I acknowledge that the DACHS/EHS Parent Handbook can be found on the Doña Ana County Head Start website (headstart.nmsu.edu) under the “Forms for Parents” tab. The 2017-18 DACHS/EHS Parent Handbook will be available on August 24th, 2017.

I ________________________________, have received the web link to the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Parent Handbook. I will follow the guidelines and procedures to the best of my ability.

PARENT/GUARDIAN

SIGNATURE ____________________________ DATE ________________
Dear Parents,

This handbook has been prepared to provide you with very important information regarding policies, procedures, and services for the Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Program.

It is our goal to make your child’s experience at Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start an enjoyable one. Your participation, cooperation and understanding of these policies will help make this possible. Take time to read this handbook carefully. During the program year you may find it necessary to refer back to this handbook for specific information. Please keep this handbook with your other important papers. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to ask one of the staff members. We look forward to getting to know you and your child. Welcome to Head Start / Early Head Start!

Thank You

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Staff
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Mission Statement

The mission of Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start is to provide a comprehensive school readiness program in partnership with parents and the community.

Overall Goal

The overall goal of Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start is to bring about a greater degree of school readiness and social competence in children of low-income families.

Statement of Philosophy

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start believes:

- Parents are a child’s primary educator and as such we will have greater success in meeting our program goals by actively supporting and involving a child’s family in his/her education.
- In order for a child to learn effectively, he/she must have a strong positive self-concept, which is developed by immersing a child in positive social environments while engaging in learning experiences.
- A preschool program must address the needs of the total child. This includes medical, dental and nutritional needs as well as social, cultural, emotional, and intellectual needs.
- Children learn actively, using all of their senses to interact with their environment.
- Children learn best when provided experiences that are:
  * age appropriate (correct for that child’s developmental state)
  * individually appropriate (correct for that child’s uniqueness)
  * culturally and linguistically appropriate

FEES: Head Start / Early Head Start is Free
**What is Head Start / Early Head Start?**

Head Start / Early Head Start is one of the most successful Federal programs ever created by the Federal Government. It has touched the lives of over 13 million economically disadvantaged preschool children and their families across the United States. Head Start / Early Head Start gives children a chance to participate in a variety of educational activities. They also receive free medical and dental care, have healthy meals and snacks, and enjoy playing indoors and outdoors in a safe setting.

Head Start / Early Head Start helps all children succeed by providing them with activities that help them grow mentally, socially, emotionally, and physically. The Head Start / Early Head Start staff recognizes that, as parents, you are the first and most important teachers of your children. Parent involvement is the cornerstone of Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start and is always welcomed.

Services are offered to meet the special needs of children with disabilities in our inclusive classrooms that stress the development of every child with attention to individual strengths and needs.

Head Start / Early Head Start’s goal is to enhance each child’s effectiveness in dealing with both present environment and later responsibilities in school and life.

Children leave Head Start prepared for Kindergarten, excited about learning, confident in their own abilities and ready to succeed.

**About Early Head Start**

The reauthorization of the Head Start Act in 1994 made it possible to establish Early Head Start as a program to serve infants and toddlers under the age of 3, and pregnant women.

Early Head Start provides early, continuous, intensive, and comprehensive child development and family support services to low-income infants and toddlers and their families, and pregnant women and their families.

**The Goals of Early Head Start**

- To provide safe and developmentally enriching caregiving which promotes the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of infants and toddlers, and prepares them for future growth and development;
- To support parents, both mothers and fathers, in their role as primary caregivers and teachers of their children, and families in meeting personal goals and achieving self sufficiency across a wide variety of domains;
- To mobilize communities to provide the resources and environment necessary to ensure a comprehensive, integrated array of services and support for families;
- To ensure the provision of high quality responsive services to family through the development of trained, and caring staff.

**The Principles of Early Head Start**

These principles are designed to nurture healthy attachments between parent and child (and child and caregiver), emphasize a strengths-based, relationship-centered approach to services, and encompass the full range of a family’s needs from pregnancy through a child’s third birthday.

**They include:**

- **An Emphasis on High Quality** which recognizes the critical opportunity of EHS programs to positively impact children and families in the early years and beyond.
- **Prevention and Promotion Activities** that both promote healthy development and recognize and address atypical development at the earliest stage possible.
- **Positive Relationships and Continuity** which honor the critical importance of early attachments on healthy development in early childhood and beyond. The parents are viewed as a child’s first, and most important, relationship.
• **Inclusion** strategies that respect the unique developmental trajectories of young children in the context of a typical setting, including children with disabilities.

• **Cultural competence** which acknowledges the profound role that culture plays in early development. Programs also recognize the influence of cultural values and beliefs on both staff and families' approaches to child development. Programs work within the context of home languages for all children and families.

• **Comprehensiveness, Flexibility and Responsiveness** of services which allow children and families to move across various program options over time, as their life situation demands.

• **Transition planning** respects families' need for thought and attention paid to movements across program options and into—and out of—Early Head Start programs.

• **Collaboration** is, simply put, central to an Early Head Start program's ability to meet the comprehensive needs of families. Strong partnerships allow programs to expand their services to families with infants and toddlers beyond the door of the program and into the larger community.

### Cornerstones

1. **Child Development:** Programs must support the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and language development of each child. Parenting education and the support of a positive parent-child relationship are critical to this cornerstone.

2. **Family Development:** Programs must seek to empower families by developing goals for themselves and their children. Staff and parents develop individualized family development plans that focus on the child's developmental needs and the family's social and economic needs. Families that are involved in other programs requiring a family service plan will receive a single coordinated plan so that they experience a seamless system of services.

3. **Community Building:** Programs are expected to conduct an assessment of community resources so that they may build a comprehensive network of services and supports for pregnant women and families with young children. The goal of these collaborative relationships is to increase family access to community supports, make the most efficient use of limited resources, and affect system-wide changes to improve the service delivery system for all families in the community.

4. **Staff Development:** The success of the Early Head Start program rests largely on the quality of the staff. Staff members must have the capacity to develop caring, supportive relationships with both children and families. Ongoing training, supervision, and mentoring will encompass an inter-disciplinary approach and emphasize relationship-building. Staff development will be grounded in established "best practices" in the areas of child development, family development, and community building.

### Program Options

All Early Head Start programs serve families through a full day, full year program option that best meets the needs of their families. Program options provide options, determined through the data collected from their community needs assessment and conversations with families, provide them with the ability to comprehensively and flexibly meet the needs of families. As infants and toddlers grow and change, and as family needs evolve, diverse program options can support them over time. This ensures that families can grow within a consistent, supportive setting, buttressed by strong relationships and developmentally-appropriate care and services. Program options for EHS include the following:

• **Center-Based services** provide early learning, care and enrichment experiences to children in an early care and education setting. Staff members also visit family homes at least twice per year.

