2018-2019
Center Closings

September 4           First Day of Head Start
October 13           Teacher Professional Development
November 12          Veteran’s Day
November 22-23       Thanksgiving
December 25-29       Winter Break
January 1            New Years Day
January 21           Martin Luther King Day
February 19          President’s Day
March 25-29          Spring Break (Extended Care open Only)
May 24               Last day of Head Start
May 27               Memorial Day

May 27-31 Snow Days (if needed)
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Dear Head Start Parents:

Welcome to the Grace Hill Settlement House Head Start & Early Head Start Program. Grace Hill Settlement House is a non-profit human services agency which serves thousands of St. Louis residents each year through a multitude of resources and services. Program and services include early childhood, youth and family supports, aging and special needs, and community and economic development.

Grace Hill Head Start & Early Head Start is a federally funded child development program for children ages 0 to 5 which provides comprehensive services to promote academic, social/emotional and physical development, along with providing social, health and nutrition services for income-eligible families in St. Louis City. Grace Hill Head Start operates three centers and partner with several community organizations to serve 313 children and their families.

We all know that children learn best when they are healthy. To assure that your child is successful in Head Start & Early Head Start, the staff will assist in any way possible to help you obtain the health information needed. I encourage you to use Health Requirement Check List on page 5 as a reminder to obtain the necessary health screenings by or before their required due dates.

Grace Hill staff, Board of Directors, and Policy Council appreciate this opportunity to offer quality, comprehensive services to you and your children. We look forward to meeting the growing needs of the Head Start & Early Head Start children and their family.

Sincerely,

Tamala Stallings
Head Start Director
HEALTH REQUIREMENTS CHECK LIST

To assure that your child is successful in school, our staff will assist in any way possible to help parents obtain the health information needed by Head Start & Early Head Start before or by the following required dates:

AT ENROLLMENT:
_____ UPDATED IMMUNIZATION RECORD/ PARENT OR GUARDIAN EXCLUSION STATUS

30 Days After Enrollment
_____ NUTRITION RECORD
_____ PHYSICAL EXAM

45 Days After Enrollment
_____ GROWTH ASSESSMENT
_____ HEALTH HISTORY
_____ HEARING
_____ VISION

90 Days After Enrollment
_____ BLOOD PRESSURE
_____ HEMOGLOBIN/HEMATOCRIT
_____ LEAD
_____ SICKLE CELL SCREENING
_____ TUBERCULOSIS RISK ASSESSMENT
_____ DENTAL EXAM
Grace Hill Settlement House Mission

Providing opportunities for individuals, families and communities to be stronger, healthier and more self-reliant.

Our Head Start & Early Head Start Mission

Grace Hill Head Start will enhance the social and educational competence of 0-5 year old children by:

- Providing a supportive, engaging and exciting learning environment through culturally representative and quality, comprehensive services.
- Involving families and neighbors in advocacy that advances the cause of family and neighborhood stability.

Program Philosophy

Invest Now, Benefit Later -- The Head Start & Early Head Start program is based on the conviction that high-quality early childhood care, education and family services pay off in a myriad of benefits to children, their families and society as a whole.

Comprehensive Programs -- Research demonstrates many factors affect a child’s readiness for school: academic readiness, social and emotional development, physical well being and parental involvement. Head Start & Early Head Start’s services are designed to address all of these areas.

Head Start & Early Head Start Goals

- To enhance children’s physical, social, emotional and cognitive development.
- To enable parents to be better caregivers and their child’s first educator.
- To partner with parents as they meet their own goals, including economic independence.
HEAD START PROGRAM & OPERATIONS
Head Start Program

Head Start is tuition free. All Grace Hill Head Start & Early Head Start Centers are licensed by the Missouri Department of Health, Bureau of Child Care. The center managers and teachers have a State Licensing Book and Family Handbook in the office/classroom which is available upon request. Each parent/guardian receives a handbook after enrolling their child in the program. Copies of the State Inspection Reports are posted on the Parent Board and the bulletin board in the Case Manager’s office. Parents can also access the reports on-line at Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services.

Grace Hill implements Head Start & Early Head Start goals and philosophies, through its many services to children and families, for the purpose of achieving School Readiness Goals.

- Education
- Health
- Mental Health
- Disabilities Services
- Nutrition
- Family & Community Engagement

Program Options

Grace Hill offers both a center– based and home-based programming (see Home-based section) for children in the Early Head Start (0-3 years) and Head Start (3-5 years) programs. The centers are open from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Center based includes the following options:

- Head Start 6 operating hours – 8:30-2:30
- Early Head Start full day option- 8:30-4:30
- Before and After Care– Before Care:7:00-8:30 After Care:2:30-6:00 (fee required)

Children enrolled in the 6 hour option will receive breakfast and lunch. Children enrolled in the full day options will receive breakfast lunch and snack.

Full/Extended Day Option (Before and After Care)

Families who need extended care services may enroll their child in the fee-based before and after care option. In order to ensure quality services beyond the Head Start & Early Head Start hours, families needing extended care are required to pay the cost of the care, either through direct payment or state subsidized funds. For more information, see Extended Day Option (Before and After Care) on page (10).
Attendance
Grace Hill Head Start & Early Head Start encourages perfect attendance. Daily attendance is essential for success in your child’s pre-school and later educational years. All children enrolled are expected to arrive by 8:30 am and join their class for a nutritious breakfast. Upon arrival, parents must bring the child into the classroom and sign their child in, indicating the actual time of arrival. Parents are encouraged to help their child develop habits of good punctuality which will aid him/her in their later school or work life. Parents are expected to call the teaching staff or Case Manager when a child will be late.
If your child is absent for 2 days in a given month, we must complete a Home Visit to meet with you to discuss attendance and implement an Attendance Improvement plan.

