

GBCA

Head Start/Early Head Start

**FAMILY HANDBOOK**



**LIVES  
CHANGED  
HERE.**

# **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><u>POLICY</u></b>	<b><u>POLICY NO.</u></b>
WELCOME	1
MISSION STATEMENT	2
PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY	3
LICENSING INFORMATION	4
ENROLLMENT	5
CONFIDENTIALITY	6
MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT	7
PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT	8
SWEARING/CURSING	8.1
THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH GREATER BERGEN HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START	8.2
PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN	8.3
SMOKING	8.4
VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY	8.5
CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES, OTHER PARENT OR ASSOCIATES OF GREATER BERGEN COMM. ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START	8.6
VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY	8.7
PROPERTY DAMAGED/VANDALISM AND THEFT	8.8
SEXUAL HARRASMENT	8.9
PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS	9

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

<b><u>POLICY</u></b>	<b><u>POLICY NO.</u></b>
DISMISSAL	10
WITHDRAW	11
COURT ORDERS AFFECTING ENROLLED CHILDREN	12
ARRIVAL PROCEDURES	13
NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE	13.1
AGENCY' S RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION	13.2
PICK UP PROCEDURES	14
LATE DROP OFF	14.1
LATE PICK UP	14.2
PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK UP	14.3
EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK-UP	14.4
TRANSPORTATION	15
EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION	16
CURRICULUM INFORMATION	17
DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES	17.1
CLASS ASSIGNMENTS	17.2
STAFF TO CHILD RATIOS	17.3
REST TIME	17.4
PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES	17.5
TRANSITION CELEBRATION	17.6
BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS	17.7

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

<b><u>POLICY</u></b>	<b><u>POLICY NO.</u></b>
OUTDOOR POLICY	17.8
HOMEWORK POLICY	17.9
DISCIPLINE	18
TOYS FROM HOME	19
DRESS CODE	20
CHILDREN	20.1
PARENTS	20.2
FIELD TRIPS	21
PARENT PARTICIPATION	22
HEALTH AND SAFETY	23
PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS	23.1
CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES	23.2
COMMUNICABLE DISEASES	23.3
BITING	23.4
DISPENSING MEDICATION	23.5
FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS	23.6
ALTERNATE SAFE LOCATION	23.7
INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS	23.8
FOODS AND REST TIME	23.9
PEANUT FREE CENTER	23.10
FIREARMS AND WEAPONS	23.11



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

<b><u>POLICY</u></b>	<b><u>POLICY NO.</u></b>
DIAPERING PROCEDURE	23.12
SAFE SLEEP POLICY	23.13
STAFF EMPLOYMENT BY CLIENT'S POLICY	24
TRANSITION POLICY	25
SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY	26
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES	27
CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW	28
TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA	29
PARENTAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA	29.1
TECHNOLOGY POLICY	29.2
NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS POLICY	30

POLICY: WELCOME

POLICY NO: 1

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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## **To Head Start/Early Head Start!**

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start! We are a division of the Greater Bergen County Community Action Agency (GBCA), which has provided low-income residents from Bergen County/Paterson/Jersey City with comprehensive quality services for over thirty years. GBGA has generally been considered to be one of the leading community action agencies in the State of New Jersey.

Head Start began during President Lyndon Johnson's term and was considered a critical part of his "war on poverty". Head Start initially began in 1965 as an eight week summer program that quickly expanded into a school year program. In the early 1970's federal legislation enhanced the program by requiring parental involvement and also required that 10% of slots be made available to children with disabilities. This legislation also established nationwide performance standards. In 1994, the Secretary of Health and Human services formed an Advisory Committee on services for Families with Infants and Toddlers to design Early Head Start. Recent advances in the field of infant development make this an especially exciting time to have Head Start formally expand its family to include the provision of Early Head Start services.

Greater Bergen Head Start and Early Head Start functions with the active participation of your entire family, so we urge you to attend special events, work one-on-one with your child, participate in parent meetings and Policy Council, and volunteer in our classrooms or kitchen. The more you are involved, the more you and your child will benefit from the program.

In keeping with New Jersey's childcare licensing requirements, we are obliged to provide you, as the parent/guardian of a child enrolled at one of our Centers, with an informational statement included in this booklet. This statement highlights, among other things: your right to visit and observe our centers at any time without having the secure prior permission, the center's obligation to be licensed and to comply with licensing standards, and the obligation of all citizens to report suspected child abuse, neglect, and/or exploitation to the State's Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P).

Please read this statement carefully and, if you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the administration office.

Sincerely,  
Mary Cudina  
Vice President, Head Start/Early Head Start

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: MISSION STATEMENT

POLICY NO: 2

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start provide comprehensive infant, toddler, and child development services to children from low-income families. We are an infant, toddler, and child focused program that embraces the entire family. Head Start and Early Head Start work with the local community to provide services that address child-care and family support issues, which enables the staff to help families become self-sufficient.

"Teaching Children, Reaching Families"

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

POLICY NO: 3

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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The Head Start and Early Head Start Programs are based on the premise that all children share certain needs and those children of low-income families, in particular, can benefit from a comprehensive developmental program to meet those needs. The Head Start and Early Head Start Program approaches are based on the philosophy that:

-A child can benefit most from a comprehensive, interdisciplinary program to foster development and remedy problems as expressed in a broad range of services, and that

-The child's entire family as well as the community must be involved. The program should maximize the strengths and unique experiences of each child. The family, which is perceived as the principal influence on the child's development, must be a direct participant in the program. Local communities are allowed latitude in developing creative program designs so long as there is adherence to the basic goals, objectives and standards of a comprehensive program.



# GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: LICENSING INFORMATION

POLICY NO: 4

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Under provisions of the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (N.J.A.C. 3A:52)*, every licensed child care center in New Jersey must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents and staff this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent and staff member's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL), Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of New Jersey", and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1 (877) 667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention, too.

Our center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the center.



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

Our center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures and the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy.

Our center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our center.

Parents are entitled to review the center's copy of the OOL's Inspection/Violation Reports on the center, which are available soon after every State licensing inspection of our center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are also entitled to review the OOL's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at <https://childcareexplorer.njccis.com/portal/>.

Our center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please talk to us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interest with the center director who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the

## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

New Jersey Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY).

Our center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information call the CPSC at (800) 638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the center or not is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the *State Central Registry Hotline*, toll free at (877) NJ ABUSE/ (877) 652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to [www.state.nj.us/dcf/](http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/).



