



**South Carolina Association of Community
Action Partnerships
Early Head Start Childcare Partnerships**



PARENT HANDBOOK 2022-2023

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IMPORTANT NAMES AND NUMBERS

Center Number: _____

Teacher's Name: _____

My Child's Center Hours: _____

Parent Meetings are Held On: _____

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OUR MISSION

Our Mission is to engage families with children birth to three, in the pursuit of school readiness opportunities and to promote positive relationships for families and strengthen local communities.

OUR VISION

Our vision is to be the leading early childhood and family services organization preparing eligible families for a lifetime of success.



**South Carolina Association of
Community Action Partnerships
Early Head Start-Child Care
Partnership Centers**

Center Name	Address	Telephone Number
Betty's Daycare	122 Elm Street Saint Stephen, SC 29479	843-567-2624
House of Smiles	210 Carolina Avenue Moncks Corner, SC 29461	843-899-2971
Kidde University	1700 S. Main Street Anderson, SC 29510	864-225-2064
Little Smurf's	903 Martin Luther King Drive Andrews, SC 29510	843-264-3262
Midlands Primary	203 Hendrix Street Lexington, SC 29072	803-479-8983
Newberry CDC	2300 Evans Street Newberry, SC 29108	803-276-3045
Pawley's Island Civic Club CDC	291 Parkersville Road Pawley's Island, SC 29585	843-237-4765
Progressive Family Life CDC	284 Progressive Way Denmark, SC 29042	803-793-5628
Small Minds of Tomorrow II	52 Hinds Street Georgetown, SC 29440	843-461-4006
Thornwell Home for Children	709 Pridgen Drive Clinton, SC 29325	864-938-2160
Wright Way CDC	639 Torrington Road Eutawville, SC 29048	803-492-7295
Wright's Day Care Center	1821 Bonner Avenue Santee, SC 29142	803-854-2976

SCACAP Early Head Start-CCP believes the lives of young children, pregnant women, and their families can be enriched and supported by our quality services. We believe children thrive in a safe and nurturing environment that encourages exploration and experimentation. We encourage parents to be proactive in the education of their children. We respect and acknowledge that a parent is their child's first and most important teacher. We firmly believe that all children can learn. What children learn between birth and the time they start kindergarten lays the foundation for their learning and development for years to come. We desire to equip children with a variety of tools to prepare them for kindergarten and later success in school and life.

SCACAP Early Head Start-CCP approaches learning by providing individualized interactions with children based on best practices to raise the developmental levels of each child. In a safe and caring environment, inclusive of rich language, children develop social-emotional skills, cognitive, and early literacy skills that are the foundation for learning. The daily routines and activities of the classroom supports critical thinking, understanding of concepts, and promote physical growth and development. Together these activities allow a child to reach their potential at their own pace. We firmly believe that all children can learn. What children learn between birth and the time they start kindergarten lays the foundation for their learning and development for years to come. We desire to equip children with a variety of tools to prepare them for kindergarten and later success in school and life.

We believe parent engagement in the classroom, at the center level, and within program operations creates a meaningful bond between the home and the program to foster a vibrant relationship that benefits all children. Parents are provided opportunities to enhance their parenting skills and understand developmental milestones from instructional staff and each other, thus family relationships are strengthened. Strong families lead to stronger communities. SCACAP Early Head Start-CCP is committed to providing the families of Anderson, Bamberg, Berkeley, Georgetown, Laurens, Newberry, Orangeburg, and York counties with a higher quality early childhood experience to enhance the overall well-being of young children and support long-term success in public schools.



DEAR PARENTS

Dear Parents and Guardians:

We are so glad that you have decided to enroll your child in our program. Going to preschool will be an exciting experience for your child. He or she will make new friends and participate in activities designed to encourage learning.

Here at SCACAP Early Head Start-CCP, we have prepared wonderful classrooms full of books, learning materials, and toys. Children will have opportunities to enjoy art, movement, science, and math. They will be exposed to stories and books to build early literacy skills that prepare them for reading and writing. All these activities take place in a warm, caring environment with your child's individual needs at the center of our program.

Our goal is to help your child be ready for school by successfully transitioning to kindergarten and into school and life. In addition to laying the foundation for academics, we will also help children learn the social and behavioral skills necessary to work in groups and enjoy the company of other children. These skill sets are critical to school readiness and lifelong success.

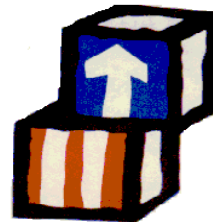
As parents, you are your child's first and most important teacher. We welcome you into our classrooms and value your input and feedback in the program. You will have many opportunities to be engaged in the program throughout the school year. Please take advantage of these opportunities. When you are active in your child's education, he/she will believe school is important. We support you in helping your child(ren) achieve great success in school and life.

We look forward to a great year. Please ask questions and express your opinions to the staff and I. We have an exciting year planned and cannot wait to watch your child learn and grow!

Thank you for joining us!

Jessica McMoore

Jessica McMoore,
Executive Director



EARLY HEAD START ELIGIBILITY

SCACAP Early Head Start-CCP program serves infants and toddlers throughout Anderson, Bamberg, Berkeley, Georgetown, Laurens, Lexington, Newberry, Orangeburg, and York counties. Enrollment in the program is limited.

Registration does not ensure that your child will be enrolled. The selection criteria of each child are age, income, children's disabilities, family needs, and situation. The program is required to always serve children that are most in need including the homeless, children in foster care, and SSI recipients.

Children who are not selected for enrollment are placed on a waiting list. Parents are notified of the child's status. When or if a slot becomes available the parent will be notified. Waiting list status is determined with the use of a data system that automatically prioritizes eligibility according to criteria points.

OFF TO A SUCCESSFUL YEAR!

