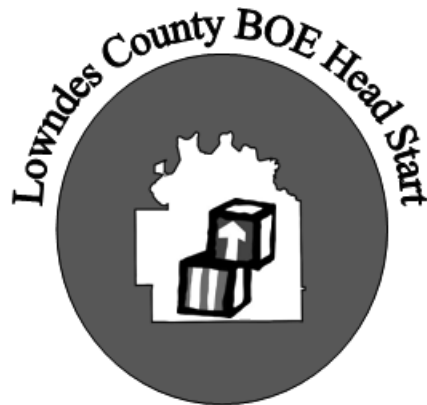


Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start 2015-2016 Parent Handbook



**Shaping The Future and Getting Ready for School
One Triangle, Square and Circle at a Time.**

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Hayneville, AL 36040
(334) 548-2145/548-2511 fax (334) 548-2021
www.lowndesboeheadstart.org

Samita L. Jeter, Director



Greetings from the Head Start Director

Dear Head Start Family:

On behalf of all the staff, welcome to Lowndes County BOE Head Start! Our goal is to provide a program that you and your child will find to be a rewarding, useful and enjoyable experience.

We believe that in order to have a successful Head Start program, parents (including those in the role of parents), children and staff must all participate as equal partners. Each of us has something to contribute.

Parents who participate in the program show their children that they think learning is important. Additionally, parents find that participation in Head Start uses and builds on their own strengths as parents and as adults. We urge you to share your talents, knowledge, time and energy in working with us so that you and your child can receive the greatest benefit from your family's enrollment.

If you have any particular needs, suggestions or concerns about your child(s) or your participation in the program, please refer to this handbook or contact your child(s) teacher, your Family Service Worker or the Central Office.

Sincerely,

Samita L. Jeter

Greetings from the Family & Community Services Manager

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all moms, dads, and guardians to the 2015-2016 school year!!! The Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start would like to thank you for allowing us to serve you and your family. We hope that you will take advantage of the various resources that will be provided during the school term. We want to assist you in achieving all that is possible from your Head Start experience.

Thank you in advance and I look forward to working with each of you.

Sincerely,

Laura James-Hunter

Your children will become who
you are; so be who you want them
to be.

--anonymous

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Purpose

This Parent Handbook is designed to acquaint parents of Head Start children with the purpose and objectives of the Head Start program. It can serve as a valuable tool for parents who seek direction and understanding concerning Head Start. Further, it will give the rights and responsibilities of parents as they are related to the overall structure of the program.

The Lowndes County BOE Head Start Program is a comprehensive Early Childhood Development Program for economically disadvantaged children ages three (3) and four (4). The program provides services for 280 children and their families throughout Lowndes County.

The Lowndes County BOE Head Start Program offers a variety of services and activities for the children and their families. These services include educational development, parent involvement, nutritional services, cultural enrichment activities, health services, and special services for children with disabilities.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start Program is to empower our families by providing educational and family-focused opportunities to improve their economic well-being and healthy lifestyle. We will accomplish this mission one child, one family at a time by involving parents and securing highly qualified staff.



PHILOSOPHY & GOALS

The Lowndes County BOE Head Start staff, parents and communities believe that a high quality early childhood program provides a safe and nurturing environment, which promotes the total need of the children and respond to the needs of the families.

We also believe that growth and development are multidimensional; therefore, we offer the comprehensive services of education, medical, dental and nutritional health, and social services. We believe that children with disabilities benefit from and contribute to programming for preschool children so we make a special effort to serve and support children with disabilities.

And finally, we believe that parents are the most important people in children's lives and that the support given to children as they grow and develop is crucial to their future and their future success. Therefore, we involve parents in all aspects of the program and support them in their roles as parents and providers for their families.

Our goals are to provide qualified, well trained staff who will interact with children in ways that will promote their development of an understanding of themselves and others and of social skills and intellectual growth; to provide a curriculum which encourage children to be actively involved in activities and materials and to learn about life, their communities and the world as they develop skills that will support later academic endeavors; to involve parents in the program in ways that enhance their abilities to support their children's growth and development and to assure that the Lowndes County BOE Head Start Program effectively address its own goals for the children

Central Office Staff

Samita L. Jeter, Director samitajeter@lowndesboe.org
 Lashica Mason, Fiscal Manager lmason@lowndesboe.org
 Afshan McDonald, Education/Disabilities Services Manager
afshanmcdonald@lowndesboe.org
 Laura James-Hunter, Family Community Services Manager laura.hunter@lowndesboe.org
 Joan Moorner-Robinson, Health/Mental Health Coordinator jrobinson@lowndesboe.org
 Jason Burroughs, Asst. Superintendent (Nutrition Coordinator)
jasonburroughs@lowndesboe.org
 Dan Davis, ERSEA/Technology Coordinator dan.davis@lowndesboe.org
 Lori Malisham, Family Service Worker lori.malisham@lowndesboe.org
 Shirley Davis, Family Service Worker shirley.davis@lowndesboe.org
 Merrie Peoples, Family Service Worker mpeoples@lowndesboe.org
 Kimberly Mason, kmason@lowndesboe.org
 Threddie Stewart, Maintenance
 Lloyd Johnson, Maintenance

Head Start Teaching Staff

	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Assistant</u>
Central Head Start—Mosses Community—(334) 563-7590		
Unit 1	Queen Gordon, Head Teacher	Bridgette Hardy
Unit 2	Annie Patterson	Dorothy Williams
Unit 3	Sharon Ray	Helen Thomas
Unit 4	Megan Wright	Latisha Walker
Unit 5	Crystal Thomas	TBA
Unit 6	Thomas McReynolds	Rosla Moore
Fort Deposit Head Start—Fort Deposit—(334) 227-8704		
Unit 1	Allison Cain	Lucenyan Powell
Unit 2	Sandra Taylor	Melinda Tolliver
Unit 3	Patricia Sprott	Trellis Cosby
Unit 4	Margie Harrison	Kimberly Thicklin
Unit 6	Stephanie Scott (Prek)	Evelyn Lambert
Jackson-Steele Head Start—White Hall—(334) 874-4792		
Unit 1	Verna Perryman, Head Teacher	Chanterrius Davis
Unit 2	Josie Struggs	Katlyn Patterson

Let's Go to Head Start!



