

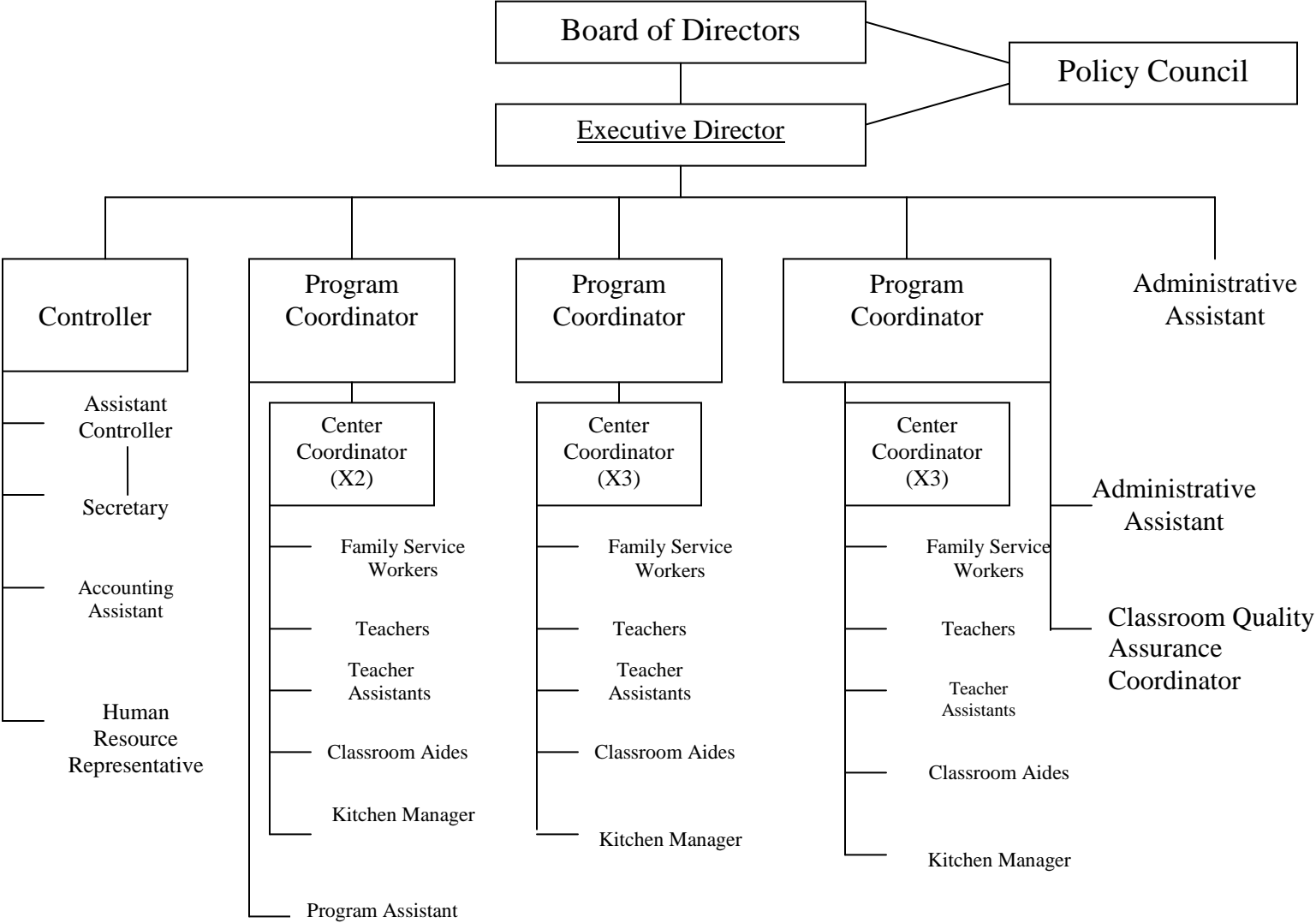
New Castle County Head Start, Inc.  
 Administrative Office  
 256 Chapman Rd., Suite 103  
 Newark, DE 19702  
 452-1500

Absalom Jones Center	999-8480	Manor Park Center	328-9454
Bear Center	832-2212	Marshallton	225-3790
Claymont Center	792-9065	Newark Center	224-3529
Lambson Center	655-5070	Rose Hill Center	654-9995

<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>
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# New Castle County Head Start, Inc.

## Organizational Chart



WELCOME! New Castle County Head Start, Inc. is pleased that you have chosen to enroll your child into the nations premier early childhood education program, Head Start.

Our program believes that parents are the primary educators of their children and we are committed to make every effort to support you in this most important role. As a Head Start parent you are encouraged to participate in the program at many levels. This includes but is not limited to being a classroom volunteer, serving on the parent center committee or serving in a governance role on the agency's Policy Council.

Your children will be cared for by a professional staff that is caring, qualified, and conscientious. Please feel free to ask questions and get involved with the program. In addition to your child's Teacher, the Center Coordinator and Family Service Worker are key persons for you to get to know as they will be your primary source of information.

I wish you well in your experience with New Castle County Head Start, Inc. Please remember that all parents have questions and sometimes concerns. We are here to work with you and with all families to provide the best educational environment possible. We ask that you work with us also in implementing the rules and regulations that helps us provide a safe and nurturing situation for all children.

I hope to see you sometime throughout the program year. Good luck and welcome to the Head Start family.

Sincerely,

*Jeffrey E. Benatti*

Jeffrey E. Benatti  
Executive Director

Welcome to the program!

This handbook is intended for use by parents/guardians of children in the Head Start program. It is important that you review this handbook to help ensure that your child's experience at Head Start is positive and productive. **Please sign and submit the parent signature sheet to the Center Coordinator or Family Service Worker as proof that you received this handbook.**

We wish you and your children a wonderful experience at New Castle County Head Start.

