect; to strengthen the family and to make the home safe for children by enhancing the parental capacity for good child care; to provide a temporary or permanent nurturing and safe environment for children when necessary; and for these purposes to require the mandatory reporting of known or suspected child abuse and neglect, investigation of such reports by a social agency (DCYF) and provisions for services, where needed, to such child and family.

**RI state law prohibits leaving infants and children unattended in cars. - The employees of East Bay Community Action (EBCAP) program shall immediately report any incident of a child being left**

**unattended in a vehicle to the DCYF Hotline because they are mandated reporters like every other Rhode Islander.**

### **Sex Offender Community Notification**

The primary purpose of community notification is to enhance public safety and protection. EBCAP provides this notice as part of our commitment to safety within our Agency and our community. For the most current information about sex offenders in your community, please visit the following website:

*State of Rhode Island Parole Board - Sex Offender Notification Unit*

[www.paroleboard.ri.gov/sexoffender/olist/search.php](http://www.paroleboard.ri.gov/sexoffender/olist/search.php)

### **Notice of Privacy of Child Records Policy**

This notice describes how personally identifiable information about you, your child and your family may be used and shared with other agencies and how you can get access to this information. East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP) is committed to protecting all health and personal information about you, your child and your family. This policy describes the different types of personal information we collect and how, when and why we share this information with other agencies. It also describes your rights as they relate to this information.

As soon as you complete the Head Start Pre-Application Sheet, personal information is collected. Once you or your child is accepted to our program, an individual record is created, and more personal information is collected. The information that could be found in your child's electronic file may include, but is not limited to:

- Program application and eligibility information
- Financial information
- Results of physical examinations
- Results of blood tests, including but not limited to iron and lead levels
- Immunization records
- Medical concerns, allergies, food restrictions
- Developmental screening tests for height, weight, vision, hearing, and ability to learn
- Your child's and family's medical and mental health histories
- Your child's nutrition history
- Medical treatment and prescription information
- Individual health, education, communication, and behavior plans
- Referral information to and from other agencies involved with the family
- Case management and review documentation
- Documentation of services rendered by East Bay Community Action Program (EBCAP)
- Documents generated by EBCAP, such as permission forms, family/child reports, and assessments

East Bay Community Action Program will comply with all applicable laws and regulations concerning the confidentiality of personally identifiable information, including but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). To the extent that this policy is deemed to be inconsistent with obligations imposed by applicable laws or regulations, such law or regulation shall control.

Personally identifiable information will not be shared outside of the program except as set forth below or as otherwise permitted by applicable laws and regulations.

## **Disclosure with parental consent**

Subject to the exceptions described below, East Bay Community Action Program will obtain a parent's written consent before disclosing Personally Identifiable Information (PII) from child records.

Parents will be notified in writing of the proposed disclosure, and the Program will ensure that the parent's written consent specifies what child records may be disclosed, explains why the records will be disclosed, and identifies the party or class of parties to whom the records may be disclosed. The written consent must be signed and dated by the parent to disclose information. "Signed and dated written consent" may include a record and signature in electronic form that: (i) Identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic consent; and, (ii) Indicates such person's approval of the information.

Granting of consent is voluntary on the part of the parent and may be revoked at any time. If a parent revokes consent, that revocation is not retroactive and therefore it does not apply to an action that occurred before the consent was revoked.

The following sections describe when and why East Bay Community Action Program would disclose personally identifiable information without parental consent but with parental notice and opportunity to refuse, and when and why we would disclose personally identifiable information without parental consent. To the extent that such personally identifiable information is considered part of an education record, the disclosure of such information will be governed by FERPA.

### **Disclosure without parental consent but with parental notice and opportunity to refuse.**

For the purposes of forwarding child records to officials at a program, school, or school district in which the child seeks or intends to enroll or where the child is already enrolled, East Bay Community Action Program may disclose information without your consent (so long as the disclosure is related to the child's enrollment or transfer) but will notify you and provide you with an opportunity to refuse the disclosure of information. We will provide you with written notification of the disclosure, the timeline of the disclosure, and upon parent request, provide you with a copy of the Personally Identifiable Information from child records to be disclosed in advance, and provide you with an opportunity to challenge and refuse disclosure of the information in the records. East Bay Community Action Program may also disclose educational directory information, as defined by 34 CFR § 99.37, after having given parental notice and opportunity to refuse as required under that section.

### **Disclosure without parental consent.**

East Bay Community Action Program may release personally identifiable information without your consent to:

- (1) Officials within the program or acting for the program, such as contractors and sub-recipients, if the official provides services for which the program would otherwise use employees, the program determines it is necessary for Head Start services, and the program maintains direct control with respect to the use, further disclosure, and maintenance of child records, such as through a written agreement, as required by applicable law and regulation;
- (2) Officials within the program, acting for the program, or authorized representatives from certain federal or state entities, in connection with an audit or evaluation of education or child development programs, or for enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements of the program; provided the program maintains oversight with respect to the use, further disclosure, and maintenance of child records, such as through a written agreement, including the destruction of the PII when no longer needed for the purpose of the disclosure, except when the disclosure is specifically authorized by federal law or by the responsible HHS official;