CALENDAR

The Head Start Centers are open from 7:30 a.m. until 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The following holidays will be observed and the centers will be closed.

Classes Begin	August 10
Labor Day	September 7
Columbus Day	October 12
Veteran's Day	November 11
Thanksgiving	November 23-27
Winter/Christmas Break	December 21-January 4
Classes Resume	January 5
Dr. King's Day	January 18
President's Day	February 15
Spring Break	March 21-25
Classes End for Head Start children	May 20



What is Head Start?

LCBOE Head Start is a federally funded child development program, serving three and four year old children from low income families. Ten percent of the children enrolled may be from families whose income exceeds federal poverty guidelines. Another ten percent of the enrolled children must have some kind of disabling condition. These enrollees are provided the opportunity to be mainstreamed into a regular classroom environment.

Head Start programs operate under annual grants from the Department of Health and Human Services/Administration for Children, Youth and Families. Program staff plan Head Start activities and services, with the assistance of parents and advisory committees. They also work with other community agencies to ensure that children and families receive needed services and are offered opportunities. Head Start provides a better future for families. Head Start prepares your child for school. Head Start helps children and families to help themselves.

When Does Head Start Begin?

The first day of Head Start for the 2015-2016 school year is Monday, August 10, 2015. The last day of school is Friday, May 20, 2016.



How will my child get there?

Transportation will be provided by the **public school buses**. However, some children are transported by parents. When dropping children off, **you must sign your name to a classroom sign-in sheet when you bring your child into class and sign your name again when you pick your child up.** This is for the safety of your child.



What will all this cost me?

Your time!!! This program is financed by the Department of Health & Human Services, for children and families. Therefore, parent participation through volunteer hours in the classrooms, field trips, doctor visits, parent committees and the Head Start Policy Council is highly encouraged and extremely needed.

Who can attend Head Start?

Any eligible (age/income) child may attend regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, health condition, or disability.

How much will my child eat at Head Start?

Children will receive breakfast, lunch, and snack through the public school's Child Nutrition Program. Portion sizes of foods served are appropriate for children ages 3-4 years old. Children are encouraged to taste all foods served at meals but are not forced to eat. Food substitutions for children with special dietary needs are provided. Please inform your child's teacher or the Health Coordinator if your child has any special dietary needs due to religious or medical reasons.



Center Rules

- 9 Children should arrive at the Center no later than 8:00 a.m. to receive breakfast.
- 9 You must sign your child in/out every day and notify an adult when the child arrives and leaves.
- 9 Parents should be dressed appropriately when entering the center
- 9 A child with a fever, head lice, contagious condition, etc., will be sent home with parent/guardian or parent/guardian will be called to pick up their child. You must make other child care arrangements for children with a fever or any contagious conditions. Your child will not be able to return until symptoms have ceased for at least a 24-hour period.
- 9 Staff can administer prescription medicine to children only with administrative and physician approval. Non-prescription drugs cannot be administered at any time.
- 9 Children will be playing outside on a daily basis.
- 9 Children must be dressed in weather appropriate, washable, comfortable clothing and shoes. For safety purposes children should **not** wear flip flops, boots, or other shoes that may cause them to slip or fall.
- 9 Center hours are determined upon the majority need of our children and families.
- 9 Children can be picked up beginning at 2:00 p.m.
- 9 Parents **must** come by the office or the center to let staff know who is picking up the child and when or to complete bus passes. Only when extreme circumstances occur, parents can notify staff with changes by using Child Security Code.
- 9 All children will be required to have a rest time in the afternoon.
- 9 Allow child enough time to pick up toys after himself/herself before leaving the Center.
- 9 Check child's cubbie to see that they have a change of clean clothes every day. Return any borrowed clothes to Center.
- 9 Check for notices each day for information concerning your child and dates the center may be closed for holidays and workshops or other paperwork.
- 9 Inform staff of any change, including but not limited to, change of name, address, work, or telephone number.
- 9 Head Start is a smoke and drug free environment. Smoking is not allowed on premises, in agency vehicles or at agency functions.
- 9 Children are not to bring toys or food to the Center except with approval from the child's teacher.
- 9 All occupants must wear seat belts when in a Head Start vehicle or at a Head Start function.
- 9 Staff is not allowed to discuss confidential family information with anyone outside the immediate family without consent.
- 9 Spanking, cursing, and inappropriate language is not allowed in the Center or on the playground by staff or parents.
- 9 Siblings are not to be left in vehicles without adult supervision when picking up or dropping off .



My Rights as a Head Start Parent

1. To take part in major policy making decisions affecting the planning and the operations of the program.
2. To help develop adult programs that will improve daily living for me and my family.
3. To be welcomed in the classroom.
4. To be informed regularly about my child's progress in Head Start.
5. To be always treated with respect and dignity.
6. To expect guidance for my child from Head Start teachers and staff, which will help his/her total individual development.
7. To be able to learn about the operation of the program, including the budget and the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.
8. To be informed about the community resources concerned with health, education and the improvement of family life.
9. To take part in planning and participating in program design and to increase my skills in areas of possible employment.

My Responsibility as a Head Start Parent

1. To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and my children's lives.
2. To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections and to explain the program to other parents and encourage their full participation.
3. To welcome teachers, and staff into my home to discuss ways in which I can help my child.
4. To send my child to school daily in order to ensure program attendance policies are being followed.
5. To attend parent committee meetings.
6. To offer constructive criticism of the program, to defend it against unfair criticism, and to share in evaluating it.
7. To work with teaching staff, and other parents in a cooperative way.
8. To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development and my skills in areas of possible employment.
9. To volunteer with the Head Start program by offering my services to assist in reaching the non-federal share match goal.
10. To notify Head Start in writing of any changes with my family, such as phone numbers, health issues, emergency information.

Policies and Procedures

Family Orientation

Parents/guardians will be informed of program policies and procedures for all service areas and resources available to them. This will be done prior to the first day of school.

