

SIU CARBONDALE
HEAD START

2024-2025



Parent
Handbook

**“Educating Children, Empowering Families, Strengthening
Communities.”**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WELCOME FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	1
SCHOOL SCHEDULE.....	2
I. PROGRAM INFORMATION.....	3
1. Overview	3
2. Centers	3
3. Class Types.....	3
II. CHILD AND FAMILY RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION	4
1. Confidentiality.....	4
2. Review or Copy Records	4
3. Transfer of Records	4
4. Certified Birth Certificate	4
5. Requesting a Transfer	5
6. Annual Enrollment Update	5
7. Change in Information.....	5
8. Court Orders and Custody	5
9. Registered Sex Offenders	5
III. ATTENDANCE.....	6
1. Attendance Policy.....	6
2. Attendance Follow Up.....	6
3. Attendance Success Plan	6-7
4. Long-Term Absences with No Contact	7
IV. DROP OFF AND PICK UP.....	7
1. Sign in and Out.....	7
2. Impaired Person Policy	8
3. Late Pick Up	8
V. FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES.....	8
1. Types of Services	8-9
2. Family Goal Setting and Documentation.....	9
3. Parent Curriculum.....	10
VI. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT	10
1. PCFE Framework	10
2. Importance of Engagement.....	10-11
3. How to be Involved.....	11
4. Parent Committee Meetings.....	11
5. Father and Father-Figure engagement	12
6. Policy Council.....	12-13
7. Health Services Advisory Council.....	13
8. Pyramid Model Leadership Team.....	13
9. Employment Opportunitites	13
10. In-Kind.....	14
11. Siblings	14
12. Parent Code of Conduct.....	14

VII. VOLUNTEERING.....	15
1. Importance of Volunteers	15
2. All Volunteer Requirements	15
3. Regular Volunteer Requirements.....	15
4. Volunteer Recognition	15
5. Ethics and Standards.....	15
VIII. HEALTH.....	16
1. Health Requirements	16
2. Medication at School	17
3. Follow Up	17
4. Medical Conditions.....	17
5. Illness	17-18
6. Communicable Diseases	18
7. Hygiene	18
8. Hearing and Vision Screening	18-19
9. Height and Weight Assessment	19
10. Toothbrushing.....	19
11. 90-Day Dental Exams.....	19
IX. SAFETY	20
1. Drug Free Environment	20
2. Weapons	20
3. Child Abuse and Neglect.....	20
4. Accidents and Injuries	20
5. Emergency Closing.....	21
X. FACILITIES	21
1. Pest Management.....	21
2. Video Surveillance.....	21-22
3. Buzzer System	22
XI. TRANSPORTATION	22
1. Bus Services	22
2. Bus Rules	22-23
3. Danger Zone	23
XII. CLASSROOM INFORMATION AND EXPECTATIONS.....	24
1. The Learning Environment.....	24
2. General Daily Schedules.....	24
3. What to Bring and Not to Bring.....	25
4. School Readiness Goals.....	25
5. School Readiness Skills.....	26
6. Curriculum.....	26
7. Outcomes	26
8. Learning Framework.....	27
9. Home Visits and Parent Teacher Conferences	27
10. Field Trips.....	28

XIII. MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITY SERVICES	28
1. Social-Emotional Development.....	28
2. Child Guidance Policy	29
3. Behavior Incident Reports	30
4. Persistent Challenging Behavior.....	30
5. Developmental Screenings	31
6. Disabilities	31
7. Mental Health	31
XIV. COMMUNICATION	31
1. Newsletters.....	31
2. ClassTag.....	32
3. School Messenger	32
4. Text Messages.....	32
5. Child Backpack.....	32
6. Respectful Communication.....	32
XV. NUTRITION.....	33
1. Daily Meals and Snacks	33
2. Family Style Meals	33
3. WIC Program.....	33
4. Lead	33
5. Treat and Snack Approvals.....	34

RESOURCES TAB

Attendance	R-1
Role of the Community Worker	R-2
Your Journey Together Parent Curriculum	R-3
Parent Leadership Opportunities	R-4
Understanding Child Illness.....	R-5
School Readiness Skills	R-6
Developmental Milestones for Three-Year-Old Children.....	R-7
Developmental Milestones for Four-Year-Old Children.....	R-8
Developmental Milestones for Five-Year-Old Children	R-9
Understanding the Pyramid Model.....	R-10
Setting Up ClassTag	R-11
CACFP Building for the Future.....	R-12
Applying for Child Care Subsidy	R-13
Poison Safety	R-14

FORMS TAB

Attendance Success Plan	F-1
Emergency Data Form	F-2
Late Pick Up Policy	F-3
In-Kind Documentation	F-4
Parent/Community Complaint Form	F-5
Parent Code of Conduct.....	F-6
Transportation Agreement	F-7
Transportation Change Request.....	F-8
Child Guidance Policy	F-9
Behavior Incident Report	F-10
Treat and Snack Form.....	F-11

WELCOME...

... to SIU Carbondale Head Start. I am pleased and excited about having your family in our program! This Parent Handbook has been designed to provide Head Start families with information about the program's services, policies, and procedures. It should serve as your guidebook throughout the year and contains many resources. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the program and use this booklet as an easy reference throughout the year.

SIU Carbondale Head Start is operated by Southern Illinois University at Carbondale through a federal grant. The program serves 290 children three to five years of age throughout Jackson and Williamson Counties. Head Start provides a comprehensive program that offers children and families activities and services that help them grow cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically as they prepare for kindergarten and beyond. Head Start takes a developmental approach to early childhood education in an environment which allows children to explore, discover, and play.

School readiness is a primary focus of the Head Start program. Head Start works with parents, staff, and local public schools to determine school readiness tasks for children to work on while enrolled at Head Start. This prepares children to make a successful transition to kindergarten and for later learning. The classroom curriculum is designed to support the program's school readiness goals.

Throughout this resource when we refer to "parents," this means biological parents, legal guardians, grandparents raising children, and other adults who are important in raising and caring for Head Start children. Research shows that children are more likely to succeed in school and life when parents are involved in their education. As parents, you are the first and most important teachers of your children. I encourage you to participate fully in our program. There are many opportunities for you to become involved in classroom activities, participate in center programs, as well as to become involved in the decision making of program planning and operations. I am hopeful that your experiences in Head Start will assist you in meeting the needs of your child and strengthening your family. The Head Start staff looks forward to working with you and your child throughout the year!



Dr. Lea Maue
SIU Carbondale Head Start Program Director

**SIU CARBONDALE HEAD START
Program Year 2024-25
School Year Schedule**

August 16, 2024	Center Staff Return
August 19-20, 2024	Pre-Service
August 21, 2024	Open House (11 am and 5 pm)
August 22-23, 2024	Home Visits
August 26, 2024	<u>Children's First Day</u>
September 2, 2024	Labor Day Holiday, No School
October 11-14, 2024	Staff Training Days, No School
November 11, 2024	Veterans Day Holiday, No School
November 25, 2024	Parent-Teacher Conferences, No School
November 26-27, 2024	Staff Training Days, No School
November 28-29, 2024	Thanksgiving Holiday, No School
December 23-31, 2024	Holiday/Administrative Closure, No School
January 1, 2025	New Year's Holiday, No School
January 2-3, 2025	Staff In-Service Training Days, No School
January 6, 2025	<u>Children Return to School</u>
January 20, 2025	Martin Luther King Holiday, No School
February 17, 2025	Parent-Teacher Conferences, No School
March 10-14, 2025	Spring Break, No School
April 19 and 21, 2025	Home Visits, No School
May 14, 2025	<u>Children's Last Day</u>
May 15, 2025	Center Staff Last Day

I. PROGRAM INFORMATION

1. Overview

Head Start is a federally funded pre-K program serving three- to five-year-old children and their families. Head Start provides high-quality care for enrolled children from experienced and credentialed teaching staff. Children and families receive comprehensive services that are intended to increase the well-being and success of the entire family. These include:

- A. **Comprehensive program:** In addition to pre-k education, the program provides services for the family including support, goal setting, education, and leadership opportunities.
- B. **School readiness:** We prepare children to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.
- C. **Parent involvement:** Parents are the first and most important teachers of children.
- D. **Physical, Dental, and Mental Health Support:** The program provides screenings, education, and direct services to support the overall health of children and families.
- E. **Nutrition:** Children are served meals and snacks to meet a portion of their daily nutritional needs.

