Mission of ADVOCAP: To create opportunities for people and communities to reduce poverty and increase self sufficiency.

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Welcome to the Head Start Program of ADVOCAP!

Dear Families,

**Welcome to Head Start!** This handbook was prepared by the staff and Policy Council of ADVOCAP Head Start to help you become more familiar with our program, policies, and procedures.

Head Start began in 1965 with the goal of providing a comprehensive preschool program for children mainly from low income families. For over fifty years Head Start has symbolized our nation's commitment to young children, increased our understanding of the importance of learning in the early years, and demonstrated the vital importance of parents in the growth and development of their children.

**The first priority of Head Start is the same as yours, your children.** When enrolled in the center based program children will learn about themselves, about others, and the world around them as they enjoy each day of Head Start.

**You are the most important people in your children's lives.** The staff at Head Start is also concerned about you and the welfare of your entire family. There will be special activities at Head Start just for parents as well as family fun times. I encourage you to participate in as many as possible. Have FUN!

**I invite you to come to the center to visit or to volunteer.** Your involvement is a valuable contribution to our program and to your children. This handbook will provide information on a variety of ways that you can become an involved Head Start parent. I look forward to seeing you often.

**On behalf of the entire Head Start staff, welcome to ADVOCAP's Head Start! We are looking forward to a year full of promise and growth!**

Sincerely,

Hillary Gunther
ADVOCAP Head Start Director
(920) 922-7760 x 3512
hillaryg@advocap.org
What is Head Start?

Head Start is a federally funded program designed to help preschool children from low-income families and children with disabilities receive a variety of learning experiences. Head Start provides children with activities that help them grow cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. The staff recognize that, as parents, you are the first and most important teachers of your children. They will welcome your involvement in Head Start activities and will work as partners with you to help your child progress.

ADVOCAP Head Start Position Statement:

The families, Policy Council, and staff of ADVOCAP Head Start are committed to:

- Providing comprehensive family and child development services that support school readiness and self-sufficiency to eligible families in Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties.
- Maintaining qualified and nurturing staff, community partnerships, the involvement of parents, and shared governance.
- Building on strengths and positive relationships with families, children and staff.

Eligibility for the program is based on three criteria:

1. The family resides in either Fond du Lac or Green Lake Counties.
2. The child must be three or four years old on or before Sept. 1st of that school year.
3. The family income meets the federal income guidelines.

Applications for enrollment are accepted throughout the year.

WE WELCOME PARENTS, VOLUNTEERS, AND VISITORS TO OUR PROGRAM!
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Fond du Lac, WI 54935
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North Fond du Lac, WI 54937
Ph: (920) 322-9190
Site Coordinator – Jessica Nemecek

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CENTER
1225 Fourth St
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
(920)273-5574
Site Coordinator – Jessica Nemecek

CLAY LAMBERTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
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Berlin, WI 54923
(920) 361-2442
Site Coordinator - RoseAnne Henning

BARLOW PARK ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
100 Ringstad Dr.
Ripon, WI 54971
(920) 748-1550
Site Coordinator - RoseAnne Henning
PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Since Head Start was authorized by Congress in the summer of 1965, one of the most unique parts of the program is the engagement of parents. Head Start recognizes that parents are the first and best teachers of their children and that they have valuable information to share about how their children learn.

Parents and staff can work together to decide what kinds of learning experiences they want their children to have in Head Start. Parents should be involved in Head Start because it is their children who are being affected and benefit from the program.

There are many ways for parents to be involved in the Head Start Program. We are a licensed child care center (5 star ratings in YoungStar at all centers) and must follow all the rules including number and age of children in the classrooms. This means we cannot allow siblings to attend with their parents who are volunteering. We do apologize for this inconvenience. Please see “Child Care Reimbursement” section if you have other children who would need child care while you are volunteering. We also ask that cell phones are put away while you are spending valuable time focusing on your child’s education. We want your Head Start experience to be a positive one and help lay the foundation for involvement in the public/parochial schools. The following is a partial list of different ways families can be involved in Head Start:

* volunteering in the classroom
* eating breakfast, lunch, snack with the children
* preparing materials at home for the teachers
* joining the children on field trips
* representing your child’s class on Policy Council
* attending family nights
* assisting the Family Development Specialists in planning family events
* reading to children

There are many other ways that parents can participate in the Head Start Program. The more parents contribute their knowledge to the program, the stronger our program will be. If anyone has any questions, ideas, or suggestions, please feel free to contact your Family Development Specialist, your child’s teacher, or the Director at anytime during the school year. Parents are welcomed as a part of the School Family at Head Start.

NEWSLETTER

Every family will receive a monthly newsletter entitled the “Head Start Connection”. Information on upcoming events such as family nights, parenting classes, community events, etc. are included in the newsletter. Please provide us with your email for easy & convenient sending!

A “Parent's Page” with articles that parents have written is an important part of our newsletter. Please read and post the monthly calendar in a convenient location for your family.

Teachers will also be sending home a weekly classroom newsletter detailing specific themes and special announcements. Early Years Newsletters are also sent home monthly.
POLICY COUNCIL

The Head Start Policy Council is one of the main decision making bodies of the program. Members of Policy Council work closely with the Head Start Director to make major decisions affecting the program. At least 51% of the Policy Council members shall be parents or guardians of children who are currently enrolled in the program. Program options will be proportionally represented on the Policy Council by county of residence. Orientation to Policy Council takes place in October.

