NeighborImpact
Head Start & Early Head Start Program

Parent Handbook

NeighborImpact Administrative Office
2303 SW 1st St
Redmond, OR 97756
(541)548-2380
## Head Start Site Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finley Butte – CC503811</td>
<td>51390 Walling Ln, La Pine 97739</td>
<td>541-536-8325</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JCI – CC503951</td>
<td>16405 1st St, La Pine 97739</td>
<td>541-536-7432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coach Rd – CC503168</td>
<td>51605 Coach Rd, La Pine 97739</td>
<td>541-536-5903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Bend – CC503468</td>
<td>60850 Brosterhous Rd, Bend 97702</td>
<td>541-330-9944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healy Heights – CC503469</td>
<td>1900 NE Bear Creek Rd, Bend 97701</td>
<td>541-322-8994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Bend – CC503424</td>
<td>2125 NE Daggett Ln, Bend 97701</td>
<td>541-385-5698</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WestSide – CC503956</td>
<td>2051 NW Shevlin Park Rd, Bend 97703</td>
<td>541-323-7584</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Becky Johnson – CC502852</td>
<td>412 SW 8th St, Redmond 97756</td>
<td>541-316-2518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynch – CC502854</td>
<td>1314 SW Kalama Ave, Redmond 97756</td>
<td>541-316-2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walker – CC502855</td>
<td>1050 SW Deschutes, Redmond 97756</td>
<td>541-323-6531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vern Patrick Head Start</td>
<td>3001 SW Obsidian Ave, Redmond 97756</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prineville – CC502853</td>
<td>1380 SE 2nd St, Prineville 97754</td>
<td>541-447-6817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ochoco – CC503473</td>
<td>954 NW 6th St, Prineville 97756</td>
<td>541-447-4145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## USDA Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/usda-program-discrimination-complaint-form.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
NeighborImpact Head Start Philosophy

NeighborImpact Mission:
NeighborImpact supports people and strengthens communities.

NeighborImpact Head Start Mission:
NeighborImpact Head Start is dedicated to ensuring that our community’s most vulnerable children and families are ready for school.

Parent’s Rights

While participating in the Head Start program you have the right to:

- Visit your child at any time
- Participate in the following ways:
  - in decision-making about the program
  - in activities and training
  - in the classroom as a volunteer or observer
- Work with your child in cooperation with center staff
- Have your child receive the best quality care in a safe and healthy environment
- To be treated with respect and confidentiality by all staff, other parents and volunteers of the program
- To be informed of your child’s health and other screenings; to receive advance notice of screening dates and results in a timely manner
- To take advantage of Head Start opportunities in whatever capacity you choose
- To accept Head Start as an opportunity through which you can improve your life and your child’s life

Code of Conduct

⇒ Agree to not use any physical discipline or foul language while in the classroom or while participating in any Head Start function.
⇒ Agree to treat staff, parents, and children with respect and courtesy.
⇒ Agree to follow the Tabaco use policy.
⇒ Agree to not bring any firearms on to any Head Start property or to any Head Start function.

Tobacco Free Environments

Tobacco free environments are established in all NeighborImpact Head Start/Early Head Start facilities and grounds and sponsored activities to eliminate exposure of children, staff, and other adults to tobacco use and tobacco smoke. We ask that parents do not smoke or use tobacco during home visits.

Tobacco is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, electronic vapor cigarettes or any other inhalant delivery systems and any other smoking product, spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, or snuff, in any form.
Important Information

Attendance Policy
In order for a child to achieve maximum benefit from the Head Start program, it is important that they attend classes consistently. In addition, in order to maintain adequate funding levels for the program it is the goal of Head Start to achieve 100% attendance.

If your child is going to be absent from school, call the child’s center and explain the absence prior to class. If a child experiences moderate or chronic absenteeism (more than 10% missed school days), staff will work with the parent to improve attendance which may include an updated Attendance Agreement or Attendance Plan. If these steps are unsuccessful, your child may be dropped from Head Start/Early Head Start program.

Snow and Ice Policy
In the event that your local school district cancels classes due to severe weather conditions, then Head Start will also cancel classes. Tune into your local television station for up-to-date information. You will also receive a CP Blast giving you information on any delays or closures.

