

**I-CARE, Inc.
2019-2020
Head Start
Parent Handbook**



The mission of I-CARE, Inc. is to empower and assist individuals and families with low-incomes to attain skills, knowledge, motivation, and opportunities to become self-sufficient and independent as well as to revitalize their communities.

To: Our Head Start Families

Welcome to a new and exciting year with I-CARE, Inc. Head Start. We are glad to have you and your child as part of our Head Start family for the 2019-2020 school year.

We look forward to working with you as we strive to promote quality care and educational experiences for your child. We would like to invite you to come to your child's classroom and spend time with us as we make new discoveries, learn social skills and share educational experiences. We enjoy having volunteers in our centers and are eager to have you share in your child's education outside the home. We welcome input from you in setting program goals for your child and helping us enhance our school readiness goals and to meet our mission statement.

It is our goal to guide and extend your child's individual interest and to prepare them for kindergarten. Our curriculum offers the best possible opportunity for your child to become well prepared for public school. Head Start takes pride in offering parents multiple ways to participate in their child's education and set goals for development within our learning environment. We use several tools that help in determining your child's individual strengths. Using these tools we build upon their strengths to empower your child to take risk, build self-esteem and become socially astute in peer settings.

Not only do we individualize for your child educationally and developmentally, but we also invite your family to share their cultural heritage and ethnicity within the center to broaden our perspectives of community and inclusion allowing us to be diverse. This whole child/whole family approach is what sets us apart from many child care centers!

During the school year, we encourage you to become involved with the classroom, center, and program by offering feedback in decision making and activities. I-CARE, Inc. has several services available to participants (Iredell County) such as: Weatherization, Workforce Development, and Community Service Block Grant programs. I-CARE, Inc. also has many community partnerships with local agencies to provide referrals and offer assistance when needed. Please see your Family Service Worker for a list of agencies.

While in the program we challenge you to do the following:

- Attend all monthly parent meetings and center events
- Attend Circle of Security (parenting curriculum)
- Be an active participant in your child's education
- Set goals with your family service worker and strive to achieve them
- Keep a positive attitude while in our centers
- Volunteer to be an engaged participant in our decision making process

Thank you

Titania Stockton
Director of Children's Services

About Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded program whose goal is to prepare children ages 3-5 for school by providing an inclusive, quality, safe-learning environment within a structured educational setting that uses a researched based curriculum (High Scope) and is the only local preschool program that offers health, dental, social services and a comprehensive parent involvement program which now includes our Parenting Curriculum (Circle of Security). Head Start provides services in Iredell and Catawba Counties to 351 children. Services include: nutritious meals and snacks and developmentally appropriate activities. Medical and Dental screenings are provided. Head Start offers a unique approach by engaging parents in collaboration with teachers to develop their child's individual plans for learning and develop, as well as revising program policies, and approval staff personnel decisions. Families must meet Federal income guidelines to qualify.

Program Goals

- I. To provide a meaningful educational program and learning atmosphere to meet the needs of our children, ages 3-5, in their individual learning stages.
- II. To have all staff working together to provide a positive learning atmosphere that will equip each child to learn, to experience success, and be challenged to become a lifelong learner.
- III. To develop and maintain the values of our society that will lead our children to become positive and functional citizens.
- IV. To have interactions of parent, child, teacher, administration, and community in the overall educational process of the program.
- V. To recognize parents as their child's first teacher and actively involve them in the educational process including transitioning from Head Start to school.
- VI. To provide opportunities for all children to learn and perform successfully, regardless of abilities, family background, and cultural diversity.
- VII. To hire and maintain respectful, caring well-trained staff, a positive climate, as well as parent and community involvement.
- VIII. To create and maintain a nurturing and educationally sound environment for all children.
- IX. To develop community partnerships to ensure quality and comprehensive services to children and their families.
- X. To welcome parent engagement & participation in center activities, provide resource and referral services, and parent training to families with young children enrolled in the program.

Program Enrollment

I-CARE, Inc. currently serves 351 children. Head Start prohibits discrimination based on race, color, sex, age, disability, religion or national origin. Acceptance into the Head Start program is based on age and income eligibility set by the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Each family must meet the federal requirements for eligibility. An eligibility rating system for most in need is used which adds points for criteria such as single parent, foster parent, homelessness, documented disabilities, etc. This system ensures that we serve children and families with the greatest need. Our program serves a minimum of 10% of children with disabilities. Those children who are not selected for enrollment are placed on a waiting list. After selection is made, parents are notified of their child's status by written notification either by mail or electronically, using email information provided by parent.

