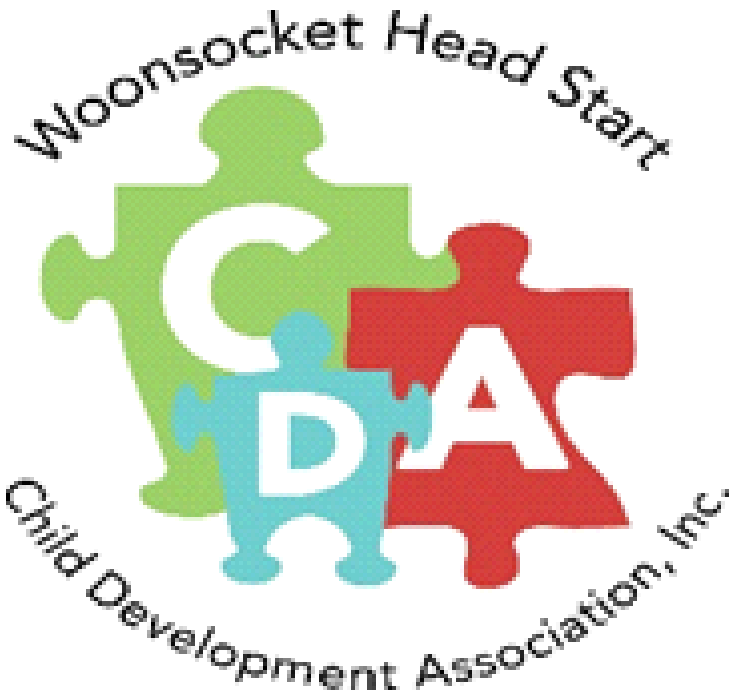


**Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association Inc.**

**Parent Handbook 2023-2024**



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## **A Welcome message from the Executive Director...**

Welcome to Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association! The staff and I are so excited for you to be a part of our comprehensive early childhood education and family support program. We know that your **active** participation in this program will prepare your child for success in all aspects of life.

When you made the decision to become a part of our WHSCDA family, you made the best choice to prepare your child for kindergarten. Our curriculum is aligned with the State of Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards and our superior Early Learning Educators will teach your child in a developmentally appropriate setting that will help your child grow socially, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. Through creative and interesting learning centers your child will increase his/her language and literacy skills, enhance his/her understanding of mathematics and science and learn how to make good nutrition and physical activity choices.

In addition to being licensed by the State of Rhode Island, the Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. is proud to have all of our Head Start centers highly rated by BrightStars and accredited by NAEYC. These quality indicators are critical in making our programs reach new heights in the education and care of your child.

One thing that sets our program apart from other programs is our focus on families. We know that in today's world of economic uncertainty our families struggle to provide for their children. Our staff are here to help you navigate through the challenging situations that raising a family entails. We want you to consider our staff as extended members of your family just as we consider you extended members of ours. We strongly encourage you take advantage of the many volunteer opportunities to participate in your child's early education. Through this partnership we will be able to provide the best learning experience for your child and build a network of support for you, our parents.

Please be sure to take the time to read through this manual so you are familiar with our policies. If you have questions or need more clarification, let us know and we will make ourselves available to you.

**Now that you have chosen our program I have a request. I am asking every parent to make a**

**commitment to bring their child to school every day.** Attendance is extremely important and if we can build healthy habits in the early years, our children **will** succeed in elementary school. They **will** graduate from High School and they **will** go to college. But we need your commitment and help to make that happen.

Are you up for the challenge? I know we are.

Let's do it together!

Sincerely,

Mary Varr

Executive Director

### **WHSCDA MISSION STATEMENT**

We build enduring partnerships with families and the community through comprehensive Early Childhood Education that improves the lifelong outcomes for the children we serve.

### **WHSCDA VISION STATEMENT**

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. inspires families and children to build strong, sustainable relationships that promote self-confidence, resiliency, and lifelong success.

### **Center Information**

#### **Bourdon Boulevard Center**

2 Bourdon Boulevard  
Woonsocket, RI 02895

[Tel:401-767-1018](tel:401-767-1018)

Fax: 401-767-1019

Email: [bb@whscda.org](mailto:bb@whscda.org)

Two (2) classrooms serving Head Start and RI State Pre K children ages 3-5.

4 and 6 hour programs; September-June

Before & After hours care/summer care available at a cost

#### **Karen G Bouchard Children's Center**

204 Warwick St.

Woonsocket RI 02895

Tel: 401-769-1850

Fax: 401- 769-1854

Email: [ps@whscda.org](mailto:ps@whscda.org)

Seven (7) classrooms serving children enrolled in Head Start and RI Dept. of Education State Pre K ages 3-5.

All classrooms operate for 6 hours/day; September-June

Before & After care/summer care available at a cost

#### **Cass Park Children's Center**

350 Newland Ave.

Woonsocket RI 02895

Tel: 401-766-0112

Fax: 401-766-0771

Email: [cp@whscda.org](mailto:cp@whscda.org)

Six (6) Head Start Classrooms, serving children in Head Start and RI State Pre K ages 3-5.

4 and 6 hour programs; September-June

Before & After hour care/summer care available at a cost

**Benoit Brown Children's Center**  
 2390 Mendon Rd, Woonsocket 02895  
 Tel: 401-765-8730  
 Fax: 401-765-8734  
 Email: [childcare@WHSCDA.org](mailto:childcare@WHSCDA.org)

Child Care Center serving children six weeks-5 yr olds  
 One (1) classroom serving Early Head Start, Head Start and RI State Pre K children ages 3-5.  
 6 hour programs; September-June  
 Before & After hours care available at a cost

**Woonsocket Early Learning Center, Governor Aram J Pothier Elementary School**  
 420 Robinson St.  
 Woonsocket, RI 02895  
 Tel: 401-767-4765 send faxes to 401-766-0771 (CP center)  
 Email: [ps@whscda.org](mailto:ps@whscda.org)

Two (2) classrooms serving Head Start and RI State Pre K children ages 4-5.  
 6 hour programs; September-June  
 Before & After hours care available at a cost

**All centers are BrightStars Quality Rated and NAEYC accredited**

The classrooms for each age group are staffed by professionally trained early childhood teachers. Each room has been specifically designed and equipped for the ages of the children in attendance.

Age	Group Size	Adult to Child Ratio
Infants (Benoit-Brown Only)	6 weeks to 18 months	Maximum 8
Toddlers (Benoit-Brown Only)	18 months to 3 years	Maximum 12 (8 for EHS room)
Pre-School/Pre-K	3 years to 5 years	Maximum 18

To ensure WHSCDA, Inc. has fully qualified staff operating at the highest level of competence so that the agency can fulfill its mission to deliver excellent early childhood comprehensive services, all WHSCDA teachers have a college degree in either child development, early childhood education, or equivalent coursework. We provide professional development opportunities that increase staff's competencies to provide effective and nurturing teacher-child interactions, plan and implement learning experiences that ensure effective curriculum implementation and use of assessment and promotes children's developmental progress.

**WHSCDA Curriculum Philosophy and Guiding Principles**

The philosophy of WHSCDA, Inc. concerning optimum care in a group setting is consistent with that of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). We strongly believe in the concept of developmentally appropriate practice: designing the program to meet the needs of each individual child according to their age, providing a safe, nurturing environment, which promotes physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth. A key element to our programs is that of success. We give children many opportunities to be successful throughout their day, always focusing on their positive experiences. This way, children develop a sense of self-esteem and self-worth necessary to attempt more challenging tasks. Play is the work of children. Young children learn by doing and need

to be given opportunities to inquire, discover and engage in critical thinking. Developmental theory and research suggest that the most important factor in supporting children’s play is the interactions between children and adults. Teachers build trusting relationships by responding with warmth, respect and enjoyment to the emotional and cognitive needs of children. Teachers plan, prepare, and manage a stimulating environment in which children are challenged to learn through active exploration and interaction with materials, peers and adults.

**Curriculum**

A developmentally appropriate educational program for young children has active learning at its core, and is composed of both concrete and abstract experiences that provide knowledge of themselves and the world around them. The curriculum must be culturally appropriate and individually appropriate for the child and family. WHSCDA, Inc. programs use Creative Curriculum and Rhode Island Early Learning and Development Standards as a framework for implementing high-quality early childhood programs. The RI Early Learning and Development Standards articulate expectations for what children should know and be able to do from birth through age five. RIELDS goals, aligned with our child assessment tool, guide teachers in development of curriculum and assessing children’s progress. The curriculum is comprehensive, flexible and child-centered and is aligned with the Head Start Child development and Learning Framework.

**PARENT, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

What is Parent, Family & Community Engagement (PFCE)? Parent, Family and Community Engagement in Head Start/ Early Head Start (HS/EHS) is about building relationships with families that support family well-being, strong relationships between parents and their children, and ongoing learning and development for both parents and children. The Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework is a road map for progress in achieving outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families. The PFCE Framework is a research-based approach to program change that shows how an agency can work together across systems and service areas to promote parent and family engagement and children’s learning and development.