Attendance

Your child's attendance plays a very important role in his or her education. Regular attendance is a habit that will help your child be successful in kindergarten and elementary school. This can be accomplished by sending your child/children to school every day. However, children do become sick and other unforeseen circumstances will occur that prohibits them from attending school but, the Lowndes County BOE Head Start program must maintain 100%-monthly average daily attendance. **Therefore, parents must call or send a note to let us know the reason for each day your child is absent.**

When regular attendance and/or tardiness becomes a challenge for your family, we will help you develop a plan of action. The program must initiate a plan of action for all children with four or more consecutive unexcused absences. In circumstances where chronic absenteeism and tardiness persists and it does not seem feasible to include your child in the program, your child's slot must be considered an enrollment vacancy.

All children should arrive to school by 8:00 a.m., yet no later than 8:30 a.m. in order to receive the maximum services provided in the classroom as well as a nutritious breakfast. Children can be picked up beginning at 2:00 p.m. However, all children must be picked up by 3:30 p.m. Children who are dropped off or picked up must be signed in

Health Requirements

ALL Head Start children are required to have up-to-date and on file the following:

- x Physical exam (to include vision, hearing, and lead)
- x Dental exam
- x Immunization record (blue slip)
- x Copy of child health insurance card

Medication Administration

A Medication Administration Authorization Form is required to be completed by a medical provider, and Medication Authorization Forms are to be completed by a parent/guardian for each prescription medication needed during school hours. This form should be given to the school nurse by the parent.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the public school as a service to children and families in the school district. **The school board reserves the right to deny a student or students the privilege of being transported at public expense provided the policies are not followed.** School bus rules forms must be signed by every parent of a Head Start child

who will ride the school bus. Name tags will be placed on each child every day. However, we ask that you return them by placing the tag on the child each morning.

Bus change request forms must be completed by the parent in the **principal's office** in advanced if you are requiring a change in route or bus. Head Start children **will not** be dropped off at a home by themselves!

Transportation Safety Education

Transportation Safety education is provided to each family on an on-going basis starting at enrollment. Pedestrian Safety education is given to the parents at enrollment and is taught to the children during the first few weeks of school.

Volunteer Health

ALL Regular volunteers must be screened for tuberculosis in accordance with State, Tribal or local laws. Documentation should be submitted to the Health Coordinator.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Head Start participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The primary goal of CACFP is to improve the diets of children under age 12. To meet this goal, reimbursement for meals and snacks meeting CACFP standards is provided to participating programs. CACFP standards include nutritious, well-balanced meals, appropriate serving sizes, and safe food handling and sanitation practice.

Parent Conferences/Home Visits

Parent conferences and home visits (two of each) are requirements for Head Start. Home visits will be scheduled at your convenience when possible. This is a great opportunity for parents to discuss progress and other concerns.

Tooth Brushing Policy & Procedures

Head Start health services focus on prevention and early intervention and are based on the premise that a child must be healthy to be ready to learn. Good oral health for pre-school children serves as a precursor to adult oral health and is essential for a child's behavior, speech, language, and overall growth and development.

For children age three and above, once daily after each meal, Head Start staff (or volunteers, if available) should assist children in brushing their teeth using a small smear of fluoride toothpaste and should make sure children rinse their mouth and do not swallow the toothpaste.

- x Each child and staff member will have her/his own-labeled toothbrush.
- x Brushes will be stored in holder (also labeled with child's name) and kept out of the reach of children when not in use.

- X Group tooth brushing must be supervised by staff and/or volunteers who have been trained to monitor for activities that could result in cross contamination (spitting, playing with toothbrushes, etc).
- X Children should never perform tooth brushing without adequate supervision. The supervising staff member or volunteer must brush his/her teeth with the children to model proper tooth brushing.
- X Tooth brushing is to be done at a sink in front of a mirror.
- X To prevent cross contamination of the toothpaste tube, ensure that a pea-sized amount of toothpaste is always dispensed onto something other than the toothbrush first (wax paper, paper cups, or paper towel). (Do Not Use Toothpaste Tube To Dispense Toothpaste to the Brushes)
- X Classroom staff must insure that each child picks up only his or her own toothbrush.
- X Classroom staff must insure that children do not have the opportunity to spit onto or near other children's toothbrushes. This will vary dependent on classroom layout, and it is the responsibility of teaching staff to determine the procedures that work best for their physical layout.
- X Classroom staff will insure that toothbrushes are rinsed and stored properly after use.
- X Home Visitors will make sure that each toothbrush is stored in a sanitary place in the home.

Sanitation/Storage:

- X Each toothbrush holder will be sanitized two times a month.
- X The holder can be washed with warm water and soap and air dried on a regular basis.
- X Toothbrushes should not be put through the dishwasher, soaked in bleach water, or sprayed with bleach water.
- X The sink area must be sanitized before and after tooth brushing activities.

Toothbrushes:

- X Each classroom child will be provided with a new toothbrush at least two times a school year.

Parent and Volunteer Dress Code

PARENTS AND VOLUNTEERS are representatives of the Head Start program and must present a good image to the community as a whole. **Parents and Volunteers** will dress appropriately for the conditions and performance of their duties. Revealing garments do not present the image the Head Start program wants to convey to the community. Parents and Volunteers should be fully dressed in appropriate attire, neat, clean, and free of body odor.

Health Services

Ongoing Health Care

The objective of the Health Services area of the Early Child Development and Health Services Team is to improve and maintain the physical and dental health of the two hundred and eighty (280) children enrolled in the program, and ensure that each child has an ongoing source of health care. This is done by using every available community resource and health services staff, and by following the directives as set forth in the Program Performance Standards. Our ultimate goal is to ensure that every child, either through Medicaid (EPSDT), Head Start or some other community resource receives the following:

- Age appropriate up-to-date preventive and primary health care.
- Appropriate diagnostic testing and follow-up for each child with an observed, known or suspected health or developmental problem.
- Parental training regarding ways of obtaining prescribed medications, aids or equipment for medical or dental conditions.
- Fluoride supplements and topical fluoride treatments are recommended by dental professionals and other necessary preventive measures and further dental treatment needed.
- Classroom staff trained and certified in First Aid and CPR.
- Parental reminder when immunizations (Blue Slips) are needed, according to the latest recommendation issued by the Department of Public Health as well as any additional recommendations from the Health Advisory Committee and the Center for Disease Control.
- Reminders to update Physical Examinations
- Safety awareness and preventive measures for ensuring a healthy center and home environment.