Absences
When it is absolutely necessary for a child to be absent, parent or legal guardian must call the child’s classroom teacher or the Family Mentor before 8:30 am, regarding the child’s absence. If a child does not arrive by 8:30, center staff will contact families for information regarding the child’s absence.

Please furnish the following information when calling:

- Student’s name
- Reason for absence
- Anticipated number of days the child will be absent
- Teacher’s name

After two consecutive absences; if no contact has been established with the family; or the absences continue to be unexcused, a home visit by the Case Manager is required to determine the reason for the absences and to help the family plan a course of action to correct the situation.

A family staffing will be scheduled when any of the following occurs: two consecutive unexcused absences; six unexcused absences within a 30 day period; or three failed attempts (including at least one home visit) by the Family Mentor to contact the family regarding absences. If no resolution is reached as a result of the staffing, or attendance issues continue to be chronic, the child may be removed from active enrollment and returned to the waiting list.

Early Pick-Up
Early pick-ups are sometimes necessary for doctor visits and other similar needs. Please advise us when it is necessary for your child to be released from class early. A phone call and a note will allow the teacher to prepare the child for the change in daily routine. The parent or guardian must enter the center to sign the child out; report to the teaching staff, and show picture I.D.

Dismissal
All children must be picked up from the classroom and signed out by a parent or other authorized individual. Children enrolled in the Head Start program must be picked up by 2:30 pm. Children in the Early Head Start program must be picked up by 4:30 pm. Children in the extended day program must be picked up by 6:00 pm.
Full/Extended Day Option (Before and After Care)

Extended care includes the hours before and after the Head Start & Early Head Start hours. Families utilizing extended care must provide proof of working or going to school and will be assessed a weekly fee, per child. See your Case Manager for fee scale. This option cannot be split for a lower fee. Children enrolled in extended care have a slot reserved for them every day. Therefore, payment is required whether or not a child attends. If the center is closed, families will not be charged for that day.

Extended care fees are due a week in advance (on Friday for the following week). The payment is to be made to the Center Manager or designee by cash, check, or money order. If weekly payments are not the best payment option for your family, a schedule of bi-weekly or monthly payments can be established.

Late Pick Up Policy

Parents are expected to notify the center if they will be arriving late for pick up. For the 6 hour option, the dismissal time is 2:30pm. For the full day option, dismissal time is 4:30 and for the extended day option, the dismissal time is no later than 5:30pm. A late fee is assessed after five minutes. This fee is $5 per 15 minutes per child. Please be sure that emergency contact phone numbers are current at all times.

Assistance for Extended Care Fees

All parents requesting extended day childcare are encouraged to apply for a childcare subsidy through the Missouri Department of Social Services Family Support Division (FSD) and designate Grace Hill as the “child care provider”. If a family qualifies for a childcare subsidy through the FSD, a notification letter is sent to the family and to Grace Hill stating the amount approved for childcare subsidy and the co-payment amount due by the family. In accordance with the FSD regulations, families will be responsible to pay the co-payment fee (the amount stated in the letter) directly to the Grace Hill center. While awaiting FSD determination, families will be required to pay the extended day childcare fee per child beginning with the first day of attendance. If the FSD backdates the subsidy amount, the amount previously paid will be applied to cover future co-pay amounts or reimbursed to family. If the FSD backdates the subsidy and determines there is to be no weekly co-pay due by the family, Grace Hill will issue the family a full reimbursement check.
What to Wear
Children are expected to dress in comfortable clothing, which is easily removable for children to use the restroom with limited assistance. In order for children to get meaningful gross motor experiences, children are encouraged to wear rubber soled, closed toe shoes, such as sneakers or tennis shoes.

Children should be dressed according to the season and weather. Children are encouraged to participate in activities that involve paint, sand, water and outdoor activities and should be dressed so they can fully participate in these activities.

Outside Wear
Children should be dressed appropriately for outdoor play including the proper shoes for running, jumping and climbing. Children will play outdoors as long as the weather permits, so please make sure that they have coats, hats and gloves during the winter and light weight jackets or sweaters in the Fall and Spring.

Please mark all personal items with child’s name.

Transition Items
At times, children may need to bring a special item from home to help them ease into the routine of leaving parents and spending the day at the center. Children are allowed to bring safe toys, special blankets, etc., to help them through this period. Please check with center staff.

Lost and Found
Occasionally, children lose or misplace important items such as coats, jackets and blankets. Items found at the centers are placed in a central place that serve as the center’s lost and found.

Please be sure to mark all personal items with child’s name.
**Photo Release**

Head Start & Early Head Start memories are everlasting. Memories will be captured in photos annually and throughout various activities at the center. These photos will be taken individually and in groups and will be displayed throughout the center. Parents are reminded to complete release forms at the time of enrollment. For photos that will be used outside of the Grace Hill program, a separate Media Release must be signed by parents for each event.

**Transferring a Child**

Parents requesting a transfer to another Grace Hill Center site must meet with their Family Mentor as soon as possible. Prior to the transfer, all current information must be updated and verified. Family Mentors will handle all transfers directly. Parents and staff will meet to plan transition activities so the child and parents will have a smooth adjustment.

**Child Custody**

In order to adhere to the State of Missouri regulations, families must limit the involvement of the center staff in domestic issues. Staff is only allowed to release children to the authorized person(s) listed on the form signed by the custodial parent or legal guardian. If parents have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring that order to the Family Mentor or Center Manager, so that a copy can be placed in child’s file.

**Emergency Procedures**

Grace Hill Head Start has developed an emergency plan and procedures for FIRE, TORNADO, EARTHQUAKE and UNFORESEEN EMERGENCIES. Drills are conducted throughout the year and all children learn and practice the appropriate procedures for each type of emergency. With appropriate preparation and training, children will learn to react in a well-organized and safe manner to any situation that may arise.