### **Mission Statement**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. is dedicated to enhancing the cognitive, social, emotional and physical well being of children and families in New Castle County, Delaware. The agency provides quality early care and educational programs for preschool children, as well as supportive family services in partnership with parents and their communities.

### **Vision Statement**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. strives to be a model collaborative, early education agency promoting individual growth and personal achievement for children and their families.

### **Core Values**

The following core values reflect the agency's relationship with our children, parents, staff, Board of Directors, Policy Council members, collaborative partners, volunteers and community.

#### **CHILD, PARENT AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**

We embrace and support the growth and self actualization of everyone involved with New Castle County Head Start, Inc.

#### **RESPECT**

We strive to treat all with care, compassion, dignity, equality and trust.

#### **COMMUNICATION**

We encourage on-going, open and honest expression of all points of view.

#### **DIVERSITY**

We welcome a broad representation of experiences, perspectives and cultures.

### **Bad Weather Bus Stops**

Each bus route may change stops in the event of bad weather. You will be informed of those stops. These stops will only be in effect on days when radio announcements are made.

Emergency closings for bad weather will be broadcast on: WDEL – 1150 AM and WSTW – 93.7 FM beginning at 6:00 a.m. You may also check snow watch on the internet.

**State of Emergency**

In the event of a community, state, or national emergency, please listen to WDEL, 1150 AM and WSTW, 93.7 FM, to find out information about center closings, special instructions and dismissal.

**Hours of Operation**

PART DAY PROGRAM	FULL DAY PROGRAM
Children – 9:15 a.m. – 1:15 p.m.	Children – 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Staff - 8:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.	Staff – 7:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

The daily schedule, behavior management policies, menus, parent notices and emergency evacuation procedures are posted in the classroom. Please feel free to examine the parent bulletin boards located in each classroom and office.

**Please Dress Your Child:**

- In simple clothing that is easy for your child to manage by himself
- In “play clothing” that is washable. Children will be using messy art materials
- In closed toe rubber soled shoes or sneakers

**Please send in a change of clothing for you child for emergency purposes.**

**Services Offered:**

For Children:

- Use of Creative Curriculum – children use environment productively and see themselves as capable learners
- Use of Doors to Discovery Curriculum – focuses on increasing the students’ speaking and listening vocabulary to develop language skills
- Pyramid Model – promotes healthy social and emotional development for early learning
- Fun and creative daily program for all children including those with disabilities
- Developmental screenings and follow up
- Breakfast, lunch and snack (Full Day Program) served with Family Style Dining
- Organized, print rich classroom environment
- Individualized lesson plans
- Classroom Computers
- Seeing Science Everywhere Curriculum – The Delaware Museum of Natural History is collaborating with New Castle County Head Start, Inc. for the purpose of enhancing science activities in the classroom. Museum educators will provide 9 hours of training for all new classroom staff and their supervisors. One key museum staff members will serve as mentor coaches.

For Parents:

- Continuing education
- Employment training
- Parenting skills workshops
- TECE class (Training for Early Care and Education)
- Emergency assistance
- Support for transition to schools and other programs
- Volunteer opportunities
- Nutrition activities
- Family literacy programs

### **CACFP**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. participates in the Child Adult Food Care Program. Meals are served family-style and fulfill all nutritional requirements. An Enrollment Form must be completed by all guardians prior to the child's first day of school. This form will be completed with your Family Service Worker.

### **Curriculum**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. uses Creative Curriculum, Doors to Discovery, and Pyramid Model as the foundations for the program's curriculum. The primary goal of the curriculum is to help children use the environment as a learning tool. Look for the following areas to be located in your child's classroom: Blocks, Dramatic Play, Table Toys, Art, Sand and Water, Library as well as other activities; Outdoors, Music and Movement.

Creative Curriculum helps students use the classroom environment productively and see themselves as capable learners. A carefully organized and print-rich setting is the foundation of the Creative Curriculum. There are 38 curriculum objectives and dimensions, which define what we want children to learn and show what growth to expect in children from three to five years old, including those who may not be a typical level of development. Based on these objectives, teachers record written observations on children daily and input into our assessment tool, Creative Curriculum.Gold. There are three checkpoints during the program year for staff input. After each checkpoint, outcomes reports are generated for the Agency, for the centers, and for each classroom. Through the use of the classroom reports, each teacher is able to assess the needs and strengths of each child and individualize their lesson plans and activities to promote each child's abilities. This information is also shared with parents at parent teacher conferences. The final outcomes report measures the progress that all children made during the program year. New Castle County Head Start, Inc. uses this information to plan for staff training, to purchase classroom materials, and to monitor trends. Parents also take this information with them as their child transitions to their next level of education.

The curriculum goals of Doors to Discovery are to increase the children's speaking and listening vocabularies – the words children know and can use, knowledge of letter sounds, ability to name the 26 alphabets letters, and understanding of why people read and write. Words that are spoken can be written down and words that are written down can be spoken. Children are encouraged to have an appreciation of books, of being read to, and of understanding and increasing their vocabulary. The objective is to develop the readiness skills in children for a successful kindergarten transition.

### **The Pyramid Model**

The Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children promotes healthy social and emotional development for early learning and to prevent challenging behaviors. The Pyramid Model curriculum supports the students' development of self-discipline skills by teaching social emotional and other skills within play time and routine activities. The Pyramid Model also promotes the child's language communication development and gives children positive guidance on rules and expectations within the classroom community. All staff members receive Pyramid Model training and work cooperatively to promote each student's social and emotional growth. The social emotional behavior screening to be used by parents and teachers is Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA).