We ask that you please **NOT** send your child to school if you know that he/she has a fever, or is otherwise too ill to come. **If your child has a contagious disease; such as pink eye, impetigo, worms, head lice, strep throat, measles, mumps, chicken pox, or has an expired Blue Slip-you are to keep him/her at home until a doctor/clinic gives your WRITTEN PERMISSION OR AN UPDATED BLUE SLIP to bring him/her back to school.** This is to aid in protecting your child and the other children in our program.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL PROCEDURES

Injuries:

1. Qualified center staff will administer immediate appropriate First Aid. (All classroom staff is certified in First Aid and CPR).
2. Parent/guardian will be notified.
3. Family Service Workers will be notified.
4. Health/Mental Health Coordinator will be notified verbally, initially and by written report within 24 hours of the occurrence.
5. The child will be taken for emergency treatment if necessary. The parent/guardian

MUST accompany the child.

Illnesses:

1. Parent/guardians will be contacted.
2. The child will be placed on his/her cot and monitored continuously until the parent/guardian arrives.
3. Family Services Workers and Health/Mental Health Coordinator will be notified.
4. NO CHILD WILL BE ADMITTED TO CLASS IF HE/SHE IS ALREADY ILL ON ARRIVAL AT THE CENTER IN THE MORNING!
5. If the child is not eligible for medical service, either through the state or SOBRA Medicaid program, or the ALL kids program, and you do not have personal health insurance which covers him/her, Head Start funds are available to assist you. Please notify your teachers, Family Service Worker for further information

EMERGENCY MEDICAL NUMBERS

In case of emergency after hours call:

Samita Jeter, Director (334) 301-0583

Laura James-Hunter, FCS Mgr, (334) 324-0667

***Any signs of suspected child abuse/neglect will be reported to the Department of Human Resources (DHR) as required by law. Therefore, if you are aware that your child has some kind of injury, which might be viewed as suspicious, please notify your child's teacher/aide during sign-in. This can help eliminate unnecessary reporting and/or checking. In addition, every child will be given a routine visual examination upon arrival at the school and before leaving by the teacher/aide for obvious signs of illness/injury.



Procedures for Administering Medication

1. Parents/guardians are encouraged to administer medications at home at times that will give maximum benefit unless otherwise instructed.
2. Medication and/or special medical procedures shall be administered to a child by the designated staff only when there is written, signed, and dated permission form from the parent/guardian.
3. Any medications (children's, staff, visitors) shall be kept under lock and key, in an area inaccessible to the children. If refrigeration is required, medicine will be placed in locked container, and placed in the refrigerator.
4. Time of all medication dosages administered at center along with the signature of the person who administered it shall be provided, in writing to child's parent/guardian on a bi-weekly basis.
5. Only prescribed medications will be given in accordance with above procedures, unless they have written instructions from doctor.

Daily Health Check

A daily health check of each child is made on the child's arrival at the Center. This check is carried out in the presence of the parent(s) by the teacher, or teacher's aide, so that they can exchange information about the child's health status and make decisions about the best ways to meet the needs of the child and parents and fulfill the expectation of the Center. By checking children at the beginning of each day, staff can identify specific signs or symptoms of illness in time to prevent the spread of infection.

Accident Reports

Despite all efforts to promote safety and injury prevention, should a child be involved in an accident or receive an injury, it is important to communicate this to parents both verbally and in writing. The information provided is essential should there be a need for follow-up with the medical home or to continue monitoring of the injury and its progress at home.



Nutrition

The nutrition segment of the Health Services component provides a comprehensive program that establishes meaningful learning experiences while providing food that meets the daily nutritional requirements by providing two balanced meals, and a snack daily, usually exceeding the USDA minimum requirements, thereby building strong healthy bodies.

The Nutrition segment, while recognizing individual differences and cultural patterns, will also promote sound physical, social and emotional growth and development. Individual profiles are done on children as needed, by means of observation in the classroom and home visits, to ascertain food preferences, special dietary needs and family feeding habits. Any special dietary need will be accommodated. Parents are encouraged to participate in menu planning to ensure introduction of new foods. All children are fed the same daily menu with the exception of special diets.



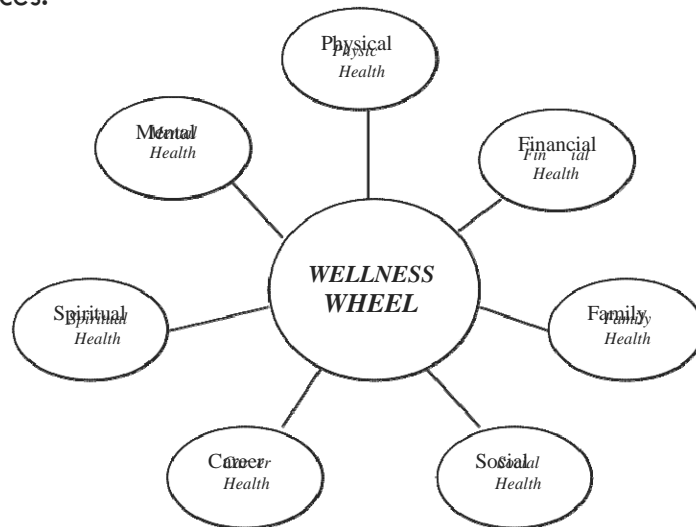
Mental Health

Parents are their child's first teachers and that is a big responsibility. Both children and parents grow and develop over time and there are many things that influence their overall health. Everyone is different, yet we are all similar in many ways.

The Wellness Wheel is an easy way to look at the different areas of our lives and how one area influences another. If you as a parent don't feel well about yourself or your life in any area, it may be hard to care for your child and meet their needs. Too many young

children are described as sad, bad, and mad. But teachers, and sometimes parents, do not know what to do.