- (3) Officials within the program, acting for the program, or from a federal or state entity, to conduct a study to improve child and family outcomes, including improving the quality of programs, for, or on behalf of, the program, provided the program maintains oversight with respect to the use, further disclosure, and maintenance of child records, such as through a written agreement, including the destruction of the PII when no longer needed for the purpose of the disclosure;
- (4) Appropriate parties in order to address a disaster, health or safety emergency during the period of the emergency, or a serious health and safety risk such as a serious food allergy, if the program determines that disclosing the PII from child records is necessary to protect the health or safety of children or other persons;
- (5) It is the practice of East Bay Community Action Program to disclose certain records pursuant to a subpoena only upon the execution of a release form permitting such disclosure or as required by court order. Notwithstanding this general practice, the Program is permitted to release personally identifiable information without parental consent in order to comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided the program makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent about all such subpoenas and court orders in advance of the compliance therewith, unless:
- (i) A court has ordered that neither the subpoena, its contents, nor the information provided in response be disclosed;
  - (ii) The disclosure is in compliance with an ex parte court order obtained by the United States Attorney General (or designee not lower than an Assistant Attorney General) concerning investigations or prosecutions of an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. 2332b(g)(5)(B) or an act of domestic or international terrorism as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2331.
  - (iii) A parent is a party to a court proceeding directly involving child abuse and neglect (as defined in section 3 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5101)) or dependency matters, and the order is issued in the context of that proceeding, additional notice to the parent by the program is not required; or,
  - (iv) A program initiates legal action against a parent or a parent initiates legal action against a program, then a program may disclose to the court, also without a court order or subpoena, the child records relevant for the program to act as plaintiff or defendant.
- (6) The Secretary of Agriculture or an authorized representative from the Food and Nutrition Service to conduct program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, if the results will be reported in an aggregate form that does not identify any individual: provided, that any data collected must be protected in a manner that will not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by other than the authorized representatives of the Secretary of Agriculture and any PII must be destroyed when the data are no longer needed for program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements;
- (7) A caseworker or other representative from a state, local, or tribal child welfare agency, who has the right to access a case plan for a child who is in foster care placement, when such agency is legally responsible for the child's care and protection, under state or tribal law, if the agency agrees in writing to protect PII, to use information from the child's case plan for specific purposes intended of addressing the child's needs, and to destroy information that is no longer needed for those purposes; and,
- (8) Appropriate parties in order to address suspected or known child maltreatment and is consistent with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws on reporting child abuse and neglect.
- (9) Other entities as permitted by applicable law or regulation.

In all circumstances, East Bay Community Action Head Start Program will only disclose the information that is deemed necessary for the purpose of the disclosure.

### **Parents/ Guardians right to review their own child’s record:**

In accordance with Head Start standards and Rhode Island Child Care Licensing Regulations. Parents/ Guardians have the right to review their child’s record. All children’s records are kept electronically on the Child Plus software system. If you would like to review your child’s record for any reason please contact your family advocate, home based visitor or education coordinator. Please allow 48 hours’ notice so we can make arrangements to have someone available to assist you. In some cases, some information may not be available. This could include information that is shared with us by another entity. In those cases, your family advocate, home visitor or education coordinator will provide the information for you to contact that person/ agency directly.

If requested, parents/guardians will be provided with copies of information in their child’s record that originated with our program or was provided to our program by or with parent/ guardian consent. Requests for copies must be in writing with a list of requested items. All copies will be provided to Parent / Guardians free of charge; please allow 48 hours for copies to be printed.

### **For More Information or To Report a Problem:**

If you have any questions, or feel your privacy rights have been violated, you can contact East Bay Community Action Program:

1. Talk to your Family Advocate to resolve.
2. Involve the Family Advocate Supervisor, if attempts to resolve with Family Advocate were unsuccessful;
3. Ask to meet with the Senior Director of Family Development, if attempts to resolve with supervisor were not successful;
4. Call the Vice President of Head Start if all attempts to resolve were unsuccessful.
5. Lastly, if all above steps did not resolve the issue, notify EBCAP’s CEO.

Or you may also contact: **Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Avenue S.W. Room 509F. HHS Building, Washington D.C. 20201**

There will be no retaliation on the part of East Bay Community Action Program for filing a complaint with an EBCAP representative or the Office for Civil Rights.

### **East Bay Community Action Head Start Program - Privacy Contact Information 2023-2024 Program Year**

- Director of Education: Heidi Nordman - 401-367-2001 X 2104
- Senior Director Family Development: Donna Ramos Razza - cell 401-662-9328
- Vice President of Head Start: Linda Laliberte - 401-437-0018 x 2103
- Health Services Director: Jessey Donaldson – 401-367-2001 x 2229
- Director of EC Systems Management: Lifen Zhong – 401-437-0018 x 2218

## **Family Development Component**

### **The Role of Family Advocates and Home-Based Visitors**

The role of family advocates and home-based visitors at Head Start and Early Head Start is to build a strong and trusting relationship with you and your family. Throughout your involvement with the program, you and your family advocate and/or home-based visitor will enter into a partnership to meet and work on specific goals that you choose. Home-based visitors will meet weekly with families enrolled in a home-based option to support parenting skills, child development, and access to community

resources. Whether you choose to explore job training, education, child development, resources in the community, or something that may be more appropriate for you and your family, your family advocate and/or home-based visitor will be there to assist you and offer you support and guidance. The most important thing is that you choose the goal that is best for you and your family.

Throughout the school year, your family advocate and/or home-based visitor will share additional information about special events and educational opportunities in our program. We will contact you as new information becomes available.

Most importantly, your family advocate and/or home-based visitor is available to assist you with any questions or concerns you may have regarding the Head Start/Early Head Start program, your child's participation, school readiness, community resources, or if you just need someone to talk to. Please do not hesitate to contact them or the Senior Director of Family Development if you need assistance.

