

**CLAYTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES AUTHORITY, INC.
AUTORIDAD DE COMUNITARIOS DEL CONDADO DE CLAYTON, INC.**

**HEAD START PROGRAM
PROGRAMA HEAD START DEL**



**SERVING CLAYTON COUNTY CHILDREN & FAMILIES
SIRVIENDO A LA COMUNIDAD**



PARENT HANDBOOK

MANUAL PARA PADRES DE FAMILIA

CLAYTON COUNTY HEAD START PROGRAM

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Organizational Management Members

Mrs. Beechie Yates	Executive Director
Mrs. Eme Isok-Nsuk	Head Start/Early Head Start Director
Mrs. Theresa Mensah	Mentor Coach Head Start
Mrs. Mary Johnson	Education Specialist
Mrs. Malinda Malden	Health and Nutrition Specialist
Mrs. Cindy Caffee	Family and Community Partnerships Specialist
Mr. Equere Uboh	Disabilities & Mental Health Specialist
Mrs. Lisa Fullerton	Center Manager (Brookwood Center)
Mr. Gary Johnson	Center Manager (South Avenue Center)
Mrs. Keila Allen	Center Manager (Early Head Start)

YOUR CHILD'S CENTER INFORMATION

Fill in the spaces below for important information about your child:

My child will be attending the _____ Center located at
_____ in Classroom _____

My child's Teacher is: _____, I can reach her/him
at _____

My child's Teacher Assistant is: _____.

My Family Service Worker is: _____, I can
reach him/her at _____.

My Center Manager is: _____, I can reach
him/her at _____.

WELCOME TO HEAD START

Welcome new and returning Head Start parents. This manual is intended to provide you with specific information about the operating procedures for our Head Start program. These procedures are based upon regulations that are dictated by the Department of Public Health-Division of Community Based Regulations, Administration for Children and Families, Head Start Bureau and are governed by the childcare regulations in the state of Georgia, National Association for Education of Young Children, Bright From the Start and other applicable local and state laws.

HEAD START HISTORY

Head Start is a federally funded program for preschool children from low-income families. Acting on research findings that early intervention could strengthen the ability of children and families to cope with school and their environment, the federal government convened a panel of child development experts to draw up a program to help communities overcome the handicap of poverty. The panel report issued in 1964 became the blueprint for Project Head Start.

Initially, Project Head Start was launched as an eight-week summer program and was overseen by the federal Office of Economics Opportunities in 1965. It was designed to help break the cycle of poverty by providing preschool children of low income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs. Each year, Head Start serves more than 750,000 children and their families in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and US territories. The program serves Native Americans and migrant populations as well.

Head Start was transferred from the Office of Economic Opportunities to the Office of Child Development in the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare in 1969 and later, as a program within the Administration for Children, and Families at the Department of Health and Human Services. More than 8 million children and their families have received services from Head Start and the congressional appropriations have increased to more than \$5.3 billion. Revised Head Start Performance Standards (45 CFR Part 1304) was adopted in 1998, which mandates services to meet the goals in the following areas:

- 1. Early Childhood Development and Health Services**
 - Child Health and Development Services**
 - Education and Early Childhood Development**
 - Child Health and Safety**
 - Child Nutrition**

2. **Family and Community Partnerships**
3. **Program Design and Management**
 - **Program Governance**
 - **Management Systems and Procedures**
 - **Human Resources Management**
 - **Facilities, Materials and Equipment**
4. **Services to Children to Disabilities (1308)**
5. **Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment and Attendance in Head Start (1305)**
6. **Head Start Staffing Requirements and Program Options (1306)**

Since 1972, Head Start has mandated that at least 10% of the enrollment opportunities in Head Start shall be made available to children with disabilities. Head Start continues to look for effective methods of dealing with issues that affect the country at large, especially those experienced by low income communities such as single-parenting, teenage pregnancy, illiteracy, homelessness, substance abuse, child abuse and neglect, domestic violence and community violence.

HEAD START PHILOSOPHY

Clayton County Head Start dedicates itself to providing a comprehensive child development program for eligible three and four-year-old children. The program is designed to meet the child's emotional, social, health and nutritional needs enabling him/her to enter kindergarten healthy and with self-confidence in his/her ability to learn and succeed.

Head Start believes in the direct engagement of parents and community volunteers as an integral part of the program. They volunteer as bus monitors, cafeteria helpers, and office and classroom assistants. They also give their time, as well as, donations of goods, services and cash. This experience is beneficial to the program, the children, their families, and the volunteer himself/herself.

QUALITY

Striving to consistently provide the highest level of service to children and families, the Head Start leadership seeks to create a dynamic and cohesive environment that fosters commitment and supports continuous improvement. To effectively accomplish its goals, Head Start respects, values, and uses the contributions of each child, family and staff member. Head Start respects and values the time, effort and resources that the community provides.

INCLUSION

Building a community where each child and adult is treated as an individual while maintaining a sense of belonging to the group. Inclusive community values, respects, and responds to diversity in culture, ethnicity, language, and ability.

EMPOWERMENT

We believe that people can identify their own needs and interests and are capable of finding solutions and making changes. Head Start offers opportunities and support for growth and change.

COLLABORATION

Head Start builds relationships among children, families, staff and the larger community. It is a part of a network of community agencies and informal networks in partnership with one another to serve families. Head Start does not act alone but, is a key player in a community of providers.

LEARNING

Creating for children, parents, and staff, a culturally sensitive environment in which enhancing awareness, refining skills, and understanding are valued and promoted. Children, parents and staff can teach and learn from one another.

ADVOCACY

Reaffirming that personal responsibility is critical to change, while acknowledging that social and economic factors negatively affect the lives and promise of children and families. Change occurs at the individual and systems levels and addresses both the symptoms and underlying causes.

WELLNESS

Embracing a comprehensive vision of health for children, families, and staff that assures basic health needs are met; encourages practices that prevent future illness or injury; and promotes positive culturally relevant health behaviors that enhance lifelong well-being.

NURTURING

Head Start supports the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of each child in the context of the child's family and culture. Development is supported through nurturing relationships among staff, parents and children.

DIVERSITY

Recognizing and embracing the idea that all members of the Head Start community's families and staff have roots in many cultures. Head Start families and staff working together as a team, effectively transform negative responses to promote respectful, sensitive, and proactive approaches to diversity issues within their programs.

CONTINUITY

Head Start creates a continuum of care, education, and services to provide stable uninterrupted support to families and children during the early childhood period beginning with birth through age eight.

CLAYTON COUNTY HEAD START MISSION

The Clayton County Community Services Authority, Inc. Head Start program provides quality comprehensive services to low-income families with children age's three to five, including children with special needs. We empower families to become self-sufficient in order to achieve their life goals; and we promote school readiness, family literacy, social competency and parent engagement.

CLAYTON COUNTY HEAD START

Clayton County Head Start is a comprehensive early childhood program for low-income children and their families. Our program is funded to serve 352 preschool children and families. At least 10% of our enrollment opportunities are made available to children with disabilities. We serve 3, 4 and 5 year old children at designated centers. Children must be at least three years old on or before the September 1 cut-off date of each program year. However, a child who may turn 3 years old with extreme needs -such as homelessness, severe disabilities etc, after the cut-off date and is below the federal government poverty guidelines, may enter the program on his/her third birthday, provided a vacancy exists. Head Start receives 80% of the cost of the project budget from the federal Department of Health and Human Services and the remaining 20% (called nonfederal share or in-kind) is generated locally from parents, communities and organizations.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for a family to apply for enrollment for their child in Head Start include the following:

CHILD

1. Must be at least three-years-old by September 1 of the enrollment year; or if below the federal government poverty guidelines may enter at his/her 3rd birthday provided a vacancy exists.
2. Must have a birth certificate, baptismal certificate or Certificate of Indian Blood documenting date of birth.