**Inclement Weather**

When snow and extreme temperatures are forecasted, Grace Hill will announce changes in center schedules and operating day on KMOX (1120 AM), KMOV (Channel 4), KSDK (Channel 5), or FOX (Channel 2) beginning at 5:30 am to determine if school will be in session. If a “Snow Schedule” is deemed necessary, the time will be posted. We will also send parents text messages and phone calls. Both the full/extended day program and the six hour Head Start program will begin at this time. If weather conditions become dangerous after the center has opened, staff will contact parents concerning early dismissal.
EDUCATION SERVICES
Grace Hill Head Start & Early Head Start respects and supports the belief that children learn best by using a variety of teaching practices. Child initiated learning and direct teaching as well as working with large and small groups of children are implemented in the daily classroom routine.

**Curriculum**

Grace Hill Head Start & Early Head Start uses the Creative Curriculum as a base curriculum for all Head Start and Early Head Start center-based options. The Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive, child development based curriculum that shows teachers how to create an effective learning environment for preschool children. It is a high quality, comprehensive curriculum which combines research with desired results, helping teachers make the connection between curriculum and assessment.

The objectives of the curriculum are to:

- Provide children with a learning environment and the varied experiences that help them develop intellectually, socially, physically and emotionally.
- Integrate the educational aspects of all Head Start components in the daily schedule of activities.
- Involve parents in educational activities of the program to enhance their role as their child’s first and most influential teacher.
- Assist parents in increasing their knowledge, skills, and understanding of child growth and development.
- Identify and reinforce experiences that occur in the home that parents can utilize as educational activities for their children.
- Provide services that are culturally responsive and meet the special needs of all children.

Staff uses a variety of ways to document each child’s individual growth, development, and goals. Portfolios are developed for each child that contains anecdotal observations, work samplings, pictures, and the Teaching Strategies Gold Child Assessment Portfolio.
The Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework

Promoting Positive Outcomes in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children 0-5 Years Old

The Framework represents the foundation of the Head Start Approach to School Readiness. It aligns with and builds from the five essential domains of school readiness identified by the National Education Goals Panel and lays out the essential areas of learning and development. The Framework is used to guide curriculum, implementation, and assessment to plan teaching and learning experiences.

Information about each child’s development and progress toward reaching school readiness goals is documented in the My Teaching Strategies Gold. Grace Hill Head Start School Readiness goals were developed with input from parents, staff and community members. The 12 School Readiness Goals are aligned with Head Start Early Learning Framework and the Missouri Early Learning Standards. Data is collected three times a year and distributed at Curriculum Committee, Policy Council and Board Meetings.

Cognitive and General Knowledge
1. Children will demonstrate the ability to count.
2. Children will demonstrate the ability to identify and name some shapes in various sizes and orientations.
3. Children will be able to gather/evaluate information, experiment and problem solve.

Language and Literacy Knowledge and Skills
4. Children will be able to name letters; including those in their name.
5. Children will demonstrate the ability to use language to pretend, initiate and participate in discussions with peers and adults.

Physical Health, Well-Being
6. Children will demonstrate the ability to manage their needs.
7. Children will demonstrate the ability to use a variety of writing tools.

Approaches to Learning (Percentage is specific to teacher)
8. Children will demonstrate appropriate initiative.

Social and Emotional Development (Percentage is specific to teacher)
9. Children will demonstrate appropriate self-regulation.
10. Children will demonstrate appropriate attachment.

Physical Motor Development
11. Children will demonstrate use of large muscles for movement, position and to explore the environment.
12. Children will coordinate hand eye movement to perform actions and use hands for exploration and completion of daily routines.
Daily Routine
To build effective learning environments, all classrooms must provide structure for each day. When routine is planned in an orderly and consistent fashion, children tend to feel safe, secure, and develop increasing independence. All daily schedules are posted in each classroom and are reviewed with the children daily. Children must arrive for breakfast and stay for the entire Head Start day to help them develop positive school habits.

Quiet Time/Nap Time
The extended day and six hour option allow for a quiet time so that children can relax. Children are allowed time to settle down at their own pace and all quiet times are supervised by at least one adult. Children who do not fall asleep shall rest on cots for 30 minutes. Quiet activities are also planned for children who wake up early and for children who do not sleep.

Take Home Activities
Parent engagement is one of the largest indicators for a child’s success in school. Throughout the school year, families will be given Take Home Activity Sheets to complete with their child at home. These activities will individualized for each child and are based upon the classroom curriculum and school readiness goals. Families are expected to complete the activity with their child and return the kit and signed form to the teacher, so that the time spent on this activity will count towards the center in-kind goal.

Field Trips
Field trips enhance classroom curriculum and provide opportunities for parents to spend time with their child. Grace Hill will be involved in several extended educational experiences. Our children will travel to places such as the Science Center, the Missouri Botanical Garden, the Zoo, and other exciting places. Regardless of the destination, the parent/legal guardian for each child must complete the permission form prior to the child attending the field trip. Teaching staff participates in all field trip experiences and parents are enthusiastically encouraged to participate with their child. Non-Head Start children my attend field trips with parent, but may not ride the bus and any fees are the responsibility of the family.
Transportation

Grace Hill does not provide transportation to and from the center, but provides parents with information on various transportation options and on a limited basis will provide parents with bus tickets to travel to and from the centers. Transportation services are provided for field trips and must adhere to the Transportation Performance Standards. Transportation services are provided by First Student, a contracted service provider. All drivers and monitors are trained and certified in the safe transporting of children. Monitors are present on all bus rides to assist the driver, engage in educational activities, monitor, and interact with the children while the bus is in route. They are also responsible for loading and unloading the children on and off the bus to ensure the overall safety of the children.

Head Start makes every effort to extend the learning environment into every aspect of the child’s day. Since this is the first bus riding experience for most of our students, children are taught bus and pedestrian safety during the first 30 days of the program and before every experience out of the center. Parents are encouraged to reinforce these safety practices with their children.

