

L.B.J.&C. Head Start

Parent Handbook

2025-2026



AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AGENCY

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L.B.J.& C. Head Start | 2025-2026 Summary Calendar

04 Independence Day

JULY '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

05 Policy Council 6 PM
11 First Day of School
12 Welcome to Head Start Board Meeting 6 PM

AUGUST '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

01 Labor Day (No Students)
02 Policy Council 6 PM
12 In-Service #1 (No Students)

SEPTEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1st Parent Meeting & Policy Council Elections

07 Policy Council 6 PM
14 Board Meeting 6 PM
31 Fall Fun Day

OCTOBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

Open House

03 In-Service #2 (No Students)
04 Policy Council 6 PM
05 Grandparent Breakfast 8:30 AM
11 Veterans Day (No Students)
13 Muffins w/ Moms 8:30 AM
25 Family Meal 11:00 AM
26-28 Thanksgiving Break (No Students)

NOVEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

18 Family Breakfast 9:00 AM
Last Day for H.S.
19-2 Winter Break (No Students)

DECEMBER '25						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

JANUARY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

02 In-Service #3 (No Students)
05 In-Service #4 (No Students)
06 Students Return
09 Father/Male Role Breakfast 8:30 AM
19 M.L. King Day (No Students)

FEBRUARY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

13 Sweetheart Breakfast 8:30 AM
16 Presidents' Day (No Students)
20 In-Service #5 (No Students)
27 Muffins w/ Moms 8:30 AM

MARCH '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

06 Father/Male Role Breakfast 8:30 AM
24 Spring Break Schedule (No Students)

09-13 White / Jackson
16-20 Cumberland / Overton / Putnam / Warren
23-27 Clay / Dekalb / Fentress / Smith
30-3 Macon / Pickett

APRIL '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
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26	27	28	29	30		

25 Memorial's Day (No Students)

MAY '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3	4
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

19 Juneteenth

JUNE '26						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

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Welcome to L.B.J.&C. Head Start

Dear L.B.J.&C. Head Start Families,

Welcome to the 2025–2026 school year! On behalf of the entire L.B.J.&C. Head Start team, I am delighted to welcome you and your child to our program. We are honored that you have chosen to partner with us in your child’s early education journey.

At L.B.J.&C. Head Start, we are committed to providing a safe and nurturing environment where children can learn, grow, and thrive. Our comprehensive approach supports your child’s development in every area—cognitive, physical, emotional, and social—while also supporting families in meeting goals that promote stability and long-term success.

This year, we look forward to building strong partnerships with our families. You are your child’s first and most important teacher, and your involvement is key to your child’s success in school and in life. We encourage you to stay connected with your classroom staff, attend parent events and trainings, and participate in program planning whenever possible.

Within this handbook, you’ll find important information about our policies, expectations, and the services available to your family. Please take time to read through it carefully and refer to it as needed throughout the year.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child. We are excited to begin this new year with you, and we look forward to celebrating each milestone along the way.

Warm regards,



Penny Meadows
L.B.J.&C. Head Start Director

About Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded program that promotes school readiness by supporting the cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development of young children.



Hands-On Exploration



Rich Learning Environments



Play-Based Activities

Our History

L.B.J.&C. Head Start has been in existence since 1965. It began as a summer program. In 1966, the program changed to full day – full year. L.B.J. & C. is named for the original four county seats

- Livingston
- Byrdstown
- Jamestown
- Cookeville.



Locations

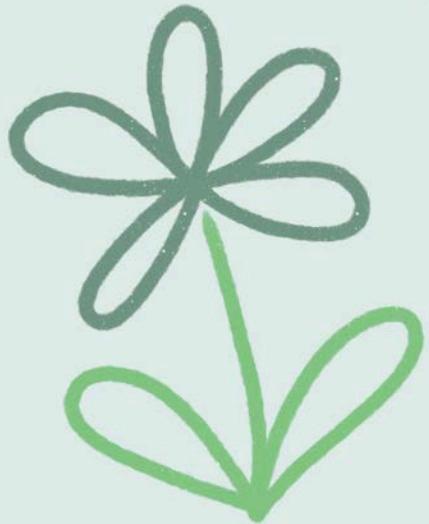
Central Office Contact Info

1150 Chocolate Drive
Cookeville, TN 38501
931-528-3361

Position	Extention
Head Start Director	221
ERSEA/Transition Specialist	222
Data Entry Assistant	223
Parent Family Engagement Specialist	224
Child Nutrition Specialist	225
Assistant Head Start Director	226
Data Entry Assistant	227
Human Resource Manager	228
Program Services Manager	229
Early Literacy Mentor Coach	230
Chief Financial Officer	231
Behavioral Specialist	232
Program Operations Manager	233
Early Literacy Mentor Coach	234
Child Health Specialist	235
Fiscal Assistant	237
Fiscal Assistant	238
Disability Specialist	239
Office Assistant	240
Education Specialist	242
Education Assistant	248
Assessment, Counseling, & Training Service	931-528-9399

Emergency Evacuation Locations

Center	Evacuation Place	Contact Person	Phone #
Bondecroft	1. Derrosett Church of Christ 2. Berta Café	Doug Watts Roberta Jordan/Jessica Rittenberry	931-235-2453 931-925-5555
Byrdstown	1. Ashley's Classy Cuts 2. Byrdstown Medical Center	Ashley Elmore Dee Dee Johnson	931-864-7376 931-864-3187
Algood	1. Algood Community Center 2. L931 Building	Brenda Dishman Keith Frieze	931-537-3447 931-537-9830
Crossville	1. AC Services 2. Victory Baptist Church	Alaine Carletti Bobby Schoolfield	931-787-2557 931-200-7379
Clarkrange	1. South Fentress Community Park 2. T&M Car Lot	Jimmy Johnson Travis or Mike	931-879-7713 931-510-4391
Jamestown	1. York Institute 2. Quality Private Care	Coach Derwin Wright Tammy Gibson	931-879-8101 931-752-7699
Livingston	1. Livingston City Police Department 2. Savage Home	Chief Ray Smith Rick or Marsha Savage	931-823-6496 931-510-0054 or 931-510-0861
Monterey	1. Monterey Library 2. Monterey Police Department	Doylene Farley Chief John Mackie	931-839-2103 931-839-2323
Sparta	1. NHC Home Health Care 2. Cumberland Family Care	Shannon Hammons Michelle Ferrell	931-836-2713 931-738-3383
Brookside	1. Bonner Church of Christ 2. Newman Home	Tim Long Ben/Ashley Newman	931-607-2540 615-335-6655 or 615-476-0707
Midway	1. Mike/Cindy Cooper's Home 2. Vaughn Home	Mike/Cindy Cooper Jennifer Vaughn	931-686-2178 931-314-9002
Smithville	1. Webb House 2. Alan/Lora Webb's Home	Lora Webb Alan & Lora Webb	615-597-8888 615-597-7775 or 615-692-2604
HAFH-Pinewood	1. Johnson Home 2. Home Away From Home Child Care Center	Tommy/Kathy Johnson Center Supervisor	931-250-2086 931-484-3238
Celina	1. Clay Board of Edu. Central Office 2. Clay County Health Dept.	Ashley White Matt Tuck	931-243-3141 931-243-2651
Gainesboro	1. USDA Jackson/Clay County Farm Service 2. County Blue Building	Lisa King Marty Henson	931-268-0201 931-268-0180
Shiloh	1. Shiloh Church of Christ 2. Shiloh Community Center	Matt Hargis Debbie Allen	931-239-1361 931-260-9454
Smith County	1. Smith County Wellness Center 2. Smith County Health Dept	Joyce Matthews Receptionist	615-735-2735 615-735-0242
Lafayette	1. Macon One Stop 2. R&L Construction	Kash Patel Randy Green	615-688-7867 615-633-8160
Red Boiling Springs	1. Anderson Funeral Home 2. Fultz Home	Leeann/Wayne Anderson Tom Fultz	615-699-2191 615-670-1356
South Cookeville	1. Cumberland Dermatology 2. Cookeville Vacuum	Bryce or Angie (Managers) Shawn Smithers	931-484-6061 931-526-6411



Vision, Mission, & Philosophy



Our Mission

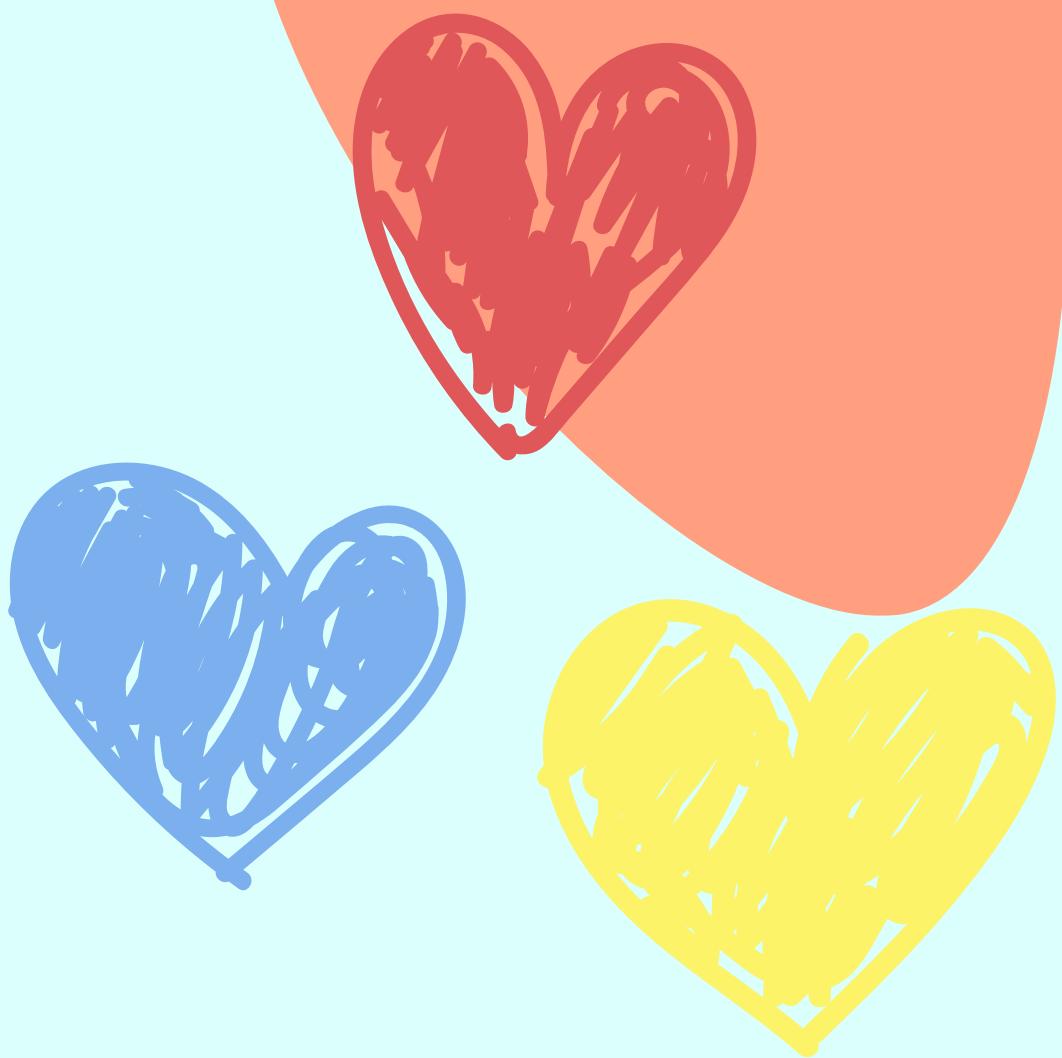
L.B.J.&C. Head Start's mission is to partner with the family and community to help children and families prepare for school.

Our Vision

L.B.J.&C. Head Start's vision is to be a model program by collaborating internally and partnering externally with the community to measurably improve the school readiness skills of children that will strengthen our families and communities.

Our Philosophy

L.B.J.&C. Head Start believes that all children and their families share certain needs and can benefit from a comprehensive child development program. High quality services will enable children to achieve school readiness and success in life. We will succeed with involvement and commitment on the part of everyone: parents, employees, concerned citizens, local education agencies, and organizations in the community.



Head Start Basics:

Family Guide to

the School Year



At L.B.J.&C. Head Start we believe that consistency and structure are essential for young children's development.

Program Schedule

01 Operating Hours

Monday - Friday, 8:00 AM - 2:30 PM

02 Morning Drop-Off

8:00 - 8:30 AM

03 Afternoon Pick-Up

2:15 - 2:30 PM

04 Pick-Up Authorization

Only authorized adults may pick up a child.

No Fall Break, but Spring Break follows the local school system calendar.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures (Transfer of Children Policy)

Drop-Off

- An adult must bring the child directly to Head Start staff.
- You must sign your child in using the sign-in/out book, including your full name and the time of arrival.
- Check in with the teacher at drop-off to share any updates or schedule changes.
- Help your child wash their hands before they begin to play.
- If arriving after 9:00 AM, please notify Head Start ahead of time.

Pick-Up / Late Pick-Up

- Only individuals listed on the child's emergency contact form are authorized to pick up the child.
- They must sign the child out using the sign-in/out book, including your full name and the time of arrival..
- The person signing the child out becomes responsible for the child at the time the book is signed.
- If a child is not picked up by 2:30, staff will begin contacting parents and all listed contacts.
- If no one can be reached, the Program Services Manager will be notified, and local law enforcement or the Department of Children's Services (DCS) may be contacted.

Important Information

Head Start is FREE!

All Head Start services are completely free!

You are not required to volunteer, but we love when you do!

Eligibility

Once a child is enrolled and eligible

They remain eligible for this year and next year!

No Corporal Punishment

No Physical Discipline

Spanking, slapping, pinching, or any form of corporal punishment is not allowed—even on your own child—while at Head Start or during any Head Start event.

If Your Child Gets Sick

If your child becomes ill during the day

You'll be asked to pick them up.

Sick children cannot stay at the center for their comfort and safety.

Volunteers

Kitchen Volunteers

Volunteers in the kitchen must have a negative TB assessment before helping in the kitchen..

Immunizations

All children must have up-to-date immunizations to attend.