PARENT (S)

1. Must provide proof of income for the past 12 months for the family of the child they are registering for Head Start.
2. Must reside within the designated zip code service areas within Clayton County.
 - 30288, 30297, 30298, 30236, 30237, 30250, 30260, 30238, 30287, 30273, 30274, 30296
3. Must complete a pre-registration form and if scheduled for an appointment, must complete all enrollment forms.
4. Are requested to attend Parent Orientation and participate in Parent Committee meetings at the center level whenever possible.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND CURRICULUM

Children can benefit most from a comprehensive program that provides them with learning skills. Head Start prepares children to be successful in any kindergarten program.

We encourage your child to learn by doing. Based on your child's age and skill level he/she will develop skills in the following areas:

- Language & Literacy**
- Cognitive**
- Physical**
- Social & Emotional**

We provide your child a learning environment that will support social, intellectual, physical and emotional development.

PARENT CURRICULUM

The program will offer opportunities for parents to participate in a research-based parenting curriculum that builds on parents' knowledge and offers parents the opportunity to practice parenting skills to promote children's learning and development. The Parent Curriculum will be held on the same days as the parent meetings are held for Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

THE CREATIVE CURRICULUM

The curriculums used at Clayton County Head Start are Creative Curriculum and Second Steps. The Second Steps curriculum focuses on the child's social emotional behavior. Both curriculums are based on sound principles of early childhood education and developmentally appropriate practices. Teachers look at other resource materials for ideas for activities and concepts to be developed according to each child's stage of development and individual needs. To individualize the Curriculum to meet each child's developmental stage and areas of interests, a number of screening and assessment tools are utilized. The teachers use anecdotal observations and other helpful instruments throughout the year to gather information about the children to then plan activities for the large group, small groups and for individuals within each classroom. The instruments might include the Ages & Stages 3 –Questionnaire, Ages & Stages Social Emotional or other developmental screening tools. Various speech and language screening tools, hearing, articulation, as well as, mental health and dental evaluations may be utilized. Staff also uses classroom observations, and the information given by parents in interviews, home visits, and conferences to plan curriculum activities and events around the interests and needs of the children.

Lesson plans are prepared each week by the teaching staff. Plans include activities to promote the four (4) primary areas (physical, language/literacy, cognitive and social/emotional) and are appropriate for each child's age and stage of development. Plans are reviewed and approved by the Parent, Center Manager and Education Specialist and filed for future reference.

The Clayton County CSA Inc., Head Start Program will ensure that before any child transition from Head Start to Public School, they attain required skills using the program curriculum tool, Teaching Strategies GOLD Assessment that has been aligned with the Georgia Early Learning Standards Indicators, the Pre-K Performance Standards & the Head Start Child Outcome Framework Indicators. The Teaching Strategies GOLD assessment will be conducted three times per year; November, February and May. Parents of the transitioning children will receive an Individual Child Progress Report at the end of the school year to show their child's progress and readiness for Kindergarten.

CENTERS/LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- Art/Creative Media
- Blocks
- Dramatic play or practical life
- Manipulative or table toys
- Nature and science
- Water and sand play
- Reading languages area or library
- Writing/Computer

Music and gross motor activities are scheduled daily. Mental health and nutritional activities are also another component to the lesson plan.

The daily schedule is designed to meet the developmental needs of the children in each class. Examples of areas addressed are as follows:

3 YEAR OLDS:

- *Three year olds will have regularly scheduled activities
- *Activities will emphasize development of problem-solving abilities
- *Activities will also focus on development of social relationships
- *Teaching staff will help children develop perceptual abilities
- *Activities will begin to focus on small muscle coordination and self-help skills.

4 YEAR OLDS:

- *Will have regularly scheduled activities
- *Will continue to develop problem solving abilities
- *Develop skills and activities that will prepare them for Kindergarten
- *Activities will emphasize reasoning abilities including development of social relationships
- *Teaching staff will help children with classification/categorization skills and continue to develop perceptual abilities
- *Activities will promote large and small muscle coordination
- *Activities will increase concentration/listening/sharing through group time experiences
- *Activities will promote literacy that will lead to phonological and print awareness and to include book knowledge and appreciation

Parent/Guardian(s) have an integral role in the curriculum and are encouraged to be engaged in the decision making process, such as the Education Advisory Committee.

ORIENTATION, PHASE-IN & TRANSITIONS

NEW STUDENTS

In order to insure a happy and successful transition into Head Start, parents are required to participate in an Orientation and Phase-In before their child begins school. Orientations are conducted to familiarize parents with the school's various services (areas of education, physical health, mental health, nutrition, family partnership, community partnership, and parent engagement). Staff members will be introduced during the Orientation and each will explain their role and responsibilities.

Phase-In is held prior to the first day of class to orient and familiarize the child and parent to the classroom and the teachers.

RETURNING STUDENTS

If your child is currently enrolled in Head Start, your Family Service Worker, will contact you for updated information such as, current address, telephone numbers and current pick-up persons.

TRANSPORTATION

Although Clayton County CSA Inc. Head Start & Early Head Start does not provide daily transportation service, but we do provide other services to ensure that the program is providing quality services to children and families that they serve. Such services are – Medical trips, dental trips, library trips (language and literacy) transitional fieldtrips, and other extended services.

TRANSITIONS

Transition activities are an ongoing process, which includes transitioning children and families into and out of Head Start. Some activities include Phase-In (visiting the Head Start classroom before the first day of school), visiting and interacting with the local Kindergarten classes, having lunch at the Public Schools, visits from teachers and staff and other events. Every effort will be made to ensure both parents and children have a smooth transition into and out of Head Start.

FIELD TRIPS (EXTENDED CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES)

While Field trips are not mandatory in Head Start, they are used as an integrated experience, which enhances the children's learning. Field trips give children an opportunity to:

- Explore natural environments within their community;**
- Learn and participate in community cultural activities;**
- Observe and interact with objects, environments, plants, animals or community workers as related to learning.**
- Extend a child's learning related to a specific activity (i.e. a visit to the library).**

The Clayton County Head Start Program promotes active exploration and learning in a setting away from the center. However, field trips must be relevant and integrated into the curriculum, and **MUST** be age appropriate. If space permits, parent/guardian(s) are allowed to accompany their child (on the bus) on field trips. However, if they plan to purchase souvenirs for their child, they must provide their own transportation.

Day to Day Operations

HOURS OF OPERATION

Head Start hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00am to 2:30pm. After Care services are offered at neighboring childcare centers THE DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND CHILDREN SERVICES Children and Parent Services Program (CAPS) may offer payment assistance for Extended Day but, **PARENTS MUST APPLY IN PERSON**. Again, spaces are limited please speak with your Family Service Worker for more information. Please make sure that your child arrives and is picked up from the center at the times stated above.

PLEASE NOTE: ALL CHILDREN MUST BE PICKED UP AT 2:30 DUE TO INSURANCE LIABILITY

ARRIVAL & DEPARTURE

To ensure your child's safety, they must be escorted to the building and you must accompany your child to their classroom and sign him/her in. When you pick your child up in the afternoon, you must sign him/her out. Please make sure your child does not arrive until the assigned arrival time and is picked up by the closing time as noted above. Your child will not be allowed to enter or exit the center without an escort and the center will not permit your child to enter or exit the center without an escort. If you are consistently late bringing your child to the center, you will need to meet with your Family Service Worker so that they may assist you with options to get your child to school in a timely manner. A pattern of picking up your child late is unacceptable, upsetting to your child and difficult for the staff that needs to go home and attend to their own families. If you are consistently late in picking up your child, your FSW along with the Center Manager will schedule a conference to assist you with developing strategies in picking up your child in a timely manner.