The PFCE Framework consists of seven (7) Family Engagement Outcomes and the ultimate outcome for the children.

<b>Family Engagement Outcomes</b>	<b>Child Outcomes</b>
Family Well being	Children are safe, healthy and well
Positive Parent Child Relationships	Children are Learning and Developing
Families as Lifelong Educators	Children are Engaged in Positive Relationships
Families as Learners	Children are Ready for School
Family Engagement in Transitions	Children are Successful in School and Life
Family Connections to Peers and Community	
Families as Advocates and Leaders	

**Why Parent, Family & Community Engagement is Important:**

Benefits for Children

Children will have higher grades & test scores and better school attendance and outcomes. They will excel in extracurricular activities, sports/clubs. They will be more likely to graduate and further their education. Children will have a more positive attitude about school and other life situations. The PFCE framework sends the message to the child that they are cared for and builds the child’s self-esteem, while supporting productive qualities like self-

discipline and achievement. Children become motivated to succeed because they feel good about themselves. They are more likely to attend college because they have always been supported with their academics. This positive framework decreases the likelihood of children getting involved with drugs and alcohol later in life.

### Benefits for Families

Parents increase their meaningful interactions with their children and are more responsive and sensitive to their children's needs. Parents are more confident in their parenting and decision-making skills. As parents gain more knowledge of child development, there is more use of affection and positive reinforcement in parenting. Parents gain a better understanding of the program curriculum and how to best support their child's learning. Families become leaders in our school and community.

### **Family Partnership Agreement**

The Family Partnership Agreement is a partnership tool between WHSCDA and our Head Start families. Family Workers help to support families with developing goals and connecting with resources both within our agency and community. Family strengths and needs are identified and used to individualize success with achieving goals toward strengthening families and increasing overall self-sufficiency. The partnering process with parents begins at intake and continues throughout a family's participation in our program.

### **Family Engagement**

You are your child's first teacher. We strongly believe that parents are the experts on their own children and the most influential teachers that their children will have throughout their lives and work to engage all families from the onset of enrollment. Research shows that family engagement in children's learning is crucial to achieving positive educational outcomes for children. Therefore, to have a program with a strong link from home to center provides the best experience for the child.

We strongly encourage families to become actively involved in our program. We offer workshops, trainings, leadership opportunities, volunteer opportunities and more!

WHSCDA teaching staff works to engage all families, including those with special needs and circumstances, to help them support and reinforce the learning that goes on during a typical day. Families are encouraged to become active partners in their child's pre-school experience. Consider the following opportunities:

- Volunteering
- Sharing information about your home culture, language, ethnicity and family compositions with teachers during home visits and parent conferences
- Discussing your child's developmental progress and setting learning goals for your child with the teacher
- Reinforcing concepts/activities introduced in the classroom by doing home activities with your child
- Participate in Parent Committee meetings, serve on Policy Council, and attend trainings and events
- Help with program planning, attend special activities, and gain information on child development, health, nutrition, guidance and discipline, curriculum, and home activities.
- WHSCDA also includes all families in our annual program self- assessment and evaluation. Family's perspectives are essential to this process. Completing Family Surveys, serving on a work or focus group, assisting in classroom observations and health and safety reviews provides valuable feedback which a critical element in providing on-going program oversight and planning. Recommendations are crafted into program goals and action plans.
- Additionally, each room has a Parent Area where you will find a posted summary of the day's activities, special events, and messages. Classrooms will invite you to their classroom Dojo page for updates and connections. We hope



you find the information helpful in understanding the program and becoming more knowledgeable about the classroom.

### **The Basics**

Basics Insights [www.thebasics.org](http://www.thebasics.org) is a free text messaging program of The Basics, Inc., which sends parents/caregivers information and activities twice-weekly. Messages include science-based tips to help boost your child's brain development. The Five Basics Principles are: Maximize Love, Manage Stress; Talk, Sing, and Point; Count, Group, and Compare; Explore through Movement and Play; and Read and Discuss Stories. Basics Insights is a key component of The Basics Strategy for early learning and brain building. The text messages are delivered currently in English, Spanish, and Brazilian Portuguese.

### **Classroom Dojo**

WHSCDA utilizes Class Dojo for teacher parent communication, classroom and center events as well as important WHSCDA information. Upon enrollment classroom teachers will invite families to connect with child's classroom Dojo.

Classroom Dojo is a platform to help support communication between home and school. It is not intended to replace other forms of communication, such as in person and telephone conversations.

In order to ensure a work-life balance, staff are asked to set "quiet hours" between 4:30PM and 8:00AM, Monday through Friday. Quiet hours will also include weekends and holidays.

Teachers, assistants and other classroom staff are responsible for providing supervision and care to their children during classroom hours. They may not use dojo during these hours.

Any messages considered offensive or inappropriate will be brought to a supervisor/manager immediately.

Parents/caregivers connected to dojo will receive information on special events, community events, important reminders, newsletters and photographs of children's learning

Dojo messages can be helpful to inform your family worker/teaching team of your child's absence or to send a quick question or update that does not need an immediate response.

Parents will respect that our staff are not able to respond to messages after working hours; or during the classroom hours (for teachers and assistants).

Staff and parents must be polite and respectful when messaging or commenting on posts.

Parents who do not adhere to messaging guidelines and respectful communication may be removed from Class dojo.

Parent messages may be viewed by supervisors and managers at any time.

### **Dual Language Learners**

We collaborate with key partners including Early Intervention, DCYF, LEAs, mental health providers, and medical professionals. These collaborations help us to provide services based on the individual needs of families.

In order to support optimal learning and development for Dual Language Learners (DLL's), teaching staff need to understand children's background and experiences with more than one language. By gathering enough information

to get the full picture of a child's overall background from parents, teaching staff can begin to plan strategies to support continued progress in learning English. We encourage and assist families in becoming knowledgeable about the cognitive value for children of knowing more than one language and the importance of maintaining their home language as they acquire English. WHSCDA uses an Individual Communication Plan (ICP) for each of our families for whom English is not their primary or secondary language. The ICP developed jointly by staff and parents, identifies how information will flow back and forth between them and what strategies can be used to support, maintain, and preserve home language learning. This information is used by teaching staff to support optimal learning and development for dual language learners.

### **Disabilities**

We welcome all children and their families, including but not limited to those with developmental delays and disabilities, mental health diagnosis, and behavioral challenges into our program and ensure they participate in all aspects of our comprehensive early childhood education program. Child Outreach conducts developmental screenings at each of our centers. *Child Outreach* screening is a free service offered to all children 3 to 5 years old by your local school district in partnership with the Rhode Island Department of Education. The tool used is called the ESI-R (Early Screening Inventory-Revised). This screening provides information about your child's development in *speech, language, fine and gross motor, cognitive skills and social emotional* as well as identifying children who may need further assessment, intervention and/or services at an early age in order to prevent the occurrence of more severe problems later. All children entering Kindergarten must be screened by Child Outreach.

Our staff will coordinate screening dates with Child Outreach. Typically, Child Outreach schedules screening beginning in September-October. Child Outreach returns to complete re-screens within three weeks at each center. All families are informed of the purpose of Child outreach and the screening process. Parent permission forms are collected. Our staff ensure families fully understand the process and are actively involved in each step. Parents/guardians are notified of the dates, time, and screenings to be done. If a referral is necessary, Family Workers/Teachers collaborate with Woonsocket Education Department (WED) IEP team and accompany parent/guardian to all evaluation meetings, up to and including the signing of an IEP. IEP review meetings are held at the Center at a time that is convenient for families.

Throughout the school year, Head Start conducts vision, hearing, height and weight screenings for all Head Start 3-5 year olds.

- *Vision screening* checks your child's eyesight.
- *Hearing screening* checks your child's ability to hear sounds.
- *Height and weight measures* evaluate your child's physical growth.

Teaching staff is provided professional development in the area of disabilities to best accommodate children's special needs. The Center Director, Education Manager, Child Care Director and Mental Health and Disabilities Manager work with the Executive Director in purchasing appropriate equipment and materials to meet each child's individual needs and ensure that children with disabilities are included in the full range of activities and services. If a child has an IEP/IFSP or is transitioning from Early Intervention to the LEA, the teacher discusses how they will work together in meeting the IEP/IFSP goals and accommodating the child's special needs.

### **Individualization**

Teachers use what they know about each child to plan and match the learning environment and teaching strategies to support children's development. Teaching staff use child assessment information gathered from families and daily observations to determine the developmental levels, learning styles, and interest of children in all domains and learning goals. They use this information to design learning opportunities to support children's development in large group settings, small group settings, and individually. Staff recognizes that all children grow and develop at predictable yet variable rates and that the rates are separate and distinct from that of any other child. The Rhode Island Early Learning

and Developmental Standards and Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, articulates what children should know and be able to do. Teaching staff is intentional in their planning and interactions. Intentional teachers purposely plan curriculum to meet the individual needs of children.