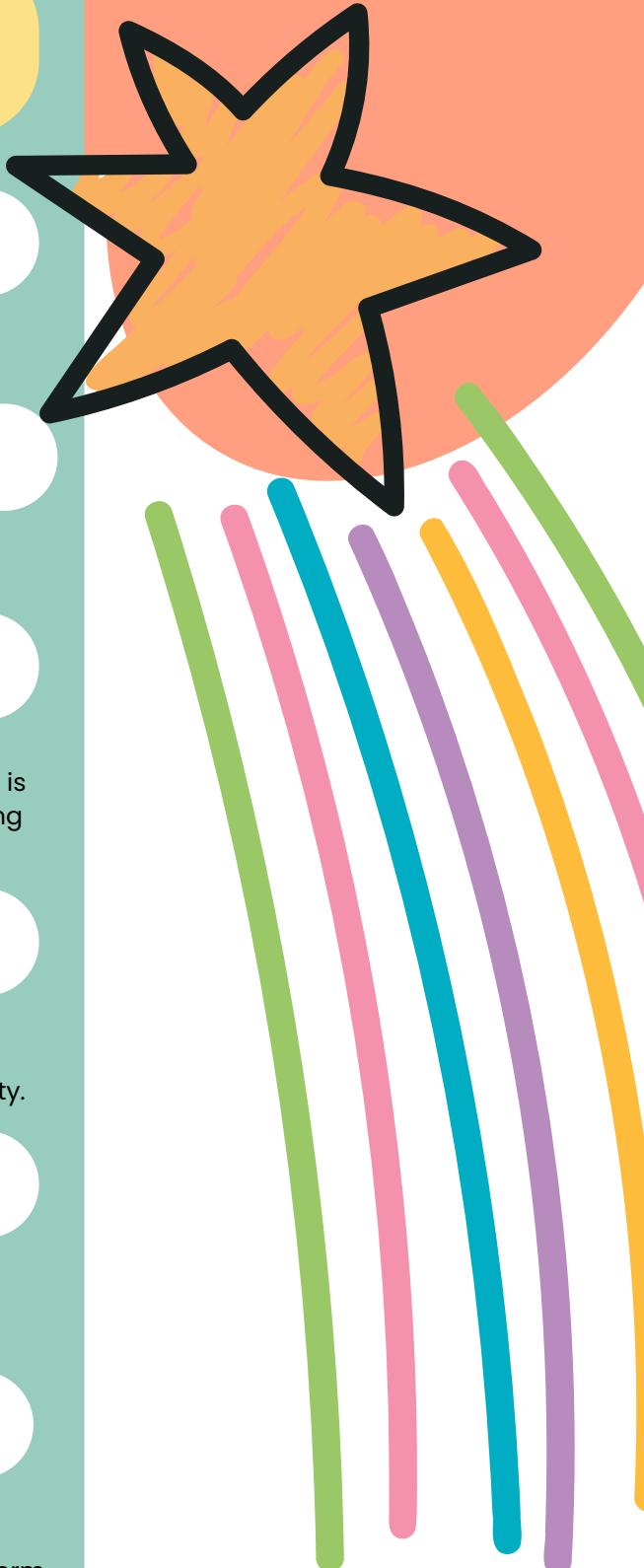
Documentation of medical/religious exemption are recognized.

Immunizations must be recorded on the Tennessee Immunization Form.

Physicals

A physical exam is required before attending.

Health Physical Forms are available at your Head Start center.





Inclement Weather

If the local school opens late (1-2 hours delay):

- Head Start will still open on time, and meals will be served as usual.

If the local school is closed:

- Head Start will also be closed.

If the local school closes early:

- Head Start will close at the same time.

Stay tuned to local news or school updates during bad weather days.

Toilet Training



Children do not need to be potty trained in order to attend Head Start; however we will assist in potty training. Our staff will work with you to create a consistent routine between home and school, using positive encouragement and developmentally appropriate strategies.

We encourage children to wear comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing that allows for safe movement, active play, and independent self-care.

Clothing and Shoes

Comfortable, Play-Appropriate Clothing

- Children should wear loose, breathable clothing that allows free movement.
- Clothes should be easy for children to manage.

Weather-Appropriate Attire

- Cold Weather: Coats, gloves, hats, and closed-toe shoes.
- Warm Weather: Lightweight clothing.

Shoes for Safety

- Supportive, comfy shoes for active play
- No shoes with wheels (to prevent injuries).

Extra Clothing Requirement

- Parents must provide a labeled extra set of clothes (shirt, pants, socks, and underwear) in case of spills or accidents.

Items Not Allowed at Head Start

Toys from home

- except for special sharing days

Electronic devices

- tablets, smartwatches, phones

Expensive or sentimental items

- the school is not responsible for lost or damaged items

Food and Drinks

- No outside food or drinks are permitted.

Personal Items

- blanket, soft toy, pillow

Pull-Ups/Wipes

- Head Start supplies all pull-up and wipes.



Regular attendance supports your child's learning and development.

A consistent routine helps build structure, responsibility, and ensures your child gets the most out of their Head Start experience. Please review our attendance procedure below.

Attendance Expectations

- All students are expected to attend Head Start Monday through Friday during regular school hours.
- 8:00 AM – 2:30 PM
- Parents are responsible for ensuring their child arrives at Head Start on time each day.
- If a child will be absent, parents must notify staff by 9:00 AM.
- A minimum attendance rate of 85% per month is encouraged.

Reporting Absences

- Parents must call or email the center office before 9:00 AM to report an absence.
- If a child is absent for more than two consecutive days without notice, staff may conduct a home visit.
- If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time without communication, their spot may be forfeited and given to a child on the waiting list.

Planned Absences & Family Vacations

- We understand that families may have pre-planned trips or obligations.
- Parents should notify the center at least two weeks in advance if they plan to take their child out of school for an extended period.

Poor Attendance & Attendance Watch

- Frequent absences without valid reasons or documentation.
- Extended absences that may affect the child's development and progress.
- Irregular attendance that impacts the child's ability to benefit from the program.



Preparing for the first day of school can be exciting, but it can also be an overwhelming and anxious time – we understand! We will work with you to make your child's first day the best it can be.

Your Child's First Day of Head Start

What to bring?

Please provide a complete set of **extra clothes**, including socks, for your child. Clothing should be updated periodically to make sure it still fits and is appropriate for the season.

Separation Anxiety – What to Expect and How to Help

The first few weeks of school can be an emotional time for both children and parents. Separation anxiety is a normal and temporary phase. Here are some helpful strategies to ease the transition:

- Keep goodbyes short and positive. A quick hug and reassurance that you'll be back soon works best.
- Create a consistent goodbye routine. A special ritual like a handshake or phrase can bring comfort and predictability.
- Trust your child's teacher. Our staff is experienced and ready to help your child feel safe and supported.
- Validate your child's feelings. Let them know it's okay to feel sad, and remind them they'll be okay and you'll return soon.

Note: It's common for separation anxiety to return after breaks or illness. Stick with your routine, and your child will readjust quickly.

You're always welcome to call any time to see how your child's adjusting.



Education Services

Our Educational Services

At L.B.J.&C. Head Start, we believe that children learn best through play, exploration, and discovery. Our curriculum and supplemental curriculums are designed to support whole-child development by integrating the following approaches:

01 Play-Based Learning

- Encourages active engagement and joyful learning.
- Builds foundational skills in literacy, numeracy, and social interaction.
- Develops problem-solving and critical thinking abilities.

02 Social-Emotional Development

- Teaches children how to express emotions and communicate effectively.
- Promotes empathy, cooperation, and self-regulation.
- Creates a warm, inclusive classroom environment.

03 Hands-On Exploration

- Provides sensory-rich experiences through arts, music, science, and nature activities.
- Encourages creativity and innovation through interactive projects.
- Develops fine and gross motor skills through active play.

04 Early Literacy & Language Development

- Teaches children how to express emotions and communicate effectively.
- Promotes empathy, cooperation, and self-regulation.
- Creates a warm, inclusive classroom environment.

05 Family Involvement

- Recognizes parents as a child's first and most important teachers.
- Provides opportunities for parent involvement in school activities.
- Encourages open communication and collaboration between families and teachers.



Our Curriculum

We focus on child-centered learning, developmentally appropriate practices, and the belief that “play is a child’s work.” Our goal is to build each child’s confidence, creativity, and love for learning.

To support this, we use the CreativeCurriculum—a research-based program that guides teachers in helping children grow in key areas like language, math, social skills, and physical development. These learning goals are built into daily activities, so children are developing important skills throughout the day in fun and meaningful ways.

Creative Curriculum

Fostering exploration and discovery through hands-on experiences.

2nd Step

Encouraging independence and self-directed learning.

Frog Street

Promoting creativity, collaboration, and critical thinking.

Our curriculum focuses on the following key developmental and learning areas:



Social & Emotional Development



Language & Literacy



Early Math & Problem-Solving



Science & Discovery



Approaches to Learning



Creativity & Imagination



Assessments

Child assessment is a vital component of all high-quality early childhood programs. Assessments are essential to understand and support young children's development.

At LBJC Head Start, we use GOLDFinch by Teaching Strategies, a powerful combination of tools to understand and support your child's development.

What GOLDFinch?

GOLD® Observations:

Teachers and families share simple, everyday notes and work samples that show how your child is developing in key areas like language, social skills, and thinking.

Finch Game-Based Assessment:

In just 5 minutes a week, children play short, engaging games (in English or Spanish) that help teachers see how they're progressing.

Finch Literacy Screener:

This tool checks early reading skills for preschoolers and can identify children who may need extra help before kindergarten.

Why it matters?

Full Picture, Every Day

- GOLDFinch combines what teachers see and what children do in play to give a clear, complete view of learning.

Early Literacy Support

- By screening for reading readiness early, we can provide help right away—giving your child the best start before kindergarten.

Personalized Learning

- Using data from both observations and games, teachers create activities that match your child's current strengths and areas for growth.

How you'll see progress?

Teacher-Family Updates

- During conferences and home visits, your child's learning dashboard shows where they're doing great and where they might need extra attention.

Supporting Growth at Home

- We'll offer ideas—like books to read, games to play, and talking and listening tips—to help build on what your child is working on at school.

Teaching Methods

At L.B.J.&C. Head Start, our educators use a combination of structured instruction and free play to create a well-balanced learning experience.



01 Hands-On Learning

Children engage in active exploration, using real-world materials to enhance understanding.



02 Teacher-Guided & Child-Led Learning

Encouraging curiosity and problem-solving through discovery-based experiences.



03 Outdoor Learning

Utilizing nature as a classroom to develop observation skills and appreciation for the environment.



04 Whole-Child Approach

Addressing cognitive, emotional, social, and physical development.

Our teachers create a safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environment where every child can grow and thrive. They support children's development in all areas—social, emotional, physical, and cognitive—through age-appropriate activities and play-based learning. Teachers also partner closely with families to support school readiness and ensure each child's individual needs are met.

Class Level	Age Group	Class Size
Preschool Class	3 – 5 years	16 children

Each class is led by a qualified Teacher and a Teacher Assistant.

The adult/child ratio must be maintained at all times--requirements will be posted in each classroom.

Role of Our Teaching Teams

Our dedicated educators play a vital role in shaping the learning experiences of young children. Their responsibilities include:

01 Support Child Development

create a safe, nurturing, and engaging learning environment that promotes each child's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth.

02 Observing and assessing children's progress

Regularly observe and assess each child's development and progress, in order to, individualize instruction and support.

03 Implement Curriculum

plan and deliver age-appropriate lessons and activities aligned with Head Start guidelines to prepare children for school success.

04 Engage Parents

Teachers build strong partnerships with families through communication, involvement in the classroom, and support for home learning activities.



By offering a balanced environment of structure and independence, our classrooms support children in exploring, discovering, and developing at a pace that meets their individual needs.

Learning Experiences & Outdoors



Our classrooms are organized into centers or defined interest areas. Activities are planned for each center in which the children move freely throughout each day.

- Encourages language development, cooperative play, and problem-solving.
- Introduces early literacy, numeracy, and creative arts through play-based learning.
- Prepares children for kindergarten readiness by building on cognitive, motor, and social skills.
- Engages students in activities, group discussions, and hands-on experiments to foster curiosity and academic growth.

Daily Structure

- Morning greetings and structured group activities.
- Learning centers that focus on letters, numbers, and fine motor skills.
- Outdoor play to develop physical coordination and teamwork.
- Thematic storytelling.
- Interactive literacy sessions (sight words, phonics, early writing practice).
- STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math) activities.
- Social-emotional learning through guided role-playing and problem-solving games.
- Outdoor nature exploration and physical fitness activities.

Outdoor Play

- Children play outside daily, weather permitting, with close staff supervision. Please dress your child appropriately for the weather. Indoor play is provided when outdoor time isn't possible.



Learning Centers



Physical Play Structures

Classroom schedules provide a balance of routine and flexibility, with age-appropriate activities that keep children engaged without being overwhelming. Staff adjust as needed to meet each child's needs.

Daily Schedule Overview

Time	Activity	Description
8:00 – 8:30 AM	Arrival & Free Play	Transition activities and social interaction.
8:30 – 9:00 AM	Breakfast Time	Social mealtime and family style meal.
9:00 – 9:30 AM	Learning Centers	Rotating literacy, math, art, and science stations.
9:30 – 10:00 AM	Group Time	Welcome songs, calendar review, and theme discussion.
10:00 – 11:30 AM	Outdoor Play	Gross motor activities and team games.
11:30 – 12:00 PM	Lunch	Social mealtime and table manners practice.
12:00 – 2:00 PM	Nap/Rest	Quiet rest with soft music. All children participate in rest time.
2:00 – 2:15 PM	Afternoon Snack	Light snack before dismissal.
2:15 – 2:30 PM	Dismissal	Free play and pick-up.



Transition Services

L.B.J.&C. Head Start supports children and families during key transitions—such as entering Head Start, moving between classrooms, or going to kindergarten.

Entering Head Start

- Families are welcomed through an orientation process before the school year begins.
- Children meet their Teacher during the Teacher 1st Home visit to help them feel comfortable.
- Teachers and Family Engagement staff share what to expect and how to prepare.
- We encourage families to ask questions and share important information about their child during these timeframes.

Daily and Classroom Transitions / Moving Between Classrooms or Centers

- Teachers help children adjust to new activities throughout the day using clear routines and guidance.
- Visual schedules and consistent structure support smooth transitions between activities.
- If a child moves to a different classroom or center, we prepare them in advance through visits and familiar routines.
- Families are informed of any staffing changes within the center through a notification system.

Transitioning Out of Head Start

- We partner with local schools to support a smooth move from Head Start to kindergarten.
- Children visit the kindergarten they will attend, when possible, to explore the environment and meet school staff.
- A kindergarten teacher attends a parent meeting in the spring to share helpful information and answer questions.
- Each family receives a Kindergarten Transition Booklet that explains what to expect and how to support their child.
- We encourage parents to get involved with their child's school from the very beginning.
- Staff work with families to ensure all needed documents and information are ready for school enrollment.

See



Safety

Safety Measures

We all know that safety comes first! At L.B.J.&C. Head Start, our first goal is to keep children safe, which starts with paying attention to every detail – big and small. Every day at our center, you can be confident that your child is in the very best hands.



01 Daily Health Checks

- A quick daily health check is done each morning to observe physical condition.
- Staff look for signs of illness, injury, head lice, and nits.
- Children who are ill will not be admitted to the center, and those who pass the daily health check will receive a hand stamp.

03 Cleaning and Sanitation

- All surfaces and toys are disinfected regularly.
- Handwashing routines are implemented to reduce the spread of germs.
- Cleaning products used are safe and child-friendly, following health guidelines.

05 Secure Centers

- Doors remain locked during school hours.
- Visitors must check in at the front office.

07 Mandated Reporting

- All staff are legally required to report any suspected abuse or neglect. Reports must be made confidentially to the Child Abuse Hotline.
- All employees undergo background checks and receive training to recognize/respond to signs of abuse or neglect.
- Abuse, neglect, or mistreatment by any staff member is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate termination.

02 Well-Child

- Children should stay home if they show signs of illness.
- If a child becomes sick at school, parents will be contacted immediately and must arrange prompt pickup.
- If a parent can't be reached, the child will be cared for, and emergency treatment will be given if needed.

04 Emergency Drills and Procedures

- Fire, weather, and various drills are conducted monthly.
- All staff receive ongoing training in emergency preparedness, and first aid.
- Emergency contact information is updated regularly.
- Clear plans are in place for various situations to keep children safe and calm.
- Many annual inspections take place throughout the year.

06 Accidents / Incidents

- Minor injuries are treated with basic first aid, and parents are informed with an Ouch Report.
- All staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and maintain current certification.
- Parents are contacted for serious injuries, and emergency services called if needed with consent.