ENTERING/EXITING BUILDING

All parents and visitors must enter and exit the Head Start centers through their Main Entrance. Children **MUST** not be dropped off or picked up from a rear entrance. It is our policy that all parents sign their child in and out of the center. If someone else is going to pick up your child that is not on your pick up list, please contact us in advance or give written authorization. If we are unfamiliar with the person picking up your child, we will ask him/her to show us a picture ID. If the person does not have written authorization or is not on your pick up list, we **WILL NOT** release your child to that person. Persons signing children in and out of the Head Start Centers **MUST** be at least 18 years of age.

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

Program will track attendance patterns of each family to identify children who are unexpectedly absent and parent who has not contacted the program within one hour of program start time.

After 1 hour of non notification from parent /guardian of a child's reason for absences , the Family Services will receive list from their designated classroom teachers to make attempt / contact parent for reason of absences.

Head Start & Early Head Start children that are absent for doctor's appointments, physical therapy, speech therapy etc. will be documented as an excused absence, therefore counted as present by the teachers. When frequent absences occur, the Family Service Workers will make every attempt to contact the parents, including conducting a home visit when children experience unexplained absences, such as two or more consecutive unexplained absences. An unexplained absence does not include days a child is sick if the parent contact the center to let them know that child was out because of illness.

The teaching staff will contact parents on the 2nd consecutive day of an absence then, after three (3) consecutive days, the Family Service Worker will contact the parent. If your child is absent for three (3) consecutive days, has a pattern of absences and you have not made contact with your FSW, he/she will make three (3) attempt to contact you via telephone. If unsuccessful, then a home visit and conference will be scheduled with the Center Manager for problem-solving solutions.

If a parent informs staff that their child will be absent for several weeks, due to a family emergency, traveling out of the country, health reasons, etc. a Family Support Policy form (P must be completed by the FSW. The form will include the reason(s) for the absence, an action plan while the child is absent (which may include home center activities, physical/dental concerns etc.) and the anticipated date of return. The form must be signed by the parent, child's teacher, FSW, Center Manager and Family and Community Partnership Specialist

If your child continues to remain absent, then he/she **WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE ACTIVE ROLL** and placed on the waiting list. After thirty (30) days your child **WILL BE TERMINATED FROM THE PROGRAM**. We know that children who attend on a regular basis have a better outcome. Therefore, we want to maximize the number of days your child attends.

Please note the following attendance policy for PRE- K Children:

- Two consecutive days unexcused – A written notice will be issued.
- Three consecutive unexcused days – A written notice and parent conference will be scheduled.
- Four consecutive days- A parent conference will be scheduled and notification will be issued to Bright from the Start

This policy also covers late arrivals and early pick-up prior to dismissal. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Family Service Worker.

ASSIGNMENT TO CLASSROOM

If you have more than one child in our program, they will be placed in a separate classroom when possible, at the same center. If a transfer is needed for your child during the second year, please see your child's Teacher, Center Manager or Family Service Worker.

CLOTHING & LINEN

Young children can have bathroom accidents or are involved in messy play throughout the day. Children should have a clean change of clothing at the center at all times. Clothing should be exchanged as the seasons change so that children are adequately dressed. When a change of clothing has been worn home, please return them immediately. The child's parent/guardian should provide the change of clothing. If however, clothing is needed, notify your FSW immediately for assistance.

DAILY RECORD KEEPING

Daily notes are kept concerning the child's developmental process, social and group skills, and any other incidents that may be of interest and helpful when planning the curriculum or sharing progress reports with parents.

Daily record keeping regarding attendance, food service reports, and unusual incidents relating to child's health (such as a rash, a sore that may not be healing like it should, or a child who is unusually irritable without an apparent reason) is required by all staff.

MEALS

The children will be provided with two (2) meals; breakfast, lunch and a PM snack while in our program.

Family style meal service is observed at all meal times. Food will be served in bowls, and plates at each dining table. The children will serve themselves the portion listed on the menu as indicated by the measuring utensil. If a child does not want to eat a particular food item, the child is encouraged to have a taste but is never forced or coerced. Adequate food will be prepared to make second servings available if a child desires. No more than three servings of any one food will be served to one child. Adaptations will be made for children with special needs. Teachers, Assistants, Volunteers and guests will serve themselves from the same bowls and plates as the children. The portions served to adults will be the same as those to children. Second portions (same size as child portion) are available if there is additional food. Teachers and Assistants will take a serving of all foods on the menu, at least a tasting portion. The children will pass very heavy serving bowls or plates by sliding them along on the table. If food is hot, the Teachers and Assistants will assist in serving. Teachers, assistants, volunteers or guests WILL NOT eat or drink any food item in the classroom or at the dining table that is not being offered to the children. Each class will designate an adult and child to set the tables for the rest of the class. The adult will supervise and coach the setting of the tables. The child and the adult will wash their hands

before beginning to set the table. The children are selected to set the table by a class rotation.

The cooks will be notified in advance of food and equipment needed for special projects or extended food experience, at least TWO weeks advance.

Foods served at holidays or celebrations will be healthy and nutritious. No candy, chips, or soda pop will be served due to their low nutrient value. If children bring any food to the center, it will be returned home.

Children having difficulty eating, chewing, or eating a variety of foods may be at nutritional risk. The Teacher will notify the Family Service Worker and Health & Nutrition Specialist of these concerns and a conference may be called to discuss this with the parent.

During enrollment in Head Start, the child's nutritional needs and family's nutritional concerns will be addressed and will be reviewed by the Health and Nutrition Specialist. Eating patterns, cultural and religious preferences, and special dietary concerns will be noted and reported to all parties involved in the child's nutritional program. If any problem presents itself, with the parent's permission, the child will be referred for nutritional services. The Clayton County Head Start Program also participates in the, I'm Moving, I'm Learning Initiative (IMIL). This initiative targets obesity in young children as well as adults. The initiative is implemented on a daily basis on the Lesson plans and executed within the classrooms as a part of the daily activities.

Parent/guardian(s) ARE NOT TO BRING FOOD TO SCHOOL due to product liability (insurance) issues. This includes foods purchased in separate packages from a grocery store. NO BIRTHDAY CAKES, CUPCAKES ETC

Administrative staff will go into the classrooms during meal time at least once a month to monitor the food quality and quantity provided. Teachers and Assistants will sit with the children during mealtime and converse with them about the day, the food they are eating, upcoming events etc. Teachers model appropriate eating behavior.

All personal staff's food in the center will be labeled with the staff member's name. A designated refrigerator can be reserved for staff food not part of the USDA/CACFP program.

PLAYGROUND RULES AND SUPERVISION

Your child will participate in outdoor activities daily as the weather permits. We follow the state childcare regulations concerning outdoor play. When inclement weather occurs, teachers have alternate recreational activities on their weekly lesson plans.

NURTURING PROCEDURES

Physical touching is an important part of the care and nurturing of young children. Children feel loved, accepted and supported through the sensations of touch by nurturing adults and peers. Staff members should be sensitive to children's responses and requests for physical interaction and model appropriate nurturing touches. Except for safety or cleansing, children will always have the right to refuse touch. Children are also taught to respect adults and other children's touch preferences.

ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF TOUCH BY STAFF MEMBERS:

NURTURING TOUCHES (Spontaneous):

- Hugging, i.e. welcoming to the classroom
- Holding on laps, i.e. reading a book or during group time
- Rocking, i.e. reading story

COMFORTING TOUCHES:

- Rubbing and patting backs, i.e. saying, "thanks" or "I'm proud of you".
- All the touches listed above, plus:
- Holding or carrying in arms, i.e. when child is injured

TOILET TRAINING

Child development specialist say that teaching a child how to use the toilet is best started sometime between 30 months (2 ½ years old) and 36 months (3 years old). Consequently, because of this newly learned procedure, some three-year-olds need **REMINDERS**, even if they may say, "I don't have to go." Bathroom reminders should be issued and scheduled:

- Before going to the playground;
- Before going to lunch;
- Before and after nap time (If Applicable); and
- Before going on field trips.