### **Attendance**

#### **HELP YOUR CHILD SUCCEED IN SCHOOL: BUILD THE HABIT OF GOOD ATTENDANCE EARLY. SCHOOL SUCCESS GOES HAND IN HAND WITH GOOD ATTENDANCE!**

##### **Did You Know?**

- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
  - Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
  - Students can fall behind if they miss just a day or two every few weeks.
  - Bringing your child to school every day helps your child adjust more quickly to the new environment, make secure, trusting relationships with peers and teachers and gain the benefits of a regular routine.
- \*Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a safe neighbor, or another parent.
- \*Please call your center if your child is going to be absent.
- \*Families will be contacted within 1 hour of start time if a child is absent. If a staff member is unable to make contact with the family and a child has been absent for 3 consecutive days, a home visit will be made to ensure safety and offer any needed support.

### **POSITIVE GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIOR**

Our Mental Health/Disabilities Manager provides guidance and assistance to children, staff and families related to children's behaviors both at school and at home. Professional development is provided to staff regarding preventative strategies teachers can use in the classroom. Our goal is to ensure that your child is learning social and emotional skills in an appropriate way. This will ensure a positive school experience not only while your child is in Head Start, but as they continue on with their education.

One of the most important goals we share with families is helping children develop appropriate social behavior. Young children must learn how to share, listen, follow directions and be polite. They can only learn these things if caring adults in their life teach them.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

The term "discipline" is intended to mean "teaching, guiding, or in some way helping a child to learn positive values, rules, and patterns of behavior." Children are disciplined when they see possible consequences of their actions, alternative behaviors are proposed, and they learn to control themselves. Children who are disciplined learn to balance their needs with those of other people, feel good about themselves, become increasingly independent. Staff members serve as a positive role model for children in care and establish strong, nurturing relationships with each child.

- Staff members use positive methods in guiding children back on task, encourage appropriate behavior, and set clear limits and rules that children can understand.
- Staff members match their expectations with children's developing abilities and capabilities.
- Staff members praise children's accomplishments as well as their attempts at tasks.
- Staff members use positive, firm limit setting in situations where a child's safety is at stake.
- Staff members assist children by redirecting them from inappropriate actions to more favorable activities.
- Staff members do not hit children or engage in any form of corporal punishment.
- Children are not subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- Children are not deprived of meals, snacks or outdoor time as a form of discipline.
- Children are not punished for soiling or wetting.

# WHSCDA, INC. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Your Child's Health and Safety

The health of your child is very important. We want your child to be healthy, strong and happy.

### MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS AND IMMUNIZATIONS

#### **State law requires your child to be current on a schedule of vaccines and medical exams.**

To keep your child, as well as all the other children, healthy and free of communicable diseases, we are required to have an up to date copy of your child's vaccine record and a physical exam done by a medical provider within the last year. Please provide updated documents as needed throughout the year in order to keep your child's records current. Please note: DHS requires children in childcare and preschool settings to receive an annual flu vaccine.

For children enrolled in Head Start or Early Head Start, these programs require that we keep records of additional health services provided to your child, such as dental exams, lead testing, and hearing and vision screenings. Your child's family worker will work with you to make sure your child remains up-to-date with these requirements.

### SPECIAL HEALTH NEEDS AND MEDICATIONS

We need to know if your child has any special medical conditions, such as food allergies, seizures, or asthma. If he/she does, we will develop a written plan with you, called the Individual Health Plan (IHP), so that staff can adequately care for your child.

If it is required that your child keep or receive medication on-site during program hours, medication paperwork, including a Medication Administration Form, will be completed by staff, signed by you, and stored in your child's classroom along with the medication. No medication will be given without a written prescription or authorization from the physician.

**This is very important! Please note that both prescription and over-the-counter (OTC) medication must be in original containers with the pharmacy label attached. Physician-authorized over-the-counter (OTC) medication must be labeled with your child's name and have official instructions attached.**

### KEEPING YOUR SICK CHILD HOME

You know yourself, that when you are not feeling well, you want to be in your own home. The same is true for children. Keep your child home when you see that he or she is not feeling well enough to participate in daily activities- your child will need extra rest and attention best provided at home. Keeping your sick child at home will also help to cut down the spread of contagious diseases in our centers. Additionally, please understand that we do not have the staff capability to adequately care for very sick children. We follow current DHS and RIDOH guidelines for contagious illnesses.

### KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME WHEN YOUR CHILD HAS:

- A fever of 100.4°F or higher. Your child may return once fever-free for 24 hours without the use of medicine such as Tylenol.
- Diarrhea or loose, watery stools. Your child may return once the diarrhea has stopped for 24 hours.
- Vomiting. Your child may return once he or she has not vomited for 24 hours and is able to eat and drink again.

This list does not cover every way in which a child can become sick. If you think your child is ill, but are not sure if he or she should attend for the day, please inform a staff member of your child's symptoms so that we may help you decide on the best plan for your child.

If your child becomes sick during the program day, a staff member will call and ask that you come pick up your child from care. We ask that you please be prepared for this, and have a plan in place (emergency contacts, family or friends who can help with pick-up, etc.) should your child need to be picked up early.

### **A WORD ABOUT ILLNESSES DURING YOUR CHILD'S PROGRAM ATTENDANCE**

When children enter a group setting, they have many new experiences. One of these experiences that can be stressful to parents is the increase in their child's number of colds and/or other common illnesses. This increase in the number of illnesses is due to the child being exposed to increased numbers of people. After the child has been in the group setting for a few months, he/she will develop a greater resistance to these types of infection. Hand washing is the best defense against communicable diseases. We teach children proper hand washing and other healthful habits in the classroom.

### **CHILD EMERGENCIES**

The safety of your children is our primary concern. Child Emergencies such as accidents and illness do happen, and we need to be able to contact you at all times during school hours. Be sure to let us know of any changes of your address and phone numbers.

### **INJURY REPORTS**

Injuries happen! A written injury report will be given to you at pick up. In more severe cases, we will call you immediately to advise you of the injury. This is one of the reasons you need to let us know whenever your phone numbers change. In true emergency situations, we will contact the emergency services for transport to the nearest medical facility.

### **RELEASE OF CHILDREN**

**Children are only released to the parent/guardian or authorized individual 18 years or older named on the child's emergency card. We will not release a child to anyone without verifying their identity via a photo ID.** For those rare times when someone else must pick-up your child, you must speak directly and personally to your Teacher or Family Worker to authorize that one-time release. If you call the center to request release of your child to someone who is not authorized, you will need to identify yourself by giving us the last four digits of your social security number.

- \* Parents **MUST** come into the center to sign out their child daily. Children will not be allowed to leave the center with anyone not authorized by the parent.
- \* Authorized persons must be kept current and documented on the child's emergency card.
- \* Please notify us if your child is to be released to someone other than the designated familiar person.

### **BUILDING SECURITY**

All of our buildings have door access systems to restrict entry. Depending on the center you attend, you will be given a code to enter on the key pad or a prox card to gain access to the center. Cass Park Center: a door code is issued for keypad entry. Karen G. Bouchard Center: prox card issued for swiping at door entry. Bourdon Boulevard Center: please ring the doorbell. Benoit-Brown Center: you will be given a door code for keypad entry. Governor Aram J. Pothier School: please ring doorbell.

All parents or legal guardians are required to select a code by which staff members can positively verify their identity when calling to request release of their child to someone other than the designated proper person(s). The individual authorized by the parent via telephone call is required to produce proper identification complete with photograph. A child will never be released to an unauthorized individual.

In a continuing effort to be responsible to both children's safety and parents' rights, the following policy has been established regarding children leaving our facilities:

If, for any reason, a center staff member suspects the individual driving a child from the center is impaired by alcohol or substance use, he or she will be asked to find a suitable alternate driver. If this request is refused, both the local police and the state child protective agency, the Rhode Island Department of Children Youth and Families (DCYF), will be notified immediately.

*Please remember our responsibility is to ensure the safety of children in our care.*

### **CUSTODY ORDERS/RESTRAINING ORDERS**

We cannot deny a biological parent access to their children unless there is a custody order or restraining order in force. **We require a copy of that order.**

If there is a current custody or restraining order pertaining to a child in our care, a copy of this document must be given to the agency upon enrollment. If such a court order is obtained subsequent to enrollment, it is your responsibility to provide us with a copy immediately. This agency will comply with and enforce the court order without exception.