- ❖ Try to learn as much as possible about the program and take part in major policy decisions.
- ❖ Take all opportunities to improve your life and the life of your child.
- ❖ Take part as an observer, a volunteer, or paid employee and contribute your services in whatever way you can.
- ❖ Provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, explaining the program to other parents, and the community.
- ❖ Make every effort to welcome staff into your home in support of parent/teacher home visits, family services home visits that support ways to help you and your child's school readiness.
- ❖ Take advantage of programs designed to increase your knowledge about child development and your skills for possible future employment.
- ❖ **Communication is key** because you are such an important part of your child's education. It is important that we keep an open line of communication with you about how your child is progressing and what we are doing in the program. We hope you let us know if anything is happening at home, that might affect your child's education or behavior at school.

If your address or telephone number changes, please notify the center.

PROGRAM OPTIONS

CENTER-BASED

Early Head Start (EHS) Zero to 36 Months

Early Head Start program provides a family-centered Center-Based Option that offers support in the areas of child development, parenting, health, and social services to infants and toddlers and their families. **The EHS program services infants, toddlers, and their families. Each child's age is calculated according to the September 1, kindergarten eligibility date.** EHS Center-Based programs have eight (8) infants and toddlers in a classroom.

The center program option provides classroom experiences planned by qualified staff to promote developmental growth in all areas. Individualized planning ensures that the specific needs of each child are met in a safe, nurturing learning environment. Teachers and parents will meet four times per year to set and update goals for their child. Children in a center-based program attend class Monday through Friday during the center's scheduled instructional (full) day.



PARENT'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PARENTS HAVE THE RIGHT TO

- ❖ Be supported as the primary educator and nurturer of their child
- ❖ Be listened to and treated with respect and dignity at all times
- ❖ Ask questions and receive information on any aspect of the program including daily operations, policy-making, and budgeting
- ❖ Express concerns about the program without repercussions to themselves or their child or family
- ❖ Express needs and interests and expect a response from the program regarding those expressed needs
- ❖ Offer any opinions or suggestions regarding any part of the program and to receive feedback on those suggestions and ideas
- ❖ Participate as little or as much as comfortable
- ❖ Be treated as equal with staff in supporting the educational goals of the children
- ❖ Know that all information gathered will be kept confidential
- ❖ Welcome and encourage to participate in their child's classroom and other center activities at any time



PARENT FAMILY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (PFCE)



PFCE in EHS is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children.

Each family works closely with their Family Advocate to complete a **Family Partnership Agreement that helps to identify their individual and family goals. This partnership also helps to support their efforts to support their family's well-being.** Family Advocate stays in contact with EHS families to develop and offer follow-up services and referrals to achieve goals and to check on issues identified by families.

Family Advocates will ask you about your area of interest and offer classes or referral information on those topics. Family Advocates send out regular communication about community resources, classes, and training opportunities and activities. Family members are encouraged to apply for employment opportunities at SCACAP-CCP EHS or in the community.

PARENT ENGAGEMENT

Parent Engagement is an important part of a successful program for you and your child. Parents meet for monthly meetings, home visits to build strong supportive relationships, educational programs, and other parent gatherings are held throughout the year. Parent workshops are offered based on a parent's interest and give parents an opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills.

Opportunities for parents are available to parents/guardians in the program for growth, input, learning, and fun. Parents and guardians are the most important people in a child's life and the program strives to successfully involve all parents and guardians. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, parent engagement activities, parent committee meetings, and parent orientation will follow the social distancing guidelines. Family Advocates assigned to each center will communicate dates and times for meetings as deemed necessary.

Parent Bulletin Boards are placed in each center to inform parents about community events, adult classes, Policy Council, and Parent Committee information.

Announcements for Parent Committee Meetings, Policy Council Meetings, and other important

parent information can be found on SCACAP’s IT Virtual Academy.

The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework is a road map for progress in achieving outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families.

PFCE Framework consists of seven (7) Family Engagement Outcomes

Family Engagement Outcomes	Child Outcomes
Family Well-Being	<p align="center">Promotes school readiness</p> <p>Children are ready for school and sustain development and learning gains through 3rd grade.</p>
Positive Parent-Child Relationships	
Families as Lifelong Learners	
Families as Learners	
Family Engagement in Transitions	
Family Connections to Peers and Community	
Families as Advocates and Leaders	

PFCE Benefits for Children	PFCE Benefits for Families
Higher grades and test scores	Parents increase their interaction with their children
Better school attendance	Parents confident in parenting and decision making
Less likely to misbehave and get into trouble	Parents gain knowledge in child development with more use of affection and positive reinforcement
Build up a child’s self-esteem	Parents have an understanding of the teacher’s role and school curriculum
Supported by their academics	Parents are more aware and become more active in school and decision-making that affects the child’s education

PARENT COMMITTEES

Parent Committee (at the center) is for parents/guardians to actively engage in classroom and parent group activities. All parents are participants in the committee. This group assists in the planning and implementation of the program as well as special activities relating to the center. Each parent committee will elect officers and **may represent their center on the agency-level Policy Council**. Parent Committee meetings are monthly and focus on various topics and training of parent’s interest. **Remember your participation in the program makes all the difference. Budgeted Parent Activity funding is available; thus, agency policy prohibits**

parent fundraising. Parent Activity funds are set-aside in the program budget to provide support.

POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council provides parents/guardians and other community representatives with opportunities to learn new skills in leadership, decision making, finances, and communication. At least 51 percent of the council is comprised of parents of currently enrolled children. Policy Council is the parent’s voice in program decisions including such items as the recruitment plan, personnel policies, budgets, and funding proposals. **Each site elects a Policy Council representative and one alternate.** This individual represents their center at monthly Policy Council meetings and reports during monthly parent meetings. **The policy council’s function is to ensure that the Early Head Start program complies with federal regulations and makes decisions regarding programming.**

OTHER COMMITTEES YOU MAY JOIN include the Health Services Advisory Committee, Parent & Family Education Advisory, and Fatherhood Advisory Committees.

FATHERHOOD/MALE ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The mission of the Fatherhood Program is to “Strengthen and enhance the lives and well-being of children and families brought about through fatherhood and positive male role modeling.” program. These services include support groups and case management services.