### **DECA Assessment**

Your teacher will be conducting a social emotional behavioral (DECA) screening on your child with you at the first home visit. He or she will work with you to complete the information with the knowledge you have about your child. Throughout the year the teacher will be doing observations on all children in his or her classroom and will be meeting with you to discuss the progress your child is making in Head Start.

### **Literacy**

Head Start literacy initiatives are incorporated within the implementation of the Creative Curriculum. This initiative focuses on the understanding and use of language. Words that are spoken can be written down and words that are written down can be spoken. Children are encouraged to have an appreciation of books, of being read to, and of understanding and increasing their vocabulary. The goal is to develop the readiness skills in children for a successful kindergarten transition.

### **Program Language Policy**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. supports for Dual Language Learning children and families by communicating with children and their families in their preferred or primary language through an interpreter, to the greatest extent feasible. Centers provide environments of acceptance that supports and respects gender, culture, language, ethnicity and family composition.

Specific information on how we support Dual Language Learners throughout the program can be found in "New Castle County Head Start, Inc. Process for Supporting Dual Language Learners" and is available for review at each center.

### **Developmental Screenings**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. Center Coordinators and Teachers work collaboratively with you and your child's School District staff to assure your child receives an individual developmental screening within the first 45 days of enrolling into our program.

Your child's teacher will give your child's screenings results during your first parent teacher conference.

When screening results determine suspected delays, the Center Coordinator and your child's teacher will help you schedule an individual evaluation with the School District.

### **Disability Plans**

If the School District individual evaluation results determine your child is eligible to receive and **Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)** from the School District, your child's Teacher, the Center Coordinator, and the Family Service Worker will guide you through the IEP process throughout the school year.

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. will offer an annual training for parents. Parents will learn how to become advocates for their child. Training includes information about the 2004 **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**, reviews the "Parent's Rights" Booklet, and guides parents through the services provided to their child under **IDEA**.

### **COPA Software**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. is utilizing the Child Outcome Planning and Administration (COPA) software. This software is designed to provide technology and guidance. COPA provides centralized and real-time data collection. There are reporting and monitoring tools for all levels of the organization including Grantee Agency, site, child and family. The COPA software is web-based.

### **Parents School Funding Request**

Parents must first apply for financial aid and/or student loans if eligible prior to requesting assistance from Head Start for "degreed programs." For continuing education, non-degreed programs, and other types of schooling, parents are not required to apply for financial aid or student loans. This resource is intended to supplement your primary source of funding. Before Head Start can assist, financial aid or student loan request must have been denied in writing. If a parent is ineligible for financial aid he/she should show some documentation supporting this position to the Family Service Worker. Parents may request financial assistance from Head Start to pay the balance for partial grants and/or loans disbursed to the school during the current Head Start program year.

Currently enrolled parents or Policy Council Community Representatives, who are past New Castle County Head Start, Inc. parents, are eligible for funds if they are actively participating in the program.

All those applying must be an active participant in the program. Active is measure as the parent being involved with the program at least 70% of the time that the child has been enrolled in the program. For example, if a child has been enrolled in the program for 5 months, the parent has been, somehow, involved in the program for at least 3.5 months. Some examples of being active are participating:

- In classrooms
- On field trips
- In parent meetings (Policy Council)
- In parent committees
- In sending supplies/donations into the Center as requested

In any case, no one recipient could receive more than \$500 per year. The year is determined as August 1<sup>st</sup> through July 31<sup>st</sup>. Parents must provide proof that they have successfully completed all prior school commitments funded by Head Start before they can make a second request.



## **Parent/Guardians Volunteer Opportunities:**

Parents/Guardians:

Can be actively included in the classroom assisting with activities and special events:

Talk and play with the children.

Get as close to their level as you can, sit in a low chair or bend down.

Talk gently and quietly with the children.

Sit with the children and eat. Please eat only foods provided by the Head Start program.

Talk politely and positively with other parents & staff.

Treat all children with respect.

Can assist teachers with nutrition education activities in the classroom.

Are welcome to share cultural experience.

Can perform clerical duties such as typing and answer the telephone

Can serve on program committees:

**Parent Center Committee:** Work with Center Coordinator to plan activities for children and families at the center

**Policy Council:** Work directly with the Executive Director and Board of Directors in developing policies that effect all children and staff in the program.

**Advisory Committee:** Work with Program Coordinators and community professionals to plan, evaluate and develop strategies for meeting the needs of children and families.

Parents/Guardians are always welcomed and encouraged to participate in the program.

It is very important to keep all information about children in Head Start confidential.

Our goal is to provide a positive and relaxed learning environment for all children and also a positive and enjoyable experience for those who volunteer in our classrooms. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your Center Coordinator.

## **Policy Support Statement**

These policies have been developed over the years with input from parents and staff for the protections and safety of the children.

They have also been developed to assure the best possible program and experiences for children and families.

While parent/guardian participation is strongly encouraged it is expected that parents/guardians respect employees, other parents and children. Verbal or physical abuse of Head Start staff or participants of the program cannot be tolerated. Any such action taken by parents/guardians or other adult family members may reflect upon your child's ability to remain in the program.

**Anyone dropping/picking up must obey all traffic safety precautions and rules. This includes parking in assigned areas and not impeding traffic. Anyone who violates these safety requirements are subjected to their child being suspended or dismissed from the program.**

Head Start believes that parents/guardians are the primary educators of their children. The Head Start staff looks to parents to be a positive role model for their children at all times. Therefore, the use of profanity is absolutely prohibited at all times.