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

While we always hope that nothing will happen, we have Emergency Preparedness procedures in place in case of an emergency situation. How we respond to an emergency will depend on the kind of incident:

- We may have a security lockdown, where children will be kept in the building
- We may need to evacuate children to a safe site
- We may dismiss early

If we have to leave the site, we will post the evacuation location on the door. We will attempt to contact all parents by phone, however if an emergency situation is announced, telephone lines may be out. You can find out what's happening by:

- Listening to radio stations:**                   **1240 AM or 1380 AM**
- Watching television:**                       **WJAR Channel 10**
- Check Internet Postings:**                   **[www.turnto10.com](http://www.turnto10.com)**

Our instructions for what to do will depend upon the type of alert that is given. If weather or other conditions prevent us from leaving a center, we will shelter and feed the children until notified by officials that it is safe to leave. Radio announcements will inform parents when it is safe to go outside. If telephone service is available, staff will call all parents.

### **CLOSINGS OR DELAYS**

If the agency closes or has a delay due to inclement weather, announcements can be seen on local NBC channel 10, registering for text messages/emails at [turnto10.com](http://turnto10.com) and selecting Woonsocket Head Start & Day Care, heard on Woonsocket AM radio stations WNRI 1390/ WOON 1240, or by calling your child's center: Karen Bouchard Children's Center 769.1850 or Benoit-Brown 765.8730.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

All staff members have been trained in both Pediatric First Aid and CPR. Medical emergency plans are also in place. In the event of any serious accident or emergency, parents are contacted immediately. Please make sure the information on your child's emergency contact card is current and notify us immediately of any changes in addresses and/or phone numbers.

### **Transportation**

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc. does not provide transportation, but assistance with finding transportation through the RIPTA Flex Van, the school department and carpooling as appropriate is available if needed.

### **Parking Lot Safety**

Each center has designated handicap parking spaces which are reserved for families that have a handicap tag prominently displayed.

We strongly discourage idling vehicles (trucks, families' automobiles), except if vehicles need to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures.

Each center has its own specific set of parking issues relating to space requiring a different set of parking rules for each building. They are as follows:

#### **KAREN G BOUCHARD CHILDREN'S CENTER**

This parking lot is too small to accommodate everyone at the same time. To maintain everyone's safety and to resolve this issue, staggered start times have been assigned to each classroom. There are seven classrooms at this building. Your Family Worker will help you with finding out what time your child should be at school. It is imperative that you arrive at your assigned time – this keeps the traffic moving and prevents frustration and potentially dangerous situations.

This parking lot has a ONE WAY traffic pattern around the building. Parking spaces are provided in front of the building for drop-off and pick-up. Parking on the street is strongly encouraged.

#### **CASS PARK CHILDREN'S CENTER**

The road entering the parking lot and the entrance gate to the building cannot be blocked-this is a fire lane and must be kept open. The parking lot has ample parking on the left of the roadway and to the right of the fenced area.

#### **BOURDON BLVD. CHILDREN'S CENTER**

Parking is allowed on side streets only.

#### **BENOIT BROWN CHILDREN'S CENTER**

- \* THE PARKING LOT IS ONE-WAY.
- \* To ensure the safety of everyone, arrows are painted on the driveway indicating the direction of travel. All vehicles must enter and exit the parking lot in the following manner:
  - To enter - use the driveway closest to the staff (right side) parking lot.
  - To exit - use the driveway closest to the traffic lights at the bottom of the hill on Mendon Road.
- \* THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO PARKING IN THE FIRE LANE.
- \* NO DIAGONAL PARKING IS ALLOWED. You will be asked to move your car if you are not parked in an appropriate manner.
- \* The use of the staff parking area is open to parents as well. Please use this area at any time.

## GOVERNOR ARAM J. POTHIER SCHOOL

Parking is available on local side streets. Parents are asked to walk their children in and enter the lower level of the school.

If you have any questions concerning parking at any of our locations, please call for assistance.

### NO SMOKING POLICY

**By State Law there is NO SMOKING within our Head Start buildings and the surrounding exterior environment.** We are dedicated to providing a healthy environment for the children and families, as well as staff. Please respect our no smoking policy by not smoking on school property.

### CELL PHONE POLICY

A cell phone is essential today, but also cell phones have become increasingly more of an issue. Children need and deserve our full attention when we drop them off at school. They need those final few moments for us to reassure them they will have a good day and that we will see them again at the end of the day. The same goes for when we pick our children up, they are excited to see us to tell us what they did that day, and we should be just as excited to see them!

We ask that you make/take calls after you have dropped off your child, or before you pick your child up. Staff will gently remind you of this policy if they see you on the phone while in our building.

### CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

Abuse and neglect is an unfortunate reality for far too many children. Child abuse and neglect means harm or threatened harm to a child's health or welfare by a person responsible for the child's care and well-being. **Child abuse** includes physical, sexual and emotional abuse. **Child neglect** includes emotional, educational, physical and medical neglect, as well as a failure to provide basic needs.

Woonsocket, for the past fifteen years, has had the highest rate of child abuse and neglect in the state of Rhode Island; we are consistently more than double the state rate. Head Start staff are all committed to assisting families and children in leading healthy, happy and productive lives. We are aware, however, that sometimes the stresses of life can overcome families, and children can be hurt. Therefore, it is important for you to know that you can come to us at any time for help in handling this additional stress in a manner that is safe for you and your family.

All instances of frequent or unexplained injuries and/or consistent signs of improper nurturing (excessive tiredness, hunger or illness, poor hygiene, improper clothing, etc.) or inappropriate sexualized behavior or inadequate medical attention are considered potential neglect/abuse situations. In some of these instances your family worker can help develop a plan with you for intervention to avoid involvement with The Department of Children Youth and Families. However, in other instances we will have to make a call to the DCYF Hotline.

Everyone in the state of Rhode Island is considered a mandated reporter, so if any staff suspects or fears that a child is being abused or neglected we must, by law, call the Department of Children Youth and Families Child Abuse Hotline to report the concern. If we call DCYF, in most cases we will advise you of our concern, and tell you we filed a report. We will offer you support, assistance and guidance in working with DCYF on the matter.

**DCYF Hotline:1-800-RI-CHILD (1-800-742-4453) For questions and information regarding child abuse and neglect, and for reporting suspected child abuse and neglect.**

### HOLIDAY CELEBRATION POLICY

We have a "holiday free" curriculum to the extent that it is possible while still responding appropriately to the expressed interests of the children. It is absolutely appropriate and desirable to respond to a child's questions about a certain holiday just as we would any other subject; however, we will not initiate discussions or projects that focus on holidays. What we believe to be reasonable:



- \* We do not want to contribute in any way to the overdone commercialism that has overtaken holidays in general.
- \* Many traditional holiday activities actually interfere with how very young children learn as they are teacher directed and not well integrated into the rest of the curriculum.
- \* We do not want to send children or parents the wrong message by choosing to celebrate certain holidays and not others and there is not enough time to celebrate them all.
- \* We need to steer clear of religious content in our curriculum. Many of the holidays are essentially religious celebrations that have been turned into mass merchandizing opportunities.

### **FOOD AND NUTRITION INFORMATION**

Mealtime is an important part of the day. Children will receive a nutritious breakfast and lunch daily. We post menus at the front entrance for you to see just what your child eats at school. Mealtime is a great time for learning, exploring and socializing.

We offer a variety of nutritious foods from all food groups. Some of the foods may be familiar and some unfamiliar to your child. Through exposure and by watching their friends and teachers enjoy healthful foods, children learn to try and enjoy many new foods.

Meals are served family-style and children assist with the service. This allows for increased independence and prepares children for assisting in mealtime tasks at home.

Children will learn to: \*Set the table \*Serve their food \*Pour their own milk \*Clean up after the meal

Mealtime is a setting that enables us to enjoy each other's company. It is a time to talk with and to learn about each other in a less formal setting.

### **INFANT FOOD PROGRAM**

As a participant of USDA's CACFP, WHSCDA, Inc. provides three meal components: iron-fortified formula, infant cereal, and jarred baby food. A parent/guardian may choose to provide one of the three components offered to infants. If you choose to use the formula provided by WHSCDA, Inc., you are responsible for supplying at least four (4) clean, sterilized bottles, along with nipples, covers, and liners daily. At the end of each day, bottles and supplies will be returned to you.

There are many issues to consider in developing feeding plans for infants. This is an area where parental input must be constant. Parents are usually following the recommendations made by their pediatricians, which can vary greatly from case to case. The caregiver's role in developing a feeding plan is to follow parental instructions, monitor carefully, and inform parents of the outcome. Parents are provided with guidance on the progression from baby food to table foods. *New foods are not given to children without first obtaining parent permission.* For children who are eating meals provided by the center, menus are posted to inform parents of the foods served. If there are medical/religious reasons why children cannot have a certain food, the center may provide substitutions following a consultation with the Dietitian.

A child can begin the center's food program when he or she is able to do the following:

- \* Child has good ability to chew and swallow
- \* Child has been introduced to a variety of foods at home
- \* Parents give their permission

The center serves whole milk to children 12 to 24 months old and 1% milk in all other classrooms. Our food and nutrition program for young children incorporates all aspects of a child's development: physical, social, and emotional.