### **Family Partnership Agreement Procedure**

1. I agree to develop a Family Partnership with my Family Advocate/Home Based Visitor through the process and completion of the Family Assessment, which is conducted twice per year, as well as goal setting and regularly scheduled home visits. Myself and my advocate/visitor will work to maintain an active, strength-based relationship for the duration of my family's time in the Head Start program.
2. I understand that the Family Assessment and the Partnership Agreement are designed to help my family advocate/home visitor support me in establishing goals for my child and family and to assist my family in accessing resources.
3. I understand that my family advocate / home visitor will take direction from me in the goal setting process and use an individualized approach in achieving goals.
4. I understand that my family advocate / home visitor will provide me with information on community services, parent involvement activities, parenting and child development, etc.
5. I agree to schedule home visits with my family advocate monthly or at a minimum quarterly. I agree to weekly home visits with my home-based visitor.
6. I agree to keep the program informed of any changes of information.
7. I understand that the Head Start program will keep information about me and my family confidential except for child abuse and neglect or knowledge of intention to harm myself or others.
8. I will be informed if we need to meet with representatives of other agencies.

### **Coordination of Care**

Teachers and family advocates work together in teams and meet monthly to discuss classroom strategies, care for individual children, and family goals. Our classroom teams are supported by representatives from our family development, education, special services, and health services departments, and are available to discuss concerns and identify program services which may include:

- recommended classroom interventions;
- referral for in-house observation;
- referral for mental health observation;
- modification of classroom hours or program options;
- referral for community support services;
- referral to Special Education (3-5) or Early Intervention (ages 0-3);
- referral to pediatrician; and/or
- schedule of team meetings with parents.

**Parents may always request a team meeting to discuss any concerns or needs of their child. A mutually convenient time and date can be arranged through their family advocate. We will request parental consent and a written release for referrals to programs and agencies outside EBCAP Head Start.**

Our program uses the Incredible Years Parenting program as our parenting curriculum. Our Family Advocates and Home Visitors are trained facilitators. They have been trained to run parenting groups using the Incredible Years Parenting curriculum. The parent groups meet weekly for 10 weeks to discuss ways to promote the social emotional development of their children as well as ways to respond to common misbehaviors. This group also offers parents the opportunity to share their experiences and support each other as they learn new ways to support their child's development.

Family Advocates and Home visitors can also meet with you individually in your home using the Incredible Years Home Coaching Curriculum model. This curriculum is available for Babies, Toddlers and Pre-school age children.

## **Behavioral Health Component**

EBCAP believes in nurturing the mental health of children and families. Good mental health for children means the development of trust, self-esteem, and a positive identity. Positive adult/child interactions foster and model these traits. Staff and parents can help children deal with anger, sadness, and frustration by comforting them, identifying and reflecting on their feelings, and providing them with words instead of acts of anger to solve problems and disputes.

### **Role of the Behavioral Health Team**

Site clinicians are responsible for coordinating behavioral health services and the partnerships with consultants and behavioral health providers. Clinicians work closely with the special services coordinator, education staff, health services staff, and family development staff to ensure coordination of services.

### **Social/Emotional Planning for Children**

To provide preventative and comprehensive behavioral health services to the children enrolled in the Head Start program, we complete a screening tool for social- emotional development (ASQ-SE) with the parent during the registration meeting. We use the results to plan for the child's adjustment to the program.

Our program requires education staff to utilize pro-active, preventative strategies when guiding children's social and emotional development. To further enhance social/emotional competence among children, families, and staff in our program, we implement The Incredible Years Teaching Strategies and Conscious Discipline in all of our classrooms. Our goal is to improve the overall functioning of our program by using a common language that reinforces positive behaviors consistently across the program. Classroom staff receive Incredible Years training and support to implement IY strategies in the classroom. Additionally, Head Start offers Incredible Years Parent classes on a yearly basis and provides referrals to other groups holding training within the community.

Children who require additional social/emotional support will be referred to the site Education Coordinator who will then review documentation and observe the child in the classroom setting. This observation may result in a range of recommendations such as specific classroom-wide changes or a written Classroom Support Plan that will be discussed in collaboration with the family. If the education team determines that a behavioral health referral is warranted, a referral can be made to the clinician assigned to the Head Start site. Clinicians offer behavioral health services to children and families enrolled in EBCAP Early Childhood Programs. Options for care can include classroom treatment plans and outpatient therapy. Out-of-agency referrals are also provided for a variety of social/emotional, developmental, diagnostic, and well-being needs.

EBCAP also offers *The Incredible Years Parenting Series training*. The Incredible Years Baby and Toddler programs are designed for use with parents of children ages 0-3 years. Incredible Years Preschool



Basic program is used with parents of children ages 3-6 years old. Family advocates and home visitors have been trained to facilitate curriculum groups where:

1. Parents are taught ways to use various strategies to help children regulate their emotions, improve their social skills, and do better academically.
2. Parents meet as a group with trained facilitators to develop new strategies for managing their children and working together in a collaborative partnerships. The parents are the experts in these groups, they know their children best. Facilitators use video scenes to encourage group discussion, problem-solving and sharing of ideas. Parents are given handouts and activities to practice with your children

***For more information about The Incredible Years Parenting Series please ask your family advocate.***

## Family Engagement

### Building Community

EBCAP Early Childhood Programs recognize that “children develop in the context of their family and culture, and that parents are respected as the primary educators and nurturers of their children” (Head Start Performance Standards). Family is determined individually and includes but is not limited to immediate and extended members who are involved in the care and education of the child. Family support of children’s development and education is continuous over time with changing roles as children mature.

