

PORTER – LEATH

Early Head Start Parent Manual



MISSION

Empowering children and families to achieve a healthy, optimal and independent lifestyle.

VISION

To be the leader in helping children and families succeed.

VALUES

We believe in: accountability, earliest intervention, safest environment, teamwork, integrity, professional development, and doing what we say.

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ABOUT OUR CENTER

The Early Head Start Program is designed to provide early intervention and child development services to eligible pregnant women and children from birth to age three. The program began in 1998 and offers a combination of home-based and center based Early Head Start services to the community. Within the program, there are departments to carry out tasks required to ensure that we are meeting the needs of the children and families served through our program.

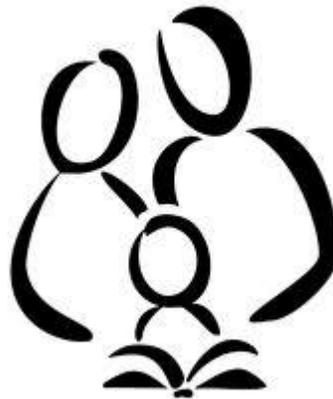
Our classrooms offer developmentally appropriate activities. Each classroom participates in child-initiated and teacher directed activities daily.

Family Services, Health, Disabilities, and Nutrition Department offer services to engage families in the program and to help them meet their basic needs. Staff also provides health, disabilities, and nutrition services for all children including those with special needs. They help to identify and implement healthy and safe practices both in the classrooms and in family homes.

Nutrition services are provided to offer our parents education on healthy cooking and eating habits. Nutritious meals are planned for our children and families and approved by a Registered Dietician. Parents are provided with a daily menu informing them of the meals provided to their children.

Our Education Department offers developmentally appropriate classroom activities and practices that prepare children for school. Our goal is to help each child develop cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. Children are given the opportunity to make choices and participate in social activities.

The program is managed by a Site Manager, assisted by the EHS/HS Operations Manager and Program Director, a parent elected Parent Committee, and governed by the Policy Council and Porter-Leath's Board of Directors.



CENTER HOURS OF OPERATION/ ATTENDANCE POLICY

1. Except for illness, children are required to be at the center every day that the center is in operation.
2. Early Head Start core hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. For parents that are working or attending school, extended care hours are provided. It is our goal to assist as many families as possible; however extended care has limited spaces and is designed for parents that are working or attending school. Extended care is only granted once parents provide documentation of attending school or working on company letterhead. ***Please note, a submission of extended care request does not guarantee approval.***
3. Early Head Start school day begins at 8:00 a.m. daily. If your child arrives late, please see your Family Services Worker before entering the classroom. Parents are expected to notify Family Services if you are experiencing any difficulties or there is a need to arrive late. Parents will be referred to management for continued late arrivals.
4. Arriving to school on time is important for our children. There are important mealtime supervision requirements designed to ensure the safety of all children. Late arrivals to school impact the children, the staff and the daily schedule. Please note that if a child arrives after mealtime, the **parent will be asked** to sit with their child while he/she eats in order to maintain compliance with program supervision requirements. This time can be an invaluable opportunity for you to engage in morning classroom activities while helping to ensure the safety of the child and the program's licensing requirements.
5. It is important for children to be picked up in a timely manner from their day at Early Head Start/Head Start. It is the family's responsibility to arrange for an alternative pick-up person if they cannot be on time. If the designated pick-up person has an emergency and believes that they may be 5-10 minutes late, they are required to call the center and inform staff.
6. If your child is going to be absent for any reason(s), the absence must be reported to your Family Services Worker.
7. After three consecutive absences, without notification from parent/guardian, a Family Services staff will contact you to identify reasons for the absences. If no contact is made by the 4th day, your Family Services Worker will conduct a home visit. If no contact from the parent is made by the 5th day, a letter of notification will be mailed regarding the termination of your child's participation in the program.
8. We must maintain 85% enrollment. Therefore, we will make every possible effort to assist you in ensuring your child's regular attendance.
9. If a child is consistently absent (for example, attends two days, misses two days), we will assess the reasons for the absences and assist you in exploring other childcare options that are more suited to your needs.

MY RIGHTS AS AN EARLY HEAD START PARENT

1. To provide input in decisions affecting the planning and operation of the program.
2. To help develop adult programs which will improve daily living for my family and me.
3. To be welcomed in the classroom.
4. To choose whether or not I participate without fear of endangering my child's right to be in the program.
5. To be informed regularly about my child's progress in Early Head Start.
6. To receive guidance for my child from Early Head Start teachers and staff this helps his/her total individual development.
7. To learn about the operation of the program, including the budget and the level of education and experience required for filling job vacancies.
8. To have a part in planning and carrying out programs designed to increase my skills in areas of possible employment.
9. To be informed of all community resources related to health, education and the improvement of family life.

MY RESPONSIBILITY AS AN EARLY HEAD START PARENT

1. To learn as much as possible about the program and to take part in major policy decisions.
2. To accept Early Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and the life of my child(ren).
3. To take part in the classroom as an observer, or a volunteer and to contribute my services in whatever way I can toward enriching the total program.
4. To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, explaining the program to other parents and encouraging their full participation.
5. To welcome teachers and staff into my home for required home visits to discuss ways in which I can help in my child's development.
6. To work with the teachers, staff, and other parents in a cooperative way.
7. To guide my children with firmness, that is both loving and protective.
8. To offer constructive criticism of the program, protect it against unfair criticism, and to share in the evaluation of services.
9. To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development.
10. To become involved in community programs which help to improve health, education, and welfare.

HOME-BASE/ PRENATAL SERVICES

Early Head Start provides home based services to expectant parents and children up to age 3 years. Our Early Head Start Program recognizes that providing a healthy start for your child begins before birth and that prenatal care is essential.

It is our commitment to provide any services, training, counseling, and referrals to assist program participants. The Parents As Teachers (PAT) curriculum is utilized to foster the growth and development during the early stages of life for children and throughout the pregnancy of an expectant parent. The interaction between the parent, child (ren), and the home visitor helps to foster developmental, cognitive, and socialization skills.