Representatives from community also play a role in the Council but these members may not exceed 49% of the total membership. They may be previous Head Start parents, representatives from other service organizations, school organizations, school districts, county public health nurses, colleges, or the county Human Services Department. Policy Council members may not serve more than five years as stated in the Head Start Performance Standards.

If possible, child care is provided during Policy Council meetings or parents may receive child care reimbursement for attending this meeting held once each month at the Fonc du Lac Head Start Center. Mileage reimbursement if available only for Policy Council delegates and alternates that live outside of Fonc du Lac. It may be possible for families to attend remotely via phone or computer. Please contact the Head Start Director for more information. Become a Leader and an Advocate in the Program!!!

IN-KIND

The ADVOCAP Head Start program receives almost 80 percent of the money necessary to operate the program from the federal government. The other 20 percent must come from the community in the form of volunteer services, material donations, and financial contributions to the program. We also receive funds from the State of Wisconsin to serve approximately 15 children in addition to the 242 children served with federal funding.

One way that the other 20 percent is obtained is by parents or guardians volunteering their time at the center, attending Policy Council meetings, preparing materials at home, or participating in other program related activities. The value of the hours a person volunteers is calculated at a rate comparable to what we would pay for these services.

Volunteering by parents is a very important part of the program. When a parent, relative, or guardian volunteers at Head Start it shows the child that an adult is interested in what he/she is doing. Volunteering gives your child a sense of pride and encourages children to do their best! It makes them feel important and special. We can help guide you and find fun activities for you to do in the classroom! Just ask us how!
FAMILY SERVICES

ADVOCAP Head Start Family Development Staff is committed to meeting the individual needs of each Head Start family. Head Start has been a leader in understanding the value of parent involvement in their child’s learning activities.

Family Development Staff will be involved with your child and classroom teacher and serve as an information link between families and the classroom staff. Family Development Staff will:

1. Offer opportunities to work with Family Development Staff to determine your family's strengths, area of concern, setting and prioritizing goals.
2. Provide you with a community Resource Directory and describe the services available to you at Head Start, ADVOCAP, and in the community.
3. Provide families with connections to employment/training resources and family literacy programs.
4. Offer Parenting Programs, Family Outings, Special Father's Programs and Activities.
5. Offer opportunities to volunteer in the classroom and on field trips.

HEAD START CENTER BASED PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY:

Children learn best by doing. The Head Start philosophy emphasizes that children will be provided with a wide range of experiences to help them grow socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically. Adequate space is provided to include room for quiet activities as well as active times. There is time for free choice and structured group activities. The classroom is divided into centers so that children can choose from a variety of activities and materials. Children may choose to play with blocks, create with art materials, listen to music, look at books, play a game, explore at the science table or pretend in the dramatic play center. Head Start includes time for large muscle development outside as well as in the classroom. There will be times that children will travel to local parks and playgrounds.

Children learn best when they feel safe. The Head Start classrooms provide a warm, secure environment where children feel safe. Furnishings are child-sized and materials are easily reached by the children. Adults allow children to explore and make their own activity choices. Positive redirection is used when children need reminders. The classroom atmosphere is relaxed and provides opportunities for children.

Children learn best when their parents are involved. Head Start teachers believe that parents are the first and best teachers children can have. Parents help teachers in the classroom, give teachers ideas and suggestions, prepare materials for teachers and bring materials from home that are relevant to their children.

Children learn best when the material is developmentally appropriate. Each child is assessed using the Teaching Strategies GOLD objectives for development and learning. This assessment helps the teachers determine what each child does well and what they may need help with. An individual plan is written for each child. Parents help the teachers determine what School Readiness goals should be included in the plan.
Children learn best when they are comfortable. **Appropriate clothing is important to children.** Clothes should be easily washable so that getting messy won’t matter. Well worn or patched jeans are fine. Clothing and shoes should be loose fitting and easy for children to manage themselves. Children should dress for going outside. Please do not send your child in flip-flop sandals; they are not safe for playground equipment and outdoor play. Closed toe shoes like tennis shoes are best for playing outside. Hats, boots, mittens, and warm coats are required when the weather gets cold. **Please put your child’s name on everything you send to school, including every item of clothing.**

**CHECK OUR LOST AND FOUND BOX IF YOU ARE MISSING ANYTHING**

**PARENT-STAFF COMMUNICATIONS**

Head Start regulations require teachers to make two visits to the home of each child, in addition to the two parent/teacher conferences scheduled at Head Start. The first home visit will take place before school begins. At this time the teacher will meet with each child’s family and answer any questions they may have before school begins. The second teacher visit will take place in January or February. The first parent/teacher conference takes place in October or November and the second conference is scheduled in May. It is important that families attend these conferences to keep informed about their child’s progress. **If you would like to talk to your child’s teacher or other Head Start staff at any time during the year, feel free to call and schedule a convenient time.**

Each teaching team sends home a weekly newsletter in your child’s school bag. This newsletter shares information with parents on the weekly theme and special activities planned for your child. Talk to your child about the events that have taken place in school.

