

Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start

Parent Policy Manual



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**Parent Policies Manual
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DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START

Center Policies

Your Child's Teacher: _____

1. The center will be open from ___AM to ___PM, Monday through Friday. Children cannot be accepted earlier. If you arrive before the designated arrival time, you will be expected to wait in your car with your child. This Policy will be strictly enforced by **ALL** staff. In case of extreme emergency, parent must call the center for child to remain past closing time.
2. Parents are expected to bring their child to the bus. The driver's assistant will help your child into the bus. When the child returns from the program, please be watching for the bus! When the bus stops, we ask that you come outside your house to the bus and meet your child. The driver's assistant will help the child off the bus. You are required to be at the bus in order to receive your child. (See Policy)
3. Each child must have on file an emergency transportation drop-off form. In the event that you have been called away in an emergency and are not home when the bus arrives, your child will be taken to one of the addresses on the form.
4. Parents must fill out an authorization form or send a note to give a person (other than the parents) permission to pick up their children. The person picking up the child must show identification, sign the child out of the center, be at least 16 years old, and have a valid driver's license.
5. In the event of an emergency, fire, flood, structural damage to the building or another disaster that makes it necessary to evacuate the building, the staff will stay with the children at the designated location until their parents arrive.
6. **Unexpected visitors.** People who turn up at the center and claim to be visiting grandmothers, aunts, absent fathers, etc., will not be permitted to have any contact with a child unless prior arrangements have been made with the parent who placed the child in the center. In any case, for the good of the child's routine, this kind of visiting should be discouraged.
7. **Parents** are asked to see that children do not bring food, money or toys to the center.
8. **Parents** will be responsible for ensuring that their child does not bring to school any dangerous items such as guns, knives, etc. It would be advisable for parents to check the children's pockets and back packs daily.
9. Outdoor play is an important part of our program. Please see that your child is suitably dressed to play outside except in extremely bad weather. We go outside every day except when it rains.
10. Parents are to notify the center of any changes in work or home phone numbers so that you may be reached in an emergency.

11. Behavior Management Guidance Policy - see explanation of Policy.
12. There must be no smoking or vaping on the grounds if children are present.
13. The center will follow the local school system's schedule concerning school closing, when bad weather conditions (snow, etc.) prevail. Listen to your local radio.
14. A current immunization record signed and/or stamped by a health care provider must be on file in the child's Head Start health record before he/she may attend the center. Each child must receive all immunizations at entry and remain on schedule unless there is a medical reason certified by a health care provider, or a religious exemption as to why these immunizations should not be given.
15. A current medical and dental examination is required for all children and documentation must be in the child's health record.
16. Non-prescription drugs such as aspirin, cold tablets, cough syrup, Tylenol (acetaminophen), Motrin (ibuprofen), ointments, etc., may not be given at the Head Start Center unless written physician's orders so advises.
17. A brief health check will be conducted on each child daily. A child may not remain at the center if he or she is thought to be ill.
18. Any sick child will be isolated from the group with adult supervision until arrangements are made for the child to go home.
19. A child will not be allowed to attend the Head Start Center if they have a communicable disease, diarrhea (2 episodes), or vomiting. Also, a child will not be allowed to attend if they have an axillary (under-arm) temperature of 99 degrees F or more, oral temp of 100 degrees F or more with other signs or symptoms of illness. Furthermore, the child needs to be free of diarrhea, vomiting and fever for at least 24 hours prior to returning to the center.
20. Parents will be notified of the occurrence of a communicable disease among the center children.
21. Children will receive the following meals at the Head Start Center:
 - ___Breakfast___AM
 - ___AM Supplement ___AM
 - ___Noon Meal ___PM
 - ___PM Supplement ___PM
22. All claimed meals or supplements follow the Child Care Food Program Requirements.
23. All children and staff must eat only the food prepared at the center unless specific instructions are prescribed by a physician and documentation is on file at the center.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE EARLY HEAD START

Center Policies

Your Child's Teacher: _____

1. The center will be open from ___AM to ___PM, Monday through Friday. Children cannot be accepted earlier. If you arrive before the designated arrival time, you will be expected to wait in your car with your child. This Policy will be strictly enforced by **ALL** staff. In case of extreme emergency, parent must call the center for child to remain past closing time.
2. Parents are expected to bring their child to the center and pick them up each day. Transportation to and from EHS is not provided.
3. Parents must fill out an authorization form or send a note to give a person (other than the parents) permission to pick up their children. The person picking up the child must show identification, sign the child out of the center, be at least 16 years old, and have a valid driver's license.
4. In the event of an emergency, fire, flood, structural damage to the building or another disaster that makes it necessary to evacuate the building, the staff will stay with the children at the designated location until their parents arrive.
5. **Unexpected visitors.** People who turn up at the center and claim to be visiting grandmothers, aunts, absent fathers, etc., will not be permitted to have any contact with a child unless prior arrangements have been made with the parent who placed the child in the center. In any case, for the good of the child's routine, this kind of visiting should be discouraged.
6. **Parents** are asked to see that children do not bring food, money or toys to the center, however, infants and toddlers are allowed to bring special snuggle/security blankets or toys.
7. Outdoor play is an important part of our program. Please see that your child is suitably dressed to play outside except in extremely bad weather. We go outside every day except when it rains. Tennis shoes are an excellent choice for outdoor play. Sandals, flip flops, etc. are not safe for running, climbing, and other outdoor activities.
8. Parents are to notify the center of any changes in work or home phone numbers so that you may be reached in an emergency.
9. Behavior Management Guidance Policy - see explanation of Policy.
10. There must be no smoking or vaping on the grounds if children are present.
11. The center will follow the DCEA agency schedule concerning school closing, when bad weather conditions (snow, etc.) prevail. Listen to your local radio.
12. A current state immunization record signed and/or stamped by a health care provider must be on file in the child's Early Head Start health record before he/she may attend the center. Each child must receive all immunizations at entry and remain on schedule unless there is a medical

reason certified by a health care provider, or a religious exemption as to why these immunizations should not be given.

13. A current medical examination is required for all children and documentation must be in the child's health record. A current dental examination is encouraged
14. Non-prescription drugs such as aspirin, cold tablets, cough syrup, Tylenol (acetaminophen), Motrin (ibuprofen), diaper and other ointments, etc., may not be given at the EHS Center unless written physician's orders so advises.
15. A brief health check will be conducted on each child daily. A child may not remain at the center if he or she is thought to be ill.
16. Any sick child will be isolated from the group with adult supervision until arrangements are made for the child to go home.
17. A child will not be allowed to attend the EHS Center if they have a communicable disease, diarrhea (2 episodes), or vomiting. Also, a child will not be allowed to attend if they have an axillary (under-arm) temperature of 99 degrees F or more, oral temp of 100 degrees F or more with other signs or symptoms of illness. Furthermore, the child needs to be free of diarrhea, vomiting and fever for at least 24 hours prior to returning to the center.
18. Parents will be notified of the occurrence of a communicable disease among the center children.
19. Children will receive the following meals at the EHS Center:

___Breakfast ___AM

___AM Supplement ___AM

___Noon Meal ___PM

___PM Supplement ___PM

All claimed meals or supplements follow the Child Care Food Program Requirements.

20. All children and staff must eat only the food prepared at the center unless specific instructions are prescribed by a physician and documentation is on file at the center.
21. Pacifiers are permitted in EHS.
22. Infants and Toddlers in EHS are fed and nap "on-demand", and are not forced to eat and sleep on adult designed/rigid schedules.

TO: Parents
RE: Daily Attendance

Dear Parents:

An essential ingredient in the learning process of a child is regularly attending the program in which he or she participates. Attendance is important to your child's enrollment in the Head Start Program. Federal law mandates that we maintain high attendance levels. But more importantly are the benefits your child receives in school readiness skills by attending Head Start on a daily basis.

