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Sheri Wilson, JD, CCAP, NCRT, Executive Director



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Dear Parents and Guardians of Head Start and Early Head Start Children,

This note is intended to offer an update regarding status of the program and the services offered to our children as we move through this pandemic. No one would argue that this is not the most ideal way to offer services nor that we wouldn't love to bring everyone back to full in-person services. At this time, however, that is still not yet possible.

We continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic in our state and local area. While the positivity rate seems to be going down, in the last 2 weeks it still ranges from 10% - 15%. I am optimistic, that with the vaccine being distributed to directed populations, we may soon be able to reevaluate our restrictions and begin to reopen more slots.

We will continue to offer in-person services to limited numbers in our classrooms to keep contact at a minimum and reduce the possibility of spread across the site. Our staff will continue to engage in a strict cleaning and sanitizing regiment throughout the day. Additionally, all our staff and Head Start (age 3 -5) children continue to wear face masks when on site, with the exception of when eating and napping.

We remain vigilant in our efforts to ensure the safety of your children and our staff by employing preventive measures to minimize the spread of this virus at our sites. The following page has the specific precautions we continue to have in place when picking up and dropping off children for both Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

We will keep you updated as things change and progress. As restrictions change in our local area, we will continue to evaluate our procedures to ensure the health and safety of our children, families, and staff.

Thank you for your patience and understanding throughout this difficult period.

Matthew LeClere, Ed.S.
Director Head Start/Early Head Start
Community Action of Southeast Iowa

1. DROPOFF

All children will be met, at the designated entrance door, of the facility by a staff member. Staff will take each child's temperature upon entering the facility. Parents/guardians and the public will not be allowed in the building until further notice.

2. CHILD AND FAMILY SICKNESS AND SYMPTOMS

Parents will be required to answer two questions daily related to child and family symptoms:

- 1) Has your child or anyone in your household had the following symptoms in the last 24 hours: Temperature of 100.4° or above, new onset or worsening cough, or shortness of breath?

** The health department recommends visiting a primary care physician to determine the source of a fever. Child must be fever free for 24 hours without aid of fever reducing medication.

- 2) Has your child been exposed to anyone who has tested positive for COVID-19?

**If the parent answers 'yes' to one or both questions, the child will be unable to participate in center-based programming that day.

3. CHILD OR STAFF WITH SYMPTOMS DURING PROGRAM DAY

If a child becomes sick during the program day, s/he will be kept in a separate room until parents arrive to pick-up the sick child.

4. PICK-UP

When picking up your child, either use the buzzer at the designated entrance or, if there is no answer, call the posted phone number to let them know which child you are there to pick up. A staff member will bring your child to the designated entrance to meet you.

5. GROUP SIZES

Classes will be limited to no more than 10 children in each classroom.

6. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

We will follow a strict cleaning and disinfecting protocol throughout all classrooms and buildings.

7. HANDWASHING

All children and staff will wash hands using proper handwashing techniques when entering the building and regularly throughout their day. Hand sanitizer will also be provided when handwashing sinks are not available.

8. MASKS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE GEAR

Masks and gloves will be made available for staff and masks for children aged 3 -5.

9. SOCIAL DISTANCING

Classrooms will include the same group of 10 or less children and 2 – 3 providers each day.

10. CONFIRMED COVID-19 CASE

If a positive case is identified within a classroom, the health department will be contacted and provide further determinations including program/classroom closure. **It is likely** that we will be instructed to close that affected classroom for 14 days.