The primary focus of the program is to help foster positive male role modeling and empowers fathers (or primary male figure) to become responsible, committed, and involved through education and awareness.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering your time is worth more than you think. When you volunteer, the value of your donated (services) time and effort are counted as “In-Kind.” A big part of in-kind is services: parents’ volunteer time attending HS committee and Policy Council meetings, volunteering in their child’s classroom, or other volunteer time that benefits the Early Head Start Program. A few ways you can provide assistance:

- ❖ Assist caregivers in the classroom; help staff update parent information boards
- ❖ Attend Parent Committee and other advisory meetings and events
- ❖ Sit in on employment interviews (available to Policy Council members)

VISITING YOUR CHILD’S CENTER

We encourage you to participate in your child’s early childhood education experience. Parents/guardians are welcome at the center at any time. We are here to support your family. Parents/guardians have the right to unlimited access to their children. All visitors must check-in before going into the classroom. **Due to the liability, children who are not enrolled in the program are not allowed in the classroom system. (Please see page 34 of the COVID-19 Addendum for additional information)**

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

SCACAP Early Head Start-CCP assists parents in planning and completing their educational goals, including the General Equivalency Diploma program, English as a Second Language (ESL),

and accredited college courses. We encourage parents to apply for positions in the program within the agency, therefore; parents are encouraged to enroll in classes for professional development.

EDUCATION SERVICES

Early Head Start Education services focus on the developmental needs of the children in the classroom. Our goal is to create a developmentally appropriate, nurturing environment in which children from all cultures and ages learn to grow socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively including children with disabilities.

TRANSITION: THE NEXT STEPS

“Transition” means change. Families go through many changes. Planned changes are the most positive ones. They are opportunities for continuous learning and growth. Together we can make transitions meaningful and successful.

Early Head Start (EHS) is responsible for facilitating the transition process from Newborn to EHS Classroom, Infant to Toddler, Toddler to Head Start (HS), or any other high-quality program and support services. A smooth transition is important to ensure each child continues to receive enriching early child development services and that each family receives the support services necessary to promote healthy family development.

Transition planning from EHS to HS takes place six months prior to the child’s third birthday. Planning will take into account the child's health status and development level, progress made by the child and family, any current and changing family circumstances, the and availability of other programs in the area.



SCHOOL READINESS

We emphasize School Readiness for each child to establish developmentally appropriate goals for children transitioning to Head Start. As a leader in early childhood education and care, Early Head Start provides a strong and clear comprehensive program that focuses on healthy development of the whole child.

We offer developmentally appropriate, individually focus opportunities for children to learn the skills in the following domains: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Language and Literacy, Cognition, and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development. Lots of songs, poems, finger plays, etc., are planned and encouraged to continue at home. Incorporating reading activities and making them as attractive as possible for the children as well as age-appropriate, so they will want to participate.

We encourage parents to participate in these literacy activities by sending activities home, and at any time parents may volunteer in the classroom. Our goal is to build a read-aloud routine in your home as well as school, thereby fostering early brain development, parent-child bonding, and early literacy skills. **You may find a copy of the school readiness goals at your center or by visiting the IT Virtual Academy under the Family Services link.**

WHAT DOES SCHOOL READINESS LOOK LIKE?

When Children Do This:	They Are Learning To:
Use blocks and wooden animals to create a zoo	Recreate the world around them (Geography and Social Skills)
Pretend to be grown-ups	Understand their experiences better (Abstract Thinking)
Gather paper scissors, and glue for a project	Plan and carry out a task (Study Habits, Independence)
Pour without spilling	Use their small muscle skills (Physical Coordination)
Scribble on paper	Use writing as a means of communication (Reading and Writing)
Find ways to move across the rug without using their feet	Think creatively to solve problems (independence and Problem solving)

PROGRAM CURRICULUM

SCACAP EHS-CCP has adopted *Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and 2-year-olds*, a framework that focuses on goals and objectives for children's learning, and guidelines for teachers, and working with families. *Creative Curriculum* is a developmentally appropriate curriculum for young children. It is implemented to address different needs, interests, and developmental levels of individual children as they learn through play.

Parents are encouraged to support their child's classroom activities by:

- ❖ Providing input into the educational program
- ❖ Participating in Parent Curriculum Activities
- ❖ Participating in home to school learning activities

Please Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic virtual learning may be delivered through the IT Virtual Academy or Zoom.

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT TOOL

The program uses a research-based assessment tool to assess each child individually. *Teaching Strategies Gold-Online* is a web-based ongoing tool used to assess an individual child or group of children in any early childhood program. *Teaching Strategies Gold-Online* is aligned with the Early Learning Standards and the Early Learning Outcomes Framework. *Teaching Strategies Gold-Online* is an interactive program with a clear and effective way for parents, teachers, and administrators to communicate about children's progress.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

SCACAP EHS-CCP recognizes the parent's role as children's lifelong educators. Therefore, **Parent-Teacher Conferences are held 2 times per program year** to encourage and enhance the knowledge and understanding of both staff and parents of the child's education and developmental progress and activities. This gives the parent another opportunity to learn about their child's progress and give feedback on instructional activities, materials, and selected curricula. Center Directors may modify its operation to provide for provision in this plan and social distancing. To reduce the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus, the use of alternating or staggered schedules may be needed to reduce the number of parents in the building.

CHANGE OF CLOTHING

Ensure that your child has at least two changes of clothing and labeled with your child's name. If your child has an accident and there is not an extra set of clothing available, you will be notified to pick the child up from the center. Soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag and delivered to the parent/guardian upon pick up the child.