2. Centers

SIU Carbondale Head Start is funded to serve 337 children through center-based classes that operate Monday through Friday at one of the program's four sites in Jackson and Williamson counties:

CENTER	ADDRESS	PHONE	FAX
Carbondale	1900 N. Illinois Avenue Carbondale, IL 62901	618-453-2440	618 453-5399
John A. Logan	700 Logan College Drive, D270 Carterville, IL 62918	618-985-2828, ext. 8241	
Marion	907 N. Vicksburg Street Marion, IL 62959	618-997-4255	618-997-8144
Murphysboro	593 Ava Road (McElvain School) Murphysboro, IL 62966	618-967-2118	618-565-1087
Administration	1906 N. Illinois Ave. Carbondale, IL 62901	618-453-6448	618-453-3888

3. Class Types

For the 2024-2025 program year, the following class types are available:

- A. Half-Day Morning Sessions: 8:00 am–11:30 am (Carbondale and Murphysboro only)
- B. Half-Day Afternoon Sessions: 12:30 pm–4:00 pm (Carbondale and Murphysboro only)
- C. Full-Day Session: 8:00 am–4:00 pm (all locations)

Full day sessions are prioritized for working parents, full-time students, and families with other documented needs indicating a full-day placement.

II. CHILD AND FAMILY RECORDS AND DOCUMENTATION

1. Confidentiality

All family information and children's files are kept strictly confidential. Only authorized Head Start personnel have access to files. Head Start is obligated to receive written consent from parents prior to sharing information with any other person or agency.



2. Review or Copy of Records

Parents and legal guardians who wish to review or obtain copies of their child's file should contact the Center Director to make the request and complete necessary paperwork. All requests to review the child's file will be processed within 72 hours. If a parent believes that information contained in their child's file is incorrect or misleading, an amendment of the child's record may be requested. All requests to copy the child's file will be processed within two (2) weeks.

3. Transfer of Records

To assist with entry into kindergarten, records will be provided to parents of all enrolled children as they transition out of Head Start into kindergarten. At enrollment, parents sign a release giving the program permission to share information/records with their corresponding school districts. The terms of this release may be terminated by written notification. Head Start will release records to other schools or educational agencies that have requested records if a written consent form signed by the parent/guardian is attached to the request.

4. Certified Birth Certificate

A certified birth certificate is not required to enroll a child in Head start. However, Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Licensing Standards for Daycare Centers requires a certified birth certificate be provided within 30 days of enrollment into a licensed childcare facility. Other forms of acceptable identification include a passport or visa along with an affidavit or notarized letter explaining why a certified birth certificate cannot be produced.

The program is required by law to notify the Illinois State Police or local law enforcement agency if the proof of identity is not submitted within the 30-day time frame. Parents will be notified in writing when Illinois State Police or local authorities have been contacted and will be advised that they have an additional 10 days to comply by submitting the required documentation. Parents who need a certified birth certificate should contact the County Clerk's office in the county in which the child was born.

Jackson County Clerk	618-687-7360
Williamson County Clerk	618-997-1301

5. Requesting a Transfer

Parents may contact the Center Director or Community Worker to request a transfer to a different classroom or center. All requests must be made in writing and include why the transfer is being requested. Not all requests can be honored due to ratio and placement concerns. Parents will be notified in writing within one (1) week if the transfer is approved.

6. Annual Enrollment Updates

Once your child is enrolled in SIUC Head Start and attending through the end of their first school year, they are automatically eligible to continue attending the following year. Center staff will contact you in the spring to confirm whether your child will be returning the following school year. If your child is going into their third year with Head Start, eligibility will need to be re-determined.

7. Change in Information

Whenever there is a change in address, phone, emergency contacts, health providers, health conditions, work/school schedule, family situation, or other pertinent information, we ask that this information be submitted, **in writing**, as soon as the change occurs. **It is essential that we can always reach you or a designated adult in case of an emergency situation. Keep your addresses and phone numbers up to date.** It is also important for staff to be aware of any household changes or transitions your child may be experiencing. This will enable staff to be supportive, empathetic, and understanding of your child's individual needs.

8. Court Orders and Custody

State law maintains that both biological parents have access to their child unless there are legal documents which define the restrictions. In situations involving child custody disputes or restraining orders, a copy of the court order **MUST** be in the child's file. The program cannot legally prohibit contact with either biological parent without current court orders.

9. Registered Sex Offenders

Registered sex offenders are not permitted to enter or loiter within 500 feet of any Head Start center. Biological parents of enrolled children who are registered sex offenders may enter a center only to conduct business related to the education of their child and are not permitted into the classroom when children are present. Children will not be released to any person listed as a registered sex offender, other than to biological parents with legal custody. All persons listed on the Emergency Data Form must be cleared through the Registered Sex Offender Registry. If someone on the Emergency Data Form has a common name, center staff will contact you for more information.

III. ATTENDANCE

SCHOOL SUCCESS GOES HAND IN HAND WITH ATTENDANCE

1. Too many absences in preschool can cause children to start school behind their peers.
2. Students fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
3. Absences affect the whole classroom, not just one child.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

1. Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
2. Lay out clothes and pack backpack the night before.
3. Make sure you review the school calendar regularly.
4. Don't let your child stay home unless they are truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomachache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
5. If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to your Teacher or Community Worker for advice on how to make them feel more comfortable.

1. Attendance Policy

Regular attendance at Head Start supports your child's development and future school success. See Resources tab, page 1 for information about the importance of regular, on-time attendance. A letter will be sent quarterly showing your child's ADA percentage. Children who attend school regularly and on-time have been shown to have better academic outcomes and opportunities. See *Resources tab, page 1* for more information about the benefits of regular attendance.

All children are expected to be in their classroom each school day by their classroom's start time. Classes are held five (5) days a week, Monday through Friday. Families are expected to notify staff if their child will arrive late or be picked up early.

2. Daily Attendance and Absentee Follow-Up

If your child is going to be absent for any reason, you must call, text, ClassTag message, or send a note to the center within one (1) hour of the beginning of class to inform staff of the reason for the child's absence. If your child is absent and you do not notify the center, staff will contact you to ensure your child's well-being and to offer any needed support. Staff will record the specific reason for the child's absence (fever, ear infection, family illness, etc.).

After three (3) consecutive days with no contact from the parent/guardian, the Community Outreach Worker will complete a home visit to check on the well-being of the child and family. If we are unable to contact you, a letter will be mailed regarding your child's participation in the program. After two weeks of no contact, your child may be dropped from the program.

If a situation arises and you must keep your child out of school for an extended period, or if you experience a crisis that will impact your child's attendance, you should discuss this with center staff.

3. Attendance Success Plan

Each child enrolled in Head Start is monitored for attendance concerns and chronic absenteeism. Head Start defines a "chronic absentee" as a child who misses 10% or more school days. For this program, that's 16 days or less. Parents with children identified as chronic absentees are

required to establish an Attendance Success Plan with the assigned Community Outreach Worker. The purpose of this plan is to assist with improving children's Average Daily Attendance (ADA) percentage and on-time arrival to school. If attendance does not improve or the child ceases to attend Head Start with no contact from the parent/guardian for an extended amount of time, the child's slot will be considered an enrollment vacancy. A blank copy of the Attendance Success Plan is in *Forms tab, page 1*.

4. Long-Term, Consecutive Absences with No Contact

If a child ceases to attend Head Start with no contact from the parent for two weeks, the child's slot will be considered open, and he/she will be returned to the wait list.

Full-day classes are prioritized for families with work, school, or other commitments, and many children are waiting for one of these slots. Children in full-day classes who fall below 65% attendance may be transitioned to half-day if absences are unexcused.

IV. DROP OFF AND PICK UP



1. Sign In and Sign Out

Children are not in the care of Head Start until they are signed in. All children must be signed in daily, regardless of how they arrive at school. This includes children being signed in at classrooms, before boarding the bus, and arriving at a field trip. **Children cannot be dropped off before class begins – 8:00 am for full day and morning sessions and 12:30 for the afternoon session.** Teachers use this time to prepare for class and are not available to provide care for your child. If a child is

dropped off at a center more than 30 minutes past the start time of the class, the parent will be required to sign in at the office and provide a reason why the child is late.

Children must also be signed out daily to a person who is authorized on the Emergency Data Form. All individuals listed on the Emergency Data Form must be at least 16 years of age and have valid identification. This could be a state-issued driver's license, state ID, military ID, passport, or school ID. Children must be signed out from all learning environments, which includes at the center, from the bus, and from a field trip. Children will not be released to any individual who is not the biological parent or not on the Emergency Data Form, so be sure to keep their children's forms up to date. Changes to the form must be **made in writing**. See blank EDF form in the *Forms tab, page 2*. Also, make sure to tell people that you have authorized to pick up your child that they will need to bring valid identification with them when picking up the child.

Never leave a sibling or other child in a car when dropping off your Head Start child. Leaving children unattended is a significant safety risk and will be addressed by the Center Director.

2. Impaired Person Policy

Head Start staff will not willingly release a child to anyone who appears to be impaired due to alcohol, drugs, medications, or unknown reasons. If a parent or authorized adult appears to be impaired when picking up a Head Start child, staff will request that parent contact someone to come to the center to drive both parent and child home. If the individual has legal rights or guardianship and demands to leave with the child, law enforcement will be notified immediately.