Notices of individual events scheduled at Head Start are sent home every week in the children’s school bags. Please read and respond accordingly to these notices. **Your communication with us is very important!**
ADVOCAP Head Start’s School Readiness and Parent Family Community Engagement (PFCE) Goals 2016-2017

School Readiness Goal #1
Children enrolled in ADVOCAP Head Start will demonstrate the use of curiosity, risk taking, and willingness to engage in new experiences to extend their learning. 
DOMAIN: Approaches to Learning

PFCE Goal #1
ADVOCAP Head Start will offer parents opportunities to learn more about their child’s developmental milestones and the importance of their role as their child’s first teacher. (Parent – Child relationships, Families as Lifelong Educators)

Objectives:
- A. Children will be able to think problems through, draw on everyday experiences, and apply their knowledge to demonstrate an appropriate solution.
- B. Children will be able to appropriately ask for help, demonstrate signs of pride, effort, and engagement in activities, materials, or information, even when challenging.

School Readiness Goal #2
Children enrolled in ADVOCAP Head Start will demonstrate emotional competence, self regulation, and a personal sense of well being. DOMAIN: Social and Emotional Development

PFCE Goal #2
ADVOCAP Head Start staff will support families as their children transition through the stages of early education. (Parent Engagement in Transitions, Parents as Advocates and Leaders)

Objectives:
- A. Children will establish and sustain positive relationships with adults and peers by developing confidence in themselves, their family, and their culture.
- B. Children will be able to follow classroom rules, routines, directions, and suggest solutions to social problems.

School Readiness Goal #3
Children enrolled in ADVOCAP Head Start will demonstrate acquisition of skills in the areas of listening and understanding, speaking and communication, and early literacy.
DOMAIN: Language and Literacy

PFCE Goal #3
ADVOCAP Head Start will provide parents with opportunities to form connections and utilize resources in the community thereby giving families additional support to promote language and literacy in the home. (Family Connections to Peers and Community, Families as Advocates and Leaders)
Objectives:
- A. Children will be able to demonstrate phonological awareness by noticing and discriminating rhyme, sounds within words, and understand print as a system to represent sounds and words.
- B. Children will use and comprehend oral language in conversations, to communicate, and to engage with literature.

School Readiness Goal #4
Children enrolled in ADVOCAP Head Start will demonstrate the ability to organize and use information to acquire knowledge and skills.

DOMAIN: Cognition

PFCE Goal #4
Families will increase their self sufficiency to create a stable home environment where their children can achieve increased school readiness skills and instill a life long value of education in the family. *(Families as Life Long Learners, Family Well Being)*

Objectives:
- A. Children will be able to use number concepts and operations, quantify, classify, explore, and describe spatial relationships and shapes in everyday routines.
- B. Children will understand the use and purpose of measurement tools to compare and measure, demonstrate knowledge of patterns, make predictions, and learn how to hypothesize.

School Readiness Goal #5
Children enrolled in ADVOCAP Head Start will demonstrate behaviors to meet physical, self help and safety needs.

DOMAIN: Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development

PFCE Goal #5
ADVOCAP Head Start will work with parents and families to increase their children’s self help skills and encourage children’s independence while working to ensure that the family units’ basic needs are being met. *(Family Well Being)*

Objectives:
- A. Children will demonstrate gross motor manipulative skills.
- B. Children will develop a sense of personal safety by making healthy choices.
CURRICULUM - Creative Curriculum

Children learn best when they can explore using materials familiar to them and make discoveries using their senses of touch, sight, hearing, feeling and taste. Learning isn’t just repeating what someone else says; it requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn first hand about the world we live in. Play is the tool that children use to learn. Keeping this information in mind, a committee of parents, community volunteers and Head Start Teachers studied several curriculum models, and recommended the use of Creative Curriculum for the Head Start program.

The goal of Creative Curriculum is to help children become enthusiastic learners. It helps children become independent, self confident, and inquisitive learners. Children learn at their own pace and in ways that are best for them. Creative Curriculum helps children develop good habits and attitudes, especially a positive sense of themselves, which will make a difference throughout their lives. Creative Curriculum is designed to help children in all areas of development.

SOCIAL: to help children feel comfortable in school, trust their new environment, make friends, and feel they are a part of the group.

EMOTIONAL: to help children experience pride and self confidence, develop independence and self control, and have a positive attitude toward life.

COGNITIVE: to help children become confident learners by letting them try out their own ideas and experience success, and by helping them acquire learning skills as the ability to solve problems, ask questions, use words to describe their ideas, observations, and feelings.

PHYSICAL: to help children increase their large and small muscle skills and feel confident about what their bodies can do.

The activities that are planned for children, the way the rooms are organized, the kinds of toys and materials available, the daily schedules and the way we talk to the children, are all designed to accomplish the goals of Creative Curriculum and give your child a successful start in school.

The curriculum works best when teachers and parents plan together. Parents are a valuable resource to teachers. Your home is your child’s first and continual learning environment. You know how your child learns best and what his or her interests are. The teachers incorporate your ideas into their plans. They appreciate knowing what is happening to your child at home. We ask that you volunteer in the classroom, read the newsletters, attend conferences, keep in touch with your child’s teacher and encourage your child to learn and explore at home. Help your child become an independent, enthusiastic, curious learner!
ADVOCAP HEAD START CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

ADVOCAP Head Start believes that:

1. It is necessary to set standards that provide for the safety of all children and adults in the classroom.

2. Discipline techniques used must be compatible with developmentally appropriate practices.

3. Each situation is unique and requires flexibility in the use of discipline procedures.

POLICY:
1. Staff will arrange the classroom to provide for a safe setting and one that is easy to manage. The classroom will have clearly defined interest areas which are equipped with materials that are developmentally appropriate and easily accessible to the children. Children will be offered a variety of activity choices. Equipment used will be appropriate for the developmental levels of the children and kept in good repair.

