



NeighborImpact

Head Start

Parent Handbook

Head Start Program

2026 – 2027

Family-Centered • Child-Focused • Ready for School

NeighborImpact Administrative Office

2303 SW 1st St, Redmond, OR 97756

(541) 548-2380

neighborimpact.org

Head Start Site Information

Below you will find the address and phone number for each of our Head Start centers across Central Oregon.

Site	Address	Phone
Finley Butte – CC503811	51390 Walling Ln, La Pine 97739	541-536-8325
JCJ – CC503951	16405 1st St, La Pine 97739	541-536-7432
Coach Rd – CC503168	51605 Coach Rd, La Pine 97739	541-536-5903
South Bend – CC503468	60850 Brosterhous Rd, Bend 97702	541-330-9944
Healy Heights – CC503469	1900 NE Bear Creek Rd, Bend 97701	541-322-8994
East Bend – CC503424	2125 NE Daggett Ln, Bend 97701	541-385-5698
West Side – CC503956	2051 NW Shevlin Park Rd, Bend 97703	541-323-7584
Becky Johnson – CC502852	412 SW 8th St, Redmond 97756	541-316-2518
Lynch – CC502854	1314 SW Kalama Ave, Redmond 97756	541-316-2001
Walker – CC502855	1050 SW Deschutes, Redmond 97756	541-323-6531
Vern Patrick Head Start	3001 SW Obsidian Ave, Redmond 97756	
Prineville – CC502853	1380 SE 2nd St, Prineville 97754	541-447-6817
Ochoco – CC503473	954 NW 6th St, Prineville 97754	541-447-4145
Redmond modular – CC504664	2303 SW First St, Redmond 97756	
Juniper – CC504778	495 NE Ochoco Plaza Dr, Prineville 97754	
Cascades	1732 SW Chandler Ave, Bend 97702	

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, audiotope, 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 Form AD-3027, 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: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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; and 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.
- Be treated with respect and confidentiality by all staff, other parents and volunteers of the program.
- Be informed of your child's health and other screenings, and receive advance notice of screening dates and results in a timely manner.
- Take advantage of Head Start opportunities in whatever capacity you choose.
- Accept Head Start as an opportunity through which you can improve your life and your child's life.
- Free language assistance, auxiliary aids and/or accommodations upon request. Please contact Erica Little at (541) 280-0411 or erical@neighborimpact.org.

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 tobacco use policy.
- Agree to not bring any firearms onto 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 cigarette or any other inhalant delivery system, 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 percent 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 percent of missed school days), staff will work with the parent to improve attendance, which may include an Attendance Plan. If these steps are unsuccessful, your child may be dropped from the 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, Head Start will also cancel classes. Tune in to 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

Each center also has a parent board where you will find:

- Monthly menus
- Family Night info
- Policy Council info

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 site coordinator. In addition, you can contact the regional coordinator or education manager. 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 Oregon public health laws.

Safety and Communication

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, by 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 at 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, as 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 and other parents' and children's right to privacy. View the Annual Notice Regarding PII and Parental Rights on the NeighborImpact website.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

All NeighborImpact employees 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 the DHS Child Welfare Department in recruiting, retaining and seeking services for all Head Start families requiring this assistance.

If you know of a child being abused or neglected, or living in a home where domestic violence is occurring, please call and report it. 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.

Child Development and Education

Play is a child's work

The Early Head Start Classroom

In our Early Head Start toddler classrooms, children ages one to three spend their day exploring, moving and building relationships through hands-on play. They practice new words during songs and story time, build coordination through messy play and outdoor exploration, and work on early problem-solving with blocks, puzzles and sensory bins. Toddlers also learn to navigate big feelings and social moments, like sharing, waiting for a turn or comforting a friend, with the support of consistent, caring teachers. Through everyday routines like handwashing, mealtimes and clean-up, children build independence and confidence, while daily exploration helps them make sense of the world around them and grow across every area of development.

Our toddler classrooms use The Creative Curriculum, a research-based approach that builds learning around each child's natural curiosity and everyday routines. Rather than following a rigid lesson plan, teachers use daily moments like diapering, mealtimes, play and exploration as opportunities for language, social-emotional and cognitive growth. The curriculum is designed around responsive caregiving, recognizing that trusting relationships with consistent adults are the foundation for all early learning. Through intentional play, sensory experiences

and predictable routines, children build the skills and confidence they need to explore their world with security.

Social Emotional Skills in Early Head Start

Baby Doll Circle Time is a Conscious Discipline strategy that uses a shared baby doll and blanket during circle time to build social-emotional skills in infants and toddlers. Each child takes a turn holding, rocking or comforting the doll while the group sings or narrates loving, nurturing actions together. This repetition helps children internalize caregiving language and behaviors, like patience, gentleness and turn-taking, before they are developmentally able to fully practice empathy on their own.

For infants and toddlers, who are just beginning to develop self-regulation and attachment, the ritual offers a predictable, safe way to practice connection, wait their turn and see caring modeled in a low-stakes way. Over time, this supports emotional vocabulary, impulse control and the foundational trust that underlies healthy relationships. These skills translate directly into how children treat peers and respond to their own big feelings in the classroom.

