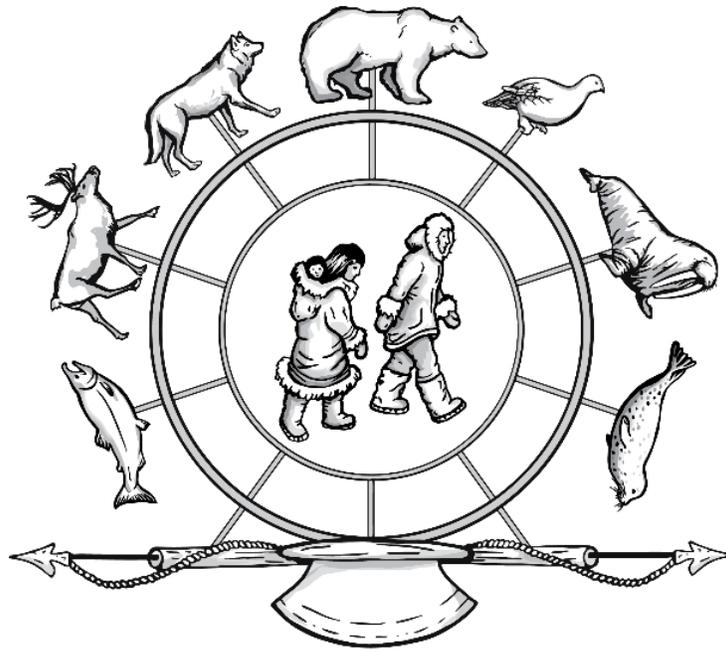


Kawerak

Head Start & Early Head Start



Parent Handbook

Kawerak, Inc.
PO Box 948
Nome, AK 99762
www.kawerak.org

Table of Contents

Head Start Services	3
Enrollment Information	4
Setting Your Child Up for Success	5
Parent and your Child's Needs	6
Parent Involvement	7

Policies

Attendance Policy	8
Emergency Contacts and Authorizations	8
Filed Trip Policy	8
Negative Behavior Management Practices	8
Illness Policy	9
Medication Policy	9
Covid-19 Policy	10
Accidents and Injuries Policy	11
Transportation/Bus Service Policy	11
Arrival/Departure Policy	12
Meal Times	12
Cold Weather and Outdoor Play Policy	12
Pets At School Policy	13
USDA Program Civil Rights Regulations	14
Contact Information for follow up	14

Head Start Services

EDUCATION SERVICES:

We focus on a child centered approach where the child is an active learner. The teaching staff serve as a guide and helper as the children learn, explore, develop and become lifelong learners. Each child is screened within 45 days of their enrollment to determine his/her unique developmental level in order to ensure that proper support is given to meet each child's individual needs. Educational activities and individual goals are designed to fit each child's developmental level and cultural background. A variety of curriculum and resources are used to document and record student development and progress. Progress reports are shared with parents three different times throughout the school year. Teaching staff arrange two home visits and two parent teacher conferences throughout the year to promote communication and assure that children and family needs are being met.

DISABILITIES SERVICES:

When a parent wants to learn more about their child's development as a result of concerns they have, developmental screening results, staff observations, or any other indicator, a parent can choose to refer their child to an appropriate agency (the local school district, Infant Learning Program, a specialist, etc.) to request a formal evaluation and program recommendations. Head Start/Early Head Start staff will support the parent and child throughout the process. Staff will receive appropriate training if needed in order to support children according to their needs. 10% of our enrollment is reserved for children with a diagnosed disability.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIP SERVICES:

Good partnerships mean Head Start parents and staff are learning from one another. Acting as a team, they identify the strengths, needs and interests of the family. Parents are supported as they meet their own goals and as they nurture the development of their children.

HEALTH SERVICES:

Through health examinations, developmental screenings and observations staff and parents can work together to identify children's individual health needs. If there are any health concerns, a child may be referred, with parent consent, to a local health agency or specialty clinic. For a child with any special health needs, Head Start staff will receive training to accommodate the child in the classroom. If a severe health or medical condition exists that requires special support beyond the skills of our staff, we will seek appropriate support with parent consent.

NUTRITION SERVICES:

Nutrition is very important for healthy development in young children. All children who are enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start are eligible to participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All meals are nutritious and in accordance with the CACFP guidelines. Children are served a minimum of one hot meal or snack each day at each site to meet at least one-third of their daily nutritional needs. All menus are renewed and approved by USDA.