Children who forget and have accidents must never be degraded by harsh words or appearances of disgust. A conference between the teacher(s) and the parent/guardian(s) will serve to establish common goals and methods. Parent/guardian(s) are encouraged to dress their child in suitable clothing (easy to get on and off). They should provide a change of clothing just in case the need arises. Accidents are to be expected. Children are admitted to Head Start without regard to whether they are toilet trained or not. Some children may start the program in diapers or pull-ups, and it is expected that staff will change diapers and assist children in positive ways to learn to use the toilet. Coordination with the family around toilet training is imperative.

REST/NAPS

Children under the age of six (6) who are in a child care facility for more than five (5) hours will have a rest and/or quiet period in accordance with the State Regulations. A

facility will provide physical care that is appropriate to each child's developmental need that will include a supervised rest period.

We will provide rest/naptime in our program, the children need a rest time to help them relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. A quiet time in the daily schedule enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be a happier child at home at the end of the day.

FIRE DRILLS

We will hold monthly fire or tornado drills and post evacuation plans. During these drills, staff will lead the children to a safe area outside of the building. Please do not be alarmed if a fire drill occurs while you are in the school building.

DAILY COMMUNICATION

Every effort will be made daily to communicate with families when they drop off and pick up their child, through direct contact, notes sent home, or through telephone calls. If there has been an unusual or special circumstance during the day, information will be passed on to the parent/guardian(s) verbally or in a written note. Serious incidents or events which the staff feel may be upsetting to the parent/guardian(s), will be communicated verbally and also written, as documentation.

HOME VISITS/PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Education staff will schedule a minimum of two home visits (2) for a full year program. The purpose of the first home visit is to provide an opportunity for the staff to get to know each child and family in their comfort of their home environment. The intent of this the first visit is to also allow parents the opportunity to provides the Teaching Staff with information to better assist them in effectively welcoming new families into the program. During this time staff will educate parent on what the program has to offer to them and their children. Parents will be encouraged to share any concerns of ask any questions that they feel are pertinent to their child's learning experience while in the program. Also, Teaching Staff will inform parent/guardian(s) of what is going on in the program and to form a partnership with them. Family participation and observation is highly encouraged during this first visit. During the 2nd Home visit, (usually beginning in latter February/March) information of the child's progress since the Winter Assessment Checkpoint is shared with the parent. Parents are encouraged to asked detailed question of what they may not understand as well as offer helpful suggestions to the teacher. Teachers also share with the parent the 2nd Family Conference form which provides the parent with detailed academic and social skills that the child has mastered as well as areas in which they still require assistance from both parent s and teachers. It is during this visit that teaching staff and parents can really plan strategies together to make sure their child is on task as they enter the Spring assessment checkpoint and prepare for kindergarten.

The Family Service Workers will conduct home visits on an as needed basis throughout the program year when circumstances arise (i.e. excessive absenteeism, family crisis, health issues etc).

Together, the Teaching staff and Family Service Workers will make every effort to meet with the family in their home, unless otherwise indicated by the parent. If for some reason the parent is uncomfortable with a meeting being held in the home, the staff will document this information in the child's folder and try to find another location to meet (i.e. local library, local fast food place, etc).

While Home visits are encouraged to be conducted in the home environment, it is not compelled.

Your child's teachers will also conduct two (2) parent/teacher conferences per year. These visits are conducted at the child's center. The first center visit (usually beginning in October/November) is to discuss your child's initial progress. Teachers also share with the parent the 1st Family Conference form which provides the parent with detailed account of the child's beginning academic and social skills levels. The purpose of the second parent/teacher conference is to exchange information and perspectives between home and school. The second visit is made late in the program (latter April/May) and the 3rd and final Family Conference Form is shared with parents at this time to show final mastery levels and to give end-of-the-year progress reports to the parents which may be necessary for Kindergarten entrance. The first half of each meeting will consist of families informing the staff about their understanding of the child's growth and development since the last meeting. The second half of each meeting will consist of staff sharing their assessment and observation of the child's growth.

Staff will always attempt to communicate with families in a positive and supportive manner that encourages the parent-child relationship. Information concerning family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially. In the event of divorce, separation, joint custody ruling etc., every effort will be made to treat both parents equally. Without legal documentation, the staff cannot act as though one parent is more fit than another to the legal rights of the child.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

The purpose of the Family Partnership Agreement is to support parent/guardian(s) in identifying their own strengths, interests and goals. We feel that fathers are very important and play an integral role in a child's development. Therefore, we want to include them in this process, even if they are not residing in the home with the child. The FSW's will encourage both parents, (if possible) to be a part of the family partnership process. This includes writing down goals and interests, as well as, setting timetables for achieving them. Your FSW's will schedule meeting times to complete the Family Partnership Agreement. After the initial meeting, your FSW will continue to follow up and work with you to achieve your family goals and document accomplishments.

HEALTH AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

We MUST keep up-to-date emergency contact information about your child in our files at all times. Any change of information from parents must be given to the Family Service Worker, child's teacher or Center Manager to ensure that the master files are updated.

Designated staff at each center **MUST** have current First Aid and CPR certification. In the event of an emergency, either the parent or the emergency contact person(s) must be contacted as soon as possible.

SICK CHILD PROCEDURES

Please do not send your child to school if he/she displays any of the following symptoms: fever, cold (runny nose, coughing, and sneezing), vomiting, diarrhea, skin rashes, pink eye and ringworm. When a child is sent to school sick, it is dangerous to his/her health and the health of the other children. Please notify the center if your child is being kept home because of sickness.

If a child becomes ill while at the center, he/she must be isolated from the other children. The parent must be contacted and informed to make arrangements to have their child taken home.

The Family Service Worker, Center Manager or child's teacher will contact the parent if the child has a fever of 100 degrees F, has diarrhea, is vomiting or has other medical conditions that cause concern. Parents are asked to be considerate of other children enrolled in the center and to keep a sick child at home if signs of illness are evident.

Staff is required to document unusual incidents relating to the health of the child, such as bowel movements with blood, a sore that may not be healing or a child who is unusually irritable without an apparent reason. All incident reports must be kept confidential and will be brought to the parent's attention by the child's Teacher, Family Service Worker or Center Manager.

Some common childhood diseases and guidelines are listed below:

Fever: A temperature of 100 degrees or higher. The child must stay home until his/her temperature is normal without medication for 24 hours.

Diarrhea: Watery or foamy bowel movements, more frequently than usual. Diarrhea is defined as three or four watery stools during a period of two hours. If the child is sent home for diarrhea, he/she should not return to the center until at least one normal bowel movement has occurred.

Vomiting: Once within a 24 hour period.

Impetigo: A skin infection consisting of blisters surrounded by a reddened area. When the blisters break, the surface becomes raw, weeps and oozes. The lesions eventually become crusted and yellowish.

Conjunctivitis: An eye infection commonly referred to as "pink eye" in which the eye is generally red with some burning and sometimes a thick yellow drainage). The child must be on medication for 24 hours and all signs of the irritation must be gone before returning to the center.

Bronchitis: Begins with hoarseness, cough and a slight elevation in temperature. The cough may be dry and painful and then becomes loose.

Strep Throat: If the doctor diagnoses strep infection, the child should be on medication for 24 hours before returning to the center.