3. Late Pick Up Policy

Children are expected to be picked up from the center or from the bus per schedule. Excessive late pick-up may require parents to complete an Attendance Success Plan with center staff. The following measures are taken in case of delayed pick-up directly from centers or from buses:

- A. Parent/guardian should notify their child's Center by telephone if they know they will be late picking up a child. **This will not excuse the late pick-up policy.**
- B. If a child is not picked up by dismissal time or the parent/guardian is not present when the bus arrives, a SIU Carbondale Head Start staff member will call the parent/guardian at home, work, and any cell phone numbers which are on file, so it is critical that this information is up-to-date.
- C. Children on buses will be brought back to their center at the end of the bus route, and the parent/guardian will be responsible to pick up the child from the center.
- D. If a parent/guardian can't be reached after 10 minutes, emergency contacts on file will be called.
- E. If the parent/guardian or emergency contacts cannot be reached after 45 minutes, according to DCFS licensing standards, SIUC Head Start staff will contact the local police. Parents may be charged late pick-up child care rate of \$1.00 per minute/per child.
- F. The protection and wellbeing of your child remains the responsibility of SIUC Head Start until the parent/guardian, the designated emergency contact, or police arrive.
- G. SIUC Head Start will never hold the child responsible for the situation. All discussions of late pick-up will be with the parent/guardian and never with the child.

As a condition of enrollment, parents are required to sign acknowledgement of the Late Pick Up Policy with intake paperwork. A blank copy of this policy is located in the *Forms tab, page 3.*

V. FAMILY SUPPORT SERVICES

1. Types of Services

The primary role of the Family and Community Partnership staff is to support families in their growth and development. The Head Start program serves as a link between families and the community. Every family enrolled in SIU Carbondale Head Start is assigned a Community Worker who will:

- A. Help families meet the child's health and dental requirements
- B. Act as the family's advocate
- C. Help the family set and reach goals

- D. Help the family to identify and overcome challenges
- E. Connect families to agencies and resources in the community for assistance and support
- F. Encourage families to volunteer at Head Start
- G. Drive children and/or parents to scheduled appointments when needed
- H. Help families in crisis or emergency situations
- I. Help families obtain Head Start services, such as learning about nutrition, good health, childhood development, and more
- J. Inform families of parent-child and family engagement events and other opportunities to be involved at Head Start
- K. Follow-up with parents when the child misses school and assist the family to improve attendance

See Resources tab, page 2 for an extensive list of how your Community Worker can support your family.



2. Family Goal Setting and Documentation

The program is required to assess family needs, assist in the development of family goals, and document the family's progress over the course of the school year. We encourage all families to take advantage of this opportunity to set goals and receive support from the program to achieve these goals. Below is a description of the process:

- A. SIU Carbondale Head Start requires that each family participate in the Family Needs Assessment process with their assigned Community Worker within 90 days of child enrollment. This the family needs assessment is normally conducted at each family's home.
- B. Based on the results of the Family Needs Assessment, each family and their assigned Community Worker will work to establish at least one family partnership goal that is documented on the Family Partnership Agreement. These goals could be personal or family-related such as furthering education, learning English as a second language (ESL), obtaining employment, and completing health requirements, etc.
- C. The Community Worker will follow up with families by checking in at least once per month. Community Workers will also meet with your family at least twice each enrollment year to complete a parent contact in the home or at the center. The purpose of this visit is to form a relationship with you and work together to build upon your family's strengths and identify areas for support and growth.
- D. As part of the goal setting process and reflecting the core belief that parents are a child's first and foremost teacher, Community Workers will encourage parent participation in screenings, parent-teacher conferences, parent contacts, classroom interactions, and additional family services.
- E. A follow up assessment will be conducted at the end of the year to determine and document family growth.

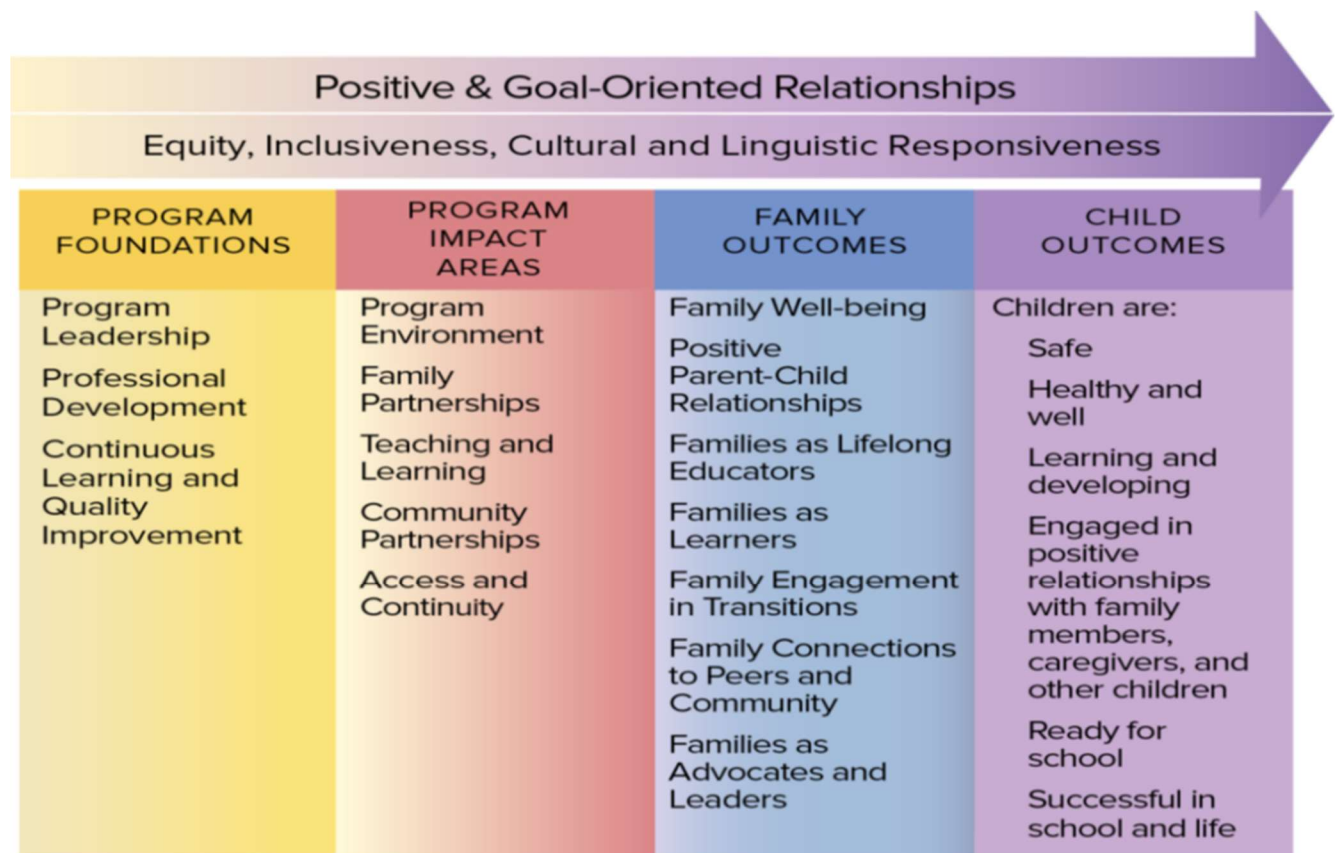
3. Parent Curriculum

Head Start offers opportunities for parents to participate in research-based parenting curriculum frameworks that are designed to build on parents’ knowledge by offering parents the opportunity to practice skills to promote children’s learning and development. Your Journey Together (YJT) promotes the social and emotional well-being and resilience of families and children. See *Resources tab, page 3* for more information about the parenting curriculum.

VI. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

1. PFCE Framework

The program uses the Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework to enhance and coordinate program services and to engage families and communities in a way that is culturally and linguistically responsive, that achieves better outcomes for children and families with positive and goal-oriented relationships. The visual below shows the components of the PFCE framework that guides the program’s approach to family engagement.



2. Importance of Involvement

Head Start is family-centered and designed to support parents as the most important influence in their child’s life. Head Start encourages parents to become actively involved in their child’s education, including direct involvement in decision-making groups within the

program. The program strives to meet the needs and interests of the families enrolled. SIU Carbondale Head Start works with the family as a whole and provides opportunities for parents to learn and grow. Family participation and education opportunities, events, and activities for parents are held on a regular basis throughout the year. *See the Resources Tab, page 4* for the Involvement Calendar for the upcoming school year.

3. How to Be Involved

Parents are highly encouraged to participate in the program through a series of learning formats—at home, at centers and classrooms, online, and through the ClassTag app.