08 Supervision

- Staff are responsible for children as soon as they are signed into the classroom. Children are supervised by sight.
- Staff monitor attendance throughout the day and perform frequent "name-to-face" headcounts.



Mental Health & Disability Services

At L.B.J.&C. Head Start, we know that healthy social and emotional development is just as important as learning letters and numbers. Mental health in early childhood means helping children build positive relationships, express their feelings in healthy ways, and feel safe and secure in their environment.

How We Support Social-Emotional Development:

If more help is needed, we assist families with referrals to trusted community mental health resources.

01 Screen all children early in the school year

to identify any emotional, behavioral, or developmental concerns.

02 If a concern is identified

our mental health partner, ACTS, works with families and teachers to understand the child's needs.

03 ACTS consultants visit classrooms

to observe and offer supportive strategies for teachers, children, and families.

04 We provide tools and ideas

to promote emotional wellness for all children, not just those with identified concerns.

Who is Assessment, Counseling, and Training Services (ACTS)? ACTS is a team of licensed mental health professionals who partner with L.B.J.&C. Head Start to support the social and emotional well-being of children and families..

Understanding and Supporting Behavior

To support children with behavior challenges, we use the **Pyramid Model**, a national framework for promoting healthy emotional and social development:

1. Tier 1: Support for all children
through strong relationships, consistent routines, and teaching social skills.

2 Tier 2: Extra help for some children
who may need more support learning how to manage emotions or interact with others.

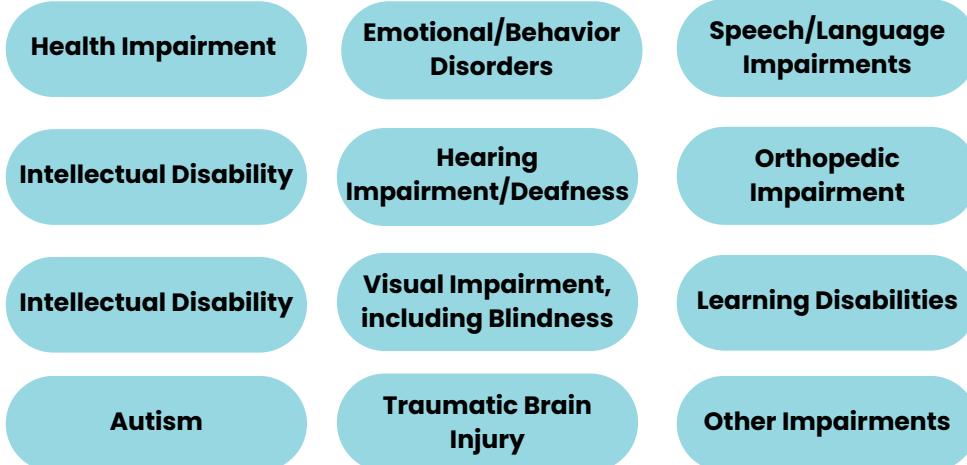
3. Tier 3: Individualized support
for a few children with ongoing or more serious behavioral needs.

Our goal is to work together with families to help every child succeed—emotionally, socially, and academically.

At L.B.J.&C. Head Start, we are committed to meeting the needs of all children, including those with disabilities. We see each child as a unique individual with their own strengths, abilities, and areas of growth. Our program is designed to provide support that helps every child grow, learn, and succeed.

Disability Services

We welcome children with all types of disabilities, including but not limited to:



Some children may need special services such as speech therapy, physical therapy, or health-related support. We work closely with Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and other community partners to make sure children get the help they need.

Our goal is to create an supportive environment where all children can learn, play, and thrive together. If you think your child may need extra support, please reach out to our staff.

We're here to help!





Health Services

L.B.J.&C. Head Start provides medical, dental, mental health, and nutrition services, while helping families connect with ongoing health care for their child's continued well-being.



Immunizations

All children must have up-to-date immunizations before the first day.

A current immunization certificate is required upon enrollment and updated annually.

Religious and Medical exemptions are accepted.

Required Screenings

- Physical
- Vision
- Hearing
- Blood Pressure
- Lead
- Hemoglobin/Hematocrit
- Oral Health Exam

- Preventative Oral Health
- Health History
- Speech
- Developmental
- Growth Assessment
- Behavioral Screening

All Identified Health Needs Will Require Follow-Up:
Head Start will provide assistance to families to obtain follow-up

When to Keep Your Child at Home

Children must stay home if they have:

- Fever of 100.4°F or higher (must be fever-free for 24 hours without medication to return).
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours (must be 24 hours without vomiting and diarrhea to return).
- Unexplained rash, pink eye, or contagious illness.
- Persistent cough, difficulty breathing, or flu-like symptoms.

If your child is absent for 3+ days due to illness, a doctor's note is required.

Communicable Disease Notice: If there is an outbreak of a contagious illness at the center, we will let parents know right away so you can take any necessary precautions.





Daily Health Checks

A quick daily health check is done each morning to observe behavior and physical condition.

Staff look for signs of illness, injury, head lice, and nits.

Children who are noticeably ill will not be admitted to the center, and those who pass the daily health check will receive a hand stamp.

- Fever -100.4 oral
- Respiratory
- Severe coughing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Live Lice or Nits

- Eye drainage
- Body rash
- Unusual appearance or behavior
- Obvious severe pain
- Chicken Pox

COVID/Respiratory Illness

We follow CDC guidance to help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses like COVID-19, flu, and RSV. Children who test positive for COVID-19 will stay home for at least 5 days. Masks are not required but are available upon request. Families should notify staff of any positive cases or exposures.

What About Head Lice?

Head lice are common in young children and are not a sign of poor hygiene.

If lice or nits (lice eggs) are found, your child will need to go home for treatment.

After moving to a private office, we will provide you with information on how to treat head lice safely and effectively.

Children may return to class once treatment has started and they are free of live lice and nits.

Staff will re-check your child before they return to the classroom.

We work to handle all cases discreetly and respectfully to avoid embarrassment.

Our goal is to stop the spread quickly while supporting families through the process. If you ever have questions or need help with treatment, just let us know—we're here to help!



Please update your Center Supervisor or teacher right away if your child's allergy information changes.

Medications

Whenever possible, medications should be given at home.

Medications will only be administered at Head Start if required during program hours and as directed by a medical provider.

The following must be submitted to the Center Supervisor for approval by the Program Services Manager:

- Doctor's orders
- Parental consent
- Information on possible side effects

Once approved and staff training is complete, medication must be delivered by a parent, guardian, or caregiver in the original labeled container.

Medications will be administered according to DHS regulations and L.B.J.&C. procedures.

No medication, including cough drops, should be left in a child's belongings.

Emergency Medication

If your child requires the use of emergency medications (i.e., inhalers, Epi-pen, Diastat, etc.), please inform staff to get further instruction.

Parents must disclose life threatening conditions at the time of orientation.

EpiPens and inhalers must be provided by parents if needed.

Allergies

Inform staff immediately if your child has any known allergies (food, insect stings, environmental, etc.).

An Individualized Health Plan signed by your child's healthcare provider may be required.

Allergy information is shared with all necessary staff to help prevent exposure.



Nutrition Services

We promote healthy eating habits while ensuring the safety of all children with food allergies. Our meal and snack procedures are designed to provide nutritious options while maintaining a nut-free and allergy-conscious environment.



❖ ❖ **NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED**

- This helps us provide a safe environment while managing allergies and following agency guidelines.



Center-Provided Meals & Snacks

- Head Start provides FREE nutritious snacks and meals daily, prepared following USDA child nutrition guidelines.
- All meals include balanced portions of proteins, grains, fruits, and vegetables.
- A weekly menu is shared with parents in advance.

Sample Meal Schedule

Time	Meal	Example
8:30 AM	Breakfast	Breakfast Pizza, Banana, Milk
11:30 AM	Lunch	Grilled Chicken Quesadilla, Corn, Refried Beans, Milk
2:15 PM	Afternoon Snack	Animal Crackers and Apple Juice

❖ ❖ **Parents must notify during the application process, if your child has a special diet due to a food allergy or religious reasons.**



Family Style Meal Service

- Meals are served in a relaxed, home-like setting where children and staff sit together at the table.
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves with age-appropriate utensils.
- Staff guide and model healthy eating habits, good manners, and social skills.
- Mealtimes are used as a learning opportunity to support language development, math, and self-help skills.
- Staff and children engage in positive conversation during meals, encouraging social development.
- Families are encouraged to reinforce these habits at home to support consistency and healthy development.



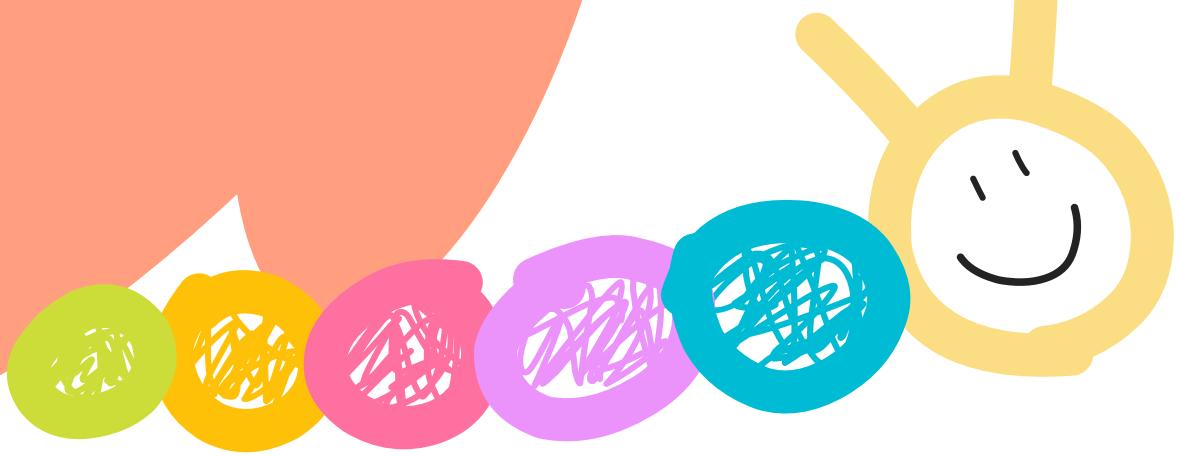
Special Diet & Food Allergies

- Peanuts, tree nuts, and nut-based products are prohibited.
- Parents must inform the school of any food allergies during application and/or orientation.
- Allergies and/or special diets must be documented by an appropriate professional (physician, clergy, etc.) with a Menu Change Form (HEN45) and an Individual Health Plan (IHP).

Talk to staff if your child needs a Special Diet or has a food allergy prior to enrollment.



Communication & Family Involvement



Communication Between Head Start & Parents

We prioritize open and transparent communication with families. Below are the ways we keep parents informed:

Teaching Strategies Family App

Family involvement in learning is key to your child's success. We want to help you stay connected and support learning at home. The free Teaching Strategies Family app will help you support your child's learning. This tool offers two-way communication between school and home; rich, interactive playlists filled with family-friendly activities you can do with your child; and a digital children's library with over 200 titles.

Accept Your Invitation Today!
Registration Is Easy!

Step 1
Download the free Teaching Strategies Family app.

Step 2
Tap "Get Started Now" in the email or text message invitation to

Step 3
• Choose your language,
• set a password, and
• tap "Create Account."

Step 4
You are in!
Now you'll receive playlists and activity ideas.



You will receive an email that says
"Teaching Strategies Family
Invitation for the family of
[Your Child]."



Parent-Teacher Conferences

Two a year or upon request.

Email & Phone Support

Teachers and staff are available for inquiries during school hours (naptime).

Monthly Calendars

Distributed at the start of each month with key dates and activities.

Home Visits

Home Visits by Education and Family Engagement staff

Home Visits & Parent Conferences

Home visits and parent conferences are an important part of your child's success in Head Start.

Additional conferences can be scheduled if needed.

Home Visits

Each year, home visits are scheduled by Family Engagement and Teaching staff at a time that works best for families. These visits help:

- Build trust and a strong relationship between parents and teachers
- Ease the transition from home to the classroom
- Give parents a chance to help set goals and contribute to their child's learning plan
- Allow children to see positive interactions between their family and teachers
- Provide a comfortable setting to talk about your child's needs and strengths

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal parent-teacher conferences are scheduled to discuss:

- Discuss your child's progress and development
- Review goals and learning activities for your child
- Share updates from both home and the classroom
- Ask questions or raise any concerns



Family Support



While L.B.J.&C. Head Start specializes in providing high-quality early childhood education, we recognize that our students and families may have needs outside early education. We have a variety of ways that we can support our families. These include:



RESOURCE REFERRALS

Assistance connecting families to housing, healthcare, food, GED, furthering education, ESL classes, job training, and other community services.



PARENT EDUCATION & TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Topics include child development, parenting skills, education, nutrition, and more.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteering, family events, and activities that build strong center-home connections.



GOAL SETTING & SUPPORT

Help with setting and working toward family or personal goals, such as education or employment.



DOLLY PARTON'S IMAGINATION LIBRARY

The Imagination Library is dedicated to inspiring a love of reading by gifting FREE books to children from birth to age five.

Home Language

It is important to L.B.J.&C. that all families are given the opportunity to fully understand, interpret, and become involved in their child's education. L.B.J.&C. will work with the family to provide information in the language they are most comfortable with for any family that makes a request.

We welcome and encourage parent involvement in Head Start, but participation is completely voluntary and not required for your child to be enrolled. Every day is Parent's Day at Head Start—feel free to join us for a meal or spend the day with your child!



Classroom Involvement

- **Guest Reader**
Parents can visit the class to read a story.
- **Special Skills Sharing**
Parents with unique skills (e.g., music, art) can assist in an activity.
- **Helping with Art & Science Projects**
Assisting children with hands-on activities.

Policy Council

Head Start parents and community representatives who help make decisions about the program.

- **Parents are the majority.**
Most members are current Head Start parents elected by other parents.
- **It helps make decisions**
about major program areas like budget planning, hiring staff, program goals, and curriculum.
- **It supports shared leadership**
between parents, staff, and the Board of Directors.

Committees & Advisories

Committees and advisory groups are where you can share ideas, give feedback, and help strengthen the program.

- **Health/Mental Health Services Advisory**
Reviews health, nutrition, and mental health services
- **Parent, Family, & Community Engagement Advisory**
Reviews social services
- **Education Advisory**
Reviews educational services
- **Parent Committee**
Center-level groups that plan events and support families

Center-Wide Volunteering & Activities

- **Field Trip Chaperones**
Assistance with on-site field trips!
- **Event Planning**
Help with center-wide events ex. Open House.
- **Office Work, Recruitment, Crafts, Family Meals**
We encourage you to come help out!



Fatherhood Initiative

- **Special Meals**

Father/Male Role Models meals throughout the year. Check the calendar in the back of this handbook for dates.

- **Read Alongs**

Father/Male Role Models can read and play with the children in the center.



Custodial and Non-Custodial Parents

- **We encourage both custodial and non-custodial parents to be involved in their child's Head Start experience.**

Custodial parents are asked to share relevant contact information for the non-custodial parent.

When appropriate, non-custodial parents will be notified and invited to participate in classroom activities, events, and volunteer opportunities.





Appendix

L.B.J.&C. Head Start Outdoor Play Procedure

An opportunity for outdoor play shall be extended to children of all ages who are in care more than three (3) daylight hours; provided, however, for agencies where outdoor play is prohibitive or dangerous, as determined in the discretion of the Department of Human Services, unoccupied indoor space providing fifty (50) square feet per child is acceptable.

