

HEAD START PARENT HANDBOOK

2023–2024



**HUMAN
SERVICES**





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Welcome to the Head Start Family!

We are happy to have you and your child in the City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program. We hope your time with us is a rewarding experience for you and your family. This Head Start Parent Handbook is designed to provide you with information about the Head Start and the Early Head Start (EHS) Programs and the important role you play in your child's experience. You are your child's first and most important teacher. Working together as a team, we will provide the support your child needs to succeed in school and in life.

Please read this handbook and become familiar with our policies and procedures. Keep this handbook in a safe place so that you can refer to it as needed. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Audrey K. Jackson
Head Start Administrator
City of San Antonio
Department of Human Services
210-206-5500



DHS MISSION

To strengthen the community through human services investments, resources, & partnerships.

OUR MISSION

For every child & every family the best Head Start services every day.

OUR VISION

Preparing children & engaging families for school readiness & life-long success.



About the Program

Program Information

The City of San Antonio Department of Human Services Head Start Program provides high quality comprehensive services to over 3,300 families with children ages 6 weeks to 5 years.

Our Head Start PreK Program provides center based services to 3,020 children. Our Early Head Start (EHS) Infant/Toddler Program provides three options for 344 children:

- EHS Center Based Program
- EHS Home Based Program
- EHS Child Care Partnership (EHS-CCP)

Our schools and centers are located within Edgewood ISD and San Antonio ISD.

For more information regarding locations and program services, please visit www.saheadstart.org or call the City of San Antonio Head Start Program at **(210) 206-5500**.

Health & Safety Guidance & Information

The health and safety of our families, staff, and community is our top priority. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program will follow guidance provided by the Office of Head Start, Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the City of San Antonio Metro Health Department, Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Child Care Regulation, and San Antonio ISD and Edgewood ISD regarding program services in response to health and safety concerns. For additional information and updates regarding program services and availability, please contact your child's campus/center or Family Support Worker.

Program Management

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program has a strong governance structure. Parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in policy making decisions. Governance includes the City of San Antonio City Council, Community Action Advisory Board, and the Head Start Policy Council. The Head Start Policy Council members are current Head Start or EHS parents/guardians from all program options. In addition, all parents/guardians of currently enrolled children are eligible to participate in the Parent Connection Committee meetings or become a Parent Leader at their site. These committees and Parent Leaders play an important role in ensuring program decisions are made with parent/guardian input. Talk to your Family Support Worker to learn more about participating in this process. Every parent/guardian's voice is important!

Social Media

For news, updates and information follow along on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

FOLLOW US



@SanAntonioHeadStart



@HeadStartSA



@HeadStartSA

Enrollment Information

Program Enrollment

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program prohibits discrimination based on age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or family composition. Head Start services are available to families within the Edgewood and San Antonio Independent School Districts. The program encourages all families to apply. Families qualify for the Head Start program if their household income is at or below the poverty level. Families who receive public assistance (TANF, SNAP, or SSI), those children in foster care, children who are experiencing homelessness, and/or a disability, also qualify regardless of income. Each family must meet the federal requirements for eligibility and children must be 3 or 4 years old by September 1st for the Head Start Program and 6 weeks - 35 months for the Early Head Start Program. This ensures children and families with the greatest need are prioritized and receive benefits from our services.

Enrollment of Children with Disabilities

Young children vary in their skills, knowledge, backgrounds, and abilities. Effective teaching includes individualized teaching and opportunities for all children to access, participate, and thrive in the Head Start program. Our program recruits, enrolls, and serves children with disabilities. In collaboration with Edgewood ISD, San Antonio ISD, and our childcare partners, Head Start provides quality services to all children in an inclusive environment.

My Child's Needs



I submitted diagnosis, evaluation, or referral information to my Family Support Worker or school



Contact for Intervention Services (Special Education or ECI)

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Questions I have about my child's learning needs



Program Policies & Information

Attendance

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program partners with San Antonio ISD and Edgewood ISD to provide full-day educational services for pre-kindergarten aged children. Because of this partnership, your child is also enrolled in the school district's pre-kindergarten program. Once enrolled in the school district, by law, your child must attend daily. This law is called compulsory attendance. When your child has multiple and/or prolonged absences, Head Start and the school district will work with you to identify and help remove barriers

Head Start/Early Head Start is a school readiness program, so it is important to establish a regular routine of attendance. Parents/guardians must bring their children to school/center on time every day.

If your child is absent, or going to be absent for any reason, please notify your Family Support Worker, child's teacher, or the school/center front office within one hour of the program's start time. When reporting your child's absence, please let staff know the reason for the absence and a possible date your child will return to class. If your child is not able to return by that date, please contact our staff. You will be contacted if your child's absence has not been reported within one hour of the program's start time.

If your child is absent for two (2) consecutive days without notification, has a pattern of irregular attendance, or stops attending school/center, contact will be made by telephone, cell phone, email, text, or home visit in person by a Head Start staff member to discuss the absences and offer assistance and/or resources to ensure that any attendance challenges are addressed. If your child does not return to school/center, then the program will place your child back on the wait list and consider your child's spot vacant.



Did You Know?