TRANSPORTATION SERVICES:

If you are a site that has Kawerak Head Start bus services, parents must sign a release form before the child is able to ride the bus. The bus driver will come to your residence and beep the horn to let you know when he/she has arrived. The bus driver is on a strict schedule and will not wait longer than 2 minutes. Currently Nome is the only site where Kawerak is providing transportation for children in our program

Enrollment Information

- All fees for children are paid through state and federal grants.
- Head Start does not discriminate against sex, religion, or cultural background of children or families.
- Our program follows low-income guidelines (updated annually) for eligibility as established by the Federal Office of Management and Budget. All children are enrolled based on age and needs. 10% of enrollment is reserved to serve children with a diagnosed disability.
- Parents must provide proof of income—current income tax or pay stub.
- A child’s age by September 1st of the upcoming school year is the age used for the program year.
- Each child must have an up-to-date record of their immunizations and a TB/PPD screening result (age 1 year and older) before entering the program.
- Our program requires dental, physical, exams, as well as developmental, vision and hearing screenings within 45 days from the child’s first day of school.



Setting Your Child Up For Success

Going to school for the first time is usually exciting for children but sometimes school can be confusing and frightening. Here are some tips to help make the home to school transition go smoothly:

- Be sure your child gets 8-10 hours of sleep every night.
- Allow plenty of time to get ready and bring your child to school on time in the morning to avoid extra anxiety.

Begin washing up/bathing, clean underwear/PJ's, reading a book or talking about your day	Bed time	Wake up	School starts
Begin as early as 7:00 PM and as late as 8:30 PM	7:30 PM – 9:00 PM	7:30 AM	8:00 AM
Begin as early as 7:30 PM and as late as 9:00 PM	8:00 PM – 9:30 PM	8:00 AM	8:30 AM
Begin as early as 8:00 PM and as late as 9:30 PM	8:30 PM – 10:00 PM	8:30 AM	9:00 AM
Begin as early as 8:30 PM and as late as 10:00 PM	9:00 PM – 10:30 PM	9:00 AM	9:30 AM
Begin as early as 9:00 PM and as late as 10:30 PM	9:30 PM – 11:00 PM	9:30 AM	10:00 AM
Begin as early as 9:30 PM and as late as 11:00 PM	10:00 PM – 11:30 PM	10:00 AM	10:30 AM

- Talk about school positively at home with your child so he/she knows what to expect at school.
- Pick up your child from school on time.
- Read classroom newsletters and bulletin boards so you can ask your child questions about what he/she is learning in school that week.
- Take time to get to know your child's teachers so you can hear about your child's progress informally.
- Visit or volunteer in your child's classroom.
- Take time to listen to your child talk about school.
- Read, count, and play with your child at home.
- Provide your child with encouragement and assurance when he/she is feeling unsure.
- Be excited about school!

Parent and Your Child's Needs

Your Preschool Child - Your preschool child's brain is still physically growing and developing. As your child develops and learns, connections are made within the brain that remain with your child for the rest of his/her life. That is why stimulating your child every day increases your child's intelligence. As a parent you are your child's first teacher and know and understand your child's abilities and interests best. You can then encourage and provide opportunities of learning in those areas and help your child explore new areas that he/she needs to develop.

Head Start/Early Head Start is designed to help parents address their child's developmental needs in the areas of language, socialization, numeration, large and fine motor development as well as self-care and self-control skills. If your child has special needs, let us know so that we can help meet those needs. Head Start/Early Head Start is here to help your child develop and grow from wherever he/she is at.

Behavior Guidance Practices - Many developmental tasks at the preschool age are linked to impulse control issues. Behavior guidance practices are important tools for preschool teachers. Teachers help children learn to express feelings and master impulses in positive ways. Teachers employ many guidance methods.

Developmental Appropriateness - Sound behavior guidance is rooted in a developmentally appropriate learning environment. Developmentally appropriate play enhances growth of social, cognitive and physical competence in children. Appropriate play is guided through the structure built into the day's schedule, use of space, equipment, materials, activities and the behavioral guidance tools adults bring. For example, providing enough materials helps prevent excessive competition. Having several choices improves learning. Learning expands and competence grows when children feel comfortable in their environment, have opportunities for challenge and feel psychologically safe.

Positive Modeling - Head Start staff model acceptable behavior and behave in a manner consistent with the behavior expected from the children. For example, since children are expected to speak in a quiet voice teachers address children in quiet, firm tones.

Behavioral Appropriateness - Staff apply behavioral management strategies appropriate to the developmental stages of preschool children. For example, understanding that preschool children learn to take turns before they learn to share helps prevent inappropriate expectations and conflict.