**Arrival and Dismissal Procedure**

<b>PART DAY PROGRAM</b>	<b>FULL DAY PROGRAM</b>
Children permitted into center after 9:00 a.m.	<u>Parent Co-Pay Fees for Purchase of Care</u> Payments are due Friday for the following week. Failure to pay in full by the first day of the next program week will result in the immediate transfer of the child to the part day program. Two late payments/transfers are allowable. On the third late payment, which would be after three transfers, you will lose your child's slot in the full day program for the remainder of the current program year.
Parents/guardians who transport must sign child in at office.	Children permitted into center at 7:30 a.m.
All children are expected to arrive by 9:15 a.m.	Parents/guardians must sign child in upon arrival in the classroom
Parents/guardians must notify Family Service Worker if child will be late or will not be in school.	Children are expected to arrive by 9:00 a.m.
Parents/guardians who pick up children must report to office to sign child out.	Parents/guardians must notify Family Service Worker if child will be late or will not be in school.
All children must be picked up at 1:15 p.m.	Children need to be picked up no later than 6:00 p.m.
Only authorized adults may pick up your child.	Children must be signed out when leaving the center.
If a child is to be picked up, and is still at the center and the staff has not been able to contact anyone listed on the child's emergency card by 2:00 p.m. the Center Coordinator will call the Division of Family Services. In the event that no one is available to take the child, 2 Head Start members will escort the child to Child Protective Services.	Only authorized adults may pick up your child.
If a child is returned to the center from the bus and the staff has not been able to contact anyone listed on the child's Emergency Card by 3:00 p.m. the staff member will call the Center Coordinator and she will call the Division of Family Services. In the event that no one is available to take the child, 2 Head Start members will escort the child to Child Protective Services.	If a child is not picked up by 6:00 p.m. an attempt will be made to contact the parent/guardian. If contact cannot be made the emergency numbers will be called. If no one is able to pick up the child, the Center Coordinator will be called and she will contact the Division of Child Protective services. Late pick up fees will apply as per the policy/contract signed by each parent.
	If a child is picked up after 6:00 p.m. a letter will be sent home explaining the policy violation each time. If your child is picked up late three times you will lose your child's slot in the full day program. This procedure is effective for one program year only. Violations will not be carried over to a new program year.

### **Release of a Child from the Center**

A staff person will verify the person is 18 years or older. The staff member will request the following:

The person's name, address, telephone number and relationship

The person's picture I.D.

The child's I.D. number.

The person may then sign the child out from the center.

If identification cannot be verified, the child will remain at the center until an authorized individual can be identified.

### **Child Abuse/Neglect**

It is our agency's legal obligation to report any suspected child abuse/neglect to the State Division of Family Services. If at any time a Head Start staff member suspects, for any reason, that a child enrolled in our program has been neglected or abused, a report will be made. Law requires this procedure.

### **Attendance Regulations**

Please send your child to the center every day. If your child is absent, call the center and let the Family Service Worker know why. We will also need to know when you expect your child to return. Remember, the staff is here to help you with any problems related to your child's attendance.

Children who are absent from the center for 5 days in a row and children who are absent 2, 3 or more times every week within a 30 day period without a legitimate excuse and no notification from the parent, must be dropped from the program and "no notification from the parent".

### **Bus Policy**

These policies have been developed to ensure the safety of the children enrolled in New Castle County Head Start, Inc. The following policies include regulations from the State and Federal department of Transportation as well as policies particular to the New Castle County Head Start, Inc. program.

#### **A. Name Tags**

Name tags (First Names Only) will be used at the beginning of the year until all staff are familiar with your child.

NONE of the following are to be brought onto the bus:

**MEDICATION    FOOD    MONEY    TOYS    ANYTHING THAT COULD BE HARMFUL OR CAUSE INJURY**

Limited transportation is provided to children in designated areas only. In the event that bus service cannot be provided or adjustments made to accommodate a family, that family will be given the option of coming to the nearest available stop, or they can provide their own transportation for their child to the center each day.

### B. Children's I.D. Numbers

It is very important that the Bus Monitor be able to identify the person getting your child off the bus.

Each child's parent/guardian is issued an identification number. You may give it to those who they want to pick up your child.

Biological parents have equal rights to their children. Restrictions regarding biological parents must be in writing from the court and on file with New Castle County Head Start, Inc. Biological parents can pick up their child even if they are not on the list if they have proper identification and can establish that they are the child's parent, unless there is a court order restricting them from contact with child.

### C. Emergency Card/List of Persons who can pick up Your Child

During the enrollment process you completed an Emergency Card for your child. You were asked to list 6 persons (all must be 18 years or older) who can pick up your child. For your child's safety the Bus Monitor will be requesting the following information from anyone picking up your child:

The person's name, address, telephone number and relationship

The person will need to show a picture I.D.

The person will need to tell the Bus Monitor the child's I.D. number.

**If any one of the above cannot be verified your child will be returned to the center.**

You may make changes to the names on the Emergency Card but you must go to the center and make changes in person.

In emergency situations, a person not listed on the Emergency Card may be allowed to pick up a child for that day only if the Family Service Worker or Center Coordinator can verify the parent on the phone.

### D. Behavior on the Bus

Children are to remain seated at all times.

Children whose behavior presents a safety problem to themselves or others may lose transportation services. The Family Service Worker will contact you regarding the situation. Situations will be handled on an individual basis.

### E. Returned Child to the Center

You will be notified of your child's return to the center. You are then responsible for picking up your child at the center. If you cannot be reached the Head Start staff will contact other people listed on the Emergency Card.

If your child is returned to the center a second time, a warning letter will be sent. If this happens again, your child will not be allowed to ride the bus for 5 days. During the time your child is not allowed on the bus, you will have to provide transportation daily to the center for your child.