• **Home-Based services** are provided through weekly home visits to each enrolled child and family. The home visitor provides child-focused visits that promote the parents' ability to support the child's development. Twice per month, the program offers opportunities for parents and children to come together as a group for learning, discussion, and social activity.
# Dona Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start Staff Roster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>License</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Enrollment</th>
<th>Pre-K Village</th>
<th>Anthony, NM 88021</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anthony I</td>
<td>882-7924</td>
<td>#87001</td>
<td>8:00-11:30 Session 1, 12:30-4:00 Session 2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>609 Church St</td>
<td>8021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony II</td>
<td>882-1109</td>
<td>#87001</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>609 Church St</td>
<td>8021</td>
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<td>Pre-K Village</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>882-1890</td>
<td>#87001</td>
<td>8:00-2:30</td>
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<td>609 Church St</td>
<td>8021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pre-K Village</td>
<td>Anthony, NM 88021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anthony—Home Base</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>609 Church St</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Head Start</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berino</td>
<td>882-2010/882-1827</td>
<td>#149220</td>
<td>8:00-11:30 Session 1, 12:30-4:00 Session 2</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>455 Shrode Rd, Portable #126</td>
<td>Anthony, NM 88021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companeros Head Start</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4101 Sam Steele Way, A-100</td>
<td>Las Cruces, NM 88001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Berino</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Myrna’s Children’s Village</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lester</td>
<td>527-8695/527-9296</td>
<td>#64566</td>
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<td>2250 Lester</td>
<td>Las Cruces, NM 88001</td>
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<tr>
<td>NMSU</td>
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<td>4101 Sam Steele Way, A-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lester</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vado</td>
<td>233-2401/233-1034</td>
<td>#66882</td>
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<td>Holguin Rd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Vado—Home Base</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>455 Shrode Road, Portable #126</td>
<td>Anthony, NM 88021</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teachers:**
- Anthony: Lorenzo Morales (lorimors@nmsu.edu)
- Anthony II: Cynthia Lopez, Velia Rivera (velias@nmsu.edu)
- Early Head Start Anthony: Whitney Escamilla (wescamilla@nmsu.edu), Janet Herrera (jhecmn@nmsu.edu)
- Early Head Start Anthony—Home Base: Martha Orozco-Pacheco (maroac@nmsu.edu)
- Berino: Liliana Arias (liliana@nmsu.edu)
- Companeros Head Start: Sergio Pando (spando@lcps.net), Rachel Balsamo, Ophelia Pazo (ophelia@nmsu.edu)
- NMSU: Maribel Lucero (maribel@nmsu.edu), Melissa Navarro (mestina@nmsu.edu)
- Lester: Josie Lema (jlerma@nmsu.edu), Tessie Bencomo (tbencomo@nmsu.edu)
- Vado: Thelma Castro (thelmac@nmsu.edu), Alejandra Mercado (mercad01@nmsu.edu)
- Early Head Start Vado—Home Base: Lynette Banega (brynm@nmsu.edu)

**Teacher Assistants:**
- Anthony: TBA
- Anthony II: TBA
- Early Head Start Anthony: TBA
- Early Head Start Anthony—Home Base: TBA
- Berino: TBA
- Companeros Head Start: TBA
- NMSU: TBA
- Lester: TBA
- Vado: TBA
- Early Head Start Vado—Home Base: TBA
### Administrative Offices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone Ext.</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone Ext.</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone Ext.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amanda Gibson-Smith</td>
<td>Ext. 111</td>
<td>Ali Ray</td>
<td>Ext. 118</td>
<td>education <a href="mailto:specialist@nmsu.edu">specialist@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:arey@nmsu.edu">arey@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yihong Chavez</td>
<td>Ext. 112</td>
<td>Marvin Tafoya</td>
<td>Ext. 119</td>
<td>buyer <a href="mailto:specialist@nmsu.edu">specialist@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:mtafoya@nmsu.edu">mtafoya@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:Yihong@nmsu.edu">Yihong@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Ext. 113</td>
<td>Olivia Seppi</td>
<td>Ext. 122</td>
<td>nutrition <a href="mailto:specialist@nmsu.edu">specialist@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabilities/Compliance Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:danceiv@nmsu.edu">danceiv@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elisa West</td>
<td>Ext. 114</td>
<td>Irma Ontiveros</td>
<td>Ext. 0</td>
<td>front desk/reception@nmsu.edu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Services Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:irmaco@nmsu.edu">irmaco@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:elisheir@nmsu.edu">elisheir@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>Ext. 116</td>
<td>Eddie Amendariz (FHSC)</td>
<td></td>
<td>const/maintenance <a href="mailto:tech@nmsu.edu">tech@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health Specialist</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:raarmendo@nmsu.edu">raarmendo@nmsu.edu</a></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Donna Johnson</td>
<td>Ext. 117</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Word Processing Specialist</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:donjohns@nmsu.edu">donjohns@nmsu.edu</a></td>
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### Family Outreach Workers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Phone Ext.</th>
<th>Email Address</th>
<th>Phone Ext.</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Liliana Rivera (PP)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>882-5262</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:lriver@nmsu.edu">lriver@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirtbel Ramirez</td>
<td></td>
<td>Anthony</td>
<td>882-5242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:mirtbel@nmsu.edu">mirtbel@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amolia Ayala</td>
<td></td>
<td>Berino</td>
<td>882-2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:melymely@nmsu.edu">melymely@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vanesca Ramirez</td>
<td></td>
<td>NMSU &amp; Companeros AM</td>
<td>648-5435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:vjurado@nmsu.edu">vjurado@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claudia Higuera</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lester &amp; Companeros PM</td>
<td>527-9013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:claudia1@nmsu.edu">claudia1@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
<td>FOW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eva Ortega</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vado</td>
<td>233-5367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="mailto:javier16@nmsu.edu">javier16@nmsu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Total Enrollment 260**

Revised: 3/10/2016
**Meals, Snacks And Types Of Food Served:**
The morning class is served breakfast and a snack, and the afternoon class is served lunch and a snack. Centers with full day sessions serve the children breakfast, lunch and a snack, therefore, **please do not feed your children prior to coming to the center.**

Our menus will be provided to all parents on a monthly basis. Our breakfast meal will consist of 3 components: Dairy, fruit/vegetable and bread. Our lunch meal will consist of 5 components: Dairy, fruit and vegetable, bread and meat. Our snack will consist of 2 different components: Any choice of the following, fruit and/or vegetable, bread, milk or a meat alternate (peanut butter, eggs, beans, cheese, yogurt, etc.). We like to introduce the children to a variety of different cultural foods as well as serving their favorite meals. The meals are served family style and language skills and social interaction are encouraged and enhanced during mealtime activities.

All Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start food services will be provided by Las Cruces Public Schools and Gadsden Independent School District.

A policy and procedure is followed for children with special dietary needs, as per doctor’s orders and reviewed by a registered dietitian.

**CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM:**

Our program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) administered through the State of New Mexico, Children Youth and Families Department. All children are treated the same under the Child and Adult Care Food Program; no child will be physically segregated or otherwise discriminated against because of race, color, age, national origin, sex, or disabling condition.

---

**Immunization Schedule**

![Immunization Schedule](image-url)

*When Does My Baby Need Shots?* 
*¿Cuando Necesita Mi Bebe Sus Vacunas?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child’s Age/ Edad</th>
<th>Shots Needed (Vacunas)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth (al nacer)</td>
<td>Hep B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 months (2 meses)</td>
<td>DTap, IPV, Hib, Hep B, PCV, RV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 months (4 meses)</td>
<td>DTap, IPV, Hib, PCV, RV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 months (6 meses)</td>
<td>DTap, IPV, Hib, Hep B, PCV, RV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12-15 months (12-15 meses)</td>
<td>DTap, Hib, Hep A, PCV, MMR, VAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 months (18 meses)</td>
<td>Hep A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-6 years (4-6 años)</td>
<td>DTap, IPV, MMR, VAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-12 years (11-12 años)</td>
<td>Tdap, MCV, HPV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yearly (cada año)</td>
<td>Influenza</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NM Department of Health Vaccines For Children Program [www.immunize.nm.org](http://www.immunize.nm.org)*

**NM Vaccine & Flu Hotline**
1-888-681-5872
Nurse Advice NM
1-877-725-2552
**Daily Schedule:**

**DAILY SCHEDULE**
**FOR HALF DAY SESSIONS:**
- Arrival/Greetings
- Meal Time
- Circle Time
- Interest Areas (Centers)
- Story Time
- Music/Movement Time
- Snack
- Outdoor Play
- Closing Circle/Departure

**EARLY HEAD START**

**DAILY SCHEDULE**
**FOR FULL DAY SESSIONS:**
- Arrival/Greetings
- Breakfast
- Circle Time
- Interest Areas (Centers)
- Outdoor Play
- Lunch
- Music/Movement Story Time
- Nap
- Snack
- Story Time
- Interest Areas (Centers)
- Outdoor Play
- Closing Circle/Departure

*All centers cover all areas above, but they may not follow the exact schedule as stated above. Please ask your teacher for a copy of their daily schedule, if needed.*
**DAILY SCHEDULE:**

**Planning/Preparation Time:**
Adults review the plans for the day, conduct health and safety check, prepare interest areas and individualized activities.