EBCAP works in partnership with families and their communities using a multipronged approach to provide services which are sensitive to the diversity of families’ culture, language, gender, race, ethnic origin, disabilities, age, religious affiliation, socio-economic status, and/or sexual orientation. We recognize that children are impacted every day by the home they live in, all of the people who care for them, and their larger community. They become who they will become because of their daily interactions in each of these settings. Every family has strengths, preferences and needs that our program is ready to support and build upon. We work to engage families in meaningful ways which reinforce learning over multiple settings including the home, the classroom and the community.

### Partnership with Parents

Building partnerships with parents has always been a cornerstone of EBCAP Early Childhood Programs. Staff strive to work in partnership with all parents by:

- ***Supporting parents as their child’s primary educators, nurturers, and advocates.*** Children whose moms, dads, and other family members participate in school activities will generally have a more successful educational experience.
- ***Providing every parent with opportunities for a significant experience in our program.*** We will meet the expressed interests and needs of parents through family goal setting and work together to provide activities to meet these goals.
- ***Ensuring that parents are involved in making policy and program decisions for their Head Start/Early Head Start program.*** Parents can give their input regarding the program when they participate in Parent Committees and Policy Council meetings.
- ***Communicating with families.*** We want to stay connected with families: you will receive regular emails with important program or community information. Other ways we communicate with families are:
  - ⊖ Bloomz, a communication app that allows teachers and parents to communicate, post events, and classroom activities. The app can be downloaded to a phone or tablet and also accessed through their website, <http://app.bloomz.net>. Your child’s teacher will invite you to join their Bloomz classroom.
  - ⊖ Blackboard Connect is used to send robo calls and texts to alert families of unexpected program or classroom closures or delays, upcoming events or special activities, and to share important information. These call will go to your primary phone number. They can go to

additional numbers at your request.

- **Additional communication:** East Bay Community Action Program can be found on social media: Facebook, Instagram and YouTube. Please go online and like and subscribe or let your family advocate/home visitor know if you need help to access these social media.

### **Parent and Staff Orientation**

Before your child's first day in a classroom, we ask all parents to attend an orientation session with their children. For school year preschool (September to June enrollment), orientation is scheduled at the beginning of the school year. Orientation provides an opportunity for your child to meet the teacher and visit the classroom with you, a trusted adult.

At orientation, you will tour the facility, review and update information collected during registration, and review information in the *Parent and Volunteer Handbook* including important policies and procedures relevant to your participation in the program. Even if your family is returning for another year in our program, many policies are reviewed and revised each year and we strongly encourage families to participate in orientation each year. Returning families can even contribute feedback to other families about their experience in our program. Some of the things discussed at orientation are the specifics about your site, drop-off/pick-up procedure, attendance policy, program calendar, center telephone numbers and more.

This process ensures we have complete and up-to-date information needed to provide quality care to your child. The teacher and family advocate will keep in contact with you to provide feedback on your child's adjustment to the classroom.

### **Volunteer for EBCAP Early Childhood Services**

Our family engagement approach recognizes parents as your child's primary caregivers, and nurturer. We want to engage parents in their children's learning and development and support parent-child relationships, including specific strategies for father/male engagement and to provide parents with opportunities to participate either as employees or volunteers (HSPPS 1302.50 (b)(1)(4)).

Parents and staff need to work cooperatively on things such as home visits, making sure forms are filled out and signed, attending meetings, giving input into the program and advocating for children. We also hope that parents will see that their involvement is not only meaningful to their child, but that parent involvement can be fun!

Being a volunteer or joining one of our groups provides a great experience in a work or classroom environment. Volunteering looks great on a resume and can be helpful when job searching! In fact, many employees in our program are past or current Head Start and Early Head Start parents who began by volunteering!

**Our policy for volunteers:** EBCAP Early Childhood Programs actively recruit parents and community volunteers to assist program staff to create a high quality, safe, and nurturing environment for our children and families. *Volunteers are never left alone with children or counted in the required classroom ratio; staff are always present to supervise.*

To become a volunteer, please make an appointment with our Family Engagement Specialist to determine which volunteer level best suits you and what paperwork is required.

**The following are ways that you can get involved! We hope that you can spend some time with the children and staff by becoming a volunteer!**

**Parent Groups:** these are groups that encourage parent involvement through positive role modeling, parent-child activities, discussion, and planning.

- **FAMILY LEADERSHIP POLICY COUNCIL TEAM:** a group of Head Start parents and community members and staff who have the general responsibility to help develop and approve policies for the program. The Family Leadership Policy Council representatives are parents nominated and elected from each site. Parents can nominate themselves if interested or be nominated by another parent or by a staff member. An elected parent member leads the meeting. The Family Leadership PC Team works with the EBCAP Board of Directors using a shared governance approach. Even if you are not elected as the representative. Family Leadership Teams are open for all parents and guardians to attend.
- **HEAD START TALKS** are online Zoom parent meetings held on a regular basis (usually monthly). Parents from any site and home based can join the Zoom link to participate in group discussion, hear from guest speakers, receive program updates from staff and ask questions and/or discuss concerns. If you have ideas for a Head Start Talks, please contact your Family Advocate or the Family Engagement Specialist.
- **PARENT MEET & GREETINGS-MORNING MINGLES** are once a month in-person opportunities to grab information, or even meet people from the program or from the community. Stop and have coffee or juice and talk to staff. Some sites may have a more formal parent meeting. During these times, parents can discuss and plan site specific activities and receive site specific updates from teachers and site staff.
- **HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE (HSAC):** The HSAC is required by Head Start Program Performance Standards. The HSAC consists of parents, staff, local physicians and dentists, nurses, state health department representatives, and other community providers who care about high quality programming for young children. The committee meets 3 times a year to review, discuss, and make recommendations on our health and nutrition policies.
- **READING IS FUN-DAMENTAL VOLUNTEER:** Parents, staff, and members of the community are needed to help organize book distribution activities and to read to children in the classrooms. This can be done virtually over Zoom as well.