In the event that your child is returned to the center and no one is able to pick up the child, but a Head Start staff member has been in contact with either the parent/guardian or an authorized individual, the Head Start staff members may transport the child to the authorized destination and the following will take place:

First Incident	A warning letter will be given to the person receiving the child stating consequences for future Incidents
Second Incident	A warning letter will be given to the parent/guardian stating that the child's bus privileges will be suspended for two days if the incident occurs again
Third Incident	The child's bus privileges will be suspended for 2 days
All Other Incidents	Child's bus privileges will be suspended two days for each incident

In the event that a child is returned to the center and the center staff has not been able to contact anyone listed on the child's Emergency Card by 3:00 p.m. the staff member will call the Center Coordinator and she will call the Division of Family Services to report the incident and also call the State Police and give a report. In the event that no one is available to take the child, two Head Start members will escort the child to Child Protective Services.

#### F. Designated Stops

Children who ride the bus are assigned a designated stop. Parents/guardians need to have children at their designated stop 10 minutes before pick-up time and wait 10 minutes past pick-up time. At the end of the program day parents/guardians also need to arrive at the stop 10 minutes before the drop off time and wait 10 minutes longer to allow for late bus arrival. It is required that all children enter and exit the bus only at his/her assigned stop. In unusual circumstances, a child may board or exit the bus at another stop. This privilege may only be used 5 times during a program year. After the third incident, a notice letter will be sent home. After the fifth incident, the child may not be permitted to ride the bus for 3 days. Any permanent changes of a designated stop must be requested through the Family Service Worker. In addition, all children will be assigned a seat on the bus.

For your child's safety, a responsible adult must place your child on the bus daily. In order to release the children in a timely and safe manner, parents/guardians must remain a safe distance from the bus doors and allow the Bus Monitor to dismiss one child at a time.

#### G. Important Information

Parents/guardians must notify Head Start 1 week in advance of moving.

Children need to be ready when the bus arrives. Head Start staff are not allowed to go to the door. If the child misses the bus, it is the parent's/guardians responsibility to take the child to the center.

If a child has to cross the street to get on or off the bus, an adult must accompany him. The child must cross in front of the bus.

There will be at least two Head Start staff on the bus at all times.

Head Start staff may determine if a child is ill at the time he/she boards the bus. A sick child will be returned to the parent

#### H. Person under the Influence of Intoxicating Substances

The release of a child to an individual suspected by the Head Start staff to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal substance **will not be permitted.**

## I. Bus Problems/Concerns

In the event that any problems or concerns arise regarding the bus or route, please contact your Family Service Worker.

### **Transportation Requirements**

All children will be transported in approved child safety seats (Q-vests). All buses will carry a communication system, first aid kit, seat belt cutter, and safety equipment. Pedestrian safety training will be provided.

Training for children will include:

- Safe riding practices
- Safe boarding/unloading procedures
- Safe street crossing practices
- Recognizing danger zones around vehicles
- Emergency evacuation procedures
- Ongoing safety reminders

Training for parents will include:

- Escorting children to stops
- Summaries of the training that the children are receiving, in order for them to reinforce concepts

All programs must have a system for transporting children with disabilities by January 2006.

**IT IS IMPERATIVE** that each parent follows the drop off and pick up safety procedures. Every center will have their own specific safety rules regarding parking, loading and unloading children. These rules will be given to each parent prior to the first day of the program at open house and home visit.

### **EVERYONE, NO EXCEPTIONS, MUST FOLLOW THESE IMPORTANT SAFETY RULES.**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. is firmly committed to protecting young children. That is our first and foremost priority. So when we see children being dropped off or picked up by someone who does not have a car seat for their child we are very concerned. A few years ago two of our children, a brother and sister, were killed in an automobile accident when their car was hit by another driver. Neither of them was in car seats. You may think this will never happen to you but we can't take that chance. Therefore, be informed that the parent Policy Council of New Castle County Head Start, Inc. has voted unanimously that staff will report, to the local traffic authorities, anyone driving children without car seats. In addition, a committee made up of staff and parents was developed to give parents information on child safety, to provide resources for families and to provide training.

### **Process for Pedestrian Safety**

During the program year, New Castle County Head Start, Inc. provides trainings for parents, children, and staff relating to pedestrian safety.

The Administrative Coordinator sets up 3 trainings with outside agencies within the first 45 days of school. She is the contact person for the agency. She will also fill out the requisition and request payment for the trainings, if necessary.

The first training is a video and quiz on transporting pre-schoolers. This video talks about school bus safety, as well as getting on and off of the bus and crossing streets. After the video is viewed, all staff must review and complete their own safety booklet and quiz. Once completed, the center coordinator keeps the original copy in the employee file and a copy comes to the Administrative Coordinator for record keeping. This training is done at the first center staff meeting in September before the program begins.

The second training is a puppet show that demonstrates safety while riding a school bus, as well as pedestrian safety and q-strait safety.

The third training is with the New Castle County Crossing Guards. The crossing guard comes out two times per year. He/she will come out in October and again in March. He/she talks about his/her job duties, how to cross the road, shows a video, and provides safety booklets.

For these trainings, all center staff are required to be present. A memo and schedule is sent from the Administrative Coordinator to all Center Coordinators providing dates, times, and contact information. The centers are responsible for making flyers and informing the families. The Center Coordinators are responsible for informing their center staff and securing a location.

On the day of the event, the Center Coordinator needs to provide sign in sheets and request all parents and staff sign in for this training. The sign in sheet and copy o the flyer should then come to the Administrative Coordinator for recordkeeping.

All information for staff will be recorded in the training section of COPA. All administrative staff will be able to monitor this training on COPA at all times.

### **Communication with Head Start Staff**

Parent meeting reminders, menus, calendar updates etc. will be sent home with your child frequently so please check all information that comes home with your child.