**Arrival:**
Families and children are greeted. Children store belongings in their cubbies, and then wash hands for a meal.

**Meal Times:**
Children and adults share meals together family style. Socialization and self-help skills are encouraged and supported. Meal time also includes conversations about the day’s events, the meal itself, and topics of interest to children.

**Transitions:**
Adults guide children in cleaning up after meals, centers, outdoor play and rest time for a smooth transition.

**Dental Hygiene:**
Adults supervise children’s oral hygiene activities.

**Circle Time:**
Children and staff gather together to share experiences and contribute to discussions regarding the theme of the day. New materials and their locations are introduced.

**Interest Centers:**
Children select an interest area of their choice. Adults observe and interact with individual children to extend play and learning. Small group activities are planned that build on children’s skill and interests.

**Story Time:**
Children and staff share stories in a variety of ways in small groups or in large groups.

**Music & Movement:**
Adults and children engage in a variety of music and movement activities.

**Outdoor Activities:**
Children interact with other children and adults as they engage in gross motor and fine motor activities (e.g. jump rope, ball games, blowing bubbles, exploring nature, etc.).

**Snack Time:**
Children’s self-help and social skills are encouraged and supported by adults.

**Closing Circle:**
Adults and children gather together to reflect on the day’s activities and events.

**Rest Time: For full day centers**
Adults provide a variety of soft music to help children relax.

*Activities reinforcing the Head Start / Early Head Start content areas are integrated throughout the day*

The following are conducted on a monthly basis: Fire Drills, Health, and Nutrition activities, and Cooking experiences.
Guidelines for Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Parents:

REST
Your child will do best when well rested. Please see that he/she gets eight to ten hours of sleep each night. This schedule should include weekend nights also.

CLOTHING
A. Be sure that your child’s clothing is:
   ▪ comfortable, washable, and allows for self dressing;
   ▪ marked with your child’s name;
   ▪ appropriate for outdoor play and other activities. Underwear must not be seen when sitting or bending over. If skirts are too short we will ask the child to change.
   ▪ shoes need to be secure and appropriate for outdoor activities. No Flip Flops or slip on gellie type shoes will be allowed. We will call you to bring a change of shoes.
B. You will need to provide an extra set of clothing for your child, in case of any accidents or spills. All names should be clearly marked to ensure that children take home or wear home their own clothes. Note: As soiled clothes are sent home – remember we need a fresh change of clothes. For children attending full day sessions, please remember to return your child’s nap sheet clean and laundered every Monday.
C. It is always a good idea to check the weather!! We do play outside. It is important that your child is prepared for either the hot or cold days. In the winter, please send your child with a coat. If providing appropriate clothing is a concern, please speak with the teacher at your center.
D. We get involved in many activities and should not have to be overly concerned with staying clean. Dresses with ruffles and bows – and pants with difficult belts and fastenings should be avoided.

TOYS
Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start provides developmentally appropriate play and learning materials. We request that your child’s toys and stuffed animals be left at home. Occasionally, your teacher may request children bring a toy from home.

FOOD
Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start prohibits parents from sending snacks and/or treats for their child and classroom. This includes homemade food or desserts. We are a licensed facility and doing so violates our license. We provide healthy snacks, breakfast and/or lunch. Please send your child to Head Start / Early Head Start without eating. We serve breakfast and/or lunch and sharing mealtime is a part of the children’s socialization process.

COMMUNICATION
We encourage you to share any events or information that may affect your child’s behavior.

All the staff of Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start are concerned about the well-being of young children and their families in this community. The staff, therefore, is anxious to listen to your suggestions and any concerns you may have regarding the day-to-day operations in the classroom or the program.

Note: Check your child’s cubbie every day for important notices.
Violent Toys or Dangerous Weapons in The Classroom:

In the last several years, our children have been inundated with graphic and or virtual violence, whether it be in the movies children watch, in the music that teenagers listen to, or in our homes while watching television programs or playing video games.

Head Start / Early Head Start promotes positive relationships among children, families and staff. We request that parents talk to their children about the seriousness of all dangerous weapons, such as guns, knives, etc.

In the Head Start / Early Head Start classroom we discourage any type of aggressive or unsafe play. The teaching staff will re-direct all unsafe play. The following items ARE NOT allowed in the Head Start / Early Head Start classroom:

- Toy guns including water guns
- Toy swords and knives
- War type toys
- Any object that could be used as a weapon (i.e. box cutter or screwdriver, pocket knives, Leatherman®, etc.)

Our program staff promotes talking to children about the dangers of guns and what to do if they see a gun. (“Don’t touch, leave the area, tell an adult.”)

Special Events, Remembrances and Celebrations:

The Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start program focuses on education and developmentally appropriate practices. We encourage families to recognize special events, remembrances and celebrations at home, as most will not be recognized in the classroom setting.

There are two major problems with concentrating our time and energies on holiday celebrations:

1. **It is extremely difficult to give holidays meaning that are developmentally appropriate for very young children.**
2. **It is difficult to be inclusive of all the holidays and all the cultures of our families.** Not all families celebrate the same way; therefore it is the Head Start / Early Head Start Policy not to celebrate.

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start will be using their creative gifts and celebratory spirit to mark occasions that are the most developmentally appropriate for young children. One day each month will be set aside to recognize all birthdays that month. If you would like to volunteer your time to assist on this special day each month, please speak to your child’s teacher at the beginning of the month.

Let’s celebrate milestones.
Let’s celebrate points of learning.
Let’s celebrate children and families.

When we make choices about what to celebrate, let us be very conscious of whom we are doing it for. If we are doing it for ourselves, it is very easy to choose a holiday curriculum - the resources are everywhere and excitement is built in. If we are doing it for the families, we must choose carefully what to celebrate so that we are inclusive. If we are doing it for the children, let us be conscious of all the subtle messages inherent in what we do and choose things to celebrate that are meaningful, developmentally appropriate, and healthy for them.
Simple Rules

At Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start we believe that your child is very important and we want to do our best when working with him/her. You can help us by understanding and following these simple rules.

1. **Arrival and Departure**

   For walking or self-transported children:

   We ask for your cooperation in dropping off and picking up your child ON TIME each day. **Center staff need sufficient time before class begins to adequately prepare for each school day, so please do not bring your child into the classroom more than five minutes before class is scheduled to begin.** If a child is not picked up on time Head Start / Early Head Start staff are required to follow the “Late Pick-Up Policy”.

   When you bring your child into the Head Start / Early Head Start classroom or come in to pick your child up you must check-in and check-out using the sign-in sheet provided. Regulations require each child to be signed into and out of the classroom each day on a log that shows time in and time out. Please be sure that your child has checked in and out.

   Only authorized persons as indicated in the child’s file will be allowed to pick up your child from class. Anyone who is not on the list of authorized persons will NOT be allowed to pick up your child unless they present written permission from you and show a picture ID.

2. **Release of Child to Parent/Guardian**

   We will only release your child to persons listed on the authorized release. If there is a custody issue regarding your child, you must provide us with a copy of divorce or custody papers, restraining order, or other legal papers. Please let your child’s center staff or Family Outreach Worker know if you have questions or concerns in this area.