Familiar activities can provide comfort for both adults and children. Just like adults, children feel more confident and secure when their daily activities are predictable and familiar. A consistent daily schedule and established routines give children a predictable day. Help ensure that your child gets to school on time by establishing a daily routine and ensuring your child get 10-12 hours of sleep each night. Do you need ideas on how to establish routines? Your Family Support Worker or child's teacher can help!



Who do I call if my child will be absent:

Family Support Worker: _____

Phone: _____

School:/Center: _____

Phone: _____

Teacher: _____

Phone: _____

Confidentiality

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program is committed to ensuring the security of personal, child, and family information. Confidentiality requirements include, but are not limited to:

- Physical and electronic records/files are secured.
- Only authorized staff may access child and family files.
- Staff members only share child information on a need-to-know basis.
- Written consent is required from parents/guardians prior to any release of individual child or family records.
- Staff are trained on how to keep information confidential.
- Only information that is essential to provide services will be recorded and maintained.
- Our program follows HIPAA, Head Start, and school district privacy guidelines.

Program Policies and Information

Standards of Conduct

In accordance with Federal Register Title 45, Subpart I – Human Resources Management, Section 1302.90(c)(1)(2), education service providers and agencies must ensure that all staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers abide by the program's standards of conduct that:

- (1) Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers implement positive strategies to support children's well-being and prevent and address challenging behavior;
- (2) Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers do not maltreat or endanger the health or safety of children, including, at a minimum, that staff must not:
 - A. Use corporal punishment;
 - B. Use isolation to discipline a child;
 - C. Bind or tie a child to restrict movement or tape a child's mouth;
 - D. Use or withhold food as a punishment or reward;
 - E. Use toilet learning/training methods that punish, demean, or humiliate a child;
 - F. Use any form of emotional abuse, including public or private humiliation, rejecting, terrorizing, extended ignoring, or corrupting a child;
 - G. Physically abuse a child;
 - H. Use any form of verbal abuse, including profane, sarcastic language, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or child's family;
 - I. Use physical activity or outdoor time as a punishment or reward;
- (3) Ensure staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and do not stereotype on any basis, including age, gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or family composition;
- (4) Require staff, consultants, contractors, and volunteers to comply with program confidentiality policies concerning personally identifiable information about children, families, and other staff members in accordance with subpart C of part 1303 on the protections for the privacy of child records and applicable federal, state, local, and tribal laws; and
- (5) Ensure no child is left alone or unsupervised by staff, consultants, contractors, or volunteers while under their care.

Additionally, personnel policies and procedures include appropriate penalties for staff, consultants, and volunteers who violate the Standards of Conduct. Furthermore, all staff members are expected to adhere to the Standards of Conduct established by their respective agency.

Program Policies & Information

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

All Head Start staff, contractors, and volunteers are required by law to report to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) if they suspect a child has been the victim of abuse or neglect. This report must be made whether the suspected abuse or neglect happened at or away from the school/center. Staff will follow state regulations regarding timeframes, information to be reported, and the confidentiality of reported information. If a report is made, the child and family will continue receiving Head Start services. A report to TDFPS or a family's involvement with TDFPS or law enforcement will never affect the participation of any child in the program.

We all have a responsibility to protect all children

If you suspect child abuse or neglect, you can call
1-800-252-5400 or report online at
www.txabusehotline.org

Toilet Training

A child will not be denied enrollment into Head Start if they are not potty trained. Head Start classroom staff will work together with parents/guardians to teach toileting skills to children. Toileting skills will be based on individual needs and family customs and beliefs. Our schools and centers have limited laundry facilities, so soiled clothing will be sent home. Please talk with your child's teacher and Family Support Worker to share any questions or concerns related to potty training.

- ✓ I have notified my child's teacher/ Family Support Worker of my child's toilet training needs.
- ✓ I have provided a clean change of clothes for my child in the event my child needs to be changed at school.
- ✓ I am working with my child's teacher on ways I can practice a toilet training routine with my child at home.
- ✓ I have reviewed my school district or child care center policies and guidance concerning toilet training.



Program Policies & Information

Community Complaint Procedure

Parents/guardians and community residents are encouraged to resolve Head Start complaints, problems, or concerns at the center/school level by talking to a teacher, Family Support Worker, center director, or principal. Concerns/complaints may also be submitted using the comment section of the Head Start website at www.saheadstart.org.

If attempts to resolve the concern/problem with the above staff person are not successful, the following formal steps may be taken:

1. If your child is enrolled in the Head Start Pre-K Program, call, email, meet with, or provide a written statement to the Early Childhood Education Director for your school district. If your child attends the Early Head Start Program, contact the Child Care Director or Site Coordinator. The Child Care Director will provide the parent/guardian or community resident a recommendation for resolution of the concern/problem within five business days of receipt of the issue. The Director may request additional time to resolve the concern/problem. If not resolved, you may proceed to step 2.

Early Child Care Education Director/Child Care Director/ or Site Coordinator

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

2. Call, email, meet with, or provide a written statement to the City of San Antonio Head Start Program Administrator. The Head Start Administrator will have five business days to resolve the concern/problem. The Head Start Administrator may request additional time to resolve the concern/problem. If not resolved, you may proceed to step 3.