- Remaining seated at all times, with seat restraints fastened
- Follow instructions given by the bus and/or teaching staff,

To ensure an efficient, effective, enjoyable and secure transportation system, the following practices are in effect.

1. Parents are welcome to accompany children on field trips. Parents must contact the center staff at least one week prior to the field trip to ensure space is available to accommodate parents, staff, and children. The bus will depart as scheduled. Siblings or other non-Head Start children are not allowed on the bus at any time.

2. NO Smoking, Eating, or Drinking is permitted on the bus. Please do not send toys with children on the bus. All passengers must be seated and wearing seat belts/restraints while on the bus. Children must exercise classroom procedures while on the bus.

3. Breakdowns/Incidents - Bus drivers are thoroughly trained in defensive driving techniques and buses are carefully maintained. In the rare event of an incident, communication is key. All buses are equipped with two-way radios and GPS (global positioning devices) systems which keep the base aware of the bus’s location at all times. Center staff also have a cell phone in case of an emergency.

4. All concerns, problems, or comments regarding transportation, should be discussed with the center manager so appropriate follow up is ensured.
Guidance and Positive Discipline
Grace Hill believes the goal of discipline is to prepare children for a lifetime of success. The focus is on developing resiliency by strengthening Initiative, Self-Control, and Attachment, so children learn to control their own behaviors. Discipline and guidance are based on an understanding of the developmental level of the children and their individual needs.

Children deserve to be in an environment that is supportive, nurturing, and safe.

- Corporal punishment, including but not limited to spanking, shaking, or physical force is prohibited.
- Humiliating, threatening, or frightening to children is prohibited.
- No child will be denied food as a form of punishment.

Supportive behavior interventions may include:

- Modification of the child’s classroom, schedule, use of materials;
- Breaking a challenge into small pieces;
- Use of effective praise;
- Positive redirection; and
- Referral to outside agency, if appropriate

Celebrations of Holidays
Instead of celebrating individual holidays, Grace Hill emphasizes developmentally appropriate celebrations and diversity that includes all children and families. Themes that are more seasonally based are encouraged, eliminating the possibility that a child or family will inadvertently be excluded. We ask families not to send valentines, Halloween costumes, or birthday cakes. If you have a particular question with regard to this policy, please see your Center Manager or classroom teaching team.

Kindergarten Readiness
Grace Hill Head Start is committed to promoting school readiness. Our goal is to transfer children from our educational program to the public schools or other educational institutions ready to succeed. Activities are organized throughout the school year which will assist children and their families in making a smooth and positive transition. Staff will serve as a liaison between families and local school districts, private and public, and other community agencies to ensure the necessary information is provided for children. During fall parent conferences or home visits, each family is given a Kindergarten Transition booklet to help in this process. Parents and children are supported in identifying a school for their children by attending Kindergarten Round-Ups set up at the centers. Here families can meet principals, obtain information and enrollment packets.
HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH & DISABILITIES
Health Requirements
Children learn best when they are healthy. To assure that each child is successful in Head Start & Early Head Start the staff will assist parents in obtaining the health information needed by Head Start & Early Head Start.

State Licensing and Head Start requires that all children have a completed/updated immunization record on file on the first day of attendance. Children who do not have a immunization record, or exemption on file, will be excluded from the program until a record/exemption is obtained.

State Licensing and Head Start also requires that all children have a physical exam before enrollment or within 30 days after enrollment, which must be updated annually. Physical exams should also include lead testing results, and hemoglobin or hematocrit testing. Physicians should perform hearing and vision testing as well as height and weight screenings during the physical exam – children are entitled to the full Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) screenings each year. See page 5 for the Health Requirements Checklist and requested due dates.

Grace Hill Head Start’s Pediatric Nurse educates children, families, and staff on health issues such as personal and dental hygiene, daily nutrition, and general good health practices. We promote and encourage families to connect with medical and dental organizations to ensure adequate health and nutrition for children. Our Pediatric Nurse also collaborates with families to ensure that children’s follow-up care by medical and dental professionals is performed.

Dental Exams and Treatment
Head Start requires that all children have a dental exam within 90 days of enrollment, which must be updated annually. Children who have healthy teeth and gums will have a better experience in Head Start and throughout their school years. Daily tooth brushing in the classroom helps children learn the importance of dental care. Annual dental exams are required to be sure that dental needs are identified. When dental treatment is needed, Head Start will assist parents in obtaining the follow up treatment. Dental treatment is also required if a need is identified.

*Physical and dental exams and any blood work results will expire one year from the date of the exam. New information must be provided once the exam expires.*

Medical & Dental Emergencies
Screening and Assessments

- Children change and grow rapidly during the pre-school years. To assess those changes children will be screened throughout the school year. These screenings will include height, weight, blood pressure, hearing, vision, tuberculosis testing, and lead poisoning testing. Outside services may be provided for dental exams and lead poisoning testing.

- Children’s development will be screened using the Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL 4) for Head Start Children and the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) for Early Head Start children. The screening covers motor development, concepts (what the child knows) and communication, including speech and language development. Through these screenings and classroom observations, children may be identified as needing extra support in an area of development. Parents will be contacted and a planning meeting will be held to discuss and agree on what the next plan should include. Sometimes services will be provided at the Head Start center, and sometimes St. Louis Public Schools or First Steps will become involved in providing those services. Early intervention can assist children in having greater success in their ongoing school years.

- Head Start requires that all children receive an assessment of their social emotional development and a screening for behavioral concerns. Within (45) forty-five days of enrollment, each child receives a Devereux Early Childhood Assessment (DECA), which measures your child’s protective factors. Your child is observed by the teacher for 20 days before the assessment is completed. Parents will also complete a DECA on their child. Results are shared with you by letter and during your parent conferences and home visits. You can contact the teacher to set up a meeting to discuss the results in more detail. These results will guide the teacher in developing lesson plans for the classroom and for individual children that will support and strengthen Initiative, Self-Control, and Attachment.