EARLY HEAD START DAILY SCHEDULE

Arrival/Free Choice of Centers, Diaper Change
Prepare for Breakfast
Breakfast
Free Choice of Centers
Outside Gross Motor
Music and Movement
Prepare for Lunch
Lunch
Quiet Time
Free Choice of Centers
Outside Gross Motor
Prepare for Snack
Free Choice of Centers
Outside Goss Motor
Prepare for Departure
Departure
Planning Time

Based on center hours, class schedules are subject to change according to the standard protocols in place for COVID-19. Center Director and staff will ensure social distancing is practiced in the classroom, during meals, during drop off and pick up procedures.

HEALTH SERVICES & SAFETY PRACTICES

Children who are healthy are more prepared for school. Children with healthy teeth are better able to eat, speak, and focus on learning. **Your child will need a well-child physical, immunization, and dental check-up every year that he or she attends the program.** If your child is new to the program, we ask that you complete these exams prior to start date. If you need health insurance, we can help and assist in you finding a medical home. **At the time of enrollment, a complete medical, dental, nutritional, and developmental history is obtained.**

IMMUNIZATIONS

All children are to be up to date with the latest immunization recommendations issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Social Services – Child Care Licensing and states Medicaid Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) schedule. **SC Day Care Licensing Regulation requires each child must have an up-to-date immunization record prior to entering and keep current during the program year.** If a child is not up-to-date with minimum immunization requirements, he or she may be excluded from attendance, but not unenrolled from the program.

Please Note: All children **born January 1, 2019 or after** will need to have **two (2) Hepatitis A shots.**

WELL CHILD/MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

All children are to be up to date on his/her scheduled age-appropriate preventative and primary health care according to the *Bright Futures/American Academy of Pediatrics* (AAP) Medical Periodicity Schedule for Early and Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) requirements schedule. **Parents are responsible for scheduling and obtaining their child's EPSDT (well check) examination as soon as possible.** A form will be provided to parents for the recording of examination results.

When intake is completed, our program may identify health concerns. If referral and follow-up needed, staff will work with you and your health care provider to develop a health care plan. Family Services Advocate will work with you to complete/obtain the following as needed:

- Current physical or well-child exam AND a copy of current immunization record
- Proof of current health insurance
- Medical and Dental Home information
- Care plans for medication instructions from a doctor for health concerns (asthma, allergies, etc). These forms must be updated each year.
- Special Diet documentation from a child's doctor (if applicable)
- Lead screening results (usually done at 12 and 24 months of age).
Hemoglobin screening results (required for 9 months of age and older)
- Hearing and Vision screenings
- Dental exam and dental referral of follow-up treatment (cleaning, filling, crowns, etc.)

SCREENING & EXAMINATION RESULTS

Any screening done during the program year, parents will be provided results. If any concerns, you may be contacted to discuss and assist in the delivery of all necessary medical and dental follow-up treatment as well as accessing referrals and resources system in the community. Parents shall be assisted in obtaining services especially parents that are not eligible for Medicaid, do not have private insurance or transportation. If all dental and medical services are not complete prior to the end of the program year a health transitional plan will be implemented to assure that all services continue after the child leaves the program.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ✓ Be sure to update all contact information as it changes. It is important that **all emergency contact telephone numbers are working at all times.**
- ✓ Make sure your child is present for screenings and exams scheduled on-site.
- ✓ Inform staff when your child's health status changes.
- ✓ Inform staff if your family is experiencing health-related issues or concerns.
- ✓ Early intervention or special education services are available for children. Diagnosis and/or referral documents must be on file. Contact your Family Support Worker, child's teacher, or other Head Start staff for any questions or concerns regarding services for children with special needs.



ORAL HEALTH

Regular oral health care prevents tooth decay and disease and improves chewing, nutrition, language skills, and overall health. Children are required to have a dental exam once a year and follow-up (check-ups) every 6 months. Follow-up dental treatment should be fully completed by a dentist. **It is recommended for infants to visit a dentist as the first teeth erupt.**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- ✓ Infant oral hygiene: Swabbing of the gums and existing teeth) provided after feedings
- ✓ Toddlers oral hygiene: Scheduled tooth brushing during the day
- ✓ Parents/guardians are encouraged to continue good oral hygiene in the home for the entire family.

Dental forms are available at the centers for completion by the child's dentist. If assistance is necessary to schedule appointments or transportation is required for these services, please inform the Family Services staff at the Center.



MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

A Medication Administration Form is required to be completed by the doctor and completed by the parent for each prescription and non-prescription (Over-the-Counter) during school hours. **Prior to staff administering medicine at the center, staffing will take place where the parent and designated staff will train on the proper administration, side effects, and expected outcomes of the medication.**

Children required to receive medication at the Early Head Start centers **must present a Medication Administration Form** completed by the child's doctor. The child's **full name, the name of the medicine, the dosage (times) must be included on the Medication Administration form**. The parent is responsible for bringing all approved medicines to the center. If possible, please ask the pediatrician if times for medication can be administered when the child is at home (due to possible side effects).

The parent must bring a copy of a doctor's written instruction to the Family Advocate/Center Director giving the dosage and the time it needs to be administered. **Do not put medicine in the child's book bag. The parent must bring medicine into the child's center.**

KEEPING CHILD HOME WHEN SICK

Contagious illnesses in an early childhood education center will affect everyone if not checked out. The following are guidelines to follow when making the decision whether your child is well enough to attend school or whether he or she should remain at home due to illness. **If your child is sick, please call us to let us know that your child will not be coming.**

If your child has had any of the following within the past 24 hours:

- Upset stomach
- Runny nose, sniffles, unusual cough
- Fever over 100 degrees
- Complaints of unusual pain

If your child has been exposed to a communicable disease, such as measles, upon observation indicates any signs of disease, your child needs to be seen by a doctor.

Please discuss illnesses with your child's teacher, family advocate, or center director when calling the center to report your child's absence. Your cooperation will lessen the possibility of spreading a contagious disease or having your child return home. **(Please see page 32 of the COVID-19 Addendum for additional information)**

CHILD ILLNESS/EXCLUSION POLICY

According to the SC DHEC's School and Child Care Exclusion List (2019), if your child develops any of the following, he or she shall be excluded from the center until the illness/concerns is properly resolved and/or observed by a doctor.