If your local school district issues a two hour delay due to severe weather conditions, Head Start morning classes will be cancelled, full day classes will begin two hours late, and afternoon classes will run as scheduled, if weather permits.

Where can I find information?
Each classroom has an education bulletin board. There you will find:
- Lesson Plans
- Class Schedule
- Emergency Plan
- Monthly Menus
- Family Night
- Policy Council

Head Start Centers are licensed through the Early Learning Division
What to do if you have a concern:
Please discuss your concern with your child’s teacher. If the concern is not resolved, please contact the director. If you continue to have concerns, contact your Office of Child Care licensing specialist: Amy Ybarra – 541-633-2250
Please note:
- This center is open to all custodial parents at any time their children are in care
- Parents shall be notified of the date and time of each planned field trip away from the child care center.
- Parents shall be notified of all child care restrictable disease as defined by the Health Division.
Releasing Children
All parents complete an emergency contact form during enrollment. At this time you document who can pick up your child.

- We require a picture ID, and they must be on the emergency form
- Without these things we will not release a child from our care.
- You MUST come in person to add someone to the emergency contact form.

If you need to speak with your child’s teacher the best time to communicate is outside of class time, by phone, scheduling a home visit or conference, or by email or text. If you have a family emergency and are unable to contact the classroom, call the Redmond Main Office 541-323-6527.

Phone Calls, Emails or Texts
When contacting the site, please leave a message, we monitor voicemail and cell phones frequently and will respond as soon as possible. Please check your email and text messages regularly, these are our primary way to communicate important information.

Emergency Preparedness
All classrooms have an Emergency Preparedness Guide posted to help staff in the event of an emergency or disaster. Drills are practiced monthly in the classrooms to prepare children and staff in the event of a real emergency or disaster.

Confidentiality
We preserve and respect your right to privacy and confidentiality. All written and verbal information you share with Head Start staff concerning you and your child is kept confidential by Head Start. When you are volunteering in the classroom we ask that you preserve and respect the confidentiality of other parents and children’s right to privacy and confidentiality. View Annual Notice Regarding PII and Parental Rights on the NeighborImpact website.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy
All employees of NeighborImpact Head Start are mandatory reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect 24 hours a day. Our job is to report, not to investigate. We want to work with you if your child is injured, please call and let the teacher know how the injury occurred. This program is committed to facilitating services in the education, prevention, identification, and treatment of child abuse and neglect. If you are in need of support in providing appropriate discipline to your children or are experiencing domestic violence, PLEASE contact any Head Start employee for assistance or referral to services. The Head Start program will strive to serve as a model of support for children and families where abuse and neglect is a concern. Every effort will be made to maintain a close working relationship with DHS Child Welfare Dept. in recruiting, retaining, and seeking services for all Head Start families requiring this assistance.

If you know of a child being abused, neglected or living in a home where domestic violence is occurring please call and report. You may save the life of a child. To report call (541)548-9499 or 911. This number is for all of Crook, Deschutes and Jefferson counties.
Head Start classrooms are designed to provide children opportunities to learn through play. NeighborImpact Head Start uses the Creative Curriculum for Preschool 5th Edition as the foundation. Creative Curriculum provides interest areas for children to explore, learn, and grow. The interest areas you will see include, Block Area, Dramatic Play, Toys & Games, Art, Library, Discovery, Sand & Water, Music & Movement, and Outdoors.

Parents are invited to come into the classroom to play with, observe, and help their child learn. Families are encouraged to partner with classroom staff around the education of their child. All questions about the classroom, curriculum, or how children learn through play are welcomed.

Positive Child Guidance

At NeighborImpact Head Start we believe in a positive guidance philosophy. A safe and nurturing environment is provided for children each day in our classrooms and children at Head Start are always treated in a warm and respectful way.

Teaching teams use Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a philosophy with which staff build relationships with children and teach children how to be successful in the classroom so they develop strong social skills that they will carry with them for a lifetime. We also support PBIS with Conscious Discipline, a comprehensive classroom management program and a social-emotional curriculum that is based on current brain research, child development information, and developmentally appropriate practices.

All classrooms in the NeighborImpact Head Start program teach the “Be Rules”; “Be Safe”, “Be a Worker”, and “Be a Friend”. The more you talk to your children about these expectations at home, the more likely your child will understand them. Ask your teacher advocate or Head Start advocate for ideas of how you can support these positive child guidance strategies at home.