3. **Attendance**

   Your child’s attendance is very important to us. In order to receive the full benefit of the Head Start / Early Head Start experience we ask that each child attend regularly and on time. **However, if your child is ill do not send them to class.** See Attendance Policy.

   **If your child will not be attending:**

   **Call your child’s center and let them know why your child will not be attending.**

   State licensing requires all children attending Head Start / Early Head Start to be current on their immunization schedules.

   **Head Start / Early Head Start MUST have an up to date immunization record on file in order for your child to attend the center. If you have an appointment to receive updated immunizations, you must provide Head Start / Early Head Start with a copy of the appointment card showing the date of next appointment in order to continue attending class before that date.**
Doña Ana County is the target service area of the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Program. In providing Head Start / Early Head Start services to families in Doña Ana County, the Head Start/ Early Head Start Performance Standards will be the basis for the services that are offered. The Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment, and Attendance Policy is set forth to clarify the requirements for eligibility, the procedures for recruitment, the selection criteria, the enrollment process, and the procedures for monitoring attendance in the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Program.

**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

All parents of children between the ages of 0 and 5 have the opportunity to apply for Head Start / Early Head Start services. All else being equal, priority is given to children who are 2 by the 1st of September for Early Head Start and 4 by the 1st of September or 1 year from entering public kindergarten for Head Start. The following documentation is required in order to determine eligibility: verification of age, copy of state certified birth certificate, baptismal certificate or hospital record will be accepted; Also proof of income that shows total family income, copy of prior year’s tax return, 3 or more pay stubs, written statement from employer, TANF, scholarships, or financial aid will be accepted.

**RECRUITMENT**

The focus of recruitment activities will be areas (geographic localities) in Doña Ana County where a community needs assessment demonstrates that there is a need for Head Start/ Early Head Start services and community support for the program has been established and facilities are available. To maintain full enrollment, the process of recruiting children will be ongoing.

Specific procedures to recruit children include

- Media advertising through one or all of the following: radio, newspapers, and public bulletin boards will be used to disseminate information about the program.

Recruitment activities in addition to media advertising will include:

- door-to-door contact,
- phone contact,
- setting up information booths in community agencies, and/or
- posting recruitment fliers in high traffic businesses - post offices, grocery stores, and Laundromats.
- on-site recruitment

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start application information will be made available to prospective applicants about eligibility requirements.
To monitor the recruitment process, the DACHS Recruitment/Outreach Data Log will be utilized. The Log will substantiate recruitment efforts.

The Family Services component staff (Family Outreach Workers) are responsible for organizing and initiating a yearly recruitment drive that will insure full enrollment of funded slots at all times. The Disability Specialist is responsible for maintaining contact with appropriate specialized agencies serving young children with special needs. The Family Services Specialist will maintain records of outreach, recruitment, and service activities for children with special needs. It will be the main responsibility of the Family Outreach Workers, (FOW) to recruit center families, complete enrollment packets with families, assist in the development of Family Partnership Agreements, conduct home visits as needed on assigned families, set-up child files and assist with coordination of screenings. It is the responsibility of all Head Start / Early Head Start staff to assist with the recruitment process as needed.

**SELECTION CRITERIA**

Selection for enrollment in the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Program will be based on six criteria:

**CATEGORICALLY ELIGIBLE**: Consist of homeless children and foster children.

**INCOME**: At least 90% of the applicants selected will meet the Family Income Guidelines for Head Start / Early Head Start Programs.

**AGE**: To be selected for enrollment, children must be between the ages of 2 - 5, by September 1 of the program year. Children who are 2 years of age by September 1 will be given priority for Early Head Start and children who are 4 years of age by September 1 will be given priority for Head Start

**CHILD’S NEED**: At least 10% of the enrollment opportunities will be made available to children who have been determined eligible on the basis of the child’s disability and the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Program’s available resources to meet the child’s needs. A child may also be determined eligible on the basis of need with documentation from appropriate community agencies, service providers, or as documented by the Family Services Specialist through pre-enrollment interviews.

**FAMILY NEED**: Psycho/social and other family needs will be screened based on self-reports from applicants, referrals from other agencies, and as documented by the Family Services Specialist through a pre-enrollment interview. Family and child’s needs will initially be screened from the DACHS application which addresses needs that have been identified through the DACHS application section; ‘Family & Child Needs’. Selection for enrollment on the basis of a family’s need for services will be based on services that a family is receiving at the time of enrollment, so that duplication of services is minimized.

**GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION**: In the process of selecting children for enrollment, the distance between the family’s residence and the Doña Ana County Head Start /Early Head Start Center will be considered.
ELIGIBILITY PRIORITY CRITERIA

In order to reach families representing the most need, DACHS utilizes a point system to determine selection for enrollment. Priority for enrollment is evidenced by the point system assignment on the Eligibility Criteria form attached to each application received. Upon completion of the Criteria form a total point assignment is documented, dated, and signed by the Family Services Specialist. The application packet is then placed according to the total point assignment in the waiting list/selection pool.

Beginning selections during spring months will take place at regular intervals through the first month of the program year or until full enrollment is obtained. First selections will consist of eligible four year olds and applications that have a total point assignment of 300 and higher, depending on the number of applications received. If the number of applications received are low, then selections may begin with those having total assigned points of 250 and higher. When making selections to enroll or replace, all else being equal, the child’s age will determine the final selection.

The following is an explanation of points assigned utilizing the Eligibility Priority Criteria form.

**Categorically Eligible:** This includes foster children with documentation and homeless children.

**Income:** Families whose income meets the Income Guideline will receive points. No points will be assigned to applicants whose income is above the Guidelines.

**Age:** Children who are 4 years of age by September 1 of the program year will be given priority for enrollment. This priority is documented by assigning the highest number of points to children who will be 4 years old by September 1 of the program year.

**Geographic Location:** Applicant families that reside within the service area or walking distance for that center will be assigned points. No points will be assigned to applicant families that do not reside within the service area.

**Parental Status:** The highest level of points will be assigned to applicant families that are non-parental guardian/custodian and foster families. The next level of points will be assigned to one parent families. The next level of points will be assigned to two parent families.

**Needs:** A pre-enrollment interview may result in assignment of the highest points depending on the family’s need. The next level of points will be assigned to applications that contain referrals from another agency. Families who have children who were served by Early Head Start /Early Head Start will be assigned the next level of points.

**Education:** Applicant families with a parent attending classes for ESL, GED certificate or those working with New Mexico Works, will be assigned the highest points. Applicant families with a parent attending classes for an Associate or Bachelor degree will be assigned the next level of points. No points will be assigned to those families attending classes for a Master or Ph.D. degree.
**Employment:** Applicant families, in which the parent are working full time, 32 hours a week or more, will be assigned the highest number of points. Applicant families in which parent(s) are working part time, 20-31 hours per week, will be assigned the next level of points. Applicant families in which parent(s) are working less than 20 hours per week will be assigned the lower level of points. No points will be assigned to those families in which no one is working. For two parent families, both parents must be employed to receive full points.

**Disability:** Applications that contain documentation that the child has been qualified through the local education agency as having a special need will be assigned the highest number of points. For applicants who are suspected to have disabilities and/or have received services from agencies serving children with disabilities, points may be assigned in the “Needs” section.

**Housing:** Families that reside in Public or Subsidized Housing will receive points. No points will be assigned to applicants who live in non-subsidized housing.

**ENROLLMENT PROCESS**

Any family submitting an application to Doña Ana County Head Start/Early Head Start will have an in-person interview conducted by a DACHS staff member to verify each child’s eligibility and will be reviewed by the Family Services Specialist. The Family Services Specialist will then utilize the DACHS Eligibility Priority Criteria point system to finish processing the application. A child is considered accepted when they have met the eligibility criteria and have completed the process for enrollment. Enrollment is defined once the child has attended class or received a service.