FEVER	
Infants up to 4 months old	100.4F or above* (rectal)
Infants and children who are over 4 months old	100.0F or greater
Fever accompanied by: - Behavior changes - Other signs and symptoms of contagious illness (such as rash, vomiting, diarrhea, irritability, or confusion).	* requires immediate medical attention

DIARRHEA
- 2 or more diarrheal episodes in a program day if the frequency or - Or the diarrheal episodes challenge the ability of the caregiver(s) to maintain sanitary techniques and/or conditions (diaper spillage or accidents in toilet trained children). - Child excluded with diarrhea until symptoms are resolved for at least 24 hours

VOMITING
-Two or more times during the previous 24 hours, or -For vomiting and fever (101F or higher) <i>Special Circumstances for Vomiting:</i> • Exclude and refer for medical attention anyone with vomit that appears green and bloody, vomiting after a recent head injury, vomiting and no urine output for 8 hours, or who appears very ill during vomiting episodes for prompt medical evaluation.

OTHER SPECIFIC ILLNESSES

- ❖ **Pink Eyes** – Symptoms of pink eye include red eyes, discharge from the eyes, and eyes that are stuck shut. Exclude (until resolved) symptomatic children who have a fever, severe eye pain, purulent drainage, or are too sick to participate in routine activities.
- ❖ **Ringworm (scalp and body)** – Exclude children by the end of the day. Ringworm of the scalp requires oral antifungal treatment and the body requires topical treatment. The child must have appropriate treatment started to return.
- ❖ **Chicken Pox** – Keep your child home until all the sores/rash have scabbed/crusted over.
- ❖ **Head Lice** – If your child has head lice or nits (eggs) treat the child with acceptable products for the effective treatment of head lice and removal all live nits. Your child must be cleared via visual observation by staff for no live, crawling lice on the scalp before returning.
- ❖ **Strep Throat** - Exclude until no fever and at least 24 hours after treatment has started. Medical note documenting the start of treatment, with parent note of afebrile (no fever) status.

SAFETY PRACTICES

Healthy habits are established in the classroom to help reduce the spread of germs and illnesses. Hand washing and tooth brushing are practiced in the classroom daily. Classrooms and outdoor spaces are inspected and cleaned daily. Playgrounds are age-appropriate and the equipment is safe. Children are taught the importance of pedestrian and bus safety. In addition, provisions and/or adjustments are made for children with disabilities to ensure their safety, comfort, and participation in all aspects of the program.

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

The program provides safety education information to all parents/guardians. Please review the following information.

- ✓ **Children should never be left unattended in vehicles**
- ✓ When picking-up or dropping-off your child, please park in designated areas.
- ✓ Always be alert and cautious when traveling near the center. **Avoid rushing.** Look out for motorists who may be rushed or distracted.
- ✓ **Children should always be escorted by an adult** when crossing the street and in a parking lot
- ✓ **Children should hold hands with the adult** and walk beside, not in front of or behind, the adult
- ✓ Position yourself between the traffic and the child.
- ✓ When crossing the street, stop at the curb or edge of the road
- ✓ Walk, don't run, across the street
- ✓ Reinforce the meaning of the red, green, and yellow colors indicated on the traffic light.
- ✓ Minimize loose clothing items, such as long drawstrings, that can cause a child to trip

HEALTH SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Health Services Advisory Committee (HSAC) advises in planning operations and evaluation of child health and developmental, child safety, child nutrition, and child mental health services. Meetings are at least twice a year. Parents are encouraged and welcome to join and express any concerns. Please ask your center manager or Family Advocate how to join.



NUTRITION SERVICES

MEAL SERVICES

All meals served in our program meet the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal patterns and standards for nutritional content. All children are provided a nourishing breakfast, lunch, and snack. **The meals provide one half to two-thirds of the child's daily nutritional needs.** Foods served are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt.



The program works closely with parents in ensuring the infants, toddlers and preschoolers receive food that meets their nutritional needs and feeding requirements. **Regardless of the time of arrival, children will be offered a nourishing breakfast.** For the health and safety of all children, only meals and snacks prepared at school will be served to children during the day.

Mealtime is a learning experience to model healthy eating habits and table manners. Staff and children eat together and use mealtime to engage in conversation and social interaction. Food is never used as a punishment or reward. Children are encouraged, but not forced, to eat or taste their food during meals and snack time. **Family style serving of meals will help children** (who are able) to will serve themselves. Fine motor skills will improve their self-help skills. **Parents are welcome to have lunch with their child. (Please see page 32 of the COVID-19 Addendum for additional information)**

MENUS

Monthly menus are posted in the center and in your child's classroom. Menus are designed to be on a cycle to promote food experiences. All meals are in accordance with USDA's

SPECIAL DIETS

It is the parent's responsibility to inform the center if their child has any food allergies or intolerances and **provide a doctor's statement** to the Family Advocate at the time of enrollment or upon request of a special diet. **A doctor's statement is needed for specific adjustments for the meals served.** All alternate food(s) will be provided to ensure that all required nutrients are included in the meal.

RELIGIOUS PREFERENCES

Families who refrain from certain foods due to religious preference must complete a religious preference statement, which includes the food(s) your child cannot eat and alternate foods your child can eat.

EARLY INTERVENTIONS

INCLUSION

SCACAP-CCP EHS provides inclusive child development settings, which provide opportunities for all children with and without disabilities, to play and learn together, as well as learning to appreciate each other differences.

All children in the program are evaluated within their first 45 days of starting to identify any concerns with developmental, sensory (visual and auditory), behavior, motor, language, social, cognitive, perceptual, or emotional skills. This program is committed to meeting the special needs of children with disabilities, regardless of the severity. Parents will be assisted with referrals for evaluation services to ensure that children's needs are addressed through the Individual Education Program (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP).