All participants in the home-based program sign an agreement stating that they will actively participate during scheduled visits in their home. If you cannot attend your home visit please contact your home visitor to reschedule. Excessive cancellations of home visits will cause termination of home-based services.

Parents are expected to participate in the following activities for the home based program:

Children and families: Weekly 1 ½ hour home visits.

Expectant parents: Monthly 1 ½ hour home visits.

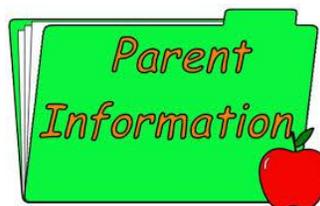
Socialization Activities: Two group socialization activities per month will be planned. Parents are encouraged to attend. Activities will focus on both the parent and their child(ren).

Screenings: All children must receive health and developmental screenings within 45 days of enrollment in the home-based program.

Assessments: All children will receive 3 developmental assessments per year and reports are provided to parents.

APPLICATION / ENROLLMENT PROCESS

1. All children are enrolled in our program using a point system.
2. Applications must be complete before processing begins.
3. Acceptance in the program is based on a point system that is approved by the Policy Council and Governing Board.
4. Parent/Guardian whose child is accepted for enrollment will receive a letter of acceptance.
5. Participants in the Head Start program are required to participate in the parent orientation training.



AUTHORIZATION OF PICK-UP/ DROP OFF

- 1.) Upon enrollment, parents must complete an authorization of pick-up/drop-off form. On this form, parents must list person(s) authorized to pick-up and/or drop-off their child(ren). These individuals must be ***over the age of 18***. No exceptions will be made and this policy includes daycare providers.
- 2.) *If staff is unfamiliar with the person picking up your child, we will ask him/her to show a picture ID. The name listed must match the name on the person's personal identification. If the person does not have written authorization and is not on your pick-up list, **we will not release your child to that person.** (This includes Day Care Providers)*
- 3.) Parents have the right to add or remove names from the authorization form; however, the parent must come to the center to update the form in person. Verbal or faxed requests will not be acknowledged nor is staff responsible for implementing the necessary changes unless procedures are followed.
- 4.) Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 18. This policy will be enforced for anyone picking up children. That includes: parents, authorized persons identified to pick-up children and private centers.

EXTENDED CARE SERVICES

Extended Care is only offered to parents who are working or attending school. It is our goal to assist as many families as possible; however due to the limited number of spaces available, a submission of an extended care request does not guarantee approval. Early Head Start must maintain compliance of teacher-child ratio at all times. Each request must be accompanied with a letter from the employer on company letterhead, or an official copy of your school schedule with a verifiable contact name and number.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

Parents are required to pick up their child by their designated pick-up time. A pattern of picking up a child(ren) late is unacceptable, upsetting to the child, and difficult for the staff. For this reason, Porter-Leath EHS/HS has adopted the following procedures for children that are not picked up from their classroom on time:

1. Staff will attempt to call parent/guardian at the numbers listed in the child's file if they are more than fifteen (15) minutes late. If parent/guardian is chronically late; and for the purpose of this policy "chronically" is defined as three (3) or more times in a two (2) week period, with or without a call from the parent/guardian telling us they are late. If chronically late parent/guardian does not contact us, staff will call when the parent/guardian is five (5) minutes late, then proceed to step 2.
2. If staff is unable to contact parent/guardian, staff will attempt to contact emergency contacts listed in the child's emergency contact list. Contacts must have authorization to pick up the child.
3. If staff is **not** able to make contact with anyone on the emergency/contact list, staff will attempt to call the parent/guardian again. If staff is unable to contact parent/guardian we will move to step 4.
4. Staff will notify the EHS/HS Director and his/her immediate supervisor, and then proceed to file a report with the Department of Children's Services.

Parents will receive a written warning for each occurrence. After the third occurrence, parents will be asked to meet with their Family Services Worker. The intent will be to discuss reasons for late arrival and identify possible solutions to get the child (ren) to the center in a timely manner.

PHOTO PERMISSION POLICY

Porter-Leath Early Head Start photographs children frequently. In order for your child to be photographed or filmed parents must sign a photo release form that will remain on file for the school term. Forms will be updated annually.



DAILY PROCEDURES

- 1.) Parents must sign children in and out daily.
- 2.) Parents must provide the child's receiving teacher with a report of the child's eating, bathroom pattern and mood each morning. This is done to ensure that we are providing the best possible care for your child.
- 3.) Your child will be given a daily health check for any contagious diseases (i.e. chicken pox, flu) or any bumps, bruises, and scratches they may have received before coming to the center.
- 4.) While conducting the daily health check, the teacher will look at your child's stomach, back, arms, legs, eyes and nose before you leave the center. If any contagious diseases are noticed, you will be asked to take your child home for the day and provide a doctor's statement when the child is able to return to school.
- 5.) Children must be picked up at the authorized time you were given upon admittance to the program unless other arrangements have been approved in advance by Family Services. Extended Care is only available for parents who are working or attending school.
- 6.) Family Services will update your records several times each year to ensure that extended care services are provided appropriately.
- 7.) The Department of Human Services requires that children will not be released to anyone whose behavior may place the child(ren) in imminent risk. This means that Head Start staff has the responsibility to refuse to release a child to anyone that they believe exhibits signs of drug/alcohol intoxication or any other behavior (rage/anger) that **may** place the child in danger.

INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURES

- 1.) Porter-Leath Early Head Start Program operates on the same schedule as the SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS system and may be required to close early or close for a full day due to inclement weather conditions.
- 2.) Parents should watch media coverage for school closings. ***When SHELBY COUNTY SCHOOLS are closed, the center will be closed for inclement weather.***
- 3.) Parents may call Porter-Leath's main phone line at 577-2500 and the recording will indicate whether or not the agency is closed due to inclement weather.

If our program closes early, parents will be notified an hour prior to closing and expected to pick-up children immediately

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Parents are their children's first teacher, and we encourage parents to be actively engaged in their child's education and in the program. The family engagement activities that we provide to families are geared towards improving family well-being; increasing positive parent-child relationships; making families as lifelong learners; engaging families in transitions; connecting families to their peers and the community; and empowering families to be advocates.