#### Social and Emotional Importance

Besides satisfying a basic physical need, feeding infants has a social and emotional significance. During the feeding time, child and caregiver establish a close relationship. Feedings should not be hurried and rushed, but

should be a relaxing time for the child. This should be a time for one-to-one contact, conversation, and positive interaction. Infants unable to sit are held for bottle-feeding. Bottles are never propped. A child's need to be independent will emerge as the child progresses through the feeding stages. It is important to allow children to take the steps toward self-feeding even though it may create a big mess!

### Food, Formula, and Breast milk

Breast milk / formula – should be brought to the center in the infant's bottles labeled with the child's name and date. Parents need to bring a daily supply and take home any unused bottles. Bottles are heated in a container of water (crock-pot). The unused portion of bottles is never reheated.

- \* We provide a private place for parents who wish to breastfeed their child.
- \* Solid food including cereal is never added to bottles unless a written instruction and medical reason is provided by your child's pediatrician.
- \* Babies are never put to bed with a bottle. This practice may contribute to baby bottle tooth decay and increased ear infections.

Baby Food: commercially prepared foods from a jar are heated in a serving dish if the child is not expected to eat the contents of the jar in one sitting. Unused portions in the jar are covered, labeled with the child's name and date, and then refrigerated.

## **FOOD ALLERGIES**

We provide a nutritious breakfast and lunch each day which take into account all documented food allergies and special diets. Full day and six hour programs also serve snack. Our cooks and teachers are informed of all children's food allergies. If a child is allergic to a certain food being served, that child is given a substitute food. In cases of extreme allergies, that food is not even served in his/her classroom. If your child has a nut allergy and uses an epi-pen, please provide one at school. If your child has a nut allergy and does not use an epi-pen, please provide a note from your child's doctor.

## **PLEASE, NO FOOD FROM HOME**

**We cannot allow food from home in school** because many children suffer from food allergies.

All food served in school has either been purchased and/or prepared by our cooks who are knowledgeable about ingredients and related food allergies. Knowing meal ingredients also helps us to respond more quickly if a new allergic reaction were to occur in a child.

If your child is on a special diet or has food allergies, you **must** make us aware of this so that we can modify the menu for your child. Our Nutritionist/Registered Dietitian creates healthful recipes and assists teachers in nutrition education in the classrooms. As a parent in the program, you can schedule an appointment with the dietitian to address any nutritional concerns your family might have throughout the year.

Although your child will receive two full meals at school please remember that for proper growth and development a child needs three full balanced meals a day and two healthy snacks.

## **TOOTH BRUSHING**

It is widely accepted that tooth-brushing plays an important role in the prevention of tooth decay, a significant goal to ensure the overall quality of health for all children. For this reason, tooth brushing has become an important daily activity in preschool and childcare to augment home brushing. activity in preschool and childcare to augment home brushing. (We follow current state and federal guidelines regarding tooth brushing during COVID-19).

Tooth brushing applies to children one year and older. Brushing take place daily in the classroom, after breakfast or

lunch. We provide your child a toothbrush. Brushes are replaced every 3-4 months or sooner if the bristles become splayed or worn. Additionally, if a child is absent from the classroom due to illness, the old toothbrush is discarded and a new one used upon return to the classroom.

**USDA Food Program**

WHSCDA participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a Federal program that provides financial assistance to help schools offer healthy meals and snacks to children. Meals meet federal USDA nutritional requirements and are offered at no cost to families. See the next page for more information.

**Building for the Future**

This early childhood facility participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a Federal program that provides healthy meals and snacks to children receiving day care.

Each day more than 2.6 million children participate in CACFP at day care homes and centers across the country. Providers are reimbursed for serving nutritious meals that meet USDA requirements. The program plays a vital role in improving the quality of day care and making it more affordable for low-income families.

**Meals** CACFP homes and centers follow meal requirements established by USDA.

Breakfast	Lunch or Supper	Snacks (Two of the five groups: )
Milk	Milk	Milk
Fruit or Vegetable	Meat or meat alternate	Meat or meat alternate
Grains	Grains	Grains
	Fruit	Fruit
	Vegetable	Vegetable

**Participating Facilities** Many different homes and centers operate CACFP and share the common goal of bringing nutritious meals and snacks to participants. Participating facilities include:

- **Child Care Centers:** Licensed or approved public or private nonprofit child care centers, Head Start programs, and some for-profit centers.
- **Family Day Care Homes:** Licensed or approved private homes.
- **Afterschool Care Programs:** Centers in low-income areas provide free snacks to school-age children and youth.
- **Homeless Shelters:** Emergency shelters provide food services to homeless children.

**Eligibility** State agencies reimburse facilities that offer non-residential day care to the following children:

- Children age 12 and under
- Migrant children age 15 and younger, and
- Youths through age 18 in afterschool care programs in needy areas

**Contact Information** If you have questions about CACFP, please contact one of the following:

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association, Inc.  
 204 Warwick Street  
 Woonsocket, RI 02895  
 (401) 769-1850

Child Nutrition Programs  
 RI Department of Education  
 255 Westminster Street  
 Providence, RI 02903  
 (401) 222-4600

**USDA Nondiscrimination 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-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant’s name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov). This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**U.S. Department of Agriculture**

**WOMEN, INFANTS, AND CHILDREN PROGRAM (WIC)**

- Pregnant or postpartum women, infants, and children up to age 5 are eligible for WIC.
- You must live in RI, and be individually determined to be at “nutritional risk” by a health professional, AND
- You must meet income guidelines.
  - A person or certain family members automatically meets the family income eligibility requirements by participating in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Medicaid, or RIWorks, OR
  - Your gross income (before taxes are withheld) must fall at or below 185 of the U.S. Poverty Income Guidelines:

**WIC Income Eligibility Guidelines**

**(Effective from July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024)**

Household Size	Annual	Monthly	Twice-Monthly	Bi-Weekly	Weekly
1	26,973	2,248	1,124	1,038	519
2	36,482	3,041	1,521	1,404	702
3	45,991	3,833	1,917	1,769	885
4	55,500	4,625	2,313	2,135	1,068
5	65,009	5,418	2,709	2,501	1,251
6	74,518	6,210	3,105	2,867	1,434
7	84,027	7,003	3,502	3,232	1,616
8	93,536	7,795	3,898	3,598	1,799
Each add'l member, add	+\$9,509	+\$793	+\$397	+\$366	+\$183

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## What are the benefits?

WIC participants receive:

- Supplemental Nutritious foods
- Nutrition education and counseling at WIC clinics
- Screening and referrals to other health, welfare and social services

In RI, WIC participants receive WIC checks to purchase specific foods each month which are designed to supplement their diets. WIC foods include iron-fortified infant formula and infant cereal, iron-fortified adult cereal, vitamin C-rich fruit and/or vegetables juice, eggs, milk, cheese, peanut butter, dried beans or peas, tuna fish and carrots. Special infant formulas and certain medical foods may be provided when prescribed by a physician or health professional for specified medical condition.

For more information see the RI WIC website <http://www.health.ri.gov/programs/wic/> or call for information on sites near you. Telephone: (401) 222-4623, Toll free (in-state): 1-800-942-7434 TDD: 1-800-745-5555

## PARENT and STAFF CODE OF CONDUCT

It is the expectation of WHSCDA, Inc. that parents and staff maintain courteous and respectful behavior between and among all program participants to assure a positive environment that promotes the safety of children, families and staff.

### Standards of Conduct:

#### All WHSCDA Staff and Families will work together to:

- Ensure that programs for young children are based on current knowledge and research of child development and early childhood education
- Respect and support families in their task of nurturing children
- Serve as an advocate for children, their families, and their teachers in community and society
- Engage in an ongoing process of self-reflection, realizing that personal characteristics, biases, and beliefs have an impact on children and families
- Be open to new ideas and be willing to learn from the suggestions of others
- Continue to learn, grow, and contribute
- Respect and promote the uniqueness of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability. All adults will treat ALL others with whom they come into contact with respect and dignity.
- Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children and other staff members.
- Conduct themselves in a way that provides the best possible example for the children in our care.

## QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS

We urge you to discuss any problems, questions or concerns you might have directly with your child's teachers. They are the individuals who know you and your child best, and for whom establishing effective two-way communication is critical. If an issue arises about your child's care, or about a policy or procedure, consult your child's teacher, the Center

Director or family worker.

If you are not comfortable or satisfied with the response you receive you may contact the agency's Executive Director:  
Mary Varr

204 Warwick Street

Woonsocket, RI 0289

Telephone: 401-769-1850

mvarr@whscda.org

Visit our website at: [www.whscda.org](http://www.whscda.org)

## PRIVACY POLICY

**This is an important message regarding your family's right to privacy. Please read carefully.**

This notice describes how information about your child and family may be used and shared with other agencies, and how you can get access to this information. All employees of Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association are committed to protecting all health and personal information about your child and your family. This policy describes the different types of personal information we collect and how and when we would share this information with other agencies. It also describes your rights as they relate to this information.