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: ENROLLMENT

POLICY NO: 5

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Enrollment at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start are open to income eligible children from ages 0-5. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, pregnancy or disability.

Parents can apply for Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start by completing the application and returning it with the proper papers (Income verification, birth certificate, proof of residency, and immunizations records) to the Head Start/Early Head Start enrollment office.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the complete application, immunization records, physicals and dentals, and completed intake appointment with a Family Worker and Nurse. It is required that 10% of our enrollment be open to children with disabilities.

The enrollment application is not meant to serve as a contract guaranteeing service for any duration. Continued enrollment at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start is contingent upon the adherence of the parents to the policies and procedures of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start as outlined in this handbook.

Parents are required to notify Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child (children) being dismissed from the program.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: CONFIDENTIALITY

POLICY NO: 6

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Within Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start who have a "need to know." In order to most appropriately and safely care for your child, confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start strives to protect everyone's right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other health related information of anyone associated with Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start.

Outside of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of a child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Any person who violates the confidentiality policy will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Refer to the policy regarding Parents Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of a child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting). You may be curious or concerned about the other child. Our confidentiality policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

**POLICY: MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED  
CHILD ABUSE AND/ OR NEGLECT**

**POLICY NO: 7**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18**

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Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start are considered mandated reporters under this law.

Employees of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start can not be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfound, provided the report was made in "good faith".

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.
- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands.
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, Etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol.
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time.
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child.



# GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

POLICY NO: 8

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/19

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Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start requires the parents of enrolled children at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start, but is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. **Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on agency property thereafter.** Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of the child when the parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

## 8.1 SWEARING/CURSING:

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on agency property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. This would include verbal abuse by phone as well as offense language in writing. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

## 8.2 THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN, OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START:

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the agency will not assume the risk of a second chance.

**PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

## 8.3 PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN AT GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START:

## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

While Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the childcare facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director.

At that point the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have the right to privacy and by our confidentiality policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

### **8.4 SMOKING:**

For the health of all Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to leaving their cars.

### **8.5 VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY:**

Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not to be inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. Please be particularly mindful of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start entrance procedures. We all like to be polite. However, we need to be careful not to allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may in fact be polite, however that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Center Director/ Head Teacher.

### **8.6 CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES, OTHER PARENT OR ASSOCIATES OF GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START:**



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start or the parents of the children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

### **8.7 VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the confidentiality policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families and employees associated with Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. Any parent who shares any information considered confidential, or pressures employees or other parents for information that is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the confidentiality policy.

### **8.8 PROPERTY DAMAGE/VANDALISM AND THEFT:**

A parent and/or guardian or any other member of the enrolled child's family who damages/vandalizes or defaces school property will be subjected to disciplinary consequences including possibility of expulsion from the program.

In addition, If GBCA determines that a parent and/or guardian or any other member of the enrolled child's family has been involved in property theft and or property damages, these actions may result in police involvement.

### **8.9 SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start program prohibits discrimination of any kind, including sexual harassment. Sexual Harassment is defined as any harassment based on a person's sex, such as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical harassment of a sexual nature, including offensive remarks about a person's gender.

Any person, regardless of their gender, is required to report suspected sexual harassment directly to any Greater Bergen Community Action administrator immediately. Complaints of the harassment will be documented and investigated as soon as possible. All complaints will be maintained as confidential to prevent retaliation while the complaint is being researched and/or resolved.

In addition, Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start prohibits retaliation of any kind against an individual claiming harassment.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

POLICY NO: 9

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for a more liberal interpretation of the order.

**In the absence of a court order** on file with Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon agency property. Due to the parent's right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start can not have a child at the agency when the child's parent is prohibited access. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: DISMISSAL

POLICY NO: 10

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with cause. Ten consecutive absences or many sporadic absences will lead to dismissal from the program. An exception would be absences because of illness, which must be documented.

The Master Teacher or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave agency property immediately in a calm and respectful manner. Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/ or uncooperative while gather their child's belongings upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Education Specialist/Head Teacher if they wish to return to agency property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Education Specialist /Head Teacher and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent.

Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the agency by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: WITHDRAW

POLICY NO: 11

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Two weeks written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason.

The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter agency property without prior permission of the Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Educational Specialist/Head Teacher if they wish to return to agency property following the last day of enrollment at Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start.

Appointments are made at the discretion of the Educational Specialist/Head Teacher and are not a right of the withdrawn child or parent.

Parents of children with disabilities who wish to change their child's days or times of attendance at Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start must submit a request to do so two weeks in advance of the proposed change. All other children are required to be enrolled full-days, five days a week.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

**POLICY: COURT ORDERS AFFECTING  
ENROLLED CHILDREN**

**POLICY NO: 12**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18**

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In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order (example: Custody Order, Restraining Order or Protection from Abuse Order) Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

**In the absence of a court order on file with Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start administration, both parents should be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law.** Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not the other parent to have access to their child, Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the most recently dated court order will be followed.

Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or Restraining Order, Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in effect. Employees of Bergen County Head Start/Early Head Start can not, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated. Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start will report any violations of these orders to the court.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

POLICY NO: 13

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Upon arrival at Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the sign-in sheet located in the classroom. Children are required to be escorted by their parent or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Parents are encouraged to help children put away their outerwear and get settled for the day.

Teachers will receive 2 children in the classroom at one time. All other parents are asked to wait their turn outside the classroom door. This procedure allows us to ensure a safe transition for each of your children.

Families are asked to put any special instructions in writing. Parents with any questions or special concerns are welcome to schedule an appointment with their teacher.

Helpful Hints: Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start discourages parents from sneaking out of the center. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their parent to leave. Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start believes it is best for parents to tell the anxious child upon arrival that after all the child's things are put away, the parent will kiss, hug and say goodbye to the child. This will prepare the child for their departure. The staff member present in the classroom will comfort and assist the child through the anxious time. Parents are asked to leave after saying goodbye. The longer the parent of an anxious child drags out the departure, the more anxiety the child is likely to feel. The professional employees of Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start are available to discuss other options if the child does not settle into the arrival routine after a reasonable period of time.

### 13.1 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents are required to inform the center by 8:15 am if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day. Parents who fail to give proper notice of an absence may result in a phone call from the center, meeting with center staff and/or a home visit.

All children who are enrolled in our program must attend regularly. You are required to maintain an 85% monthly attendance (Maximum 3 days per month excused absence) in order for your child to stay in the program



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

Children are allowed no more than 10 consecutive days absent. If all efforts have been made to reengage the family and the family does not resume attendance then the program must consider that slot vacant. This action is not considered expulsion as described in Policy 1302.16. If you accumulate three (3) unexcused absences you will be notified by phone, letter or home visit. If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center staff not only of the absence, but also alert the health staff to the nature of the illness. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Health Specialist, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality.