2. The atmosphere of the classroom will promote positive interactions among children and adults. Staff will help children develop self control and promote positive self esteem. Adults will model appropriate behaviors, speak calmly to the children, praise and encourage the successive steps of the child’s learning progress, and provide opportunities for success. Staff will provide an environment of acceptance which helps each child build ethnic pride and a positive self concept.

3. Staff will clearly define acceptable behaviors and teach children to respect the rights of others. Classroom rules will be: simply and positively stated; developed with the help of the children, reinforced through the use of reminders and visual cues. Staff will provide positive guidance and set developmentally appropriate limits.

4. The daily schedule will provide predictability for the children. Time will be allowed for active and quiet activities, small group and large group activities as well as teacher directed and self initiated. Individualized activities will be provided to all children. Adequate time will be allowed for transitioning.

5. A developmentally appropriate curriculum will be used. Staff will prepare lesson plans in advance. Equipment and materials will be in place before the children arrive each day.
THE FOLLOWING POSITIVE GUIDANCE TECHNIQUES WILL BE USED:

1. Praising: Create a sense of well being and acceptance.

2. Shaping: Systematic planning for gradual, sequential change in negative behavior.

3. Active listening: Help children clarify feelings in order to problem solve and replace behavior.

4. Substituting: Offer a positive replacement activity for an unacceptable activity.

5. Modifying environment: Change room arrangement.
   Reduce group size.
   Modify stimulus, reduce waiting time.
   Restrict choices.
   Remove a child from an activity, only if the child is verbally disruptive or in danger of hurting himself/herself or others.
   Revise daily schedule.

   Plan transitions in advance.

7. Involving parents: Ask for parental input and cooperation.
   Provide instruction in behavior modification techniques.

PROHIBITIVE PRACTICES:

ADVOCAP Head Start prohibits any physical punishment or punishment that humiliates or frightens the children. This includes but is not limited to:

- Spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, or inflicting any form of corporal punishment
- Verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about child or family
- Binding or tying to restrain movement or enclosing in confined space
- Withholding or forcing meals, snacks and naps
- Punishing for lapses in toilet training
- Excluding child(ren) from class experiences
- Employees who violate the Discipline Policy will be subject to the provisions of the ADVOCAP Employee Personnel Policies.
OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY

Outdoor play is an important part of our curriculum. When the children are outdoors, they like to run, jump, climb, and use all the large muscles in their bodies. They need space to work out and let off steam. Health experts also agree on the importance of fresh air and the negative health consequences of children spending too much time in closed, indoor settings. For these benefits, children are expected to go outside every day, except in extreme weather. (rain, below zero temperatures or wind chill)

If you ask that your child stay indoors on a particular day we usually have to say “no”. While we would like to individualize, staff-child ratios rarely allow us to stay inside with one or two children while the group goes outside.

We do understand that parents have strong feelings about keeping their children healthy. If a child is well enough to attend Head Start, the child is generally assumed well enough to go outside. Health experts agree that cool or damp weather is rarely harmful to children. Please speak with the Health Services Manager or the Director with questions.

We will try to remind you when your child is lacking a hat, mittens, boots, snow pants or other needed clothing. We also try and keep extras on hand for those times when parents forget or items disappear. The program depends on children arriving with all of the necessary clothing for a full, active day - both indoors and out.

Outdoor play provides children with a wonderful opportunity to race around, breathe the fresh air, look at the clouds, and experience all the wonder nature has to offer. By playing outdoors your child can learn so many things:

- to notice changes in nature
- to discover what happens when it is cold, hot, dark, or light
- to use his or her body in increasingly skillful ways
- to be a good observer by seeing, hearing, smelling and touching

With your cooperation and encouragement the outdoors becomes an extension of our classroom where exciting learning takes place!

HEALTH SERVICES AND POLICIES

Every child needs regular preventive health care to promote normal healthy development. Our Head Start family development and health staff will assist parents in finding a dentist or doctor so they can secure ongoing health and dental care which is affordable. The Health Services Manager welcomes calls from families regarding any health or mental health concerns or difficulties with medical bills.

Head Start has a health education program for both parents and children. As a Head Start parent, you may take any of the preventive health and safety classes, such as CPR, First Aid, Weight Loss, Quitting Smoking, at your local hospital free of charge. Health and safety practices are taught to the children every day as a part of the Head Start curriculum.

Head Start has health policies and recommendations in place to help keep your child healthy, safe and free from communicable disease. They are as follows:

1. Our state and federal regulations require that children attending Head Start need to have a physical and dental exam within 6 months prior OR 90 days after enrollment. A record of immunizations
must also be in the center prior to enrollment. Parents must set up a schedule within 30 days of enrollment to complete immunizations for those children who are not up to date.

Children who do not complete their health exams and/or immunizations within 90 days of enrollment will have their names placed on a waiting list to be re-enrolled when their health exams and/or immunizations are up to date.

2. Children who attend Head Start for more than 1 year will need to complete their physical and dental exam within 1 year from their previous exam.