Social Emotional Skills

Strong social-emotional skills and good social-emotional health are the greatest predictors of children’s success in school. Our Head Start program is dedicated to supporting the social-emotional wellness of each child and family by helping children develop excellent social skills and good emotional health. We provide children with activities that help them strengthen social skills, make and keep friends, cooperate, make appropriate choices, recognize and appropriately express emotions and develop a strong sense of self-esteem. One of the ways in which we provide these lessons is through the use of the Second Step Social-Emotional Learning curriculum. This curriculum helps children harness their energy and potential by teaching them to listen, pay attention, manage their behavior and get along with others. Skills and concepts are taught through short, daily activities that take 5-7 minutes each.
School Readiness Goals (SRGs)

The Federal Office of Head Start defines School Readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for success in school and later learning in life. In addition, NeighborImpact recognizes that in order for a child to be Ready for School, the family must be Ready to Support Their Children’s Success. In partnership with parents, our local school districts, the NeighborImpact board of directors, the policy council, staff and community partners, the Head Start program has developed School Readiness Goals (SRGs) in the 5 essential areas of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, and in family and community engagement. These goals guide program efforts to enhance the school readiness of all children and families transitioning from our program to kindergarten. Each family will create an School Readiness Goal for their child at the first home visit. These goals are incorporated into the weekly lesson plan and reviewed at each conference/home visit.

Inclement Weather Policy

It is the policy of our program that children are taken outside daily unless the weather is severely cold, wet, or poor air quality. Please send your child to school with the proper clothing. On snowy days if your child has snow pants, please send them to school. If not, please send extra clothes for your child to change into if he/she get wet. If your child needs warm clothing, please let your Head Start staff know. Outdoor activities will be limited during periods of poor air quality. Activity and duration will be determined based on OHA Public Health Guidance: School Outdoor Activities During Wildfire Events.

I want to volunteer. How do I get involved?

- Come and visit the classroom, join us for meals, read to the children or engage in play activities or outside time
- Watch a short video to learn how to be a parent volunteer
- Join the children on their field trips or share a special skill or hobby with the classroom
- Help the teacher with prep work or housekeeping duties
- Bring your family to Family Night and Family Engagement Events
- Join a committee such as Father & Friends or Health Services Advisory
- Gain experience for potential employment with Head Start by volunteering in the classroom and attending child development workshops provided by NeighborImpact
- Remember to log your time by signing into the Visitor Notebook in each classroom
- Talk with your teacher or advocate to learn about the different opportunities available to you as a parent volunteer
Screenings

ASQ:SE2 - Parents complete a social–emotional screening called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional. The results of this screening are used to help parents and staff plan supportive activities for children.

ASQ:3 — Parents complete a developmental screening called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire. If a developmental screening determines that a child may benefit from Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) services, the child’s parents are notified and offered further evaluation.

Inclusion Services for Children

Head Start is dedicated to including children of all abilities in the program. Children experiencing disabilities are provided individualized accommodations to support participation in the Head Start Program. In partnership with the High Desert Education Services District (HDESD)/Early Childhood Special Education program we ensure that each child’s Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) goals are implemented.

Our program contracts with a mental health consultant to provide support services for children, families and classrooms. The Mental Health Consultant is available to talk to parents or guardians by phone or in person. If you would like to meet with our mental health consultant, please contact your Teacher Advocate or Head Start Advocate.

Health Screenings

While your child is in Head Start we will obtain, with your consent, height, weight, vision and hearing screenings. The results of these screenings are shared with families and will be used to determine the need for further referrals.

To screen for vision, we have a machine that takes pictures of your child’s eyes. If the results are not within the normal range we will recommend to you that you have an eye doctor check your child’s eyes.

To screen for hearing, we place an ear-bud in your child’s ear and see if they can hear different sounds (high and low) at different levels. If their results are not within the normal range, we will recommend to you that you follow-up with your medical home. It’s important to prepare your child for these screenings. Talk to them about what we will be doing in the classroom.
Importance of Hand Washing at School and at Home

As you participate in our program you will notice that there is a commitment to keeping children and staff as safe as possible from illness. You can help us at home by following good hand washing practices. Hand washing should be done with warm water and soap. You can use the ABC’s or another song to indicate how long hand washing should occur. Hand washing and getting vaccinated are the first steps in protecting your child from illness.