Lowndes County BOE Head Start contracts with the Montgomery Area Mental Health Professionals and other private consultants who are available to assist and support children and families, and Head Start staff. The Mental Health consultants are here to provide information and support. Please contact your Classroom Teacher or Family Service Worker if you would like more information on how to use our Mental Health consultant services.



Essentially, there are 7 components that make up the expression of our wellness:

- 1. Physical Health: Is your body healthy or sick? What are you doing about it?
- 2. Financial Health: Do you live within your means, or is this always a source of stress?
- 3. Family Health: Is your family a source of support to you?
- 4. Social Health: Are your friends a source of support to you?
- 5. Career Health: Do you like your job? Is your job rewarding to you?
- 6. Spiritual Health: Are you connected with something bigger?
- 7. Mental Health: Are you rewarded with new ideas or seek out to expand your mind?

Your present circumstances don't determine where you can go; they merely determine where you start.

—Nido Qubein

Parent, Family & Community Engagement

Parent Engagement

The Family Community Services department implemented the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework beginning the 2012-2013 program year. The framework was developed by the Office of Head Start with Head Start children's academic success in mind. The following Family Engagement Outcomes will be addressed with you: Family Well-being, Parent-Child Relationships, Families as Lifelong Educators, Families as Learners, Family Engagement in Transitions, Family Connections to Peers and Community, and Families as Advocates and Learners. Research suggests that if Head Start creates a positive and trusting relationship with our parents and family members, you are more likely to become engaged in your child's development and learning. Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start wants to engage with YOU!!!

Parent Literacy Program

LCBOE Head Start Program provides financial assistance to parent/guardians (of children enrolled in the LCBOE Head Start Program) seeking their General Educational Development Diploma (GED). Childcare, mileage and test fees are reimbursed to parent/guardians as they work to obtain their GED. Information about area colleges and vocational schools is available to parents/guardians wanting to further their education. Referrals are also made to the Job Training Program for assistance with interview skills and resumé development.

Parents as Adult Learners

All family members are encourage to continue their education or begin job training. Family Service Workers help set education/job training goals and support families' efforts. These goals may include basic education, GED, ESL, job training, college certificate or other vocational program. Referrals to classes or support in enrolling will be offered.

Parents as Teachers

Each family can participate in planned Family Fun Club activities. It means a great deal for children to have their families spend special time with them. Children are given a free book at these activities which are held monthly in each county.

Parent/Child Packets

Families receive monthly parent/child packets filled with ideas and materials to help them in their role as their child's most important teacher. Many packets will include a book to add to your home library.

RIF/Reading Is Fundamental

Throughout the school year, Lowndes County BOE Head Start children participate in RIF

which is the nation's oldest and largest child and family literacy program providing books to the children.

We will provide a Parent Engagement program that will:

1. Involve the total community in the Head Start operations.
2. Require at least 51% parent representation on the Policy Council.
3. Require each Head Start center to have its own parent committee to assume responsibility for involving parents in a direct and meaningful way.
4. Develop a program of parent education that will disseminate information the parents feel they need.
5. Implement a program of wholesome recreation for parents.
6. Provide training toward the development of careers that aid in removing the underlying cause of poverty.
7. Reimburse parents who are below the poverty guidelines for reasonable expenses incurred while serving on the Policy Council, parent committee officers, Education Advisory members, Inter-agency, screening, and interview committee members.



Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Agreement

Head Start is committed to supporting your family. One of the ways in which we will support you throughout the year is through the PFCE Agreement. The PFCE Agreement is a tool that we will work on together to help us identify your family's strengths, and goals/opportunities for change that will benefit your family.

By setting goals and following a plan to meet them, you are able to realize your hopes and dreams for your family. Head Start staff will support you in reaching your goals by providing you with the following services:

Information:

- We will provide information about available resources in the community that your family may be interested in.

Referral:

- We will provide you with the contact information for resources in the community that you are interested in accessing to assist you in meeting your needs and goals.

Advocacy:

- We will work alongside you or on your behalf to help you better access services provided by community resources.

Support:

- We will check in with you throughout the year to see if your family needs are being met and offer you encouragement in working toward your goals.

Fatherhood Initiative

Better known as the **REAL MEN, REAL TALK** was developed to provide men involved in the lives of children with the skills necessary to become more committed in their children's lives, in addition to developing and enhancing both the children's and father's literacy skills.

The goals of the Fatherhood Initiative are to: increase male participation in all aspects of LCBOEHS, provide opportunities for fathers to discuss topics of interest, increase positive father/child interactions, increase male knowledge of community resources, include non-custodial and incarcerated fathers, and maintain father friendly centers, activities, and staff.

Community Resources

Head Start believes in assisting families to meet their basic needs so we will provide you with information (Quick Find Card) about community resources that provide assistance with emergency and crisis needs, counseling, education, child care, child support, health care, employment, housing, legal assistance, financial and budgeting needs, transportation, and parenting information for you and your family. Please contact us if you would like additional information about any of the resources available for families in the Lowndes County area.



Donations/In-Kind

In-kind is a term you will hear often in Head Start. Because our program is funded by a grant awarded by the federal government, we are required to provide 25% local matching funds. These funds can be actual dollars or in-kind dollars. **The time that you volunteer in Head Start will be converted into a dollar amount, thus the in-kind contributed.**

You will be asked to verify and sign in-kind voucher forms weekly. Your teacher or Family Service Worker will assist you and answer any questions that might arise.

Volunteering

Sharing your time and talents with our program offers you a variety of personal rewards, including:

- Gaining valuable work experience to prepare you for your future employment;
- Learning more about children and how to work with them;
- Having the opportunity to fulfill your public service goals; and
- Gaining the pride and satisfaction of being a part of a successful program for children and families.

Some of the ways you may participate as a Head Start Volunteer are:

1. Help a disabled child
2. Assist with escorting children on field trips
3. Attend parent committee meetings
4. Decorate a bulletin board
5. Teach music and/or art in the classroom
6. Supervise the playground, read to the children
7. Type and/or copy correspondences
8. Use your skills to assist staff and other volunteers
9. Serve as a floater
10. Bus monitor

Sharing your experiences can mean a lot to your children, the program and you. You are always welcome in the classroom. We want to share your special talents, hobbies and time. If you are interested in volunteering, see Mrs. Laura Hunter to complete an application and training.