Children shall be allowed to experience a variety of weather conditions:

1. Children shall be provided an opportunity for outdoor play when the temperature range, after adjustment for wind chill and heat index, is between thirty-two (32) degrees and ninety-five (95) degrees Fahrenheit and not raining;
2. Children shall be properly dressed and the length of time outside adjusted according to the conditions and the age of the children.
3. Children are not allowed to play on the playground while outside maintenance, such as lawn mowing or weed maintenance, is taking place.

The same adult: child ratio is applicable for the playground as in the Head Start classrooms. The adult: child ratio must be met at all times while the children are experiencing playtime on the playground.

Each classroom will have a Center and a Classroom Schedule posted in plain view showing times for arrival and departure times from the playground. Name to face roll call will take place when there is a transition from the classroom.

1. **Educators will take roll before leaving the classroom to go outside to the playground. Call the child's name and look at their face.**
2. **Take roll when you arrive to the playground. Call the child's name and look at their face.**
3. **Take roll before leaving the playground. Call the child's name and look at their face.**
4. **Take roll once you arrive back in the classroom. Call the child's name and look at their face.**

After each roll call, educators should glance and look at any blind spots to ensure no child has left the roll call area. For example, after calling name to face roll call before leaving the classroom, do a quick sweep to ensure no child left the area of roll call and hid in another area of the room.

Two-way radios will be used in centers that do not have playgrounds adjacent to the building in the event of an emergency, such as: Emergency Situation, Child Injury, Weather Evacuation, toileting or personal care needs of children or staff exist. Head Start Center support staff will immediately step in to meet the adult: child ratio guidelines. There will never be only one staff member outside with the children at any given time.

The traveling first aid kit will be accessible for each classroom of children as they go out onto the playground. The teaching staff will review the playground rules each day with the children before entering the playground.

The Head Start staff will:

1. Obtain the child sign-in/sign out book and conduct a name to face roll call of the children prior to leaving the classroom.
2. Upon arrival at the playground another name to face roll call of the children will be conducted.
3. One staff member (teacher) will constantly be moving around in an unpredictable pattern and continuously scan the entire playground.
4. The other staff member(s) (teacher assistant and support staff) will be moving around and engaging only in brief discussions with the children or other adults using brief eye contact.
5. Head Start Staff will regularly turn their body from side to side to ensure a full 360-degree range of vision.
6. Staff members will focus on playground rules, redirect play behavior, and note location of play on the playground.
7. Staff members will remain in the same interaction no longer than 10-15 seconds and move to a new location for continued surveillance.
8. Staff members will anticipate problems and hazards; continually scan equipment for hazards, scan the playground for trash and/or animal droppings and scan the wood/rubber mulch for kicked out areas of surfacing that does not allow for adequate surfacing depths.
9. Staff members will continually monitor the children's behavior and limit number of children on each piece of equipment.
10. Staff members will not engage in conversation with other staff members, parents or visitor while monitoring playground activities.
11. Head Start staff will refer back to the child sign-in/sign out book and conduct a name to face roll call of the children, prior to leaving the playground.
12. Upon arrival in the classroom, another roll call of the children will be completed.
13. If a situation arises that warrants either staff member from their specific duties listed above, support staff members will be brought out to cover their duties until they can resume with their responsibilities.

L.B.J.&C. Head Start Code of Conduct Policy

It is the policy of the L.B.J. & C. Development Corporation that a Code of Conduct is in effect. All staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers are required to abide by the program's standards of conduct that:

1. Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers implement positive strategies to support children's well-being and prevent and address challenging behavior;
2. Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers do not engage in behaviors that maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children, including, at a minimum: Use corporal punishment;
 - a. Corporal punishment; or physically abusive behavior, defined as intentional use of physical force that results in, or has the potential to result in, physical injury. Examples include, but are not limited to, hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, pushing, restraining, force feeding, or dragging;
 - b. Sexually abusive behavior, defined as any completed or attempted sexual act, sexual contact, or exploitation. Examples include, but are not limited to, behaviors such as inappropriate touching, inappropriate filming, or exposing a child to other sexual activities;
 - c. Emotionally harmful or abusive behavior, defined as behaviors that harm a child's self worth or emotional well-being. Examples include, but are not limited to, using seclusion, using or exposing a child to public or private humiliation, or name calling, shaming, intimidating, or threatening a child; and
 - d. Neglectful behavior, defined as the failure to meet a child's basic physical and emotional needs including access to food, education, medical care, appropriate supervision by an adequate caregiver, and safe physical and emotional environments. Examples include, but are not limited to, leaving a child unattended on a bus, withholding food as punishment or refusing to change soiled diapers as punishment; Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and do not stereotype on any basis, including gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or family composition;
3. Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers report reasonably suspected or known incidents of child abuse and neglect, as defined by the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) (42 U.S.C. 5101 note) and in compliance with Federal, State, local, and Tribal laws;
4. Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers respect and promote the unique identity of each individual and do not stereotype on any basis, including gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or family composition;
5. Require staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers to comply with program confidentiality policies concerning personally identifiable information about children, families, and other staff members in accordance with subpart C of part 1303 of this chapter and applicable Federal, State, local, and Tribal laws; and,
6. Ensure no child is left alone or unsupervised.
7. When one becomes aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health or safety of children, but has not been previously known to do so, inform those who can remedy the situation to keep other children from being similarly endangered.
8. Attempt to develop relationships of mutual trust with the families we serve.
9. Inform families of our program's philosophy, policies, and personnel qualifications and explain and involve them in our curriculum.
10. Inform the family of accidents involving their child or risk such as exposures to contagious disease that may result in infection and of events that might result in psychological damage.
11. Initiate appropriate actions against responsible persons who take, threaten to take, or fail to take a personnel action with respect to any employee or applicant because of any protected disclosure of information, as required by the Whistleblower Protection Act.
12. Do not permit or participate in research that could in any way hinder the education or development of the children in our program. Ensure that families are fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and that they have the opportunity to give or withhold consent.
13. When having a concern about the professional behavior of a co-worker, first let that person know of our concern and attempt to resolve the matter collegially. If this fails, the program's Chain of Command will be followed.
14. Assist the program in providing the highest quality of service and maintain loyalty to the program and uphold its reputation.
15. When disagreement with program policies, attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organization.
16. Speak or act on behalf of an organization only when authorized. Be careful to know when speaking for the organization versus expressing a personal judgment.
17. Staff members will be provided with work conditions that permit them to carry out their responsibilities. Staff members will also be provided with timely and non-threatening evaluation procedures, written grievance procedures, constructive feedback, and opportunities for continuing professional development advancement.
18. Firearms, weapons, drugs, and alcohol are prohibited on the L.B.J.& C. operational sites.
19. No employee is authorized to remove any property belonging to the L.B.J.& C. Development Corporation without obtaining prior approval from the Program Director.

L.B.J.&C. Head Start Confidentiality Policy

All Program files and records (i.e. financial, programmatic, personnel, children/families, and operations) are confidential and the property of L.B.J.& C.

Children and Family Information

In order to provide individual quality services to families, the staff must gather very personal, sensitive information concerning almost every facet of the family's lifestyle and habits. The information collected includes not only current information, but historical information as well. L.B.J.& C. staff must maintain the confidentiality of all records and information pertaining to the children and/or family. The program will provide locked file cabinets in each center and classroom for child/family records. Only those staff designated will have access to the keys to the files, and all persons examining the records will sign and date the Review of Confidential Information section of each record. Parents/legal guardians have the right to examine any records concerning their child/family. Maintaining confidentiality pertains not only to written information but also to verbal disclosure of any information concerning children/families. Shared information among staff regarding children/families will be disclosed on an as-needed basis only. All records concerning children/families will be destroyed in accordance with funding source's regulations.

Staff Information

Confidentiality also includes staff information and staff records. Staff information and records are held confidential as requirements direct. Staff information is not available as common knowledge and is held confidential, as policies require under the Program Director's authority.

Program procedures – applicable confidentiality provisions

Due to serving children who are referred to, or found eligible for services under, IDEA, the program will comply with the applicable confidentiality provisions in Part B or Part C of IDEA to protect the Personally Identifiable Information (PII) in records of those children, and, therefore, the provisions in this subpart do not apply to those children.

Disclosures With, and Without, Parental Consent

All outside requests for files and records will be forwarded immediately to the Program Director. The Program Director will act upon requests for children/family information only after receipt of written parental consent.

- Disclosure with parental consent. Subject to exceptions in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section, the procedures to protect PII must require the program to obtain a parent's written consent before the program may disclose such PII from child records. The parent's written consent will specify what records may be disclosed, explain why the records will be disclosed, and identify the party or class of parties to whom the records may be disclosed. The written consent must be signed and dated. "Signed and dated written consent" under this part may include a record and signature in electronic form that:
 - "Identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic consent; and,
 - "Indicates such person's approval of the information.
 - The program will explain to the parent that the granting of consent is voluntary on the part of the parent and may be revoked at any time. If a parent revokes consent, that revocation is not retroactive and therefore it does not apply to an action that occurred before the consent was revoked.
- Disclosure without parent consent but with parental notice and opportunity to refuse. The program may disclose such PII from child records without parent consent if the program notifies the parent about the disclosure, provides the parent, upon the parent's request, a copy of the PII from child records to be disclosed in advance, and gives the parent an opportunity to challenge and refuse disclosure of the information in the records, before the program forwards the records to officials at the program, school, or school district in which the child seeks or intends to enroll or where the child is already enrolled so long as the disclosure is related to the child's enrollment and transfer.
- Disclosure without parental consent. The program may disclose such PII from child records without parental consent to:
 - a.Officials within the program or acting for the program, such as contractors and subrecipients, if the official provides services for which the program would otherwise use employees, the program determines it is necessary for Head Start services, and the program maintains oversight with respect to the use, further disclosure, and maintenance of child records, such as through a written agreement;
 - b.Officials within the program, acting for the program, or from a federal or state entity, in connection with an audit or evaluation of education or child development programs, or for enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements of the program; provided the program maintains oversight with respect to the use, further disclosure, and maintenance of child records, such as through a written agreement, including the destruction of PII when no longer needed for the purpose of the disclosure, except the disclosure is specifically authorized by federal law or by the responsible HHS official;
 - c.Officials within the program, acting for the program, or from a federal or state entity, to conduct a study to improve child and family outcomes, including improving the quality of programs, for, or on behalf of, the program, provided the program maintains oversight with respect to the use, further disclosure, and maintenance of child records, such as through a written agreement, including the destruction of the PII when no longer needed for the purpose of the disclosure;
 - d.Appropriate parties in order to address a disaster, health or safety emergency during the period of the emergency, or a serious health and safety risk such as a serious food allergy, if the program determines that disclosing the PII from child records is necessary to protect the health or safety of children or other persons;
 - e.Comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena, provided the program makes a reasonable effort to notify the parent about all such subpoenas and court orders in advance of the compliance therewith, unless:
 - i.A court has ordered that neither the subpoena, its contents, nor the information provided in response is disclosed;
 - ii.The disclosure is in compliance with an ex parte court order obtained by the United States Attorney General (or designee not lower than an Assistant Attorney General) concerning investigations or prosecutions of an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. 2332b(g)(5)(B) or an act of domestic or international terrorism as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2331.
 - iii.A parent is a party to a court proceeding directly involving child abuse and neglect (as defined in section 3 of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (42 U.S.C. 5101) or dependency matters, and the order is issued in the context of that proceeding, additional notice to the parent by the program is not required; or,
 - iv.A program initiates legal action against a parent or a parent initiates legal action against a program, then a program may disclose to the court, also without a court order or subpoena, the child records relevant for the program to act as plaintiff or defendant.
 - f.The Secretary of Agriculture or an authorized representative from the Food and Nutrition Service to conduct program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements for the Child and Adult Care Food Program under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, if the results will be reported in an aggregate form that does not identify any individual; provided, that any data collected must be protected in a manner that will not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by other than the authorized representatives of the Secretary of Agriculture and any PII must be destroyed when the data are no longer needed for program monitoring, evaluations, and performance measurements;
 - g.A caseworker or other representative from a state, local, or tribal child welfare agency, who has the right to access a case plan for a child who is in foster care placement, when such agency is legally responsible for the child's care and protections, under state or tribal law, if the agency agrees in writing to protect PII, to use information from the child's case plan for specific purposes intended of addressing the child's needs, and to destroy information that is no longer needed for those purposes; and,
 - h.Appropriate parties in order to address suspected or known child maltreatment and is consistent with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws on reporting child abuse and neglect.
- Written agreements. If the program establishes a written agreement with a third party, the program will annually review, and if necessary, update the agreement to protect PII. If the third party violates the agreement, then the program may:
 - Provide the third party an opportunity to self-correct; or,
 - Prohibit the third party from access to records for a set period of time as established by the Board of Directors and Policy Council.
- Annual notice. The program will notify parents of their rights in writing annually. The notice will include a description of the types of PII that may be disclosed, to whom the PII may be disclosed, and what may constitute a necessary reason for the disclosure without parental consent as described in paragraph (c) of this section.
- Limit on disclosing PII. The program will only disclose the information that is deemed necessary for the purpose of the disclosure.

Outside Requests

To ensure timely disposition of the request, the request should be provided in writing, and include the following information:

- name of the agency and its representative or the individual, making the request,
- telephone number of the agency representative or the individual making the request,
- brief detailed description of why the files or records are being requested, and
- dated and signed.

After evaluating the request, appropriate action will be taken. The Program Director or his/her designee is the only staff authorized to release files and records outside the agency. Business affairs and the operation of the Agency should not be discussed with anyone outside the organization except when required in the normal course of business. Access to sensitive information and operating procedures will be handled on a need-to-know basis and given as directed by the Program Director, only. Any employee dealing with confidential Agency information is responsible for its security. The cost of Agency products and services is considered sensitive information and should be handled as confidential information.

ACS Volunteer Information

The information in the Foster Grandparent personnel file folder will be kept confidential.

- Copies of the initial physical examination information may be shared with the Volunteer Station. This is done to provide them with information about the volunteer's physical limitations. It is also done to provide paramedics with medical information in the event of a medical emergency.
- The Volunteer Station may also be provided with the volunteer's contact information so that they may be contacted in an emergency.
- A copy of the volunteer's background check may be given to the volunteer station where stationed.
- Personal information about volunteers contained on the enrollment form, such as home addresses, may be disclosed only with the express prior written permission of the Foster Grandparent Volunteer.

L.B.J.&C. Head Start Policies

Grievance

Disagreements may occur, even with the best of intentions. Experience has taught us that open communication is the key to maintaining a positive relationship. The adults must demonstrate the cooperative, compassionate communication we want our children to imitate. If you have a concern, please discuss it with your child's teacher or the staff involved. If the concern is not resolved to the satisfaction of all parties, a meeting can be arranged between the persons involved and the Center Supervisor. If there is still a concern, please reach out to a member of the Central Office at 931-528-3361..

Transportation

L.B.J.&C. Head Start does not provide regular transportation to and from school. Parents are responsible for arranging their child's transportation. However, we do offer support for families facing transportation challenges by connecting them with local resources such as U-CARTS, UCHRA, and other community options. Please speak with your Family Advocate if you need assistance.

Tobacco/Vape-Free Environment Policy

L.B.J.&C. Head Start premises are smoke-free, vape-free, and tobacco-free environments. Smoking and the use of any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco, including e-cigarettes, vapes, cigars, little cigars, smokeless tobacco, and hookah, shall not be permitted on the premises of the childcare center or during any off-premises activities. Additionally, firearms and ammunition are prohibited in all licensed childcare centers,

Corporal Punishment Policy

L.B.J. & C. staff are advised, trained and reminded on the use of corporal punishment, or isolation is prohibited in all Head Start facilities by staff, paid substitutes, volunteers/non-paid substitutes, or visitors.