EARLY INVENTION SERVICES

An Individual with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a law ensuring services to children with disabilities throughout the nation. IDEA governs how states and public agencies provide early intervention, special education, and related services to more than 6.5 million eligible infants, toddlers, children, and youth with disabilities. Infants and toddlers with disabilities (birth-3) and their families receive early intervention services under IDEA Part C. Children and youth (ages 3-21) receive special education and related services under IDEA Part B.

The process of identification includes a referral to local part C or B services providers for an assessment. If the child qualifies, the development of an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individual Education Program (IEP) is created as defined in the individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

The term children with disabilities or special needs means children with mental retardation, hearing impairments including deafness, speech or language impairments, visual impairments, autism, traumatic brain injury, other health impairments, or special learning disabilities: and who by reason thereof, need special education and related services. This may also include the following areas: physical development, cognitive development, and communication development social or emotional development.

WELLNESS SUPPORT SERVICES

Wellness support services guides our efforts to create a nurturing, caring environment for all persons associated with our program. We approach mental health in a positive way – in terms of wellness. We can help parents meet mental health goals for their children as well as themselves. Mental Health services and consultants are available, upon request, for parents/guardians of children with disabilities.

Mental Health services for SCACAP-CCP Early Head Start program will be through contractual services with licensed Childhood Mental Health Consultant. These services assist with ways to build collaborative relationships among children, families, staff, mental health professionals, and the community in order to increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

MENTAL HEALTH

Mental health and social emotional well-being is the guiding light for our efforts to create a nurturing, caring environment for all persons associated with our program. We approach mental health in a positive way—in terms of wellness, because mental health *is* health. We can help parents meet mental health goals for their children as well as themselves.

These services assist with ways to build collaborative relationships among children, families, staff, mental health professionals, and the community in order to increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues.

WHAT WE OFFER

SCACAP EHS-CCP provides Mental Health consultation services through a licensed professional fulfilling the role of the Mental Health Disabilities Specialist. This Specialist will offer consultation to center level staff to suggest classroom modifications and teaching practices to adapt to each child's needs. The Specialist will also be able to conduct observations in centers, as permitted with COVID-19 safety practices, to receive firsthand knowledge on the concerning behaviors to confirm proper recommendations and referrals are made. To ensure the referrals are accurate and received by the external agency, the Mental Health Disabilities Specialist is available to submit referrals (e.g., BabyNet, ABA Therapy) as well.

There will also be opportunity for the Specialist to provide psychoeducation to families to help them better understand staff concerns and why their child's behaviors are warranting attention. Upon referral, the Mental Health Disabilities Specialist will be available for parents and families needing support with life stressors.

The Mental Health Disabilities Specialist similarly accepts referral for all staff (e.g., EHS, directors, teachers, Family Advocates, Teacher Mentor) to ensure their mental and emotional well-being. There will be open availability to have sessions, individually or collectively, to provide an outlet for staff to decompress any stressors they may be experiencing. These efforts will be to make certain the staff is at their best to care for the children, in addition to reduction of burnout and residual turnover. Lastly, the Mental Health Disabilities Specialist wants to ensure all staff, children, and families have access to proper resources should they choose not to utilize the Specialist's services and expertise.

PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS

The agency staff respects the privacy of every parent/guardian and child. Confidential information will not be discussed in the presence of another parent/guardian, children, or staff. All confidential information is locked in a secured file cabinet. Upon request, the agency will provide authorized persons with access to information and records pertaining to the program.

A program must establish procedures to protect the confidentiality of any personally identifiable information (PII) in child records.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The program does not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, marital status with regards to public assistance in determining which children are served. We look forward to meeting your goals for a bright future.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

We miss your child when they are gone and we value their contributions to our Early Head Start Centers. We would like you to help ensure that your child attends regularly and is successful in Early Head Start. If your child is going to be absent or late, please contact your teacher, Center Director, or Family Advocate at the center before 9:00 AM of the school day. If you know that your child will be absent days or the night before the center opens, please call the center and leave a message to notify them. Your child will be marked as Tardy if they arrive after 9:00 AM to help prepare your child with school readiness goals.

OUR PROMISE TO YOU

We know that there are a wide variety of reasons that children are absent from school, from health concerns to transportation challenges. Your family advocate is prepared to help you strategize some ideas if you or your child face challenges in getting to the center regularly or on time. We promise to track attendance daily, to notice when your child is missing from the center, communicate with you to understand why they were absent and to identify barriers and supports available to overcome challenges you may face in helping your child attend the center.

If your child has five tardies in one month or/and has ten percent unexcused absences in a program year, Early Head Start Family Advocates will schedule a Family Team Meeting (FTM) with you to identify the barriers and supports available to ensure regular attendance. Early Head Start is obligated to develop a plan that requires an assessment to determine how to best meet the needs of your family and reduce absenteeism and tardiness that may affect your child's individualized lesson plans.

Here are a few tips to help ensure your child is attending regularly and receiving the greatest possible benefits from his/her time in Early Head Start:

Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.

- Prepare for school the night before by getting a good night's sleep.
- Find out what day, time the center starts, and make sure your child has had all required

immunizations.

- Do not let your child stay home unless they are sick (please review the flyer “When is sick too sick for school?” posted at the center).
- Allow your child to attend Early Head Start on the designated days listed on your SCACAP Early Head Start Child Care Partnership program calendar (this includes days Early Head Start is open when the local school district may be closed).
- Develop back-up plans for getting to the center if something comes up.
- Keep track of your child’s attendance. Missing a few days in one month can put your child at risk of falling behind in the center’s routine.
- If you know that, your child will be absent the night before call and leave a message at the center.
- If you know that your child may arrive after 9:00 AM, please call the center or your Family Advocate before 9:00 AM.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Foods cannot be brought into the Early Head Start centers from home or restaurants. No food, including candy for any type of holiday (birthday parties, Halloween, Christmas, Valentine’s Day, etc.) will be allowed.