Head Start Administrator

Name: Audrey Jackson

Phone: 210-206-5500

Email: Audrey.Jackson@sanantonio.gov

3. Call, email, or provide a written statement to the Department of Human Services (DHS) Head Start Policy Council. The statement shall describe in detail the complaint, problem, or concern and steps taken to resolve the issue. The DHS Head Start Policy Council will provide a written response within 15 business days of receipt of the written statement. The DHS Head Start Policy Council may request additional time to resolve the concern/problem. If not resolved, you may proceed to step 4.

Head Start Policy Council Liaison

Name: Rocío Plata

Phone: 210-206-5500

Email: Rocio.Plata@sanantonio.gov

4. Submit a signed, written statement to the City of San Antonio City Council's Governing Board/ Advisory Committee. The statement shall describe in detail the complaint, problem, or concern and steps taken to resolve the issue. The City of San Antonio City Council's Governing Board/ Advisory Committee will provide a written response within 15 business days of receipt of the written statement. The City of San Antonio City Council's Governing Board is the last formal step in resolving parent/community resident complaints or concern and the resolution is final.





Education Information

Education Information

School Readiness

School Readiness means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children. Head Start views school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life. Physical, cognitive, social, and emotional development are all essential parts of school readiness.

Head Start values the unique role families play in this process. Our program will provide opportunities for you to help prepare your child for kindergarten. Talk to your child's teacher and Family Support Worker to learn more about events, activities, and resources that can help you make connections with other parents, continue building a positive relationship with your child, learn about child development, and improve family well-being. School Readiness information is presented throughout the year during orientation, Policy Council meetings, Parent Connection Committee meetings, trainings, conferences, and in reference materials.

Our school readiness goals focus on the knowledge, skills, and abilities children should attain as a result of Head Start and EHS services. Our program identifies key school readiness goals within the five central domains of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (HSELOF): Approaches to Learning, Social & Emotional Development, Language & Literacy, Cognition, and Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development. The school readiness goals are linked to the Parent, Family & Community Engagement Framework (PFCE).

Approaches to Learning

Approaches to Learning

- Child will become more independent in behavior, actions, and play while exploring and investigating their surroundings.

Social & Emotional Development

- Child will develop social and emotional skills that support on-going positive relationships with self and others.

Language & Literacy

- Child will develop skills in listening and understanding and using words/actions to respond to others.
- Child will understand and demonstrate the use of print, signs, and pictures.
- Child will develop knowledge of how sounds, letters, and words relate to one another and spoken language.

Cognition

- Child will develop skills for reasoning, memory, and problem solving.
- Child will use critical thinking to understand and organize their world.

Perceptual, Motor, & Physical Development

- Child will demonstrate increasing Independence in motor skills, self-care, and safety.
- Child will use their senses to understand, organize, and explore their world.

Education Information

Home Visits and Parent Conferences

Your child's teacher will schedule at least two home visits and two parent conferences during the school year with you. The purpose of each home visit and parent conference is to learn about your child and family, discuss your child's development and progress, and share goals for your child. This is a chance for you to share your child's interests, strengths, and experiences. You are welcome to ask questions about your child or the Head Start program. Parents may schedule an appointment with the principal/director or teacher at any time to address any questions or concerns.

EHS Home-Based Home Visits

Families with children enrolled in the EHS Home-Based option will receive weekly home visits for 90 minutes with a minimum of 46 visits per program year. Home visitors will support parents in their role as their child's first and most important teacher by providing individualized activities that promote secure parent-child relationships.

Discipline and Guidance

Head Start promotes positive discipline and guidance that encourages building self-esteem and self-control. These methods include:

- Using praise and encouragement of appropriate behavior instead of focusing on the negative behavior
- Reminding a child of expectations throughout the day by using clear, positive statements
- Redirecting negative behavior using positive statements
- Using a brief supervised separation or break from the group, when appropriate, for the child's age and development. This is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age



The City of San Antonio Head Start Program does not use harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment with children. The following are examples of discipline methods that are **not allowed**:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toilet training
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or object
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Pointing a finger in a child's face
- Snapping fingers at a child
- Threatening phrases or sarcastic language
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom or closet with the door closed
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time for the child's age

Education Information

Curriculum

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program uses research-based, state-adopted early childhood curricula to guide and plan instruction. Various curricula are used within the program. Preparing children for school is a primary focus in all our classrooms. Each curriculum aligns with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and the Texas Pre-kindergarten Guidelines or Little Texans Big Futures. Ask your child's teacher about the curriculum used in the classroom. The EHS Program uses a research-based curriculum to support parents in their role as their child's teacher in both the center and home-based programs. Both curricula aligns with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework.

Screenings and Assessments

All children receive a developmental and social/emotional screening within 45 days of entry into the program. The following areas are screened: gross and fine motor skills, cognitive, language, self-help and social and emotional development. If further evaluation is needed, parents/guardians are notified and involved in the process to help their child achieve specific goals.

A vision and hearing screening may also be provided within 45 days of a child's entry into the program.

In addition to initial screenings, ongoing formal and informal assessments are conducted throughout the program year. Information from assessments, parent input, classroom observations, and work samples is gathered and used to plan activities to support learning.