Now is the time to instill in your child the importance of attending school every day he or she is physically able. **It is your responsibility, as the parent of the child, to see that they attend.** Please ensure that they have the proper rest they need and are ready each morning for their day at Head Start. When children are often absent, they miss out on so many fun things and learning experiences that the Head Start Program has to offer.

Head Start would like to see every child's attendance at 100% during the program year; however, we realize absences are often unavoidable. **When it is necessary for your child to be absent from Head Start it is your responsibility as the parent to contact the teachers concerning this absence.** Knowing the reason why a child is absent increases the teacher's and FSW's opportunity for providing support to your family thus increasing your participation in program activities. It is important that you are aware and understand the Head Start Policies and follow the guidelines of the program while your child is in Head Start.

Follow-up will be completed and documented when attendance issues become a concern. In circumstances where a child has chronic absenteeism and staff have supported and encouraged parents with no improvement in attendance, the child may be put back on the waitlist and a new application would have to be completed for the child to be eligible to reenroll. Please avoid any action by the program, as outlined in the policy for attendance, by simply notifying your child's teacher any time an absence is necessary.

Guidelines for Absence from Class:

1. Notify your child's teacher early on the first day of your child's absence.
2. Inform your child's teacher of the reason for the absence.
3. Inform the teacher when you expect your child will be returning to class.

Please read and refer to the Attendance Policy and Procedure (next pages) for a more detailed explanation.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: ATTENDANCE

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: An essential ingredient in a child's school readiness is regular attendance in the Head Start/Early Head Start program in which he or she participates. Federal law also mandates that we maintain high attendance levels to retain our funding. For these reasons, children's attendance will be monitored daily by the center Teacher and Family Service Worker.

HS/EHS would like to see every child attend 100% of the time during the school year; however, the program realizes absences are sometimes unavoidable.

When a child is absent, for whatever reason, it will be the parent/guardian's responsibility to contact the HS/EHS staff concerning the reason.

1. **Absence from Class (First Occurrence):**

- A. The Teacher must be notified no later than 2:00 p.m. of the first day of the child's absence. Notification as soon as possible allows time to adjust bus routes and home visits when a child is not attending.
- B. If the staff has not heard from the family they will try to call and check on them using the contact phone numbers.
- C. The Teacher must be given a reason for the absence as well as when the child is expected to return to the program.

Every effort possible will be made to provide support to the family in order to reduce obstacles that may interfere with child's attendance.

2. **Policy for children who have missed three (3) consecutive center days with no contact made by the parent or staff:**

- A. A home visit will be attempted on the third consecutive absent day.
- B. Bus service will be discontinued until contact is made with the parent.
- C. If no response is received from the parent within three (3) days of the home visit, it will be assumed that the parent is no longer interested in the services of Head Start/Early Head Start and has withdrawn the child.

Children's attendance will also be monitored for irregular attendance. **Irregular attendance occurs when a child has missed 3 days within 10 consecutive attendance days.**

The Attendance Policy will be reviewed with parents again when the policy is violated a second time during the school year. Documentation will be recorded of any support provided by Head Start staff to partner with families to prevent any further attendance issues and retain Head Start enrollment for the child if possible.

The Teacher will document each child's attendance on a daily basis. Attendance reports will be faxed to the FSW each Friday. The FSW will enter attendance in child plus and notify the Social Services Coordinator of attendance issues. (See detailed procedures for steps.) Early Head Start Teachers will notify the Early Head Start Area Manager of attendance problems as well as the FSW.

The documentation kept by the Teacher will outline the attendance pattern of each child and will be mailed to Central Office weekly, after being faxed to the FSW. It is the goal of HS/EHS to ensure that parents are made aware of the importance of attendance and provide support services to families to increase the participation of the family in program activities.

Families of enrolled children will be made aware of the Attendance Policy and will be asked to sign a letter of understanding of their responsibility toward attendance.

PROCEDURE:

1. Procedures for children who have missed three (3) consecutive center days with no contact made by the parent or staff:

A. A home visit will be attempted on the third day of a consecutive unexcused absence. The Teacher will notify the FSW that a home visit needs to be attempted. Early Head Start Teachers will notify the EHS Area Manager and FSW. HS/EHS Teachers and FSW's will complete home visit together when possible. FSW/teacher will notify the Social Service Coordinator after the attempted visit to discuss outcome.

B. Complete Home Visit

1. Discuss the reason for the child's consecutive absence.
2. Provide support to prevent future unexcused absences.
3. Review Attendance Policy and parents responsibilities.
4. Have the parent sign and date the Step System Log.
5. Document home visit completed for attendance follow-up on Attendance Logs. (Example: HV) Teacher should also document on Parent/Teacher contact log.

C. Home Visit - No contact

1. Leave Letter, Re: Consecutive Missed Days.
2. Date letter for three working days after your home visit.
3. Attempt an additional home visit within the three working day period following the attempted home visit.
4. If no response - notify Social Services Coordinator.
5. If response is received, schedule home visit to provide support services.
6. Document incomplete follow-up on attendance logs. (Example: AT HV) Teacher should also document on Parent/Teacher contact log.

2. Procedure for continued non-compliance of Attendance Policies:

A. First Occurrence

1. Proper procedures must be followed in the first occurrence of an attendance violation as outlined in the Attendance Policy.
2. All efforts to provide support to the family concerning the child's regular attendance must be documented.
3. The Teacher, FSW and Social Service Coordinator, when contacted, will keep appropriate documentation on the action taken in support services.

B. Second Occurrence

1. The above information must be repeated for the second occurrence. Documentation is most important as well as all support possible must be attempted.
2. The Family Service Worker **must** attend the home visit on a second occurrence and the Social Service Coordinator must be contacted prior to the visit.
3. The parent will be reminded once again of the Attendance Policy and that continued child absenteeism could put the child's enrollment at risk.

C. Third Occurrence

Upon third occurrence of non-compliance of the Attendance Policy, the Teacher or FSW will contact the Social Services Coordinator. A meeting or home visit will be scheduled with parent/guardian, Teacher, FSW and Social Services Coordinator. If all types of support that HS/EHS staff can provide have been exhausted, parent/guardian will be notified that a fourth occurrence of non-compliance will result in the child's slot being declared a vacancy and the slot would be filled with a child on the wait list. If parents later decide they wish to reenroll child and he/she is still age eligible, they must complete a new application and the child would be put on the wait list according to priority points.

All attendance procedures, documentation, and support must be followed before the fourth occurrence procedures can be put into effect.

The Step System Log will be used to document follow-up for attendance policy violations.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Policy & Procedures

Identifying & Reporting Child Abuse and/or Neglect

Policy

It is Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start's mission to promote, protect and provide for the physical, mental, and emotional health and safety of all its children and to cooperate with individuals, organizations, and agencies who share the responsibility with us. We will assume our duty to identify abused and neglected children, to act as a support to the local child protective service program, and otherwise encourage prevention in the important parent-child system in which our Head Start/Early Head Start children develop.

All agency staff is mandated reporters under the Tennessee Code on Child Abuse and Neglect. It is both a State and a Federal requirement that all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect be reported. Staff must be mindful of this requirement at all times.

Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Head Start/Early Head Start agency must report child abuse and neglect in accordance with the provisions of State or Local laws.

1. The Tennessee Code on Child Abuse states "any person having knowledge of or called upon to render aid to any child who is suffering from or has sustained any wound, injury, disability, physical or mental condition which is of such a nature as to reasonably indicate that it has been caused by brutality, abuse or neglect, report such harm immediately by telephone or otherwise, to the judge having juvenile jurisdiction or to the county office of the Department of Children's Services, or to the Sheriff or the chief law enforcement official of the municipality where the child resides. The report shall include to the extent known by the reporter the name, address of the child, and the facts requiring the report. The report may include other pertinent information."
2. Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Head Start/Early Head Start will "preserve the confidentiality of all records pertaining to child abuse or neglect problems."
3. Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Head Start/Early Head Start will not "undertake on their own to treat cases of child abuse or neglect." However, the Head Start/Early Head Start Program will cooperate fully with the Department of Children's Services and other child protection agencies. HS/EHS will make every attempt to retain allegedly abused or neglected children in their program, recognizing that the "child's participation in the HS/EHS may be essential in assisting families with abuse or neglect problems."
4. With the approval of the Policy Council, HS/EHS will make a "special effort to include otherwise eligible children suffering from abuse or neglect as referred by the child protection agencies." HS/EHS can serve an important preventive role

in child abuse and neglect but must not be used as a primary instrument for the treatment of abuse or neglect.