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT

Our Early Head Start program is concerned about the abuse and neglect of any child. All teachers and staff are mandated by law to report any suspected child abuse or neglect case. Failure to do so is a misdemeanor and punishable by law. A child is a victim of abuse when in serious danger of physical, mental, sexual, or emotional injury. A child who is a victim of neglect is a child without adequate food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision.

SCACAP-CCP Early Head Start does not make judgments as to the state of abuse or neglect of a child. However, it is **MANDATORY** that we report every **suspected** case immediately. Early Head Start teachers and staff are trained to daily document every mark, bruise, scratch, etc., and to ask the cause. We are protecting your child with this policy.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Field Trips are incorporated into the curriculum. They promote hands-on learning experience and are planned prior to the event. SCACAP does not provide daily transportation for children to and from the Early Head Start classroom, and neither funding nor appropriate buses are available for field trips.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The use of spanking and other forms of physical punishment is not consistent with the program’s goals of self-competence and self-confidence and is therefore prohibited. Similarly, isolation for a child’s misbehavior is not allowed. Discipline involves teaching. We believe the following are effective in the center and the home:

- Praising the child for appropriate behavior consistently and sincerely
- Redirecting the child from inappropriate behavior to another activity, guiding them for the areas where actions are not acceptable into another setting with acceptable activity.
- Talking one on one with the child. Each child participated in developing classroom rules with the teacher’s guidance. Often a brief one on one discussion about the rules and how the rules apply will serve to remind the child.

HAZARDOUS WEATHER

It is the policy of the program to close centers in the event of bad weather. **If the local school district in your area is closed, we will close, unless other instructions are given.** Notice of closure due to bad weather will be **broadcasted through local radio and television station announcements.**

ACCIDENTS & INCIDENTS

Accidents or illnesses are assessed by the center staff. Necessary first aid is administered by staff persons who have received training in First Aid/CPR treatment. The parent or guardian is notified immediately of illness/injury or emergency need of evacuation (to include a program lockdown, severe weather closures, or active shooter). Parents are notified by phone and or school text/email system.

The parent or guardian should accompany the child, if possible, to the child's physician or emergency room at the hospital.

In the event the parent or guardian cannot be located, the center staff responsible for the child will take the child to the physician or emergency room. Center staff will continue to locate parent/guardian in the event of illness or injury.

CHILD EVACUATION NOTIFICATION

The program will use its evacuation plan to secure safety for the children in the event of a need for evacuation. The parent or guardian will be notified immediately of the emergency need for evacuation. An emergency includes and not limited to a program lockdown, severe weather closures, or an active shooter. Parents will be contacted by phone and or school text/email system.

Parents are responsible to help the staff maintain accurate contact numbers where the parent or guardian can be reached at all times. If unable to contact the parent(s), the emergency contact will be notified.

DIAPERING

The program supplies disposable diapers, wipes and if necessary, **cloth diapers when a child has been identified as having an allergic reaction to disposable diapers.**

- Please bring the child in a dry diaper each day, and we will supply the changing of diapers while your child is in the center.
- Staff will send your child home with a clean dry diaper.
- During diapering, we adhere to state licensing and Early Head Start policies and procedures in maintaining good health and safety practices.
- Diapers are also provided when your child is developing toilet training skills.

PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

To prevent personal belongings from being lost or broken, please leave all items of value including radios, toys, tapes, toys games, jewelry, and money at home. Children are welcome to bring a special item to share with the group on a specified share day.

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT

Current national policies require a smoke-free environment and the elimination of exposure to tobacco smoke by children, staff, and parents. Smoking is prohibited at all times in all spaces utilized by the program. This includes classrooms, staff offices, kitchens, restrooms, parent and staff meeting rooms, hallways, outdoor play areas, and vehicles used by staff and for transporting children.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is a developmental milestone and it cannot be rushed. As we focus on diapering and toileting in the program, we find that this is a challenging period for children.

With encouragement and through daily routines, we can help your child be ready to provide you with cues of readiness. This is how we can work together:

- Children still learning to use the toilet should have at least one change of clothing including underwear, pants, and socks.
- Only diapers will be provided not training pants.
- Meet and discuss progress with center staff in regard to different approaches.
- Communicate with staff to share progress both at home and center.
- Do not be discouraged when accidents occur.

SUDDEN INFANT DEATH SYNDROME (SIDS) POLICY

Early Head Start program practices Safe Sleep for infants. This practice requires infants to be placed on their backs when sleeping. There will be no toys, blankets, or pillows placed in the crib.

NO FLIP FLOPS/NO HAIR BEADS POLICY

Preventing injury is upmost importance, flip-flops or open-toe shoes are not permitted to be worn. Children should wear closed-toe shoes at all times.

Any small item is a potential choking hazard – beads and small hair barrettes. Hair beads are not permitted to be worn by infants and toddlers. We wish not to jeopardize your child's safety. Hair beads are unsafe due to child possibly swallowing them or placing them in their ear or nose.

PARENTAL ACCESS

Parents who have concerns/issues about custody or visitation of their child(ren), must have legal or court-ordered documentation and share with Family Services/Center Director for filing. We will go by the orders of the court for any visitation. Any onsite visit must not interfere with the class routine. The program will only release a child to a person indicated on the child's application completed by the primary parent/guardian. Parents are responsible to keep that information updated.

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

SCACAP-CCP Early Head Start has developed a Social Media policy for parents to use extreme caution with the use of Social Media. This was to guarantee compliance with legal restrictions as well as privacy and confidentiality agreements.

The objective of this caution is to set boundaries for families with regard to online postings and to empower employees and families to use social media tools. Social media includes, but is not limited to, blogs, podcasts, social networks, photo/video sharing websites, and discussion forums.

While we recognize that this can be a fun and easy way to share information with family and friends, there are times when the need exists to exercise caution, including when it involves photos and/or videos of children and staff in the Head Start/Pre-K classrooms.