To complete the enrollment process (if accepted), the requirements are:

1. Formal notification of acceptance into the program by FOW.
2. A response from the family, within 7 working days, verifying that the child will be attending the program.
3. The completion of all enrollment forms for the child’s record, prior to a child’s participation in the class. Parent/Guardian needs to provide:
   - Copy of immunization record
   - Documentation if child received services from an early intervention program (Doctor’s diagnosis, concerns, evaluation, IEP or IFSP)

   FOW will not be able to tell what classroom the child will attend at this time (excludes Vado, Lester and NMSU).
4. At the beginning of a program term all eligible children will be placed in a classroom by the Selection Committee. Any vacancies will be filled within 3 days, if possible. The Selection Committee will consist of: the Family Service Specialist and FOW’s. Taking into account all the factors so that the placement will be beneficial to the child and family.
The total number of children enrolled in the program may exceed the ACYF funded enrollment to insure that Head Start / Early Head Start services are available to the greatest number of children possible. When 60 calendar days or less remain in the program year, only the enrollment of eligible 3 year old children will be considered for families who will qualify for Head Start / Early Head Start services the following program year. The Head Start / Early Head Start program may also choose not to fill enrollment vacancies when 60 calendar days or less remain in the program year.

A waiting list of eligible applicants who meet the selection criteria will be established to minimize the enrollment time when there is an available slot, however, as eligible applicants are referred to other programs, there may be times when the waiting list is at a minimum.

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start believes that continuity is an important aspect of Head Start / Early Head Start services, since one of the purposes of the program is to prepare children for entry into public school. We believe that once a child is enrolled, it is important for the child to continue to build on the gains achieved in Head Start / Early Head Start. In order to maintain these gains, we think that all children should be enrolled with the understanding that they are to continue receiving Head Start / Early Head Start services until they are eligible for public school. However, because there might be times that a compelling reason may occur not to re-enroll, such as significant rise in family income, Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start may choose to enroll a different child from a more needy family. These situations will be brought to the Family Services Specialist and Director for individual consideration.
Attendance

Monitoring of attendance will be conducted daily through the ChildPlus computer program.

The attendance requirements are:

1. Current or in process immunizations for the child on the first day of class attendance.
2. Minimum 85% attendance goal in each class.
3. Mandatory center staff follow-up after any absence without parental contact.

Attendance Policy Procedures: These procedures include family and staff responsibilities for implementing the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start attendance policy requirements:

* Assigned center staff will record the daily attendance of each child in ChildPlus for monitoring and follow-up by the Family Services Staff.

* Families of children enrolled in the program are required to contact the center staff if their child will not be attending classes. The method of contact may include telephone, correspondence, or personal contact. In order to determine when action or intervention is appropriate, staff must be aware of the causes of absence. This is accomplished via the Monthly Attendance Monitoring Form (C.I.R.) Parents will be urged to provide this information whenever children are absent. It is the responsibility of the staff to seek out the cause of absence when the information is not volunteered.

* Mandatory center staff follow-up after absences without parental contact:
  - phone contact, (home, work, or emergency contacts)
  - correspondence,
  - home visits, or
  - personal contacts (i.e., neighbors, relatives or friends)

* If attendance for any child falls below the 85% requirement for any given month, the information will be referred to the Family Outreach Worker for review and follow-up via an e-mail from the assigned center staff.

* After mandatory staff follow-up and an assessment of the child absences by the Family Services staff and all attempts to maintain the enrollment have been exhausted, disenrollment will be considered based on factors that include:
  - Parental request,
  - Relocation of the family out of the program’s service area,
  - Chronic absenteeism that persists for 2 months despite program efforts,
  - if a child is absent for 8 school days (consecutive) and DACHS has exhausted all methods of establishing parent contact,

In order to ensure the health and safety of all children enrolled in the DACHS program, a child may be considered for Temporary Exclusion or possible disenrollment if the behavior that is expressed by a child during classroom hours endangers or threatens another child or classroom staff.
Doña Ana County

Head Start /

Early Head Start

Policies
**Open Door Policy for Parents:**

Research and experience have shown that parental involvement is a key factor in student success. Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start encourages parents to actively participate in their child’s education and welcomes parents or guardians to visit and observe their child’s Head Start / Early Head Start center at any time during center hours, 8:00 am – 4:00 pm.

For the safety of our students and staff, center doors will be locked at all times during class hours to prevent anyone from unknowingly entering the classroom. Program staff asks but doesn’t require that parents/school visitors contact their child’s Head Start / Early Head Start centers’ teacher or family outreach worker to advise in advance of their visit.

Please remember when visiting, children may react in a manner that does not normally occur when we are working alone with the children. If the visit causes a disruption that interferes with the educational process, we will ask that you reschedule your visit so we can continue with our planned activities.

**Attendance Policy:**

Families of children enrolled in the program are required to contact the staff if their child will not be attending class. Parents are encouraged to notify teaching staff whenever they know their child will be absent ahead of time (family vacations, well-child appointments, etc.) as meals, transportation and activities are planned around all children being present. It is the responsibility of the teacher or other designated staff person to seek out the cause of any absence.

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start is a comprehensive child development program and consistent attendance is vital to your child. Children do become ill. Please do not send your child to the center if he or she is sick. Families do encounter situations that may result in their child missing class. Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start cares about you and your child and we would like to be of assistance if we can.

If the attendance for any child falls below 85% for a period longer than 2 consecutive months, the family will be referred to the Family Services Specialist for follow-up. After mandatory staff follow-up and an assessment of family circumstances by the Specialist has been completed, automatic disenrollment will be based on several factors that include:

- parental request,
- relocation of the family out of program’s service area,
- chronic absenteeism that persists for 2 months despite program efforts,
- if a child is absent for 8 school days (consecutive) and DACHS has exhausted all methods of establishing parent contact,

*If you have any questions or concerns regarding this policy, please contact the Family Services Specialist.*
Late Pick Up Policy:

It is important for children to be picked up in a timely manner from their day at Head Start / Early Head Start. Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start has adopted the following procedures for children that are not picked up from their classroom on time:

1. Staff will attempt to call parent/guardian at the numbers listed in the child’s file if they are more than fifteen (15) minutes late. If parent/guardian is chronically late; and for the purpose of this policy “chronically” is defined as three (3) or more times in a two (2) week period, with or without a call from the parent/guardian telling us they are late. If chronically late parent/guardian does not contact us, staff will call when the parent/guardian is five (5) minutes late, then proceed to step 2. Even if the chronically late parent/guardian calls in we will still attempt to contact the emergency contacts to pick up the child.

2. If staff is unable to contact parent/guardian, staff will attempt to contact emergency contacts listed in the child’s emergency contact list. Contacts must have authorization to pick up the child. If parent/guardian is chronically late and we have not received a phone call staff will proceed with contacting emergency contacts to pick up the child within ten (10) minutes.

3. If staff is not able to make contact with anyone on the emergency/contact list, staff will attempt to call the parent/guardian again. If parent/guardian is chronically late we will move to step 4.

4. If staff is unable to make contact with anyone after trying parent/guardian and all emergency contacts, staff will proceed with the following:
   1. Call area Police Central Dispatch to report that a child has not been picked up from Head Start / Early Head Start.
   2. Contact New Mexico Children, Youth, & Families Department by dialing #SAFE (#7233) from any cell phone or by calling 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) ONLY IF POLICE ACTION HAS TAKEN PLACE.
   3. Contact the State of New Mexico Child Care Licensing @ 373-6609 ext. 115 within 24 hours ONLY IF POLICE OR CYFD ACTION HAS TAKEN PLACE.
   4. Contact the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Director and immediate supervisor as soon as situation takes place, followed by a written report within 24 hours.
   5. Submit completed “Child Abuse & Neglect Report Form” to the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start Mental Health Specialist within 24 hours. IF APPLICABLE.