Child Development and Education

The Head Start Classroom

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. The Creative Curriculum provides interest areas for children to explore, learn and grow. The interest areas you will see include the 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 the Pyramid Model. The Pyramid Model is a philosophy through 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 the Pyramid Model with Conscious Discipline, a comprehensive classroom management program and social-emotional curriculum that is based on current 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 on 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 to 7 minutes each.

School Readiness and Engagement

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 a 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.

Importance of Outdoor Play

It is the policy of our program that children are taken outside daily unless the weather is severely cold or wet, or air quality is poor. 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 they 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 Policy Council or a committee.
- Gain experience for potential employment with Head Start by volunteering in the classroom and attending training opportunities.
- 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:SE-2

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 (HDES) 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 Plus Optix machine that takes pictures of your child's eyes. If the results are not within the normal range, we will recommend that you have an eye doctor check your child's eyes.

To screen for hearing, we use an otoacoustic emission machine to see if children can hear different sounds (high and low) at different levels. If their results are not within the normal range, we will recommend that you follow up with your child's primary care doctor.

It's important to prepare your child for these screenings. Talk to them about what we will be doing in the classroom.

Health: Hygiene and Immunizations

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 ABCs 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. Children will not be allowed to start classes unless they have at least one dose of each required vaccine.

Exceptions to these laws include:

- 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

- Non-medical exemptions, which require the parent to sign the Oregon CIS form, non-medical 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; or
- The child is identified as houseless and may be allowed a 60-day grace period to receive required vaccines.

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: 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 100.4 °F or higher
- New cough illness
- New difficulty breathing
- Diarrhea: 3 loose or watery stools in a day, OR not able to control bowel movements
- Vomiting: one or more episodes that are unexplained
- Headache with stiff neck and fever
- Skin rash or open sores
- Red eyes with colored drainage
- Jaundice: new yellow color in eyes or skin
- Acting differently without a reason: unusually sleepy, grumpy or confused
- Major health event, like an illness lasting 2 or more weeks, OR a hospital stay, OR a health condition that requires more care than school staff can safely provide

Children diagnosed with one of the following restrictable diseases will be excluded from the program until cleared by the local health authority: chickenpox, diphtheria, Hepatitis A, Hepatitis E, measles, mumps, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella, Salmonella enterica serotype Typhi infection, Shiga-toxigenic E. coli (STEC) infection (O157 and others), shigellosis, and infectious tuberculosis.

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, without medication, before coming back to school, or until cleared by a medical provider.

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, the date the prescription was filled, the 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 an accident at school.

Parent and 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 and 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 call your teacher or advocate.

Home Visits/Conferences

Home visits and conferences are designed to further develop the parent, staff and child relationship. Children feel important and valued when their teacher or advocate takes 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 a minimum of two 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.

Family Engagement Committee

Get further involved in parent and family engagement in the Head Start program by participating in our Family Engagement Committee. Work with staff to increase parent and family engagement in Family Night, Family Engagement after-school activities, Policy Council, and other functions.

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:

- Work alongside program management to support the development of the program's design and operations.
- Make decisions for budget planning.
- Approve program expenditures.
- Review and approve policies and procedures related to the program's operations and needs.
- Develop long- and short-term planning goals and objectives.
- Participate on various committees to support program growth and development.

ReadyRosie and Family Connection Quest

ReadyRosie and Family Connection Quest 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 a web-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. Family Connection Quest includes various activities you can do with your child on a monthly basis. At the end of each month, submit your Quest card to your child's teacher or advocate and earn in-kind volunteer hours for each Quest square you complete.

Classroom Cameras Notice

For the safety and security of children, staff and visitors, cameras are used in classrooms and common areas throughout our program facilities. The use of cameras supports our

commitment to providing a secure and high-quality learning environment. Please note the following:

- Cameras are used for safety, supervision, staff training and quality assurance purposes.
- Footage is accessible only to authorized personnel and is handled in accordance with confidentiality and data privacy policies.
- Parents and guardians do not have direct access to video recordings, to protect the privacy of all children and families. However, if there is an incident involving your child, you may submit a request for footage to be reviewed by the appropriate program staff.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in supporting a safe and respectful environment for all.

Health and Nutrition

"School Readiness Begins with Health"

The Oregon Health Plan (OHP)

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, and being on OHP does not count as public charge. If qualified, you will be enrolled automatically and your coverage could start immediately.

If you have moved, your mail from OHP will not be forwarded. Submit an address change via email to Oregon.Benefits@dhsosha.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. To speak with a member of the health services team, email healthoffice@neighborimpact.org.

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 by requesting copies of your child's most recent well-child exam. With prior consent, the health office faxes your child's medical provider for copies. 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.
- Helping your child brush at least twice daily with fluoride toothpaste. Children need help with brushing until about age ten.
- Avoiding high-sugar snacks.
- Offering 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
- ODS: 800-342-0526
- Capital: 800-525-6800
- Willamette Dental: 855-433-6825
- Pacific Source (to change dental plan): 800-431-4135

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. 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 CACFP-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/get-help/head-start/parent-resources/

If your child has a diagnosed food allergy or cultural/religious practice that requires 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 Registered Dietician who is available to meet with parents to discuss any questions or concerns that a family may have regarding their child's nutrition.

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 the 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 the parent/community member within fifteen (15) working days of the meeting. The manager/director's response is final.

NeighborImpact is an equal opportunity provider and employer. If you require accommodation, contact 541-548-2380. If you are hearing impaired, dial 7-1-1.