Procedures

1. Component Staff Responsibilities:

The Director of HS/EHS has designated the Social Services Coordinator as the programs person who will have responsibilities for:

- A. Establishing and maintaining cooperative relationships with the Department of Children's Services and other child protection agencies in the community which would include regular formal and informal communication with staff at all levels of the agencies.
- B. Informing and providing training for parents and staff of state and local law requirements in cases of child abuse and neglect.
- C. Maintaining updated knowledge of community, medical and social services which are available for families with an abuse or neglect problem.
- D. Maintaining all reports of abuse in a central office file and kept confidential by the Social Service Coordinator.
- E Keeping the Head Start /Early Head Start Program Director abreast of any and all reports.

2. Training:

Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority Head Start/Early Head Start will provide orientation and yearly training for staff on the identification and reporting of child abuse and neglect.

1. Center Staff Responsibilities:

If **any staff person** has knowledge of/or reasonable suspicion that a child has been mistreated, based either on observation of a wound/injury or disclosure by the child, **they must report immediately or as soon as practically possible** to the **Department of Children's Services** in their respective county or to the **Sheriff or local Law Enforcement** in their town/city who are the **Child Protective Agencies**.

Reasonable suspicion means that it is objectively reasonable for a person to entertain a suspicion, based upon facts that could cause a reasonable person in a like position, drawing when appropriate on his/her training and experience, to suspect child abuse or neglect.

The report of the suspected child abuse should contain the following information:

- (1) Name and address of the child and parents or persons responsible for the child's care.
- (2) Child's age and birth date
- (3) Nature and extent of the suspected abuse.
- (4) Explanation given for the suspected abuse.

- (5) Any other information that might be helpful in establishing cause of the abuse and identity of the abuser.

Specific Procedural Steps:

1. Observe children when they arrive. When a child has a physical injury, ask the child how the injury occurred. If the child's explanation appears incompatible with the type, locations, and shape of the injury, **do not press the child for additional information**. Do not undress the child to look for additional injuries. Pay attention only to those injuries you can see or what the child voluntarily shows you. For infants and young toddlers (in Early Head Start) who cannot respond verbally to your questions, it is acceptable to remove their clothing to look for additional injuries.
2. Respond to the child's disclosure or complaint about injuries, aches, pain, etc. by acknowledging and supporting the child for telling. Tell the child you want to help but don't make promises you can't keep.
3. Call the Department of Children's Services/Child Protective Agency and report immediately, or as soon as practically possible to facilitate efforts to protect the child. Preferably, this should be done early in the day or as soon as the child discloses in order for protective services to make a visit and interview the child at the center.
4. When two or more mandated reporters jointly have knowledge of a known or suspected instance of child abuse or neglect, and when there is agreement among them, the report may be made by a member of the team selected by mutual agreement and a single report may be made and signed by the selected member of the reporting team.
5. When the telephone report is made, the mandated reporter shall note the name of the official contacted, the date and time contacted, and any instructions or advice received. **Mandated reporter in turn will report to the Social Service Coordinator by phone and then in writing** by filling out and mailing to the Social Service Coordinator the suspected report form with the same information provided to Department of Children's Services or Law Enforcement.
6. Staff should co-operate fully with the investigators. The Department of Children's Services will investigate, if warranted, in cooperation with local law enforcement authorities and the district attorney to determine the validity of the report and a decision regarding further action. The investigating agency may interview a suspected victim during school hours, on school premises.
7. Staff must not be found guilty of any type of child abuse/neglect. Disciplinary approaches administered during the day must not include verbal abuse (yelling, name calling, etc.) physical abuse (spanking, pinching, jerking, etc.) or neglect (withholding food as punishment, not attending to needs of

children). Staff found guilty of child abuse or neglect places himself/herself in a position of immediate dismissal.

Specific Procedural Steps: (In the event one staff member/classroom volunteer/parent witnessing abuse by another staff member/classroom volunteer/parent.)

1. Ensure that classroom is covered by staff in order to immediately move staff member/classroom volunteer/parent in violation of policy out of the classroom.
2. Administer appropriate support measures to child and reassure them that they will be protected and that this was not their fault.
3. Keep staff member/classroom volunteer/parent away from children and call DCS with report. Ensure that all Suspected Child Abuse Reporting forms are filled out correctly and that they document the name of the reporting official contacted.
4. Once report has been made to DCS, report the call to the Social Services Coordinator at Central Office. If Social Services Coordinator is not available, report the call to the Director. In the event that neither person is readily available, the Office Manager will contact one of them by phone in order to respond to this matter.
5. Central Office will then alert State Licensing Officials and instruct the staff member/classroom volunteer/parent as to their ability to remain on the premises or be removed. The staff member/classroom volunteer will wait for instruction from Central Office regarding their return to work.
6. Central Office will coordinate any and all communication with the family of the child and/or the families of the children in the center as directed by State Licensing Officials, the Office of Head Start Performance Standards and Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority. It is **extremely important** that confidentiality be upheld at every level during this process to protect the child and the staff member involved. Any and all communication or correspondence with any media source will be handled solely by Central Office.
7. The Social Services Coordinator, Education Coordinator and Director will team together to implement classroom coverage procedures and will involve any management staff that directly supervise the staff member/classroom volunteer involved. This team will also handle responsibilities for reporting these incidents to Regional Office.

As a member of a HS/EHS Program it is not your responsibility to find out whether or not actual abuse or neglect has occurred, but it is your

responsibility to report to the child protective service agency any situation that you believe may be causing harm to a child or may have the potential to harm the child.

It is the child protective agency's responsibility to determine whether or not abuse or neglect is actually occurring and to determine what actions need to be taken to protect the child from further harm. It is important to remember that the child protective agency is not interested in punishing the parent who abuses or neglects their child by taking the child away from its parents. Their goal is to offer services to the family to help them rectify the situation in the home that may be causing harm or that has the potential to harm the child. Most parents care and are concerned about their children and do not desire to deliberately harm them. When given the opportunity to receive help in better caring for their child, most parents, after an initial hostile or angry reaction, are more than willing to take the necessary steps to resolve the situation. However, in some instances where the family cannot or chooses not to take the necessary steps to protect the child it may be necessary to remove the child from the home.

It is not your responsibility to make those decisions but it is your responsibility to see that the child is protected even if it only requires that you make the telephone call to the proper agency.

Failure to report can result in the loss of one's rights to practice in the profession of childcare and/or legal liability. As long as the report is done in good faith and is not an act of harassment, any reporter is protected from civil liability or from being sued.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: EXCLUSION OF A CHILD

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: Head Start/Early Head Start believes that the safety of each enrolled child is extremely important. In order to insure that children are provided this protection HS/EHS will follow our procedures as outlined.

At the time of enrollment, parents will be advised of the exclusion policy and the procedures that the program will follow in excluding a child. Parents will also be advised that they must provide a record of a complete physical exam and documentation of current/ up-to-date immunizations, as this is a requirement for State Licensing.