Staff will remain with the child until the proper authorities have arrived. If a parent/guardian arrives after the authorities have been contacted, the parent and staff must remain on-site so the situation can be resolved.
Guidance/Discipline Policy:

Guidance is a matter of helping children learn socially appropriate behavior and self-control. It involves leading children from adult control to the development of their own inner control. Stated below are the ways in which Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start staff and volunteers will prevent undesirable situations from occurring in the center:

1. Encourage desirable behavior both verbally and non-verbally.
   - Examples of verbal encouragement include:
     1. “I notice that you are matching the blocks to the shapes on the shelf. You are putting them exactly where they belong.”
     2. “I see you remembered to throw your Kleenex in the trash can. Thank you.”
     3. “You’re helping Juan pick up the markers.”
   - Examples of non-verbal encouragement include: a smile, a hug, your physical presence near the child, etc.

Ignore behavior that is inappropriate or undesirable (i.e. inappropriate language, tattling and whining, etc.)

2. Staff should be positioned so that all children are visible at all times (indoors and outside). This is to better empower teaching staff to support children’s social interactions.

3. To avoid difficult situations, teaching staff should have individual plans for students with different needs. Example: if a child is disrupting circle time, invite child to engage in an individual activity.

4. Warn children five minutes ahead of time in order to make transitions from one activity to another easier for the children. Example: “In five minutes the bell will ring and it will be clean up time.”

5. Arrange the environment to promote positive interactions. Children will have opportunities to work in small groups and individually with staff.

6. Develop with the children a limited number of simple, positively stated, reasonable rules for the classroom, playground, and field trips. Post these rules with visuals in the center at children’s eye level.
   - Examples include: (Taken from Creative Curriculum)
     1. Be kind others.
     2. Walk in the classroom / Run outside.
     3. Help each other.
     4. Keep the room neat.

Review the rules prior to each class transition. Give gentle reminders such as: gentle touches; walking; helping; cleaning up.

7. Spend time planning to provide an interesting, stimulating daily schedule that will encourage positive behaviors.
8. Physical punishment will NEVER be used as a means of discipline. (Physical punishment is grounds for dismissal.)

9. Withholding food will NEVER be used as a means of punishment.

10. Consequences for behavior need to be immediate. Developmentally our children retain information for 3 to 5 minutes. Threats are not effective and are inappropriate.
    - Examples of threats include (but not limited to):
      1. “Do you want me to call your Mother/Father?”
      2. “If you don’t cooperate you will have to stay indoors.”

11. Intimidation and humiliation will NEVER be used as a means of discipline.
    - Example: “Only babies cry, you are too old to cry.”

12. Staff must be willing to re-evaluate and to change their own behavior as needed in order to prevent a child’s need to engage in challenging behavior.
POLICY
The purpose of the Child Abuse & Neglect Policy and Child Protective Services Reporting Procedures is to ensure that all Doña Ana County Head Start parents, families and staff fully understand their legal responsibility to report suspected child abuse.
One of Doña Ana County Head Start’s most important commitments is to keep children safe. We feel parents need to be as informed as possible about the law(s) that are designed to protect their children. Doña Ana County Head Start staff will comply with New Mexico State Statute, Section 32-1-15 NMSA 1978, requiring the mandated reporting of suspected child abuse and/or neglect as follows:
Section 32-1-15 NMSA 1978:
“A. Any licensed physician, resident or intern examining, attending, or treating a child, any law enforcement officer, registered nurse, school teacher, or social worker acting in his official capacity or any other person knowing or having reasonable suspicion that a child is an abused or a neglected child shall report the matter immediately to: (1) a local law enforcement agency; or (2) the county social services office of the human services department in the county where the child resides.
G. Any person who violates the provision of Subsection A of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be sentenced pursuant to the provisions of Section 31-19-1 NMSA 1978.”
Doña Ana County Head Start staff will preserve the confidentiality of all records pertaining to child abuse in accordance with DACHS Confidentiality Policy.

DEFINITIONS www.childwelfare.gov/systemwide/laws_policies/statutes/define.cfm
Citation: Ann. Stat. § 32A-4-2
Abused child' means a child:
Who has suffered or is at risk of suffering serious harm because of the action or inaction of their parent, guardian, or custodian;
• Who has suffered physical abuse inflicted or caused by the parent, guardian, or custodian
• Whose parent, guardian, or custodian has knowingly, intentionally, or negligently placed the child in a situation that may endanger the child's life or health;
• Whose parent, guardian, or custodian has knowingly or intentionally tortured, cruelly confined, or cruelly punished the child.

Physical Abuse
'Physical abuse' includes, but is not limited to, any case in which the child exhibits evidence of skin bruising, bleeding, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fracture of any bone, subdural hematoma, soft tissue swelling, or death, and:
• There is no justifiable explanation for the condition or death.
• The explanation given for the condition or death is at variance with the degree or nature of the condition or the nature of the death.
• Circumstances indicate that the condition or death may not be the product of an accidental occurrence.

Neglect Neglected child' means a child:
• Who has been abandoned by the parent, guardian, or custodian;
• Who is without proper parental care and control or subsistence, education, medical, or other care or control necessary for the child's well-being because of the faults or habits of the parent, guardian, or custodian or that person's failure or refusal to provide them;
• Who has been physically or sexually abused when the child's parent, guardian, or custodian knew or should have known of the abuse and failed to take reasonable steps to protect the child from further harm;
- Whose parent, guardian, or custodian is unable to discharge his or her responsibilities to and for the child because of incarceration, hospitalization, or other physical or mental disorder or incapacity;
- Who has been placed for care or adoption in violation of the law.

**Sexual Abuse/Exploitation** The term 'abused child' includes a child who has suffered sexual abuse or sexual exploitation inflicted by the child's parent, guardian, or custodian.

'Sexual abuse' includes, but is not limited to, criminal sexual contact, incest, or criminal sexual penetration, as those acts are defined by State law.

'Sexual exploitation' includes, but is not limited to:
- Allowing, permitting, or encouraging a child to engage in prostitution;
- Allowing, permitting, encouraging, or engaging a child in obscene or pornographic photographing;
- Filming or depicting a child for obscene or pornographic commercial purposes.

**Emotional Abuse** The term 'abused child' includes a child who has suffered emotional or psychological abuse inflicted or caused by the child's parent, guardian, or custodian. **Abandonment** 'Abandonment' includes instances when the parent, without justifiable cause:
- Left the child without provision for the child's identification for a period of 14 days
- Left the child with others, including the other parent or an agency, without provision for support and without communication, for a period of 3 months if the child was younger than age 6 at the commencement of the 3-month period, or 6 months if the child was older than age 6 at the commencement of the 6-month period.
Health Services:

To ensure that your child is developing in a healthy manner DACHS requests that each child receive:

- current immunizations. **(If a child is not up-to-date with all required immunizations, he/she will not be able to attend Head Start / Early Head Start until they receive their immunizations and Head Start / Early Head Start receives a current copy);**
- a complete physical exam and dental exam within 90 days from date child begins Head Start / Early Head Start;
- a complete vision and hearing screening; (completed at the center)
- a complete developmental screening which will provide useful information about your child’s physical, language, and social/emotional development.
- **if your child is temporarily ill and is unable to participate in the daily program - indoor and outdoor - please keep child home until he/she is well enough to attend.**

MEDICATION

We request that parents administer any necessary medication to their children before or after Head Start / Early Head Start hours. On occasion, a child may require medication during class hours. When this is the case, the following procedure **MUST** be followed:

- notify your child’s teacher and the Health Services Specialist;
- leave the medication in it’s original container with the prescription or label clearly visible, and the child’s name printed on the container;
- a permission form must be signed by the parent allowing Head Start / Early Head Start staff to administer the medication;
- a medical form will be given to the parent to take to the child's doctor requesting the exact method of medication administration;
- the teacher will consult with the parent at the end of each day/session regarding the effects of the medication on the child;
- and parents must initial Medication Monitoring Form.