Some ways parents participate are:

- A. Working with the child at home to develop school readiness skills
- B. Participating in parent contacts, home visits, and parent teacher conferences
- C. Participating in Self-Assessment and Community Assessment
- D. Participating in classroom activities
- E. Planning, developing, and attending parent activities
- F. Attending and supporting the monthly Parent and Child Together (PACT) Activities and Parent (Power-Up with Parents /Seeds to Success) Committee meetings
- G. Serving as officers of the Parent Committee
- H. Serving as elected members of the Policy Council
- I. Serving on the Male Advisory Panel (MAP) and/or Health Advisory Committee (HSAC)
- J. Serving on the Pyramid Model Leadership Team (PMLT)
- K. Serving on the Parent Involvement Leadership Team (PILT)

4. Parent and Child Together Activities (PACT) and Parent Committee Meetings

All parents who have children enrolled in Head Start are automatically members of the Head Start Parent Committee and are welcome to attend parent committee meetings. A parent at Head Start is defined as a Head Start child's mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent, guardian, or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree. PACT Activities and parent committees are established at the center level as determined by center staff and SIUC Head Start families and meet in-person as determined by the center director. Participation in parent committee meetings is extremely beneficial because it allows parents to:

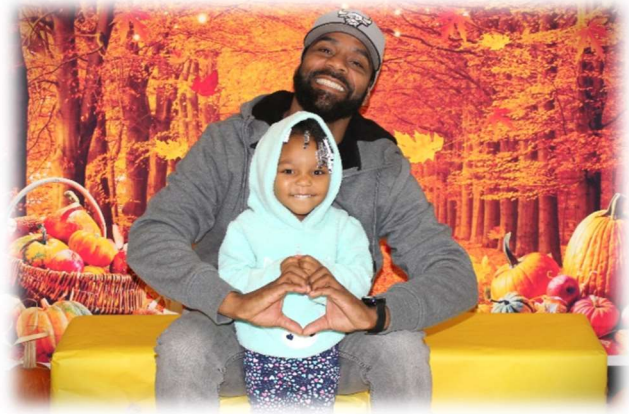
- A. participate in the governance of the Head Start program;
- B. advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services, and;
- C. plan, conduct, and participate in programs and activities for parents and staff.

5. Father and Father-Figure Engagement

SIU Carbondale Head Start promotes the involvement of Fathers and Father-Figures in the program to significantly influence children's development and well-being.

The program celebrates and strengthens the parenting roles by:

- A. Encouraging responsible role modeling
- B. Helping children and fathers and father-figures relate and connect
- C. Educating those caring for their children about parenting
- D. Creating opportunities for individuals with involvement and leadership



Two unique opportunities are provided by SIU Carbondale Head Start to help foster father and father-figure engagement:

The MUSCLE (Men Understanding Small Children's Learning Experiences) Program: MUSCLE encourages male involvement in children's literacy activities by recognizing the contribution of fathers and father figures who read to children. Certificates, storybooks, child and adult sized t-shirts (while supplies last) can be earned by men participating in the MUSCLE program.

Male (Father Figure) Advisory Panel (MAP): MAP is a group of Father and Father-Figures and community volunteers who meet both in person and virtually two to three times per school year. Participants are also encouraged to be involved in other scheduled events throughout the program year. The meetings typically last 1½ - 2 hours and refreshments and/or meals are usually served during in-person attendings.

6. Policy Council

The Policy Council is made up of Head Start parents and representatives of the community. Representatives from Parent Committees are elected to serve as members of the Policy Council. Elected representatives serve a one-year term, from October to September, and no member may serve more than five total terms. No SIU Carbondale employees or members of their immediate families may serve on Policy Council, except parents who occasionally substitute for regular staff.

Policy Council meetings are held monthly. On-site childcare and meals are provided at the meetings. Mileage reimbursement, at the established state rate and/or transportation arrangement, is provided for Policy Council members attending meetings. Staff will provide

and verify forms for reimbursement for qualifying events. The direct functions of the Policy Council are:

- A. Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, grantee governing body, public and private organizations, and the communities they serve.
- B. Communicate with parents about their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities in Head Start and encourage participation in the program.
- C. Assist Parent Committees and staff in planning, coordinating, and organizing program activities for parents using funds set aside from program budgets to support parent activities.
- D. Assist in recruiting volunteer services from parents, community residents and community organizations.
- E. Establish and maintain procedures for working with the grantee or delegate agency to resolve community complaints about the program.

7. Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC)

The Health Services Advisory Committee is composed of Head Start staff, Head start parents and community health professionals. The committee offers support and guidance to the program's health services, which includes physical health, dental health, and mental health. The Health Services Advisory Committee meets two times each year—in Fall and Spring.

8. Pyramid Model Leadership Team (PMLT)

The Pyramid Model Leadership Team is comprised of Head Start staff, parents, and community members. The leadership team oversees the implementation of Pyramid Model and supports child, family, and staff social-emotional development and well-being. The leadership team meets monthly per the agency calendar.

9. Employment Opportunities

Parents may, when qualified, be considered for employment in positions in the Head Start program. Former and current parents are encouraged to apply for vacant positions and their Head Start background will be given consideration when positions are filled. All employees must abide by the standards of conduct detailed in the program's personnel policies. These policies clearly guide the expectations for working with children in a manner that always protects their safety.

10. In-Kind

The program is required to generate 10% of its annual funding from volunteer hours and donations, which is called in-kind. We rely on parents to help us meet this federal grant requirement. A parent who completes any of the tasks described above contributes \$33.60 per hour towards the program's in-kind requirement. When parents participate or make donations to the program, an in-kind sheet must be signed to document the services provided. Weekly homework is sent out with an in-kind form to return to the center – this is an important source of in-kind for the program, so parents are asked to complete the work and return in a timely manner. Please see the *Forms tab, page 4* for a sample form.

11. Siblings

Due to state regulations, only enrolled children may be present in the classroom. Siblings over two-years old are occasionally allowed to accompany parents when volunteering in the class with prior consent from the Center Director. If approved, the sibling may be present for no more than one hour. Siblings are welcome to attend special events held outdoors or at off-site locations with parent supervision.

12. Parent Code of Conduct

All adults in a child's life serve as role models of appropriate behavior for children. As such, parents are expected to:

- A. Behave and speak in a respectful and orderly manner on school property or when attending a school function, including staff, children, and other parents.
- B. Respect the rights of other parents, children, and staff to a have safe and inclusive environment.
- C. Address concerns reasonably with the appropriate people. A parent with a concern about the program can file an official complaint to the Executive Director and Governing Board. *See Forms tab, page 5* for the blank form.
- D. Keep our classrooms, hallways and playgrounds focused on children, by turning cell phones to silent or off while at Head Start Centers.

SIU Carbondale will not tolerate behavior by parents/guardians, visitors, or anyone else involved with the program that violates the Code of Conduct. Examples of violations include, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Using threatening, hostile, intimidating, bullying, harassing, or coercive language or behavior toward employees, volunteers, or children
- B. Harassing or discriminating against any person based on race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sex, sexual orientation, or disability
- C. Using physically or verbally aggressive punishment of a child
- D. Using profanity and foul language
- E. Arguing, verbal fighting, loud shouting, and displays of anger
- F. Engaging in physical violence

If a parent violates the Code of Conduct, SIU Carbondale Head Start reserves the right to:

- A. Restrict access to program children, classrooms, and activities
- B. Remove the child's name from the Waiting List
- C. Contact the Department of Children and Family Services
- D. Contact the police
- E. Take civil or criminal action

All parents are required to sign the parent code of conduct, located in *Forms tab, page 6*.

VII. VOLUNTEERING

1. Importance of Volunteers

Volunteers are very important at SIU Carbondale Head Start! A variety of volunteer opportunities are available, such as helping in the classroom, attending field trips, participating in mealtime, assisting on the playground, and reading to or playing with the children. Volunteers are also needed to assist teachers and other staff, participate in parent meetings and special events, recruitment, and assist with office duties as needed. Every individual who volunteers is required to complete the Volunteer Orientation. This orientation is provided by administrative staff.

2. All Volunteer Requirements

- A. Show emotional maturity when volunteering
- B. Demonstrate respect for children and adults
- C. Commit to following the program's Standards of Conduct
- D. Complete a volunteer orientation before classroom volunteering

3. Regular Volunteer Requirements

In addition to the above requirements for all volunteers, regular volunteers have additional requirements to ensure that all children are safe. Regular volunteers are defined as those persons who are scheduled to volunteer five or more days or 30 or more hours in the classroom. These additional requirements include:

- A. Provide a physical examination signed by a medical professional as required by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) that includes TB clearance and immunizations. DCFS physical forms are available through the Center Director, and the program will pay for the physical.
- B. Submit to a DCFS background check and fingerprinting.

4. Volunteer Recognition

SIU Carbondale Head Start values its parent, student, and community volunteers and recognizes their contributions annually. At end-of-the-year recognition events, all volunteers will receive a certificate of appreciation. Additionally, Center Directors nominate a volunteer of the year award and this individual is recognized at the end of school year.



5. Volunteer Ethics and Standards

All volunteers must abide by the Standards of Conduct detailed in the program's policies and procedures. These policies clearly guide the expectations for working with children in a way that always protects child safety. If a parent witnesses the behavior of an employee or another volunteer indicating that a child in the care of SIU Carbondale Head Start is being mistreated, we encourage you to contact your Center Director immediately. The program will investigate the individual's behavior based on internal policies and procedures. The individual will be removed from the classroom until both internal and Department and

Children and Family Services investigations are complete and a determination has been made about how to proceed with the appropriate placement of the individual.