The following are contagious childhood diseases:

- Chicken pox
- Impetigo
- Lice or scabies
- Ringworm or other fungus infections
- Pinworms
- Giardia or other parasites
- Strep throat
- Skin rashes
- Pink eye
- Sinus infection (green or yellow drainage from sinus)
- Cold with fever

Some common childhood diseases and guidelines for when the child may return to the center is listed below:

<u>Disease/Illness:</u>	<u>May not return to the center until:</u>
Chicken Pox	When all lesions have dried or scabbed over (5-7 days)
Impetigo	After lesions have healed
Measles	Return is advised by a physician
Conjunctivitis	Return is advised by a physician
Ringworm (in scalp)	Doctor's statement indicating condition has been treated with medication
Scarlet Fever	Adequately treated and temperature is completely gone
Mumps	All swelling has disappeared or upon the advice of a physician
Strep Throat	Adequately treated and temperature is completely gone
Whooping Cough	On the advice of a physician and the cough is completely gone

Head Start reserves the right to send the child home and/or require a note from the child's physician before re-admitting him/her into the center under these conditions.

IMMUNIZATIONS

To attend Head Start your child **MUST** have a current immunization certificate (form #3231) and he/she **MUST** maintain all shots required by the Georgia Health Laws. During the year, please forward update immunization information to your Family Service Worker. This information will be kept in your child's folder. The Health & Nutrition Specialists will also keep a copy for an annual inspection by a Georgia Child Licensing Reviewer. If your child's certificate is not current, he/she will not be able to attend classes until it is updated.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION

Prescribed medication may be administered. However, staff must check to ensure that it is in the original container, is not expired, the name of the child/dosage to be administered, the name of the prescribing doctor listed on the original container and has written parental consent. The Center Manager or assigned staff will administer medicine. Also, staff will log all medications given on a Medication Form. All medications kept at the center must be kept in a locked box away from access to children at all times. All empty or unused medication containers are returned to the parent.

Medications to control fever will not be administered (children with a fever are considered sick and are to stay home).

SAFETY AND INCIDENT REPORTS

We encourage all parents to report any health and safety hazards to the Center Manager, Family Service Worker or child's teacher. It is very important to note unusual or strange circumstances that may cause an accident or become a safety issue.

If necessary, a Daily Health Checklist will be completed by the child's teacher. This report documents any unusual signs, marks or bruises that a child may have when he/she arrives. It also documents things such as a sore that is not healing properly, or if your child is unusually irritable without any apparent reason. We also keep Incident Reports on your child, if necessary. If your child gets a minor scratch, bump or bruise while in school, we will note it on the incident report and give a copy to you. All incident reports are kept confidential and signed by the Center Manager.

AUTHORIZATION FOR EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL TREATMENT

Parents must sign consent forms allowing their child to receive Emergency Medical/Dental treatment, if necessary. In the event the parent or emergency contact cannot be located, the consent form can be used to seek treatment until the parent or guardian arrives.

ACCIDENTS

Minor accidents requiring first aid will be treated in the Center Manager's office. If the child sustains any type of head injury, bump or broken skin, the child's parent must be notified by the Family Service Worker, Center Manager or child's teacher immediately. The teacher must prepare an Incident Report immediately after the

child is treated and it must be signed by the Center Manager. The Original will go to the child's parent, a copy will be placed in the child's file; a copy will be given to the Center Manager and a copy will go to the Health & Nutrition Specialist. First aid will consist of a cold compress when appropriate. Open wounds may be cleaned using soap and water only. A non-medicated band aide or sterile cloth may be used to cover the exposed area. Under no circumstances are topical medications or sprays to be applied.

Serious accidents might occur inside the center or on the playground. The first step is for the staff member to assess the extent of the injury. If the child is not able to be moved, the following procedures will be followed:

- * If the child has sustained a head, neck or spinal cord injury, has an obvious leg or arm fracture or is unconscious, a staff member will call 911 Emergency Medical Services (EMS) and the parent/guardian immediately.
- * If the child has none of the above and is able to be moved, the child's parent/guardian can choose to transport the child to the doctor or emergency room.
- * The Center Manager will call ahead to alert the emergency room or doctor with pertinent information.
- * Emergency records will be sent to the hospital with the adult accompanying the child if it is not the parent or legal guardian.
- * If the child is not accompanied by a parent/guardian or emergency contact person, a Head Start staff person will accompany the child in the EMS vehicle. Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES are staff to transport an injured child.

HOLIDAYS, SCHOOL CLOSINGS & CELEBRATIONS INCLEMENTS WEATHER/SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Severe winter storms are usually forecast far enough in advance to allow for preparation. Clayton County Head Start will follow the decision of the Clayton County Public Schools in determining school delays or closure for inclement weather. For example, if Clayton County Public Schools is operating on a 2-hour delay, the children in our program will operate on a 2-hour delay. Parents are encouraged to listen to the local news or radio for school closings.

HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

Young children can be over stimulated by the consumerism associated with major holidays (Halloween, Christmas, Easter, etc.) The program is interested in facilitating an environment which offers meaningful experiences for children so there is not an emphasis on specific holiday celebrations or activities. Children will be exposed to meaningful experiences within their own family traditions, which they will be asked to share with the class. Conversations about the diversity of ways that people celebrate is encouraged and will be included as part of our multicultural and anti-bias curriculum.

END OF YEAR/EXIT CELEBRATION/INTERNATIONAL DAY

At the end of each program year, Clayton County CSA Inc. Head Start program celebrate our uniqueness and our differences by showing appreciation to the children,

families and the community that we serve through International Day activities. This event includes a parade of countries, games and field day activities for the children and families. Also community vendors are onsite to offer an array of information and resources for families. It is always our intent to provide developmentally -age- appropriate activities to the children that we serve. Children that leave our program to attend Kindergarten in the fall are simply TRANSITIONING to the next level; therefore the Clayton County CSA Head Start program does not conduct ANY type of GRADUATION ceremonies. This also includes CAP & GOWN PICTURES. Please be informed that activities such as Graduation and Graduation picture taking are “PROHIBITED”

DISCIPLINE POLICY

GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE/SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

The long term goal for children enrolled in the program is to provide a setting where children can slowly develop a sense of inner self-control; that they can begin to understand the reasons for limits that are set, and develop a sense of both being respected and respecting other’s rights and feelings.

When behavior problems arise, staff is encouraged to look at classroom routines, the environment and individual needs of the child in order to help the child overcome the behavior. Classrooms are also equipped with behavior modification kits used by teaching staff to assist children in controlling their behavior. Parents are also expected and may be required to assist with their child’s uncontrollable behavior by volunteering in the classroom to provide extra assistance to the teaching staff if deemed necessary by the Mental Health Consultant. It is important for all adults to be aware of the language, the tone of voice and the manner of speech used when working with young children. Providing each child with choices, foreseeing problems and responding to their needs immediately enables us to help the child positively without having to use direct discipline.

The program will limit the use of suspension due to child’s behavior. Temporary suspension will be the last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications.

Before the program determines whether a temporary suspension is necessary, the program will engage with mental health consultant, collaborative with parents, and utilized appropriate community resources. If a temporary is deemed necessary, the program will help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible, while ensuring child safety.

One of the goals of guidance and discipline is to help children develop the necessary skills for problem solving. Discipline is the external tool to help children develop internal control. Young children learn by experimenting, testing limits and experiencing the consequences of their behavior.

TIME OUT / EXCLUSION

Clayton County Head Start Program **DOES NOT** support the use of “traditional” time out. Positive statements such as, “Do you need to be alone for a while, should be used to help the child recognize the need to quiet himself/herself. Other statements such as, “This seems to be hard for you right now, can I help you find something else to do?” allows children a choice in choosing a more appropriate activity for that time.