Your family will receive 2 home visits and 2 parent/teacher conferences with your child's teacher. The first home visit will be in the fall before school begins. The second home visit will take place in February. The parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled twice a year in November and May.

Family Service Workers will also be having home visits with you to assist with any needs you might have. They will be working with you to complete a Family Partnership Agreement to set goals and design an approach for achieving your goals.

## Concerns

Parent/guardian concerns involving your children are usually resolved at the center level by discussion with the center staff. Concerns involving personnel issues should be discussed as outlined below:

1. Center Coordinator
2. Program Coordinator if Not Resolved
3. Executive Director who will communicate the concern to Policy Council if not resolved

Parent/guardian concerns involving center operations should first be discussed with the Center Coordinator. If necessary, the concern should be brought to the Parent Center Committee. If necessary, the parent and/or Parent Center Committee should contact the Program Coordinator and if necessary, the Executive Director. If a resolution is not reached, the concern will be brought to Policy Council.

## Field Trips and Events

A limited number of field trips are planned throughout the year and are planned to extend the curriculum. Special events may be conducted at the center or out in the community.

If a parent/guardian does not want a child to attend a field trip, he/she will spend the day in another classroom. If the entire center is attending the trip, the parent/guardian will need to keep the child at home for the day.

Head Start will pay for a minimum of 4 volunteers per classroom to attend each field trip. This will include bus transportation, entrance fee and lunch.

The Center Coordinator will notify parents/guardians of upcoming trips a month in advance so that parents/guardians can make arrangements and have sufficient time to make a decision regarding volunteering. **Because of the need for close supervision of Head Start children, no other children will be permitted to accompany volunteers.**

Other parents/guardians who are not volunteering are welcome to meet the center at the field trip location. These parents/guardians may be required to pay any entrance fee and to provide their own lunch.

Parent/guardian volunteers will be assigned to work with a Head Start employee in supervising a class of children.

Efforts will be made to include every child in all field trips. If a child has been identified as one who has difficulty handling change in the daily routine of the classroom, staff will take measures to prepare the child for the trip and establish certain conditions under which the child may participate. Ideally, one person will be assigned to the child and will be responsible for that specific child so that he/she will have a positive experience.



To provide for the safety of the children and to abide by the confidentiality regulations, NCCHS, Inc. t-shirts will be worn by all children, staff, and designated adult volunteers. Children will also wear ID tags which will contain:

- **Name of Center**
- **Telephone Number of Center & Administrative Office**

T-shirts will be kept at the center for the entire school year.

- Children will put the NCCHS, Inc. t-shirts on over their regular clothing before leaving the center for the field trip.
- When the children and volunteers return to the center from the field trip, the Teacher will collect all t-shirts and turn them into the Center Coordinator.
- The Center Coordinator (or his or her designee) will take the t-shirts home or to the Laundromat to be washed, before the shirts are worn again.
- On the last day of school, children will take their t-shirts home.

The child's name will **not** appear on the nametag.

If you need to contact the center while a field trip is planned please leave a message on the answering machine and someone will return your call once they return.

### **Field Trip Volunteer Guidelines**

As a field trip volunteer it is important to be aware of the following guidelines:

1. Volunteers are encouraged to engage children in conversations about what they see and what they are experiencing. Ask open ended questions. You will be assigned to a staff person. Keep with your class. Do not separate from the group. Engage children so they share what they are learning. This is an excellent opportunity for enhancing a child's social and language development.
2. Children are to be supervised at all times. Work with your assigned staff person to insure that no child is left unattended.
3. Rules and expectations are:
  - a. Children must remain seated on the bus in their q-vests
  - b. Children and volunteers must stay with their class
  - c. Children must walk while indoors
  - d. Children must use "indoor voices" while indoors
4. Because of the need for close supervision of Head Start children, no other children are permitted to accompany volunteers on field trips.
5. Smoking and alcoholic beverages are prohibited at all times.
6. Each time that you board the bus or leave a building, you should count the children in the class to see that they are all there. Please be constantly aware of the whereabouts of the children.
7. Parents and volunteers are asked to refrain from buying souvenirs, food, and other additional purchases to give to the children.

8. New Castle County's Behavior Management Policy is based on a commitment to enhance the potential, self-esteem, and dignity of children and their families. Volunteers are encouraged to be positive in their expectations. If you, as a volunteer, do find yourself in a situation where a child's behavior is a concern for you, always inform your assigned staff person.
9. The Center Coordinator will be in charge on the field trips.

**Statement on Holiday Celebrations**

Holidays are times of tradition, fun, family and friends. Each family varies in the types of holidays celebrated and in the ways they are celebrated. It is important for each child to learn about and participate in activities that are appropriate to his/her family's beliefs and traditions. Respecting differences in cultures and family traditions is why New Castle County Head Start, Inc. is not involved in the celebration of religion based holidays. We believe that these celebrations should be unique to each individual family.

*New Castle County Head Start, Inc. does welcome the celebration of:*

Labor Day	Thanksgiving	New Year	Arbor Day
Earth Day	Groundhog Day	Independence Day	

Birthdays are celebrated in the classroom by the Teachers and their classmates, therefore, we are asking parents not to bring in any items including: birthday cakes, cupcakes, cookies, balloons, and anything else that can be served.

**Food Donations** – the program cannot receive any food items that have been prepared or any kind of unprepared/uncooked meats. All food items must be prepared by Head Start staff in Head Start kitchens. This includes baked goods, desserts, meals, and anything else that can be served. The program can only receive food items that have not been prepared such as: raw vegetables and fruit.