Corporal Punishment is defined as the use of physical force as a disciplinary measure. This includes, but is not limited to spanking, slapping, pulling of hair, isolation, etc. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities as a punishment measure. Isolation includes, but is not restricted to, confining the child in a small area, retaining the child in the classroom when other children go to play, or restricting the child from lunch with his/her classmates.

The Agency operates a Zero Tolerance of employee's inappropriate behavior toward the children we serve. Upon receipt of a report that an employee failed to follow the Supervision of Children procedure, used corporal punishment or a staff member has used isolation with a child, or inappropriate behavior on the part of the staff or if there are allegations or charges of inappropriate behavior by staff:

- The Program Director will immediately place the employee on Administrative Leave with pay; until such time as an investigation suggests other action is appropriate or required.
- The Program Director or designated staff member will, contact the Department of Children Services, State of Tennessee Head Start Collaboration Office and the Region IV Head Start Office.
- The Program Director and the immediate supervisor will conduct an investigation including interviews, review of documentation, and other necessary action. This investigation will include notification to the employee of the suspicion and/or allegation with opportunity for explanation by the employee of circumstances and other appropriate information.
- The suspension with pay will be converted to termination, if warranted due to official guilty charges, conviction, or incontrovertible evidence of misbehavior and/or violation of program policies established for the protection, safety, and welfare of children.

Should the Policy Council/ACS Advisory Council not concur with the Program Director's recommendation, minutes of the proceedings shall be forwarded to the Regional Office for instruction and/or guidance.

Legal Information

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES (TDHS) CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP) AND SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM (SFSP) CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE REPORT PROCEDURES

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [YOUR RIGHTS UNDER TITLE VI OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT OF 1964](#)

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

- mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
- fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
- email: Program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

YOUR RIGHTS UNDER SECTION 504 AND THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) is responsible for enforcing the nondiscrimination requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, involving health care and human service providers and institutions.

What is Prohibited Under Section 504 and the ADA?

Both Section 504 and the ADA prohibit covered entities from discriminating against persons with disabilities in the provision of benefits or services or the conduct of programs or activities on the basis of their disability. Section 504 applies to programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. Title II of the ADA covers all of the services, programs, and activities conducted by public entities (state and local governments, departments, agencies, etc.), including licensing.

Who is Protected Under Section 504 and the ADA?

Section 504 and the ADA protect qualified individuals with disabilities. An individual with a disability is a person who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; has a record of such an impairment; or is regarded as having such an impairment. Major life activities means functions such as caring for one's self, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working. Under Section 504 and the ADA, a person is a qualified individual with a disability if he or she meets the essential requirements for receipt of services or benefits, or participation in the programs or activities of a covered entity. The question of whether a particular condition is a disability within the meaning of Section 504 and the ADA is determined on a case-by-case basis.

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This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Information

CACFP Parent Letter



L.B.J. & C. Head Start

A Limited Purpose Agency Serving
Clay, Cumberland, DeKalb, Fentress, Jackson, Macon, Overton,
Pickett, Putnam, Smith, Warren, and White Counties

1150 Chocolate Drive • Cookeville, Tennessee 38501 • Telephone: (931) 528-3361 • FAX: (931) 528-2409 • www.lbjc.org

MEMO

To: Head Start Parent(s)/Guardian(s)
From: Penny Meadows, Head Start Director
Date: July 1, 2025
Subject: Department of Human Services Meal Guidelines

The Department of Human Services has issued a new set of income guidelines by which your child's eligibility for free and reduced price meals must be re-determined. Please assist us to comply with the requirements of the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Public Law 110-134 makes any child enrolled in Head Start automatically eligible for free meals without further application or eligibility determination thru the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program.

Income Eligibility Guidelines for Free and Reduced Price Meals Effective July 1, 2025 until June 30, 2026						
Household Size	Reduced Meals			Free Meals		
	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly
1	28,953	2,413	557	20,345	1,696	392
2	39,128	3,261	753	27,495	2,292	529
3	49,303	4,109	949	34,645	2,888	667
4	59,478	4,957	1,144	41,795	3,483	804
5	69,653	5,640	1,340	48,945	4,079	942
6	79,828	6,653	1,536	56,095	4,675	1,079
7	90,003	7,501	1,731	63,245	5,271	1,217
8	100,178	8,349	1,927	70,395	5,867	1,354
***	10,175	848	196	7,150	596	138

*** For each additional family member add

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AGENCY
Funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families L.B.J. & C. Development Corporation is an Equal Opportunity Agency. The agency does not discriminate on any non-merit reasons such as race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, political affiliation, sexual preference, or qualified individuals with mental and physical handicaps. The 504/ADA>Title VI Contact Person: Angela West (931) 528-3361



provides healthy, supplemental foods and breastfeeding support for people who are pregnant, have a new baby, or have a child under age 5.

What does WIC offer?

- Healthy supplemental foods and nutrition education
- Breastfeeding and chestfeeding support, including access to lactation specialists
- Infant formula
- Health screenings and referrals to other food, health and social agencies
- Free app to help you use your WIC benefits

Who can join WIC?

Both adults and children can enroll in WIC. WIC can provide services:

- During pregnancy
- For 6 months after delivery (or up to a year if you are breastfeeding or chestfeeding)
- To children ages 1 to 5 years (any parent, grandparent, or guardian can sign their children up for WIC)

You can be eligible for WIC if you are:

- Employed or without a job
- With or without a home
- Married, single, or divorced
- Of any immigration status

You must:

- Be a Maryland resident
- Meet income guidelines

Tennessee WIC Program
1-800-DIAL-WIC (1-800-342-5942)
www.tn.gov/wic

Legal Information

Notice of Parent Rights

All children who enter the Head Start program receive physicals and other health screenings to ensure that they are healthy and are developing normally. Children who fail the screenings or have concerns from the physical may need additional or special services. To determine individual needs, an evaluation may be needed. After the evaluation, a team will meet with the child's parents to review the child's strengths and needs, and to plan exactly the right services and activities for the child.

The people who are on the team are there because they know something about the child (or about other children with special needs) or because they will be taking part in actually teaching or giving other services to the child. The team will also need information from the child's parents, because they know their child better than anyone. The team will need the parent's help in deciding on the best services to meet the child's needs.

Your Rights Summarized

Notice: You have the right to give your written permission before an evaluation can be done and shared with the Head Start Program.

Advocacy: You have the right to bring someone with you to speak for you or help you in the meeting. If you cannot come to the meeting, you can send this person in your place and send your information to the team in writing.

Evaluations: You have the right to take your child to a different specialist for another evaluation and share the results with the team.

Consent: You have the right to give your written permission before Head Start releases any information from the evaluation to another agency.

Records: You have the right to know what records are maintained and the right to see them.

Confidentiality: You have the right to give your written permission before any information from prior evaluations that you have had done can be shared with Head Start.

Your Responsibilities Summarized

Go to as many of the team meetings as possible.

Ask questions whenever you do not understand or you are concerned about something.

Share your observations and knowledge about your child and things that may affect your child.

Try to carry out suggestions by the team and report back the effects they have on your child.

The 504/ADA>Title VI contact person is Angela West, 528-3361 ext. 239

What is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)?

At a glance

- IDEA is the nation's special education law.
- Schools must find and evaluate students thought to have disabilities — at no cost to families.
- To qualify for IDEA services, a child must have a disability and need special education to make progress in school.

To get special education services for a child, you have to follow a legal process. The most important law for this process is the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

IDEA is the nation's special education law. It gives rights and protections to kids with disabilities. It covers them from birth through high school graduation or age 21 (whichever comes first). Parents and legal guardians also have rights under the law.

As the nation's special education law, IDEA provides rights and protections to children with disabilities and to their parents. Learning your rights under IDEA can make it easier for your child to get the help he needs (and is legally entitled to) at school.

The Purpose of IDEA

IDEA has been amended several times since Congress first passed it in 1975. (At that time it was called the Education for All Handicapped Children Act.) The essential purpose of IDEA hasn't changed, though. Its primary goals are:

- To protect the rights of children with disabilities. IDEA ensures students with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE), just like all other children. Schools are required to provide special education in the least restrictive environment. That means schools must teach students with disabilities in general education classroom whenever possible.
- To give parents a voice in their child's education. Under IDEA, you have a say in the educational decisions the school makes about your child. At every point of the process, the law gives you specific rights and protections. These are called procedural safeguards.

IDEA covers kids from infancy through high school graduation or age 21 (whichever comes first).

Services Under IDEA: Who's Eligible

Not every child with learning and attention issues is eligible for special education services under IDEA. First, a child must be found to have one of the 13 kinds of disabilities that IDEA covers.

The First Step to Access Services Under IDEA: An Evaluation

The school should conduct a thorough evaluation if it suspects a child has a disability. The evaluation not only determines if a student has a disability. It also sheds light on what services and support that student might need. Find out how the evaluation process works.

The Next Step: Getting an IEP

If an evaluation shows that a student is eligible for special education, parents work with a school team to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP). An IEP is a legal document that spells out a child's educational goals, disabilities, and the services and support that the school will provide.

The Role of Parents

You're your child's most important advocate. IDEA gives you an equal say in decisions about your child's education. A number of procedural safeguards protect your rights.

Try not to get discouraged if the process seems complex. Little by little, you can learn more about your child's rights. Consider talking to other parents in our community. Their experience can help guide you. You can also talk to one of our live experts.

Key Takeaways

- If your child qualifies for special education services, you'll work with a school team to develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP).
- An IEP is like a formal contract that outlines how the school will support your child.
- The law gives you an equal say in decisions about your child's education.

Source: www.understood.org

Legal Information

Notice of Rights and Responsibilities of the Volunteer

The Rights of the Volunteer

1. The right of being offered the opportunity to become a volunteer regardless of race, financial status, sex or age.
2. The right to be interviewed and appropriately assigned to a meaningful job.
3. The right to expect training and supervision to enable them to perform the job well.
4. The right to be involved in planning and evaluating the program.
5. The right to receive recognition in a way that is meaningful to them.
6. The right to be regarded as a person, with individuality, uniqueness, and value.

Volunteer Responsibilities

1. To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and my child's life.
2. To guide my child with firmness which is both loving and protective.
3. Abide by the Program's Code of Conduct, Confidentiality Policy, and Corporal Punishment Policy.
4. Report Child Abuse and/or Neglect.

Suggested Ways to Volunteer

1. Volunteer time in the classroom, such as at mealtime; read to the children in my home language; creative arts: make crafts with the children; share a talent, interest or hobby; do a make and take workshop; or donate art supplies.
2. Attend and/or prepare for parent meetings and workshops.
3. Serve on Advisory and/or Functional Committees.
4. Serve as a Self-Assessment Team Member.
5. Assist with recruitment (Distribute flyers and Head Start business cards; hang posters in the community; and/or assist with a "Recruitment Kick-off Event.").
6. Assist with Open House (Set up tables, decorate, post flyers, call members of the community).
7. Invite someone into the Head Start Center to conduct parent meetings and/or workshops.
8. Donate dramatic play items and/or multicultural items.
9. Bring in Show & Tell items that are aligned directly with the lesson plan to share with the children (ex: multicultural items; transportation-trucks, cars, 4-wheelers, tractors, motorcycles; community helpers).
10. Run errands: to the post office, pick up donated items, etc.
11. Take pictures to be used in the classroom, cubbies, and portfolios.
12. Donate children's necessities to be used while at Head Start (Minimal Supplies PLEASE, such as extra coats, hats, scarves, gloves, toothbrushes, etc.)
13. Parent and Child Time (PACT).
14. Work with your local groups: make items such as children's aprons, small blankets, or throws.
15. Volunteer to do yard maintenance, mow and weed eat, mulch, trim bushes and trees, haul trash, plant flowers, sow grass seed, spread hay, donate the seed or hay, decorate for seasons, paint or repair items.
16. Help with playground clean-up days.
17. Kitchen helpers (must have TB test).
18. Assist with on-site field trips.
19. Get field trip items donated for the children or get a reduced rate.
20. Invite community agencies to set up at Open House.
21. Assist to increase volunteer involvement at the Head Start Center.

Advantages of Being a Volunteer

1. Have an opportunity to increase your job skills.

Legal Information

USDA

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Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

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2. Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
3. Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

WHAT IS HIPAA?
(Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act)

WHO DOES HIPAA APPLY TO?

- Healthcare Providers (Doctors, Hospitals, Clinics)
- Health Plans (Insurance Companies, HMOs)
- Business Associates (Companies that handle medical data)
- Healthcare Clearinghouses (Intermediary middleman between provider and payer)

WHAT ARE SOME KEY RULES & EXAMPLES?

The Privacy Rule	The Security Rule	The Enforcement Rule
protects the privacy of health information by limiting its disclosure without patient consent.	establishes the standards for protecting electronic health information (e-PHI) of patients.	establishes penalties for noncompliance and any breaches with HIPAA regulations.
Example: Hospitals cannot share a patient's medical history with an insurance company without consent.	Example: All healthcare provider must use encryption to protect stored patient data.	Example: A clinic that fails to protect patient data could face fines of up to \$50,000 per violation.

Child Abuse Facts and Laws

Child Abuse and Neglect Definition

Child abuse and neglect occurs when a child is mistreated, resulting in injury or risk of harm. Abuse can be physical, verbal, emotional or sexual.

Physical Abuse is defined as non-accidental physical trauma or injury inflicted by a parent or caretaker on a child. It also includes a parent's or a caretaker's failure to protect a child from another person who perpetrated physical abuse on a child. In its most severe form, physical abuse is likely to cause great bodily harm or death.

Physical Neglect is defined as the failure to provide for a child's physical survival needs to the extent that there is harm or risk of harm to the child's health or safety. This may include, but is not limited to abandonment, lack of supervision, life endangering physical hygiene, lack of adequate nutrition that places the child below the normal growth curve, lack of shelter, lack of medical or dental that results in health threatening conditions, and the inability to meet basic clothing needs of a child. In its most severe form, physical neglect may result in great bodily harm or death.

Sexual Abuse includes penetration or external touching of a child's intimate parts, oral sex with a child, indecent exposure or any other sexual act performed in a child's presence for sexual gratification, sexual use of a child for prostitution, and the manufacturing of child pornography. Child sexual abuse is also the willful failure of the parent or the child's caretaker to make a reasonable effort to stop child sexual abuse by another person.

Emotional Abuse includes verbal assaults, ignoring and indifference or constant family conflict. If a child is degraded enough, the child will begin to live up to the image communicated by the abusing parent or caretaker.

Child abuse can happen anywhere; in poor, middle-class or well-to-do homes, in rural or urban areas.

Reporting Laws (See Next Page)

According to Tennessee law, all persons (including doctors, mental health professionals, child care providers, dentists, family members and friends) must report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect. Failure to report child abuse or neglect is a violation of the law. If you believe a child has been abused or neglected, call:

- Your local Children's Services office
- Your local Juvenile Court
- Local Sheriff's office or Police Department

Tennessee has 24-hour availability for reporting child abuse or neglect. The appropriate form will be filed at the Central Office when child abuse or neglect is reported.

Violations - Penalties

- a) Any person required to report known or suspected child abuse who knowingly and will fully fails to do so, or who knowingly and willfully prevents another person from doing so, is guilty of a misdemeanor.
- b) Any person who knowingly and willfully makes public or discloses any confidential information contained in the abuse registry or in the records of any child abuse case, is guilty of a misdemeanor.