Ready Rosie

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program provides the Ready Rosie Program, a research-based parenting curriculum, to all families free of charge. Head Start staff will send caregivers an invitation to join Ready Rosie after your child's enrollment. Ready Rosie helps build language, reading and math skills. Parents/guardians will receive a playlist with short videos in English and in Spanish that model fun and easy activities to do with children at home and in places like the grocery store, bus, car, or restaurants. Ready Rosie is available through text, email, and smart phone applications. Family Support Workers can assist parents/guardians who do not have an email address to sign up for a free email account.



My Child's Teacher Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Conference
Hours: _____

Wellness Support Services

The City of San Antonio Head Start Program employs licensed mental health professionals who complete consultations and may suggest interventions. These mental health professionals refer families in need to community providers to meet the social, emotional and behavioral needs of children and family members. These staff members visit homes and classrooms, attend school events, and work with parents/guardians, teachers and other Head Start staff to develop strategies to ensure the needs of each family is met.

For questions or concerns about social and emotional development and/or mental health, contact your child's teacher or your Family Support Worker. If needed, staff will set up individual meetings to discuss wellness support for your family.



Site/Center Wellness Services Contact

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



City of San Antonio Family Wellness Specialist

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Nutrition & Health Information

Nutrition & Health Information

Nutrition and Meal Service

In order to meet nutritional needs and special dietary accommodations, children receive a nutrition assessment at application and/or start of each new program year. Staff and families work together to identify nutritional needs for each child. Parents/guardians are also provided information concerning diet and general nutrition. Special dietary needs, with documentation from the child’s healthcare provider, are considered when providing meals to children. When appropriate, a registered dietitian or nutritionist will provide nutrition consultations. Please communicate with staff if your child has any food allergies or intolerances, cultural/personal preferences, or any nutrition related health concerns and feeding requirements throughout the year.

Head Start and EHS follow USDA standards. Foods served are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt. Children are provided a nourishing breakfast, lunch, and snack. Children in the home-based program are provided a meal or snack depending on the time of their playgroup. Center staff and children eat together and use mealtime to engage in conversation and social interaction. Regardless of the time of arrival, children are offered breakfast. Food is never used as punishment or reward. Children are encouraged, but not forced, to eat or taste their food during meals and snack time.

If you have any questions about snacks and meals, please talk with your child’s teacher or the site director/principal.



Need a copy of a Special Diet/Medication form? Contact your Family Support Worker or School Nurse



I submitted the Special Diet/ Medication Form to my Family Support Worker or Nurse



My School Nurse Information

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Health and Safety

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 Head Start Program.

Dental Screenings

Regular oral health care prevents tooth decay and disease and improves chewing, nutrition, language skills, and overall health. Children with healthy teeth are better able to eat, speak, and focus on learning. Head Start requires all children, six months and older, to have an established dental home where they receive routine preventive oral health care and if needed, restorative treatment.

In addition to visiting your child’s dental home for routine oral health care, our program partners with Metro Health to provide a free on- site dental screening and fluoride varnish. Dental screenings are performed after consent is obtained by a licensed dentist and occur in the fall and spring during the program year. If you prefer that Metro Health not provide dental services for your child, please inform your Family Support Worker. You will be given a Private Dental Exam form to take to your child’s dental provider.



Need a copy of a Private Dental Exam form? Contact your Family Support Worker.



I submitted the Private Dental Exam form



My Child’s Dental Information

Dental Office: _____

Dental Provider: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Nutrition & Health Information

Health Services

Health and school readiness begin long before a child enters the classroom. As your child gets older and grows, their needs change. Access to ongoing medical and dental care can help ensure your child is healthy and ready to learn. A current physical or well-child exam can help identify health concerns that may affect your child's learning. Children who are healthy are more prepared for school.

Our program may identify health and/or dietary concerns when you complete an application for enrollment. Any concerns will receive an appropriate referral and follow-up. If needed, staff will work with you and your medical provider to develop a health care plan. Your Family Support Worker will work with you to complete/obtain the following:

- Current physical or well-child exam
- Copy of current immunization record
- Proof of current health insurance
- Medical and Dental Home information
- Care plan and medication instructions from a doctor for health concerns, such as asthma, diabetes, allergies, etc. These forms must be updated each year
- Special diet documentation from your child's doctor (if applicable)
- Allergy information and Plan of Action from a doctor (if applicable)
- Lead screening results (usually done at 12 and 24 months of age). If your child's doctor does not have a screening result on file, then a blood lead screening should be completed as soon as possible. If your child is missing a lead screening, the program, with your consent, can provide the screening free of charge.
- Hemoglobin screening results. Hemoglobin screenings are required for children in Early Head Start who are 12 months of age and older. If your child is missing a hemoglobin screening, the program, with your consent, can provide the screening free of charge.
- Dental exam and, if needed, dental referral of follow-up treatment (cleaning, filling, crowns, sealants, etc.)
- Hearing and Vision screenings
- Developmental and Social-emotional screenings (Ages & Stages Questionnaires: ASQ- 3 and ASQ-SE)
- Tuberculosis (TB) Questionnaire

Additional Tips and Information

- Be sure to update all contact information as it changes. It is important that all emergency contact telephone numbers are working.
- 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.