Children who are absent for three (3) days or more must return with a physician's note stating that the child is able to return to school, unless you have spoken to the nurse in the course of the absence and she permits your child to return to school. This note must be given to the health staff before the child is admitted back into class.

Parents who know in advance that a child will be late, are required to notify the center by 8:15 am, so as to maintain the appropriate numbers of employees to ensure ratios are met when the child arrives to school.

### **13.2 AGENCY'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start strives to maintain an ample list of substitutes in anticipation of staff absences, however there are times when substitutes are not available, and classrooms need to be closed to maintain compliance with licensing regulations. Refusal will be based on a "first come first served" basis when seeking to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios and/or when closing classrooms.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Staff deems the child too ill to attend.
2. The need to maintain compliance with licensing regulations.
3. Domestic situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start if the child were to be present at the center.
4. Parent's failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
5. Parent's failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: PICK UP PROCEDURES

POLICY NO: 14

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet located in the classroom. An "adult" is interpreted as a person 16 years of age or older. A person 12 years of age will be permitted to sign out a child with a signed letter from the parent.

Teachers will receive 2 families in the classroom at one time. All other parents are asked to wait their turn outside the classroom door. This procedure allows us to ensure a safe transition for each of your children.

Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is solely responsible for supervising their child while on agency premises. The parent **may not** allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms and classrooms and/or playground. Parents are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child and are required to directly exit the building once they have signed their child out of care.

Parents must take home all papers in the child's cubby or school bag each day.

#### 14.1 LATE DROP OFF

Children must be in the classroom by 8:45 a.m. or they are considered late. The Teacher will accept the child at this time, however if the child is dropped off after 8:45 a.m. three times, the parent must meet with the Teacher, Family Worker, and Education Specialist to discuss lateness. **If lateness continues, it will be address in a meeting with the Parent(s), the Head Start/Early Head Start Director and Associate Director of Family Services.**

#### 14.2 LATE PICK UP

Parents are considered late at the Center's closing time. All measurements of time are to be according to the Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start clocks located in each classroom.

If the child is picked up late on three occasions in one school year, regardless of the reasons for the late pick-up the parent must meet with the Education Specialist, Family Worker and Teacher to discuss lateness. A child's services will be terminated should the child continue to be picked up late after the meeting has been held. **It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or an emergency/alternate pick -up person) is available to pick up the child on time.**

Any child remaining at the center one hour after the scheduled center closing time will be referred to the New Jersey Division of Child Protection and Permanency as an abandoned child.

## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

### **14.3 PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK UP**

The staff at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not prevent the agency from denying a custodial parent access to their child if the parent is or appears to be impaired. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick up a child, and appears to the staff of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will contact the child's parents, local police, and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

### **14.4 EMERGENCY/ALTERNATE PICK UP**

At enrollment, parents will be presented with an Emergency/Alternate Pick Up form. Parents must include on this form any and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time or other be asked to pick up their child from Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. In an emergency situation, the child's parents will be called first. If they cannot be reached, staff will call the persons listed on the form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent and the parent is unable to pick up his/her child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for the child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list.

Parents are not required to be listed on the Emergency Contact form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick up their child.

Parents will be asked to determine which persons (if any) on the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up form have the right to act "In Loco Parentis." In Loco Parentis status affords the person picking up the right to discuss confidential information about the child's day including, but not limited to, incident/accident reports and behavior issues. In the absence of this designation, the people on the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up Form are only afforded the right to pick up the child. Staff is not permitted to discuss the child's day with them.

Parents will be asked to list those people to whom they have given Head Start/Early Head Start the authorization to contact as pick up person or the pick up person in the event of an illness,



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

serious accident or center closings. Parents understand that the school will try to contact them using the information supplied by the parents.

**The persons on the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up form will be required to provide a license or another appropriate form of identification with name, address, phone number prior to the agency releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Parents are informed that their child will only be released when this criteria has been met.**

In the event the listed individuals for pick up are not available, the parent will notify the Head Start/Early Head Start Center, in writing or verbally, of alternate plans. Parents will be advised that the newly designated pick up person will be required to provide a license or other appropriate form of identification (when not using a motor vehicle) with name, address, phone number prior to the agency releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Parents are informed that their child will only be released when this criteria has been met.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick Up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Emergency/Alternate Contact Form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Emergency/Alternate form of the policies/procedures contained herein.

Only the number of children who can be accommodated in the appropriate child restraint (based on New Jersey law) will be released to parents or their documented designees. The program will adhere to the Child Car Seat Policy, which is based on the law per The State of New Jersey, Department of Law & Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General, Child Passenger Safety. The Head Start/Early Head Start Programs will strictly enforce the law working in cooperation with local police departments. Parent trainings will help to define and stress the importance of picking up children and properly restraining them in vehicles. Staff and the local police will spot check cars in the program's parking lots. The local police departments will be partners in ensuring children and family safety.

It must be noted that utilizing proper restraint for Head Start/Early Head Start children will be applicable for regular daily and/ or emergency/ alternate pick up.

Please refer to Policy 28. New Jerseys Child Passenger Safety Law



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: TRANSPORTATION

POLICY NO: 15

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start does not currently provide transportation services for any infant, toddler or preschool children enrolled in the program.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

**POLICY: EMERGENCY CLOSING AND  
INCLEMENT WEATHER INFORMATION**

**POLICY NO: 16**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/19**

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In the event of an emergency closing, delayed opening and/or inclement weather closings, parents will be notified of the closing by email and or text alert. Only parents that opt in to receive the messages via email/text will be notified. If you do not opt in to this service, you will not receive notifications. If you want to receive notifications, please see your family worker. You can also check our website; [www.Greaterbergen.org](http://www.Greaterbergen.org) for up-to-date news/events, or follow us on Facebook.

School closing and/or delays will also be broadcast via your local television and/or radio station:

RADIO 108 FM  
RADIO WOR 7.10 AM  
RADIO WV WJ 11.60 AM  
RADIO WINS 10.10 AM

Parents can also contact the school at (201) 884-1050 and press # 4 to listen to school closing and delayed opening information. Please note that a center will be closed when the school district in which the center is located is closed. For example, if the Jersey City Public Schools announce that they are closed, then the Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will be closed as well. If Jersey City Public Schools remain open, then the Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start will remain open as well.