Immunization Requirements

Head Start must meet Oregon’s immunization law requirements. If your child does not have the required vaccines they may experience a delay in starting school. It is required by state law that all children who participate in Head Start, preschool or school be up-to-date on their immunizations.

Exceptions to these laws include:

1. Medical exemptions which require a written statement signed by a physician or an authorized representative of a health department stating that the child should be exempt, or
2. Non-medical exemptions which require the parent to sign the Oregon CIS form, nonmedical exemption section and provide the program with a Vaccine Education Certificate which can be obtained through your child’s medical provider or through the online module. The Vaccine Education Module can be found at: www.healthcare.org/vaccineexemption

Immunizations can be updated by making an appointment with your child’s physician or your local health department.

NeighborImpact Head Start immunization data can be viewed on the NeighborImpact Website: https://www.neighborimpact.org/get-help/head-start/parent-resources/
When Your Child is Sick
It is very important that you keep your child home if they are sick. Keeping them home slows or stops the spread of illness between the children and provides safe and comfortable surroundings for all children in school. Children with the following symptoms will need to stay home, or will be sent home from school:

- Fever of 100 degrees F or higher taken under the arm
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose, runny, watery, or bloody stool)
- Nausea
- Severe cough
- Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
- Skin or eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping, or pus-filled
- Stiff neck or headache with one or more of the symptoms listed above
- Draining, infectious rash
- Eye discharge or pink eye. May be readmitted after medical diagnosis rules out infection or 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Open, oozing sores which cannot be covered. May be readmitted 24 hours after starting antibiotic treatment if there are no underlying causes
- Lice—May come back to school after treatment and no live lice are found.
- Scabies—May be re-admitted 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Chicken pox until all the pox are dried over
- Difficulty breathing, abnormal wheezing
- Fatigue preventing the child from being a part of the regular activities
- Complaints of severe pain

If the staff (teachers in consultation with the health services manager) have a question about a child’s ability to safely return to class, they have the right to request a note from the child’s health care provider. Any outbreaks of communicable illnesses will be posted in your child's classroom. Children need to be symptom free for 24 hours before coming back to school.

Administration of Medication at School
The parent is responsible for providing the medication prior to the first day of school. The medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child’s name, date the prescription was filled, medication expiration date, and legible instructions for administration. The medication must remain at the center and not travel back and forth with the child between the center and home to the extent that this is possible.

Diapering Changing and Toilet Training at School
Toilet training is best accomplished when the child is developmentally ready and in partnership between school and home. If your child is toilet training or needing diaper changing at school you will receive a weekly Diapering/Toilet Training log. Please send an extra set of clothes in the event your child has a accident at school.
Parent Family Engagement

Parent and family engagement is essential to quality early care and education. Family engagement is the cornerstone of the Head Start program. It is Head Start’s philosophy that parents are the first and most important educators & advocates of their children. It is vital for parents and staff to work together to support each child’s learning.

**Family Services** Head Start has a teacher advocate model. Teachers in our half day classes also provide family services to the children and families on their caseload. Full day classes are assigned an advocate who provides family services to the families on their caseload. If your family is in need of assistance please class your teacher or advocate.

**Home Visits/Conferences** Home visits/conferences are designed to further develop the parent, staff and child relationship. Children feel important and valued when their Teacher or Advocate take time to come to their home. Home visits and conferences help build the important partnership between school and family. Each teacher will provide two conferences and two home visits with each family and each advocate will provide three home visits with each family.

**Family Night** Parents are provided a number of opportunities to participate in the program. Parents are encouraged to attend family night. You will enjoy a light dinner, participate in an engaging activity, and attend an informational meeting.