PROCEDURE:

Reasons for Exclusion and Procedures

1. A child may be excluded from center attendance if parents fail to provide written documentation of current/ up-to-date immunization status and complete physical exam report. Family Service Workers will work with the family in insuring that every child has these documents for entry.
2. A child may be excluded from the program for communicable diseases and parasites. (Refer to 3.2 Head Start Center Policies Statement #19 or 3.2a Early Head Start Center Policies Statement #17)
3. A child may be excluded for failure of the parent or designated adult to be home when the child is scheduled to arrive home on the bus. (After the third (3rd) time). **First time** will be a verbal warning, **second time** there will be a written warning and the **third time** the bus service will be temporarily discontinued, and intervention will be provided by the FSW, Teacher, Transportation Coordinator, and Social Service Coordinator.
4. Behavior concerns will first be discussed with the parent and/or guardian of the child. A plan will be developed with the parent to address the behavior issues. A referral will be made to the Mental Health Coordinator and Consultant. The consultant will complete a behavior observation. This team of people will meet to discuss the issues and a decision will be made concerning the progress of the child's behavior and the correct placement for services. A referral may be made for a complete psychoeducational evaluation if the team deems this is necessary. If the Mental Health Consultant and the staff feel the child is a serious threat to other children and staff, an individual plan will be implemented.
5. A child may be excluded for lack of cooperation from parents. In these cases staff will first make every effort to resolve differences and help the parent understand the importance of cooperating with the program in meeting their child's need by assisting in developing a behavior management plan.

6. A child may be excluded for **chronic** failure of the parent or designated person to pick up the child at their appointed time. Parents must notify center staff if they are delayed beyond their scheduled arrival time or if they are going to be late picking up the child. A step system log will be utilized to document violations. ***At no time will staff turn children away from the classroom.*** If a parent or authorized person has not arrived to pick up the child by center closing time and no one on the emergency phone list can be contacted, then the Department of Children's Services and/or the Police Department will be notified that they have a child in their care and are unable to locate the parent/guardian of the child.
7. A child may be excluded for abusive behaviors and /or verbal threats made by the child's parent toward program staff or other parents. (Immediate Exclusion)
8. A child may be excluded if a parent abuses the discipline policy while participating in program activities. (See Child Behavior Management Policy)
9. A child may be excluded when he or she exhibits special needs or needs related to a serious illness that are not possible to be met by the program. In these cases, the program staff will make every effort to involve the parent and possible other resource persons (as appropriate) in order to decide on the best course of action for the child, prior to exclusion.
10. A child may be excluded for bringing onto HS/EHS property any type of weapon such as real firearms and/or knives. Parents of the child will be notified immediately as well as HS/EHS Central Office. A course of action will then be discussed.

The Step System Log will be used to document exclusion policy violations.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Releasing a Child to an Adult "Under the Influence" Or a Non-Custodial Adult Policy

Policy

The well-being of all children under the care of Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start is of primary importance. To adequately protect the child while in HS/EHS care staff will use every precaution in releasing a child. To adequately protect the staff and the HS/EHS program from liability, the following procedures will be adhered to when releasing a child into custody of a person suspected to be "under the influence" or a non-custodial adult.

Procedures

1. Parents of enrolled children will be informed at the time of enrollment about the program's "Release Policy".
2. Parents of enrolled children or other authorized adults, such as a legal guardian, will provide complete information on the child's enrollment application of anyone they may authorize to pick up their child. As changes occur to authorized pick-up, a status change form will be filled out and mailed to Central Office for data entry to ensure staff have current information.
3. Non-custodial adults picking up EHS children must be at least 18 years old. Disability: For parents, guardians, and non-custodial authorized persons with disabilities, a plan for drop off and pick up of children will be designed on an individual basis to meet the needs of the person with the disability, the child, and the family.
4. In the event that someone not listed as an authorized custodial adult will be picking up the child at the HS/EHS center or receiving the child when he/she is returned home, the child's parent/legal guardian must send a signed note authorizing that particular person to receive the child that day only or on successive days.
5. Staff will verify the identification (i.e. driver's license) of anyone they have not met and do not know, but their name is on the emergency list, who attempts to pick up or receive the child at the center or at the home. It is better to delay an authorized person a few minutes than to release a child into the custody of the wrong individual. (Call the parent if the child is reluctant about leaving with someone. Anyone concerned about the child will appreciate your caution rather than resent it.)
6. Staff will not accept telephone authorization unless it is a dire emergency and the staff person can readily identify the caller without question!
7. If a staff person suspects that the person to whom they are releasing the child is "under the influence", their first concern must be that the child can be safely

supervised. The following options may be utilized if staff feels that the adult in question is not in a condition to be driving or is unable to safely supervise:

- A. Make sure to have additional authorized adults who can be called to pick up the child.
 - B. Offer to give the child a ride home or offer to take the child to a relative.
 - C. If the parent /adult is aggressive or threatening, call the sheriff or police (911).
 - D. Staff must assure that an adult/authorized person is present at the home that is able to supervise the child when returning children to their home or when making a home visit.
 - E. If situations occur repeatedly, a decision will be made by the Central Office and Center Staff to inform the parents they may be at risk of having their child excluded from the program.
 - F. Report incidents that are suspected child neglect to the Department of Children Services, especially if you are worried that children are being supervised by someone who is mentally and/or physically impaired. Report in writing to Central Office when you have made a report.
8. If there is a custody problem, staff is legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent with legal custody. Ask for a certified copy of the most recent court order of legal custody. It is legally available to you as the child's care giver.

The enrolling parent may inform the HS/EHS staff that the other parent is not permitted to pick up the child. The staff should tell that parent that without a court document, both parents have equal rights to custody. This parent may have taken and be holding the child without the other parent's knowledge of the whereabouts before a court order has been made.

In either case, staff should tell the enrolling parent that the program will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent has legal custody where there is no court document and that the program will accept the information given by the enrolling parent unless presented with a court document that shows otherwise.

If staff have any concerns about a possible problem, they can tell the enrolling parent that the program won't be able to care for the child unless both parents sign a written agreement that spells out who can pick up the child at which times.

9. The custodial parent will be contacted if an unauthorized adult demands the right to pick up a child (the staff having already asked for identification from and explained the policy to the individual), or if the child doesn't want to leave with someone. If the custodial parent denies release of the child to the unauthorized person, or the custodial parent cannot be contacted, HS/EHS staff will attempt to stall or deny release of the child. It is HS/EHS responsibility to protect the other children in our care as well as the staff. If necessary, contact the local law enforcement officials.

10. Staff should release the child only as a last resort; the parent and the law enforcement should be notified immediately. Staff should be prepared to provide a good description of the person and the vehicle license plate number.

Every situation is unique when dealing with these types of problems. Staff will need to use good judgment, remain calm, and use different options to handle different situations.

Every effort will be made by HS/EHS staff to provide the best possible protection for the well-being of the children in their care, and to avoid excluding a child from the program by helping the family seek alternative solutions for the situation through support and guidance.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: ACCESS TO CAMPUS FOR PERSONS WITH A PROHIBITED CRIMINAL HISTORY/ REGISTERED AS SEXUAL OFFENDERS/VIOLENT SEXUAL OFFENDERS

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: In compliance with Tennessee Licensure Rule 1240-04-03-.07, Douglas-Cherokee Head Start will restrict persons with a prohibited criminal history and persons registered as Sexual Offenders/Violent Sexual Offenders from access to Head Start/Early Head Start campus and off- campus events.

Douglas-Cherokee Head Start classifies persons with a prohibited criminal history as defined below:

1. A criminal conviction or a no-contest or guilty plea; or any pending criminal action, including individuals subject to any warrant, indictment, presentment, etc.; or placement in a pretrial diversion; or
2. A pending juvenile action or previous juvenile adjudication, which, if an adult, would constitute a criminal offense; and
3. Any of the circumstances in subparts (1) and (2) above involves any of the following criminal offenses:
 - i. Any offense (including a lesser included offense) involving the physical, sexual or emotional abuse or gross neglect of a child, or involving a threat to the health, safety or welfare of a child;
 - ii. Any offense (including a lesser included offense) involving violence or the threat of violence against another person; and/or
 - iii. Any offense (including a lesser included offense) involving the manufacture, sale, distribution or possession of any drug.
4. Is listed on the Department of Health's Vulnerable Person's Registry.