In working with families and implementing a variety of family engagement activities, Porter-Leath's EHS/HS **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT GOALS** are to: 1) Build partnerships with families to help improve family outcomes; and 2) Improve transition process for children families, and program staff. To achieve these goals and to generate positive family outcomes, we encourage families to:

Participation in:

- Policy Council and other committees as selected

By being active in the center, parents demonstrate an interest in the growth and development of their child(ren). A child can see that their parent is concerned about his/her well being.

Participation in the classroom and in the center:

- Parent Meetings
- Volunteers in the Classroom
- Visits to Classroom
- Parent Conferences

By being involved in Early Head Start activities, parents show their child(ren) their willingness to share their time. This gives children an opportunity to show pride in his/her own parents.

Parent Activities and Projects:

- Educational Activities
- Family Health and Nutrition
- Budgeting and Money Management
- Parenting Skills
- Community Concerns
- Celebrations

In this area, Early Head Start parents often join with other community action groups. The child is able to see his/her parents involved in community activities.

Helping the child at home:

- Permitting home visits by the Early Head Start staff.

Planning with the teacher learning activities that can be done at home, with the parent serving as teacher. This is an extension of Early Head Start classroom activities.

- Recognizing the child's work.

The child needs to know that the whole family is involved and interested in his/her Early Head Start experiences, teachers and friends, as well as his/her classroom.

FAMILY SERVICES

Family Services staff will work with parents to develop a Family Partnership Agreement. The purpose of the Family Partnership Agreement is to support parents in identifying their own strengths, interests, and goals. This includes identifying and documenting these goals as well as setting timetables for achieving them. Family Services staff will schedule a time and place in order to begin the family partnership process.

- 1.) Upon enrollment into the Early Head Start program, Family Services staff will work with parents to develop a Family Partnership Agreement.
- 2.) Family Services staff will follow-up with parents monthly, to ensure that they are working towards objectives identified to accomplish goals.
- 3.) Each agreement will include goals and objectives as identified by families.
- 4.) Family Services staff will identify community resources and assist families with objectives that will help achieve the identified goal.

Family Services staff will assist parents/guardians by making referrals to resources available in the community such as:

- Affordable Utilities
- Safe and Affordable Housing
- Food and Clothing
- Family Literacy Training
- Affordable Medical and Dental Care
- Educational Training

Family Services staff will also conduct announced home visits. Unannounced home visits will only be conducted when there are consistent attendance concerns.



PARENT COMMUNICATION

Every effort will be made daily to communicate with families when they drop off and pick up their child(ren), through notes sent home, or through telephone calls. If there has been an unusual or special circumstance during the day, information will be passed on to the parent(s) verbally or in writing. Serious incidents, or ones that the staff feels may be upsetting to the parents will be communicated verbally and a follow up incident report will be provided to parents.

In return, we ask that parents communicate with the classroom Teachers any unusual behavior or incident that may have occurred while the child was at home; when Teachers are well informed they can take care of your child in the best way possible.

Early Head Start staff will communicate with parents often regarding center activities, daily activities for children, and center closings/updates.

Types of communication will include (but will not be limited to) the following:

1. Face to face meetings
2. Phone contacts
3. Monthly newsletters/calendars
4. Policy Council Meetings
5. Parent Meetings
6. Daily Activity Reports
7. Parent-Teacher Conferences
8. Home visits

Parents are strongly encouraged to participate in activities provided at our center. We also ask that parents volunteer in the classroom and assist in planning programs, curriculum and special events.

IMPORTANT: We must keep up-to-date emergency contact information about each child in our files **at all times.** Any change of information from parents must be given to Family Services staff and/or the Site Manager to ensure that the master files are updated.



PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

Head Start/Early Head Start programs must operate under a philosophy of shared governance. This enables parents and community members to be active decision-makers in policies, procedures and other important issues that affect how a program operates. Parents can express an interest and possibly be elected to be members of the Policy Council and attend meetings. Parents may attend training sessions that are planned for them, including some out-of-town conferences.

PARENT COMMITTEES

Parent Committees are organized at the center level. Every parent who has a currently enrolled child is a member of the Parent Committee. Activities for the Parent Committee include:

- Working with the Policy Council to support overall program development and implementation.
- Planning, conducting, and participating in informal or formal programs and activities for parents and staff (e.g., Parent Committee meetings, family picnics, family field trips, etc.).
- Contributing to program development and operations in many ways, including the following:
 - Becoming involved in the development of the program's curriculum and approach to child development and education.
 - Assisting in planning program activities for centers, group socialization experiences, etc.
 - Identifying how volunteers and community resources can extend program services.
 - Suggesting where to look for community volunteers and resources.
- Collaborating with local foundations and other organizations to advocate on behalf of low-income family needs.
- Assist in recruiting parents and other resources to support desired parent driven activities and as part of the matching non-federal share.

PARENT ACTIVITY FUND

The purpose of this fund will be explained during Center/Parent Committee Meeting. Parents will be encouraged to use the monies for educational purposes at their child's center.

POLICY COUNCIL

The Early Head Start Policy Council participates in shared governance of the Early Head Start program. The Policy Council functions as a link to Parent Committees in communicating with parents enrolled in the Early Head Start program. Policy Council members operate as the voice for the parents who have children currently enrolled in the program. The Policy Council is made up of 51% parents and 49% community members. Policy Council members receive formal training on their roles and responsibilities. Policy Council members cannot be Porter-Leath employees, nor can they be related to any employee by blood or marriage. There is a lifetime limit of three (3) one-year terms to serve on the Policy Council.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (Governing Board)

Porter-Leath's Board of Directors has the administrative and fiscal responsibility for the Early Head Start program. As the governing board for the program, the Early Head Start Board of Directors is a partner in the shared governance of the Early Head Start program.

PARENT ORIENTATION

Parent orientation is held at the beginning of each year. Parents/Guardians are required to attend orientation before their child is admitted to school.



Parents/Guardians will meet teachers and staff. During that time information about the center will be reviewed and forms completed. Parents/Guardians will obtain a parent manual and licensing information.