Presentations explaining the assessment process, ways that parents can support social emotional development, and how they can strengthen “protective factors” at home are presented at parent meetings.
When your child is ill……

Although we expect your child to attend classes regularly, there are reasons to keep a child home from school:

- Temperature - fever over 100° within the last 24 hour
- Gastro-intestinal - Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain within the last 24 hours.
- Throat and neck – redness, spots, sore throat, infected tonsils, swollen glands.
- Eyes – Discharge and/or redness
- Nose and ears – discharge with symptoms such as fever, coughing or other symptoms
- Skin – rashes, spots, eruptions, etc.
- Lice or nits
- Any infectious disease diagnosed by your family physician such as ring worm, pink eye, strep throat, etc. (Dr.’s note is required to return to school).
- Unable to participate in a classroom setting due to being “too ill to function”

If your child will be absent from school, please call the center. If your child has any ongoing health concerns, please advise Head Start staff of the health issue.

Medication Procedures

If your child requires medication, it is best if he/she can receive it before leaving home. However, designated Head Start staff can administer medications in the classrooms when it is necessary. Parents/guardians will need to be sure the physician completes the forms necessary for medication administration. Forms can be received from the classroom teacher. It is necessary that the medication container is marked with:

(a) the child’s name,
(b) the dosage and time of administration, and
(c) the doctor’s name and telephone number.

Medication will be kept in a locked secure container and refrigerated when required. For the safety of all Grace Hill Head Start children, no child will be allowed to have medication of any kind in his/her possession for self administration. Also, for the safety of your child, if the doctor has prescribed “rescue medications” such as inhalers, epi-pens or seizure medications bring those medications to the classroom with the necessary forms – this will assure that your child is in a safe environment.
Mental Health Services
Head Start is concerned with the total development of each child. Young children learn about feelings and emotions, make friends, trust adults, and to do some things for themselves. The Mental Health portion of the program focuses on the promotion of positive self-worth, respect for individual differences, and the ability to develop appropriate social skills. Accomplishments in these areas will have a positive impact on the children’s ability to become independent, resourceful problem solvers who are able to forge ahead despite disappointment, misfortune, or tragedy, to achieve greater academic success, and to have healthy and rewarding relationships and successful careers.

Mental Health has three major goals:
1. To work with parents and staff when there are concerns about a child’s social/emotional development and/or behavior, and
2. To insure that Head Start Children are strong in Initiative, Attachment, and Self Control, through daily activities and experiences throughout the program year.
3. To offer education and supportive services through Head Start or community resources to assist adults and children in achieving or enhancing resiliency.

A Resource Directory is distributed to families and staff which lists various community resources and their contact information.

Social/Emotional Development
Grace Hill focuses on building resiliency in children by focusing on their social/emotional development which strengthens protective factors. Resiliency is the ability to bounce back and move forward after misfortune, tragedy, and change. Research has identified three characteristics that have proven to contribute to the development of resiliency. Those three factors, also referred to as “protective factors,” are:

1. Initiative – the ability to use independent thought and action to meet his/her needs
2. Self-Control - the ability to experience a range of feelings and express them using actions and words that society considers appropriate,
3. Attachment – the mutual, strong, and long lasting relationship between a child, and significant adults such as parents, teachers, and family members.

Head Start works to strengthen these “protective factors” by providing supportive classroom environments, including classroom activities and experiences that strengthen social and emotional development, and partnering with parents to help plan ways to interact with their children, that will assist in strengthening the identified “protective factors.” In addition, Grace Hill Head Start has partnerships and collaborations with community agencies and organizations that can provide families with additional services and resources.
Disabilities Services

Head Start maintains a nation-wide policy of open enrollment for all eligible children by encouraging “the inclusion of children with special needs in an integrated setting”. Children with disabilities are welcomed in the Grace Hill Head Start program and at least 10% of the program’s enrollment is available to children with diagnosed disabilities. With early intervention, children with potential delays will have the opportunity to reach their full potential. From identification to transition, we believe effective intervention occurs only if a team approach is used.

Disabilities Services assures that children with potential delays will:

- Complete appropriate screenings which identify if there is need for further evaluation
- When evaluation is recommended, referral is made to community resources to obtain a diagnosis which confirms if services are needed
- When a diagnosis recommends services, the child will receive appropriate services at the Head Start Center, local school district or First Steps provider.

The Disability Specialist assists parents with identifying and securing special support services for their children. Parents are provided with information and the skills to become the best advocates for their children.
Nutrition
We believe that children need healthy, nutritious food for optimum growth and development. Our program exposes the children to a variety of foods and strives to serve the ethnic foods of all children in the program.

**Meal Service**

Grace Hill Head Start provides nutritious meals for children, breakfast, lunch and snack. The meals offered are nutritious foods that are moderate in sugar and fat as recommended by Dietary Guidelines of America.

For children 0-12 months, Grace Hill will provide nutritious meals, including required infant formula. Each child will have an individual feeding plan developed with the parents.

Parents are encouraged to give feedback and ideas for the menus of Head Start so that a diverse variety of foods are offered to the children in a nutritious manner.

**Outside Food**

Please do not send snacks or other foods to the center. Grace Hill does not support the use of outside foods. If you are interested in helping plan a celebration, please refer to the suggestions provided on the Guidelines for Healthy Celebrations. You may also want to ask your child’s teacher for other, non-food ideas if you wish to donate to the classroom.

**Family Style Dining**

Please join your child for a Family Style Dining meal by arranging a visit at breakfast or lunch time (please arrange with Center Manager at least 3 days ahead of time to ensure enough food is ordered). Family Style Dining presents opportunities for learning, socialization, skill development, and self esteem building. Family style meals at Grace Hill Head Start encourage your child to:

- Develop healthy eating habits by discovering new foods, enjoying new foods and familiar foods, eating because of hunger and stopping
- because of fullness.
- Serve food themselves while working on mastery of motor skills such as pouring milk from a pitcher and serving meats & breads with tongs and fruits, vegetables, and other dishes with a serving spoon or ladle.
- Learn personal hygiene, set up and cleanup of meals and other skills such as concepts and conversations at the table that can easily be taken into the home.