As soon as you apply to enroll your child into a WHSCDA Head Start or our Child Care program, health and other personal information is collected. Once your child is accepted into our program, an individual record is opened on your child and more personal information is collected. The information included in your child's file includes:

- Program application and eligibility information
- Results of physical examinations
- Results of blood tests, including, but not limited to, lead and iron levels
- Vaccination (shot) records
- Medical concerns, allergies, food restrictions
- Developmental screening tests for height, weight, vision, hearing and ability to learn
- Your child and family's medical and mental health histories
- Your child's nutrition history
- Medical treatment and prescription information
- Individual Health, Education, Communication and Behavior Plans
- Referral information to and from other agencies involved with the family
- Case management and review documentation
- Financial information
- Services rendered by WHSCDA personnel
- Documents generated by WHSCDA, such as permission forms, family/child reports and assessments, partnership plans include, but are not limited to, the Department of Health and Human Services, the Department of Children, Youth and Families and the Department of Justice, to the Police for safety purposes, for legal proceedings per a valid court order or search warrant

### **For More Information or to report a problem:**

If you have any questions, or feel your privacy rights have been violated, you can contact WHSCDA's Privacy Officer, Mary Varr, at 769-1850 or you may also contact: **Office for Civil Rights U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 200 Independence Ave., S.W. Room 509F, HHH Building Washington, D.C. 20201**  
There will be no retaliation on the part of WHSCDA for filing a complaint.

## **Your Child's Educational Program**

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Our centers offer extended care before and after regular hours for children. Before and after care requires payment while regular Head Start and state pre-k hours are free of charge.

- \* Children receive breakfast and lunch. Children in a six- hour program also receive a nutritious snack
- \* Please bring a change of clothes for your child (remember to label all possessions!)
- \* No toys or food should be brought to the center, as we provide appropriate toys, activities, and nutritious foods
- \* Children taking a nap will need a fitted sheet, blanket and pillow
- \* Children should dress for outdoor activities (winter; hats, boots, mittens, snow pants for winter and summer; bathing suit, towel, hat and water shoes)
- \* Please notify the center when your child will be absent
- \* Please check your child's cubby daily for items that need to be brought home.
- \* Jewelry: To ensure the safety of all children in our care, **we do not allow children under the age of three to wear jewelry of any kind. PLEASE NOTE: Under no circumstances is the agency responsible for any items of jewelry that children bring and/ or wear into our centers**

Teaching Strategies Gold continuum is our ongoing assessment tool. The continuum details the developmental steps children go through as they master the goals and expectations. Each day Teachers observe and record observations. Teachers collect children's work throughout the year to further their understanding of each individual child's developmental level and progress. Photos of the child engaged in activities are also used to document the child's developmental progress. Teachers observations, photographs, checklist, interviews, rating scales, and child's authentic work is compiled in a child's portfolio. Teachers also collect assessment information families, WED therapists, extended day staff, other teaching/program staff. This allows teachers to gather information about a child from multiple sources and settings, giving a more complete picture of child's abilities. Each child has a portfolio of work, used to document the child's growth and development in each domain area of the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework and Rhode Island Early Learning Development Standards. The portfolio is shared with parents at home visits/conferences and is given to parents at the end of the year.

Teachers share your child's developmental assessment during home visits and parent conferences which are scheduled in November, March and June. These meetings provide an opportunity for you to share your Insights on your child's interests and needs, learn ways you can support your child's learning at home, keep informed about what is happening in the classroom, and establish a positive working relationship with your child's teacher.

Teachers plan monthly and weekly experiences and activities to help meet individual children's educational goals as established with parents. Teachers intentionally plan play based activities that encourage children's active participation. Teachers use open-ended questions, posing problems and comments and suggestions to promote each child's ability to observe, inquire, and experiment. Teachers offer a rich variety of experiences, projects, materials, problems, and ideas to extend children's critical thinking and to support their interests. Teachers provide high-quality feedback to help children obtain a deeper understanding of concepts and motivation to stay engaged in the learning process. Teachers provide experiences and activities in the curriculum areas: science, social studies, creative arts, numeracy, and language and literacy.

### **When planning classroom curriculum, teaching staff at WHSCDA will**

- Provide choices so children can self-regulate
- Provide first-hand experience and context
- Organize learning around bigger topics (projects, science, social studies, the arts that can be explored in-depth)

- Develop, cultivate, engage and extend interests
- Use multiple learning contexts (small & large groups, centers, play, routines, transitions, outdoors)
- Recognize and capitalize on diversity
- Differentiate and individualize instruction based on ongoing assessment
- Acknowledge and encourage children's efforts
- Model and demonstrate, create challenges, and support children in extending their capabilities
- Provide specific direction and instruction
- Include child-guided and teacher-guided experiences (teacher-initiated group-work (including small group pre-planned experiences
- Provide freely chosen yet potentially instructive play activities, supported by teacher

### Sample Daily Six Hour Schedule

**9:00-9:45** Arrival, handwashing, breakfast

**9:45-11:45** Center time

**11:45-12:00** Clean-up, reflections

**12:00-12:45** Lunch

**12:45-1:30** Outdoor play

**1:30-1:35** Transition to indoor/ handwashing

**1:35-1:45** Story (Read A Loud)

**1:45-2:40** Rest time

**2:40-3:00** Snack and dismissal

### **School Readiness**

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

### WHSCDA School Readiness Goals: Based on the HEAD START Early Learning Outcome Framework and RIELDS

**To promote positive, sustained child outcomes for children 3-5 years, WHSCDA has set the following goals:**

**Approaches to Learning: focus on how children learn and refers to the skills and behaviors that children use to engage in learning**

1. Children will develop the ability to regulate emotions and control impulses
2. Children will increase ability to sustain attention and persistence and work independently
3. Children will demonstrate interest and engagement in group experiences

**Social/Emotional Development: refers to how children create and sustain meaningful relationships and express, recognize, and manage their own emotions as well as respond appropriately to other's emotions**

1. Children will develop a strong sense of identity, expressing confidence in own skills, abilities, characteristics, emotions and interests
2. Children will develop successful relationships with other children and engage in cooperative play



3. Children will increase their ability to express a healthy range of emotions and learn possible alternatives to aggressive or isolating behaviors

**Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development: refers to awareness of their bodies in space and to move effectively to perform tasks; moving whole body and using larger muscles; using small muscles to manipulate objects, gain hand eye coordination; keeping themselves safe and healthy**

1. Children will use their senses and bodies to explore their physical environment
2. Children will increasingly develop the motions that lead to mastery of fine and large motor tasks
3. Children will begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety

**Language Development: refers to emerging abilities in listening and understanding (receptive language) and in using language (expressive language)**

1. Children will develop skills in listening and in understanding language and respond to increasingly complex communication and language of others
2. Children will increase ability to express themselves in detailed ways, increase vocabulary, and understand word categories and relationship among words
3. Children will demonstrate an awareness that language can be broken into words, syllables, and smaller pieces of sound

#### **Dual language Learners**

1. Children will increase ability to comprehend or understand the English language
2. Children will increase ability to speak or use English and use verbal and non- verbal language to express and communicate information
3. Children will demonstrate understanding and respond to books, storytelling, and songs presented in English.

**Literacy: refers to knowledge and skills that lay foundation for reading and writing**

1. Children will recognize that symbols are associated with letters of the alphabet and that they form words and produce correct sounds associated with letters
2. Children will develop understanding and appreciation that books and other forms of print have a purpose
3. Children will increase comprehension by demonstrating ability to retell, ask and answer questions about a story or book that is read aloud
4. Children will become familiar with writing implements, conventions, and emerging skills to communicate through written representations, symbols, and letters

#### **Cognition Development**

**Mathematics: refers to understanding numbers and quantity, their relationships and operations (adding to and take away), shapes and their structure, reasoning, measurement, classification, and patterns**

1. Children will demonstrate ability to count, sequence, and understand relationships between numbers and quantities, and compare numbers
2. Children will increase ability to associate quantity with written numerals
3. Children will develop vocabulary and skills to measure, describe patterns and express order and position

**Social Studies: refers to the exploration and development of understanding of their place within and relationships to family, community, environment and the world.**

1. Children develop awareness that care of the community through personal responsibility, agreed upon rules, and conflict resolution are important components of a fair and just society
2. Children demonstrate increasing knowledge of basic economic concepts such as supply and demand, occupations and currency
3. Children develop an understanding of the passage of time as it relates to historical changes in events, people and the world
4. Children gain awareness of themselves and others as members of diverse families, communities and cultures.
5. Children demonstrate knowledge of geographical concepts of location and physical characteristics of the environment in which they live

**Scientific Reasoning: refers to emerging ability to develop scientific knowledge about the natural and physical worlds; learn scientific skills and methods; continue developing reasoning and problem-solving skills**

1. Children will develop skills to observe and collect information on observable phenomena and use it to ask questions, predict, compare, categorize, explain, and draw conclusions

### Transition to Kindergarten

In Rhode Island, children who are five years old by September 1 transition to Kindergarten. To help prepare you and your child for this big move, teaching staff will

- \* Schedule a parent conference to share with you the final developmental assessment and goals.
- \* Provide you with a Transition form that documents your child's developmental progress, goals, and any health needs or IEP information. With parental consent, this form is shared with Kindergarten teachers. If you live in Woonsocket, the signed transition form will be sent to your child's public school in June. If you do not live in Woonsocket, you may share this form with your Kindergarten teacher.
- \* Celebrate your child's preschool experience with an end of the year Parent Day. Children receive a certificate of participation in the program and their personnel Developmental Portfolio. This portfolio is a collection of photos, observations, and work samples that document your child's mastery of school readiness goals.
- \* Transition to Kindergarten events are offered in the spring to share Kindergarten expectations and ways you can help your child prepare for their next schools experience.