DAILY APPEARANCE

- Children should be dressed for safe play. Please remember the following when dressing your child:
 - **Closed toe shoes are required.** *Sandals, crocs, flip-flops or slide-in shoes should not be worn to ensure safety of your child(ren) at all times.*
 - **Hair beads and small hair decorations are prohibited.**
 - **Earring studs should be worn with appropriate backs and refrain from long or hoop earrings.**
- Children should not arrive to school in soiled clothing or diapers. If your child(ren) has soiled themselves prior to their arrival to the center please inform your child's teacher before leaving the center.

TOILETING PROCEDURES

Children are enrolled in Early Head Start without regard to whether or not they have learned to use the toilet. Staff will change diapers and assist children in positive ways to learn to use the toilet within a developmentally appropriate time frame.

- The Teachers will communicate with parents to determine when toilet training should begin at school.
- Parents should remain in regular contact with teachers about their child's toileting needs so that we can maintain consistency with your child(ren) at the center.

CHANGE OF CLOTHING

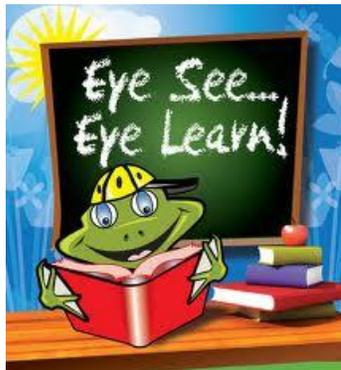
To avoid the center interrupting you at work/school, please make sure your child has a change of clothing at the center at all times. A change of clothing consists of a top, bottom, socks, and underwear. If you do not provide a change of clothing, you will be contacted to pick up your child.

HEALTH SERVICES

The health services that we offer includes providing medical and dental services for your child(ren). A complete physical examination is required before starting the program.

Within the first 45-90 days of program enrollment, developmental and health screenings and assessments will be conducted. The information gathered from these screenings and assessments assist us in developing a profile for your child. This profile helps teachers to plan and implement activities that maximize your child's learning. In addition, it helps the teachers to determine the developmental milestones that a child has achieved and which milestones he/she is ready to learn.

1. Early Head Start will work with parents to conduct visual, developmental, hearing, speech, dental and lead screenings.
 - **Vision, Speech, and Hearing Screenings** are conducted by the University of Memphis.
 - **Dental Screenings** are conducted by Christ Community Health Services.
 - **Lead Screenings** are conducted by Shelby County Health Department.
 - **Developmental Screenings** are conducted by each child's parent/guardian. Teachers will give each parent/guardian an Ages and Stages Questionnaire to complete on their child.
 - **Developmental Assessments** are conducted by each child's teachers three times during the school year- beginning, middle and year end. Teachers have been trained to use the Early Learning Accomplishment Profile (ELAP) to assess each child's developmental skills and to interpret its results. **A report will be provided to the parent after each assessment period.**
2. Staff will obtain authorization from parents before screenings are conducted.
3. All parents will be notified regarding the screening schedules, updates, and/or deficiencies from screening results.
4. Parents will receive a copy of their child's developmental screenings and a staff member will contact you if further screenings are necessary.



Note: Parent's insurance will be billed for Dental screenings conducted at the center. If your children(ren) have received these services prior to enrollment, please be sure to provide your assigned Family Services Worker with the appropriate documentation.

SICK CHILD POLICY

In our efforts to better serve you, these three steps must be taken when your child is sent home sick:

1. **You must bring your child to Family Services staff before he/she can return to the classroom.**
2. **You must provide a doctor's excuse upon arrival to school.** If your child rides the bus, the doctor's excuse may be faxed to the office the day of the office visit. Classroom teachers will not be allowed to take these slips. You can call the school to ensure that we have received the return slip.
3. If the child is on an antibiotic medication, he/she must be on the medication for a full 24 hours before returning to school. Any medication that needs to be administered to your child at school must be submitted to Family Services staff. You will be asked to sign a medication consent form and we will need a copy of the prescription or doctor's statement.

Only the following doctor prescribed medications will be administered by Porter-Leath Early Head Start/Head Start Staff.

- a. Medications that the doctor specifies will be administered within PL Early Head Start hours of operation.
- b. A medical statement is required by the parent/guardian if medication is to be administered on a PRN (as needed) basis. The parent/guardian is responsible for notifying **Family Services staff** upon arrival to the center.
- c. Medications that are to be given four times a day or more. (Medications that are to be administered less than (4) times daily should be given at home except when ordered by the doctor to be given during the school day or in unusual circumstances that will be determined by Management– on a case by case basis).



The parent/guardian is responsible for ensuring that all necessary medication, supplies and equipment required to administer the child's medication are provided to the center.

Under no circumstances are children allowed to transport medication containers (full or empty) to or from the center. All transfer of medication containers will be between PL staff and parent/guardian.

- The parent/guardian is responsible for providing instructions to Family Services staff on any equipment or supplies required to properly administering the child's medication.
- The parent/guardian is responsible for reviewing papers brought home by the child.
 - Notification when more medication is needed.
 - Notification when a child fails to receive a scheduled dose of medication
 - Notification when a child receives a PRN (as needed) dose of medication
- The parent/guardian is responsible for notifying Family Services staff and providing any required documentation whenever their child's medication is changed or discontinued by the doctor (this will require a written medical statement).
- Parents are encouraged to give their child (ren) his/her morning dosage of medication at home before coming to the center as required by the Physician.
- Medication will not be administered in any other liquids such as in milk or through a bottle; unless required by a Physician.

Working together, we hope to make your child's Early Head Start school year safe and healthy, as well as fun and educational. If you have any questions concerning your child's health needs, please contact **Family Services staff**

Note: Medication should not be placed in your child's backpack or diaper bag. This is a serious liability for both your child as well as the center. Please be sure to adhere to the policy above.