Children may be invited to work independently for a short time in order to gain self-control, and in those cases, the child has an open invitation from the teacher to return to the group when he/she feels ready. At any time a child is allowed to have some quiet time alone, he/she **MUST BE** supervised and monitored by one of the teaching staff and the child **MUST** be engaged in some type of quiet activity, (books, soft toys, audio listening). If the child refuses to participate in quiet activities provided, the teacher must stay near and close until he settles down enough to rejoin the group.

STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT (PROHIBITED ACTIONS)

- a. Children shall not be subject to any form of corporal punishment, including rough handling, shoving, hair pulling, shaking, slapping, kicking, biting, pinching, hitting or spanking, bind or tie a child to restrict movement or tape a child’s mouth
- b. Children shall not be subjected to any form of emotional abuse, including name calling, ostracism, shaming, making derogatory remarks about the child or his family, or using sarcastic language that threatens, humiliates or frightens the child.
- c. Withholding of food as punishment or reward, using toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child
- d. Use isolation unless supervised to discipline a child.
- e. Using any form of emotional abuse, including public or private humiliation, rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, or corrupting a child, and physically abusing a child.
- f. Using physical activity or outdoor time as a punishment
- g. Yelling or raising voice (unless the child is in some type of danger, such as running into the street and traffic is coming).

PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT (PROHIBITED ACTIONS)

The Clayton County CSA, Inc. Head Start Program will not allow the following:

- a) No Threatening of Staff, Parents, or Children.
- b) No Physical/Verbal Abuse or Punishment of your children or other children in the program.
- c) No Screaming in Anger; No Frightening or Humiliating Punishment.
- d) No Smoking on or inside the premises.
- e) Not Abiding by Safety Policy
- f) No Quarreling with other Parents or Staff (Please refer all complaints or issues to the Center Manager or Family Service Workers).

- g) **No Violating the Confidentiality Policy**
- h) **Adhere to the “DRESS CODE” (No Pajamas, House Robe, and Sagging or Loosely Hanging Pants exposing your undergarment.
ALL MEN ARE REQUIRED TO WEAR A BELT WITH THEIR PANTS.
No Clothing with suggestive, derogatory, non-therapeutic, objectionable slogans or insignia printed on it.
No clothing that promotes or advertises tobacco or alcohol products. No ripped or torn clothing.**
- i) **No Cell Phone Usage Inside the Building Unless an EMERGENCY.**
- j) **Do Not Allow Children to Bring Toys, Jewelry, Food, or Snack From Home (PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD BOOK BAG DAILY).**
- k) **No Swearing/Cursing Inside or Outside the Premises.**
- l) **No Early Pick-Up or Late Pick-Up WITHOUT Proper Notification or Approval. (Please see Center Manager or Family Service Worker).**

It is our school policy and Georgia State Law that children must not be physically or emotionally abused or punished. Parents must abide by this policy when at any Head Start center.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY: IDENTIFICATION AND REPORTING

All staff members are MANDATED by law to report any suspected abuse and neglect. This is in accordance with the Child Abuse Reporting Act. We will not be able to let a parent know if a report has been made so that Child Protective Services is able to investigate. Our reporting does not place blame; we only report signs and symptoms of suspected abuse or neglect.

In accordance with both Federal/State Regulations, all staff working in facilities in which children are cared for, including the Clayton County Head Start Program, are required to report suspect child abuse or neglect to an agency designated to receive and investigate reports.

REPORTABLE SITUATIONS INCLUDE, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:

- 1. Continuous bruises, sores or other injuries observed on the child’s body, even though the source or event of injury is unknown;**
- 2. Abandonment of a child by a parent or guardian;**
- 3. Suspected sexual abuse;**
- 4. Absence of proper parental control or subsistence, education, medical or other care of control necessary for the child’s well being.**

Head Start program parents and families are informed of laws regarding child abuse and neglect reporting procedures. The Family Service Workers or Center Manager provides this information at enrollment and continuously throughout the program.

Training on the detection of abuse and neglect, as well as the program's reporting procedure is reviewed annually for employees and parents. All new employees are trained on child abuse and neglect identification and reporting during the pre-employment orientation.

NOTE: If you are aware that your child has been accidentally injured while in your care (after school hours, weekends etc.), PLEASE make sure you inform your child's teacher upon entrance into the classroom the following school day. This act of concern protects ALL of us from the accusation of child abuse.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF FILES

All files of Head Start children are confidential. Center Managers, Family Service Workers, Specialists, Therapists, Teachers, Federal Reviewers and other approved staff are the only people who have access to these files. Parents have the right to view their child's file at any time during normal business hours. All persons viewing files MUST sign a Record of Access form. This form is attached to your child's individual file.

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

Clayton County Head Start will not release information from a child's record or file without the parent signing the Release of Information Form. Parents have the right not to sign the release. The consent is good for one year from the date signed and shall be revocable at any time.

The parent may choose to sign a release allowing Head Start staff to disclose specifically identified information to other providers/agencies if:

- 1. The release lists the specific agencies, providers or individuals to whom information may be given.**
- 2. The release specifies the type of information that will be given and the form (video or audio tape, written report, oral report etc.).**
- 3. The parent is given an opportunity to limit the information provided under the release, and to limit the agencies, providers or persons with whom information may be shared.**

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

We provide educational services to children with disabilities ages 3, 4 and 5. If your child has been evaluated as having a disability, contact the Center Manager upon enrollment. You will be asked to provide copies of all assessments or evaluations done on your child. This information will be given to the Disabilities & Mental Health Specialist who will also share this information with the Education Specialist. The information you provide will be kept confidential. All newly enrolled children will receive a Developmental screening (Ages & Stages -3 Questionnaire), 10 days after entrance into the program which will be used to assist staff in planning your child's developmental needs and educational growth. If the result of the screening yields

disability concerns in academic learning or behavior, with your consent, Head Start will assist you in getting to the appropriate referral agency for further evaluation. The teacher will first discuss the disability with the Family Service Worker, Center Manager and parent. From there, the teacher will do an In-house referral to the Disabilities & Mental Health Specialist for screening and follow-up. The Disabilities & Mental Health Specialist will stay in close contact with the Education Specialist for support through the process especially if the disability concern is of the academic spectrum.

SERVICES PROVIDED TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Public law 94-142: the Education for All Handicapped Children Act was passed by Congress in 1975 to establish a “right to education” for all handicapped children.”

Public Law 99-457: Enacted by congress in 1986, this law extends the provisions of Public Law (P.L.) 94-142 to children from birth through age five.

IDEA: Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (Part B, Local Education Agencies and Part C Early Intervention Infant/Toddler Programs)

Children are eligible for services if they are professionally diagnosed as meeting one of the following categories of disabilities:

- * Hearing Impairments/Deaf
- * Orthopedic Impairments
- * Developmental Impairments
- * Speech/Language Impairments
- * Visual Impairments/Blind
- * Traumatic Brain Injury
- * Autism
- * Specific Learning Disabilities
- * Mental Retardation
- * Physical Disabilities
- * Emotional/Behavior Disorder
- * Other Health Impairments

Inclusion in a Head Start setting provides children with disabilities, an opportunity to learn, play and live with non-disabled children. Inclusion helps children develop healthy attitudes about each other and themselves and starts them down the path toward becoming responsible, aware participants in an adult society.

PARENT/COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER INFORMATION

Head Start was founded in 1965 with the belief that the child’s development depends on caring adults spending quality time with their children. Head Start believes that the parents are the child’s first and most important teacher because they are the most significant adults in his/her life. It is our goal to promote the parent/child relationship and help parents in the difficult task of child rearing. We do this partly by using volunteers. Some are parents; others are people from the community. We use our volunteers in every area of the school. Many classroom and program activities provide opportunities for parent and community involvement.