Volunteers are not paid—
not because they are
worthless but because
they are priceless.

--unknown



GET ENGAGED! For your child! For you!



You are your child's first and most important teacher!
There are many ways for you to share your child's Head Start experience:

Parenting: Teachers and other staff can help you learn about child development and parenting – how to set up rules and routines that will make your home more peaceful. You can help teachers learn more about your family background, cultures and goals for your child.

Communicating: Communication goes both ways. Teachers want to share information with you at Home Visits and Conferences, through newsletters, phone calls or notes home. Never hesitate to call or ask to visit.

Volunteering: We need you! We need volunteers to help children with coats and shoes, to help at mealtimes, to read to the children, to stuff take-home folders, to share a special skill or to share a cultural experience. The more parent volunteers we have, the richer the children's classroom experience. You will have many wonderful opportunities this year!

Learning at Home: You and your child have activities to do together! It is important to spend time looking at and reading books every day. By talking together and sharing household jobs with your child you are helping him or her learn. All you have to do is TAKE TIME—we will offer lots of ideas!

Decision Making: We expect parents to attend monthly parent meetings to hear about what is happening in the Head Start classroom and to help teachers plan experiences for the children. Parents are elected to serve on our monthly Policy Council to share decisions on how the money is spent, who is hired to work in the program, and what the goals are for the program. You know your family best, partner with us to do the best.

Collaborating With the Community: "It takes a village to raise a child." Join us as we get out in the community to let others know more about our program – about Early Childhood and what all families need to be successful. Together we will find places to make our voices known.

The greatest predictor of student achievement is family involvement! Research says that to help children be successful in school the family must...

- 1) Have HIGH EXPECTATIONS for their child's future.
- 2) Offer opportunities to LEARN AT HOME.
- 3) BECOME INVOLVED in their child's education.

You are invited...to a PARENT MEETING once a month!

We are in this together! Let's meet once a month to share important information and plan together. We'll have Child Care for the kids and an informal meeting time for parents or guardians and Head Start staff.

What will happen at the meeting?

- You will learn more about what is happening in the classroom. What are the children interested in learning about? Help plan activities, field trips, and special events to share with your children both in the classroom and at home.
- You can talk with teachers about what is working for you in the Head Start program and what isn't working. We need your ideas, opinions, and feedback to make sure we are providing a quality experience for children and families.
- You will get parenting support from Head Start staff and other parents who are experiencing some of the same things you are. We don't have all the answers, but we have information, experience and practical ideas for you to try.



Getting a HEAD in life depends on where you START.



**Lowndes County BOE Head Start
Policy Council**

Seeking 3 Parent Representatives from each center and alternates.
The meetings will be held in Hayneville @ the Central Office Conference Center

TOP 10 REASONS TO SERVE ON POLICY COUNCIL!

1. Be a leader!
2. Your family will be so proud of you.
3. Learn job skills to put on your resume.
4. Enjoy a delicious meal with the group.
5. Be part of the village that it takes to raise a child.
6. Establish w relationship with the Head Start director.
7. Help balance a million dollar budget.
8. Meet new friends and influence people.
9. Get involved at the highest level.
10. Put your heart into Head Start!

If this sounds like the place for you, please talk to your teacher or call Mrs. Hunter at 548-2145 or 548-2511 to learn more today. New representatives are now being recruited and will be elected in September to sit on POLICY COUNCIL 2015-2016!

All representatives will be trained and equipped for service to their unit and the Head Start Program. Reimbursement for any child care or mileages costs for participation will be provided. Be a part of a winning team!

Early Childhood Development

Education

The overall goal of Early Childhood Development (one of three areas integrated into the Performance Standards for the Head Start Program) includes Education, Health and Nutrition, Mental Health and Disabilities. In an effort to ensure that each child reaches his/her maximum potential, the Lowndes County BOE Head Start program provides an environment that helps to build ethnic pride, positive self esteem, strengthen social relationships while continuing to forge a strong relationship between home and school, and community. In order to serve both children and families, we provide a continuum of services. It is our goal to build strong families so that children may succeed.

The Houghton Mifflin SPLASH into Pre-K Curriculum is a hands on, minds on curriculum that is based on scientific research. Aligned with the key Pre-K learning goals, it provides children with the foundational skills they need to succeed as lifelong learners.

School Readiness Goals

In order to ensure our children are prepared for kindergarten when they leave our program, we have adopted the following goals:

- Emergent Literacy-Children will comprehend and use increasingly complex and varied language to communicate needs and express ideas with adults and peers
- Emergent Numeracy-Children will use math in everyday routines to count, compare, relate patterns and problem solve
- Social Studies-Children will understand people and how to relate to others and the world around them
- Science and Environmental Education-Children will use science in everyday routines to gather information, investigate, and observe their surroundings.
- Technology-Children explore and use technological skills and tools to understand the digital environment as it relates to everyday life
- Social and Emotional Development-Children will recognize and regulate emotions, attention, impulses, and behavior
- Approaches to Learning-Children will demonstrate interest in varied topics and activities, desire to learn, creativity and independence in learning
- Creative Arts-Children will express their creativity through art media, musical activities, and materials
- Physical Health & Development-Children will demonstrate control of large muscles for movement, navigation and balance

Parents, you are your child's first teacher. Build on these facts:

- You are the first and strongest role model. Set good examples.
- Offer plenty of praise and encouragement. Love is unconditional.
- Teach responsibility. It will help your child feel capable.
- Communication counts. Good relationships are built on communication.
- Strengthen the home/school connection. Help with homework, attend parent meetings, support extra-curricular activities, and introduce your child to local resources.

A Day In Head Start

Shared learning experience that comes from being involved in your child's learning increases the harmony between home and school. We include parents as partners in their children's education, giving them a voice and place in their child's classroom. We look forward to having your participation and presence in the classroom. Listed below is a sample of our daily schedule.