When there has been a Winter Weather Advisory issued by the National Weather Services, on a day when centers are open, designated central office staff members will be responsible for finding out if any of the public school districts are closing early. The decision to close any of our centers comes from the Head Start/Early Head Start Director.

If the Public schools are closing early, the Associate Director for Education and Associate Director of Family Services will call the centers and notify them.

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At the Centers:

1) Teachers and Family Worker will explain to families, when the children are dropped off that we may be closing early and we would like to have a way of getting in contact with them, so they can come and get their child. Families should understand that it is not a guarantee; however it does let them know that closing is a possibility. Some families may choose not to leave their

## GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

child in school, and that is all right as well. **Please ask the parents for an emergency contact number when they sign the children in, in the mornings. That number should be put on the sign in sheet in each classroom.**

2) Education Specialist/Head Teachers, Family Workers, Health, and clerical/center administrative staff should be placing calls to families. **We will leave no child unsupervised and the families' safety comes only after the care we provide for the children.**

3) If bilingual children are left in the center a staff member who is also bilingual must remain with the child - regardless of where the staff member lives.

4) As staff members close the center, they are to get in touch with the Associate Director for Education to let her know that all staff and children have gone home.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick-up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call, of the pick up location should the children need to be evacuated from the childcare center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.



# **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: CURRICULUM INFORMATION

POLICY NO: 17

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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## **17.1 DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES**

Each classroom has the daily schedule posted for children, parents and visitors to see. The schedule will include breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack, outdoor play, circle time, rest time, and free playtime. If you have any question about your child's daily schedule- please speak to your child's teacher.

## **17.2 CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

Your child's assignment is based on a large number of things including age, sex, language, and sibling (if applicable.) We try to place children in classrooms that will help them develop and thrive. If you have any questions about your child's classroom assignment, please speak to the Education Specialist/Head Teacher.

## **17.3 STAFF TO CHILD RATIOS**

Every class is staffed by either an Infant/Toddler Caregiver or Teacher and Teacher Assistant. Some centers may have additional staff members to accommodate the extended hours at the center. In a Head Start classroom, there are no more than 20 children in each class. In an Early Head Start classroom, there are no more than 8 children in each class. We try to limit the class size as much as possible to ensure that each child gets as much individual attention as possible.

## **17.4 REST TIME**

All children are encouraged to rest for a period during the day. Children are given cots or cribs to rest on and must have a sheet and blanket (according to state regulation). This is the responsibility of the Head Start family. Bedding will be sent home every Friday to be washed, and must be returned to school on Monday. Early Head Start families will have sheets and blankets provided for their infant and toddlers. Laundering of the sheets and blankets for the Early Head Start families, will be provided by the center staff. Rest time is at least 1 hour but no more than 2 hours. Children are encouraged to relax for at least a ½ hour. If they are not asleep, they will be able to do quiet activities on their cots (puzzles, books, games, drawing, writing and manipulatives). Infants and toddlers will nap based upon individual need. We try to be responsive to your child's individual needs, especially when it comes to their physical development and rest time is an important part of that. State law requires that you have a sheet and a blanket covering the bed. You must send a blanket and a sheet (a pillow is optional)

## **17.5 PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

## GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start feels that parents are their child's first teacher. We encourage parents to actively take part in their child's educational

experiences here at Head Start/Early Head Start. Parent -Teacher Conferences are only a part of that experience.

There will be several formal Parent-Teacher Conferences each year: fall, winter and spring. We assess children's developmental through observation and by collecting work samples. This is a time for the parent and their child's teacher to exchange thoughts about your child and how they are doing in the class. Together with the teacher you will have the opportunity to set goals for your child's development while they are here at Head Start/Early Head Start. **Please remember no two children are the same. Everyone develops and learns at a different rate. Our job is to provide the appropriate environment that will allow your child to learn and grow at his/her own pace.**

Informal Parent- Teacher Conferences take place on a regular basis, when parents are dropping off and picking up their children and on Home Visits.

If you have a concern or question about your child, please speak to your child's teacher. We are here to provide the best experience possible.

### 17.6 TRANSITION CELEBRATION

If parents want to have a "Transition Celebration" for their children, they need to attend and address the topic during a Parent Committee meeting. **Transition Celebrations are NOT the responsibility of the Parent Committee.** If a transition celebration is planned in conjunction with Head Start/Early Head Start Administration, the Head Start/Early Head Start Director will co-ordinate the activities, and/or food, and/or any other event(s) for the celebration, at the Head Start Director's discretion. The Parent Committee may assist in the planning and implementation of the celebration for the center.

There is to be **NO OUTSIDE FOOD**, other than fruit permitted at these celebrations. The Head Start/Early Head Start Director will determine if the fruit will be provided by parents, the parent committee, or Greater Bergen Community Action. In the event it is determined by the Head Start/Early Head Start Director that fruit will be provided by parents or the parent committee, **a list of ingredients must be submitted two weeks prior to the celebration.** The inclusion of any other type of food and/or beverage will be determined by the Head Start/Early Head Start Director and will be provided by the agency.

Siblings will not be permitted to attend the end of the year celebration.

**Transition ceremonies or any other year end celebration/ ceremonies are not to be considered graduation ceremonies. Therefore, no caps, gowns, diplomas, balloons, gifts, etc., will be permitted. Any and all items brought to and from these events must have prior approval from the Head Start/Early Head Start Director.**



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

We will try to assist you and your child in any way possible to help ease the transition into Head Start, another classroom or Kindergarten. Parents are encouraged to participate in these activities as much as possible. If you have any concerns about your child's transition, please speak with your Family Worker or child's Teacher.

### **17.7 BIRTHDAY/HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT**

Head Start/Early Head Start must meet Federal guidelines in the area of nutrition and the dental health for our students. We adhere to their requirements of reduced fat, sugar, and salt content and strive to offer nutritionally dense food rather than "empty calories" from junk foods. Head Start/Early Head Start also emphasizes reduced sugar content to decrease the incidence of dental cavities in our centers.

Head Start/Early Head Start serves many children and families from various ethnic backgrounds. It is our belief that the celebration and observance of holidays are practiced at home. However, we are committed to providing developmentally appropriate learning experiences of the cultures we serve, so each site celebrates the cultural heritage of each family representative of that site during International Day. In this way all children and their families can be comfortable in the knowledge that their religious beliefs and practices will not be infringed upon or disrespected by the Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

#### **PROCEDURES FOR CELEBRATION**

**If a parent chooses to have their child's Birthday celebration in the classroom, they are required to complete the Birthday/Special Celebration form no less than two weeks prior to the celebration. This form must be returned to the classroom teacher and will be approved by the nurse. Forms will be available your child's center.** Head Start/Early Head Start does not allow goodie bags, balloons, toys, or gifts to be brought in for any celebrations.