Families will be encouraged to visit and participate as a volunteer at any time. In this manner, families can gain a deeper understanding of their child and the Head Start program.

PARENTS CAN VOLUNTEER FOUR WAYS AT HEAD START:

- 1. Parents working with their children at home.**
- 2. Parent-sponsored activities in the program.**
- 3. Parent participation in the decision-making process (i.e. Policy Council, Advisory Committee or some other committee).**
- 4. Volunteering in the classroom or in some other part of the program.**

CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS

Detailed records are kept on the number of hours you volunteer or any in-kind contributions (i.e. toys, books, etc.), and from these records we recognize our volunteers yearly for their outstanding contributions to the school. Staff will ensure that any parent or person that volunteers on a regular basis (more than twice a week on continuous basis) must show documentation of TB screen and criminal background check. These actions will not be a requirement for occasional volunteers.

Parents who meet the minimum job qualifications are given preferential consideration for employment. They are urged to donate their time and unique services to the Head Start Program. They can serve as substitute teachers, classroom volunteers, office workers, or other areas in the school. Parents are always welcome in the classroom. However, in a few instances, the child may be best served if the parent works in a classroom other than the one his/her child is in, or another part of the program.

The benefits of volunteering or working in the Head Start Program are many. A parent or community volunteer will gain experience that may be useful in a future or current job. Head Start honors volunteers in special Awards ceremonies each year. For more information about volunteering, contact your Center Manager or our Family and Community Partnership Specialist at 404-363-6710.

VOLUNTEER ACTIVITIES

Volunteer time is given to Head Start by parents or community members cooperating in the following ways:

- Parents accompany children for medical and dental appointments.**
- Parents accompany children on field trips.**
- Parents volunteer as assistants in classrooms, attend meetings and workshops.**
- Parents or other family members take an active part in participating with assisting the child/children complete their Home Center Activities.**
- Parents provide transportation for other parents.**

POLICY COUNCIL-SHARED GOVERNANCE

Parents can express an interest and possibly be elected to be members of the Policy Council and attend meetings. Parents may attend training sessions that are planned for them, including out-of-town conferences.

POLICY COUNCIL

The Clayton County Head Start Policy Council participates in shared governance of Head Start. The Policy Council functions as a link to parent committees in communicating with parents enrolled in the Head Start program. Policy Council members operate as the voice for the parents who have children currently enrolled in the program. The Policy Council is made up of 51% parents and 49% community members. A parent and an alternate member are elected from the center and one from every 40 children for each child care site and meet once a month. Policy Council members receive formal training on their roles and responsibilities. The Policy Council representative's role is to express the ideas and viewpoints of the parents at the center they represent.

Policy Council members cannot be a Clayton County Head Start employee, nor can they be related to any Clayton County Head Start employee by blood or marriage. There is a lifetime limit of three (3) one year terms to serve on the Policy Council.

PARENT COMMITTEES

Parents are automatically on the parent committee. Parent committees are formed at the center level for parent participation. Every parent who has a currently enrolled child is a member of the parent committee. Other committees such as the Newsletter, Health Advisory Committee, Education Advisory Committee, etc. also ensure input in the decision-making processes that involve their children's education.

PARENT COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities and services.
- Plan, conduct and participate in informal, as well as, formal programs and activities for parents and staff (e.g., center parent committee meetings, family picnics, family field trips, etc.).
- Play a vital role in recruiting and interviewing employees by helping determine how and where to recruit potential employees when needed and to participate in the interview process.
- Assist in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education.
- Identify how volunteers and community resources can extend program services.
- Suggest where to look for community volunteers and resources.
- Collaborate with local foundations and other organizations to advocate on behalf of low-income family needs.

- **Locate resources to carry out program activities as part of the matching non-federal share.**
- **Bring parents together to share common interest.**
- **Work with the Policy Council to support program development and implementation.**
- **Plan programs and activities for parents and staff. Parent Committees are encouraged to discover and discuss what parents would like to do, what they would like to learn and to discuss how ideas can be realized with or without staff assistance.**
- **Assist in securing funding, recruit parents, and other resources to support desired parent driven activities.**

PARENT ACTIVITY FUND

The purpose of this fund will be explained during Center/Parent Committees Meetings. Parents will be encouraged to use the money for educational purposes at their child's center upon approval by the Policy Council.

CLAYTON COUNTY HEAD START BOARD OF DIRECTORS (GOVERNING BOARD)

The Clayton County Head Start Board of Directors has the administrative and fiscal responsibility for the Clayton County Head Start Program. As the Governing Board for the Head Start Program, the Clayton County Head Start Board of Directors is a partner in the shared governance of the Head Start Program.

COMPLAINT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

If you have a concern about your child's development, we encourage you to discuss it first, with your child's teacher. It is important that you discuss with your child's teacher and Family Service Worker, any concerns that you may have involving behavior, activities, health or emotional well being. The more information you share about your child, the better we can care for your child and help him/her develop his/her learning skills.

It is our policy to work closely with you and your child to create a positive learning experience. We encourage you to share comments and concerns with Head Start staff. Your concerns will always be addressed. We respect your rights as parents and we ask that you respect us as childcare providers.

Program administrators WILL NOT TOLERATE blatant disrespect of any staff member. Should this occur, your child may be suspended from receiving future childcare services from Head Start.

If you are dissatisfied with any part of our program, please discuss it first with your child's teacher or Family Service Worker. If you are still dissatisfied, then please see your Center Manager. If you are still unsatisfied, you can request to see the Head Start Director. You may file a formal written complaint by completing the Parent Complaint Form in this Handbook. The Head Start Director will respond directly to your complaint.

PARTICIPANTS FAIR HEARING PROCEDURES

The Clayton County CSA, Inc. will ensure that the Board of Directors and the Head Start Policy Council members are fully involved in any complaint that individuals has against the agency / Head Start program. Upon the assures that fair hearings shall be held for all dissatisfied individuals, upon their request, who are applying for assistance under this program where one or more of the following situations occur. If the problem is not resolved with the program or grantee, all community complaints will be brought before the Policy Council and the Board of Directors. The following are grounds for a hearing:

1. The applicant is denied services.
2. The application is neither denied nor approved within forty-five (45) days after application, unless the delay was caused by the applicant's lack of cooperation in providing necessary and reasonable evidence.
3. The payment (if applicable) is less than the applicant believes it should be.
4. The payment (if applicable) is to be made in a lesser amount than the applicant was notified of earlier.

You may request a hearing by applying to the administrative office of the Clayton County CSA, Inc / Head Start program where you completed your application. The agency will appoint a hearing officer to assure that these hearings meet the following standards.

1. Hearing shall be held in a place reasonably convenient to the claimant.
2. The claimant shall be afforded an opportunity to review the case file.
3. The hearing officer(s) shall be an agency representative who is not involved in the decision being appealed.
4. The claimant shall be properly advised of and guaranteed of their rights, which include:
 - The right to permit a representative to accompany him/her to the hearing.
 - The right to present oral and written statements and other evidence.
 - The right to have witnesses subpoenaed.
 - The right to cross-examine witnesses.
 - The right to bring an interpreter if needed.
5. All testimony will be given under oath.
6. All hearings shall be recorded and the decision based on the record.

It is the intent of the agency to make certain that all appeals and/or requests for hearings are responded to in an orderly, equitable and timely manner. Therefore, when an applicant is dissatisfied because of one or more of the reasons cited, it shall be the responsibility of the Clayton County CSA, Inc. / Head Start program to provide for an informal conference between the applicant and/or his/her representative and the Executive Director or his designee, provided that such designee has not been involved in the decision being appealed. The informal conference must take place within three (3) working days from the date of the request for a Fair Hearing. The agency should render a decision during this conference unless additional information is required.