Douglas-Cherokee Head Start classifies "registered person" as defined by Tennessee Code Annotated:

A "sexual offender" is any person who has been convicted in this state of committing a sexual offense as defined by T.C.A. 40-39-202 (20); or has another qualifying conviction as defined by T.C.A. 40-39-202 (2). A "violent sexual offender" is any person convicted of a violent sexual offense as defined by T.C.A. 40-39-202 (28); or has another qualifying conviction as defined by T.C.A. 40-39-202 (2).

OPERATING PROCEDURE:

A person who has a prohibited criminal history or is registered as a “sexual offender” or “violent sexual offender” must confidentially disclose such status to Douglas-Cherokee Head Start immediately upon enrollment of his/her child(ren). Failure to do so can result in a violation of Douglas-Cherokee Head Start policy.

Access to Head Start/Early Head Start Campus will be restricted for all persons with prohibited criminal history and all “registered persons” by limiting involvement to dropping off and picking up only. Unless otherwise prohibited by law or a court ordered probation restriction, a registered person may drop their child(ren) off at their designated Head Start/Early Head Start Campus or pick their child(ren) up at their designated Head Start/Early Head Start Campus.

No registered person may attend any Douglas-Cherokee Head Start events on campus or off-campus.

Nothing contained herein is intended to create an obligation by Douglas-Cherokee Head Start to identify and/or confirm an individual as a “registered person” or any individual’s criminal history. Douglas-Cherokee Head Start reserves the right to deny a registered person access to any Head Start/Early Head Start Campus, activity, or program, if it is deemed to be in the best interests of other children or staff in the Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Discipline Management Policy

We believe that children learn best through experiences. We believe our staff must guide and redirect the children to help them learn to cooperate with their peers. Positive educational experiences, encouragement, good health practices, and a supportive home will enhance a child's development. We believe we can best accomplish this by:

1. Having a variety of activities and experiences for children.
2. By using group management techniques, limiting the number of children in each area of the room to avoid overcrowding and to allow sufficient materials and opportunities for positive interactions.
3. By using below state recommended adult/child ratio in most classrooms.
4. By speaking with a child if their behavior is inappropriate or if they are using materials inappropriately.
5. By using positive language with the children to give praise for appropriate behavior. For example: "I like the way Sue is listening." "We walk inside" instead of don't run.
6. After using the above techniques, if a child is still having a problem in an area of the room, she/he may be asked to play in another area. For example: "John, this is not the way we play in the sand, please go to the puzzle table or library." As the year progresses children will learn the rules and what behavior is accepted.
 - If group behavior is the problem, the area that has become a problem for the group is closed and the group is divided to play in other areas.
 - If cleaning up is the problem for a group, we discuss the fact the longer it takes to clean after play the longer we wait for other fun activities.
7. Sometimes just a touch on the shoulder can let a child know of your presence and this will in turn put him/her back in task.
8. After exhausting the above mentioned methods, a child may still be having behavior issues. If this is the case, the child will be placed in a "time-out" area or chair. "Time-out" can last 3 to 5 minutes depending upon the age of the child. The child will be informed that when they have calmed down they

may return to play. If the child begins to tantrum aggressively (hurting others, materials, or themselves) or trying to run from staff and not calm themselves after a warning, then the parent will be called. **Staff cannot restrain children. Staff can stop the child from hurting others or trying to run away. The child may be removed from the classroom for safety reasons but will always be supervised.** Our goal is for the child to learn self-control and to learn to calm themselves. If the child displays extreme behavior issues then a parent/teacher conference will be requested so a plan to address behavior issues will be completed.

9. If a child has consistent difficulties in the class, the child and parents would discuss the concerns with the Mental Health Consultant. A child would not be referred without parental permission. A team decision is made as to referral process and if Head Start is the appropriate placement for the child.
10. Please be advised that under the law and Head Start regulations any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh or humiliating or frightening treatment, is illegal and against our policy. ***This applies to staff as well as parents volunteering in the classroom.***

Remember, we try to be consistent in our behavior techniques and class rules so children will know what we expect of them. If you have any questions about your child's behavior, please don't hesitate to ask the teacher.

**Head Start Transportation
Pedestrian/Bus Safety Education Training
1310.21**

Purpose:

To ensure the safety of the children and families that we serve and to improve the quality of our transportation services.

General Safety Rules:

- Stand Back from the road while waiting on the bus.
- Wait until the bus comes to a complete stop, the stop sign is out, and the bus door is open before approaching the bus.
- Please hold your child's hands when:
 the bus is approaching
 while loading and unloading
- If crossing the street, look to the left and right to make sure that no traffic is coming. Make sure to stay 10 feet from all sides of the bus. Ten feet from the front, sides and the back are the dangers zone and need to be avoided.
- An adult should always accompany a child while crossing the street at anytime.
- Be ready at your designated pick up location and time.
- Be patient in the event the bus is off schedule.
- If child is brought in by a parent, the parent must hold the child's hand at all times until the child is safely in the center. Same rules apply for bus or parent transports.
- Never leave your children unattended for any reason.

Safe Riding Practices:

- Obey the driver and bus monitor at all times
- Stay seated
- Stay buckled
- Keep hands and feet to yourself
- Talk quietly

I have read and understand the General Safety Rules and Safe Riding Practice and will adhere to them whether I transport my child or my child rides the bus. Bus services are not provided at every center. Centers that do provide transportation have an assigned route that may not pick up in your area; therefore, you may be responsible for transporting your child to and from the center. Field trips are taken occasionally so it is of utmost importance for all parents and children to know and follow this safety rules. Please note that failure to follow these safety rules may result in suspension of services.

Parent or Guardian's Signature

Date

Child's Name

POLICY: BUS EVACUATION

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: A bus evacuation drill will be conducted according to the employee calendar. One will be conducted from the front door of the bus, while the next scheduled one will be conducted from the rear door of the bus using the following procedure:

PROCEDURE:

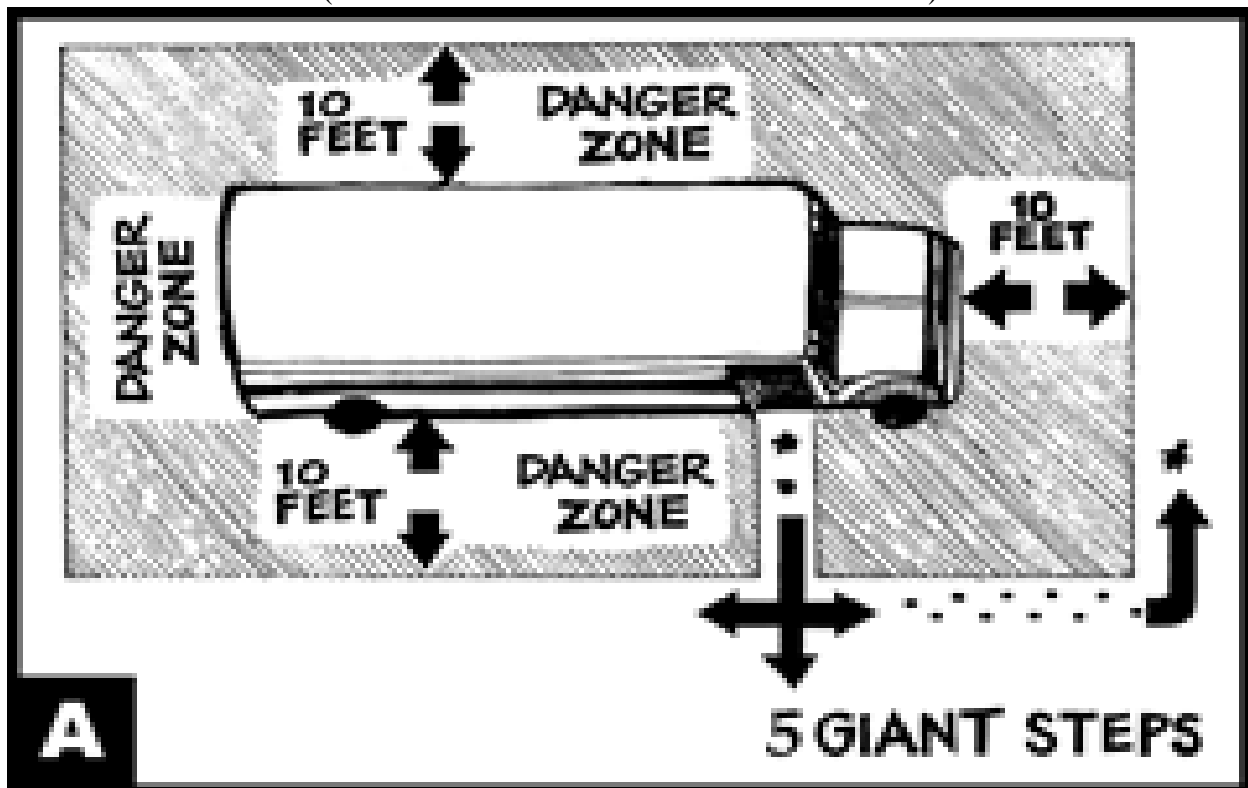
Front Door Evacuation : The bus driver will exit the front door first, taking the bus attendance log. The bus monitor will send the children off the bus, one at a time, in an orderly manner. The driver will check the children off as they exit the bus. The children will line up behind the driver and hold hands until the driver has checked all children off and can take them to a safe place away from the bus. The bus monitor will then inspect the interior of bus to make sure all of the children have exited the bus. While the bus monitor is making the final check of the bus, the driver will check the attendance log to ensure that all children are accounted for.