- 1.) Teachers are required to conduct daily health checks. If a child is found to be ill, parents will be notified by Family Services staff that your child(ren) should be picked up.
- 2.) Children that are ill **must** be picked up within 1 **hour** after parent has been contacted.
- 3.) Parents will be notified if children have the following symptoms:
 - Fever 100 f (or above)
 - Diarrhea (3 episodes in one day)
 - Vomiting
 - Discolored discharge from eyes
 - Discolored discharge from nose (accompanied by other symptoms)
 - Rashes (example: ringworm)
 - Difficulty breathing (example: wheezing)
 - Symptoms associated with contagious (communicable) diseases
- 4.) When children are sent home with a fever or diarrhea, they must be fever/diarrhea free for 24hrs. before returning to school.
- 5.) If a child is suspected to have a communicable disease such as: ringworm or pink eye, lead staff will determine whether a written doctor's statement will be required before the child returns to the center based on the local health department's regulations.
- 6.) No medicine will be given to your child without written instructions from your child's doctor. This includes prescription medicine, over-the-counter medicine (such as Tylenol or cough syrup) and diaper rash cream.
- 7.) Please check with Early Head Start staff to make sure the appropriate paper work is complete if your child requires medicine.

Note: *A doctor's excuse to return to school should be provided to Family Services staff.*

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

All staff will follow procedures indicated in the Porter-Leath Early Head Start Manual. Parents will be notified when emergencies require that children be picked up. Evacuation and emergency procedures are posted in each classroom.



HEALTH & SAFETY PROCEDURES

The following outlines some of the general areas of health and safety that are taken to ensure high standards of hygiene at Early Head Start.

- Children are encouraged to follow the hygiene practices in an independent manner.
- Children are educated about the need to follow hygiene practices such as hand washing.
- All human blood, body fluids and tissues will be treated as being potentially infectious.
- Any child, staff member, family member or visitor with open wounds or broken skin must have these covered with a waterproof dressing for the duration of their time within the center.
- All sinks, toilets, and changing tables are cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- The Early Head Start center is thoroughly cleaned and disinfected daily before closing.
- Floors, equipment, and toys will be regularly cleaned with water and bleach.
- Staff will wear disposable gloves when dealing with bodily fluids.

CHILD INJURY

1. All child injuries will be reported to the Site Manager and Family Services staff.
2. OSHA practices and First Aid procedures will be followed to handle all child injuries.
3. A copy of the accident/incident report will be given to all parents following any accidents and a copy will be maintained in the child's file.
4. If a child needs to be transported to the hospital, parents will be notified immediately.



EXCLUSIONARY POLICY

If your child is suspected to have any of the following conditions, they will not be allowed to attend the center until they have complied with the exclusionary guidelines as listed below.

<u>INFECTION</u>	<u>FREQUENTLY CALLED</u>	<u>EXCLUSIONS</u>
Chickenpox	Chicken pox	When all lesions have dried and crusted
Conjunctivitis*	Pink eye	24 hours after start of treatment
Diarrhea*	Diarrhea	Diarrhea free for 24 hours
Fever*	Temp.	Fever free for 24 hours
Head lice	Head lice	24 hours after treatment
Hepatitis A	Hep A	1 week after onset of illness or jaundice
Impetigo*	Impetigo	24 hours after onset of illness or jaundice
Measles	Measles	4-6 days after onset of rash
Mouth Sores w/ Drooling*	Same	Pending eval. by health care professional
Mumps	Mumps	9 days after onset of partitas
Rash*(Undiagnosed)	Same	Pending eval. by health care professional
Scabies*	Scabies	After completion of treatment
Shigella*	Intestinal Inflammation	4 weeks; antibiotics and diarrhea free
Streptococcal	Strep Throat	24 hours of oral medication
Tinea	Ringworm (body) Ringworm*(scalp)	Pending eval. by health care professional 24 hours of medication
Meningitis	Same	Pending eval. by health care professional
Pertussis	Whooping Cough	5 days after treatment
Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus	MRSA	Pending eval. by health care professional
Vomiting* (Twice within school hours)	Same	Pending eval. by health care professional

Note: The list provided above is not indicative of all childhood illnesses and can change based on Health Dept. guidelines, this is only a summarized list. Items with an (*) require a written statement from a physician. However, staff may request a doctor's statement for any of these infections.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Porter Leath Early Head Start center provides educational services to children with disabilities. If a child has been diagnosed as having a disability, parents will be in contact with the Family Services staff upon enrollment. Parents will be asked to provide copies of all assessments or evaluations. The information provided will remain confidential and is used to assist staff in planning for the child's developmental needs and educational growth. If a child is admitted to the Early Head Start program and delays or other concerns arise, staff reserves the right to ask parents to assist us in referring their child to an agency or group that will meet the needs of their child's developmental progress.

SERVICES PROVIDED TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

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

Children are eligible for services if they are professionally diagnosed as having a disability. Early Head Start staff will work closely with the local Early Intervention program to ensure that children receive a continuum of appropriate services. Children with current IFSP's (Individual Family Service Plans) may benefit from the Early Head Start program in addition to the Early Intervention program. The Early Head Start staff and Early Intervention program staff will meet with the family to develop one service plan that is inclusive of all necessary supports, services, and modifications to ensure the young child is able to fully participate in the development of secure, trusting relationships and exploration of the environment. Conversely, all concerns about the development of a young child should be referred, with parent consent, to the Early Intervention program.

The passage of P.L. 99-457 by the US Congress amends the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, P.L. 94-142, with a mandate for the extension of services to the preschool population. The IDEA mandates services to children ages birth to 21 years of age.

Public Law 94-142: (The Education for all Handicapped Children Act) was passed by Congress in 1975 to establish a "right to education: for all handicapped children."

Public Law 99-457: which was enacted by Congress in 1986, extends the provisions of Public Law (P.L.) 94-142 to children from birth through age five.

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

HEALTH RECORDS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

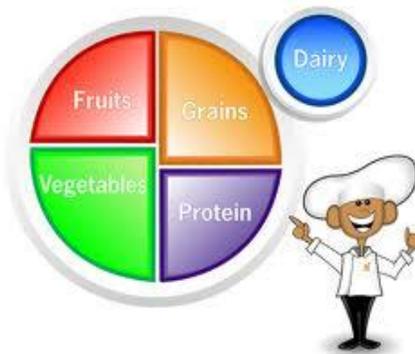
- 1.) Children's records must be updated and maintained.
- 2.) Family Services staff will work with parents and health providers to ensure children's immunizations are maintained and updated.
- 3.) All parents must bring a copy of their child's updated health and immunization records after every appointment.