If the applicant is satisfied with the decision rendered in the informal conference, then the agency shall notify the applicant in writing of its decision and the action taken to carry out the decision.

If the applicant is not satisfied with the decision rendered in the informal conference the local agency official shall advise the applicant, prior to adjournment of the informal conference of the procedures for utilizing the next step of the preliminary appeal.

Any applicant seeking assistance or service who is dissatisfied with a decision rendered by the Clayton County CSA, Inc. / Head Start Program at this point the Board of Directors and Head Start Policy Council will be involved and make appropriate recommendations for resolution. A dissatisfied applicant shall have sixty (60) days from the date of application to file an appeal with the Executive Director of the agency, or his designee, based on the negative decision rendered by the agency.

**CLAYTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES AUTHORITY, INC
HEAD START PROGRAM/ PRE-K PROGRAM**

PARENT COMPLAINT FORM

Name of Complainant: _____ **Center:**

Address:

Telephone Number: (Home) _____ **(Work)** _____
(Cell) _____ **Best time to call:** _____ **am/pm**

Please describe the complaint: (date, place, who, etc.)

Please state the action that you think would resolve this:

Signature

Date

**ONCE COMPLETED DELIVER IN SEALED ENVELOPE TO: MRS. NSUK,
HEAD START DIRECTOR, 667 SOUTH AVE., FOREST PARK, GA. 30297**

**CLAYTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES AUTHORITY INC.
HEAD START / EARLY HEAD START / PRE-K PROGRAM**

PARENT PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

I parent/guardian of _____ – participating in the Clayton County Head Start / Early Head Start/ Pre-K Program, understand that I have rights and responsibilities defined by the program and will adhere to them during the school year.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING PARENTAL RIGHTS VERY CAREFULLY:

1. I am responsible for the delivery and pick-up of my child at the Head Start / Early Head Start /Pre-K Program each day. I will observe the delivery time of 8:00am (**NO LATER THAN 8:30AM**) and the pick up time of 2:30pm (**NO LATER THAN 2:45 PM**) on the following days, Monday through Friday; holidays excluded. However, children enrolled in the Pre-K Program are required to be in class promptly at 8:00am and picked up promptly at 2:30pm. (**NO EXCEPTIONS**). Children in Child Care site are required to be picked up by 6:00pm if you are working or in training and eligible for child care subsidies.
2. I agree that my child will attend the program daily, unless he/she is ill, and I also understand that regular attendance is defined by the Federal Government as a way for the program to continue to receive money to operate.
3. I agree that my child will remain at the center for the full day of operation (8:00am - 2:30pm) on the following days, Monday through Friday. My child will receive the following meals while in Head Start's care, breakfast, lunch and snack. I understand it is important for my child to remain the entire day in order to receive the full benefit of the program.
4. I agree to notify the center in the morning if my child is unable to attend due to illness. I also agree to notify the center if my child has an appointment of any kind that will cause him/her to be late or absent.
5. I agree to the Head Start / Early Head Start staff making Home Visits at my convenience, during the school year or agree to meet at another mutual location.

6. I agree to my child going on all field trips planned by the center as long as I receive information prior to the trip, such as the date, time, place, departure and return. I also understand I may accompany my child on these trips by making arrangements with the Head Start Center Manager as it relates to children in Head Start and Pre-K. **(NOTE: TRANSPORTATION MAY NOT ALWAYS BE AVAILABLE FOR PARENTS ON ALL FIELD TRIPS. EARLY HEAD START CHILDREN ARE EXCLUDED FROM FIELD TRIPS).**
7. I agree to notify the center of any change in my address, telephone numbers and work location etc. in order to be reached during school hours in case of an emergency. I also agree to contact the center in advance, if I have any persons (other than those listed on my pick-up list) pick-up my child and will inform them to submit their identification upon arrival.
8. I agree to participate in the Head Start/ Early Head Start/ Pre-K program:
- As a volunteer at the center if my schedule permits.
 - Attend Parent Committee Meetings on a monthly basis whenever possible.
 - Attend training sessions and workshops whenever possible.

I FULLY UNDERSTAND THESE RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES AND WILL ADHERE TO THEM DURING THE SCHOOL YEAR.

Parent/Guardian's Signature

Date

Protection for the Privacy of Child Records

**CONSENT TO RELEASE MY CHILD'S EDUCATIONAL RECORDS
(Minor Under 18)**

The Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides certain rights to parents of students under 18 years old concerning the privacy of, and access to, the child's personally identifiable information, including Educational Records. Except as otherwise permitted by law, no educational agency may disclose any personally identifiable information contained in your child's files without your signed and written consent unless a specific exception is provided in FERPA. If you want/will allow an educational agency to disclose your student's information to another person or non-custodial parent, you must complete, date, and sign this form and return it to Clayton County Head Start/ Early Head Start & Pre-K Program.

YOU MUST COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION (please print or type):

Student's Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____
School Name: _____ School Site: _____
Your name: _____ Relationship to Student: _____
Address: _____
Home Phone#: _____ Cell Phone#: _____
Work Phone#: _____ Email Address: _____

AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION

I, _____, HEREBY AUTHORIZE MY CHILD'S SCHOOL, Clayton County Head Start/ Early Head Start & Pre-K Program, TO RELEASE ANY AND ALL OF MY CHILD'S DEMOGRAPHIC AND ACADEMIC DATA, INCLUDING NAME, DATE OF BIRTH, SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER, GRADE LEVEL, GENDER, ETHNICITY, DISCIPLINE AND ATTENDANCE INFORMATION, FOR ANY PURPOSE RELATED TO SCHOOL DISTRICT. I UNDERSTAND THAT MY CHILD'S NAME WILL NOT BE PUBLISHED IN ANY REPORT; HIS/HER DATA WILL BE AGGREGATED FOR REPORTING PURPOSES.

I acknowledge by my signature below that although I am not required to release any of my child's Educational Records, I am giving consent to release my child's personal information as indicated above to _____. I understand that this consent will remain in effect until and unless I revoke such consent in writing and the revocation is received by the Clayton County Head Start/ Early Head Start & Pre-K Program.

Parent's Signature Date

RETURN the completed form to:

(Appropriate on-site Family Community Partnership Specialist at the Clayton County Head Start/EHS & Pre-K Program

**CLAYTON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES AUTHORITY, INC
HEAD START PROGRAM/ PRE-K PROGRAM**

PARENT HANDBOOK RECEIPT VERIFICATION

This is to verify that I have received a copy of the Clayton County Parent Handbook:

Parent/Guardian: _____

Date: _____

Child's Name _____

Center _____

Teacher(s) _____

Classroom _____

By Signing this Parent Handbook, I acknowledge that I will adhere to all policies

And procedures of the Clayton County CSA Inc. Head Start Program.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Center Manager

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Witness

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Clayton County Community Services Authority Inc.
Head Start / Pre- K Program

CHILDREN'S CALENDAR

2017 -2018

August 7, 2017	Head Start & Pre - K Children Return
September 4, 2017	All Children Out - Labor Day
October 9 - 10, 2017	All Children Out – Fall Break Staff - In - Service Day
November 20 - 24, 2017	All Children Out - Thanksgiving Holiday
December 25 -29, 2017	All Children Out - Winter Holiday
January 1, 2018	All Children/ Staff Out New Year Holiday
January 9, 2018	Children Return from Winter Holidays
January 15, 2018	All Children & Staff Out – MLK Holiday
February 19, 2018	All Children & Staff Out – President Day
February 20, 2018	All Children Out – Winter Break Day Staff - In-service Day
April 2 - 6, 2018	All Children Out – Spring Break
May 22, 2018	Head Start & Pre-K Children Last Day of School