Rear Door Evacuation: The bus monitor will exit the rear bus door, taking the bus attendance log. The driver will send the children to the rear of the bus and help them exit one at a time in an orderly manner. The bus monitor will assist the children off the bus. The bus monitor will check each child off the bus and the children will stand behind the bus monitor and hold hands until the bus monitor can take them to a safe place away from the bus. The driver will then inspect the interior of the bus to make sure all the children have exited the bus. While the driver is making the final check of the bus, the bus monitor will check the bus attendance log to ensure that all children are accounted for. With each evacuation drill, always make sure that the children are accounted for and are away from the bus in a safe place.

For Children with Disabilities: A responsible adult will be assigned to a child whose abilities could limit them from exiting the bus on their own. An Individual Transportation Plan will need to be completed and sent to Central Office to be approved by the Special Services and Transportation Coordinators.

The bus evacuation drills should be timed and documented on the correct form. At the end of the month the evacuation drills will be sent to the Transportation Coordinator.

(Picture of the DANGER ZONES around a bus)



DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: PARENTS RESPONSIBILITY FOR TRANSPORTATION

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: In order to safely transport children to and from school and home each day, parents or guardians must be aware of and practice the loading and unloading Policy. **Early Head Start: Transportation is not provided.** Transportation will be provided to and from health and social services only when no other means are available. However, EHS children 3 year of age and older may ride the bus on occasion, such as a field trip with HS. **Disability:** A plan for Parents/guardians with disabilities will be designed on a case by case basis to meet the individual needs of the person with the disability, their child, and their family.

PROCEDURE:

1. All Head Start/Early Head Start children must be accompanied by a responsible adult while loading and unloading the HS/EHS school bus.
2. The parent or guardian will assist their child on and off the school bus steps and to and from the bus assistant.
3. Whenever the child is released from the parent in the morning, the parent or guardian must sign their **first** and **last name** on the transportation log. Whenever the child is released from the HS/EHS monitor to the parent in the afternoon, the parent or guardian must sign their **first** and **last name** on the transportation log.
4. No one other than the assigned persons can receive your child from the school bus.
5. **Head Start:** A parent or guardian must supply a list of three (3) responsible persons who have agreed to accept the child as an emergency contact/alternate drop. These names must be filled out on the Authorized Contacts and Emergency Permission Form. This form must be kept up to date. Parents are responsible for notifying staff of any changes throughout the year. The teacher will ask for the parent or guardian to update this form during the fall conference and at mid-year (January). A copy of this form and all updates will be kept in the child's file in the classroom, the field trip notebook and on the bus in the Emergency Contact folder.
6. If the parent or guardian cannot be at home at the appointed drop-off time, the child will be taken to the emergency contact/alternate drop designated by parent.
7. If no one is at home and there is not another designated person, staff will bring the child back to the center and the teacher will call the parents to inform them that someone will need to pick up the child.
8. If you are uncertain that an adult is present when you pickup/drop off a child, then the following steps need to be taken.
 1. Call the Family Service Worker and wait on him/her to arrive before continuing on your route. If FSW cannot be reached, then

- immediately call Central Office report situation to Social Services Coordinator or the Director.
2. Family Service Worker will knock on the door of residence to see if someone is in fact at home.
 3. If child is determined to be alone, then immediately contact DCS and follow their instructions.
 4. Call Central Office and report the situation with Social Services Coordinator or Director.
9. Bus stops will be selected for safety and, all persons must work together to ensure the area is free of any obstacles and that there will be a safe pick-up/drop-off place.
 10. Parents will be informed of expected bus arrival times and should be at the bus stop ready to load and unload your child. The driving staff will adhere as closely as possible to these times each day. Due to strict time limits, the driver will blow horn one time and wait three minutes for parent to acknowledge presence of bus.
 11. Parents can only pickup and drop child off at their designated location. If the parent is late to stop and the bus has already left, parents will have to transport child to the center.
 12. If for any reason the parent or child cannot cooperate with the transportation policy, HS/EHS will be unable to transport your child on the school bus.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START POLICY: ARRIVAL/DEPARTURE FOR CAR RIDERS

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: The center sign in log will be completed to assure that all children being transported by their parent or guardian to a Head Start/Early Head Start site have accurately been accounted in the adult/child ratio. The center sign out log will be completed at departure to assure each child has safely exited the classroom with an approved adult thereby eliminating the possibility that any child would be left unattended in the classroom.

PROCEDURE:

1. Children cannot be accepted earlier than the designated arrival time for the center. If you arrive before the designated arrival time, you will be expected to wait in your car with your child.
2. Immediately upon arrival, the parent must sign their first and last name on the sign in log with the time of arrival to the center. Once the child has been signed in by the parent, the child will immediately be counted in the adult/child ratio.
3. Parents are to notify the center of any changes in work or home phone numbers so that you may be reached in an emergency.
4. A brief health check will be conducted on each child daily. A child may not remain at the center if he or she is thought to be ill.
5. The teacher will complete a head count to ensure the number of children present in the classroom is accurate and update the total number of children present on the classroom board. The teacher will then document the child as present on the attendance sheet.

PROCEDURE: Sign In Log for Afternoon Pick Up

1. Parents must fill out an authorization form or send a note to give a person (other than the parents) permission to pick up their children. The person picking up the child must show identification, sign the child out of the center, be at least 16 years old, and have a valid driver's license.
2. Parents will sign their first and last name on the sign out log with the time of departure from the center.
3. The teacher will complete a head count to ensure the number of children present is accurate and change the number of children present on the classroom board.
4. In the event of a late pick up, a child will NOT be placed on the bus to ride the route while waiting on the parent to arrive at the center.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Standard of Conduct

All staff, consultants, and volunteers must abide by the Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start standards of conduct during all times while working or contracting services for the program.

Knowledge

All employees, volunteers, and consultants agree to have a basic knowledge of performance standards and the policies and procedures implemented by the program and verbalize the program philosophy.

Employees, volunteers, and consultants also agree to have knowledge of the ethnic and cultural backgrounds of families served.

Responsibilities

Must not solicit or accept personal gratuities, favors or anything of significant monetary value from vendors, contractors, or potential contractors.

Respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family served in the Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start Program

Refrain from stereotyping any child or family member based on gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, or disability.

Agree to follow the program's confidentiality policy at all times and refrain from any type of "gossip" concerning children, families, and Head Start/Early Head Start employees.

At no time will staff leave a child alone or unsupervised while assisting with the care of the child or supervising children.