NUTRITION SERVICES

Nutrition education is an important part of the Porter-Leath Early Head Start Programs. Teaching children and families to eat and enjoy a wide-variety of foods can help to establish a sound healthy foundation for a lifetime.

Each day, we offer BREAKFAST, LUNCH, and SNACK. Meals are healthy, nutritious and USDA approved.



Special Diets

All dietary restrictions must be reported to the health staff during orientation. If your child(ren) has a medical dietary restriction, this must be supported by a doctor's statement.

EDUCATION SERVICES

The Education Department offers developmentally appropriate classroom practices and activities that focus on school readiness and enhance cognitive, physical, and social emotional development.

At Early Head Start, we teach our children through the use of the **Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddler's and Two's**.

1. This curriculum provides a frame work for pulling all the pieces of developmentally appropriate practice together; the why, and how, you do things.
2. A good curriculum gives the teacher the opportunity to learn about each child. It is based on developmentally appropriate practice and offers you the big picture of where you want to lead each child and family.
3. Staff will assist the children with learning about themselves, about their feelings, communicating, moving and doing, and learning thinking skills.
4. We have daily routines and activities to respond to children's growing abilities, interests, and needs. Our curriculum will enable us to lay the groundwork for a lifetime of positive learning.
5. We are looking for feedback from our parents regarding the curriculum. Parents will receive a monthly letter identifying the theme and we encourage our parents to volunteer in their child's classroom.
6. Parents will be asked to participate in planning the lessons each week and will be asked to provide comments about the weekly lesson on the lesson plan form.



CONTINUITY OF CARE

Children accepted in the program will be assigned to a class according to the child's age. Children are assigned to classes based on availability and the age of the child. Efforts are made to match children up with children of like ages. Each child is assigned to a class with a teacher and an assistant. Children will be assigned to a classroom, as vacancies become available.

Efforts are made but are not guaranteed for children to remain with the same group of children and teacher throughout their Early Head Start experience.

SCHOOL READINESS

Throughout the school year, activities are implemented to help the children achieve their school readiness goals. We wholeheartedly promote the collaboration between parents and staff to develop the most effective school readiness goals for the program and the child. We facilitate this collaboration by:

- Providing them the opportunity through parent meetings, surveys, and correspondences, to review and contribute input on school readiness goals, the School Readiness Plan, and outcomes.
- Reviewing and analyzing outcomes and scores three times a year to ensure that progress is being made towards school readiness goals and/or determine if modifications are needed. .
- Using the results of their child's assessment to identify individual school readiness goals in order to develop an Education Partnership Agreement.
- Providing them the opportunity to serve on the School Readiness Team.

Early Head Start uses the School Readiness Plan that outlines the adoption, alignment, and implementation of these goals to ensure that: 1) Children will be academically ready to be successful in educational settings as they transition; and 2) Parents are actively engaged in preparing their child to succeed in kindergarten and beyond.

HOME VISITS AND PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

- 1) Teachers are required to conduct **two home visits** and **three parent-teacher conferences** per year.
- 2) Goals, assessments, and objectives for the child(ren) will be formed, developed and discussed during meetings.
- 3) Parents are expected to participate in all home visits and conferences.
 - a. Home visits will be conducted at the child's home and the parent/teacher conferences can be held at the center.

TRANSITION ACTIVITY

Our program will participate in one transition activity. However, transition planning will begin prior to the child's 3rd birthday. All parents will be notified prior to the activity. All safety precautions will be followed and parents will be notified of the purpose and plans for the activity. For off-site transition activities, a permission slip may need to be completed before your child(ren) can attend. Parents may be requested to accompany their child when there are behavioral safety concerns for their child(ren).

For off-site transition activities,

- Parents may be requested to accompany their child on a field trip when there are behavioral safety concerns for their child(ren).
- Parents will be notified of field trips at least two-weeks in advance.
- Transportation for field trips will be provided by Shelby County Head Start/Early Head Start Program or Durham Bus Services.
- Each child must have a signed permission slip from the parent/guardian in order to attend.
- If a parent chooses to transport his/her child to the field trip site, he/she must sign the child out for dismissal prior to the field trip.
- If a child is transported to the site of the field trip by school bus, then he/she must return on the school bus. In the event a parent drives their child to the field trip site, the parent must sign the child out and the child must ride back with their parent from the field trip site back to the school. The parent may then sign the child back in if they wish for the child to stay at school.
- If a child rides the school bus to the field trip site, a parent cannot take the child home from the field trip site. All children must be dismissed from the Head Start center.
- In the event there is an issue at the field trip site, the staff must notify their Site Manager or the EHS/HS Operations Manager.

HOLIDAY, BIRTHDAY & END OF YEAR CELEBRATIONS

The staff will celebrate birthdays monthly. All children will be allowed to participate in the center-wide Monthly Birthday Celebration. Items from home such as food, toys, balloons and etc... are **not allowed for the birthday celebrations.**

PL Early Head Start is interested in facilitating an environment that offers meaningful experiences for children reflective of family traditions from all children in the classroom. We will make every effort to celebrate holidays in a general manner. Conversations about the diversity of ways people celebrate is encouraged and will be included as part of planning with families to create a multicultural and anti-biased curriculum.



*** Classroom parties are the only instances where parents are allowed to bring in “store bought items” that are age appropriate such as fruit, fruit cups, baked chips, graham crackers, animal cookies, etc. Parents are not required to bring in items for classroom parties. The days for the classroom parties will be communicated to the parent through the center’s monthly newsletters and calendars. Parents are encouraged to volunteer and assist during these events.

END OF YEAR (TRANSITION) CELEBRATION

Moving from Early Head Start to Head Start is only the start of your child’s educational experience. As a parent, you should not think of this transition as a graduation. Instead, you should think of think of transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start as *the mark for the beginning of your child's formal school experience, not the ending*. Wearing caps and gowns or holding graduation programs are not developmentally appropriate for young children.