VIII. HEALTH

1. Health Requirements

Your child's health impacts their total development and ability to benefit from the Head Start experience. Healthy children have better school outcomes and are ready for school success as they transition to kindergarten. The program's goal is to promote each child's optimal health, including preventative health measures and follow-up treatment.

To accomplish this goal, the program requires each child to have a complete physical exam, immunization record, TB screening, blood lead test with results, hemoglobin screening with results, and yearly dental exam. Head Start provides vision and hearing screenings for every child attending and the results are provided to parents.

PRIOR TO CHILD ENROLLMENT:

– All children must have a physical exam on file. The physical exam should include current immunizations. The exam cannot be more than six (6) months old prior to the date of enrollment, unless directly transferring from a DCFS licensed center or ISBE approved center. In this case, the physical exam cannot be more than one (1) year old prior to the date of enrollment. If a child is enrolled for a second or third year, an updated physical exam will be required once the initial physical exam expires.

– Blood lead test with results completed at or after 24 months of age

– TB test with results or TB risk assessment

– Hemoglobin or Hematocrit blood test with results

WITHIN 45 DAYS AFTER ENROLLMENT:

– Each child's height and weight are assessed, and this information is shared with the family.

– Each child's vision and hearing are tested. The Health Specialist will follow up with families on areas of concern.

WITHIN 90 DAYS AFTER ENROLLMENT:

– All children must have a dental exam. This can be done through the family's dentist or by scheduling an appointment with the SIU Dental Clinic. The family's assigned Community Worker can assist in scheduling and transporting families to appointments as needed.

ANNUALLY AFTER ENROLLMENT:

– An updated physical exam

– An updated dental exam



2. Medication at School

If possible, every effort should be made by parents to administer prescribed medication to their child before or after school hours. Please notify us if your child is receiving any type of medication at home, so we are aware and can watch for adverse signs or allergic reactions.

Over-the-counter medication will not be administered to children at Head Start.

Prescribed medications must be in their original container with the full pharmacy label attached. When necessary, prescribed medications can be given at Head Start with a written statement from the physician and medication request form from the parent.

3. Follow Up

It is critical for the healthy development of the child that parents work with center staff to follow up with needed treatment or health issues. This includes dental treatment, glasses, hearing assessments, high blood lead, etc. The Health Specialist will work directly with parents to complete any health follow-up that is needed.

4. Medical Conditions

Some children enrolled in the program require special attention due to a medical or physical condition. Children with restrictions, medications, or special conditions at the time of enrollment or throughout the year must have written documentation from a physician. This is to be done on the SIU Carbondale Head Start Physician's Statement for Medical Condition and Limitations form. Due to requirements outlined in the State of Illinois DCFS Licensing Standards for Daycare Centers, a child will not be able to attend until all forms are received. Whenever the limitation or treatment is discontinued, parents should again provide written documentation from the child's physician stating the limitations were lifted. Treatment will continue until documentation is received ordering it to stop.

Due to requirements outlined in the State of Illinois DCFS Licensing Standards for Daycare Centers, children requiring rescue medication i.e., Albuterol inhaler, epi-pen etc. will not be able to attend until forms are and medications are received. Head Start will maintain documentation of when and who administered medication to your child. These forms will be reviewed with parents regularly.

5. Illness

Children must not be sent to school when sick. Parents must notify the center when their child is absent due to illness. If a child becomes ill while at school, parents are notified and requested to pick up their child immediately. In some instances, the center may request a statement from a physician stating that the child may return and participate in activities before that child can return to school. A child should be kept home and may be sent home for any of the following symptoms:

- A. Complains of not feeling well and is unable to participate comfortably in program activities (See information on attendance: What you can do!)
- B. Shows any flu-like symptoms (fever, vomiting, and diarrhea)

- C. Has a rash combined with fever
- D. Has open, oozing, or bleeding sores and/or has mouth sores with inability to control saliva
- E. Has live head lice or scabies
- F. Shows any sign of any communicable disease: pink eye (conjunctivitis), impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox, etc.
- G. Has breathing difficulties or other signs or possible severe illness

Please see the *Resources tab, page 5* for comprehensive guidance about keeping children at home based on symptoms.

6. Communicable Diseases

During a school year, it is to be expected that a child enrolled in any childcare setting may be exposed to common communicable diseases. Keep in mind that it is not until about age six before a child's immunities begin to become fully established. The illness children experience during the pre-school years provides a means for their bodies to recognize and fight infections as they grow.

SIU Carbondale Head Start follows guidelines set forth by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and local health departments, when determining exclusion and attendance policies for children that are exhibiting symptoms of any communicable disease (i.e., Pink eye, conjunctivitis, impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox etc.). Parents/guardians will be contacted regarding any health concerns and/or any requests that their child see a physician for diagnosis and treatment.

Parents will be notified when there are outbreaks of communicable diseases in the classroom or center including but not limited to: chicken pox, COVID, fifth disease, impetigo, pin worms, hand foot and mouth, flu, and ring worm. If your child has a communicable disease, inform your Center Director immediately.

The program has been significantly impacted by the pandemic and follows recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control in handling positive cases of COVID. Please refer to current CDC guidelines for any questions or concerns.



7. Hygiene

The program reinforces healthy hygiene practices in children to develop lifelong healthy habits. To this end, all classrooms practice hand washing routinely and frequently with the children. We ask parents to reinforce handwashing habits by having their child wash hands before each meal and after using the restroom, blowing or wiping their nose, playing outside, and handling animals or soiled items.

8. Hearing and Vision Screenings

Head Start provides vision and hearing screenings for every enrolled child, and the results are provided to parents. This developmental screening is completed within the first 45 days of child attendance and completed by Certified Vision and Hearing Screening Technicians. If there is a concern about the screening, additional treatment or services may be needed.

Parents should work together with the Health Specialist to arrange all necessary follow-up services.

9. Height and Weight Assessment

Height and weight assessments are completed twice during the program year for all children to track individual growth and development. Children are weighed in the fall and spring. Following the second assessment, the “How’s my child growing?” form is sent home to parents. This form shows how much growth the child has had as well as the child’s BMI percentile. Parents are encouraged to follow up with their medical provider if they have any concerns.

10. Toothbrushing

Children attending full day sessions will brush teeth twice and rinse once throughout their school day. Half day sessions (AM or PM) brush teeth once and rinse once.

Toothbrushing is done at the table to help minimize the spread of germs. Each child has their own labeled toothbrush. Brushes are stored in a holder and out of the reach of children when not in use. Toothbrushes are replaced every three months during the program year. Parents are strongly encouraged to help children continue good dental habits at home.



11. 90-Day Dental Exams

Regular dental care prevents tooth decay and disease and improves chewing, nutrition, language skills, and overall health. A dental exam is required for every child within 90 days of entry to the program. The Community Worker may help in making appointments and transportation if needed.

SIU Head Start partners with SIU Community Dental Clinic to provide free dental exams. Exams are performed by a licensed dentist and completed at the health intake day annually in August. Parents are notified of this day once a child has been accepted into the program. Head Start standards require that all children have an established dental home where they received ongoing routine preventive care and if needed, restorative treatment. If a child has a current established dental home, parents should inform Head Start staff so that the dental provider can be contacted.

IX. SAFETY



1. Drug Free Environment

SIU Carbondale Head Start centers operate a healthy environment that is free from alcohol, illicit drugs, and smoke. State laws and University policies regarding these items are strictly enforced. State law prohibits use of these substances on University property. Smoking in front of children at any of the centers, on field trips, during Head Start activities, near the bus, or at bus stops is prohibited.

2. Weapons

Weapons are not permitted in or on school property. This includes weapons in cars when dropping off or picking up children. University police will be contacted if a weapon is brought onto school property.

3. Child Abuse and Neglect

Illinois state law mandates, under the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act, that any school/day care employee who suspects child abuse or neglect must make a report to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services child abuse hotline. Head Start staff receive training to recognize the signs of abuse and neglect.

If a parent suspects that their child or any child in the care of Head Start is being verbally, emotionally, or physically abused by an employee, volunteer, or contractor, they should call the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline at 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873) or use the new online reporting system located at <https://dcfsonlinereporting.dcf.illinois.gov/>. Parents may also contact the Center Director or Executive Director to discuss any concerns.

4. Accidents and Injuries

Staff members are trained in first aid to handle injuries. Minor injuries (bumps, scrapes, bruises) are reported to parents through the program's Injury Report, which is sent home with your child. Should a child receive an injury that requires medical care, Head Start provides the parents with an SIU Carbondale Accident/Medical Claim Form. If the child is taken for medical care, the parent must notify the Center Director, who will provide guidance. If a child is involved in a medical or dental emergency, staff are trained to follow the steps in the program's emergency plan. The Center Director and administrative staff will determine if the accident or illness requires ambulance transportation for the child or if parents or staff are able to transport the child. Parents are contacted immediately in case of an emergency. If a parent cannot be reached, center staff will call the next person designated on the Emergency Data Form. It is critical to keep the child's Emergency Data Form up to date.