Forms must be updated every year the child is enrolled in the program



Need a copy of a Physical, Asthma Action Plan, Medication form etc? Contact your Family Support Worker.



I have submitted Required Medical forms to your Family Support Worker or School Nurse



My Child's Medical Information

Medical Office: _____

Medical Provider: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____





Parent Engagement

Parent Engagement



Policy Council

The Head Start Policy Council is a governing body that includes Head Start and EHS program parents/guardians and community members. The Policy Council is responsible for program decisions, including program design, recruitment, selection criteria, programmatic policies, program funding, and budgets. Representatives are elected by Head Start and EHS parents/guardians. It is the responsibility of Policy Council members to remain informed of issues facing the Head Start Program and share the information with other Head Start parents. Policy Council members attend monthly meetings, participate in available trainings, and advocate for the best interest of the entire program. All meetings are open to the public and welcome parents to attend.

City of San Antonio Policy Council Contact

Name: **Rocio Plata**
Phone: **210-206-5500**
Email: **Rocio.Plata@sanantonio.gov**

Parent Connection Committee and Parent Leaders

Parents/guardians have a role in the operation of the Head Start program. Parent Connection Committee Meetings are held throughout the school year at each center/school. During these meetings, parents are encouraged to advocate and make recommendations for program improvements. Head Start and EHS program staff, including principals/center directors, teachers and Family Support Workers attend the meetings and inform parents of center/school activities.

Parents are also updated on Policy Council activities and Head Start requirements and regulations. Guest speakers and other activities may also be planned during these meetings. Parent Connection Committee meetings are a great place to network and have fun. In addition, parents/guardians are encouraged to participate in officer roles but may choose to become a Parent Leader for their site. Officers and Parent Leaders will have the opportunity to build leadership skills, participate in free workshops, trainings, and community events. All Head Start parents/guardians are invited and encouraged to attend.

When does my school/center hold their Parent Connection Meetings:

Dates: _____
Time: _____

PCC Officer Information:

President: _____
Email: _____
Vice-President: _____
Email: _____
Secretary: _____
Email: _____

Parent Engagement

Opportunities for Parent Engagement

Parent engagement is an interactive process where staff, families, and children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. Our approach to engagement is through partnership. We strive to work as equal partners to ensure all children in our program are ready for success in kindergarten and beyond. This requires mutual respect for the roles and identifying strengths each has to offer. We do this through establishing a trusting, relationship-based partnership from the beginning by learning about you and your family. Head Start supports opportunities across the following family outcomes:

- Family Well-being
- Positive Parent-Child Relationships
- Families as Lifelong Educators
- Families as Learners
- Family Engagement in Transitions
- Family Connections to Peers and Community
- Families as Advocates and Leaders

Parent engagement opportunities are offered throughout the year at various times and locations. You will be notified ahead of time. Parent/guardians are also encouraged to volunteer. Volunteering in Head Start provides parents/guardians the opportunity to build new skills that encourage the development of nurturing relationships with both their children and teachers. Research shows that parent participation in their child's learning positively impacts children socially, emotionally, and academically.

Parent Training

The Head Start/EHS program offers a series of trainings and learning opportunities for parents/guardians. Workshops, trainings, and seminars are offered throughout the year at various locations and are based on the interests and needs of parents.

Triple P – Positive Parenting Program

In collaboration with San Antonio Metro Health, the City of San Antonio Head Start and Early Head Start Program offers various levels of the international, evidence-based positive parenting program, Triple P, to all families enrolled in the program. Triple P has five levels of family education and intervention for parents with children up to 12 years of age.

Triple P Level 2 selected is comprised of three seminars for parent's or caregivers, with children up to 12 years, that are interested in general information about promoting their child's development. The series of seminars can also assist parents with specific concerns about their child's behavior or development. Primary Care Level 3 is individually tailored with a focus for specific child behavior concern and includes an active skills training process to help parents acquire new knowledge and skills, evaluate their performance and set themselves goals for change. Triple Level 4 is an 8-week closed group focusing on child management skills including monitoring problem behavior and the attention given following desirable behavior. Triple P Level 5 is for families who need added support after the participation in a lower level of the program. It focuses on marital communication, partner support, mood management and stress coping skills for parents.

For more information on how to participate in the Triple P program families can reach out to their Family Support Worker or Family Wellness Specialist.

EHS Playgroups

Parents/guardians participating in the EHS Home Based Program option may also participate in playgroups held twice a month for a total of 22 during the program year. Playgroups are an opportunity for parents/guardians enrolled in the home-based program to socialize and network with other parents, home visitors, other EHS staff and community members. This is an opportunity to discuss your child's development, promote school readiness activities and strengthen the parent-child relationship. All playgroups are planned jointly with the parent and must include participation of both the parent/guardian and the child.



Parent Engagement

Support and Community Referrals

Raising young children can be challenging. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program wants to help families grow and find the support and resources they need. Staff members build caring and respectful partnerships, so every child has the best chance for success in school and life.