3. Health screening for growth, hearing, and vision will be completed by your doctor or Head Start staff within 45 days of enrollment.

4. Please give your child plenty of time to recover if he or she has been ill so they are strong and healthy when they return to the center.

5. Prescribed medication can be given to your child by teaching staff if medication is required while your child is at school. All medicine must be in the original container and labeled with the child’s name, directions, date, and physician’s name. A written request form needs to be completed and signed by the parent or guardian and doctor BEFORE any medication can be given. Parents or guardians will give school medications or refills directly to a staff member such as the child’s teacher, bus monitor, or bus driver. Medication must never be transported in your child’s school bag. If your child needs non-prescription medication, we will need an order signed with directions from your doctor before the medication can be given.

6. Children with an undiagnosed rash or skin problem need to see their doctor for a diagnosis. We will need to have a re-admittance slip signed by the doctor or medical provider so we know the skin condition is not communicable to other children.

**Families need to inform their child’s teacher or Head Start staff if their child is exposed to a communicable disease, lice, or bed bugs. Family Development Specialists can assist in connecting families to resources to help with these concerns. We are here to help!**

Children with a communicable disease may return with a re-entry permission form from the doctor or if the child has been absent for a period of time equal to the longest period of communicability according to the WI Communicable Disease and Administrative Rule. Temporary isolation will be provided for all children who become ill while they are at the center. Parents or (if the parent isn’t available) your designated person for emergency will be contacted to pick up the child at the center.

7. If a child is injured, the parents will be notified by phone or note depending on the circumstances. A written accident report is kept in the child’s record and a copy is sent home.

8. All education, health, and transportation staff are required to have current First Aid and CPR training and are trained in emergency situations.
CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

Head Start is required to comply with Wisconsin law regarding child abuse and neglect. Our staff is mandated to report the observation of any child who appears to have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused. This report is kept confidential. They must also report any child whose health appears to be endangered by a lack of physical care and/or neglect. The law is designed to protect the health and welfare of children.

A Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Program is part of the Head Start Curriculum. It is reinforced throughout the year by Head Start staff as part of the curriculum. Our curriculum teaches children to respect their bodies and understand their emotions. Children have the opportunity to learn what they should do if they feel threatened or abused. Parents with concerns are invited to come into their child’s classroom or talk with their child’s teacher or Health Services Manager.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Head Start believes in the importance of good mental health. The staff works with each child to help them succeed and develop good self esteem. Throughout the school year our staff use several specially designed curricula to help the children build their confidence and learn to be proud of who they are.

There are also opportunities for parents. Informal discussion groups are held throughout the year on topics of interest that are selected by parents. Topics in the past have included building healthy relationships, step-parent families, child growth and development, parenting, and support groups for both moms and dads. Families are also given information about many other opportunities in the community regarding mental wellness.

Each of our centers in Fond du Lac and Green Lake Counties have a mental health consultant who is available to meet with staff and families. The consultants have experience working with children and young families. They observe all of the children in the classrooms each fall and spring and meet with the staff to give suggestions and help develop a plan to help each child achieve success.

Parents are welcome to meet with the mental health consultant at their center for individual counseling. The appointments are very informal, there is no charge, and are confidential (no forms or records are kept). Each year, many of our families find this very helpful. If you, or any members of your family are going through a troublesome time, have personal concerns or just need someone to talk with, call the Health Services Manager to discuss your concerns. You may want to schedule an appointment with the mental health consultant at your center. You may also make an appointment through your Family Development Specialist or your child’s teacher. All information shared is strictly confidential.

Parents are also encouraged to talk and share their concerns regarding their child with any of the staff at parent/teacher conferences, home visits, or at any other time they would like to talk with someone. Children will often have a change in their behavior in response to a change in their lives. If you’ve had some changes in your family that you feel are affecting your child, please share that information with your child’s teacher or family development specialist. By doing so, we can work together to understand your child’s behavior and help him or her deal successfully with those changes.
NUTRITION SERVICES

Meals:
All children at ADVOCAP Head Start participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The CACFP is a federal program of the Food and Nutrition Services, United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA). This program gives financial assistance to licensed child care institutions to provide nutritious meals. In WI, the CACFP is administered by the Dept. of Public Instruction. The primary goal of the CACFP is to improve the diet of children 12 years of age and younger. The CACFP reimbursement helps to offset food costs so care givers are better able to furnish high quality, nutritious meals and snacks to children in their care.

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

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

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

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

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Meals and snacks provide 1/3-2/3 of the USDA Daily Recommended Intakes. Meals must meet the CACFP minimum meal pattern requirements for children. The meal patterns are based on research related to the individual needs of children at specific ages. Children will not go without nourishment for more than 3 hours.

The meal pattern contains specific components for each meal. Breakfast must contain milk, juice or fruit or vegetable, and a grain/bread item. Lunch/Supper must include milk, a meat/meat alternate, vegetable, fruit, and a grain/bread item. A snack must contain 2 different food components (milk, juice or fruit, vegetable, meat/meat alternate, grain/bread).

Meals are planned and prepared monthly
  • with limited use of salt, sugar, and fat
  • emphasizing foods high in fiber, and including diverse types of food to broaden the child’s food experiences.

Food for all meals must be prepared on the premises and come from approved food sources.
Special Diets:
Menus will be altered for children with special dietary needs due to allergy or a medical condition. Menu alterations will be made upon receipt of written instructions by the child’s physician and upon request of the parent.