**Contact your Family Advocate, Home Visitor, Teacher or the Family Engagement Specialist if you are interested in learning more about getting involved in one or more of these groups.**

**Additional opportunities for parents and community members to be involved as volunteers:** reading or assisting in the classroom; helping in the kitchen, administration or health offices; planning/carrying out a parent activity; or being a guest speaker (see below). We also welcome parents on site specific field trips and family outings held periodically throughout the year.

### **Classroom Volunteers**

**Duties/Goal:** To assist the teachers or primary caregivers in providing learning experiences for children that will enhance their social, intellectual, physical, and emotional development.

**Responsibilities:** Report to teacher/primary caregiver. To be a classroom volunteer, you must have the ability to:

- Assist children in developing self-help skills.
- Assist in classroom set-up (set tables, mix paints, fill water table, etc.).
- Assist and participate in all classroom activities.
- Other responsibilities include the willingness to share ideas to enhance classroom curriculum and the willingness to communicate problems, resource needs, etc. to the teacher.

**START A CAREER IN HEAD START:** If you are interested in becoming a member of Head Start staff, you may be able to qualify for a paid position as a substitute for the classroom or kitchen (where applicable). Employees of EBCAP must be at least 18 years old and submit to Fingerprint, Department of Children, Youth and Families Services Child Abuse and Neglect Tracker and Sex Offense background checks.

Do you have an idea or ideas that might make our program even better? Please feel free to call any of our Leadership team members:

1. Linda Laliberte, Vice President at 401.437.0018 ex. 2103
2. Donna Razza Ramos, Senior Director of Family Development at 401.662.9328
3. Heidi Nordmann, Director of Education at 401.367.2001 x 2204
4. Lifen Zhong, Director of EC Management Systems at 401.367.2001 x 2218
5. Jessica Donaldson, Director of Health Services, 401-367-2001 x 2229 or 401-430-5066

Parents will be asked to complete a program evaluation at the end of each school year. Please answer all questions honestly so we can plan for the following school year and continue to make improvements to our program.

# Key Staff Directory

(\*) Habla Español

Early Childhood Services staff			367-2001
Vice President of Head Start	Linda Laliberte	Cell phone – 568-2791	2103
Director of Education	Heidi Nordmann	Cell phone – 644-5668	2204
Director of Early Childhood Systems	Lifen Zhong	Cell phone – 408-9449	2218
Director of Health Services	Jessica Donaldson	Cell phone – 430-5066	2229
Senior Director of Family Development	Donna Ramos Razza	Cell phone – 662-9328	2001
Family & Community Engagement Specialist	Dianne Farrar		2207
Administrative Support Manager	Marilyn García(*)		2505
ERSEA Specialist	Melanie Furtado		2206
ERSEA Specialist	Jazmine Price		2117
Education & Training Coordinator - MVQ	Beni Arroyo		2413
Special Services Coordinator	Deborah Newell		2251
Education Coordinator - Chafee	Carolyn Gizzi		2281
Education Coordinator - Chafee	Kelly Monson		2280
Education Coordinator – Chafee & Middletown	Marie Van Velzer		2503
Education Coordinator - Willett	Craig Turcotte		2120
Education Coordinator – Turner & Tiverton	Diane Riva		2002
Health Services Specialist	Shaneis Algoo	Cell phone – 585-4943	2104
Health Services Assistant	Kaori Oneil		2270
Office Assistant - Chafee	Kaila Matteson		2201
Office Assistant - Turner	Yesenia Beco (*)		2000
Office Assistant - Willett	Benjamin Sunoskie		2100
Office Assistant - MVQ	Tami Cavaliere		2400
Lead Family Advocate	Barbara Warren		2209
Lead Family Advocate	Cheryl Schofield		2405
Family Advocate	Nancy Llamas (*)		2202
Family Advocate	Joyce Sims (*)		2212
Family Advocate	Velvida Currens		2017
Family Advocate	Tiffany Bator		2111
Family Advocate	Catherine Tyler		2411
Home Based Supervisor	Jessica Parylak		2221
Home Visitor	Caitlin Crum		2224
Home Visitor	Spencer Hardy		1538
Home Visitor	Aubrie Messenger		1545
Kids Connect Clinician Supervisor	Jillian McLeish		1221
Kids Connect Clinician	Clare Garcia		2220
Billing Specialist	Susan Costa		1149

All of the above extensions can be dialed from the main number or any of the Head Start numbers, and are points of contact and/or for voice mail messages. Managerial staff can be available at all sites.

## Head Start and Child Care Programs - Classrooms Sites

### Newport Center:

**8 John H. Chafee Boulevard, Newport, RI 02840 / Phone (401) 367-2001 / Fax # (401) 367-2009**

- Hours of operation: 7:30 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.
- Head Start & EHS School day Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Pre-K School Hours: 8:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Head Start & Pre-K Before School Childcare – Hours: 7:30 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.
- Head Start & Pre-K After School Childcare – Hours: 2:30 p.m. – 4:45 p.m.
- 1 Head Start Home-Based group

### Willett Center

**386 Willett Avenue, Riverside, RI 02915 / Phone (401) 437-0018 / Fax # (401) 433-5259**

- Hours of operation: 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Head Start & EHS School day Hours: 8:45 a.m. – 2:45 p.m.
- Head Start Before School Childcare – Hours 7:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
- Head Start After School Childcare – Hours 2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