TN

Department of
Children's Services

877-237-0004

Call 911 if there is a life-threatening emergency

Do You Suspect a Child is Being Abused or Neglected?

The Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline accepts all reports of suspected child abuse and neglect for the state of Tennessee. The Tennessee Child Abuse Hotline is open 365 days a year, 24 hours a day and 7 days a week.

Call the Child Abuse Hotline

1-877-237-0004

Or in non-emergency situations use the online form
<https://apps.tn.gov/carat/>

- Our trained case managers will guide Hotline callers through a series of questions.
- Callers do not have to know all the details of the abuse or neglect.
- The Hotline case managers use the information you provide to determine the severity of the situation and how best to intervene.

Learn More

Visit the DCS website at tn.gov/dcs to learn more about keeping children safe.



Flu:

A Guide for Parents



Influenza (flu) is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat and lungs. Flu is different from a cold and usually comes on suddenly. Each year flu causes millions of illnesses, hundreds of thousands of hospitalizations, and tens of thousands of deaths in the United States.

Flu can be very dangerous for children. CDC estimates that between 2010 - 2020, between 6,000 and 27,000 children younger than 5 years old have been hospitalized from flu each year in the U.S. Flu vaccine is safe and helps protect children from flu.

What parents should know

How serious is flu?

While flu illness can vary from mild to severe, children often need medical care because of flu. Children younger than 5 years old and children of any age with certain long-term health problems are at increased risk of flu complications like pneumonia, bronchitis, sinus and ear infections. Some health problems that are known to make children more vulnerable to flu include asthma, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system.

How does flu spread?

Flu viruses are thought to spread mainly by droplets made when someone with flu coughs, sneezes or talks. These droplets can land in the mouths or noses of people nearby. A person also can get flu by touching something that has flu virus on it and then touching their mouth, eyes, or nose.

What are flu symptoms?

Flu symptoms can include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills, feeling tired and sometimes vomiting and diarrhea (more common in children than adults). Some people with flu will not have a fever.

Protect your child

How can I protect my child from flu?

The first and best way to protect against flu is to get a yearly flu vaccine for yourself and your child.

- Flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months and older every year. Flu shots and nasal spray flu vaccines are both options for most children.
- It's especially important that young children and children with certain long-term health problems get vaccinated.
- Caregivers of children at higher risk of flu complications should get a flu vaccine. (Babies younger than 6 months are at higher risk for serious flu complications, but too young to get a flu vaccine.)
- Pregnant people should get a flu vaccine to protect themselves and their baby from flu. Research shows that flu vaccination during pregnancy can protect the baby from flu for several months after birth.
- Flu viruses are constantly changing so flu vaccines are updated often to protect against the flu viruses that research indicates are most likely to cause illness during the upcoming flu season.

Are flu vaccines safe?

Flu vaccines have an excellent safety record. Millions of people have safely received flu vaccines for decades. Flu shots and nasal spray flu vaccines are both options for vaccination. Different types of flu vaccines are licensed for different ages. Each person should get one that is appropriate for their age. CDC and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend an annual flu vaccine for all children 6 months and older.

What are the benefits of getting a flu vaccine?

- **A flu vaccine can keep you and your child from getting sick.** When vaccine viruses and circulating viruses are matched, flu vaccination has been shown to reduce risk of getting sick with flu by about 40 to 60%.
- **Flu vaccines can keep your child from being hospitalized for flu in the pediatric intensive care unit.** One recent study showed that flu vaccine reduced children's risk of flu-related pediatric intensive care unit admission by 74%.
- **Flu vaccine can be life saving in children.** A study using data from recent flu seasons found that flu vaccine reduced the risk of flu-associated death by half among children with higher risk medical conditions



- and by nearly two-thirds among children without medical conditions.
- Flu vaccination also may make your illness milder if you do get sick.
- Getting yourself and your child vaccinated also can protect others who may be more vulnerable to serious flu illness, like babies and young children, older people, and people with certain long-term health problems.

What are some other ways I can protect my child against flu?

In addition to getting a flu vaccine, you and your child should take everyday actions to help prevent the spread of germs. Stay away from people who are sick as much as possible to keep from getting sick yourself. If you or your child are sick, avoid others as much as possible to keep from infecting them. Also, remember to regularly cover your coughs and sneezes, wash your hands often, avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth, and clean surfaces that may be contaminated with flu viruses. These everyday actions can help reduce your chances of getting sick and prevent the spread of germs to others if you are sick. However, a yearly flu vaccine is the best way to prevent flu illness.

If your child is sick

What can I do if my child gets sick?

Talk to your doctor early if you are worried about your child's illness.

Make sure your child gets plenty of rest and drinks enough fluids.

If your child is 5 years or older and does not have a long-term health problem and gets flu symptoms, including a fever and/or cough, consult your doctor as needed.

Children younger than 5 years old – especially those younger than 2 years – and children of any age with certain long-term health problems (including asthma or any lung disease, heart disease, diabetes and disorders of the brain or nervous system), are at higher risk of serious flu complications. Because children at higher risk of serious flu complications can benefit from early antiviral treatment of flu, parents of such children should contact their child's doctor if they develop flu symptoms.

What if my child seems very sick?

Even healthy children can get very sick from flu. If your child is experiencing the following emergency warning signs, you should go to the emergency room:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish lips or face
- Ribs pulling in with each breath
- Chest pain

- Severe muscle pain (child refuses to walk)
- Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours, dry mouth, no tears when crying)
- Not alert or interacting when awake
- Seizures
- Fever above 104°F
- In children less than 12 weeks, any fever
- Fever or cough that improve but then return or worsen
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions



This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptom that is severe or concerning.

Is there a medicine to treat flu?

Yes. Antiviral drugs are prescription medicines that can be used to treat flu illness. They can shorten your illness and make it milder, and they can prevent serious complications that could result in a hospital stay. Antivirals work best when started during the first two days of illness. Antiviral drugs are recommended to treat flu in people who are very sick (for example, people who are in the hospital) or people who are at higher risk of serious flu complications who get flu symptoms. Antivirals can be given to most children and pregnant people.

How long can a sick person spread flu to others?

People with flu may be able to infect others from one day before getting sick to up to five to seven days after. Severely ill people or young children may be able to spread the flu longer, especially if they still have symptoms.

Can my child go to school, day care, or camp if he or she is sick?

No. Your child should stay home to rest and to avoid spreading flu to other children or caregivers.

When can my child go back to school after having flu?

Keep your child home from school, day care, or camp for at least 24 hours after their fever is gone. (The fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) A fever is defined as 100°F (37.8°C)* or higher.

*Many authorities use either 100 (37.8 degrees Celsius) or 100.4 F (38.0 degrees Celsius) as a cut-off for fever, but this number can vary depending on factors such as the method of measurement and the age of the person.

For more information, visit

www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/children.htm or call 800-CDC-INFO



U.S. Department of
Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention

SUMMARY OF LICENSING REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE AGENCIES

This summary is a guide for parents of children in licensed child care agencies and it outlines some of the requirements child care agencies must meet in order to be licensed. The purpose of licensing is the protection of children while under the care of child care agencies licensed by the Department of Human Services and to promote developmentally appropriate practices that enhance early learning and foster parental engagement. The Department of Human Services licenses child care agencies with five (5) or more unrelated children operating for three (3) or more hours per day unless exempt. Questions about these requirements or concerns about an agency's compliance should be referred to the local DHS office. This summary does not contain all of the requirements for licensed child care agencies detailed in the Department's child care law and rules; therefore, you may ask your agency for the complete set of licensure rules for child care agencies or you can access the rules through the Department's website

Ownership, Organization, and Administration

- General liability, automobile liability and medical payment insurance coverage shall be maintained on the operations of the child care agency's facilities and vehicles.
- Enrollment of children less than six (6) weeks of age is prohibited.
- Children shall not be in care for more than twelve (12) hours in a twenty-four (24) hour period except in special circumstances.
- The agency must maintain written documentation that the parent performed an on- site visit to the agency to review the agency's facility and parent engagement strategies prior to enrolling the child (not required for children of homeless families).
- Child care agencies shall establish a drug testing policy for all staff having direct contact with children.
- A copy of the agency's policies, procedures, and the Department's Summary of Licensing Requirements shall be supplied to the parent upon admission of the child.
- Parents shall be permitted to see the professional credential(s) of staff upon request.
- During operating hours, parents shall be permitted immediate access to their children, unless legal documents prohibit or restrict access.
- Agency shall have ongoing communication with parents/guardians to include curriculum, changes in personnel, changes in policies and/or substantive licensing requirements, and any changes affecting children's routine care, and shall document such communication in writing.
- Child care agencies shall provide information about the benefits of immunizing children against influenza and other communicable diseases each August or September to parents/guardians of all children enrolled in the child care agency and document such communication in writing.
- The licensee and agency staff shall not disclose or knowingly permit the use by other persons, any information concerning a child or family except as required by law.
- The child care agency's current license and quality rating improvement system score shall be posted near the main entrance.
- A written expulsion policy shall be clearly articulated to parents and staff.

Staff

- Family and group home child care agencies must notify parents in advance of the person in charge during primary educator's absence.
- A staff member shall be designated to be in charge of the child care agency in the absence of the primary educator/director and the name of the person shall be communicated to staff. Such person shall be familiar with child care agency policies/procedures.
- Prior to having unsupervised contact with children, new

employees shall receive orientation and pre-service training.

- Substitutes and practicum students providing services for more than 36 hours in a calendar year shall meet background check requirements and have a physical exam prior to beginning duties.
- Volunteers cannot be counted to meet the adult: child ratios and shall never be left alone with children.

Criminal Background Check

- Criminal background checks are required for all staff at least every five (5) years.
- The following persons are required to have a background check no more than ninety (90) days before having access to any child care agency: any person who owns or operates a child care agency; any person who applies to work in a child care agency; any person who will provide substitute services to a child care agency for more than thirty-six (36) hours in a calendar year and who is counted in the adult:child ratio; and any person who is fifteen (15) years of age or older who will reside in a child care agency.

Record Keeping

Each child shall be maintained within the child care agency.

- All records shall be maintained in an organized manner onsite, in a centralized location, or available electronically, and made readily available upon Department request.
- Written plan of action must be endorsed by a physician for a child with life threatening allergies.
- Parent must provide written consent for emergency medical care/treatment.
- Written statement must be on file that lists to whom the child shall be released
- Written transportation agreement between parent and the child care agency regarding daily transportation shall be on file.
- Daily attendance records that include the full name and time in time out for each child shall be maintained on site.
- The child care agency shall obtain individual permission slips signed and dated by the parent for each field trip prior to the activity.
- Each infant, toddler and preschool child shall have a written transition plan for moving from one age group to another.
- The records of any child who is five (5) years old in an agency which lacks approved kindergarten status shall include a signed acknowledgment by the child's parents that recognizes that the child's attendance does not satisfy the mandatory kindergarten prerequisite for the child's enrollment in first grade.

- Children of homeless families and/or children in state custody may receive care for up to sixty (60) days prior to providing documentation of immunizations and well-child examinations.

Incident Reporting

- Incidents, accidents, injuries and signs of illness shall be reported to the parent no later than the child's release on the date of occurrence and documented immediately with specific

information; such information shall be provided to the parent the same day of the incident and filed in the child's record.

□ The child care agency shall notify the Department of all serious incidents the same day of the incident by contacting the Complaint Hotline or submission via the parent portal.

□ Serious incidents involving suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported to the Department of Children's Services.

Duty to Report Child Abuse and Neglect

□ Every operator, owner, licensee, director, primary educator or staff member of, or substitute staff member or volunteer in, a child care agency licensed by the Department of Human Services is individually responsible and required to immediately report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect to either the Department of Children's Services and/or local law enforcement or the judge of the juvenile court in the county of the child's residence, pursuant to T.C.A. §§ 37-1-403 and 37-1-605.

□ All child care agency staff shall receive training annually regarding proper procedures to report child abuse and neglect.

Supervision

□ All areas of the building and grounds shall be visually inspected after closing for the day to ensure no children have been unintentionally left in any part of the facilities.

□ Children shall be released to only the child's parent, or other person authorized by the parent in accordance with child care agency's policies.

□ Child care agencies shall maintain a daily sign-in and sign-out sheet or electronic sign-in or sign-out record that includes each child's printed or typed full name, date, time of entry, time of departure and the name of the individual who brought the child and picked the child up.

□ Educators providing supervision to children during meal and snack times are prohibited from engaging in activities unrelated to mealtime while children are eating.

□ Child care agencies shall develop, follow and post a written mealtime supervision plan.

□ Child care agencies shall develop and follow a written playground supervision plan.

□ During field trips, the adult:child ratios shall be doubled, and attendance shall be checked prior to leaving the child care agency, upon arrival at each destination, at the beginning and end of each activity; upon departing each destination and upon arrival at the child care agency.

□ For family and group homes the adult:child ratio shall be increased by one (1) during field trips.

□ When children are engaged in activities in or near a body of water, the following requirements shall be met:

Age Group	Adult:Child Ratio
6 weeks–12 months	1:1
13 months – 35months	1:2
Three (3) years	1:3
Four (4) years	1:4
Five (5) years	1:5
School-age (Kindergarten and above)	1:10

□ One (1) adult present shall have a current certificate in advanced aquatics lifesaving skills and shall supervise above the level of the swimmers.

□ Safe sleep practices must be followed to prevent suffocation and deaths in infants:

- Infants shall sleep in cribs or play yards with a firm sleep surface with a fitted sheet.
- Infants shall not sleep on a sofa, soft mattress, adult bed, in a car seat, swing or other restraining devices.
- Infants shall be positioned on their backs for sleeping. Bibs shall be removed prior to placing infants in a crib for sleeping.

- Soft bedding, mobiles and other toys that attach to any part of the crib are prohibited.
- Infants that arrive asleep in car seats or fall asleep in any piece of equipment other than a crib must be immediately removed and placed on their back in a crib.
- Avoid letting the infant overheat and ensure infants are dressed appropriately for the environment (no greater than 1 layer more than an adult would wear in the same environment).

□ Any practice that is an exception to the Department's safe sleep supervision procedures shall not be used without written authorization from a physician.

□ If there is a sleeping or resting child during nighttime, there shall be at least one (1) adult educator awake and supervising.

Health and Safety

□ Children shall be checked upon arrival each day for signs of illness and injury.

□ The receiving educator shall document any obvious marks or injuries and shall note any comments from the parents pertaining to the marks or injuries.

□ A child showing signs of illness shall be cared for apart from other children to the extent that supervision can be maintained for all children, and the parent shall be contacted and arrangements made for pick up.

□ At least one staff with certification in first aid and one certified in CPR shall be present on site at all times.

□ A child diagnosed with a communicable disease shall have proof of treatment prior to readmission if necessary.

□ Parents/guardians of every child enrolled shall be notified immediately if a diagnosed communicable disease has been identified in the agency.

□ All medications shall be received from the parent by a designated staff person and administered by staff persons who have received training in medication administration.

□ Unused medication shall be returned to the parent.

□ Medication shall never be administered in bottles or infant feeders unless authorized by a physician.

□ All medications shall be inaccessible to children unless a physician's authorization for the current school year is on file that allows a school-age child to have self-administered medication.

□ Diaper cream, ointments, sunscreens and lotions shall be inaccessible to children.

□ Smoking/vaping is not permitted in any indoor area or vehicle of the child care agency at any time.

□ Smoking/vaping is not permitted on the playground or in any outdoor area accessible to children during the time children are present.