The following are examples of referrals that Head Start staff can provide:

- Housing assistance
- Homelessness prevention, intervention
- Utility assistance
- Alcohol or substance abuse services
- Domestic violence services
- Food and clothing assistance
- Parenting assistance
- Mental Wellness assistance
- Resources for grandparents raising grandchildren

Did You Know?

You don't have to wait for the first day of school to receive assistance. Your Family Support Worker can answer any questions or concerns you may have. We want to help make your child's school year a success!



Goal Setting

When parents/guardians think about what they would like to achieve for their child and family in one year, two years, or even five years, they are thinking about family goals. Staff can help families set goals and work towards making those goals a reality. The City of San Antonio Head Start Program works in partnership with each family to identify strengths and challenges, set goals for the future, and make plans to meet those goals. Goals may include reading with children every day, finding better housing, learning computer skills, creating a household spending plan, or cooking more nutritious meals at home. Head Start staff will support families to create a plan to meet their goals and will check in with families throughout the year to support progress toward achievement.



A goal I would like to work on for my family:



A goal I would like to work on for myself:



Family Support Worker

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____



Family Support Worker Supervisor

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Head Start Family Partnership Agreement

As a Head Start Parent, I will:

As a Head Start Staff member, I will:

Make sure that my child attends school every day and on time.

Provide my child a medical and dental home. If my child does not have a medical and/or dental home, I will work with the Head Start staff to find one.

Make sure that my child's shots and well childcare visits are up-to-date.

Follow-up on any medical, dental, or other health concerns regarding my child.

Follow the health and well-child information guidelines listed on page 16 and 17 of this Parent Handbook.

Attend two parent conferences and two home visits and work with my child's teacher to develop and support my child's educational goals.

Work in partnership with my Family Support Worker to set goals for myself and my family.

Participate in leadership opportunities and Parent Connection Committee meetings.

Volunteer and attend events at my child's school.

Participate in Ready Rosie activities and other parent engagement activities and trainings.

For families participating in the EHS Home-Based option only: Be present and participate in weekly scheduled home visits, participate in parent programs and bi-monthly educational play group activities.

Promote a welcoming and culturally sensitive environment that is respectful of your child and family.

Assist and provide resources to help your family establish a medical and dental home.

Follow-up with you to ensure that your child receives appropriate health screenings. Work with you to ensure that your child's immunizations and well-child visits are up-to-date.

Follow-up on medical, dental, or other health concerns regarding your child.

Provide you with information and training opportunities related to healthy habits, screenings, and other health-related topics.

Collaborate with program staff to provide you information about your child's education.

Coordinate training and resources for you and your family.

Help you achieve your goals by providing referrals and support when you need social services and community resources.

Assist in organizing the Parent Connection Committee meetings and other activities.

Promote our parenting curriculum and ensure your family has access to Ready Rosie videos and workshops, as well as other parent engagement activities and trainings.

Inform you regularly about volunteer opportunities and other events in the classroom and at school.



Safety & Transportation

Safety & Transportation Information

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

Pedestrian Safety Information

- Children should always be escorted by an adult when crossing the street, in a parking lot, and entering a Head Start facility.
- Children should hold hands with the adult and walk beside, not in front of or behind, the adult.
- When escorting children to school, position yourself between the traffic and the child.
- Teach children to look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the street to identify approaching vehicles.
- Always stop at the curb before crossing the street.
- Walk, don't run, across the street.
- Whenever possible, cross at corners with traffic signals and crosswalks.
- Walk facing traffic.
- Make sure that drivers see you by communicating with them verbally or through body language before crossing in front of them.
- Minimize loose clothing items, such as long drawstrings, that may become tangled or cause a child to trip.
- Wear reflectors or white clothing when walking during times of limited visibility, such as early in the morning or late in the afternoon or when rain or fog is in the forecast.
- Reinforce the meaning of the red, green, and yellow colors indicated on the traffic light.
- When picking-up or dropping-off your child, please should park in designated areas.
- Children should never be left unattended in vehicles.
- Always be alert and cautious when traveling near a school campus or child care center. Avoid rushing. Look out for other motorists who may be rushed or distracted.