### Mary V. Quirk Center

**790 Main Street, Warren, RI 02885 / Phone (401) 245-2833 / Fax # (401) 245-5430**

- Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Head Start & Pre-K School Year Classrooms - Hours: 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
- Early Head Start Home-Based group

### Turner Center

**70 Turner Avenue, Riverside, RI 02915 / Phone (401) 649-4233 / Fax # (401) 649-4247**

- Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- Head Start & Pre-K School Year Classrooms - Hours: 8:15 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

### Tiverton Center

**1048 Stafford Road, Tiverton, RI 02878 / Phone (401) 624-4736 / Fax # (401) 624-3665**

- Head Start School Year Classroom - Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### Broadway Family Center

**19 Broadway, Newport, RI 02840 / Phone (401) 847-7821**

- Early Head Start Home-Based groups

### Aquidneck Elementary School

**70 Reservoir Road, Middletown, RI 02842 / Phone (401) 601-0588**

- Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Head Start School Year Classroom – Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

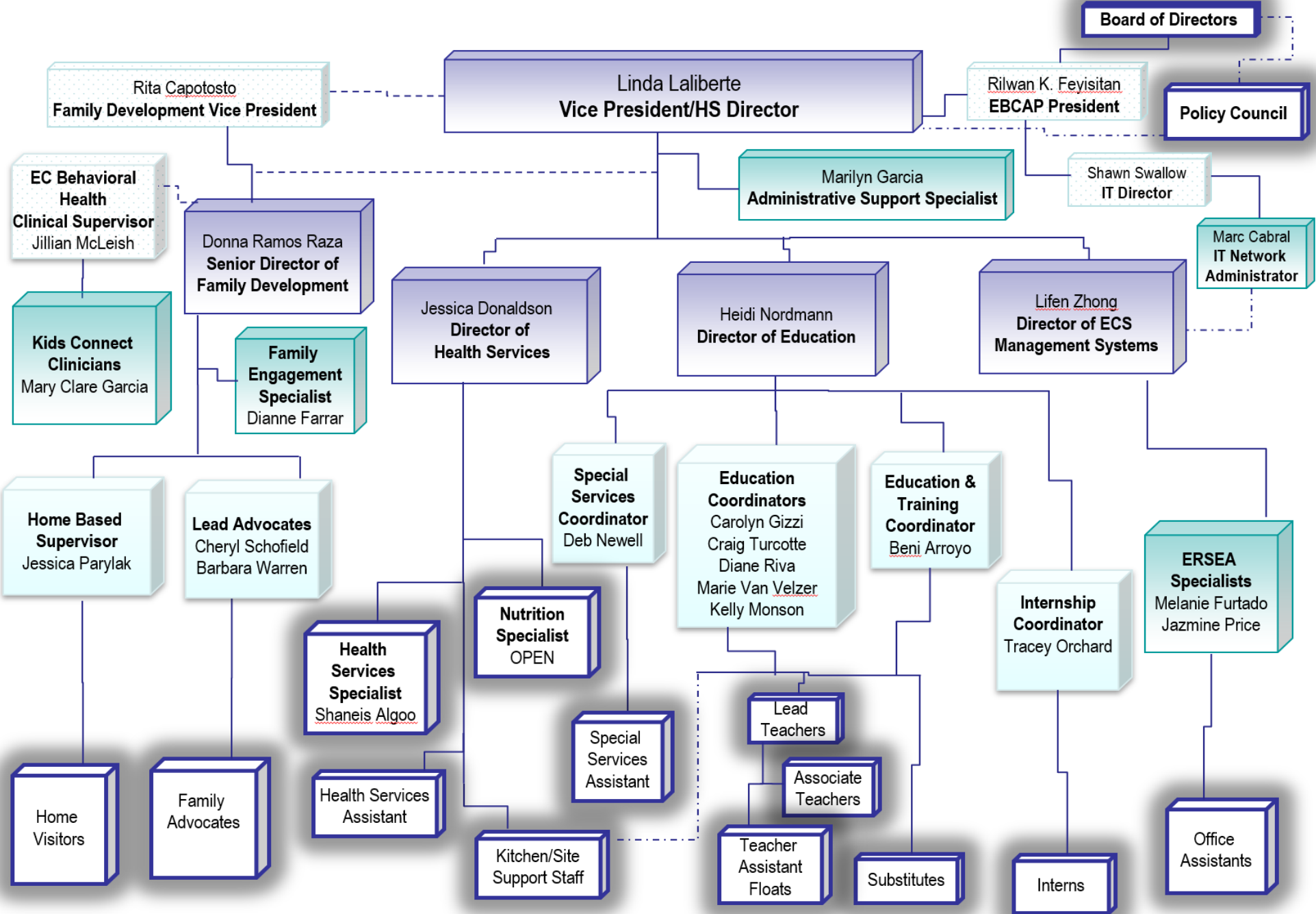
### Forest Avenue Elementary School

**315 Forest Avenue, Middletown, RI 02842 / Phone (401) 864-9839**

- Hours of operation: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- Head Start School Year Classroom – Hours: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**\*\*\*Hours are subject to change and parents will be notified in advanced.**

# EBCAP Head Start Organizational Chart



# CACFP – Building for the Future

## *Building for the Future*

This day care facility participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a Federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children receiving day care.

Each day more than 2.6 million children participate in CACFP at day care homes and centers across the country. Providers are reimbursed for serving nutritious meals that meet USDA requirements. The program plays a vital role in improving the quality of day care and making it more affordable for low-income families.