**NOTE:** All medication must be taken home daily. Parents are responsible for transferring medication to and from the Head Start /Early Head Start center.

See Medication Policy

PARENT NOTICES AT CENTER

A parent notice will be posted at the center when a potential outbreak of certain communicable diseases exists. Parents may receive additional information regarding these diseases from the Health Services Specialist. If parents wish to contact the Specialist, they are encouraged to do so.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start program’s confidentiality policy will be adhered to in the event a child may have a communicable disease. The number of staff who will be informed will be kept to a minimum to assure the confidentiality of records and other information regarding the child.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start provides a positive mental health environment. Mental health information and services are available to all enrolled families.
Medication Policy:

Procedures for dispensing medication at Head Start / Early Head Start will follow New Mexico State Day Care Licensing regulations. Section 8.16.2.26 (c) (1,2,3,4,5) (Revision 6/30/10). These are as follows:

We will allow the administration of prescribed medication under these conditions:

- **Head Start / Early Head Start** will give prescribed medication only with **written permission** from a parent or guardian. Medication will be administered according to **written direction** from the prescribing physician.

- **Early Head Start / Early Head Start** will keep all medications in a locked file cabinet inaccessible to children and will refrigerate medications when needed. If the refrigerator is inaccessible to children, medications will be placed in an insulated bag in the refrigerator.

- A designated **trained staff member** will be responsible for giving medications to children. The designated staff member will ensure prescription medications have a **label with the child’s name** and the date the medication was brought to the center. The center will keep the prescription medication in the original container with **written instructions**, including the name of medication, the dosage, and the hours and dates the child should receive the medication.

- The staff member will use the medication monitoring form located in the POG as a **written record** of the dosage, date and time a child is given medication, with the signature of the staff who administers the medication. This form will be **reviewed and initialed by the parent** or guardian who picks up the child on the days the medication is given.

- When the medication is no longer needed, it shall be returned to the parents or guardians or destroyed. The center shall not administer expired medication.

**SAFETY PRECAUTIONS**

Staff will be required to wear gloves and follow the Bloodborne Pathogens Exposure Control Plan and adhere to Universal Precautions.
Communicable Disease Policy:

In keeping with state licensing requirements and promoting a healthy and safe environment for all children, Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start program has established a communicable, notifiable diseases and medication policies.

IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WITH COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Communicable diseases are defined as diseases caused by infectious agents that may be transmitted directly or indirectly from person to person. For the purpose of this policy, communicable diseases include, but are not limited to: The simplex, hepatitis B virus, human immune deficiency virus, measles, pertussis, whopping cough, rubella, salmonella, tuberculoses, typhoid fever and similar communicable diseases with serious consequences.

For communicable diseases of short and well known duration, parents or guardians will be asked to absent their children from school during the contagious period. For communicable diseases of less well determined duration, parents or guardians may absent their children from school for any period during which the child’s condition is infectious or communicable.

CHILDREN WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN IN THE CENTER IF THEY HAVE A FEVER, PINK-EYE, HEAD LICE, IMPETIGO, COMPLAINT OF SORE THROAT WITH FEVER, DIARRHEA, VOMITING, OR CHICKEN POX. THE CHILD WILL BE ISOLATED UNTIL HE/SHE CAN BE PICKED UP BY THE PARENT OR EMERGENCY CONTACT.

PARENTAL REPORTING RESPONSIBILITIES

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE

Policy on notifiable conditions in New Mexico will be consistent with the reporting policy of NMAC 4.3.11 published by the office of Epidemiology of the N.M. Dept. of Health.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Parents or guardians of children presently attending or enrolling in Head Start / Early Head Start, have a legal obligation, if there is no health care professional attending the child, to report to the Children’s, Youth & Families, Child Care Licensing Authority division of the State of New Mexico, the fact that the child is a carrier of, or is infected with a communicable disease, as soon as the parent or guardian becomes aware of the condition.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The number of staff who will be informed of the child’s communicable disease will be kept to a minimum to assure the confidentiality of records and other information regarding the child. The Dona Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start program confidentiality policy will be adhered to.
NOTICE FOR CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES

A child in this Head Start / Early Head Start Center has been diagnosed with one of these contagious illnesses:

**Head Lice** - do not transmit disease, jump, or fly; nits are egg cases; nymphs & adult lice crawl from place to place, when in close contact they infect people and feed on human blood; eggs hatch in 6-10 days and then mature to adults 2-3 weeks later ready to reproduce; considered a nuisance rather than a health hazard.

Please check your child’s head every day for two weeks for nits and adult lice—looking at the hairline and the nape of the neck for grayish-white round balls that are attached to the hair shaft.

- **Symptoms:** Itching, feeling of things crawling on scalp, secondary bacterial infection
- **What you should do:** After initial shampoo treatment, a second treatment 7-10 days after first is recommended. It is recommended to wash all brushes, combs, pillows, blankets, and personal items that have been in contact with the infected person with hot soapy water (128-130 degrees F). For clothing, wash first and then place the items in the dryer on high heat. For items that cannot be washed, it is recommended to place the item into a large black plastic bag and remove from the school or home for 10-14 days. Vacuuming the environment is Recommended instead of spraying with insecticide because of toxicity to the children.

- **Control Measures:** Questions? Call us, your doctor, pharmacy, or Public Health Dept. number is at the bottom of the page. Bedmates should also be treated. After proper application of the lice shampoo—re-infestation of Children from an untreated contact is more common than treatment failure.
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until the day after LICE SHAMPOO treatment.** (available at no cost from Dept. of Health – contact information listed below)

**Chicken Pox**

Please check your child’s skin regularly to ensure they have not acquired it.
- **Symptoms:** Itchy red rash that turns into dots or blisters on the skin
- **What you should do:** Ensure you child is vaccinated for Varicella. Contact your doctor so that they determine at what point your child is no longer contagious
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until a Doctor’s release has been provided, stating your child is no longer contagious.**

**Scarlet Fever**

Please check your child’s skin for these symptoms.
- **Symptoms:** Red rash that looks like a sunburn and feels like sandpaper, fever of more than 101 F, sore throat for more than 1-2 days, flushed face, headache, nausea
- **What you should do:** Take your child to the doctor if your child has any one of the following signs or symptoms. Medication and antibiotics are needed.
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until a Doctor’s release has been provided, stating your child is no longer contagious.**

**Scabies**

Please check your child’s skin for these symptoms.
- **Symptoms:** Intense itching and rashes
- **What you should do:** Take your child to the doctor if your child has any one of the following signs or symptoms mentioned.
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until a Doctor’s release has been provided, stating your child is no longer contagious.**

**Ringworm**

Please check your child’s skin for these symptoms.
- **Symptoms:** Ringworm of the skin usually causes a very itchy rash. It often makes a pattern in the shape of a ring, but not always. Sometimes it just a red, itchy rash.
- **What you should do:** Take your child to the doctor if your child has any one of the following signs or symptoms
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until a Doctor’s release has been provided, stating your child is no longer contagious.**