SAMPLE SCHEDULE

Time	Minutes	Activity
7:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.	60	Arrival/Breakfast/Restroom
8:00 a.m.-8:10 a.m.	10	Meeting Time/Tooth Brushing
8:10 a.m.-9:00 a.m.	50	School Readiness/Free Choice Activities/Story Time
9:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m.	60	Outside Play
10:00 a.m.-10:10 a.m.	10	Restroom
10:10 a.m.-10:25 a.m.	15	Story Time
10:25 a.m.-10:35 a.m.	10	Hand Washing
10:35 a.m.-11:05 a.m.	30	LUNCH
11:05 a.m.-11:15 a.m.	10	Restroom
11:15 a.m.-12:00 noon	45	Tooth brushing/ School Readiness/Free Choice Activities
12:00 noon-1:00 p.m.	60	Nap Time
1:00 p.m.-1:20 p.m.	20	Restroom/Snack
1:20 p.m.-1:35 p.m.	15	Story Time
1:35 p.m.-2:15 p.m.	20	School Readiness/Free Choice Activities
2:15 p.m.-2:30 p.m.	15	Closing Day Activity
2:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.	30	Prepare to depart for home/Extended day

*School readiness activities include, but not limited to: discovery, exploration, numeracy, literacy, and creativity.



Toys from Home

Head Start has a large variety of developmentally appropriate toys/materials for preschool age children. **Please do not send toys from home** as they are too easily broken or lost and are extra hard to share. It is not safe for the children to have toys on the bus.



Field Trips

Field trips are planned for the children throughout the school year at LCBOE Head Start. A field trip is considered any supervised trip with the children, that is away from the Head Start site. Classroom staff will inform parents of the field trip by providing you a permission slip and you will need to sign it and return it to your child's teacher before he/she can go on the field trip.



Dressing your child for center activities

Your child should wear comfortable clothing suitable for indoor and outdoor play. They are encouraged to help themselves as much as possible. Therefore, clothing should be easy to get off and on. Clothing worn to school will get dirty as children participate in the activities of the day, **an extra set should remain at the center for emergencies**. All clothing should be marked with the child's name.

Girls are encouraged not to wear beads in their hair. Young children remove beads and place them in their mouth and other body cavities. Children should leave jewelry and money at home. Help us provide a safe environment for our children. If jewelry is worn and lost, Head Start will not be responsible.

Student Disciplinary Policy

In an effort to ensure the safety and well being of all children entrusted to the Lowndes County BOE Head Start Program, it is our policy to implement the following procedures for disciplinary action(s) involving children with behavior problems:

Offense: Disciplinary Behavior Problem(s)

1. A letter from the teachers and FSW will be sent to the respective parent and/or guardian of the child when the child's behavior is determined to present a problem which interrupts the classroom instruction and/or which poses a safety concern in the classroom.

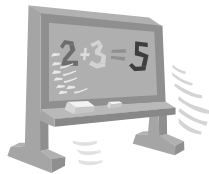
2. In the event that the behavior problems continues after the aforementioned action(s) have taken place, an on-site conference with the child's parent, Head Start's Family Community Services Manager, Education/Disabilities Manager, and the child's classroom teacher will be held.
3. Upon completing the on-site conference with the parent, a referral to an appropriate agency will be recommended with the parent's permission (if applicable).

Corporal Punishment

The use of corporal punishment and/or total isolation of any child cannot be tolerated in Head Start. Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force as a form of discipline. This includes spanking, slapping, pinching, jerking, pulling hair, etc. Isolation refers to separating the child from normal association with classroom activities. Isolation in which the child is left totally unattended is unacceptable. Using the deprivation of meals is also forbidden. The use of verbal abuse is not allowed in Head Start. This includes yelling, embarrassing or talking down to a child in any way. This is a form of emotional abuse and will not be tolerated.

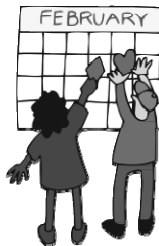
Keeping you informed

We want you to know what your child will be doing at the center each day. We will send letters about your child's progress and other information of interest. You will also receive other notes and phone calls when necessary. Please read these notices and respond as needed.



Early Closing/Inclement Weather

Parents will be notified in advance, when we find it necessary to close schools for staff training or other reasons. In case of bad weather, radio and television stations will make the announcement in the same manner as public school system. Monthly fire/tornado drills are conducted at your child's center for safety purposes.



Parent – Teacher Communication

Open Door Policy

- We have an “open door” policy for families in Head Start. This means you are welcome to stop in at anytime to visit with your child.

Home Visits

- Two visits will take place in your home with one or both of the parents/guardians at a time convenient for your family. The purpose of a home visit is for the teacher to work with you to provide learning opportunities within the home that enhance your child’s growth and development. It also helps the teacher learn more about you and your child and your unique relationship. We also want to meet with you to provide any information or support you may need for your family, check in on your progress toward your family goal, and connect you with any resources in the community that you may be interested in.

Newsletters

- *Nutrition Nuggets* is a newsletter given to parents on a quarterly basis. It contains information on parenting, child development, health and safety. Quarterly newsletters provide you with information as to what is happening in your child’s classroom and throughout the program.
- *Head Start Voices Newsletter* is a newsletter given to parents on a quarterly basis identifying what’s happening throughout our program.

Parent Information Bulletin Boards

- These are located either in your child’s classroom or outside in the hallway. Information regarding the children’s curriculum and development will be displayed along with any classroom notices or program information.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Regularly scheduled conferences are held. Parents will be notified of dates in advance. Conferences are an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss your child’s progress, accomplishments, daily routines, and concerns. Other meetings may be held throughout the year at either the parent or teacher’s request.

Phone Contacts

- Classroom teachers would be very happy to talk with you or return your phone call to let you know how your child is doing or answer any questions you may have.

Written Notes

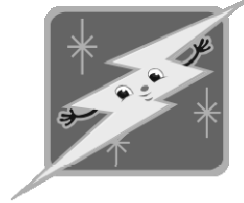
- Notes or memos of upcoming events will be placed in your child’s Head Start bag for you to read. Please check this daily.