EXAMPLES OF APPROPRIATE BEHAVIORAL STRATEGIES:

- Redirecting children to an acceptable activity.
- Giving children a choice of several activities.
- Discussing feelings and helping children verbalize their feelings.
- Offering alternative activities, "You may not do __ , but you may do _____ instead".
- Providing immediate, consistent and related consequences for unacceptable behavior such as removal of a misused toy, brief time out, etc.

Parent and Volunteer Role in Behavior Management - Head Start's goal is to make volunteering in the classroom a positive learning experience. Parents and other volunteers are expected to implement positive behavior guidance methods. If a situation is beyond the comfort level of a volunteer, the teacher will provide guidance and support. Volunteers are not expected to take an active part in managing difficult behaviors. Volunteers will take their lead from teaching staff regarding how to handle particular behavior and situations.

Parent Involvement

Get Involved – Head Start believes parents are their child's first and most important teacher AND parents are always welcome to visit their child's classroom at any time. Ways to be involved include the following:

- Reading the newsletters and information Head Start offers.
- Volunteering or observing in your child's classroom.
- Attending Parent Meetings.
- Getting involved with Policy Council or Parent Committee to share your ideas.
- Attend Monthly Family Events (Family Fun Nights/Socials, etc.).
- Applying to be a paid substitute in our classrooms.
- Due to COVID, ALL Family Engagement activities may be limited to virtual and will be considered face to face on a case by case basis.

Parent Committee - Each site will have a parent committee made up of all the parents and guardians of children in that class. Committee meetings will be held on a regular basis during the program year. The Parent Committees may assist in:

- Planning classroom and group activities including field trips--under the direction of their staff person and in agreement with the developmental level of the children involved.
- Provide the necessary volunteers for the classrooms, center days or field trips.
- Elect a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and a Secretary for Parent Committee.
- Elect a delegate and an alternate for Policy Council for each program option at their site. Alternates should participate in meetings if the delegate is unable to participate.
- Parents should encourage their delegate to attend as they represent your views when writing the grant, budget and policies.
- Plan and schedule training activities that meet the needs of the parents on your parent committee.
- Support staff with addressing problems and concerns should be identified to your teacher before discussing them at parent meetings. Please give your teacher the opportunity to solve the concerns.

Policy Council – Policy Council is a group of parents and community members who meet monthly during the school year to oversee the delivery of services to children and families.

Through Policy Council, members actively share in making decisions about the program. Each local parent committee elects a parent to present their site at Policy Council.

Policies and Procedures

Attendance Policy - Regular attendance is encouraged, so that your child gets the most from his/her Head Start/Early Head Start experience. It is a program goal for all students to be present at least 85% of days class is offered. Please contact your classroom teacher when your child will be absent. In the event you do not contact Head Start/Early Head Start, staff will contact you in regards to your child's absence to ensure your child is safe and understand your situation. If absences become concerning a conference will be scheduled to support improved attendance. Your classroom teacher or Family Advocate will work with your family to improve your child's participation in the program with emphasis on attendance in relation to your family's unique circumstances.

Emergency Contacts and Authorizations

You must sign authorizations for the following:

- Names and phone numbers of emergency contacts (child's HS/EHS application and emergency card). We encourage parents to least 3 or more emergency contacts as unforeseen circumstances can come up and emergency contacts are sometimes unavailable.
- Permission for Head Start staff to act in case of an emergency (classroom emergency card).
- Name of preferred hospital and source of regular medical care. (HS/EHS application & emergency card)
Please notify your child's teacher of emergency contact or their phone number changes.

Field Trip Policy - Field trips are done periodically to extend student learning. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to participate in field trips. Parent permission is given for children to participate in field trips on the *Child Development Permission/Agreement Form* filled at the beginning of the year. Staff will provide parents with a field trip notification prior to every field trip so parents are aware of upcoming trips and can participate if they choose to.

Negative Behavior Management Practices- Corporal punishment is strictly forbidden/prohibited (hitting, spanking, pinching, kicking, biting, rough handling). Emotional abuse is also strictly forbidden/prohibited (name calling, shaming, shunning, and making derogatory remarks, threatening, humiliating or frightening). Children will not be punished for lapses in toilet habits. Children will not be deprived of food, clothing, warmth, light or medical care. Restraint may only be used if safety for any person is compromised.