Grace Hill Head Start practices Family Style Dining in conjunction with our participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP is a federal program funded by the USDA and enacted at the state level which provides funding for healthy meals and snacks to children.
The best gift you can give your child is the gift of your time. We welcome and encourage all families to participate in our program. Your participation on your child’s special day will build memories that last a lifetime. Here are a couple of suggestions for you and your child’s class to meaningful celebrations.

Help your child decorate special hat, crown or badge for that day.

Create a poster of photos and stories that are important to you and your child.

Each class can assemble a cumulative class “Celebration Book”. On each child’s celebration day, staff sends home a blank page from the “Celebration Book”. The child and family can illustrate and write a message about a special moment. This page can be inserted into the class book and read to the class.

At circle time, the child celebrating a special day may pass around a pot with soil in it. Each child pushes a seed deep in the soil and makes a wish for the child’s upcoming year. The sprouting seeds symbolize wishes for the child.

Parents can read to the group, help with a project or join the class for lunch.

Remember– parent engagement is the best predictor of a child’s success and what is a better gift than a lifetime of success!

Guidelines for Healthy Celebrations

Please help us encourage lifelong healthy habits in our children. We encourage parents to join us for their child’s birthday or other special occasion.

Our facility does allow celebrations to use food but food items must be from the Healthy Treats Options Handout

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Remember– parent engagement is the best predictor of a child’s success and what is a better gift than a lifetime of success!
FAMILY & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
The Head Start program serves as a link between families and the community. Every family enrolled in Grace Hill Head Start is assigned a Case Manager whose role is to support families in their growth and development. Case Managers will:

- Assist your family in obtaining health requirements for Head Start attendance.
- Support your family in setting and reaching goals and overcoming challenges identified in the Family Partnership Agreement.
- Inform you of community resources and how to access them.
- Help in crisis or emergency situations.
- Help you obtain special Head Start services, such as helping families learn about nutrition, good health, appropriate childhood development and more.
- Keep you informed of parent involvement, volunteer, and employment opportunities at Head Start.

**Family Partnership Agreement**
Grace Hill Head Start is a strengths-based, family focused program that serves the entire family. By working in a collaborative partnership that is driven by parents’ identification of their family’s strengths and needs, parents and their Case Manager determine how the Head Start program can support families in achieving their goals.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**
Parent-Teacher Conferences are held twice per school year. Parents are asked to schedule times on the appropriate date. Parents as well as other family members are encouraged to participate. Parent-Teacher Conferences are designed to inform parents of their children’s developmental progress, to offer parents strategies/techniques to help build developmental skills, and to work with parents to develop goals for their children. Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled Fall and Spring, but may be scheduled at different times depending on the needs of the family.

**Home Visits**
Home Visits are scheduled twice a year and are a time to share information on the child’s progress and to provide strategies and activities that parents can use at home to build development skills in their child. The first home visit is usually scheduled between September and January and the second is scheduled between January and May. This schedule is flexible, based upon the needs of the family.
Community Resource Guide

• The guide is a comprehensive listing of community resources, agencies, programs and services available to individuals, families and children within the city of St. Louis.
• Your Case Manager will help you locate resources and provide confidential referrals to agencies providing services such as food stamps, clothing, employment assistance, housing, mental health, domestic violence, substance abuse, counseling, etc.

Referrals
Referrals requesting services for children and their families may come from Head Start staff to other community agencies. Head Start must receive a Release of Information authorization from parents/guardians before sharing any information with any outside community agency. All information is considered confidential. Case Managers will follow up with families about their satisfaction with referrals.
Involving Parents and Family in Head Start & Early Head Start

Parents are the most important influence in a child’s development. As a parent/guardian, you can assist Grace Hill Head Start Program with achieving our overall objective of effectively preparing children for kindergarten through your involvement. The Head Start program works with the family as a whole and provides opportunities for parents to learn and grow.

What Can You Expect as a Head Start & Early Head Start Parent?
- To be welcomed in the center or classroom during program hours
- To participate in the Head Start Program activities
- To be informed regularly about the child’s progress
- To always be treated with respect and dignity
- Guidance to help children achieve full potential
- To be informed of community resources, agency activities, program planning, and training opportunities
- To participate as a member of the Parent Committee meetings
- To be informed about operation of program through Policy Council representative and communication

Male Involvement

Head Start encourages participation by the males involved in the lives of Grace Hill Head Start children. Children guided by responsible male care giving have the opportunity to experience the unique male perspective. Throughout the year, there are numerous opportunities for men to volunteer or intern in the program and provide input on designing special initiatives to improve the interaction of men with children.

Parent Institute (Parent Education and Training)

Parents are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of the program, particularly in attending trainings and conferences both in and out of town. Please contact your Case Manager for more information on training opportunities.

Grace Hill Head Start also partners with the United Way to provide parents financial education, open bank accounts, receive credit counseling, and receive support from a savings coach. Please contact your Case Manager for more information on training opportunities.
Parent Committees
All parents who have children enrolled in Head Start are members of the Head Start Parent Committee. A parent is defined as a Head Start child’s mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent, guardian or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree. Parent Committees meet once a month from September through May. A Parent Committee is established at each Head Start Center.

The three main functions of the Parent Committee are:

1. Participate in the shared governance and decision making process by:
   a. Attending and supporting the Parent Committee meetings
   b. Serving as officers of the Parent Committee
   c. Serving as elected members of the Policy Council
   d. Electing representative (s) and alternate representative (s) to the Policy Council

At the September parent meeting, parents will nominate officers and representatives to the Policy Council. Parents will elect officers and their Policy Council representative (s) at the October meeting.