**Father & Friends** The focus of Father & Friends at NeighborImpact is to increase male and family engagement through leadership training, parenting classes, literacy programs and other fun activities parents enjoy. Staff and parents work together to increase father participation in the classroom, Family Night, Policy Council and other functions. Studies show that if your child’s father is affectionate, supportive and involved, he can contribute greatly to your child’s cognitive, language and social development, as well as academic achievement, a strong inner core resource, sense of well-being, good self-esteem and authenticity.
Parent Engagement Continued

**Program Governance (Policy Council)** The Program Governance system is an essential part of the Head Start program. Each agency shall have a Policy Council Committee responsible for the direction of the program. Policy Council shall approve and submit to the governing body decisions on activities such as:

1.) Work alongside program management to support the development of the program’s design and operations
2.) Decisions for budget planning
3.) Approve program expenditures
4.) Review and approve policies and procedures related to the program’s operations and needs
5.) Develop long-and short term planning goals and objectives
6.) Participating on various committees to support program growth and development

**ReadyRosie and Family Fun BINGO Challenge** ReadyRosie and the Family Fun BINGO Challenge are both ways for you to engage with your child and explore your potential as your child’s first and most important teacher. ReadyRosie is an online/app based program that uses videos to demonstrate different learning activities to do with your child. Your family will receive bi-weekly playlists that coordinate with what your child is doing in class. The Family Fun BINGO Challenge, shows various activities you can do with your child on a monthly basis. At the end of each month, submit your BINGO card to your child’s teacher and earn in-kind volunteer hours for each BINGO square you complete.
Health and Nutrition
“School Readiness Begins with Health”

The Oregon Health Plan

The Oregon Health Plan (OHP) is a state program that provides health coverage to low-income Oregonians. Individuals and families can apply for OHP anytime, children will not be denied due to immigration status. If qualified, you will be enrolled automatically and your coverage could start immediately. NeighborImpact EHS/HS has an OHP Assister who is available to assist in applying for health coverage, renewing your existing coverage, changing providers, or providing assistance with plan. You can request assistance here: https://www.neighborimpact.org/ohp/

If you have moved your mail from OHP will not be forwarded. Submit an address change via email to Oregon.Benefits@dhsoha.state.or.us. Clients need to Include full name, date of birth, Oregon Health ID number, and phone number.

Importance of Having a Medical Home

One of the most important things we can do to help children be “ready to learn” is to make sure that any health problems are identified and appropriately treated. It is hard for children to benefit from school when they are not feeling well.

Head Start is committed to supporting families with accessing a source of continuous health care, a medical home and accessing health care resources. It has been shown that having a medical home (a provider who knows your child) and getting regular well child check-ups is the best way to find and treat health problems that can interfere with learning. Head Start Advocates and Teacher Advocates work with families to access health care resources and provide supportive health information. Head Start also has health staff and a contracted nurse available to answer questions and provide specialized support.

If you have any questions about your OHP Pacific Source benefits call Pacific Source: 800-431-4135

Consider using the School Based Health Care clinics for a well-child exam if you currently do not have a medical home or health insurance. SBHC clinics operate on a sliding fee scale in which most Head Start families qualify for free service. They will also take your OHP if you have not established a medical home:

School Based Services | Deschutes County Oregon
Crook Kids Clinic | Mosaic Medical

Well Child Exams: Head Start requires NeighborImpact to determine if children are up to date on preventative care within 90 days of starting. At NeighborImpact we do this with the ‘Physical Exam” form which is completed by your child’s medical provider at their Well Child Exam. With prior consent, the health office faxes the form to your child’s medical provider for completion. If there are any concerns or problems noted by your child’s medical provider we will discuss those with you and work together to develop a plan to accommodate any needs for your child.
**Good Oral Health is Important to Children**

Children with good oral health are more ready to learn. When a child’s oral health suffers, so does their ability to learn. Dental pain interferes with a child’s ability to focus and they are easily distracted from learning opportunities. Childhood tooth decay can be prevented and treated. Head Start is here to help families ensure good dental health for their children. Teacher Advocates and Head Start Advocates help families access dental care and provide oral health information. Classroom Teachers help children learn to brush their teeth using fluoride toothpaste. Children are offered healthy foods at least twice a day.

**Parents can help by:**
- Making sure your child gets regular dental check-ups at least once a year.
- Help your child brush at least twice daily with fluoride toothpaste. Children need help with brushing until about age ten.
- Avoid high sugar snacks.
- Offer milk or water as beverages. Baby teeth are as important as permanent teeth.
- Baby teeth act as space holders and help children form sounds and words.