□ The use of alcoholic beverages is not permitted in a child care agency during the hours of operation.

□ Firearms shall not be on the premises of a child care agency, in any vehicle used to transport children or in the presence of a child.

□ In a private residence, firearms shall be locked and unloaded with ammunition locked up separately.

□ All items labeled "keep out of reach of children" shall be inaccessible to children.

□ Personal belongings of residents and staff shall be inaccessible to children.

□ Children's diapers shall be checked regularly throughout the day to determine if they are wet or soiled.

□ Educators shall provide rich social interchanges and engaging eye contact during diapering.

□ Educators shall utilize sanitary diapering procedures.

□ Pre-school and school-age children requiring assistance with toileting, shall receive assistance in a location designated for

that purpose which provides privacy.

Child care agencies shall use U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)- registered products for cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting.

Staff members with signs of a communicable disease shall not be present.

Food and Food Service

Educators and children shall wash their hands with soap and water.

Children shall be seated at tables and chairs of appropriate size, and an educator shall be near any table or high chair where a child is eating.

An infant shall be held while drinking from a bottle if the infant is too young to use a high chair.

Educators shall ensure that infants have completed feeding and swallowed all milk/formula prior to being laid down.

Bottles shall not be propped or given to a child while lying flat.

Children shall not be permitted to carry a bottle with them throughout the day.

Children shall not have food or drink while in beds, cots, cribs or on mats.

In order to prevent injuries related to bottle warmers, crock pots and microwaves:

Crock pots are prohibited for use as bottle warmers.

Crock pots shall be kept in kitchen and inaccessible.

Microwave ovens and surrounding area, including cords, shall not be accessible to children.

School-age children shall use microwaves only under direct supervision.

In order to prevent choking:

Solid foods, including cereal, shall not be given to children with normal eating abilities in bottles or infant feeders unless written authorization on file from doctor.

Food shall not be accessible/served until cut, chopped, diced, mashed for each child's age, chewing and swallowing ability.

Educators shall check to ensure that no food is left in the mouth of a child prior to placing down for sleep.

Educator is prohibited from performing classroom duties unrelated to food service during mealtime.

Children shall not wear teething necklaces, pacifiers, or any item around their neck or attached to their clothing.

Breast milk/formula remaining in bottles after feeding shall be disposed of in accordance with timeframes recommended by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Frozen breast milk shall be labeled with date expressed and name of child.

Food, formula, milk or breast milk brought from home shall be labeled with the child's name; the date received and shall be refrigerated immediately.

Previously opened baby food jars shall not be accepted in the child care agency.

If food is fed directly from the jar by the educator, the jar shall be used for only one feeding and discarded.

Food provided by the agency shall be in accordance with the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) nutritional guidelines.

No sugar sweetened beverages shall be served to children at any time by the child care agency.

Children shall be given adequate time to eat.

Food shall not be used as a reward and should not be forced or withheld.

Each child's food allergies shall be posted where food is prepared and served.

For a child with life threatening allergies, a written plan of action should be posted where the educator has immediate

access.

Agency shall make accommodations that support and facilitate a family's decision to continue breast feeding.

Home preserved food and raw milk are prohibited.

Equipment for Children

Developmentally appropriate equipment and furnishings shall be available for each age group.

All indoor and outdoor large and heavy equipment, appliances and furnishings shall be secured to prevent falling or tipping over.

Electrical cords and cords on window blinds or curtains shall be inaccessible to children.

Indoor equipment, materials, and toys shall be available to provide a variety of developmentally appropriate activities so that each child has at least two (2) choices during play time.

In infant/toddler rooms, equipment and a safe space shall be provided for climbing, crawling, pulling up and exploring without the use of confining equipment.

Trampolines are prohibited.

Climbers, swings and other heavy equipment that could cause injury if toppled shall be securely anchored.

Climbers and swings shall have a protective fall zone surface recognized by CPSC as a shock absorbing, resilient material.

Portable equipment shall be securely anchored or rendered immobile if required by manufacturer.

A quiet rest area and cots or mats shall be available for all children who want to rest or nap.

For health and safety reasons each crib, cot, bed or mat shall be labeled to assure that each child naps on his/her own bedding.

Cribs and play yards must comply with CPSC requirements.

Mattresses and foam pads shall fit the crib without any gaps or spaces to prevent suffocation.

A blanket or covering shall be available to each child sleeping on a mat.

Program, Language and Literacy Development

Every child should have an opportunity to participate in program activities.

The educator(s) shall give individual attention to each child throughout the day.

Upon arrival, infants and toddlers shall be removed from car seats immediately.

Child shall never be left unattended in any restraining device and shall not be kept in any restraining device longer than fifteen (15) minutes, except when eating while in a high chair.

The use of electronic media and other electronic devices is prohibited for children less than two (2) years of age.

Programs, movies, computer games, and music with violent or adult content shall not be permitted in children's presence.

Child care agencies shall inform parents in writing of any scheduled media program viewing.

Other activity choices shall be available to children who do not wish to participate in media time.

Children of all ages who are in care more than three (3) daylight hours shall have a daily opportunity for outdoor play.

Weather permitting, infants shall be taken outside two to three times per day.

Children shall be properly dressed, and the length of time outside adjusted according to weather and age of the child.

During outdoor play educators shall be alert for signs of weather-related distress such as dehydration and frostbite.

Children in care for six (6) hours or more shall have an opportunity for a reclining rest period.

No child shall be forced to lie down/nap or stay on a cot/mat for an extended period.

Nap areas shall have adequate lighting to allow the educator to

see each child with a quick glance and respond appropriately to the child's physical and emotional needs.

- If music is played in areas where children sleep, it should be soothing and soft enough so children can be heard.
- Potentially shaming, humiliating, frightening, verbally abusive, injurious discipline methods, and/or techniques that isolate children are prohibited.
- Discipline shall not be related to food, rest, or toileting.
- Food shall not be used or withheld as a form of discipline. Active play opportunities shall not be withheld from children who have misbehaved.
- Spanking and all types of corporal punishment are prohibited.
- Toilet learning shall be done in cooperation with parents, and communication with parents maintained during the process.
- Activities shall be intentionally planned based upon the developmental age of the child.
- Infants, less than six (6) months of age shall have direct supervised tummy time every day when they are awake.
- During floor time/tummy time, the floor shall be clean and safe.
- Infants should be placed on a firm, safe surface for tummy time, with no soft materials placed under or around the infant during tummy time.
- If the infant falls asleep during tummy time, educators shall immediately place the infant in a crib on their back and follow all safe sleep procedures.
- For ages three (3) though school-age, a personal safety curriculum shall be provided annually.
- For school-age children the curriculum shall include instruction on reporting physical, sexual or verbal abuse.
- Parents shall be consulted in developing a plan to meet the individual needs of a child with special needs.

Physical Facilities

- All facilities shall annually pass an inspection verifying compliance with all applicable state and local fire and environmental requirements.
- At least one (1) working telephone shall be available at the agency and the telephone number made available to parents.
- Outdoor play areas shall contain a minimum of fifty (50) square feet of usable play space for each child using the area at one time.
- The outdoor play area shall be enclosed by fence or barrier at least four (4) feet in height.
- Pre-play inspection of outdoor play area shall be completed prior to each use.
- Sandboxes must be covered when not in use.
- Children shall not be present if an adequate water supply is not available.
- Children shall not be present if the sewage system is not operating.
- All rooms used by children shall be maintained at a temperature of between 68 to 78 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Children shall not be present if indoor temperature cannot be maintained between 68 to 78 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Unvented fuel burning heaters and portable heaters are prohibited.
- Swimming pools shall be made inaccessible to children by use of fences and locked gates.
- Swimming is prohibited in drop-in care.
- Swimming pools and/or wading pools shall not be used without prior approval by the Health Department.
- Animals shall be in good health and immunized; free of fleas/ticks; kept away from food storage/ preparation areas and contained in a way that does not allow unsupervised access.
- Reptiles and amphibians shall not be kept as pets.

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Transportation

- Child care agencies shall not transport children without prior written approval by the Department.
- Agencies shall conduct vehicle emergency evacuation drills quarterly.
- Use of cell phones and texting is prohibited while driving.
- Routine transportation is limited to forty-five (45) minutes each way (does not apply to field trips for school-agers).
- Agencies shall maintain documentation of daily inspections and necessary repairs
- The interior temperature of the vehicle shall be monitored during extreme weather to ensure child safety.
- An adult must be in the vehicle whenever a child is in the vehicle.
- A passenger log with the first and last name of each child shall be used to track the loading and unloading of children during transport.
- If the child was loaded from home, the parent or other authorized person will additionally sign the log indicating that the child was placed on the vehicle.
- The log shall be updated as children are released from the vehicle.
- When the child is released to a parent or other authorized person, that person must sign the log indicating the release of that child to them.
- Immediately upon unloading the last child the driver must walk through the vehicle to confirm that all the children are off the vehicle.
- A staff person designated as reviewer shall walk through the vehicle to confirm that all the children are off the vehicle. The reviewer shall have no other responsibilities during the walk through of the vehicle.
- Family and group homes with a single educator shall develop a Department approved alternative system for ensuring all children are off the vehicle.
- When children are transported to school, they shall be unloaded only at the location designated by the school and only at the time the school is officially open with staff present to receive them.
- Drivers must submit to an annual health examination and pass a drug screening test.
- Drivers and monitors shall hold current certification in CPR and First Aid.
- The following equipment shall be maintained in the vehicle and stored in a manner which is not readily accessible to children: fire extinguisher, emergency reflective triangles; first aid kit; seat-belt cutter or similar device manufactured and designed to immediately release the vehicle's child restraint system(s) in an emergency; blood borne pathogenic clean-up kit; and working flashlight.
- All vehicles utilized by a child care agency which are designed to carry ten (10) or more passengers shall conform to all Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards for school buses.
- All child care vehicles designed by the vehicle manufacturer to carry ten (10) or more passengers shall be inspected as required by the Department.
- Child passenger restraints must be used in accordance with state law and federal law.
- Signage that includes the agency name, phone number and the Department's toll-free Child Care Complaint phone number must be on child care vehicles.

Emergency Preparedness

- The agency, in consultation with appropriate local authorities and local emergency management, shall develop a written multi-hazard plan to protect children in the event of emergencies.
- All child care agencies shall also inform parents and guardians

of children attending the child care agency of the plan.

Specific Requirements For Family Child Care Homes

- Adult:Child ratios shall be maintained at all times.
- Licensed capacity shall not be exceeded.

Family Child Care Home Ratios and Group Size Chart

Maximum Number of Children and Ages (Including children "related" to the primary educator under nine (9) years of age) Seven (7) or fewer children; and no more than four (4)	Educators Required
under two (2) years	1
Seven (7) or fewer children; and five (5) or more under two (2) years	2
More than seven (7) children; and no more than four (4) under two (2) years	2
More than seven (7) children; and five (5) or more under two (2) years	3

- A qualified educator shall be on site any time the primary educator is not on site during child care operating hours.
- The maximum number of children present inside a physical space shall be determined by minimum square footage requirements.

- If the number of children exceeds seven (7) at one time or care is provided in one room of the home, the area shall provide thirty (30) square feet per child of usable play space.

Specific Requirements For Group Child Care Homes

- Adult:Child ratios shall be maintained at all times.
- The maximum number of children present shall not exceed twelve (12). Exception: Three (3) additional school-age children may be in care before/after school, school holidays/snow days and during summer vacation.

Group Home Ratio and Group Size Chart:

Number of Children	Ages of Children	Educators Required
Twelve (12) – Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age)	No more than twelve (12) children three (3) years of age or older	1
Twelve (12) – Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age)	Up to nine (9) children under three (3) years of age; and no more than four (4) present under two (2) years of age	2
Twelve (12) – Fifteen (15) (any number over twelve (12) must be school-age)	Ten (10) or more under three (3) years of age	3

- If school-age children are enrolled, a school-age program shall be provided. If four (4) or more infants/toddlers attend, they shall have a separate and distinct space and their own educator. When children are sleeping or resting, there shall be at least one (1) adult awake and supervising and adult to child ratios shall be maintained. Primary educators shall have a high school diploma or equivalent. Owners who are employed elsewhere shall ensure that the primary educator is always on-site. The primary educator shall not be employed at any other job during the hours of operation unless the Department has approved the primary educator's employment in a program sponsored or recognized by the Department. A qualified educator shall be on-site any time that the primary educator is not on-site during child care operating hours. A minimum of thirty (30) square feet of useable indoor play space shall be provided for each child. The maximum number of children who may be present inside a physical space shall be determined in accordance with the minimum square footage requirements.
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Specific Requirements For Child Care Centers

- Adult: child ratios must be maintained at all times.
- When more than twelve (12) children are present a second adult must be physically available on the premises.

Child Care Ratio and Group Size Charts

Age of Children	Adult:Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
6 weeks – 15 months	1:4	8
12 months – 30 months	1:6	12
24 months – 35 months	1:7	14
3 years	1:9	18
4 years	1:13	20
5 years	1:16	20
School-age (Kindergarten and above)	1:20	No max

Age of Children	Adult: Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
6 weeks – 30 months	1:5	10
2 years – 4 years	1:8	16
2 ½ years – 3 years	1:9	18
2 ½ years – 5 years	1:11	20
2 ½ years – 12 years	1:10	10
3 years – 5 years	1:13	22
4 years – 5 years	1:16	24
5 years – 12 years	1:20	No max

Ratio Chart first/last hour and one-half (½) of each day only:

Age of Children	Adult: Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
2 ½ years – 5 years	1:10	10
3 years – 12 years	1:15	15
4 years – 12 years	1:20	20

- Each child must be on roll in a defined group and assigned to that group with a specific educator(s).
- Infants shall have a separate space and shall never be grouped with children older than thirty (30) months of age.
- Children shall not be promoted to a new group until required based upon the age and developmental needs of the child.
- Groups, excluding infants & toddlers, may be combined for short periods for a special activity no more than sixty (60) minutes per day as long as adult:child ratios are met.
- Each group shall have a designated classroom with enough space for the entire group.
- Child care centers shall provide written lesson plans for each group of children.
- When more than twelve (12) children in first grade and above are present, a separate educator, group, space and program shall be provided for them.
- The maximum number of children who may be present inside a physical space shall be determined in accordance with the minimum square footage requirements.
- A minimum of thirty (30) square feet of useable indoor play space shall be provided for each child.
- Each nap room shall contain a minimum of thirty (30) square feet of floor space per child.
- In an infant or toddler room with more than one educator, each educator shall be responsible for providing consistent care for a specific infant(s)/toddler(s) which includes but is not limited to: planning and record- keeping, communication, etc.
- Following the issuance of a license, a child care center may operate without an on-site director for a period of not more than sixty (60) days total within the licensing year.