2. Advise staff in developing and implementing local program policies, activities, and services.
3. Plan, conduct, and participate in informal as well as formal programs and activities for parents and staff.

Head Start Policy Council
The Grace Hill Head Start Policy Council is made up of parents and representatives from the community. Representatives from Parent Committees are selected to serve as members of the Policy Council. The responsibilities of the Policy Council include:

- Serve as a link to the Parent Committees, grantee governing board, public and private organizations and the community they serve.
- Review and approve policies and decisions about the Head Start Program.

Policy Council representatives serve a one-year term, from October to September, and no member may serve more than three terms.

Grace Hill Settlement House Board of Directors (governing body)
Two Policy Council parents are selected to attend the Grace Hill Settlement House Board of Directors’ meetings. These parents serve as liaison between Grace Hill Settlement House and the Policy Council.
Volunteer and Intern Services

AS A PARENT, GRANDPARENT, OR CARING ADULT, the Grace Hill Head Start program is seeking your volunteer or intern service time, talents and professional experiences.

The goal of the Head Start program is to build collaborative relationships between families, teachers/staff and the community. This is done to enhance the cognitive, social, emotional and physical development of each child in the Head Start program.

Ways to Be Involved:

**In the Classroom:**
- Read to children
- Assist with arts and crafts
- Playground support and FUN
- Assist on field trips
- Help serve breakfast and/or lunch
- Be a door monitor/friendly greeter
- Attend Parent Committee Meetings
- Become a member of the Policy Council
- Greet/door monitor
- Parking lot attendant

**At Home:**
- Prepare activities for the teacher
- Work with your child to complete individualized home activities prepared by the teacher to support school readiness goals
- Read to your child (ren)

Your Time Spent in the Classroom is Incredibly Valuable

As an example, this is how YOU can help raise $14,440.00 worth of In-Kind dollars serving as a classroom aide:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volunteer Time</th>
<th>Minimum In-Kind Value</th>
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<tr>
<td>30 minutes / day</td>
<td>$6.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.5 hours / week</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>120 hours / year</td>
<td>$1,440.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is In-Kind?

In-Kind is an allowable donation of materials, space, cash, services and/or volunteer time that directly impacts the Head Start program and children.

The Head Start program is required to generate 20% of their total budget through local contributions. We rely on volunteers and donations to help us meet the federal grant requirement.

Each Center uses In-Kind forms to document volunteer time and donations.

Example of Donations:

- Educational Materials
  > Books, paper, crayons, pencils, markers, glue sticks
  > Games, toys, puzzles, paint, paint brushes
- Computers
- Playground Items
  > Bicycles, helmets, safety equipment, balls, water play items
- Arts and Craft Items
- Sheets and blankets for cots at nap time
- Flowers, plants, seeds, soil and gardening tools
- Hygiene Items
  > Hand sanitizer, tooth brushes, toothpaste, tissues, etc.
- Cleaning supplies
  > Lysol wipes, laundry detergent, soap, dish soap, disinfectants
- Gift cards and/or gift certificates
- Items for culture enrichment activities
- Dramatic play clothing and props
- Cash
**Volunteer Requirements**

All regular volunteers (volunteering more than 20 hours a month) must complete a Background Check Form, Family Care Safety Registry Worker Registration Form, and Tuberculosis TB Risk Assessment Form.

Volunteers must also agree in writing to follow the agency’s confidentiality policy, which states that individuals will not reveal, divulge, or publicize any matters dealing with Grace Hill Head Start. Individuals will not disseminate any oral or written information or remove any documents from Grace Hill Head Start premises without permission from the President/Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee.

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**Parent/Volunteer Awards, Recognition, Appreciation**

At the end of the school year, regular volunteers will be acknowledged for their time and commitment to our Head Start program.

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**Parent Activity Funds**

The Parent Activity Fund was established to provide parents at each center the opportunity and experience in planning, developing, and implementing activities which they design for themselves. The funds can be used in the following manner:

- Educational Trainings
- Speakers
- Conferences
- Books/Journals

Funds cannot be used for entertainment, social outings, to purchase gifts for parents, staff or children or as incentives for parents.

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**Childcare Services and Transportation**

Head Start will provide childcare services and transportation to Head Start parents attending authorized and appropriate meetings, i.e., Parent Committee meetings, Policy Council meetings, and other Head Start related functions, with the exception of overnight conferences. Please notify your Case Manager when childcare services or transportation are required.
HEAD START POLICIES
Grace Hill Head Start
Parent/Guardian Code of Conduct

In order to maintain a stable, consistent, respectful environment that is conducive to learning, Head Start Parents are expected to abide by the following guidelines:

1. When providing behavioral guidance to children at a Head Start function or in a Head Start facility, parents will utilize positive methods. The use of corporal punishment (i.e., physically striking a child or inflicting physical punishment) or verbal humiliation is prohibited.

2. Parents will treat Head Start staff and other Head Start parents and volunteers with courtesy and respect. Verbal or physical threats toward staff and/or other parents are unacceptable. Cursing or swearing is not allowed at any time.

3. Disputes that arise between adults will be discussed in a calm manner and in a location away from children.

4. Parents, staff, and volunteers will smoke only in designated areas and out of the view of children.

- If parents/guardians/family members engage in physical or verbal abuse/threats of the staff, other parents and/or volunteers, the Center Manager must meet with the offender to discuss the prohibited behavior, review the parent code of conduct and develop a mutually agrees upon plan of action to ensure the prohibited behavior does not occur again.

- If a 2nd violation of the Parent Code of Conduct occurs: The parties in question will meet with the Center managers to discuss the prohibited behavior, review the Parent Code of Conduct and revise the initial plan to ensure the behavior does not occur again.

