

**NeighborImpact Head Start & Early Head Start  
Policy & Procedure**

<b>Section: Child Development &amp; Health Services</b>	<b>PC Approval Date: 9/16/08, 1/18/18</b>
<b>Title: Holiday Celebration Policy</b>	<b>Updated: 11/7/17</b>
<b>Policy #: HS-89</b>	<b>NI Board Approval: 9/12/19</b>
<b>Forms Required:</b>	
<b>Performance Standards: 1302.31, 1302.50 (b)(2)</b>	<b>Page 1 of 1</b>

**Policy:** Celebrations and formal observations of commercial or religious holidays and birthday parties do not occur in the Head Start & Early Head Start program. Staff acknowledges children’s spontaneous comments about family and community celebrations or holiday observances in a positive, respectful and supportive manner. Children’s birthdays may be recognized as a special day for the child, but parties, celebrations and party invitations take place outside of the Head Start classroom.

**Purpose:**

Head Start & Early Head Start’s primary mission is to help prepare children for success in school. In order to fully support the children in our program with school readiness, we consider all aspects of each child’s development; social-emotional, physical, language and cognitive. Teacher /Advocates address the individual educational needs and challenges of each child in the classroom. A Teacher /Advocate does this by setting goals for each child with his or her family. These goals are used to construct a classroom curriculum that is sensitive to and meaningful for every child. The Head Start program serves children 128 days a year, four hours a day. There are only 512 hours in the school year to address these very significant and individual needs. It is the program’s intention to assure that all Head Start children receive a well-rounded education that addresses their own specific needs and ensures that they are ready for success in school.

EHS serves pregnant women and children up to age 3 with in-home services. Home Visitors will provide 46 home visits per year and a minimum of 22 group socialization.

Taking away from the very limited time available to participate in parties and holiday celebrations is not consistent with this urgent mission.

Additionally, according to the Head Start regulations, the program must take into consideration a family’s cultural background and values in order to create a program that meets the needs of all families. Our program understands that holiday celebrations and traditions are unique to each family and fully supports families in celebrating holidays and traditions in their homes. Staff design and plan program activities so that all children and families can participate free from conflict with families’ values or beliefs.

The objective of this policy is to be inclusive of all families and to respect the diverse ways that families choose to celebrate. Through implementation of this policy, we intend to ensure that all children and families feel welcomed and respected in the NeighborImpact Head Start program.