5. Emergency Closing/Crisis Situations

In the event of an emergency, the Head Start Executive Director is responsible to decide if classes will be canceled, postponed, or shortened. Examples of situations that might call for canceling or postponing classes would be inclement weather, natural disasters, or damage to center buildings.

All emergency cancellations or changes to the school day will be communicated through School Messenger. It is important that parents keep phone numbers updated all year round so that the notifications are received. The *ClassTag* application allows parents to receive text notifications regarding program events and other information and to have the ability to send texts to your center. When bad weather causes early dismissal or cancellation of classes, parents are responsible for picking up their child in the allotted time frame or arrange for someone to be home when the child is dropped off by the bus.

In the event of a crisis such as tornado, fire, earthquake, or civil disturbance:

- A. No child is dismissed from school unless a parent/guardian (or individual designated on the Emergency Data Form) comes to pick him/her up and has proper identification.
- B. All parents/guardians or designated individuals who come to pick up children must sign them out in the classroom or at a temporary release station. Signs are posted indicating where the temporary release station is located.
- C. We are prepared to care for all children in times of critical situations. Staff are trained in first aid certificates and work with various local emergency services on emergency preparedness procedures.

X. FACILITIES



1. Pest Management

Public Act 93-381 Integrated Pest Management in Licensed Day Care Centers (effective July 1, 2004) requires licensed child care facilities to implement an integrated pest management plan. The plan involves the use of pesticide applications involving antimicrobial agents and baits. Anti-microbial agents such as disinfectants, sanitizers, deodorizers, insecticide baits, and rodenticide baits are NOT SUBJECT to notification requirements.

It is recognized that pests can best be controlled through an integrated pest management program that combines preventative techniques, nonchemical pest control methods and appropriate use of pesticides with preference for products that are the least harmful to human health and environment. If a different pesticide application approach is determined necessary, written notification will be provided to enrolled children's parents and staff at least two business days before application along with contact information for the center.

2. Video Surveillance

The Carbondale, Marion, and Murphysboro facilities use video camera surveillance at the main entries, hallways, parking lots, buses and playgrounds. The purpose of video recording is to keep all children, staff, and parents safe while at the facilities. Video is not

reviewed on a regular basis and only pulled to investigate incidents which include situations including child or staff conduct and traffic incidents. Parents do not have direct access to video but can request that the video is reviewed in the process of an investigation or complaint.

3. Buzzer System

Centers utilize a buzzer system and real-time video surveillance system to control who accesses facilities. Doors remain locked during the school day and visitors, including parents, will only have access to the building by being buzzed in. This security system is utilized to enhance the safety and security of Head Start facilities.

XI. TRANSPORTATION

1. Bus Services

Transportation is provided for some children to and from our Head Start sites. Double session children are prioritized for enrollment, followed by homeless and foster children, and then it is based on family proximity to established routes. Transportation is not guaranteed for all enrolled children. Per Head Start standards, children should not be on the bus for more than one hour. This means that children who live far away from centers or well outside routes may not receive bussing to and from school. Children must be picked up on the curb side of the bus, so buses may not be able to pick up/drop off on some streets or apartment/mobile home complex parking lots because they are not permitted to perform U-turns.

In many instances, an approved pick-up point can be arranged if you live in an area where transportation will not be provided. Contact your Center Director to arrange an alternate pick up/drop off location if necessary.

Bus transportation is provided by Jackson County Mass Transit District (JCMTD). Drivers are employees of JCMTD and Bus Monitors are Head Start employees. All Bus Drivers comply with the Illinois Secretary of State Bus driver regulations. Head Start takes the responsibility of transportation very seriously and requests full cooperation in following our bus procedures and policies. Children's safety is the main concern and responsibility of the bus drivers and bus monitors. Parents must abide by the following bus rules listed below and in the Transportation Agreement signed during the time of application. A copy of the transportation agreement can be found in the *Forms tab, page 7*.

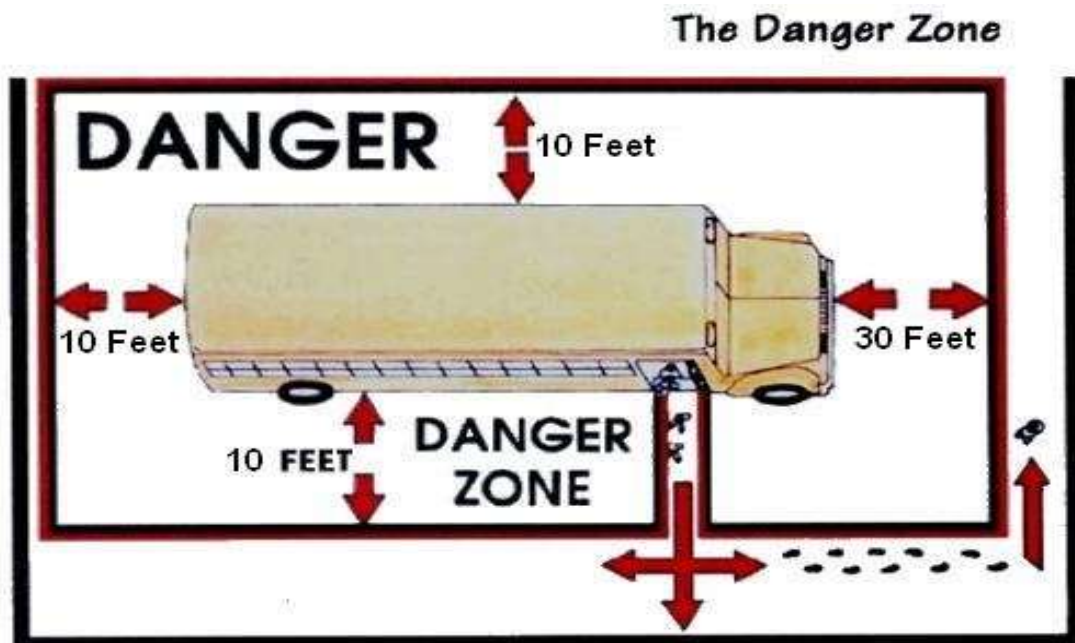
2. Bus Rules

- A. Children should be ready and waiting for the bus. Head Start's policy is a one (1) minute wait at each house.
- B. The parent or designated person is responsible for walking children to and from the bus before and after each bus route. Parents that have failed to walk children to and from the bus, and/or are not present at the bus stop to receive their children from the bus will be documented by the bus driver on a designated form. Failure to comply could result in the loss of bus service.
- C. Head Start assumes responsibility for children upon entry on the bus. Once released from the bus, children are the responsibility of the parent or designated person.

- D. The parent or authorized person listed on the Emergency Data Form is responsible for being at the assigned drop-off location when the bus arrives. If the approved adult is not at the drop-off location, the child will not be released from the bus. The driver will contact a Head Start staff member via radio, who will attempt to contact an authorized adult listed on the Emergency Data Form. Head Start staff are not expected to work after normal work hours and therefore, cannot be responsible to care for your child when the approved adult is not at the designated drop-off location.
- E. When an approved adult is not at home or at the drop-off location and no contact can be made with persons on the Emergency Data Form, the program notifies the local police department and the Department of Children and Family Services after 45 minutes (see late pick up policy). However, procedures vary with each individual case.
- F. Parents should notify the center when their child will not attend class.
- G. If there is a change in the child's pick-up or drop-off point, the parent/guardian must contact the center director in writing at least 24 hours in advance to determine if the change can be made. Only the Center Director can authorize a change in bussing. See *Forms tab, page 8* for Transportation Change Request Form.
- H. For safety reasons, the following items are not allowed: rolling backpacks, food, drink, toys, or other personal items. Personal items are allowed if requested by the teacher for a special day and these items must fit in the child's backpack.

3. The Danger Zone

Most children injured or killed in pupil transportation are injured outside the bus by motorists who fail to stop for the bus or do not see the children. This area around the bus is often referred to as the “**DANGER ZONE.**” To keep all children safe, Head Start requires that all children be always walked to and from the bus. At the Carbondale Center, parents must park in the front lot when walking children to the classroom.



XII. CLASSROOM INFORMATION AND PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS



1. The Learning Environment

The learning environment is designed to meet each child's individual and school readiness needs. The number of children in each class varies but ranges between 15 and 18. Regardless of cultural background or special needs, every child is offered a variety of learning experiences designed to help them develop in the following areas:

- Physical Development and Health
- Science
- Social/Emotional Development
- Social Studies
- Language
- Creative Arts
- Literacy
- Cognitive
- Math

2. General Daily Schedule

Below is the general daily schedule by class type. Parents must consider what the classroom is scheduled to do when dropping children off late or picking them up early. It's best for children to eat meals and snacks with their peers and have a full nap if possible.