- a. In planning the celebration we allow only fresh fruit.
- b. Paper goods such as plates, napkins, and cups will be supplied by the center.
- c. Junk foods such as potato chips and soda will not be permitted.
- d. Parties will take place in the afternoons only.

**NO SHEET CAKES, CAKES OR CUPCAKES OF ANY SIZE, SHAPE, ETC. WILL BE ALLOWED.**

**NO COSTUMED CHARACTERS WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE CENTERS.**



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

### **17.8 OUTDOOR POLICY**

Licensing requires that children be taken outdoors on a daily basis. Since children will be exposed to different weather conditions, we recommend children to be dressed accordingly to the weather. Recommendations include; light jacket, cap, and rain boots (for damp days) in fall and spring; heavy winter jacket, mittens, scarf, hat, and snow boots in winter. An extra sweater or sweatshirt at school is recommended for sudden changes in temperature. **All clothing, including coats and boots, must be labeled clearly with your child's name. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.**

### **17.9 HOMEWORK POLICY**

Parents are an integral part of their children's preschool learning experiences. GBCA Head Start and Early Head Start program in collaboration with the Local Education Agency (LEA), has adapted a NO HOMEWORK POLICY.

In accordance with the Department of Early Childhood, Homework Policy for Preschoolers: *"Homework" that consists of ditto assignments-workbook-like, focused skill practice involving writing, cutting, pasting, matching, etc. – are developmentally inappropriate and therefore not permitted in our Preschool Programs.*

# **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: DISCIPLINE

POLICY NO: 18

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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The teaching and support staffs that interact with our children are expected to EXERCISE CONTROL IN A FIRM NON-THREATENING MANNER. THEY MUST REFRAIN FROM YELLING. NO HITTING IS ALLOWED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES!!

Should this occur, the Director would terminate the employee immediately.

Under our care there are infant, toddlers and preschoolers who may use physical methods or have temper tantrums to resolve conflicts. When this occurs staff may need to hold the child to restrain them thereby using physical contact however, it is used only for safety measures.

**\*PARENTS WHO VOLUNTEER PERIODICALLY, AS WELL AS COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS ARE INSTRUCTED TO LEAVE THE DISCIPLINING OF CHILDREN TO THE TEACHERS.\***

## **STATEMENT**

Discipline is needed for young children because it provides them with guidance, support and teaches them socially acceptable behavior.

The goals of discipline for the children at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start are:

- To help foster and develop a positive self image.
- To encourage curiosity and exploration
- To strengthen language skills and encourage use of words for problem solving.
- To help begin to develop the ability to control their own behavior.

The adults at Head Start/Early Head Start have the responsibility of setting guidelines:

- Tell children what they can do and can't do.
- Use words to explain reasons (involve children in making rules).
- Use words and tone of voice that give guidance and do not make children feel ashamed.
- Use voice as teaching tool.
- Work through difficult times with the child in one to one interaction. Get down on eye level with the children when speaking.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: TOYS FROM HOME

POLICY NO: 19

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy. If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start Early Head Start is not responsible for replacing and/or compensation for any lost and/or damaged toy brought in by any child with/without parent's knowledge.

Children in classrooms during rest time are permitted to include with their bedding supplies, one plush/non-musical toy with which to rest. This toy will be placed with the bedding supplies and use of it will only be permitted at rest time.

All toys brought in for use as part of the curriculum, and/or for rest time will be inspected by Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start staff for safety and appropriateness, and may be prohibited at the sole discretion of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: DRESS CODE

POLICY NO: 20

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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## 20.1 CHILDREN

### **Clothing:**

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate and comfortable clothing.

Parents are prohibited from dressing children in clothing with difficult closures. This type of clothing presents particular challenges for children in relation to toileting.

Coats, hats, gloves, and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. Children are not permitted to wear open toe, and/or open back shoes. The appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

All children are required to have one seasonable and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes, shirt, pants, underwear, and socks. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and boots. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

**ALL CHILDREN MUST WEAR APPROPRIATE RUBBER SOLED SHOES/SNEAKERS AT ALL TIMES.**

### **Jewelry/Accessories:**

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry. Hanging earrings, necklaces, and bracelets are a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. Girls will be permitted to wear small stud earrings. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children. Should a child come to school wearing any jewelry other than small stud earrings, parents will be required to take it with them, or to return to the school to remove the jewelry if it is discovered after the parent leaves. Repeated (more than 3 violations

## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

per school year) violations of this policy are considered to be violation of SAFETY POLICIES and will result in dismissal from the program.

Bobby pins are not to be worn by children. These are considered to be safety hazards. When choosing accessories for your children, please be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child, but also for the older and younger children attending Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start.

### **20.2 PARENTS**

#### **Clothing:**

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at Greater Bergen Head Start Early Head Start, or involved in any Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start sponsored events. Inappropriate clothing would include revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited. Parents who are volunteering at the school should not wear high heels, work boots, or shoes with wet/dirty soles.

#### **Jewelry:**

While volunteering in the classroom or at any Head Start/Early Head Start sponsored event, parents are encouraged not to wear any jewelry and/or accessories as per the children and staff dress code policy outlined above. Parents could be restricted from volunteering if they are not in compliance with this policy. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start is not responsible for replacing and/or compensation for any lost and/or damaged jewelry worn by any adult.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: FIELD TRIPS

POLICY NO: 21

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start frequently supplements the in class curriculum with off premises field trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Notification of a field trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information including destination, date, time, and reason for trip, cost and mode of transportation.

Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip to be completed, signed, and returned to the teacher prior to the date of the trip. The field trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, in order for your child to attend.

Parent's attendance at field trips is required at times, in order for Head Start/Early Head Start to meet the adult to child ratio. If parents wish to attend the trip with their child, they should discuss this with the classroom teacher.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip and you wish your child to participate in the trip, please discuss this with your child's teacher at least three days prior to the date of the trip. Your child will be permitted to attend if required ratios can be maintained with his/her addition to the class.

Siblings are not permitted to attend Field Trips. Children are not able to come to school if their class is out on a Field Trip and they chose not to attend. Field Trips are on a set schedule and parents must bring their child to school on time. If a child arrives late for the Field Trip, the child must be taken home.