E-mail

- If available, e-mail is used to inform you of Head Start events.

Monthly Calendar

- A monthly calendar is offered to each enrolled family. The calendar lists the monthly curriculum theme and specific program activities.



Child Abuse

According to Public law 93-247, which is the child abuse and neglect prevention and treatment act, it is the responsibility, by law, of the Head Start personnel to report any suspected child abuse and/or neglect to the Department of Human Resources, in accordance with state law and Head Start will maintain confidentiality of records concerning child abuse and neglect.

Head Start is proud to be able to offer healthy meals and snacks to our children. Due to various food allergies and strict Federal and State guidelines, we ask that parents do not bring in food to share in the Head Start classroom. We encourage you to be involved in nutrition activities by sharing recipes and menu ideas, or volunteering in the classroom.

Name Tags

The ride to school can set the tone for the whole school day for your child. Therefore, to ensure safety, name tags must be worn by your child every day. The Head Start program will provide name tags for your child to wear to and from school. We ask that you attach the name tag to the outside of their clothing. This will help to ensure that your child gets on the correct bus and gets home safely.

Holiday and Celebrations

We have many celebrations in Head Start. They are generally focused around changing seasons and also celebrate our friends and families on an individual basis. We encourage teachers, parents and children to celebrate learning every day. In order to be respectful of everyone's beliefs and financial status, we save religious and commercial holidays, as well as birthday celebrations, for families to celebrate on their own. Instead, parents may send party invitations for teachers to pass out to classmates.

Nap Time

Head Start children attending the full day program will be provided with an opportunity to nap/rest without distraction/disturbance from other activities at the center. Bedding is provided by LCBOEHS to be used by your child during naptime. However, parents can send one from home.

Transition

It is the policy of the Lowndes County BOE Head Start Program to make the transition to and from the program as smooth as possible. Parents are a vital part of this transition process and are encouraged to participate in transitional activities and field trips.

Transition to Public School

To assist families as they leave Head Start for public school, staff members will provide the following:

- Information about the public school (ie., address, phone number, name of principal, registration dates, orientation sessions, etc.)
- Opportunities to meet public school personnel;
- Opportunities to ask questions and receive answers about the kindergarten program and expectations;
- Copies of child records;
- Suggestions for summer activities;
- Support and encouragement for children and parents as they prepare for change.

Children with Disabilities

Head Start works in cooperation with community professionals and the LEA to provide services and support to children diagnosed with special needs. All Head Start services, including full participation in center activities, socializations and field trips, are made available to children regardless of their special needs.

For children who are not enrolled in special education services, LCBOEHS staff conducts a child development screening during the first forty-five (45) days following enrollment. The screening tools we use are the DENVER, DECA, and ASQ-3 which includes a survey of questions for you to answer. The information you supply will reveal your child's strengths, uncover any areas of concern and help your staff member identify areas to focus on with you and your child. The questionnaire, coupled with parent and staff observations, allows us to determine whether or not a referral for more in-depth evaluation should be considered. If staff and parents agree a referral is warranted, we will assist the parent in making contact with the appropriate agency. HS staff will offer support throughout the evaluation process. If your child is determined eligible to receive services, we will support you as you learn about the process and take part in developing your child's educational plan. We will work together with you and the other service providers involved to meet your child's unique needs.

Parent Grievance Policy

If you are concerned that things are not going as well as you would like in the program, there is a process to have your concerns addressed. First, please discuss the issue with the person/persons involved. For example, if you feel that something is not right in the classroom, please talk to your classroom teacher. If they are unable to help you or you feel that the issue has not been resolved, please address your concerns to the appropriate Manager. If the issue persists, you can address your concerns to the Head Start Director at the central office. Remember that your opinion and viewpoint is important and we would like to hear you give suggestions that might be helpful in improving the program.

Confidentiality

All child and family records are confidential and kept in locked cabinets. LCBOEHS maintains all child and family records for a period of 3 years after the child leaves the program. After 3 years, all records are destroyed. Any information in these files shall not be transferred to any public or private agency or any individual without the written consent of the parent or guardian. Only authorized persons are permitted to see the records and/or to share written and/or verbal information pertinent to the coordination of Head Start services.

Authorized persons include:

- The child's custodial parent or guardian
- Classroom and family services staff who work with child and family
- LCBOEHS Management and administrative staff
- Head Start collaborative partners delivering child and family services
- Head Start consultants (mental health, dental hygienist, nurse, education specialist, or other service consultant) and substitutes only on a need-to-know basis
- Persons who have received written permission from the child's custodial parent/guardian
- LCBOEHS legal counsel
- Qualified personnel for research, audit or program evaluation

Parents/guardians must give written consent to have a child photographed while participating in Head Start activities and for use in any Head Start recruitment materials or newsletters.

Receipt of Parent Handbook Form (Parent's Copy)

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start Parent Handbook. I recognize that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with information, policies and procedures it contains. By my signature, I agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the parent handbook.

Enrolled Child's/Children's Name(s) _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FAMILY NAME _____

CENTER: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EDUCATION SUPERVISOR: _____

TEACHER: _____

TEACHER ASSISTANT _____

FAMILY SERVICE WORKER: _____

BUS DRIVER: _____

BUS NUMBER: _____

THE BUS WILL ARRIVE AT APPROXIMATELY: _____

THE BUS WILL RETURN AT APPROXIMATELY: _____



Receipt of Parent Handbook Form (File Copy-please return to teacher)

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Lowndes County Board of Education Head Start Parent Handbook. I recognize that it is my responsibility to familiarize myself with information, policies and procedures it contains. By my signature, I agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in the parent handbook.

Enrolled Child's/Children's Name(s) _____

Parent's Name _____

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

FAMILY NAME _____

CENTER: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EDUCATION SUPERVISOR: _____

TEACHER: _____

TEACHER ASSISTANT _____

FAMILY SERVICE WORKER: _____

BUS DRIVER: _____

BUS NUMBER: _____

THE BUS WILL ARRIVE AT APPROXIMATELY: _____

THE BUS WILL RETURN AT APPROXIMATELY: _____