A. Half-day schedule:

MORNING SESSION	AFTERNOON SESSION	ACTIVITY
8:00	12:30	Arrival/Greeting-restroom
8:15	12:45	Breakfast/Lunch-before & after restroom
9:15	1:45	Self-Selection/Gross Motor-if needed restroom
10:45	3:00	Lunch/Snack-before & after restroom
11:20	3:50	Prepare for Departure-restroom
11:30	4:00	Departure

B. Full-day schedule:

TIME	ACTIVITY
8:00	Arrival/Handwashing
8:15	Breakfast/Toothbrushing/Handwashing
8:45	Self-Selection/Gross Motor-if needed restroom
9:45	Restroom/Handwashing
9:50	Self-Selection
10:45	Restroom/Handwashing
10:50	Lunch/Toothbrushing/Restroom
11:30	Nap
1:40	Gross Motor
2:30	Handwashing
2:35	Snack
3:00	Self-Selection
3:30	Read Aloud
4:00	Departure

3. What to Bring and What NOT to Bring

Head Start provides all the classroom supplies that your child will need.

SEND CHILDREN WITH	DO NOT SEND CHILDREN WITH
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Play clothes* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Shoes should be protective of toes, heels, and soles of little feet (no flip-flops) – Clothes that are easily washable – Simple clothing without complicated fastenings 2. At least one extra set of clothing* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used in the event of a bathroom accident, paint spill, etc. – Remember to send extra replacement clothing when the child wears them home or when the weather changes 3. Jacket/coat, hat, and gloves* <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Used when weather is cold – Children <u>WILL</u> go outside on clear days when the temperature is above 25° Fahrenheit (wind chill included) 4. A backpack or bag for belongings (no rolling backpacks due to bus safety) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Any toys, blankets or pillows from home unless requested by the teacher for an activity such as show and tell 2. A rolling backpack 3. Snack or other food items unless approved by the Center Director in advance (see Treat/Snack Policy on page 37) 4. Inappropriate clothing, such as dress clothes or other clothing that cannot get messy 5. Expensive jewelry that may be lost during play. The program does not reimburse parents for lost jewelry. 6. Any item that will not fit in the child's backpack or bag

* Write the child's name on all belongings

4. School Readiness Goals

The program has 14 school readiness goals that are implemented through developmentally appropriate and individualized activities in the weekly lesson plans. Teachers assess children three times a year to determine progress in meeting the school readiness goals. These outcomes are assessed by individual child, classroom, center, and program and inform future activities within the classroom and for individual children. Children will....

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. recognize and regulate their emotions and behaviors. 2. develop and sustain positive relationships with peers and adults. 3. participate cooperatively and constructively in group situations. 4. demonstrate fine motor strength and coordination. 5. listen to and understand increasingly complex language. 6. use language to express their thoughts and needs and engage in conversations. 7. demonstrate letter knowledge. 8. demonstrate phonological awareness. 9. demonstrate knowledge of print and its uses. 10. demonstrate writing skills. 11. demonstrate engagement, motivation, and persistence in learning. 12. use number concepts and operations. 13. demonstrate knowledge of shapes, and spatial relationships 14. demonstrate various uses of mathematical operations (measurement, patterns)

5. School Readiness Skills

The Southern Illinois Coalition for Children and Families worked with local school districts and pre-kindergarten programs to develop a listing of school readiness skills for children entering kindergarten. Working with your child at home to strengthen school readiness skills will promote academic achievement and success in school. Please see the *Resources tab, page 6* for the complete listing of school readiness skills.

6. Curriculum



SIU Carbondale Head Start implements the Creative Curriculum, a research-based curriculum that supports a developmentally appropriate approach to learning for preschool-age children. Children are taught in a play-based approach through a series of study guides that promote language, literacy, math, science, creative arts, social emotional development, cognitive, physical development and health, and English language development. Development of good health and nutrition habits, personal safety

habits, and self-help skills are also individualized. The curriculum is designed to meet your child's individual needs. Children participate in daily indoor and outdoor play as well as quarterly field trips around the community. Children are encouraged to express their feelings, manage emotions, and get along with other children and adults.

Children are free to choose from a variety of learning interest areas located in each classroom during self-selection. Interest areas are equipped with materials that go along with teacher interactions and learning objectives to build children's skills and promote school readiness. The interest areas included in the classrooms are listed below:

- Blocks
- Dramatic Play
- Technology
- Library/ Writing
- Art
- Science
- Math and Manipulatives
- Sand and Water
- Music and Movement
- Gross motor

7. Outcomes

Every child's progress is assessed throughout the school year. Teachers work with each child to complete assessment, rating scales, portfolios, and record observations. Results from these assessments are shared with you throughout the year and used to plan educational experiences based on each child's strengths, needs, and interests.

8. Learning Framework

The program uses the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework as its approach to child development and learning.

CENTRAL DOMAINS					
	APPROACHES TO LEARNING	SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT	LANGUAGE AND LITERACY	COGNITION	PERCEPTUAL, MOTOR, AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT
▲ INFANT/TODDLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Cognition	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
● PRESCHOOLER DOMAINS	Approaches to Learning	Social and Emotional Development	Language and Communication	Mathematics Development	Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development
			Literacy	Scientific Reasoning	

9. Home Visits and Parent-Teacher Conferences

Enrolled families participate in **two home visits** and **two parent-teacher conferences** with teaching staff during the year. Conferences are an in-depth opportunity for parents and teachers to:

- Develop and share individualized learning goals for each child
- Share observations about the child’s strengths, needs, and interests
- Hear about the classroom schedule and activities
- Provide teachers with feedback regarding curriculum ideas and instructional materials
- Discuss screening and assessment results
- Enhance knowledge and understanding of child’s development
- Encourage parents to participate in upcoming events

These visits are highly encouraged so teachers and parents can work together to enhance learning, both at school and in the home. Parents, as well as teachers, are encouraged to keep scheduled appointments so that all home visits and conferences are completed in a timely manner.

Parent are encouraged to review the Developmental Milestones for their child in the *Resources tab, pages 7-9*.



10. Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled multiple times throughout the year. They are designed to enhance a curriculum study, spark the child’s interest, and provide an opportunity for children to practice and develop social skills in a variety of settings.

Written permission **MUST** be obtained from parent or guardian for each trip. Parents are notified in advance of each scheduled trip and are encouraged to attend with their child.

To ensure safety, field trips require a minimum of four adults per classroom to keep adult to child ratio low, and at least one staff member must be certified in First Aid and CPR. All parents attending field trips must complete the program’s field trip procedure training.

XIV. MENTAL HEALTH AND DISABILITIES SERVICES

1. Social-Emotional Development

The Pyramid Model is a framework that has been designed to support the social and emotional development of the children, families, and staff in our program. Young children who have a strong foundation in social-emotional skills are more likely to experience later academic success and positive post-school outcomes. The graphic below represents the Pyramid Model Approach. More detailed information about the Pyramid Model can be found in the *Resources tab, page 10*.



2. Child Guidance Policy

SIU Carbondale Head Start promotes the development of social-emotional skills as the key factor in preparing for future school success. The program's philosophy is guided by the following beliefs:

- The role of the adult is to model and teach children appropriate social-emotional skills.
- Relationships between adults and children guide and regulate behaviors.
- Behavior is communication and serves a function.
- Each child is a unique individual and should be supported as such.
- Implicit bias affects decision making about appropriate behavior.

The program also acknowledges that the parent is the child's first and most important teacher. We will work closely with each child's family to assess current beliefs and practices at home general and/or about age-appropriate behavior and social-emotional skills, provide resources to all families regarding our approach to child guidance, and how to work together for the success of each child.

As a condition of enrollment, parents are required to sign acknowledgement of the program's child guidance policy. A copy of the form can be found in the *Forms tab, page 9*.

The program implements a variety of guidance strategies to support each child's needs and works toward meeting those needs so challenging behaviors are reduced or eliminated.

Strategies Implemented

- Provide specific, developmentally appropriate, positively stated expectations that are posted, reviewed, and reinforced throughout the day.
- Provide specific praise and encouragement.
- Model appropriate pro-social behaviors.
- Develop warm and welcoming relationships, with both adults and peers.
- Design learning environments to develop and support social-emotions skills.
- Deliver intentional instruction on social-emotional skill development.
- Support the child to identify and solve problems/conflicts.
- Provide the child with natural, logical, and developmentally appropriate consequences for their behavior

Prohibited Practices

- Removal from the classroom/peers for an extended amount of time
- Punishment related to toileting accidents
- Any form of corporal punishment intended to induce fear or physical pain (e.g., hitting, restraint)
- Threat or actual withdrawal of food, rest, or access to the bathroom
- Any form of emotional abuse (e.g., humiliation, threats, shaming)

3. Behavior Incident Reports

A Behavior Incident Report form is used by teachers to record serious behavior incidents (aggression, elopement, and/or self-injurious behaviors) and gathers critical information around the following factors:

- Problem Behavior
- Activity
- Others Involved
- Possible Motivation
- Response
- Gender
- Administrative Follow-up
- Race/Ethnicity
- IEP Status
- Dual-Language Learner

The BIR Form is provided to a designated person or staff who enters the data into the BIR Data System. By collecting and reviewing BIR data:

- The Pyramid Model Leadership Team can improve the quality of data-based decision making and action planning
- The Pyramid Model Leadership Team can assist in identifying potential issues of disproportionality, determine individual children’s incident patterns
- Behavioral patterns can be defined in greater detail and used to improve child and teacher interactions

A blank copy of the BIR can be located under the *Forms tab, page 10*.