**Meals** CACFP homes and centers follow meal requirements established by USDA.

Breakfast	Lunch or Supper	Snacks (Two of the five groups: )
Milk	Milk	Milk
Fruit or Vegetable	Meat or meat alternate	Meat or meat alternate
Grains	Grains	Grains
	Fruit	Fruit
	Vegetable	Vegetable

**Participating Facilities** Many different homes and centers operate CACFP and share the common goal of bringing nutritious meals and snacks to participants. Participating facilities include:

- **Child Care Centers:** Licensed or approved public or private nonprofit child care centers, Head Start programs, and some for-profit centers.
- **Family Day Care Homes:** Licensed or approved private homes.
- **Afterschool Care Programs:** Centers in low-income areas provide free snacks to school-age children and youth.
- **Homeless Shelters:** Emergency shelters provide food services to homeless children.

**Eligibility** State agencies reimburse facilities that offer non-residential day care to the following children:

- Children age 12 and under
- Migrant children age 15 and younger, and
- Youths through age 18 in afterschool care programs in needy areas

**Contact Information** If you have questions about CACFP, please contact one of the following:

East Bay Community Action Program Head Start  
 8 John H. Chafee Boulevard  
 Newport, RI 02840  
 (401) 367-2001

Child Nutrition Programs  
 RI Department of Education  
 255 Westminster Street  
 Providence, RI 02903  
 (401) 222-4600

**USDA 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: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



## Addendum

### EBCAP Head Start and PreK Updated COVID-19 Policy For Center-Based Programs Effective August 2, 2023

**Masking:** Masks are only required in EBCAP Centers in the situations listed below. Masking is not recommended for children under age 2 at any time.

- If the area that EBCAP serves is at a high CDC COVID-19 Hospital Admissions Level, EBCAP will notify staff and families that masks are required.
- If a classroom has been exposed to someone with COVID-19, everyone ages 2+ in the classroom must wear a mask for 10 days following the exposure. EBCAP will notify staff and families as quickly as possible via robocall/robotext and email when a classroom exposure has occurred.
- If a person returns from isolation on day 6 after testing positive for COVID-19, they must continue to wear a mask until day 10.
- During an outbreak, RIDOH may require everyone ages 2+ to wear masks for a period of time. We will notify you immediately if this happens.
- If you have people in your household who are at high risk for getting very sick with COVID-19, CDC and RIDOH recommend wearing a mask during medium and high CDC COVID-19 Hospital Admissions Levels. [Here](#) is information from the CDC about factors that affect your personal risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. If you would like your child to wear a mask, please contact a member of EBCAP staff, and we will do our best to support them in wearing the mask while they are at the center.

**Exclusion:** EBCAP will exclude children who present with any two symptoms of COVID-19. Children will be excluded for one underlined symptom, but testing will only be required if a second symptom is present. If a child needs to be excluded, staff will contact the family and ask them to pick up the child as soon as possible. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Chills
- New cough with persistent coughing
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion
- Runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting two times within 24 hours
- Diarrhea three times within 8 hours

**Testing for Children with Symptoms of COVID-19:** During the 2022-2023 school year, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) announced that at-home rapid antigen tests can be used in people of all ages, including children under age 2. When a child develops two symptoms of COVID-19 and is excluded from the center, parents have the following options for testing/diagnosis. EBCAP will notify families of the testing/diagnosis options via telephone and email after they report their child's symptoms.

- **Two At-Home Rapid Antigen Tests:** Do one at-home rapid antigen test the day the child develops symptoms and notify the center of the result. If the child's first test is negative, wait one full day, do a second at-home rapid antigen test the next morning, and then notify the center of the result. If both at-home rapid antigen tests are negative, the child can return on the day of the second test as long as they are fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully.
  - **Example:** If a child is excluded or parents choose to keep a child home with symptoms on a Tuesday, parents test the child using one at-home rapid antigen test on Tuesday. If the test result is negative, parents test the child with a second at-home rapid antigen test on Thursday morning. If both test results are negative, the child can return on Thursday as long as they are fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully.
- **Doctor's Visit:** Bring the child to the pediatrician for an in-person exam and ask the pediatrician to provide a doctor's note stating when the child can safely return to the center. The child can return on the day that the doctor clears them as long as they are fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully.
- **No Testing/Diagnosis:** Keep the child at home for 5 days from when symptoms developed and return on day 6 as long as they are fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully. Children ages 2+ returning before day 10 must wear a mask indoors until day 10. Health Services staff will provide the return date to parents who choose this option.

**Isolation:** If a child tests positive for COVID-19, the child isolates for 5 days and returns on day 6 as long as they are fever free for 24 hours without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully. Children ages 2+ returning before day 10 must wear a mask indoors until day 10. EBCAP will notify families of their child's isolation and mask-wearing timeline via telephone and/or email (based on family preference) after they report their child's positive test result.

**Classroom Exposure to COVID-19:** When a person in a classroom tests positive for COVID-19 and was present during their contagious period, EBCAP will notify staff and families of the classroom exposure and the monitoring and mask-wearing timeline for the classroom as quickly as possible by robocall/robotext and email. Children can continue attending school as long as they do not have any symptoms of COVID-19. In this instance, families must:

- Monitor children for symptoms of COVID-19 for 10 days after the exposure, and keep them home if the child develops any symptoms.

- If the child develops symptoms, follow the section above for testing/diagnosis of children with symptoms of COVID-19.
- All children ages 2+ must wear a mask while indoors through day 10.
- The classroom may be closed if staffing is unavailable.