Treats:
Head Start includes celebrations and special occasions as part of our developmentally appropriate curriculum. To ensure the safety of our children and staff, families are asked not to bring in food treats to celebrate special occasions. Traditional food treats for special occasions do not meet the USDA’s meal patterns for snacks and meals. Therefore, these foods cannot be distributed at Head Start. If your child would like to share something to celebrate a special occasion, Head Start suggests non-food treats such as pencils, stickers, or books. Check with your teacher for other ideas!

Head Start welcomes meal and snack suggestions from families for celebrating special occasions or for introducing new food experiences to children. Those with suggestions should contact the teacher who will then coordinate purchase of supplies and provision of the food item during planned classroom activities.

Menus:
Parents will receive a monthly copy of the menus. First Presbyterian and North Fond du Lac lunch menus will follow the school district’s menu; the breakfast and snack menus will follow Head Start’s menus. Berlin and Ripon breakfast and lunch menus will follow the school district’s menu. Menu changes may be made without notice due to unforeseen circumstances.

Meal Service:
Staff and volunteers dine with the children family style. Additional portions of vegetables, fruit, bread, and milk are available to allow for individual appetites. Children are encouraged to serve themselves; staff and volunteers may assist children as needed. Meals are eaten in a relaxed and positive atmosphere with adults modeling and encouraging proper table manners, tasting of all foods, initiating conversation, and respecting children’s individual appetites and preferences. Children are encouraged to taste all foods, but they are not forced to take or taste any food. Food is not used as punishment or reward. Children are allowed to eat at their own pace. They may leave the table when they are full and then move on to a quiet activity. Parents are strongly encouraged to come and enjoy a meal with their child and his/her Head Start friends.

Nutrition education:
Children participate in planned food-related and nutrition activities. Topics include safe food preparation, learning about My Plate, and connecting food with good health. These activities occur in the classrooms. Family nutrition education opportunities are available throughout the year in collaboration with UW-Extension.

Nutrition Assessment and Counseling:
All families complete a child nutrition assessment during registration. Any individual or family nutrition needs identified during the assessment will be addressed and followed during the school year. New or additional nutrition needs will be addressed during the school year as needed.
SERVICES TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

SPEECH AND LANGUAGE:
Head Start offers an educational curriculum rich in language development for all enrolled children. Some children may need extra help in the areas of articulation and/or language. A developmental assessment is completed on all children. After consultation with parents, a child may be referred to the school district for further evaluation.

CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES:
Each year Head Start serves children with diagnosed disabilities in an inclusive setting at all centers. All children are screened to detect possible disabilities and referred for further evaluation, when necessary. For those Head Start children who participate in other programs, a cooperative effort is made to best serve the child. Head Start offers support and training for parents of all children.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Head Start’s philosophy states that attendance and full participation by parents and children is necessary. The development of a child’s social competence depends on regular attendance.

If your child is going to be absent, please call your Head Start center as early as possible. If you do not contact Head Start, your child's teacher is required to contact you.

You are also asked not to bring your child to class more than 10 minutes prior to the beginning of your child’s class session. Teachers are in and out of the classrooms preparing for the sessions and may not be ready to accept children at that earlier time. In extreme circumstances, please make sure you speak with your child's teacher and DO NOT leave your child in a room unattended. Children can not be left unattended for any reason in our centers.

EXCLUSION POLICY
ADVOCAP Head Start staff will be closely monitoring the health of children who attend our centers and activities, and will send home any child with the following health conditions:

✓ Fever of 100 degrees or more
✓ Influenza (flu) symptoms
✓ Vomiting
✓ Diarrhea
✓ Undiagnosed rash
✓ Any illness that prevents a child from participating comfortably in program activities.
✓ Illness that results in a greater need for care that staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children in the classroom.

If your child has any of these symptoms, they need to stay home from school, recreational/social events, and child care until they are symptom-free, without the use of medication for 24 hours. Limiting your child's exposure to others will decrease the chance of disease spreading to others.

**Parents are responsible for notifying your child's school when your child is symptom-free and healthy enough to return to school. If your child rides an ADVOCAP Head Start bus, the bus WILL NOT pick up your child until you have notified the school that your child has been
CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All forms/information on the children are considered confidential and are seen only by appropriate Head Start staff. Records are kept in an individual folder inside a locked file cabinet and no other person shall have access unless you give your written permission. Parents have access to their child’s file. When volunteering in the classroom or on a field trip, remember that any information you learn from working with the children must be kept confidential. Parents may only take pictures of their own child.

TRANSPORTATION SCHEDULES

Head Start will not guarantee the bus will reach your home at the exact scheduled time each day, due to weather conditions, new routing, train crossings, and other disturbances. Time ranges will be given at the beginning of the year. Your child should be ready 20 minutes within the time frame given. If you have questions concerning the scheduling, please call the Head Start Transportation number 922-5982.

For safety reasons, Head Start requests that you give us only one address where your child will be picked up or dropped off. If in an emergency, other arrangements are required, the proper paperwork must be filled out with our office. Address changes must be reported at least 24 hours prior to the change. Any transportation requests will not be accepted verbally by bus drivers; teachers or other staff. Transportation requests need to be submitted in writing, you will be notified if request is approved or denied. Transportation requests are available through the Transportation office or contact your Family Development Specialist. Guardians signatures will be required on the change paperwork and turned into the transportation office. The route will not change without the proper paperwork.