You may use social media such as Facebook to keep in touch with family and friends, but **please remember that the information that is posted on social media is not private and can often be viewed by anyone who logs onto your page.**

All parents or guardians will sign the **Permission to Photograph** statement when his/her child is enrolled to granting permission for their child to be photographed or not to be photographed. Parents must notify the Family Advocate if permission status changes. On occasion, parents may be asked at specific activities/events for permission to photograph the child for public use.

We ask that you respect and understand that taking photos or videos could put a child or family in jeopardy if they have chosen not to be photographed or videoed and have not given permission. If you are interested in following our program, you can become a friend of our Facebook Page by using the link on our website. www.scacap.org



**Thank you for being a part of the South
Carolina Association of Community Action
Partnerships Early Head Start-Child Care
family!**

I, _____ acknowledge that I have received and (PRINT PARENT/GUARDIAN NAME) carefully read the SC Association of Community Action Partnership Early Head Start Child Care Partnership Parent Handbook. I have read and understand all of the information presented to me in this Parent Handbook including the following please initial:

- _____ Program Services and Policies
- _____ Attendance and Tardiness Policy
- _____ Volunteer and Confidentiality Policy
- _____ Informed Consent & Public Acknowledgment of Reporting Child Abuse
- _____ Medical Information
- _____ Family Engagement

I understand that it is my responsibility to contact the Center Director should I have questions or need clarification regarding any policies, practices, and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook.

Center Name: _____
Child(ren) Name(s): _____
Parent Name: _____
Parent Signature: _____ Date: _____
Staff Signature: _____ Date: _____

COVID-19 PANDEMIC ADDENDUM



COVID-19 RELATED INFORMATION

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a virus that is spread through “droplets.” When a person with the virus coughs or sneezes, they spread tiny droplets with the virus. If the droplets land on you or a surface that you touch, and then you rub your eyes, nose, or mouth, the virus can enter your body and you can become sick. Most people have mild symptoms, but some become very sick. **The most common symptoms are fever, tiredness, and cough, with or without shortness of breath.** Others include headache, sore throat, congestion/runny nose, loss of smell or taste, vomiting, diarrhea, and nausea/upset stomach. **If your child has any symptoms of COVID-19, keep child at home.**

PREVENTION IN THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Your center staff will have additional monitoring processes to detect symptoms prior to entering the center. Here is a list of the following steps to keep your child and the center’s staff protected:

1. Symptoms and temperature screening for COVID-19 will be conducted for all children, parents, and staff upon arrival.
2. Personal protective equipment will be provided for staff, visitors, and children 2 years old and older (masks, foot covers, and gloves)
3. Meals will be served with disposable plates, cups, and utensils while social distancing as much as possible.
4. Additional cleaning and disinfecting of the learning environment/equipment throughout the day.

COVID-19 HEALTH CHECKS AND SCREENINGS

If your child has a temperature of 100.4 or above, your child will not be allowed to enter the classroom. The child may return to the center after 24 hours of being fever-free, without the use of fever medicines (i.e. Motrin, etc). **Contact your child's doctor about any symptoms lasting 3 days.**

If your child is showing COVID-19 symptoms during the day, your child will need to be picked up immediately and referred to your child's doctor for testing. **Call 911 or visit the emergency department if your child is showing any of the following symptoms of respiratory distress:**

- Signs of breathing problems – look for muscles pulling in between the ribs or the nose puffing out with each breath.
- Bluish lips, hands/nails, or face.
- Becomes confused or very sleepy.

If a child, staff member, or close family member test positive for COVID-19, the local health department will be referred for guidance such as proper disinfecting protocols, closure of the classroom/center, exclusion from the center, and returning to the center.

The best way to avoid getting sick with COVID-19 is to avoid close contact with others. When you go out, wear a face covering and stay at least six feet away from other people whenever possible. Even when you're at home, remember to do the following:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Make sure everyone in your household does, too.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Stay home if you believe you are sick.
- Keep your hands clean and away from your face, nose, or mouth.

HEALTH & SAFETY – INFANTS & TODDLERS

- All staff handling infants and toddlers will wash their hands, neck, and anywhere touched by a child's secretions.
- Caregivers will change the child's clothes if secretions are on the child's clothes. Teachers will change their clothing, if there are secretions on it, and wash their hands again.
- After diapering, caregivers will wash their hands (even if they were wearing gloves) and disinfect the diapering area.

PARENT FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

DROP-OFF/ARRIVAL & PICK UP PROCEDURES

- Read signage in the drop-off/arrival area and are to keep six feet of distance whenever feasible.
- If possible it is preferred that one parent may drop off/pick up each child. If possible, it is preferred that the same adult from each family pick up and drop off your child. Parents must follow procedures to be admitted in the center. A staff person will greet you to receive your child during drop off and return your child during pick up.
- A staff member will sign your child in and out at the designated receiving area.
- Center staff will ensure that hand sanitizer will be at the designated receiving area.
- Local and Community infection rates will determine the need to deny or limit access of visitors.

EDUCATION SERVICES

PREVENTING SPREAD IN THE CLASSROOM

- Staff will follow social distancing strategies.
- Breastfeeding mothers will be provided an altered location in the center.
- Teachers will be restricted to one classroom with one group of children. (cohort)
- Children will be kept in their assigned rooms throughout the day with the same teacher including at naptime and for meals.
- Group meetings or circle time will be time limited with social distancing measures.
- At naptime children cots will be sanitized, kept 6 feet apart, and placed head to toe to reduce the potential for viral spread.
- Mouthed toys will be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day.
- Children will be separated during most activities.

CLOTH FACE COVERINGS

Cloth face coverings are meant to protect other people in case the wearer is unknowingly infected but does not have symptoms.

- Teachers will ensure that children ages 2 and above face covering is placed at appropriate times.
- Staff will assist with applying and removing face coverings.
- Cloth face coverings will **not** be placed on children under the age of 2 or
 - Masks may be removed for anyone who has trouble breathing, or is unconscious, incapacitated, or otherwise unable to remove the face covering without assistance.
 - Anyone who cannot tolerate a cloth face-covering due to a documented developmental, medical, or behavioral health needs may be excluded.