**Dental Home:** Head Start is committed to supporting families with accessing a source of continuous oral health care, a dental home and accessing health care resources. It has been shown that having a dental home (a dental provider who knows your child) and getting regular oral health exams is the best way to find and treat oral health problems. Head Start Advocates and Teacher Advocates work with families to access oral health care resources and provide supportive oral health information.

If you are unsure of your child’s dental provider you can contact the assigned DCO:
- Advantage Dental: 866-268-9631
- Capital: 800-525-6800
- Pacific Source to change dental plan: 800-431-4135
- ODS: 800-342-0526
- Willamette Dental: 855-433-6825

**Oral Exams:** Head Start requires NeighborImpact to determine if children are up to date on preventative care within 90 days of starting — this includes oral health. At NeighborImpact we do this with the ‘Oral Health Assessment” form which is completed by your child’s dental provider at their Dental Exam. With prior consent, the health office faxes the form to your child’s dental provider for completion. If there are any concerns or problems noted by your child’s dental provider we will discuss those with you and work together to develop a plan to complete any treatment needs for your child.

**Advantage Dental Group**

Head Start has partnered with Advantage Dental Group to provide classroom oral health assessments to all children and additional services to children who would benefit from those services. Consent is obtained at enrollment for these services. You can help prepare your child for this assessment by having them open their mouth so you can count their teeth. Make it fun by using the alphabet instead of numbers or let your child count your teeth before counting theirs.
Nutrition

Good nutrition in the early years of a child’s life is extremely important, not only for good physical growth and development, but also for the formation of the brain. In Head Start the food experiences in the classroom must be high in nutrients, and low in fat, sugar and salt. It is the program’s goal to have the meals include fruits and vegetables of all kinds, multi-grain products and a variety of protein foods. This wide base for selections of healthy foods will help children understand the importance of developing a healthy eating pattern. Children receive USDA approved meals in their classrooms every day. They also learn about health and nutrition in class. Children are encouraged to try different foods but we never force a child to eat.

In Head Start our meals are served family-style. Food is passed in small containers for children to serve themselves and pour their own milk. The positive effects of this type of meal service for children include: building lifetime skills, taking part in the entire meal from preparation to cleanup, and enjoying a meal setting that is comfortable and relaxing. Parents are always welcome to work with the teaching staff to plan a cooking project in the classroom. We ask that parents do not bring food into the classroom.

Parents are encouraged to offer suggestions to the menus by completing the Menu Input/Suggestion form. Our menus are posted in each classroom and also on the NeighborImpact website at neighborimpact.org/headstart-menus

If your child has a diagnosed food allergy and will need substitutions at school notify your child’s Teacher or Head Start Advocate immediately. We are able to accommodate food substitutions for children. We also consult with a Dietician who can meet with parents as requested.
Parent and Community Grievance Procedure

The purpose of this policy is to provide an avenue for members of the community and parents involved in the Head Start program to have their complaints heard and resolved. It is our hope that this procedure will allow an opportunity for concerns to be heard and cause the least amount of disruption to the program’s operation.

When a member of the community or a parent is dissatisfied with regard to program operations or staff relationships, there are appropriate steps they can take:

Parents/community members are asked to express their concerns directly to the individual staff member involved and/or the site supervisor. Every attempt will be made to handle the situation respectfully, directly and with confidentiality.

If the parent/community member does not feel comfortable speaking directly to staff involved or the site supervisor, or if the situation remains unresolved after communicating directly with the individual staff member and/or the site supervisor, parents/community members can fill out the “Written Concern Form” and submit it to the site supervisor or any Head Start management personnel. A “Written Concern Form” may be obtained at any center via a staff person or at the NeighborImpact Administration Office.

A manager or director will try to resolve the concern by phone. If the concern is not resolved by phone, a meeting will be conducted within five (5) working days to discuss the situation.

The manager/director may invite all or part of the following to review the situation:
Parent/community chairperson, Policy Council representative, individual staff person addressed in the concern, appropriate supervisor, NeighborImpact board chairperson, or other member of the NeighborImpact board. The goal of such a meeting is to bring final resolution to the concern or complaint by reaching consensus, in a positive manner, about the most appropriate form of action to take and when the action should be completed.

The manager/director prepares a written response outlining action taken and mails it to parent/community member within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting. The manager/director’s response is final.