We strongly recommend that if your child suffers from a severe allergy /disability and wishes to participate in a field trip, that for the child's safety, a parent/guardian accompanies the child.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: PARENT PARTICIPATION

POLICY NO: 22

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities at Head Start/Early Head Start. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the childcare center. Parents may attend trips, read in the classroom, and assist teachers. Parents not interested in volunteering directly may work on activities at home with their child. Parent participation will require recording volunteer activities and hours in their child's classroom weekly.

Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. Any person, including parents, with felony convictions, sex offender convictions and/or open investigations into any criminal activities will not be permitted to volunteer in the classroom or attend any field trips.

Parents with court orders detailing custodial arrangements will only be permitted to volunteer on days in which they are afforded custody (joint/shared custody arrangement) as per the court order. For example, if a parent is afforded custody on Tuesdays and Wednesdays that parent will only be able to volunteer on those days. Parents with visitation only (sole/exclusive custody arrangements), will only be permitted to volunteer with the express written permission of the custodial parent.

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to make volunteer assignments. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start does not guarantee that volunteering parents will be assigned to locations where their child(ren) is present.

The Head Start/Early Head Start Policy Council is comprised of parents of children currently enrolled in the program and community representatives. A minimum of 51% of Policy Council members must be parents of currently enrolled children. New Policy Council members are elected at the beginning of each school year.

Policy Council has a variety of functions, all of which are linked to the overall operation of the program. Policy council becomes involved in such administrative areas as the development and revision of personnel policies and procedures.

During the September Parent Orientation Meeting, parents will be advised of the functions of the Policy Council. Interested parents may be nominated and then elected to serve on the Council. Participation of this Council is considered critical to the success of the program.

# **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: HEALTH AND SAFETY

POLICY NO: 23

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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## **23.1 PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Each child is required to complete a pre-enrollment packet of information. This packet is to be completed at a scheduled intake appointment with a Family Worker and nursing staff prior to the child being enrolled. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. This is per our licensing regulations. If you have not had your child immunized due to the fact that immunizations are contraindicated for medical reasons or immunizations conflict with the child's exercise of bona fide religious tenets or practices, documentation must be provided to the center.

All children are required to have an annual physical examination and dental form filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. The Physical Examination and Dental Form, indicating the child's wellness, must be completed by a licensed health care professional and returned to the main office in Jersey City before an intake appointment will be scheduled. Also, children enrolled in the program for two years will need an annual medical/dental examination prior to the second year of attending school.

## **23.2 CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES**

For the safety of your child, parents are required to notify health staff of any allergies at the time of the intake interview or any time an allergic condition develops. Parents are to inform the nurse what type of allergic reaction the child could be expected to have. Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the medication policy detailed herein.

## **23.3 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined by New Jersey state law and as outlined in the Licensing Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers. A copy of these manuals is on file with the Health Specialist and is available upon request for review.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification by phone. If a parent is reached, but cannot pick his or her child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

parent is reached. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the staff believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program **or a doctor's note is not provided.**

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever he/she, is not permitted to return to the program the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of anything above 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken under the arm.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels, diarrhea and vomit that occur 3 or more times in a 24-hour period. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

### **23.4 BITING**

Children may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures, where appropriate, as outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have a meeting with the Head Start/Early Head Start staff to discuss provision of reasonable modifications and/or appropriate community resource to ensure the safety of all children.

Furthermore, children who bite 3 times in a school year their parents must meet with the mental health specialist to collaborate with appropriate community resources – such as behavior coaches, psychologists, or other resources to determine reasonable options since the safety of all the children in the program is of the utmost concern of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

### **23.5 DISPENSING MEDICATION**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will only administer medications for chronic conditions of those medications necessary for the child's safety; for example; for diabetes or asthma. Staff can only give medication that is in the original container labeled by the pharmacy and is accompanied by a care plan with explicit dosage and administration instructions. Parents are also required to complete a Medication Permission Form before medication can be given. Medication Forms are available from and are to be turned into the center nurse.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date.

### **23.6 FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will be practicing four (4) primary emergency drills throughout the year. They are FIRE DRILLS, LOCKDOWN DRILLS, SHELTER-IN-PLACE and EVACUATION DRILLS. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of the drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of the drill plans.

During a lockdown/evacuation drill or a real situation, parents will not be allowed to sign children into or out of the program. Parents must wait until the drill is completed and children have returned to the building to sign their child into or out of the program. Parents may feel free to wait with their child's class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is completed.

In the event of a situation, the Director will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

Parents wishing to sign their child out of the program during a drill or real situation are expected to have patience with the staff as they are trying to maintain order during an often hectic and dangerous situation. If the center is in the midst of a fire/evacuation drill, parents will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children has returned to the building to sign their child out of the program. If the center is having a real situation, parents will be asked to wait until the Director has accounted for all staff and children and give the staff permission to release children. Once again, it is important for parents and staff to work together, remain calm, and cooperate with the personnel and center administration during these challenging and critical situations.



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

### **23.7 ALTERNATE SAFE LOCATION**

Should the administration of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start or any emergency services personnel determine the building which houses the child care agency to be too dangerous to be occupied, the staff and children will be taken to a designated site, which will be posted at the Center. Once the children are assembled here, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up. As stated before, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

### **23.8 INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS**

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report. The Incident/Accident Report will be placed in a sealed envelope and put in the child's cubby.

Parents or persons designated to pick up children are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.

Should a person other than the parent or one designated to pick-up the child; teachers must put the Incident/Accident Report in an envelope and request that the parent return a signed copy to the teacher within 24 hours.

### **23.9 FOOD AND MEAL TIME**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start curriculum focuses on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start offers children breakfast between 8:45 and 9:15 am, lunch between 11:45 am and 12:15 pm, and snack between 2:45 pm and 3:00 pm. Greater Bergen Community Action Early Head Start offers children breakfast, lunch and snack on an as needed basis and corresponds to the child's individual schedules and needs.

**NO OUTSIDE FOOD OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED AT THE CENTERS AT ANY TIME, FOR ANY OCCASION.**

In the classrooms children eat family style, sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills.

## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instruction for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. Please refer to the Health and Safety Policies contained herein for further information.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions. (i.e. lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets)

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start never uses food as a punishment. Children will never be denied participation in lunch or snack time for behavior reasons.