NORTH FOND DU LAC TRANSPORTATION POLICY

The Head Start classroom located at the Early Learning Center in NFDL will serve children and families living in the NFDL School District. Families who have children attending this center are asked to provide their own transportation to their own children. Head Start is not going to be providing transportation to this area. The District will be providing transportation to the children who attend the Early Childhood classes, Head Start will no longer be providing this service.
TRANSPORTATION POLICY

Fond du Lac Center  922-5982 - Direct Line
North Fond du Lac Center - 922-5982
Prairie View Center - 398-3907 or 1-800-631-6617
First Presbyterian Center – 922-5982

TRANSPORTATION MAY BE PROVIDED WITHIN DESIGNATED AREAS IN FOND DU LAC AND GREEN LAKE COUNTIES.

1. Have your child appropriately dressed and ready to board the bus prior to the schedule given at the beginning of the year. Remember we cannot guarantee an exact time due to many influences. We can only provide a general time range. Drivers will wait 3 minutes per child and we are not allowed to honk the horn (per City Ordinance). After 3 minutes the driver will continue on their route and are not allowed to come back for any reason. We need to stay on time for the sake of all of the other families on the route.

2. Parents or authorized adults must walk the child to the bus. It is the bus monitor’s responsibility to assist the children into the bus and fasten their child’s bus seat restraints. Parents or designated adults will sign the daily attendance log when their child gets on and off the bus. We encourage parents to say their “good-byes” at the door of the bus so we can move quickly on our way. We are all on a mission to get our little ones to class safely!

3. If a parent would like to ride the bus to the center to volunteer or visit, they must first receive approval from the child’s teacher (at least 24 hours prior). This is important as it helps us to do what we can to make sure there will be room on the bus the day of the visit, plan meals, and have volunteer activities ready for the parent.

4. It is the parents’ responsibility to have an authorized adult to pick their child up at the end of the program day or when the child is dropped off from Head Start. If a child is not picked up by an authorized adult, the child will be taken back to or kept at the center and it will be the parent’s responsibility to see that the child is picked up and taken home. If, at the close of the business day, the child is still in our care, the authorities will be contacted.

5. If your child is home sick, the bus will not return until a parent calls to let us know that he/she has been symptom free for 24 hours. If the child is a no call, no show for 2 consecutive days, the bus will not return until we speak to the parents. Parents must notify the Fond du Lac Center and Prairie View Center when a child will not be attending class and when the child is ready to be picked up again. We will not pick up your child until we are called. The time line does start over on the next Monday following the absences.

6. Notify the Transportation Supervisor of any change in your child’s pick up or drop off at least 24 hours in advance 920-922-5982 so we are able to make the route adjustment.

7. Children will not be released to anyone other than persons listed on the Emergency Information Card. Minor children CAN NOT sign off for Head Start Children unless deemed appropriate by the Transportation Supervisor (such as a teenage sibling who is age appropriate to babysit). Parents need to discuss this situation with the Transportation Supervisor directly. Please have proper identification available (driver’s license or ID).
8. Parents should notify Head Start a week in advance of moving. If you are moving outside the transportation boundaries of your child’s current center, then you will then be responsible for providing transportation. When we have a classroom spot available in your new transportation area, you may request a transfer to the new site at which time ADVOCAP Head Start transportation can resume if applicable.

9. If there is a concern regarding the transportation and or drivers, parents/guardians will call the transportation supervisor at 920-922-5982 to discuss the issue. **Concerns will not be addressed on or near the bus in front of the children.**

10. There is **no food, drink, smoking, or pets allowed** on Head Start vehicles.

11. Parents who transport their child to Head Start must accompany the child into the classroom and sign the classroom sign-in/sign-out sheet. **Children must not arrive at school more than 10 minutes before their class begins.** Please be sure to pick up your child promptly when your child’s class is dismissed.

**For Children that attend Berlin, Ripon or North Fond du Lac Centers:**

We have a Transportation Waiver from Head Start and will be using the School District’s transportation system. There will not be bus monitors or the individual bus seats on District run buses. A parent or other authorized adult will need to walk the child to the bus and sign the clipboard as their child enters the bus. They will be seated and ride to school with the other students. When the child is dropped off a parent or authorized adult will need to walk to the bus to receive the child and sign the clipboard.

**If you have questions or concerns, please call the Head Start Director.**

If you need to report an absence or change in transportation needs please call the bus company directly.

Berlin- Julie Beck at Mascoutin Bus Company (920) 361-2100
North Fond du Lac – Brenda at Johnson Bus Company (920) 921-3003
Ripon -
WINTER TRANSPORTATION
Winter poses new challenges for the safe transportation of Head Start children. Our bus drivers will be driving more cautiously when the roads are snow-packed or slippery. The Head Start Transportation Office has cell phone or two way radio contact with every vehicle in our Head Start fleet.

NOTICE OF CENTER CLOSING OR DELAY WILL BE ANNOUNCED BY 6:45 AM

With ADVOCAP Head Start serving nine school districts, we will use the districts as a guide but ultimately make our own decisions on whether to close school because of bad weather.