**Pink Eye**

Please check your child’s eyes for these symptoms.
- **Symptoms:** Redness, irritation, and watering of the eyes are common symptoms
- **What you should do:** Take your child to the doctor if your child has any one of the following signs or symptoms
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until a Doctor’s release has been provided, stating your child is no longer contagious.**

**Strep Throat**

Please check your child’s throat for these symptoms.
- **Symptoms:** Sore throat, fever of more than 100 F, pus on tonsils, absence of cough
- **What you should do:** Take your child to the doctor if your child has any one of the following signs or symptoms
- **Your child may not return to Head Start / Early Head Start until a Doctor’s release has been provided, stating your child is no longer contagious.**

For more information contact: New Mexico Department of Health 575-528-5000 ext. #2 Online: Manual for Investigation & Control of Communicable Diseases in New Mexico Lice- pages 23 - 25 http://nmhealth.org/erd/healthdata/pdf/CDManualFinal04.pdf
Temporary Exclusion/Expulsion Policy

In keeping with federal performance standards (1302.17)(a)(b)

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start will not expel children but will temporarily exclude a child with a short-term injury (*) or an acute or short-term contagious illness (**) that cannot be readily accommodated, from program participation in center-based activities or group experiences, but only for that generally short-term period when keeping the child in care poses a significant risk to the health or safety of the child or anyone in contact with the child. A staffing may occur to determine if exclusion is appropriate.

Similarly, a child may be considered for possible temporary exclusion if the behavior that is expressed by a child during classroom hours, is repetitive and/or endangers or threatens another child or classroom staff. ***Behaviors, just as in the case of injury or contagious illness must be evaluated by a professional.

If it is determined that a child needs to be temporarily excluded for any of the reasons outlined above, Head Start / Early Head Start staff will refer the child’s family to an appropriate health care professional (e.g., physician, psychologist) and will facilitate necessary assessment and/or intervention.

A child may be readmitted to the program when he or she meets the following criteria which is relevant to his/her condition.

1) If a child is medically fragile, a doctor must complete a Medically Fragile form and individual Health Care Plan and have it returned to the program;

2) A staffing about the child is completed with the appropriate Program Specialist, family members, health care providers, other involved agencies and/or LEA staff to determine service options;

3) If a staffing does not occur, the child’s parent must bring in a note from a health care provider regarding the child’s condition and recommending the child’s return to Head Start / Early Head Start.

* Short-term injuries may include, but not limited to, head trauma, post surgery, etc.

** Communicable Disease may include, but not limited to, fever, head lice, impetigo, etc.

*** Problem behaviors maybe related to a developmental delay or other environmental factors.

This policy is implemented on a case by case basis to best support children’s success.
Confidentiality/Records Policy:

Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start parents are the primary source of information about themselves and their child and information sought from them will be limited to that which is ESSENTIAL for services.

1. **Head Start / Early Head Start** staff and other related service providers shall not discuss information that has been shared with them by families or parents unless it is DIRECTLY related to Head Start / Early Head Start services.

2. Parents and other Head Start / Early Head Start volunteers in the program are prohibited from reviewing records other than those of their own children.

3. Children’s health, education and social services records on families are open only to Head Start / Early Head Start staff and special consultants on a “NEED TO KNOW” basis.

4. Head Start / Early Head Start families must be informed about information that is shared with cooperating Head Start / Early Head Start staff, such as, information and follow-up on communicable diseases, health related subjects, testing, evaluations or therapy regarding the special needs of their child.

5. Written Permission: SPECIFIC release forms should be signed by Head Start / Early Head Start parents when there are plans to exchange information with a cooperating community agency.

6. On a yearly basis, staff will review and update, if necessary, all data collection instruments, enrollment packet, Needs Assessments, etc.

7. Information recorded in a child’s record and in family files will pertain ONLY SPECIFICALLY to Head Start / Early Head Start services.

8. Any authorized person requesting to view Head Start / Early Head Start children’s files/records, must complete the “CHILD’S FILE CHECK OUT” form located in the front of each child’s record file. Viewing of records will take place only at the appropriate center location during work hours. Unauthorized removal of records is a violation of this policy.

9. STAFF records will be maintained by the Head Start / Early Head Start Director, supervisors and NMSU Personnel Office. Staff members have access to their own personnel files upon request to the Head Start / Early Head Start Director.

10. To insure confidentiality, any required information that is placed in a personnel or child’s file will not refer specifically by name, the identity of the other party or parties involved.

*** NOTE:

Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start employees shall grant law enforcement agencies or the Children, Youth and Families Dept. interviews with DACHS students and access to any of the DACHS student records in the event of an investigation, without permission of the child’s parent, guardian, or custodian; provided Head Start / Early Head Start staff is provided written documentation such as a court order. Staff will not release any information to any agency without such documentation. (See DACHS Child Abuse & Neglect Policy).

* A “records review” by student practicums and fieldwork interns must be supervised by appropriate Head Start / Early Head Start Component staff and the students will abide by this policy.
Snow Day Policy:

Rarely does Las Cruces have snow days during the winter; however, there has been a time or two. As early as 6:30 am the following may occur.

DIRECTOR

- Will contact the Radio Station or the NMSU Police Station to ask about decisions made by the University to discontinue work or school due to weather conditions;

- If NMSU is closed then all Head Start / Early Head Start services will be discontinued until further notice;

- Health Specialist will contact all Specialists who supervise Head Start / Early Head Start staff to notify their staff of the above decision;

- Direct Service Staff will contact all parents regarding the discontinuation of classes until further notice;

- All Head Start / Early Head Start staff please tune in to one of the following radio stations: KASK – KSNM – KGRT – KMVR or your local TV channel or visit the NMSU webpage at www.nmsu.edu.

- Supervisors contact their employees.
MINOR INJURIES

ABRASIONS AND MINOR CUTS:

Clean thoroughly with soap and water. For cuts inside the mouth, have patient rinse mouth repeatedly with cold water or hold ice chips in mouth.

BRUISES:

Apply cold compresses immediately following injury.

SLIVERS AND SPLINTERS:

Remove with tweezers after the skin has been thoroughly washed. Wash skin again after removing sliver or splinter.

BURNS AND SCALDS:

DO NOT use ointment of any kind. If skin is not broken, flush area in clean cool water for 15-20 minutes and wrap in clean gauze.

CHEMICAL BURNS:

Flush immediately with running water. Repeat several times. Call poison control #.

SPRAINS AND STRAINS:

Apply cold compresses or ice bag to affected area for 20 minutes – on 5 minutes – off 5 minutes – then wrap with ace bandage and contact PCP.

BLISTERS: (OTHER THAN BURNS)

Whether closed or open, wash thoroughly with soap and water. Pat dry and wrap with gauze.

NOSEBLEEDS:

Have patient sit upright and leaning forward. Apply pressure to nose with thumb and first finger for approximately 5 minutes until bleeding stops.

FAINTING:

Have patient lie down and lift legs 12 inches from ground.
Volunteers Needed

NEEDED!

Making a quality Head Start / Early Head Start Program requires Staff and Volunteers to work together, sharing their talents, knowledge and energy so that the children can receive the greatest benefit. With this in mind, the Doña Ana County Head Start / Early Head Start staff would love for you to offer your services for the benefit of all children and families enrolled in the program. **If you are considering volunteering in our program for six (6) hours or more per week, we require that you have a criminal records check and attend Volunteer Training** provided at your Head Start / Early Head Start center within 30 days. Copies of DACHS Policies and Program Regulations are available for review at each Center site. Each volunteer applicant will be screened and interviewed prior to placement at the Head Start / Early Head Start center.
**2017-2018 Head Start/Early Head Start Calendar Links**

**Anthony Head Start Calendar**


**Anthony Early Head Start Calendar**


**Vado & Bernio Head Start Calendar**


**Lester, NMSU & Companeros Head Start Calendars**