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Sheri Wilson, JD, CCAP, NCRT, Executive Director



February 3, 2021

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

This is an update regarding the status of the program and the services offered to our children as we move through this pandemic. After careful consideration, consultation with the Health Department, and discussion with our Head Start Leadership Team, I am pleased to tell you that we are prepared to take a small step towards normalcy.

In response to the lowering cases of COVID-19 in Southeast Iowa and the Governors orders for public schools to return to in-person learning, I am pleased to announce that Head Start will begin the transition back to full enrollment. This includes increasing our classroom enrollments from the current restricted 10 children to their regular full classroom enrollments (15 or 16 depending on the room).

Starting on Tuesday, February 16, we will begin the transition back to full capacity classrooms. This will start with our full virtual kids that have all their paperwork in order and would like to be in-person. The next step is to work with any virtual kids who still need to turn in paperwork before they can start. Waitlist kids follow them and then our recruitment of other families to fill all our slots.

We will still offer a full virtual option through the end of this school year, if families are participating, and continue to supplement our in-person learning with DOJO. Family Development Specialists will work with each of the current virtual families individually to determine the service delivery option that best meets their child's needs.

We will continue to follow our same procedures for drop-off and pick-up, as well as the other guidelines and precautions listed on the following page. 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 will continue to wear face masks when onsite, with the exception of eating and napping.

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 cooperation and support throughout the last several months and into the future.

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. CLEANING AND DISINFECTING

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

6. 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.

7. MASKS AND OTHER PROTECTIVE GEAR

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

8. SOCIAL DISTANCING

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

9. 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.