Agree to use positive methods of child guidance and not engage in any type of corporal punishment. This includes but is not limited to emotional or physical abuse, humiliation, or isolation. This includes never using food as any type of punishment or reward.

Never refuse a child the opportunity to fulfill a basic need.

Consequences for Violating the Standard of Conduct (For Employees)

Failure to abide by the Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start standards of conduct will result in disciplinary action. This action will be consistent with the seriousness of the violation and will follow the disciplinary action policy in the Personnel Policies. Disciplinary action can begin at any step in the procedure if the Executive Director feels that the nature of the violation justifies a change from the normal disciplinary procedures.

Code of Conduct for all Persons on Head Start Property

1. Observe posted safety rules and regulations.
2. No alcohol, illegal drugs or weapons while on Head Start premises.
3. Parents who volunteer for the entire day may have meals with the children if food is available. Should a parent attend a parent training near the lunch period he/she should not plan to have lunch at the center. We receive reimbursement from USDA for the children's meals and no additional monies are available.
4. Special rules for children cannot apply. ***When parents volunteer at the center, their children participate in activities planned for all children.*** Example: the parent, even though she may do so at home, would not "feed" her child at meal time. Children attending a center (except in some special service situations) need to learn to participate in meal time with a minimum amount of assistance. Example: The parent would not want to comment "Jimmy does not eat such and such food". It may be that Jimmy will observe other children trying a particular food and will try and learn to enjoy that very food.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Confidentiality Policy

Policy

Families have the right to protection of personal information in their relationship with Head Start/Early Head Start during and following the process of obtaining services.

1. DCHS/EHS will collect all information that is relevant and necessary to accomplish the goals of HS/EHS families. Parents will be used as the primary source of information about themselves; and the information sought from the family will be limited to that which is essential for services.
2. Parents and other volunteers are prohibited from viewing records other than those of their own children.
3. Family information will be available to HS/EHS employees with the understanding that they will respect the right of privacy for each parent and child.
4. Employees will not reveal any information they may have access to that would breach this confidentiality policy or procedure and infringe on the right to privacy of the parent, volunteer, or child.
5. Files containing confidential information on children and/or staff will be locked when not in use; access to the file keys will be closely monitored.
6. Children's health, education, disability, and social services records will be open only to HS/EHS staff and special consultants on a "need to know" basis (to the extent necessary to provide services). Appropriate Coordinators will view records periodically in relation to their component area. A "Review of Record Form" must be completed and signed before access to records may be granted to a staff person not directly associated with that component area.
7. Written permission must be obtained from the parent /guardian before releasing any information regarding a HS/EHS child/family. (Please refer to Procedure VII A for incidences where permission is not needed).
8. When a family expresses a need or a concern, other agencies and individuals should be consulted only with the family's consent and within the limits of that consent.
9. Any verbal or telephone requests from someone not associated with HS/EHS for personal information concerning a child, parent, or employee should be referred to the appropriate person at Central Office. This will help to avoid accidentally releasing confidential information to an unauthorized person.
10. Any information received in confidence that could lead to a person being harmed must be brought to the attention of Central Office.
11. DCHS/EHS will impress upon parents and staff the importance of confidentiality and work together to maintain confidentiality.

Breach of Confidentiality

Any violation of the confidentiality policy is subject under law as a criminal offense with the following actions possible:

- A. Job dismissal for failure to follow the agency's regulations or professional standards.
- B. Conviction of a misdemeanor for violating certain confidentiality laws.
- C. The client can sue the employee who divulges information wrongly.
- D. Lawsuit for damages or for the invasion of privacy.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: NO-SMOKING

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVE: Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start strives to provide and maintain a safe and healthy environment for children. It is with this in mind that a No-Smoking Policy was adopted.

PROCEDURE:

As of July 1, 2010, there will be **NO SMOKING or VAPING on the grounds** of any DCEA Head Start/Early Head Start facility **when children are present** on the premises. (This includes children who may still be in their parent's vehicle, or children visiting with a parent filling out an application.) Staff may leave the premises when on their 30 minute break to smoke or vape. Staff may only smoke or vape in the designated areas when there are no children on the premises.

If a staff member is found to be smoking or vaping on the premises at a facility when there are any children present, he or she will be immediately sent home (unpaid disciplinary leave) for the rest of the day. Any member of management, including Area Managers and Education Manager has the authority to send staff home for this reason. Second occurrences will result in further disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Parents, volunteers, and visiting community members are also expected to follow this policy.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Health Policy for Volunteers in the Classroom

According to Head Start Performance Standards, a Volunteer Program including parents and community persons must be an active part of the HS/EHS Program.

Licensing requirements of the State of Tennessee Department of Human Services pertaining to Day Care Licensing states:

Each volunteer who is in contact with the children thirty (30) or more calendar days per year must have on file evidence of a tuberculin screening, or test or chest x-ray (if indicated) with negative results, in accordance with Department of Health and Environment recommendations. (See Appendix 6-B)

Therefore, all persons who volunteer one day per week in the center are requested to obtain a tuberculin screening, and test or chest x-ray (if indicated) with negative results and this should be displayed in the center. The tuberculin screening, and test or chest x-ray (if indicated) may be obtained at the Health Department.

It is the responsibility of the person seeking to volunteer in a HS/EHS classroom to obtain this information and present it to the Lead Teacher at the site where the volunteer will be stationed.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: LICE AND OTHER INSECT POLICY

Classroom lice checks should only occur at the end of the class day. If a child has lice or nits, the parent should be informed when the child is picked up or taken home. The child must be treated before returning to school. As many families choose to use non-pesticide alternative treatments (such as mayonnaise, olive oil, or combing), proof of treatment will be the child's head being free of live lice and greatly reduced in the number of nits. If the child is allowed to stay, the parent must be informed that any remaining nits should be removed before returning, and that the child's head will be checked again the following day. If there are questions the Health & Nutrition Coordinator should be called.

Individual checks should only be done if a child is observed scratching, and should be done in a private area of the classroom. If live lice or nits are found, staff may call the parent to inform them that their child has lice or nits, and told that staff checked the child because he/she was scratching and appeared uncomfortable. The staff will inform the parent that they may come pick-up their child early or wait until the usual pick up time (either by bus or parent transportation).

Parents should bring their child upon returning to school when possible. If parent transportation is not available, the Health & Nutrition Coordinator may give special exemption to return on the bus, and give instructions to staff based on each individual situation. The parents should be told to bring their child at a time when TWO staff will be available to check the child's head WITH THE PARENT THERE. The parent should stay until the child's head has been checked and determined to have been treated. The child's head should be checked every morning upon arrival to ensure the number of nits is decreasing and no more bugs are found. Once no bugs or nits are found, the child's head should be checked every morning for two weeks to monitor for re-occurrence.

The teacher will notify all parents when a case of lice is discovered by sending home the notice typically used to inform parents of infections and/or diseases. The Family Service Worker and/or Teacher will provide information on getting rid of lice to parents on an as-needed or requested basis.

If the child is determined to have NOT been treated, he or she will not be allowed to stay. After two days of the child returning and having not been treated, the Health & Nutrition Coordinator and/or the Social Services Coordinator should be called by the Family Service Worker.

Bed Bugs/Ants/Fleas/Roaches/Other Pests:

A child WILL NOT be excluded for living in a home which is infested with pests. If the child attends school and has two or more individual pests crawl off of the child, or be found on the child or in the child's clothing or hair, the parent will be called and asked to pick up the child and make sure the child does not have pests on their person when returning to school.

The classroom staff will inform the Family Service Worker of the situation. The Family Service Worker will contact the family to help find solutions to the pest problem.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Written Procedure for Hearing and Resolving Parent and Community Complaints/Grievances

The classroom teacher should be contacted or consulted if there is a complaint/grievance by a parent or community person.

If the nature of the complaint/grievance is such that it can be answered by applying the Head Start/Early Head Start Policies, this information should be given to the parent or community person.