**Nutrition**

Your child will be given meals, which meet nutritional requirements for this age group by Head Start and the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. Meals are served family style. Monthly menus will be sent home to you. Pork products are not served. If your child has any food allergies, it should be clearly noted on the health and nutrition form of your child's application. Before a menu item can be substituted, the condition must be medical and verified, in writing, by an authorized Medical professional. Parents must also fill out "medical and religious/cultural food restrictions" form before any menu item can be substituted.

The Program Coordinator or other Head Start Staff is available to parents/guardians to discuss their child's growth assessment and hemoglobin readings (status of anemia) plus topics in the area of food and nutrition.

The Center Coordinator can arrange presentations related to these topics for Head Start Parent Groups.

### **Serious Disruptive Behavior Policy**

It is New Castle County Head Start, Inc.'s desire to provide ample opportunities for each child to learn and participate in a safe, secure and well-managed classroom. New Castle County Head Inc. supports ongoing teacher training, positive reinforcement of children, graduated discipline practices and on occasion, special intervention plans to create successful experiences for children both educationally and behaviorally. Should a child exhibit serious disruptive behavior that interferes with the ability to maintain a safe and secure environment the following steps will take place:

1. New Castle County Head Start, Inc. will notify you by phone or with a home visit. All efforts will be made to do so on the same day of the incident (s).
2. Written documentation will be made and given to you. You will be asked to sign that you have received a copy of the documentation.
3. Within 2 weeks of notification the parent(s)/guardians(s), Teacher and Center Coordinator will meet to discuss a plan and will work together to prevent the behavior(s) in the future so that the child may achieve success or improvement. The program's Mental Health Consultant may also become involved to assist in developing the plans.
4. Should the parent(s)/guardians(s) be unwilling to attend and participate in the planning meeting and the child's disruptive behavior continues, New Castle County Head Start, Inc. reserves the right to suspend the child from attending the program until the meeting takes place and a plan for improvement is made.

### **BEHAVIORS WHICH MAY BE CONSIDERED SERIOUSLY DISRUPTIVE INCLUDE BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO:**

Aggression toward other children, staff, volunteers or parents  
Running away from the group/or classroom where the likelihood of danger exists  
Climbing onto/into areas where a physical danger exists  
Destruction, breaking, throwing of classroom items, which may cause physical injury

**For the purposes of the above procedure Serious Disruptive Behavior is NOT:** yelling, cursing, tearing paper, poking or tapping, verbal teasing or name-calling. Alternative classroom/teacher behavioral interventions will be used in these instances.

### **Administration of Medication**

Most medication can be given to your child outside of the Head Start program operation hours. There may be times when it will be necessary to give medication to your child during the program day. The parent/guardian must inform the Center Coordinator and obtain approval. The parent/guardian must sign written permission to have the medication given. All medicine must be in its original container with a prescription label with specific directions. Childrens medication is never permitted on a school bus. Medications must be brought to the Center Coordinator.

### **General Child Health Policies**

We realize how important your child's health is to you. New Castle County Head Start, Inc. as well as with the State of Delaware requires a yearly physical within 30 days of enrollment and proof of all childhood immunizations. Parents/guardians will be notified when their child's annual physical is due within 30 days of the annual exam date. Exam results must be submitted to the Family Service Worker. If not, state regulations require your child to be dropped from the program.

Children need to remain home if they show any of these symptoms:

Infected Skin Patches/Lesions	Diarrhea	Severe Coughing	Sore Throat	Yellow Skin or Eyes
Severe Pain in Joints, Stomach, Ears	Stiff Neck	Red Eyes w/Discharge	Difficult/Rapid Breathing	Blood or Pus from Ear, Skin, Urine, Stool
Severe Itching of Body or Scalp	Skin Rashes			

**Your child may return to the center when the symptoms are no longer present or a physician indicates the child poses no serious health risk to the child or to other children.**

### **Infection Control Procedure**

Due to the nature of the program, children and adults can be exposed to contagious illnesses such as:

- |          |             |                |            |          |          |
|----------|-------------|----------------|------------|----------|----------|
| Colds    | Strep       | Scabies        | Impetigo   | Ringworm | Pink Eye |
| Diarrhea | Chicken Pox | Hepatitis A, B | HIV (Aids) | Rashes   | Lice     |

Most of the time we are not aware of the presence of such an illness until after the children have been exposed. Parents/guardians should be aware of this as it may present a risk to their children.

### **When Should a Child be allowed to Return after Being Ill?**

When a child has a communicable disease, the Division of Public Health feels that the following exclusion and return policies reflect the best judgment with the least inconvenience possible. The policies can be modified in the case of an outbreak.

<i>DISEASE</i>	<i>WHEN A CHILD CAN SAFELY RETURN TO THE CENTER</i>
Bacterial Meningitis	When the Health Department indicated it is safe
Chicken Pox	One week after the rash begins, or when all chicken pox are scabbed over
Conjunctive (Pink Eye)	24 Hours after Antibiotic Treatment
Diarrhea For any of the following specific illnesses: Shigella Campylobacter Salmonella Giardia	When he/she no longer has diarrhea  When your physician or the Health Department says it is safe  These diseases will be reported to Public Health
Diphtheria	When your physician tells you it is safe
Head Lice	After treatment has begun – Show Proof
Hepatitis A	1 week after the illness begins
Measles	5 days after the rash appears
Mumps	After swelling subsides (or 9 days after swelling begins)
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	4 weeks after intense coughing begins, or 5 days after antibiotic treatment begins
Pneumonia/Epiglottitis/Infectious acute arthritis	If NOT due to H-flu, when your physician tells you it is safe. If due to H-flu, when the Health Department indicates it is safe
Rubella (German Measles)	5 days after the rash appears
Scabies	The day after treatment has begun
Strep Throat (Streptococcal)	24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun
Sinusitis	After the child is well

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. follows Standard Precautions Procedures. Gloves, cleaning, sanitation and disposal materials are provided.