FOR 2017-2018 with 2 hour delays, called by school district, we pick up full day and p.m. children at typical pick up address. If the child is to be picked up at a different address, the parent is responsible for providing transportation. For early releases called by district, we will not pick up p.m. only children (if notified in time) and will drop off full day children at typical drop off address. If the typical drop off is at the district to catch a district bus, we will have to coordinate efforts with the district and/or the parents.

CHILD CARE REIMBURSEMENT
When parents/guardians volunteer in the classrooms at Head Start, we ask that you do not bring any other children along. This is a special time for you and your Head Start child. We do offer assistance in locating quality child care and also reimburse parents with no other means $4.00 an hour to help cover child care costs.

We also provide child care at our Head Start centers during Parent/Teacher conferences, some night meetings, and during special events. Please read all notices carefully and respond accordingly. If you have any questions in regard to child care reimbursement, contact the Family Engagement Manager at 922-7760 Ext. 3544.

MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT
Parents who are members of the ADVOCAP Head Start Policy Council may receive reimbursement for mileage to attend the monthly meetings held in Fond du Lac. Contact the Family Engagement Manager at 922-7760 Ext. 3544.

SMOKING POLICY
Smoking has been determined to be a health hazard both to the individual smoking, and all persons who might otherwise be exposed to tobacco smoke. You may not expose any employee, or person that ADVOCAP serves to this hazard by smoking in their presence. You are not permitted to smoke in sight of the children, in any ADVOCAP vehicles, or facility or on the property.
RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

MY RIGHTS AS A HEAD START PARENT:

- To always be treated with respect and dignity.
- To be welcomed in the classroom and at all Head Start Activities (unless legal limitations).
- To choose whether or not I participate, without fear of endangering my child’s right to be in the program.
- To expect guidance for my child from Head Start staff which will enhance his/her total individual development.
- To be able to learn enough about the program to take part in major decisions affecting it’s planning and operations.
- To help develop and participate in adult programs which will improve daily living for my family and I.
- To participate in programs designed to increase my skills in areas of employment.
- To be informed about all community resources concerned with health, education, and the improvement of family life.

We take your rights VERY seriously.

MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A HEAD START PARENT:

- To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and the lives of my children.
- To take part in the classroom experiences as an observer, a volunteer worker or a paid employee, and to contribute in any way I can to the enrichment of the program.
- To guide my children with firmness, which is both loving and protective.
- To work in partnership with staff and other parents in a cooperative way.
- To work with Head Start staff to set goals and overcome obstacles, celebrating my strengths and successes.
- To learn as much as possible about the program, explain it to other parents, and encourage their full participation which will enable us to take part in major policy decisions.
- To offer constructive criticism of the program, defend it against unfair criticism, and share in evaluating it.
- To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development and my skills in areas of possible employment.

THE HEAD START LOGO

The building blocks of the Head Start logo are symbol for the development and growth of children through Head Start family and community partnerships. The red and white stripes represent the American flag, and the arrow, printed on a blue background, symbolizes upward movement for families.

ADVOCAP is a Community Action Agency offering solutions to poverty in Fond du Lac, Winnebago and Green Lake Counties in Wisconsin.
PARTICIPANT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

In the course of agency business, individuals and families may be denied services or may feel mistreated. The constituent may wish to challenge the eligibility determination or complain about his/her treatment. Information concerning a participant grievance will be held in strict confidence. The following procedure should be followed:

1. The Department Director should be informed of the constituent’s discontent by the individual or by the staff person.

2. The Department Director will discuss the situation with the constituent and attempt to resolve the matter to the constituent’s satisfaction. If the constituent is not satisfied, a formal complaint should be filed with the Deputy Director.

3. The Department Director will provide the constituent with a complaint form, and if necessary, assist with its completion. The completed form will be forwarded to the Deputy Director.

4. The Deputy Director will investigate the complaint and issue a verbal and written response to the constituent within five working days. For questions of eligibility, the program funding source will normally be contacted for their opinion.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

If an actual disaster does occur while your child is at Head Start, every parent must know how to respond. Your cooperation will be essential in the following ways:

How to Check on Your Child

1. Do NOT call Head Start. Telephone lines must be kept free for outgoing calls to emergency personnel. In a citywide emergency, telephone lines may be busy and totally unavailable.
2. If it is at all possible, ADVOCAP Head Start staff will contact you.
3. Watch local TV news channels and listen to local radio stations for updates as broadcast.

How to Pick Up Your Child in the Event of a Real Disaster

1. Instructions for picking up children will be made available through the media. In some cases the students may be evacuated from the school grounds. The only way you will know where to pick them up is by the media information.
2. In most cases, the school will be locked during and immediately following a crisis. No one, other than emergency personnel, will be allowed to enter until it is determined that conditions are safe.
3. When it is safe to release students, there will be a reunion plan. Parents need to be prepared to check in at the reunion gate with identification. Students will not be released to anyone other than their parent unless we have written consent by the parent. This may seem inconvenient; however, we have learned that it can become very difficult to be aware of the whereabouts of every child if children are sent with a neighbor or friend without the knowledge of their parent.
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<th>RESPONSE</th>
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<td>Evacuate the building (We practice this once per month. If there were a real fire or gas leak we would go to our designated alternative site.)</td>
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<td>Natural Disasters</td>
<td>Shelter in place Stay in classroom or go to shelter area within the school until safe to leave. (We will practice this in September, October, March, April and May.)</td>
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<td>(tornado, flood, earthquake)</td>
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<td>Chemical and hazardous materials spills</td>
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