If the nature of the complaint/grievance is not covered by a Head Start/Early Head Start Policy, the Area Manager, or EHS Site Supervisor must be contacted immediately.

All complaints/grievances will be brought to the attention of the Area Manager or EHS Site Supervisor.

The Area Manager or EHS Site Supervisor will address the situation with the person making the complaint/grievance.

The Head Start/Early Head Start Director will be consulted. At the director's request appropriate Coordinators may meet with the director to review the complaint/grievance.

At the discretion of the Head Start/Early Head Start Director and the Douglas-Cherokee Executive Director, the Policy Council may be made aware of the complaint/grievance.

The Head Start/Early Head Start Director will then take action to resolve the complaint/grievance. The final action will be based on the information received, existing Head Start/Early Head Start Policies, and advice of Policy Council and/or Executive Director.

An appeal of the decision of the Head Start/Early Head Start Director may be made to the Policy Council, and after review the decision of the Policy Council will be final.

- **Must Be Voted On By Policy Council Annually**

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Fund-Raising/Donation Policy

Fund-raising activities will not be permitted. Donations of cash/goods done in the name of Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start must be handled in a consistent and professional manner.

Staff and parents are not permitted to solicit funds; however, it is appropriate to make the public aware we accept donations through personal contacts. Examples might include:

- VAP (Volunteerism Always Pays) program through local Wal-Marts encourages employee volunteerism in the community. A monetary donation may be made based on the volunteer time given by the Wal-Mart employee.
- Staff or parents may be affiliated with or have contacts with community leaders and civic organizations that may have an interest in making a donation.
- Local churches may be interested in contributing to a classroom (especially during the holidays).
- Local restaurants may offer to donate a meal or give a discounted rate to provide a cultural experience for the children and/or parents.
- Relatives of staff or parents may be interested in sponsoring a special activity for the children and/or parents.

The procedures for handling donations are:

1. Record on the Classroom Fund Ledger the amounts received and attach a copy of the check, shopping/gift card or receipt that money was received.
2. Send donations (checks/cash) and a copy of any donated shopping/gift card to the Parent Involvement Coordinator or Finance Manager.
3. Complete a "Request for Funds" and fax to Parent Involvement Coordinator when funds are needed. (This form is also required when you are ready to use a shopping/gift card.) Shopping/Gift cards should be used within 30 days of receiving.
4. A limit of twenty dollars per child is allowable for Christmas gifts. Preferably funds should be utilized to provide opportunities to participate in and benefit from periodic field trips that enhance and expand the learning environment.
5. Send original receipts to Parent Involvement Coordinator and attach a copy to the ledger sheet once expenditure is complete.
6. Complete a Volunteer/In-kind form upon expenditure, if allowable.
7. A copy of the Classroom Fund Ledger will be submitted to the Parent Involvement Coordinator at the end of December and the original at close-out in May. The teacher will maintain a copy for her records with copies of receipts.
8. Balances may be carried over to the next program year.

Any monetary donation must be treated as program income and can only be spent for purposes related to the Head Start/Early Head Start program to be counted as In-kind. There are some activities that are acceptable but not allowable as In-kind (i.e.-Christmas gifts, T-shirts for End of Year Celebration).

Teachers must work with the Parent Committee and should ask for assistance from the Parent Involvement Coordinator if any questions arise or if parents have ideas/suggestions in conflict with established policies/Head Start Performance Standards.

DOUGLAS-CHEROKEE HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Holiday Celebration Policy

Policy

To select and celebrate holidays that are culturally relevant to the group for the overall purpose of building a sense of community, family, and togetherness without consuming the curriculum.

Holiday Celebration Objectives

- To demonstrate that different beliefs are valued and appreciated
- To respect the diversity of a particular group
- To validate a child's and family's holiday experiences
- To expose children to different ways of celebrating the same holiday
- To connect children's lives at home with relevant school experiences
- To affirm a family's values
- To promote thoughtful and meaningful dialogue between staff and families
- To limit the number of holiday celebrations to ones that have significant meaning to the children and families.

Procedures

1. Obtain information from families about their holiday customs and traditions.
2. Discuss and decide which holiday celebrations will be included in the long-range curriculum plans.
3. Obtain accurate information about holiday customs and traditions as it relates to how individual families celebrate.
4. Involve parents/guardians in the implementation of holiday activities.
5. Select activities that are developmentally appropriate and within the scope of young children's understanding (see attached Holiday Ages & Stages).
6. Select a few activities and/or experiences that are related to the holiday celebration rather than planning a week long theme around a particular holiday.
7. Provide nutritional foods in relation to the holiday celebration.

What to Avoid

- **Candy Treats (All Holidays)**
- Stereotyping a particular ethnic group or culture
- Portraying one holiday as more important than another
- Requesting money or treats from parents for celebrations/field trips
- Halloween costumes & masks
- Excluding children or families
- Teaching religious aspects of holidays
- All outside food purchases or donations.

Note: The overall purpose of developing a Holiday Policy for Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start is to improve the quality of services to the children and families by providing "more appropriate holiday celebration experiences." If we all agree to keep this thought in the back of our minds and maintain a positive attitude this change will not be difficult.

Early Head Start: Infants and Toddlers can be easily over stimulated and do not react well to drastic changes in their environment and routine. Please use caution when considering Holiday activities.

Holiday Ages and Stages

Two Year Olds

- Enjoy being with family on holidays.
- Catch excitement from adults but do not understand what is going on.
- May be over stimulated or upset by too much change in their routine.

Three Year Olds

- View holiday celebrations in terms of their own family experiences
- Are egocentric and think that everyone celebrates what they do and in the same way
- Need to see their family's special holidays reflected in their school environment, especially if the holidays are not usually visible in our society
- Learn from holiday activities that are concrete, accurate, and connected to their own experiences
- Understand and respond to the feelings holidays bring, rather than to the reasons people celebrate
- May not remember anything about a particular family celebration from last year

Four Year Olds

- Continue to view holidays primarily in terms of their own family experiences
- Continue to need to see their family's special holidays reflected in their school environment
- May remember a celebration from last year and look forward to it
- Begin to realize that some people celebrate holidays other than their own, and celebrate in different ways
- Can talk about similarities and differences among holidays that connect to their own experiences
- Understand simple (and accurate) information about the meanings of holidays

Five Year Olds

- Enjoy celebrating holidays with friends as well as with families
- Continue to need to see their family's special holidays reflected in their school environment
- Enjoy preparing for celebrations by making special foods, decorating, etc.
- Want celebrations to be consistent "like last year"
- Begin understanding the historical or social reasons why a holiday is celebrated

Taken from Celebrate! An Anti-Bias Guide to Enjoying Holidays. By Julie Bisson

*Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start
Parent Suggestion Form*

Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start is always striving to do a better job for our children and their families. As a Head Start parent, we welcome your suggestions/concerns anytime. We are always looking for new ideas to use in our classrooms, parent trainings and staff trainings. Please send in any suggestions/concerns that you have. Turn this form in to your teacher, family service worker or mail to:

Douglas-Cherokee Head Start/Early Head Start 127 Cedar St. Morristown, Tn. 37814

Attn: Parent Involvement Coordinator

Parent/Child Name _____

Classroom _____ **Teacher** _____

Suggestions for classrooms _____

Parent Enrichment activities _____

Parent Trainings _____

As a parent, I'd like to learn more about:

1. My rights as a parent: _____
2. How to further my own education: _____
3. Head Start's Menu _____
4. Volunteering in classroom & on field trips _____
5. Getting my child interested in learning i.e. home activities _____
6. Other; explain _____

We also realize that you may want to express some concerns that you may have. Please feel free to let us know those too.

Concerns _____

Thank you for all that you do for your child and for our program. Without your help and support our program could not function. Again, thank you!! Remember, we welcome volunteers daily! Parents are invited to visit the classroom and examine the curricula and instruction materials at any time.

***Policy Council Minutes and Parent Resources are located on the
Douglas-Cherokee HS/EHS website at www.dceaheadstart.org***