- If a 3rd violation of the Parent Code of Conduct occurs: The parties in question will meet with the Center and the Head Start Director and will be asked not to return to Grace Hill property. The enrolled child/children will continue with his/her enrollment. The parents/guardians must provide a list of alternate adults to drop off and pick up their child/children.

Grace Hill reserves the right to call and engages the Police and/or press charges for an action or occurrence that threatened the health and safety of staff, parents, volunteer and children.
Release of Child
1304.22(a)(1)
For the safety of all children, an authorized individual must pick up child from school each day. Parents/guardians will be required to provide names of individuals who are authorized to pick up their child from the center. Individuals authorized to pick up children must be at least 14 years of age and have a photo I.D. These procedures will be followed in each classroom.

1. Parents/guardians are expected to drop off and pick up their child at the designated time.
2. In the event of an emergency that will cause parents/guardians to be delayed, they are to contact the center staff immediately. Contact information is included in the handbook.
3. If the dismissal time passes with no contact from parents/guardians, staff will follow these procedures:
   - Efforts will be made to contact parents/guardians.
   - If unsuccessful, individuals listed on the emergency card will be contacted.
   - If unsuccessful, Head Start staff will contact local authorities.
4. If a staff member determines that the adult picking up the child is unable to safely provide care for the child, the procedure is as follows:
   - The staff member calmly approaches the individual and asks to speak with them privately.
   - The staff member states their concern for the safety of the child.
   - The staff member offers to contact another person to pick up the child.
   - The staff member will notify local authorities if unable to contact an authorized individual.
5. Staff member will notify supervisor if these instances occur.
6. Child custody issues will be handled according to the regulations set forward by the State of Missouri. If you have a court order that limits the rights of one parent in matters such as custody or visitation, please bring that order to your Case Manager or your Center.
Daily Sign In & Out
It is a Head Start and Licensing requirement that children must be signed in and out of the center every day. Any person picking children up MUST be on the enrollment form as an authorized person to pick up the child. The individual assigned to pick up a child must provide valid picture identification. If the person is not on the authorized list or is unable to provide identification, the child will not be released until the parent comes to pick up the child.

In addition, Head Start has established a safeguard to the children enrolled in the program. If anyone who comes to pick up a child seems to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the child will not be released to that individual/parent. Head Start will contact law enforcement.

No Siblings Allowed in the Classroom
Head Start licensing restricts the number of individuals in the center. All children in the centers must be enrolled in the program. Children through five years of age and not enrolled in the program are not permitted to visit in the classrooms.

Stepping Up Recognition
We share the parent’s pride to see the educational growth their children have made with the learning experiences they have had in the program. To celebrate the end of the school year, the teacher along with parents will organize a special year end event where all children will be recognized.

Grace Hill Head Start will not conduct any “graduation ceremonies” where caps and gowns are worn.

Child Abuse/Neglect
All Grace Hill Head Start staff are responsible for the care and safety of the children in the program. The laws of the State of Missouri require that staff report to the Division of Family Services any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect. It is the goal of Grace Hill Head Start to prevent child abuse and neglect by providing comprehensive child and family services, including education, health, and social services. Resources are available to all families.
Safe, Drug-Free Grace Hill Head Start Centers
The Grace Hill Head Start Program is a comprehensive and preventive program involving the home, the school, and the community. Grace Hill works hard to integrate a variety of programs and activities to teach drug and alcohol prevention. Smoking is not permitted at any of the Grace Hill Centers.

Weapons
All Grace Hill Head Start Centers have a **ZERO TOLERANCE POLICY ON WEAPONS**. Any adult in possession of a weapon (guns, knives, etc.) will be removed from the center, with an automatic recommendation for **Dismissal** if an employee. If a child brings a weapon to the center, staff will confiscate the weapon and immediately notify the parents. A course of action will be determined, which may include contacting local authorities.

Vandalism
The destruction or defacing of any of the property of Grace Hill Head Start is considered vandalism. It disturbs the learning environment of the children and destroys the appearance of the site. This behavior will not be tolerated.

Statement of Assurance
The Grace Hill Head Start Program does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability in admission or access to treatment or employment in its programs and activities. Inquiries regarding compliance with Title VI, Title IX, age, Section 504, or Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) should be directed to Human Resources.
Confidentiality
Grace Hill Head Start protects each parent’s/legal guardian’s fundamental right to privacy and confidentiality. All children/family records are secured in a locked file cabinet. Only authorized staff are permitted to access these files. When necessary, child and family information will be shared with outside agencies/authorities with the written consent of the parent or legal guardian of the child (except in cases of child abuse).

Prior to and as a precondition for volunteering, parents and community volunteers must agree in writing to follow the agency’s confidentiality policy, which states that individuals will not reveal, divulge or publicize any matters dealing with Grace Hill Head Start. Individuals will not disseminate any oral or written information or remove any documents from Grace Hill Head Start premises without permission from the President/Chief Executive Officer or his/her designee. Additionally, individuals will respect and safeguard the confidentiality of the people we serve, our staff, and other volunteers. Any action resulting from a breach of confidentiality may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of volunteer services.
GRACE HILL HEAD START CENTERS

Grace Hill Settlement House Central Office &
Grace Hill Head Start Administration

2600 Hadley Street
St. Louis, MO 63106
314-584-6900

Water Tower 2125 Bissell, 63107
Data Clerk/Receptionist 314-584-6876
Center Manager 314-584-6870
Case Managers 314-584-6873
314-584-6872

Broadway 4040 S. Broadway, 63118
Data Clerk/Receptionist 314-584-6820
Center Manager 314-584-6827
Case Managers 314-584-6828
314-584-6824

Patch 7925 Minnesota, 63111
Data Clerk/Receptionist 314-584-6820
Center Manager 314-584-6827
Case Managers 314-584-6828
314-584-6824
# My Child’s Head Start Program Information:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Telephone:</td>
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### Center Staff

| Center Manager: |
| Case Manager: |

### My Child’s Information

| Classroom: |
| Teachers: |