As an EHS/HS program, we do not host transition ceremonies. However, we encourage families to spend time in our classrooms with their child(ren) and to participate in planned events and activities to that promote parent-child engagement such as picnics, literacy event, etc.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

Porter- Leath understands that good order and discipline in Early Head Start facilities is critical to maintaining a positive learning environment and safety for all children attending classes in a facility. Therefore, the following behavioral policy has been approved by the Governing Board and Policy Council.

Misbehavior that is not repetitive will be dealt with in an acceptable manner by classroom teachers to include:

- i. Redirection
- ii. Positive Guidance
- iii. Removal from classroom to:
 1. Another classroom
 2. Family Services/Health
 3. Management Office

The actions listed below are prohibited:

- A. Corporal punishment of any type
- B. Spanking, paddling
- C. Pinching
- D. Verbal threats

Serious child misbehavior consist of repetitive breaking of rules and failure to modify this behavior when corrected by staff. Children who create disruptive environments or safety issues are included in this category. Examples of serious misbehavior or disruptive/safety issues are not limited to but include:

- A. Hitting, biting, or scratching
- B. Leaving classroom
- C. Throwing objects and/or destruction of property
- D. Using (excessive) profanity
- E. Possession of weapons, drugs, or alcohol

If a child is exhibiting serious misbehavior, and/or creating safety issues, the matter will be referred to the Site Manager for action. The Site Manager may take the following actions:

- A. Parent observation/consultation
- B. Referral for behavioral observation
- C. Referral for therapy
- D. Change in attendance schedule, to include a 2 hour pick-up requirement.

The Site Manager has the discretion to follow the above actions in any given order according to seriousness of the situation. In the event the above interventions are not successful, recommendations will be made and the child will be transferred to a more structured/appropriate environment.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT PROCEDURES

1. It is the responsibility of our staff to report all suspected cases of child abuse and neglect.
2. If child abuse or neglect is suspected the staff at the Early Head Start Center is required by law to report suspected cases to the Tennessee Department of Children's Services.

Reportable situations include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Bruises, sores or other injuries observed on the child's body, even though the source or event of injury is unknown;
- ◆ Abandonment of a child by a parent or guardian;
- ◆ Suspected sexual abuse;
- ◆ Absence of proper parental control or subsistence, education, medical or other care of control necessary for the child's well-being. This may include failure to follow-up on educational, medical or safety concerns identified by staff (i.e. leaving children unattended in the car or ongoing neglect of ensuring children are in proper child safety restraints).

Family Services staff or the Site Manager provides this information at enrollment and continuously throughout the program. Training on the detection of abuse and neglect, as well as the program's reporting procedure is reviewed annually for employees and parents. All new employees are trained on child abuse and neglect identification and reporting during orientation.



"IT'S THE LAW"

CHILDREN ARE NOT TO BE LEFT IN A VEHICLE

Safety is a priority of Porter-Leath Head Start & Early Head Start program. We value the health of all children that are on our property; therefore, no young child is to be left in a vehicle alone. No exceptions will be tolerated; parents are required to bring all children inside the center during drop-off and/or pick-up. The staff is required by law to notify The Department of Children's Services and the Memphis Police Department immediately with vehicle make/model and the identity/description of persons involved.

Safety first

- Check your back seat
- Avoid Locking Doors Until All Children are Out of the Vehicle
- Always Transport Young Children in an Age Appropriate Car Seat or Booster Seat



OFFENDERS WILL IMMEDIATELY BE REPORTED TO
MEMPHIS POLICE DEPARTMENT (MPD)
THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN SERVICES (DCS)
The DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (DHS)

Family/ Parent Websites

www.porterleath.org

www.parentcenter.babycenter.com

www.learningplanet.com

www.literacycenter.net

www.preknow.org

www.governorsfoundation.org

<http://state.tn.us/humanserv>

www.keepkidshealthy.com

www.famlit.org

www.tnheadstart.org

www.naeyc.org

www.taeyc.org

www.tnstarquality.org

www.memphis-schools.k12.tn.us

PEDESTRIAN AND BUS SAFETY TIPS FOR HEAD START CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES

Walking in Traffic

The safe transport of our children to Early Head Start/Head Start, child care centers, in-home care providers, churches and schools should be an important topic for everyone. Walking is a mode of travel that places young children at as much risk as traveling by passenger vehicle or school bus.

Protect yourself and your family by doing these things:

Walk on the sidewalk or off the side of the road

- ◆ Children should always walk on the sidewalk.
- ◆ If you must walk on a road with not sidewalks, walk facing the traffic.
- ◆ Cross at intersections if at all possible, most people are hit by cars when they cross the road at places other than intersections.
- ◆ ALWAYS hold your child's hand when crossing the street.

See and Be Seen

- ◆ Drivers need to see you to avoid you.
- ◆ Stay out of the driver's blind spot.
- ◆ Make eye contact with drivers when crossing busy streets.
- ◆ Wear bright colors or reflective clothing if you are walking near traffic at night.
- ◆ Carry a flashlight when walking in the dark.
- ◆ Do not let kids play near traffic or cross the street by themselves. Kids are small and drivers may not see them if they run into the street.

Watch your kids

- ◆ Children should not cross streets by themselves or be allowed to play or walk near traffic. Kids are small unpredictable, and cannot judge vehicle distances and speeds.
- ◆ When kids get older, teach them three things to do before they cross the street:
 1. **Try to cross at an intersection if at all possible**
 2. **Stop at the edge of the road**
 3. **Look left, right and then left again to make sure no cars are coming.**



TIPS ON SAFELY BOARDING AND EXITING THE SCHOOL BUS

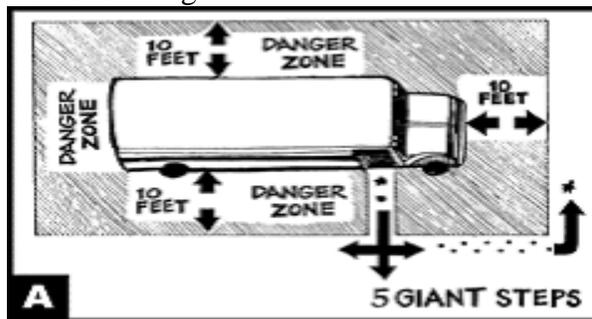
School buses are nearly eight times safer than passenger vehicles, but children must take care when boarding or leaving the bus. Please discuss and practice these safety tips with your children.