Illness Policy –If at any time you are uncertain about your child’s health, check with your local Physician or Health Aide before sending your child to school. Please contact your local Head Start and keep your child home if he/she has any of the following:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature above 100 Degrees F anytime within 24 hrs. of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown or unfamiliar rash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unusual tiredness, paleness, irritability, constant crying, fussiness
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vomiting anytime within 24 hours of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red inflamed eyes, draining eyes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infectious diseases (pink eye, scabies, impetigo, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diarrhea anytime within 24 hours of school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red inflamed ears, draining ears with thick green discharge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Untreated lice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open and draining skin sores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stomach aches, severe headaches, sore throat, etc. 	

If your child has any of these while at school he/she may be sent home according to Kawerak Head Start policy. If we suspect that your child may have been exposed to a contagious disease while at school, we will send home a notice with your child or call you. Children with certain diseases may need to be cleared by a health authority before they are able to return to school.

Medication Policy - Children who require staff to administer medication while at school are required to have specific forms filled out and on file at their local Head Start before medication can be administered at school. Medications must come in their original bottle with the name, date, dosage, administration route, and physician’s information. Medications will be stored in a lock box at school and will be hand delivered to the parent at the end of each week. If a child has a special medical need, staff will work with parents to become properly trained on how to administer care for that child while at school.

COVID-19 Policy

The novel coronavirus is a new coronavirus that has not been previously identified. The virus causing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is not the same as the coronavirus that commonly circulate among humans causing illness like the common cold. The virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to spread mainly from person to person, mainly through respiratory droplets produced when an infected person coughs, sneezes, or talks. Spread is more likely to occur when people are in close contact with one another (within 6 feet). Some recent studies have suggested that COVID-19 may spread by people who are not showing symptoms.

Symptoms

All students and staff will complete a Health Check upon arrival, including a temperature screening. The following are symptoms of COVID-19 and (if displayed) will result in the child or staff member being temporarily excluded:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Any person who displays these symptoms should stay home and are encouraged to get tested for COVID-19. If the person does not get tested for COVID-19 or they test positive, they should stay home for a minimum of 10 days. They may return when 10 days have passed, they have not had a fever in 24 hours, and all their symptoms are improving. Students and staff who test positive for COVID-19 must stay home for a minimum of 10 days even if they are asymptomatic. If the person has a negative COVID-19 test, they can return to work/school once it has been 24 hours since they had a fever AND all of their symptoms are improving.

Accidents and Injuries Policy - All Kawerak Head Start staff are trained in First Aid and CPR. Kawerak will ensure that there is at least one member present in each classroom that has CPR/First Aid training. If your child is in an accident or becomes injured and that results in the need for basic first aid, staff will act accordingly. If an injury results in the need for a visit to the Doctor, staff will apply first aid and the parent will be called to bring their child to the Doctor. For life threatening or serious injuries first aid will be implemented, 911 will be called immediately and the parent will be called as soon as possible. All incidents, injuries, or accidents will be reported to supervisors and parents will be called according to the Emergency Contact Card on file for the child. Copies of reports will be kept in the Child File and in the Health/Nutrition Specialist office.

Supervision of Children Policy - Children will be supervised at all times while attending the program (classroom, indoor and outdoor play, field trips, etc.). The staff to child ratio will be 1 staff member for every 10 preschool children in the 3 and 4 year old classrooms and 1 staff member for every 4 children in the Early Head Start classrooms, birth to three years old. Teachers will ensure that children are always in their range of sight and/or hearing at all times. These ratios and rules will also be used during off-site sessions such as lunch/gym time at BSSD schools, or during field trips.

Transportation/Bus Services Policy - Please consider the following when preparing for school in the morning:

- Have your child dressed in clothes and ready to go to school on time.
- Have hat, gloves, boots, and coat ready to put on before the bus honks.
- Check the weather to make sure you are sending your child to school with appropriate outdoor clothing.
- Remind your child to use the restroom before the bus arrives.
- Finish up any morning snack before the bus comes and remind your child not to bring it on the bus.

If your child is not ready or misses the bus, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to bring the child to school. The bus WILL NOT go back for your child if the child is not ready. Please do not send your child to school in a cab alone or let your child walk to school by him/herself as it is against Kawerak Head Start policy.

After school is out, the bus will not drop off a child if there is not an adult or person of appropriate age (16 years or older) at home to meet the child. The adult MUST meet the child at the bus during drop off. It is the driver's responsibility to return the child home safely to a responsible adult. If there is no one at the residence, the bus will bring the child back to school. If this happens, it will be the parent's responsibility to pick up their child from school. Please call and let us know an hour in advance before the bus run starts if there is a change in where the child is to be picked up or dropped off. If your child is sick or unable to come to school, please call the center to let us know immediately so we can inform the bus driver.