4. Persistent Challenging Behavior

If a child exhibits persistent challenging behaviors and ongoing support has been given to staff and found unsuccessful in addressing the child’s behaviors, a team comprised of the parent, classroom teachers, consultants, and other appropriate adults will meet to discuss the behavior, factors impacting the behavior, purpose of the behavior, new social-emotional skills that need to be taught, and individualized interventions to implement. The program defines a “persistent challenging behavior” as:

- any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with learning or engagement in prosocial interactions and
- behaviors that are not responsive to the use of developmentally appropriate guidance procedures

Notes from the meeting will be taken and shared with all team members for consistency of implementation. The team will meet periodically to discuss status of interventions and adjust as needed. If necessary, a referral for mental health support or for further developmental evaluation may be completed.

If a child is exhibiting persistent challenging behaviors, the implementation behavior plan is not successful, and there continues to be a severe safety concern, the team may need to take steps toward a transfer to a more appropriate placement (classroom or session) or program.

5. Developmental Screenings

Head Start is mandated to provide developmental screenings to all enrolled children within our program. Screenings take place within 45 days of the first day of enrollment. Children receive screenings relating to speech and language, cognitive skills, fine and gross motor skills, social-emotional development, and hearing and vision. Results of your child's screenings are provided to you, but otherwise kept confidential.

6. Disabilities

The program is mandated to identify, refer, and coordinate services for children who may be or are eligible under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) services. Supports provided include:

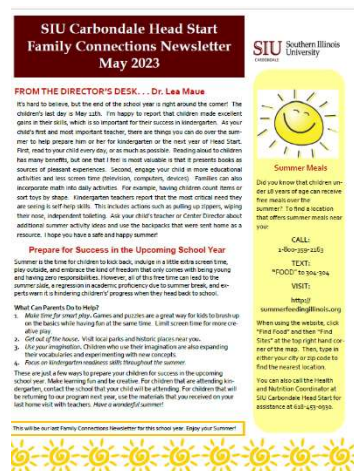
- A. Complete developmental screenings with each child to identify possible delays
- B. Implement individualized supports based on screening results
- C. Work with families to initiate referrals to the local special education agency
- D. Attend IEP meetings with parents and advocate for the child's best interests
- E. Implement goals and accommodations of IEP while at Head Start
- F. Collaborate with local school districts and special education agencies to provide services
- G. Educate parents on their child's disability, referral process, and rights and responsibilities

7. Mental Health

The program employs mental health consultants to assist with family support issues, such as substance abuse, domestic violence, challenging behaviors, or stress-related issues. Supports include phone conferences, home visits, and referrals to community agencies. If a parent or child needs support, they should contact their Community Worker, Teacher, or Center Director. The primary role of the Head Start Mental Health service area is:

- A. Support social-emotional development in children at school and home
- B. Support adult resiliency through ongoing consultations, training, and coaching
- C. Connect families with needed resources related to mental health support
- D. Screen child social-emotional development at school and home
- E. Develop individualized supports to prepare children for public school

XIV. COMMUNICATION



1. Newsletters

Parents will receive monthly classroom and agency newsletters during the school year. Calendars list classroom activities, field trips and special days. The agency newsletter contains Head Start news, parent/child activity suggestions, and agency/center announcements and activities. It is important for parents to read both newsletters to be informed of center, classroom, and program updates and to be a part of the child's education. Newsletters will be sent out via ClassTag in electronic form.

2. Class Tag

Parents are expected to set up a Class Tag account upon enrollment to the program. Your assigned Community Worker will assist you in this process. The program communicates non-emergency messages primarily through Class Tag. This is how reminders about school events, child progress updates, and resources are shared throughout the year. You can also communicate through Class Tag to your center about child attendance, family need, etc. Instructions for setting up your Class Tag account can be found in the *Resources Tab, page 11*.

3. School Messenger

School Messenger is used to relay emergency messages only. This includes unplanned school closures, early release, and other urgent messages. We use the cell phone number provided on family intake forms. If your cell number changes, please let your Center Director or Community Worker know so that you can continue to receive messages.

4. Texting

Center Directors and Community Workers have program-issued cell phones that you can call or text. If you make contact outside of regular business hours (7:30 am-4:00 pm) you may not receive an immediate response.

5. Child's Backpack

Children are required to bring a non-rolling backpack to and from school each day. A great amount of information is sent home in children's backpacks by teachers and other center staff. Parents must check this backpack each day after school.

6. Respectful Two-Way Communication

Communication is very important to the success of your child in the Head Start program. We ask that you update your child's records as soon as changes occur. Other changes that may affect your child's daily routine (birth, death in the family, marriage, divorce, move, etc.) should be shared as well.

Parents who have a concern or question about their child's experience at Head Start are encouraged to contact their Center Director, Teacher, or Community Worker to voice these concerns. Parents must refrain from using abusive, threatening, and disrespectful language towards program staff and should expect the same respect from Head Start staff. Staff will not continue to engage in conversations with parents who violate this expectation and will ask you to call back or return to the center when you are ready to communicate respectfully.

XV. NUTRITION



1. Daily Meals and Snacks

Head Start's nutrition program is designed to help meet each child's daily nutritional needs. Head Start participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which requires children in half day programs to receive at least one-third of their recommended daily nutritional allowances and children enrolled in full day or extended day programs to receive one-half to two-thirds of their recommended daily nutritional allowances. Please see more information about the benefits of CACFP in *Resources tab, page 12*.

- Morning children will receive breakfast and lunch
- Afternoon children receive lunch and snack
- Full-day children receive breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack
- Parent input and feedback is used during menu development

2. Family Style Meals

Mealtimes are an opportunity for learning and developing good health habits, socialization skills, self-help skills, decision-making skills, and communication skills. Head Start adheres to strict requirements set forth by the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), DCFS, and HSPPS. These requirements determine the types of foods served, amounts served, and style in which meals and snacks are presented to children. Special dietary needs and feeding accommodations will be given individual attention.

3. Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC)

WIC is a food assistance program for Women, Infants, and Children. It helps pregnant women, new mothers and young children eat well and stay healthy. WIC serves pregnant women, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants and children up to 5 years of age (including foster children). If you are interested in seeing if you qualify for WIC services, please contact the Health Department in the county that you reside in. For Jackson County residents, please call 618.684.3143 and for Williamson County residents, please call 618.993.8111.

4. Lead

Head Start programs have a major role in preventing children's exposure to lead. This includes preventing lead exposure in the Head Start facilities and its water supplies and working with the wider community to reduce lead exposure in other locations. Families are an important line of defense against lead poisoning. If you have any concerns for your child's blood lead or if you would like to have your home tested for the presence of lead, please contact the Health Department in the county that you reside in. For Jackson County residents, please call 618.684.3143 and for Williamson County residents, please call 618.993.8111.



5. Treat and Snack Approvals

A child's birthday is a wonderful reason to celebrate! The program encourages and invites families to celebrate special events with their child's teachers and peers. However, Head Start values the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in their centers, and many celebration foods are high fat and sugary food items. When these are served during classroom celebrations, it sends a mixed message to our children. Our program already serves a snack item every day in our full day sessions, so, we encourage parents to volunteer on your child's birthday or contribute party plates, napkins, cups, etc. Instead of a food item. Or there are many other things that could be brought in to celebrate instead of food items like stickers, temporary tattoos, fidget toys, etc. Parents who would like to send food to school for other occasions must receive prior approval by completing the treat and snack form (forms tab) and follow these general guidelines:

1. Parents must select **nutritious** foods. Suggestions of food items – low sugar muffins, dried fruits, raisins, popcorn, snack crackers, graham crackers. Snacks must be nut-free and adhere to health restrictions of all children in the classroom.
2. Parents must send a note with their child to the center director three (3) days in advance stating what food item you would like to bring and on which day.
3. The center director will send a note home with the child giving consent to send the food item(s).
4. All food brought in must be pre-packed and in the original container, unopened.

The Treat and Snack Approval Form can be found in the *Forms tab, page 11*.

IMPORTANT NAMES AND NUMBERS

CENTER: _____

TEACHER NAME: _____

COMMUNITY WORKER: _____

COMMUNITY WORKER CELL PHONE: _____

CENTER DIRECTOR CELL PHONE: _____

SCHOOL STARTING TIME: _____

SCHOOL ENDING TIME: _____

**This Parent Handbook is the property of SIU Carbondale Head Start.
The information may not be used or duplicated
without written permission. The information contained in this
handbook is subject to change without prior notice.**