Young children are most likely to be hit because they:

- ◆ Hurry to get on or off the bus,
- ◆ Act before they think and have little experience with traffic,
- ◆ Assume motorists will see them and will wait for them to cross
- ◆ Don't always stay within the bus driver's sight, or
- ◆ Drop something as they get off the bus and run into the path of the bus to pick it up.

Teach Your Child to Get On and Off the Bus Safely:

- ◆ When getting on the bus, stay away from the danger zone and wait for the driver's signal. Board the bus one at a time.
- ◆ When getting off the bus, look before stepping off the bus to be sure no cars are passing on the shoulder (side of the road). Move away from the bus.
- ◆ Before crossing the street, take five "giant steps" out from the front of the bus, or until the driver's face can be seen. Wait for the driver to signal that it's safe to cross.
- ◆ Look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the bus to make sure traffic is stopped. Keep watching traffic when crossing.



Safety Steps You Can Take:

- ◆ Supervise children to make sure they get to the stop on time, wait far away from the road, and avoid rough play.
- ◆ Teach your child to ask the driver for help if he/she drops something near the bus. If a child bends down to pick up something, the driver cannot see him/her and the child may be hit by the bus. Have your child use a backpack or book bag to keep loose items together.
- ◆ Make sure clothing and backpacks have no loose drawstrings or long straps, to get caught in the handrail or bus door.
- ◆ Encourage safe school bus loading and unloading.
- ◆ If you think a bus stop is in a dangerous place, talk with your school office or transportation director about changing the location.

Learn and Follow School Bus Stop Laws:

Laws exist to protect children getting on and off the bus AND protect you from a tragedy. Check with your school or police department for more information on your state's laws. Here are some rules:

- ◆ Vehicles must stop when the bus displays flashing red warning lights and extends the stop signal arm. Vehicles may not pass until the flashing red lights and signals are turned off.
- ◆ Never pass on the right side of the bus, where children enter or exit. This is illegal and can have tragic results.
- ◆ Drivers need to always be alert for children and adhere to speed limits.

Information was provided by SAFE KIDS, sponsored by the Children's Health Foundation of Northern Alberta and the Alberta Children's Hospital



Performance Standards 1310.21: safety education. Each agency must provide training for parents and children in pedestrian and transportation safety within the first 30 days of the program year.

What	Target Audience	When	Responsible Party
Introductory letter and discussion/ Pedestrian & Bus Safety training	Parents /Teachers	Parent Orientation July/August	Family Service/HND Department / Home visitors / Education Manager
Lessons in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe riding practices • Safety procedures boarding and loading • Safety procedures crossing the street • Danger zones 	Children	Classroom teacher at circle time in August/September before evacuation drill scheduled Document in lesson plans & Anecdotal notes	Teachers/ Asst. Teachers
Emergency evacuation procedures and practice, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escorting children to vehicle stops for field trips • Reinforcing vehicle safety • Carseat Safety 	Children/Parents	First evacuation drill- August	Site Managers, Education Manager, Teachers and field trip monitors ; field trip schedules will be provided to sites and parents will receive safety practice handouts
Follow-up Evacuation drills	Children	Once a month after August (Random)	Site Managers

Outdoor Safety Rules Reglas de la Seguridad Afuera

1. Go down slide, feet first, sitting.
Baja la resbaladilla, los pies primero, sentado.
2. Rocks and sticks stay on the ground.
Las rocas y los palitos se quedan en el terreno.
3. Remember to ask for a turn instead of grabbing.
Recuerda a pedir un turno en vez de agarrar.
4. Please stay off the fence.
No subas en el cerco, por favor
5. Always stay with the group.
Quédate con el grupo, siempre.
6. Children play outside only with a teacher or their parent present.
Los niños juegan afuera sólo cuando está presente un maestro o uno de sus padres.
7. If someone is crying, check to see if they're OK.
Si alguien está llorando, chequea a saber si está bien.
8. Keep weapons at home.
Guarda las armas en casa.
9. Handle plants and critters with care and respect.
Trata las plantas y los animales con cuidado y con respeto.
10. Pretend fighting is not allowed.

CLIENT/ COMMUNITY COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Complaints must pertain to areas affecting services to children and families. Complaints and any actions taken to resolve complaints will be documented. Complaints should be directed to the Site Manager. *(See Client/Community Complaint form below)* If not resolved the following steps will occur:

- The Site Manager will refer the complaint to the Operations Manager, if not resolved.
- Complaint will involve the EHS/HS Director and Policy Council, if not resolved.
- If not resolved complaint will then go to the agency President, then the Board of Directors for the final action.

Porter-Leath Early Head Start staff respect parents' rights as parents. However, we ask that parents also respect us as Early Childhood Professionals. ***Program administrators will not tolerate blatant disrespect of any staff member.*** Should this occur, the offending parent's child may be suspended from receiving future services from the Early Head Start program.



PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE

My signature below acknowledges that I have:

- Read and understand my rights and responsibilities as an Early Head Start/ Head Start parent;
- Been informed about the hours of operation, attendance policy, and behavior policy in my local Head Start/ Early Head Start Program;
- Been informed about the services and safety procedures in my local Head Start/Early Head Start Program; and
- Have received Pedestrian and Bus Safety Education and information about the Client/Community Complaint Form.

I, the undersigned parent/guardian of _____ do hereby acknowledge that I have read and received a copy of the Parent Handbook and that the program's Manager/Coordinator (or other designated staff member) has discussed these policies and procedures with me.

Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____

Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

Staff signature verifies that the Parent Handbook was reviewed with the parent and that the parent was given a copy of the Porter-Leath Early Head Start/ Head Start Parent Handbook.