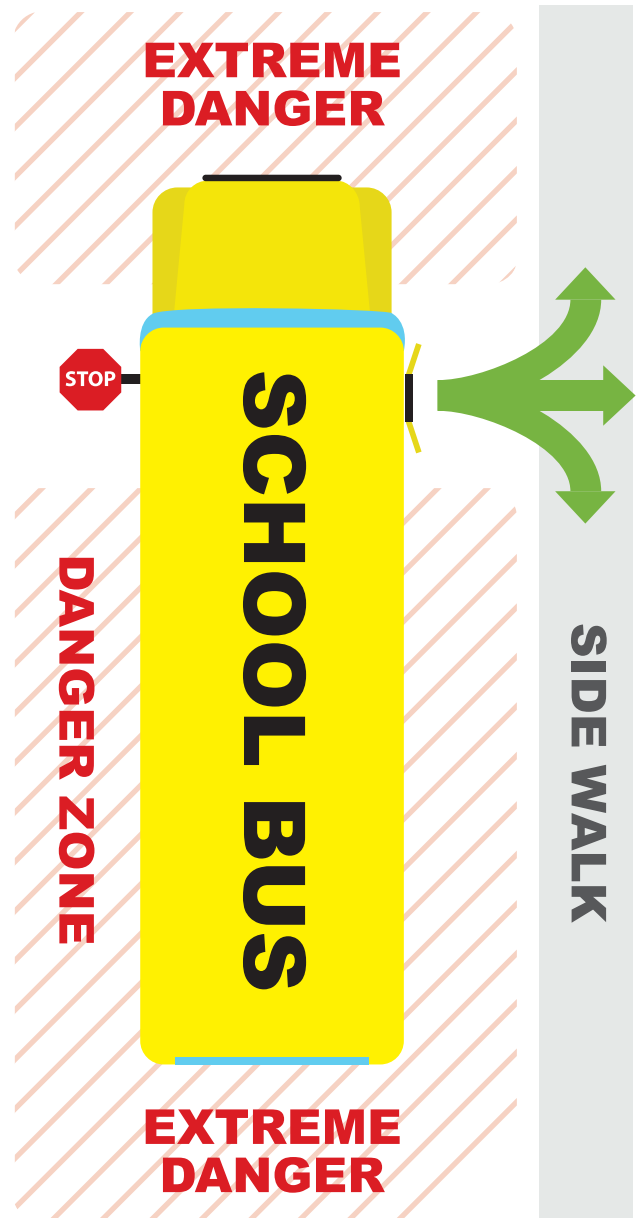


SCHOOL BUS

Safety & Transportation Information

School Bus Safety

- Escort children to and from the bus stop. This is an important transition from the home to the program.
- Teach children to look left-right-left when coming to the edge of the street.
- Ensure loose clothing items such as long draw-strings do not get tangled.
- Stand back at least 10 feet from where the bus stops.
- The bus should stop to the right of traffic lane when loading and unloading, about two feet from the road's edge.
- Stand still until the bus driver opens the door.
- Remind children to hold onto the handrail and walk one step at a time.
- The bus monitor or other adult needs to accompany preschool children while crossing the street.
- Reinforce the meaning of the red, green, and yellow colors indicated on the traffic light.
- Talk to children about the danger zones around the bus. Use the diagram to the right:
 - **Front of the bus (extreme danger)**
 - **Back of the bus (extreme danger)**
 - **Standing, waiting, and leaving or entering the bus (walking area)**



Safety & Transportation Information

Safe Riding Practices

- Children need to remain buckled in their seat until the driver says they can exit.
- Children need to remain seated while the bus is in motion.
- Only adults can open and close windows.
- Children should sit in the seat facing forward and keep all body parts away from the aisle and inside the vehicle.

Child Safety

- Children should remain buckled in their seat belts, harnesses, or car seats until the monitor or driver says they may unbuckle.
- Harnesses, car seats, and seat belts should always be tight.
- Children should be seated in height-weight appropriate child restraint seats.



Railroad Crossing

- When approaching a railroad crossing, the driver should tell children that the bus is coming to a railroad crossing.
- The driver should instruct children to remain quiet until they are instructed to talk again.
- The driver must stop at all railroad crossings, never closer than 15 feet from the nearest rail.
- The driver should open the driver's window and passenger door and look and listen for an approaching train.
- The driver must close the passenger door before driving across the tracks.
- The driver should let the children know when they may talk again, thank them for being quiet, and explain the importance of safety at railroad crossing.

Transportation Services

Transportation may be available upon request for Head Start children. Parents/guardians in need of transportation must meet the school district's policy and eligibility requirements. Currently, our EHS centers do not provide transportation services.

However, if you need transportation, please contact your Family Support Worker, teacher, or other Head Start staff so that they may provide you with additional information or outside resources. Car seat support and resources are available, please contact your family support worker.



School District Transportation Contact

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Attendance Agreement

Head Start is a school readiness program that helps children and families gain knowledge and skills for success in school. Help your child succeed in Head Start by building the habit of good attendance. Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.

Too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school. Missing 10%, or about 2 days each month, can make it harder to learn math and reading. Attending school regularly helps establish good attendance patterns that will help your child be successful.

I Understand That.....

- 1 My child must maintain regular attendance: attending school daily and arriving on time.
- 2 I will contact my child's teacher, school/center front office and/or Family Support Worker the day before and up to one hour before the start of the school day if my child will not be in attendance. If I do not contact Head Start staff within 1 hour, staff is required to contact me.
- 3 My Family Support Worker supports me and my family. When my child is absent, they will visit with me and offer support, help identify and remove barriers for regular attendance, and provide referrals if necessary.
- 4 If my child is absent too many times, I may be placed on an attendance success plan.
- 5 If my child's chronic absenteeism continues, the program will work with me to identify and help remove barriers for regular attendance. If my child's attendance does not resume, my child may be placed back on the waitlist.
- 6 If my child will be away from school for an extended period, I will discuss this with my Family Support Worker or child's teacher before the extended period begins.
- 7 I will contact my Family Support Worker, teacher, or school/center front office if my child has symptoms, has been exposed to, has been quarantined, or diagnosed with COVID-19.



Head Start Family Partnership Agreement

Head Start Family Partnership Agreement City of San Antonio Head Start Community Complaint Procedure Procedure Pedestrian & Bus Safety Training

Family Name: _____

ChildPlus Family ID: _____

By enrolling your child in our program, you are joining us in focusing on positive child and family outcomes to build a better future for the children, families and communities served by the City of San Antonio Head Start and EHS Program.