### **23.10 PEANUT FREE CENTER**

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions in some children to peanuts and products containing peanuts, Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start prohibits peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products on Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start properties, and/or at any Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start sponsored events. These peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath, or touching peanut oil residue left on a counter top, not only from consuming peanuts or peanut products.

When requested by the Head Start/Early Head Start Director, parents are responsible for providing foods that are peanut and peanut product free. There are many acceptable food items in stores that are peanut and peanut product free. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts, or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods and therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, Plain chocolate M&M's have this statement on the label.

### **23.11 FIRE ARMS AND WEAPONS**

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunition, weapons, knife, pepper spray, mace, and/or illegal substances on agency property or any other property visited by and affiliated with Head Start/Early Head Start, when that property is being used by and for Head Start/Early Head Start purposes for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program. The Police will be notified immediately if this occurs.

### **23.12 DIAPERING**



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will change each child's diaper when the diaper is wet or soiled. Each child's bottom will be washed and dried during each diaper change with individual disposable wash cloths, paper towels or disposable diaper wipes.

Staff and child's hands will be washed before and after changing or checking of the diaper. Diapering shall not take place in an area or on a surface used for food preparation, service or eating. The diapering area shall be within 15 feet of a sink that is not used for food preparation. The diapering surface will be flat, smooth, clean, dry non-absorbent and in good repair. A supply of clean diapers will be available at all times. Diapering supplies, including diapers, shall be stored in an area out of the children's reach but easily accessible to staff members during a diaper change. The diapering surface shall be washed and disinfected after each use. Equipment used for cleaning the diapering surface shall be restricted for use in this area only and shall be disposable or laundered in hot soapy water. Staff members will use disposable latex/or latex free gloves if allergic, during a diaper change and will dispose of the gloves after use. Soiled disposable diapers will be placed in a closed container that is lined with a leak proof or impervious lining. These diapers will be removed from the center daily and placed in a closed garbage receptacle outside the building.

### **23.13 SAFE SLEEP POLICY**

It is the policy of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start to place all infants in a face-up sleeping position, unless otherwise indicated in writing by the health care provider. The physician's note should include why the infant should not be placed in a face-up sleeping position, how the child should be placed to sleep and a time frame that the instructions are to be followed.

Each crib or playpen will be equipped with:

1. a firm, waterproof, snugly fitting mattress
2. a clean, snugly fitting sheet or other covering and blanket
3. top rails that are at least 19 inches above the mattress and
4. slats that are not more than 2 3/8 inches apart.

Locks and latches on the dropsides of cribs shall be safe and secure from accidental release.

Sleeping equipment shall be free of pillows and soft bedding when occupied by a sleeping child.

As a reminder, **babies should never be placed on their stomachs to sleep**, but during the day when infants are awake they should spend some playing time on their stomachs know as tummy time. Tummy time is important for several reasons it's a way to support infants' development of neck control and upper body strength to which minimizes the use of infant seats and swings throughout the day.

Training will be provided on a yearly basis regarding Safe Sleep Policy.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

**POLICY: STAFF EMPLOYMENT BY  
CLIENT'S POLICY**

**POLICY NO: 24**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18**

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The staff of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start is prohibited from being employed by any client (current or former). Parents are prohibited from soliciting any staff member for the purpose of employment. Parents who employ Greater Bergen Head Start/Early Head Start staff will have their services terminated and any deposits will be forfeited. Staff who becomes employed by current or former clients of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start will have their employment with Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start terminated.

Employment refers to any relationship outside of the agency's services that involves an employee of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start to interact with current or formal clients of Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start. Such relationships include but are not limited to, baby-sitting, house-sitting, mother's helper, nanny services, and carpooling regardless of whether or not those services are voluntary or paid.



# **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

**POLICY: TRANSITION POLICY**

**POLICY NO: 25**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18**

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Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start and Early Head Start have Transition Plans that were created to help the children and parents we serve. Your Family Worker will be speaking with you throughout the school year regarding the specific procedures established to help you with your child's transition in and out of the Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

The objectives of the Transition Plans are to:

- Assist parents in becoming their children's advocate as they transition into a Head Start, public and/or private school setting;
- Promote the continued involvement of Head Start/Early Head Start parents in the education and development of their children upon this transition;
- Initiate meetings involving parent, and/or private school representatives and Head Start/Early Head Start staff.

The goals of the Transition Plan are to:

- Ensure a smooth transition for children and their parents into Head Start/Early Head Start and from Head Start/Early Head Start;
- Make sure families have the information they need to participate effectively in transition decision making;
- Assure that family members are welcomed into the new public/private school programs and encourage them to share information with other families;
- Involve children into transition experiences;
- Establish a collaboration and partnership with public/private schools.

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

POLICY: SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY

POLICY NO: 26

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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**SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION POLICY**

Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start

CENTER: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF CHILD: \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE OF PARENT: \_\_\_\_\_

Unfortunately there are some occasions when we are forced to suspend a child on a temporary basis. We will do everything possible to ensure that a child is returned to full program activities as quickly as possible. If after all appropriate and documented steps are taken it is determined that the program is not the most appropriate placement for the child, we will work with the family and with such entities as to facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.

**Suspension and Expulsion**

A. Limitations on suspension.

1. A program must prohibit or severely limit the use of suspension due to a child's behavior. Such suspensions may only be temporary in nature.
2. A temporary suspension must be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications.
3. Before a program determines whether a temporary suspension is necessary, a program must engage with a mental health specialist, collaborate with the parents, utilize appropriate community resources-such as behavior coaches, psychologists, other appropriate specialists, or other resources- as needed, to determine no other reasonable option is appropriate.



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

4. If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, a program must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by :

- (i) Continuing to engage with the parents and a mental health specialist, and continuing to utilize appropriate community resources;
- (ii) Developing a written plan to document the action and supports needed;
- (iii) Providing services that include home visits; and ,
- (iv) Determining whether a referral to a local agency responsible for implementing IDEA is appropriate.

### **B. Prohibition on expulsion**

1. A program cannot expel or unenroll a child from Head Start because of a child's behavior.
2. When a child exhibits persistent and serious challenging behaviors, a program must explore all possible steps and document all steps taken to address such problems, and facilitate the child's safe participation in the program. Such steps must include at a minimum, engaging a mental health specialist, considering the appropriateness of providing services and supports under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to ensure that the child who satisfies the definition of a disability in 29 U.S.C. 705(9)(b) of the Rehabilitation Act is not excluded from the program on the basis of disability, and consulting with the parents and the child's teacher, and:
  - (i) If the child has an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education plan (IEP), the program must consult with the agency responsible for the IFSP or IEP to ensure the child receives the needed support services; or,
  - (ii) If the child does not have an IFSP or IEP, the program must collaborate, with parental consent, with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to determine the child's eligibility for services.
3. If, after a program has explored all possible steps and documented all steps taken as described in paragraph (b)(2) of this section, a program, in consultation with the parents, the child's teacher, the agency responsible for implementing the IDEA (if applicable), and the mental health specialist, determines that the child's continued enrollment presents a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children and determines the program is not the most appropriate placement for the

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

child, the program must work with such entities to directly facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.