Head Start MAY NOT transport a child in vehicles that do not meet the Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. We are unable pay for or provide transportation by cab (with the exception of the BHS/HB program), four wheeler, snow machine, boat, or personal vehicles. In case of an emergency, transportation will be arranged for the child.

Arrival/Departure Policy - All children and families must fill out an “Arrival/Departure & Attendance Reporting” form so that parents are aware of Kawerak Head Start policy. This form includes information about our attendance policy, classroom start and end times, as well as the responsibilities of parent. This form is completed as part of the orientation process once your child has been accepted into the program.

Meal Times - We recognize that mealtimes and feeding routines are essential to children’s healthy development and socialization. Mealtime provides opportunities for children to learn appropriate eating patterns and meal time behavior; practice decision-making, sharing, and communicating with others; and develop muscle control and eye-hand coordination. In the center- based program and at home-based group socializations, meals are eaten family-style with teaching staff joining children at the table, foods are passed among the children, and portions are regulated by the children themselves with staff guidance. We encourage parents to be actively involved in the classroom and participate in meals with their child. If you wish to volunteer in the classroom during mealtime, please let the center know so that the cook knows how much food to prepare for that meal. Mealtime prayer: *Quyaana now for food to eat; for fresh cold milk that we can drink. Quyaana too for rest and care and little children everywhere.*

Sample Menu: Baked Salmon, Brown Rice, Green beans, Peaches, Milk. Menus will be sent home monthly with children. Please contact the Health/Nutrition Specialist if you have questions or concerns regarding the menu.

Cold Weather and Outdoor Play Policy - Teachers and Teacher Aides are encouraged to take children outside daily, as weather permits.

Parents are asked to bring weather appropriate clothing for their children every day. Adverse weather will be considered when the temperature outside is colder than 0 degrees Fahrenheit for Early Head Start/Child Care Partnership and -10 degrees Fahrenheit for Head Start with wind chill. If it reaches these temperatures, children will play inside.

Pets at School Policy -

Classroom pets must be pre-approved and meet all licensing safety guidelines.

No Outside Foods in Classrooms Policy - Head Start promotes nutrition education for children and families and wants to support safe environments and healthy food choices during program hours. Head Start Performance Standards state that all foods served as part of our meal program must be low in fat, sugar, and salt. All foods must accommodate any dietary restriction/disabilities of children in the classroom. To consistently ensure the safety of all children enrolled in Head Start/Early Head Start, no outside foods will be permitted in the classroom, on the bus, or on class field trips. Outside food will be placed outside of the classroom and sent home with the child at the end of the day.

This policy is applicable to:

- Birthday celebrations in our classrooms/facilities
- Holiday celebrations in our classrooms/facilities
- Field Trips
- Riding the Head Start bus

Head Start will provide foods within the CACFP guidelines if approved for activities hosted by Head Start. Events may include: parent activities, parent trainings, or educational opportunities in the classroom related to our Creative Curriculum or other curriculum.

References:

- Meals in Classrooms policy
- Classroom Activities policy
- Food Donations policy
- Nutrition Education for Children policy
- Centers for Disease Control

Infant Meals - Early Head Start sites are responsible for documenting infant meals provided by Kawerak for children ages 6 weeks to 11 months. Infant Menu/Meal Count Menu will be followed for the ages and stages of development. Infants will be fed on demand and our program encourages breastfeeding. Meals that are claimable under CACFP are designated by site based on the Early Head Start feeding times.

Nutrition Actives for Parents - Kawerak will provide nutrition education to parents to support a child's nutritional needs in the home. Nutrition education will be integrated in health related education activities for parents. The Health/Nutrition Specialist will work with teaching staff/Parent Committees to determine areas of interest. Nutrition education for parents may be incorporated into parent activities/meetings and during site visits by Core Staff members.

Allergies Policy - Kawerak will provide a safe educational environment for students by reducing the risk of accidental exposure to allergy-causing foods and/or allergens known or unknown. It is the Parents and or Guardian's responsibility to inform Head Start/Early Head Start staff of what their child can or cannot eat. Parents are required to fill out a "Nutrition History" and a "Health/Developmental History" form at enrollment to provide the program information on the child's current health/nutrition status

USDA Program civil rights regulations In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [How to File a Complaint](#), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- 1) Mail:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil
Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- 2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- 3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Thank you for participating in our program. We look forward to our partnership with you. If you have any questions or concerns, you are welcomed to contact your site staff or our Child Development Program Manager at 907-443-9073 who can direct you to the appropriate staff member.

Have a wonderful school year!