### INFANT EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The Infant program provides babies with a warm nurturing environment. Qualified staff supports children's growth in physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development with love, guidance, and understanding. The center is a safe, enjoyable place to learn while having fun.

#### Pre-enrollment conference

To ease the transition from home to center, a meeting will be scheduled between you and your child's caregiver before your child begins child care. This is a time to share information about your child so that we can follow his or her schedule as closely as possible. The caregiver will be asking you questions about your child's health, development, eating habits, sleeping patterns, and family information. In turn, you should come prepared with many questions for the caregiver about our program and about caring for your child.

#### Philosophy, Goals and Objectives

The goal for this age group is to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment for the children. Caregivers will be aware of the sequence of developmental milestones and the age range in which the milestones usually occur. Caregivers will carefully observe children and document their development in anecdotal form. Each child is recognized as unique in his or her development and the Creative Curriculum Continuum for Infants and Toddlers is used as a guide. The documentation of a child's growth and development is used for planning an appropriate program that supports a child's needs.

#### Child Development

Children at this age are growing and developing at a very rapid pace. In this state of sensory-motor development, children learn through their senses and the exploration of their environment. In our program, children will be provided with materials to enhance their development. They will be given space to crawl and walk, objects to grasp and squeeze, toys that make different sounds, and books and music for listening and language acquisition. Most importantly, they will be given warmth and affection by their caregiver to build a sense of trust and love.

Children have the opportunity to go outdoors daily. The infants have their own outdoor space adjacent to their room, which will enable them to benefit from some fresh air and sunshine.

#### Diapering

Issues about hygiene and cleanliness are frequently mentioned in group-care settings. We will make every attempt to uphold high standards of hygiene. Each room has a built-in changing table unit with a sink for diapering. Infants are changed every two hours. Staff members are required to use gloves and wash their hands thoroughly before and after diapering a child to minimize the risk of infections. Changing tables are disinfected after each use. The center is equipped with a laundry room where linen will be washed weekly, more frequently if needed. All toys that the children use will be washed and sanitized daily. Staff members adhere to strict hand-washing routines and ensure that tables and high chairs are disinfected after each use.

### **EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM**

Early Head Start is a unique early childhood program that works in partnership with parents to make sure young children have the best possible start in life. We reserve 8 slots in our infant and toddler classrooms for families eligible for Early Head Start services.

Families enrolled in Early Head Start participate in home visits/conferences that support parents in their role as their children's first teachers. The program also focuses on parent's goals for their own education, job skills, and overall family needs. Additionally, parents receive health and nutrition information and services to ensure optimal growth for children and their families. Please contact the child care director for more information about Early Head Start eligibility.

## WHSCDA School Readiness Goals for Infants and Toddlers

### Based on the HEAD START Early Learning Outcome Framework and RIELDS

WHSCDA has set the following goals to promote positive, sustained child outcomes for children 6 weeks to 3 years:

**Approaches to Learning:** focus on how children learn and refers to the skills and behaviors that children use to engage in learning

1. Children will attend, persist, and demonstrate flexibility in learning, making discoveries, and solving problems.
2. Children will demonstrate emerging initiative, interest, and curiosity in interactions with others and exploration of objects and people in the environment.
3. Children will increasingly show creativity and imagination in play, learning, and interactions with others.

**Social/Emotional Development:** refers to how children create and sustain meaningful relationships and express, recognize, and manage their own emotions as well as respond appropriately to other's emotions

1. Children will engage in positive interactions through secure relationships with consistent, responsive adults.
2. Children will develop personal and playful relationships with other children.
3. Children will begin to manage emotions and to understand and express emotions with support of familiar adults.
4. Children will begin to develop a sense of identity and a sense of belonging to a family and a group of peers

**Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development:** refers to awareness of their bodies in space and to move effectively to perform tasks; moving whole body and using larger muscles; using small muscles to manipulate objects, gain hand eye coordination; keeping themselves safe and healthy

4. Children will use their senses and bodies to explore their physical environment
5. Children will increasingly develop the motions that lead to mastery of fine and large motor tasks
6. Children will begin to understand how daily activity and healthy behavior promote overall personal health and safety

**Language, Communication, and Literacy:** refers to emerging abilities in listening and understanding (receptive language) and in using language (expressive language) and refers to knowledge and skills that lay foundation for reading and writing

1. Children will attend to, understand, and respond to increasingly complex language
2. Children will use increasingly complex vocabulary, grammar, and syntax to express thoughts and needs
3. Children will use non-verbal communication to express needs and wants and to engage with others
4. Children will attend to, repeat, and use some rhymes and refrains from stories and songs.
5. Children will engage with books for stories and information.
6. Children will make written marks and use them to represent objects or actions.

**Cognition:** refers to emerging ability to explore, solve problems, and develop pre-math and pre-science skills

1. Children will actively explore their environment to discover what objects and people do, how things work, and how to make things happen.
2. Children will use a variety of strategies to solve problems, including reasoning and planning ahead.
3. Children will use beginning math concepts during daily routines and experiences, including sense of number and quantity, spatial awareness, and classification.
4. Children will use imitation and symbolic thinking to increase understanding of concepts, environment, daily experiences, and home culture.

### TRANSITIONS

Change in Age Groups

Infants who have reached 18 months of age transition to Toddlers and toddlers who have turned 3 years move to Preschool. A child’s transition depends on availability of space, the time of year, and the individual needs of the child.

Classroom teachers will make the parent aware of the move in advance and discuss any problems or questions the parent may have. In addition, teachers will prepare the child for the move and accompany him or her to the new room. A conference time will be scheduled for the parent to meet with the new teacher to discuss the child’s interests, needs, and to familiarize the parent with the program.

Early Head Start Transitions

Early Head Start children age out of the program at the age of three. At the age of three, a child transitions into Head Start or another program. Beginning at 30 months, classroom teachers make the parent aware of this anticipated change. In addition, family workers make every effort to assist the family with paperwork to enroll their child into a Head Start or alternative program at the age of three. A conference or home visit is conducted with the Head Start teacher prior to the child transitioning into the Head Start classroom. The family is given opportunity to visit the Head Start classroom with their child prior to the start date.

**SAMPLE TODDLER DAILY SCHEDULE**

7:00 AM - 8:45 AM	Greet parents and children / Help children and parents say good-bye / Encourage children to explore the environment and materials in their own way with teacher guidance
8:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Clean-up and prepare for breakfast (diapering, toileting, hand-washing)
9:00 AM - 9:30 AM	Breakfast, clean tables, wash hands, tooth brushing (2 minutes)
9:30 AM – 10:45 AM	Indoor Activity - Children explore a variety of materials in the classroom environment. Adults encourage child-initiated play and offer teacher-directed activities
10:45 AM - 11:30 AM	Outdoor Play- Supervise and interact with children as they explore the playground equipment, environment and materials
11:30 AM - 11:45 AM	Clean-up and prepare for lunch (diapering, toileting, hand-washing) Story time/ Children help to set tables
11:45 AM - 12: 15 PM	Lunch / Clean tables Wash hands
12:15 PM - 12:30 PM	Help children prepare for nap (diapering, toileting, hand-washing)
12:30 PM - 2:30 PM	Nap- Play soft music, rub backs
2:30 PM - 3:00 PM	Wake-up and cuddle time (diapering, toileting, hand-washing) Prepare for snack
3:00 PM -3:30 PM	Snack/ Clean tables /Wash hands
3:30 PM – 4:30 PM	Outdoor Play- Supervise and interact with children as they explore the playground equipment, environment and materials
4:30 PM – 5:30 PM	Play indoors, read stories, quiet play such as table art or toys, help parents and children reunite and leave for home

The Toddler program provides children with a warm nurturing environment. Qualified staff support children’s growth in physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development with love, guidance, and understanding. The center is a safe, enjoyable place to learn while having fun.