### **Emergency Procedures**

Emergency First Aid will be performed as needed by trained staff. For serious injuries, Head Start staff will dial 911 immediately.

Every effort will be made to contact a parent, guardian, or other emergency contact whenever a child is injured. If a child must be taken to an emergency medical facility, a Head Start staff person will accompany the child.

**AN ACCIDENT REPORT WILL BE COMPLETED AND SENT HOME ON THE SAME DAY OF THE INJURY.**

**Please keep your emergency card at the center up-to-date, reporting any changes immediately to your Family Service Worker.**

### **Head Lice Policy**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. cannot permit a child with Head Lice symptoms to be admitted or to remain at the center. The following procedure will be followed:

1. After it has been established that a child has Head Lice, the parent/guardian will be contacted. A note and instructions sheet will be sent home with the child. Also, at this time, other Head Start parents/guardians will be informed of Head Lice infestation and an information sheet on Head Lice will be given to each parent/guardian.
2. The parent/guardian will be responsible to treat the child with an over-the-counter product from a drug store or physician prescribed treatment and must repeat the treatment 7-10 days later to kill any surviving nits. Proof of the treatment (such as the box top) must accompany the child when he/she returns to the Head Start program.
3. After the first treatment, the child can return to the center. However, there can be no signs or symptoms of Head Lice. If there are symptoms, the child will be returned home. It is understood that the parent/guardian will repeat the treatment 7-10 days after the first application.
4. If the child becomes reinfested, the parent must take the child to their physician. The child will not be able to return until treated by the physician, and can be proven by a note from the doctor.
5. If a child gets reinfested within one month after the previous treatment, the Family Service Worker will do a home visit to further assist the parent. Once again, a child cannot return without proof of medication or a doctor's note.
6. Classroom and home sanitation procedures will be as follows: remove lice and fallen hairs with attached nits from rugs, upholstered furniture, stuffed animals and car seats by vacuuming. All fabric items, such as clothing and blankets need to be washed in hot water and dried in the dryer. Once washed and dried, place in an airtight bag for 72 hours. Then wash and dry the items again. All hard surfaced items need to be washed.

### **Immunization Policy**

All children enrolled in the Head Start program shall have a current up-to-date immunization record as dictated by their age. Children, who do not, must have a minimum of the initial immunization series (DPT, OPV, Hep B, MMR, HIB) and a written schedule to complete immunizations. Either the public health clinic or your child's physician must develop this schedule. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to keep the schedule of immunizations for their child and submit proof of all updates as they occur. Ask your Family Service Worker for help with this process, if needed.

Failure to obtain a written immunization schedule and get the needed immunizations is sufficient cause to dismiss your child from the Head Start Program.

Once the child is dismissed from the program, the child's enrollment slot will be given to another child. Your child cannot re-enter the program until the immunizations are up to date and there is an opening.

### **Licensing**

Each center is licensed by the State of Delaware yearly. If you are interested in the licensing requirements we will be happy to discuss the procedure with you at your convenience. Contact the Center Coordinator for more information.

### **Donations**

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. welcomes donations from parents, relatives, businesses, companies, etc. but certain restrictions do apply and must be followed in order to assure compliance with federal and state regulations.

Food – the program cannot receive any food items that have been prepared or any kind of unprepared/uncooked meats. All food items must be prepared by Head Start staff in Head Start kitchens. This includes baked goods, desserts, meals, and anything else that can be served. The program can receive food items that have not been prepared such as: raw vegetables and fruit.

Clothes – the program welcomes donations of clothes that are clean and usable. Each center will designate a period of time when clothes can be donated (three times per year). During those periods we will collect and distribute the clothes to needy families. Donation receipts will not be given for clothing items.

Toys – the program cannot collect toys as a part of its on going donations. We are fortunate to have classrooms full of developmentally appropriate equipment and each has a place in the New Castle County Head Start, Inc. curriculum. If you have a piece of equipment that you think could support the curriculum please ask the Center Coordinator for approval.

Classroom Supplies – the program may receive classrooms supplies if the materials are usable for the New Castle County Head Start, Inc. curriculum. We are appreciative of any item that can be donated that meets the criteria so please speak to the classroom Teacher or Center Coordinator about these types of donations prior to purchasing or bringing them in.

Office Supplies – the program has more flexibility in receiving office supply donations and, again we appreciate anything that can be donated that the office staff can use. Computers, however, may not be received unless they have been approved by the Administrative Assistant from the Administrative Office. This is to assure that the computers have the proper configuration and can be used in either the offices or the classrooms. Please see the Center Coordinator for questions regarding computer donations.

New Castle County Head Start, Inc. was granted exemption from Federal Income Tax under section 5019 (c) 3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Federal Identification Number 51-0191916.

Donors may deduct contributions under section 170 of the Code. Please complete a donation receipt form and have the Center Coordinator approve.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

Parents/Guardians agree to:

- Follow the policies of the program according to the parent handbook
- Respect all employees, volunteers, children and other parents in the program
- Handle any concern or conflict calmly and privately with the appropriate persons
- Not use inappropriate language at any time to any employee, volunteer, child or other parent in the program
- Never physically intimidate or touch any employee, volunteer, child or other parent in the program (this will result in immediate dismissal from the program)
- Follow all procedures of the program including but not limited to:
  - Parking
  - Drop off and pick up
  - Transportation/bus regulations
  - Volunteering
  - Donations
  - Contacting the center
  - Curriculum
  - Home Visits

I understand that any violation of the Parent Code of Conduct can result in having to meet with the Executive Director of the agency, suspension from the program for my child, dismissal from the program for my child and/or prosecution under the law.