Specific Requirements For Drop-In Child Care Centers

- Before accepting a child for care, the parent shall provide a statement regarding the estimated amount of time that the parent anticipates that the child will be in attendance.
- The child care agency shall familiarize staff with personal safety material and be prepared to discuss them with parents.
- The drop-in center shall have an on-site director and the director shall be at least twenty-one (21) years of age.
- The director shall have earned a high school diploma or its equivalent and one (1) year of full-time work experience with children in a group setting.
- Each educator who is used to meet the minimum required adult:child ratio shall have a high school diploma.
- Children shall be placed in age appropriate groups and with adequate adult educator supervision:

Age Grouping:

Age of Children	Adult:Child Ratio
Six (6) weeks – Fifteen (15) months	1:4
Twelve (12) months – Thirty (30) month	1:8
Two (2) years	1:12
Three (3) years	1:15
Four (4) years	1:18
Five (5) years (not in Kindergarten)	1:20
School-age (Kindergarten and above)	1:22

- The adult:child ratio for a multi-age group containing infants:

Majority Age of Children Present	One Infant	Two Infants
12 months – 30 months	1:8	1:6
2 years	1:10	1:8
3 years	1:12	1:10
4 years	1:15	1:12
5 years (not in Kindergarten)	1:17	1:13
School-age (Kindergarten and above)	1:19	1:15

- If food is provided by the agency, it shall meet the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program nutritional guidelines.
- The maximum number of children who may be present inside a physical space shall be determined in accordance with the minimum square footage requirements.
- A minimum of thirty (30) square feet of useable indoor play space shall be provided for each child.
- Each nap room shall contain a minimum of thirty (30) square feet of floor space per child.
- Staff shall have documentation of all children's allergies and how to deal with any allergic reaction.
- Staff shall review emergency preparedness and fire procedures and shall physically walk through the evacuation process every quarter.
- Prohibited activities include swimming, transportation and the provision of specialized services.

Tennessee Department of Human Services ChildCare Services website is located here:

[Child Care Services \(tn.gov\)](http://Child Care Services (tn.gov))

A wealth of child care information can be found on the Department's website.

You can:

- Learn more about the rules
- Learn more about the types of regulated care
- Locate a child care provider
- Learn more about the Quality Rating and Improvement System (formerly Report Card and Star Quality Program)
- Locate the local child care licensing office
- Review the current personal safety curriculum
- Read about new initiatives in child care
- Locate the nearest child care certificate office
- Find info on choosing child care
- Locate a child care resource and referral center

And much more!

Child Care Resource and Referral Centers

The Tennessee Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) Network has 9 CCR&R sites located across the state. Each CCR&R employs a team of highly qualified coaches who provide training and coaching to DHS licensed child care educators in their area. CCR&Rs also provide valuable resources to parents looking for quality child care. For more information visit the Child Care Services website or tnccrr.org

kidcentral TN

Information about child health, education, and development as well as available state services can be found at:
[https://www.kidcentraltn.com/](http://www.kidcentraltn.com)

Department of Children's Services Hotline

Report Child Abuse or Neglect
1-877-237-0004

Child Care Complaint Hotline

Nashville Area: (615) 313-4820
Toll Free: 1-800-462-8261

If you have a concern about an existing child care agency or wish to report an illegal operation, call the Department's complaint hotline.

Monthly Calendar

2025

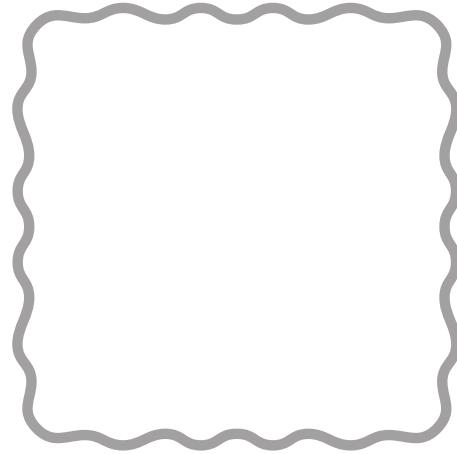
AUGUST

08

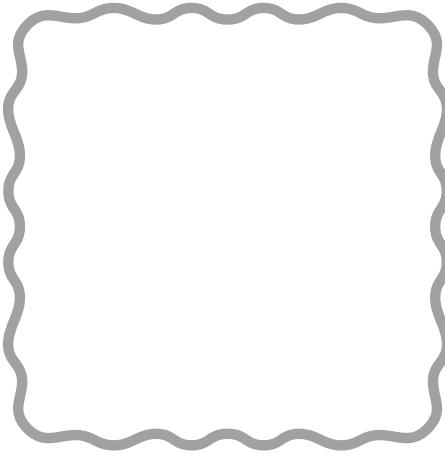
MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5 Policy Council 6 PM	6	7	8	9
10	11 Children's 1 st Day	12 Board Meeting 6 PM	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

NOTES



TO DO



2025

SEPTEMBER 09

MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Labor Day Closed	2 Policy Council 6 PM	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 In-Service No Children	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

NOTES

**September is 1st Parent
Meeting Month!**

Each center will hold parent meetings, center elections, and County Policy Council elections. Be on the lookout for flyers with more information and meeting dates!

TO DO

2025

OCTOBER

10

MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Policy Council Training 11 AM	7 Policy Council 6 PM	8	9	10	11
12	13 Board Training/Meeting 5 PM	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Fall Fun Day	

NOTES

October is
Open House Month!
Each center will host an
Open House this month from
1-3. Watch for notifications
with more details
—we hope to see you there!

OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

- 01 Gainesboro
- 02 Red Boiling Springs
- 03 Livingston
- 06 Clarkrange
- 07 Pinewood
- 08 Jamestown
- 09 Shiloh
- 10 Smith County
- 13 Algood
- 14 Brookside
- 15 Celina
- 16 Midway
- 17 Byrdstown
- 20 Crossville
- 21 Lafayette
- 22 Monterey
- 23 Bondecroft
- 24 Smithville
- 27 Sparta
- 28 South Cookeville

2025

NOVEMBER

11

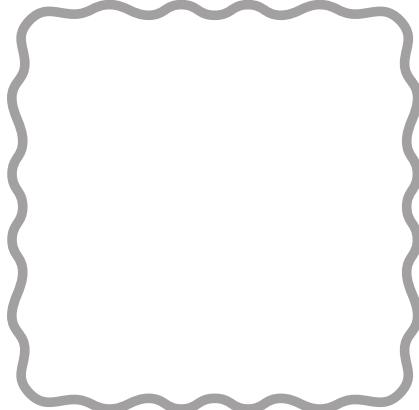
MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3 In-Service No Children	4 Policy Council 6 PM	5 Grandparent Breakfast 8:30 AM	6	7	8
9	10	11 Veterans Day Closed	12	13 Muffins With Moms 8:30 AM	14	15
16	17	18	19 H/MH Advisory 1:00 PM	20 PFCE Advisory 1:00 PM	21	22
23	24	25 Family Meal 11 AM	26 CLOSED	27 CLOSED	28 CLOSED	29
30						

NOTES



TO DO



2025

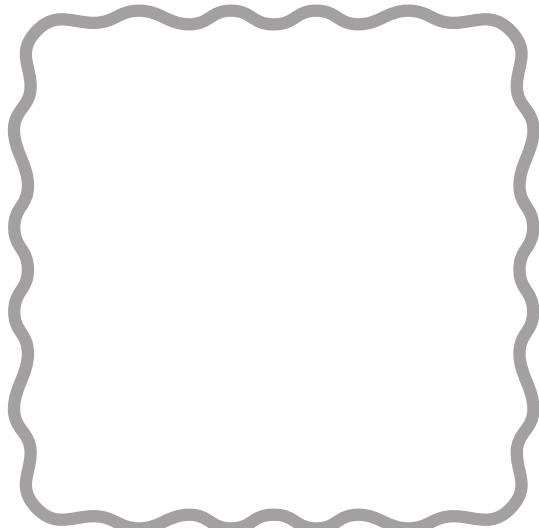
DECEMBER

12

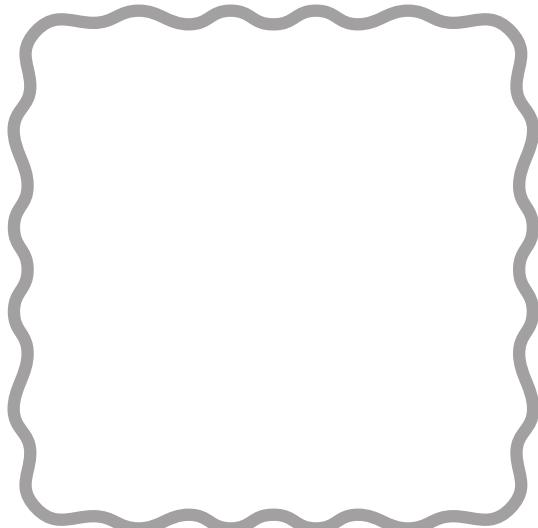
MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2 Policy Council 6 PM	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 Board Meeting 6 PM	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18 Family Breakfast 9 AM	19 CLOSED	20
21	22 CLOSED	23 CLOSED	24 CLOSED	25 CLOSED	26 CLOSED	27
28	29 CLOSED	30 CLOSED	31 CLOSED			

NOTES



TO DO



2026

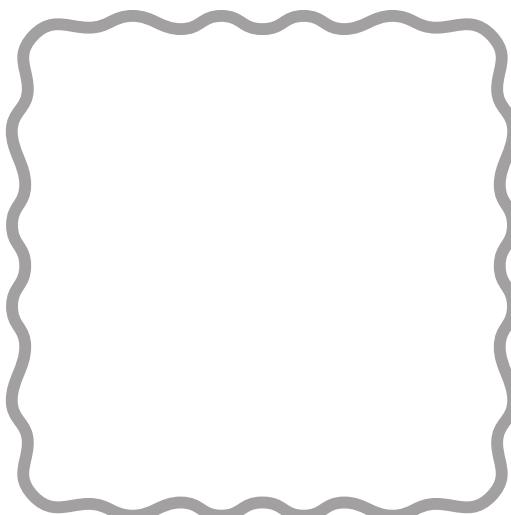
JANUARY

01

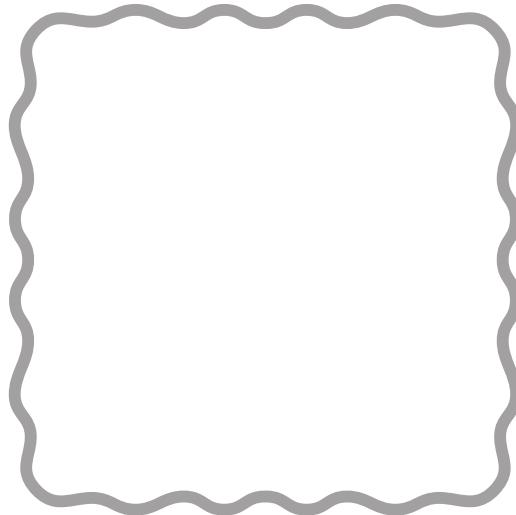
MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 New Year's Closed	2 In-Service No Children	3
4	5 In-Service No Children	6 Children Return	7	8	9 Father/Male Role Breakfast 8:30 AM	10
11	12	13	14 H/MH Advisory 1:00 PM	15	16	17
18	19 MLK Closed	20	21	22 PFCE Advisory 1:00 PM	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

NOTES



TO DO



2026

FEBRUARY

02

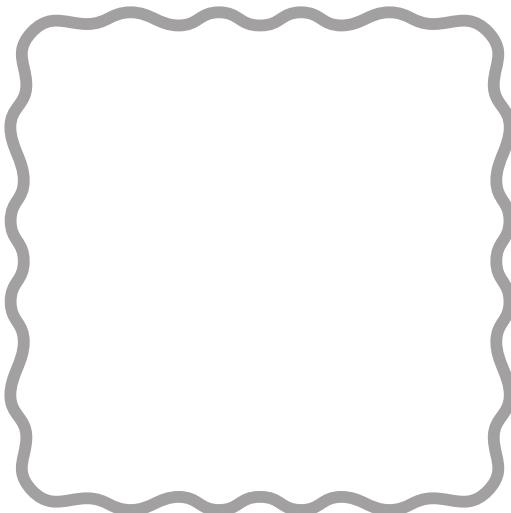
MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Policy Council 6 PM	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Board Meeting 6 PM	11	12	13 Sweetheart Breakfast 8:30 AM	14
15	16 Presidents Day Closed	17	18	19	20 In-Service No Children	21
22	23	24	25	26	27 Muffins with Mom 8:30 AM	28

NOTES



TO DO



2026

MARCH

03

MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 Policy Council 6 PM	4	5	6 Father/Male Role Breakfast 8:30 AM	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

NOTES

TO DO

HEAD START IS CLOSED FOR SPRING BREAK!

SPRING BREAK SCHEDULE

- 9-13 JACKSON / WHITE
- 16-20 CUMBERLAND / OVERTON / PUTNAM / WARREN
- 23-27 CLAY / DEKALB / FENTRESS / SMITH
- 30-3 MACON / PICKETT

2026

APRIL

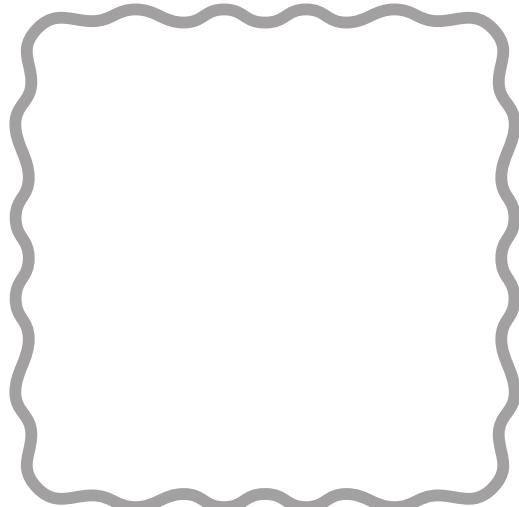
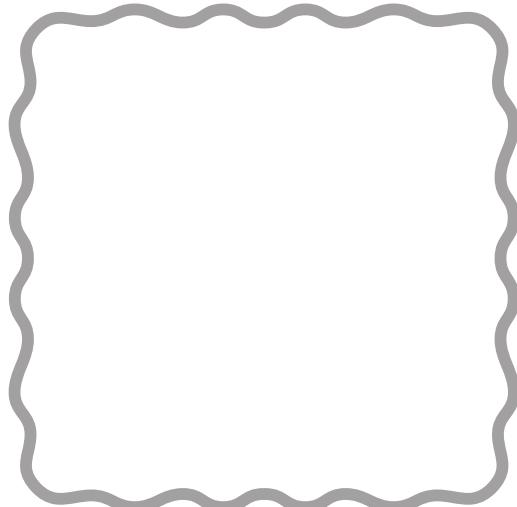
04

MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
			1	2 Family Picnic 11 AM	3 Good Friday Closed	4
5	6	7 Policy Council 6 PM	8	9 PFCE Advisory 1:00 PM	10	11
12	13	14 Board Meeting 6 PM	15 H/MH Advisory 1:00 PM	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24 In-Service No Children	25
26	27	28	29	30		

NOTES

TO DO



2026

MAY

05

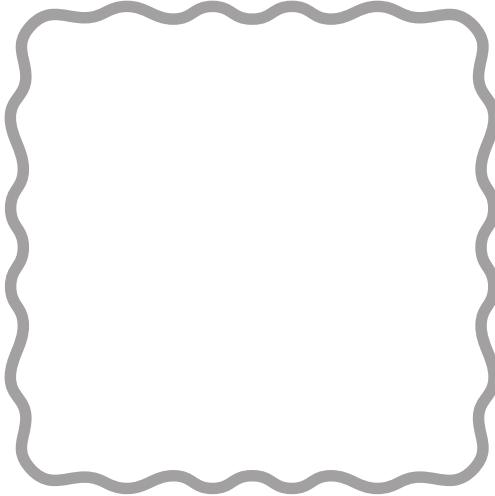
MONTHLY PLANNER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
		POLICY COUNCIL 6:00 P.M.				
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

NOTES



TO DO



L.B.J.&C. Head Start

**Learning with Love,
Growing with Care**

1150 Chocolate Drive
Cookeville, TN 38501
Phone: (931) 528-3361
Website: www.lbjc.org