To reach this goal, we will work together as equal partners. Please join us by signing and following through on the Head Start Family Partnership Agreement.

I acknowledge the following:

- I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook. The program requirements were explained to me.
- I have read the Attendance Agreement for center-based services and understand the importance of my child's daily attendance. I will make attendance a priority and work with my Family Support Worker, school/center, and my child's teacher if I need assistance. I understand that regular attendance will help my child have a successful year.
- I have received a copy of the Head Start Community Complaint Procedure.
- I have read and understand the safety and transportation information outlined in the Parent Handbook. I agree to share this important safety information with my child and follow all pedestrian and bus safety procedures.
- I have read the Head Start Family Partnership Agreement, and I agree to follow through on my responsibilities as a Head Start parent/guardian.



Community Resources

Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG)

(210) 362-5200

- Weatherization program
- Intellectual and developmental disability services
- Senior Services

Any Baby Can

(210) 227-0170

- Family support groups
- Prescription assistance

Bexar County, Department of Community Resources

(210) 335-3666

- Utility assistance
- Veterans services
- Community health

Bexar County Family Justice Ctr.

(210) 631-0100

- Domestic violence support
- Legal assistance

Café College

(210) 207-4528

- Free assistance with college admission
- Financial aid support
- Test preparations

Catholic Charities

(210) 222-1294

- Utility assistance
- Immigration and refugee services
- Counseling services

Center for Health Care Services

(800) 316-9241 or (210) 223-7233

- Children and Adult mental health conditions
- Substance use challenges
- Intellectual or developmental disabilities

City of San Antonio Baby Café

(210) 207-8876

- Support for breastfeeding mothers and pregnant women

City of San Antonio Child Care Services

(210) 230-6300

- Subsidized child care

City of San Antonio Financial Assistance Division

(210) 207-7830

- Utility assistance
- Plumbers to People Program

City of San Antonio Financial Empowerment Center

(210) 431-4425

(210) 352-7087

- Financial counseling and resources

City of San Antonio Green and Healthy Homes

(210) 207-4444

- Lead inspection/risk assessment of home
- Lead hazard control work to home
- Remediation of asthma triggers in the home

City of San Antonio Head Start Program

(210) 206-5500

- Car Seat Inspections

City of San Antonio Neighborhood & Housing Services

(210) 207-5910

- Home buying and housing rights education
- Resolution of housing related discrimination
- Home foreclosure intervention and counseling

City of San Antonio Ready to Work Program

(210) 207-8080

- Job training program

City of San Antonio Training for Job Success

(210) 207-5929

- Education assistance

Family Violence Prevention Services, Inc. (Women's/Children's Shelter)

(210) 733-8810

- Crisis hotline

(210) 930-3669

- Counseling, legal, and transitional housing assistance

Community Resources

Goodwill Industries

(210) 924-8581

- Job training
- Education assistance

Haven for Hope

(210) 220-2100

- Shelter assistance
- Case management services

Housing Authority of Bexar County

(210) 225-0071

- Section 8 Housing Voucher Program
- Public Housing

NXT Level Youth Opportunity Center

(210) 207-1723

- Youth educational & career goals

Planned Parenthood

(210) 736-2262

- Health care services

Pride Center

(210) 370-7743

- LGBTQ+ Community Resources

Project Quest

(210) 630-4690

- Educational opportunities

Rape Crisis Center

(210) 521-7273

- Counseling services for victims of sexual assault

Roy Maas Youth Alternatives

(210) 340-7971

- Child and family counseling
- Parenting education

San Antonio Food Bank

(210) 337-3663

- Food pantry
- Food Stamps, TANF, CHIP, WIC
- Women's Health Care application

San Antonio Metro Health

(210) 207-8750

- Immunizations

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

(210) 225-7837

- Food and clothing assistance
- Rental & utility assistance
- Furniture and appliances

St. Mary's University Civil Justice Clinic

(210) 431-2596

- Legal aid

Texas Abuse Hotline

1-800-252-5400

- Abuse, neglect, and exploitation of children, adults with disabilities, or people who are elderly (65 years or older)

Texas Attorney General

(210) 472-2185 —West Office

(210) 333-6011 —South Office

- Child support
- Family initiatives

Texas Rio Grande Legal Aid

1-888-988-9996

- Legal Aid

The Arc of San Antonio

(210) 490-4300

- Support services for people with developmental disabilities

United Way of San Antonio Help Line

2-1-1

- Hotline for connection to community resources

Workforce Solutions

(210) 272-3260

- Job training
- Career counseling
- Job development and placement assistance

WIC

(210) 207-4906

- Food benefits
- Nutrition education
- Counseling
- Breastfeeding support

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, please contact:

Crisis & Suicide Lifeline

Call or Text 988

Online Chat also available at

<https://988lifeline.org/>

Free and Confidential services available 24/7





1227 Brady Blvd
San Antonio, TX 78207

210.206.5500
SaHeadStart.org



@SanAntonioHeadStart



@HeadStartSA



@HeadStartSA