**POLICY: GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

**POLICY NO: 27**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18**

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The first line of communication begins at each center's parent meetings. Each center's parent committee consists of several elected officers.

An agenda that includes a section for old and new business will be provided by the parent committee. The meeting will be conducted under Robert's Rules of Order.

Grievances, concerns and suggestions related to the program should be brought to the meeting and entered in the minutes. Copies of the minutes will be distributed to the parents and Director within seven working days. The minutes will be reviewed by the Director to determine if any action is to be taken. Issues needing action are to be addressed before the next scheduled monthly meeting and included on the agenda under old business.

If the issue has not been resolved, at the next scheduled parent meeting, the issue will be submitted in writing to the Policy Council President so that it may be placed on the policy council agenda for their next meeting.



# GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY LAW

POLICY: 28

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18

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The State of New Jersey, Department of Law & Public Safety, Office of the Attorney General, Child Passenger Safety law requires:

- Children less than 8 years of age who weigh less than 80 pounds to ride properly secured in a child safety seat or booster seat in the rear seat of the vehicle. If there is no rear seat, the child may sit in the front seat, but s/he must be secured by a child safety seat or booster seat.
- Children under 8 years of age who weigh more than 80 pounds to ride properly secured in a seat belt. (Note: A rear-facing infant seat should never be placed in a front seat with a Passenger-side airbag unless the vehicle is equipped with an air bag on/off switch. For more information about child safety seats and air bags consult Advisory on Airbags and Passenger Sensing Systems.)
- Passengers 8 to 18 years of age (regardless of weight) ride properly secured in a seat belt.

Please refer to [http://www.nj.gov/lps/hts/childseats/childseats\\_newlaw.html](http://www.nj.gov/lps/hts/childseats/childseats_newlaw.html)

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It is important that parents follow the Child Passenger Safety Law, ensuring that their child is correctly secured in a child safety seat or booster seat when the child is being transported from any one of our facilities.

The Head Start and Early Head Start Programs will strictly enforce the law working in cooperation with Police Departments.

Employees of Greater Bergen Community Action will randomly check vehicles transporting children from our facilities to make sure that The New Jersey's child passenger safety law is being adhered to.

# GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

POLICY: TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY: 29

APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL

EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/20

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## 29.1 PARENTAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Effective communication with school personnel and families is vital for a thriving school environment. GBCA understands the values of using social media and the benefits offered by digital communication devices for providing quick and easy interaction among school staff and families. These guidelines are intended to safeguard students, staff and anyone associated with the school from the negative effects of social networking sites. The purpose of this policy is to outline what the school considers to be appropriate and inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents.

### **Appropriate vs. Inappropriate use of social networking sites by parents:**

Although social networking sites may appear to be the quickest and easiest way to express your frustrations or concerns about GBCA and those associated with it, it is not the way to raise concerns or complaints as the school will not respond to issues raised on a social networking site. If a parent wishes to file a complaint, they may do so by filing a formal complaint with the area director, head teacher or supervisor at any of our sites. If there is a serious allegation being made or a concern, social media and other internet sites should not be used to name individuals nor make abusive comments. The following are examples of what the school considers to be inappropriate uses of social networking sites:

- ☐ Making allegations about staff or anyone else connected to GBCA
- ☐ Making any posts that could be deemed to be cyber-bullying
- ☐ Making complaints about the school or staff at the school
- ☐ Making defamatory comments about GBCA and it's staff
- ☐ Posting racist comments
- ☐ Posting comments that threaten violence
- ☐ Parents are prohibited from posting any children's names, making comments and/or posting pictures of other children who attend the program on any Social Media website.

### **If inappropriate use continues, the following will be implemented:**

- ☐ Director will meet with the parent to discuss the matter at hand and to come to a resolution.



## **GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

- ☐ If parent refuses to remove information from the social networking, the school will then consider taking legal advice.
- ☐ Written notice will be sent to the parent, giving them a formal warning and requesting that the material be removed immediately.
- ☐ GBCA will contact the authorities were the school feels it's appropriate- Example of such is if the school considers a crime such as harassment, racial element, offensive and obscene acts of violence has taken place.
- ☐ Such postings made to a GBCA website or online forum, will lead to the parent from being "blocked" or "restricted" to that website.

- ☐ GBCA will contact the provider/host of the social networking site to complain about the content and ask for removal of the information posted.
- ☐ Take other legal actions as deemed necessary.

### **29.2 TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

Technology and interactive media are tools that can promote effective learning and development when they are used intentionally and according to developmentally appropriate practice (NAEYC 2009a).

Greater Bergen Community Action believes that Early Childhood settings can provide opportunities for exploring digital cameras, audio and video recorders, computers, printers, and other technologies to children who otherwise might not have access to these tools. Educators should also consider the learning and creative advantage that high-quality interactive media can bring to children, especially when combined with skillful teaching and complementary curriculum resources. Early childhood educators always should use their knowledge of child development and best practices to carefully and intentionally select and use technology and media.

Greater Bergen Community Action supports that Child Care settings limit screen time (including television, videos, digital media, video games, mobile media and the internet for preschoolers (age 2 through 5) to 15 minutes per day per child.

**Greater Bergen Community Action, Head Start and Early Head Start programs offers no access to computer, television or videos for children under 2 years.**

**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**

**POLICY: NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS POLICY**

**POLICY NO: 30**

**APPROVED BY: POLICY COUNCIL**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 9/1/18**

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Effective communication between Greater Bergen Community Action Head Start/Early Head Start is vital for a thriving school environment. It is important that Head Start/Early Head Start notify parents regarding school closings, sick children, incidents/accidents emergencies, center activities, etc. by way of written documentation, verbal communication, phone calls, emails or social media.

For parents who elect to receive email and/or text notifications, GBCA staff will communicate with the families through a GBCA provided device such as; school based email account, school-provided telephones or school-based web pages.



**GREATER BERGEN COMMUNITY ACTION  
HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START**