**Symptomatic Household Member:** If someone in a child's household has symptoms of COVID-19, the child can continue coming to school as long as the child does not have any symptoms. Someone who does not have symptoms of COVID-19 must be available for drop off and pick up. If the household member tests positive for COVID-19, then the child should follow the monitoring, mask-wearing and testing information below.

**Monitoring, Mask-Wearing, and Testing for Household Exposure:** If someone in a child's household tests positive for COVID-19, the child can continue attending school as long as they do not have any symptoms of COVID-19. EBCAP will notify families of their child's monitoring and mask-wearing timeline and any other requirements to continue attending school via telephone and/or email (based on family preference) after they report the household member's positive test result. Families must do the following:

- Monitor the child for symptoms of COVID-19 for 15 days after the person tests positive for COVID-19, and keep them home if the child develops any symptoms.
- If the child develops symptoms, follow the section above for testing/diagnosis of children with symptoms of COVID-19.
- Have their child wear a mask indoors at the center until day 15 from when the person with COVID-19 tested positive.
- Identify a responsible adult who has not tested positive for COVID-19 and has no symptoms of COVID-19 who can drop-off and pick-up the child each day. This person must wear a mask at all times while indoors at the center.

**COVID-19 Vaccination:**

- All EBCAP Head Start staff are strongly encouraged to remain up to date on COVID-19 vaccination, including all recommended boosters. EBCAP Head Start staff are not required to receive the primary series of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Families are also encouraged to have their children vaccinated for COVID-19. If families choose to vaccinate their children for COVID-19, documentation of vaccination should be submitted to the Health Services Team for inclusion in the child's file.

Approved by Policy Council: 8.1.2023

**EBCAP Head Start Updated COVID-19 Policy  
For Home-Based Programs  
Effective August 2, 2023**

**Masking:** Masks are only required during Head Start Home-Based Visits in the situations listed below. Masking is not recommended for children under age 2 at any time.

- If the area that EBCAP serves is at a high CDC COVID-19 Hospital Admissions Level, EBCAP will notify staff and families that masks are required.
- If anyone involved in the visit is leaving isolation on day 6 after testing positive, they must wear a mask during any home visits until day 10.
- If children and families are unwilling to wear masks under the above circumstances, the home visit will be cancelled or held virtually.
- If you have people in your household who are at high risk for getting very sick with COVID-19, CDC and RIDOH recommend wearing a mask during medium and high CDC COVID-19 Hospital Admissions Levels. [Here](#) is information from the CDC about factors that affect your personal risk of getting very sick with from COVID-19.

**Exclusion:** EBCAP will not hold in-person home visits if children, household members, or EBCAP staff present with any two symptoms of COVID-19. Home visits will not be held in person if children, household members, or EBCAP staff have one underlined symptom, but testing will only be required if a second symptom is present. If families are interested, home visits may be held virtually. Symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Chills
- New cough with persistent coughing
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell
- Congestion
- Runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting two times within 24 hours
- Diarrhea three times within 8 hours

**Testing for Children and Household Members with Symptoms of COVID-19:** During the 2022-2023 school year, the Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) recently announced that at-home rapid antigen tests can be used in people of all ages, including children under age 2. When a child, family member, or EBCAP staff develops symptoms of COVID-19 and is excluded from having an in-person home visit, the person with symptoms has the following options for testing/diagnosis. EBCAP will notify families of the

testing/diagnosis options via telephone and email after they report their child's symptoms. During the isolation and testing period, home visits can be held virtually.

- **Two At-Home Rapid Antigen Tests:** Do one at-home rapid antigen test the day the child or family member develops symptoms and notify the home visitor of the result. If the child's or family member's first test is negative, wait one full day, do a second at-home rapid antigen test the next morning, and then notify the home visitor of the result. If both at-home rapid antigen tests are negative, the child can resume home visits on the day of the second test as long as they are fever free without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully.
  - **Example:** If a child or family member has symptoms requiring exclusion on a Tuesday, parents test the child using one at-home rapid antigen test on Tuesday. If the test result is negative, parents test the child with a second at-home rapid antigen test on Thursday morning. If both test results are negative, the child can resume home visits on Thursday as long as they are fever free without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully.
- **Doctor's Visit:** Bring the child to the pediatrician for an in-person exam and ask the pediatrician to provide a doctor's note stating when the child can safely resume home visits.
- **No Testing/Diagnosis:** Pause home visits for 5 days from when symptoms developed and resume on day 6 as long as they are fever free without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully. Everyone ages 2+ participating in a visit before day 10 must wear a mask indoors. Health Services staff will provide the date for resuming visits to parents who choose this option.

**Isolation and Testing for Positive Household Members:** If a child or family member tests positive for COVID-19, the person who tested positive isolates for 5 days and can resume home visits on day 6 as long as they are fever free without using fever-reducing medications and they feel well enough to participate fully in the visit. To resume visits, no one else in the household can have any symptoms of COVID-19. If anyone else develops symptoms of COVID-19, they would need to follow the testing/diagnosis for people with symptoms of COVID-19. Everyone participating in the visit ages 2+ must wear a mask indoors until day 15. EBCAP will notify families of their child's isolation and mask-wearing timeline via telephone and/or email (based on family preference) after they report their child's positive test result. During the isolation and testing period, home visits can be held virtually.

#### **COVID-19 Vaccination:**

- All EBCAP Head Start staff are strongly encouraged to remain up to date on COVID-19 vaccination, including all recommended boosters. EBCAP Head Start staff are not required to receive the primary series of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- Families are also encouraged to have their children vaccinated for COVID-19. If families choose to vaccinate their children for COVID-19, documentation of vaccination should be submitted to the Health Services Team for inclusion in the child's file.