

March 16, 2020

Attention Staff,

You have already received the initial memo and spreadsheet so that we can plan the next week for our program. The following information is for how we will be “doing business” in the coming days to best keep our staff and children healthy and safe. Please be mindful, that even if you have families who are not working that express a desire to still bring their child, our care may be the safest place for that child to be. It is not our job to question the reason behind a family wanting their child to continue attending during this time.

**Drop Off and Pick Up Procedures:**

- Head Start
  - Families will bring their children to the classroom door. Staff will meet the child at the classroom door. Parents/Guardians are not going to enter the classroom to sign in on paper. Staff will scan children in and out as usual and will be responsible for ensuring hand washing. Families should be encouraged to keep drop off and pick up as brief as possible.
  - Buses will run as usual with bus monitors doing health checks.
- Early Head Start
  - Families will bring their children into the rooms as usual. Parents/Guardians are not going to sign in on paper. Staff will encourage families to keep drop off and pick up as brief as possible to encourage social distancing. Staff will scan children in and out as they usually do.
- ALL children will be assessed for illness using our Daily Health Check criteria as a guide. If there is ANY sign of illness they will be sent back home. If a family insists the child's symptoms are allergies, teething or otherwise not an illness. Please use your best judgement and knowledge of the child. If you feel it is illness related the child should not attend. This is to ensure the health and safety of all involved, including that child.

**Meals:**

- We will not be doing family style meals until further notice. We realize that the children will still be sitting in close proximity at the tables but this will reduce the amount of germs passed. Please plate the food for the children and set tables yourselves to reduce contamination.
- When serving the food make sure you are plating and pouring the FULL serving amount per CACFP guidelines. If children want seconds you may serve them more but we are REQUIRED to at least give the minimum amounts.
- We are making plans to try and serve food to those children who are not in attendance.

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#### **Staff Coverage:**

- In the upcoming days/weeks, our attendance numbers will most likely be down. Please work together with the others in your site to ensure classrooms are within ratio. This may include shifting children or staff members to other rooms. There are specific requirements for combining children under 24 months of age. For specific requirements please see your DHS licensing book. Please stay in close communication with your immediate supervisor as needs arise but know we are confident in your abilities to maintain ratio and professionalism.

#### **Staff Health and Safety:**

- Although many of these memos are regarding our children and their families, please know that your health and safety are equally as important to us. That being said, if you are ill or have a compromising health situation please contact your supervisor for guidance.
- In regards to home visits for any newly enrolled children. Please complete as much as possible via phone and email as home visits are temporarily suspended.

#### **Programming As Usual:**

- Although numbers will be low and there may be alternate staff in classrooms it is vitally important that we continue to provide a positive and enriching environment for all of those in attendance as well as for those children not attending during this time.
- We as caregivers and educators need to be mindful of little ears in the room. Please keep all "adult" conversations, concerns and fears in check. It is not the time to be instilling our own insecurities on anyone else. Although, we expect this to always be the case, with emotions running high, it is extra important.

#### **Fielding Questions:**

- We will keep you up to date as quickly as we can. If a family has questions regarding the program's plans for closures and/or health and safety precautions that you do not feel confident in answering please call Central Office to get the answers your families are seeking.
- Just like we will do with children, please be mindful of your conversations with families. Only give out the facts and information you are provided with. We all have our own feelings and thoughts about this but we need to stay professional and objective.

**As previously stated, we will continue to keep in touch with you and our families as soon as information becomes available. The information regarding the Covid-19 pandemic is ever evolving and we will keep you up to date as promptly as we can. Thank you so much for your patience and dedication to our children and families.**

Sincerely,

**Head Start Leadership Team**