Pre-enrollment conference

To ease the transition from home to center, a meeting will be scheduled between you and your child's caregiver before your child begins child care. This is a time to share information about your child so that we can follow his or her schedule as closely as possible. The caregiver will be asking you questions about your child's health, development, eating habits, sleeping patterns, and family information. In turn, you should come prepared with many questions for the caregiver about our program and about caring for your child.

### Philosophy, Goals, and Objectives

The goal for this age group is to provide a safe, secure, and healthy environment. The program is designed to continue to foster a sense of trust in children, which began in infancy, and to meet autonomous drives of the toddler. The program's philosophy of learning follows Piaget's theories of development, which promotes learning through sensorimotor experiences. Each child is recognized as being unique in his/her development and *The Creative Curriculum Continuum for Infants and Toddlers* is used as a guide.

### Physical Development

Children will be given ample space indoors and outdoors to walk, run and climb. They will gain confidence in using these large muscle skills while enjoying many activities. Small motor development will also be enhanced through use of eating utensils, toys such as large puzzles, blocks and pegs, and art activities that include painting and scribbling with crayons.

### Social and Emotional Development

Children will be given the opportunity throughout the day to make choices appropriate to their age level. In addition, they are encouraged to do many things independently: help to feed and dress themselves, wash their hands, cleanup around the room, hang up their coats, etc. Accomplishing these self-help tasks provides the toddler with a sense of independence, which they so strongly desire.

Group care situations are sometimes difficult initially for toddlers because of "egocentricity": they all see themselves as the most important person in the world. Sharing and waiting their turn are two very difficult (sometimes impossible!) tasks for toddlers causing them much frustration. To minimize this frustration in a group setting, the center will keep the staff / child ratio as low as possible while providing enough materials and equipment to minimize the need to share. In these ways, children can develop positive social skills with adults and peers, and adjust comfortably to group care.

### Intellectual Development

The focus of the cognitive development of toddlers is language acquisition. Children will be learning to use language to communicate their thoughts, to name objects and pictures, and to make conversation with adults and other children. The caregivers promote language development while talking to children, asking questions, describing actions, reading books, and singing songs.

Children will also be given the opportunity to develop problem-solving skills. By exploring their surroundings with their senses, children learn about how things work and what causes many things to happen. This is the beginning stage in building the memory skills in young children, which are essential for further learning.

### Diapering/Toilet Training

Issues about hygiene and cleanliness are frequently mentioned in group-care settings. We will make every attempt to uphold high standards of hygiene. Each room has a built-in changing table unit with a sink for diapering. Toddlers are changed every two hours or as needed. Staff members are required to use gloves and wash their hands thoroughly before and after diapering a child to minimize the risk of infections. Changing tables are cleaned and sanitized after each use.

Toilet training is an important developmental milestone in the later toddler stage. Cooperation and good communication between parent and caregiver is essential to make this experience positive and successful for the child. In determining a child's readiness for toilet training, the following guidelines are helpful:

1. Child's diapers stay dry for a long period
2. Child shows interest in sitting on the toilet
3. Child asks for diaper to be changed
4. Child can follow simple directions and can indicate when he/she needs to use the toilet

We do not believe that a child can or should be forced into toilet training. Careful observation of the child will indicate when he or she is ready to begin. The training process at the center will be positive and supportive. Children will not be punished or shamed for accidents or refusal to use the toilet. Rather, they will be praised for their efforts. It is very important that toilet training is consistent between home and center. A plan will be developed between parent and caregiver to ensure this consistency.

### **FINANCIAL AGREEMENT POLICIES**

The financial agreement policies are for children enrolled in child care or extended day programs at WHSCDA.

WHSCDA accepts private pay or CCAP subsidies provided by the Department of Human Services. Child care tuition and co-pays are charged weekly for the convenience of the majority of our parents. However, it is your option to pay bi-weekly or monthly, as long as you are paying in advance of receiving services.

Contact the child care director or family worker for current child care and extended day rates. DHS subsidies and child care rates cover the cost of 9 hours per day of care. If you choose to use more than 9 hours per day, there is an additional charge per day.

#### **Deposit**

- \* At the time of admission, a deposit equal to one week's tuition is required.
- \* This fee is non-refundable should you choose not to enroll your child.
- \* Once the enrollment process is complete, the deposit will remain in a special deposit account to be used for your last week of care when you have given your written two week written notice for discontinuance of care.
- \* Should your weekly tuition increase (adding days) you will need to increase your deposit.
- \* Failure to provide written notification two weeks in advance will result in the forfeiture of your deposit.

#### **Weekly Tuition Payments**

- \* Full weekly payment is due for each week including weeks when the child care center is closed for holidays or when your child is absent due to illness, or another personal reason.
- \* Credits are not applied for days when the center is closed for any reason. However, credits may be applied at the discretion of the Executive Director in extreme circumstances.
- \* Tuition payment is due in advance on Thursday for the following week's care.
- \* Payment is considered past due at 5:30 pm on Friday, at which time a late payment fee of \$10 will be applied. Tuition + \$10 late fee must be paid in full before the child may return to care.
- \* If your payments continue to be late, you must meet with the child care director or family worker to discuss payment options. Failure to comply with the payment plan will result in a suspension or termination of child care services.

### Vacation Week

- \* Children enrolled continuously for 12 months receive a credit for one vacation week per year. Your child will be eligible for the annual vacation week 12 months after the last one was taken.
- \* The credit must be taken as a full week, not individual days, and must be used for days in which your child is enrolled, but not in attendance.
- \* You are responsible for providing written notice to the child care director or family worker at least two weeks before the vacation week, either by email or a written, signed note. Failure to provide written notice will result in the full charge for the week of care.

### Late Pick-Up

- \* Child Care closes at 5:30 pm each day. It is important that you and your child are ready to leave the building at that time so that staff members may lock the doors and go home to their own families.
- \* You will be charged a late fee of \$1.00 per minute per child, when your child/ren are not picked up by 5:30 pm.
- \* Late pick-up fees will be included in the following week's tuition if payment is not received by the end of the week.
- \* Please provide us with the courtesy of a phone call if you know you will be late.
- \* If you are repeatedly late, you will be required to find alternate care for your child.

### Returned Checks

- \* There is a \$25.00 returned check fee each time we have to redeposit a check.

### Modification of Hours

- \* When you first enroll your child in our program, we agree to provide care for certain days of the week and hours of the day.
- \* If you wish to change the days or hours your child is enrolled in care, submit a request in writing to the child care director or family worker at least two weeks prior to the requested change. A new financial agreement indicating your new days/ hours must also be signed.



## Personnel Directory

Mary Varr	Executive Director	<a href="mailto:mvarr@whscda.org">mvarr@whscda.org</a>
Kate Maccio	Director of Early Childhood	<a href="mailto:kmaccio@whscda.org">kmaccio@whscda.org</a>
Ann Lesinski	Health Manager/Registered Nurse	<a href="mailto:alesinski@@whscda.org">alesinski@@whscda.org</a>
Bobby Williams	Mental Health Manager	<a href="mailto:bwilliams@whscda.org">bwilliams@whscda.org</a>
Jody Ragosta	Family Development Manager	<a href="mailto:jragosta@whscda.org">jragosta@whscda.org</a>
Emelia Zukowski	Registered Dietitian	<a href="mailto:ezukowski@whscda.org">ezukowski@whscda.org</a>
Mary Coutu	Child Care Director	<a href="mailto:mcoutu@whscda.org">mcoutu@whscda.org</a>
Keri Enright	Assistant Child Care Director	<a href="mailto:kenright@whscda.org">kenright@whscda.org</a>
Michael Smith	Facilities Manager	<a href="mailto:msmith@whscda.org">msmith@whscda.org</a>
Erin Smith	Enrollment Specialist	<a href="mailto:esmith@whscda.org">esmith@whscda.org</a>
Giana Pires	Center Director/Cass Park	<a href="mailto:gpires@whscda.org">gpires@whscda.org</a>
Brigitte Kennedy	Center Director/Bourdon Blvd and Pothier	<a href="mailto:bkennedy@whscda.org">bkennedy@whscda.org</a>
Alexandria Thompson	Center Director/Karen Bouchard	<a href="mailto:athompson@whscda.org">athompson@whscda.org</a>
Julie Glasko	Family Engagement Specialist	<a href="mailto:jglasko@whscda.org">jglasko@whscda.org</a>
Vanessa Ferreira	Family Liaison/ Benoit Brown	<a href="mailto:vferreira@whscda.org">vferreira@whscda.org</a>
Courtney Paquin	Family Liaison/ Karen Bouchard	<a href="mailto:cpaquin@whscda.org">cpaquin@whscda.org</a>