Contact Information

Center Name	Address	Contact Information	Hours of operation
Southeast Head Start	230 Adams Street Statesville, NC 28677	704-873-2858	8:00 AM-2:00 PM Extended Day Available
Buffalo Shoals Head Start	532 Buffalo Shoals Rd. Statesville, NC 28677	704-881-0760	8:00 AM-2:00 PM
Unity Head Start	1145 Salisbury Rd. Statesville, NC 28677	704-450-8531	8:00 AM-2:00 PM
Cloverleaf Head Start	300 James Farm Rd. Statesville, NC 28625	704-402-8587	7:45 AM-1:45 PM
Union Grove Head Start	1314 Sloans Mill Rd. Union Grove, NC 28689	704-402-7544	7:30 AM-1:30 PM
Troutman Head Start	236 Barium Springs Dr. Statesville, NC 28677	704-402-7578	8:00 AM-2:00PM
Mooresville Head Start	219 W Mills Ave. Mooresville, NC 28115	704-450-2387	8:00 AM-2:00Pm
Newton Head Start	249 East N St. Newton, NC 28658	828-464-1108	8:00 AM-2:00 PM
Longview Head Start	737 12 th St. Hickory, NC 28602	704-450-2165	8:15 AM-2:15 PM
Viewmont Head Start	21 16 th Ave. NW Hickory, NC 28601	704-402-7635	7:45 AM-1:45 AM

Center Operation/Closings/Cancellations

I-CARE Inc., Head Start centers will operate as close to school system calendars respective to their county and/or location. As part of our school readiness centers will close for teacher workdays, nationally recognized holidays, early releases and annual leave days. These will be communicated with the family using agendas, parent information boards and mass email/text messages.

In cases of inclement weather, please join the I-CARE, Inc. Facebook page for announcements. Staff will send mass email/text when able to inform parents of closings due to weather. If a center closes due to weather, this will also cancel any activities scheduled for that day (parent meetings, policy council, etc.)

Please be mindful, emergencies may happen at any point in the year, or even during the day that may cause a specific center to close unexpectedly. Staff will work diligently to ensure you receive this information in a timely manner.

Program Governance

Parent Committee

All parents of currently enrolled Head Start children are members of the Parent Committee. Parent Meetings are held monthly throughout the year. These meetings give parents an opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills, have fun and make site-based decisions, and receive valuable information on topics related to parenting, self-sufficiency and health and safety best practices. Parents are encouraged to take an active role in these meetings. Meeting dates and times are decided on during the first parent Meeting.

The following officers are elected at the first Parent Meeting to preside over the monthly Parent Committee Meetings: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. Parent Committee members are responsible for electing a Policy Council Representative and Alternate to represent the center. Any officer that misses three consecutive meetings may be replaced.

Policy Council

The Policy Council is the governing body of Head Start and consists of Head Start parents from each center, former parents, and community representatives and stake-holders. Its function is to oversee the Head Start Program, ensure compliance with federal regulations and provide parents the opportunity to participate in shared decision-making regarding the program design and implementation. Meetings are held monthly to discuss issues affecting Head Start and to make decisions about how the program operates. Each center will elect one Representative and one Alternate Representative to attend Policy Council meetings. It is very important that your site elects a Representative who is dedicated and willing to attend Policy Council meetings monthly. Parents who are members of the Policy Council are reimbursed for mileage to and from the meeting location, this will not exceed the approved IRS rate (see I-CARE, Inc. financial policies and procedures-local travel), child care is available if needed and transportation can be arranged upon request. **The Policy Council Chair will serve on the Board of Directors to ensure information is shared between governing bodies. Policy Council representative from each center must attend monthly parent meetings to ensure information is shared in a unilateral approach.**

Attendance

Head Start places intense focus on school readiness, therefore your child's attendance is very important. Parents/guardians must bring their children to school every day on time.

In accordance with Head Start Program Performance Standard 1302.16 (1), if your child is unexpectedly absent and you have not contacted the program within one hour of classroom start time, we must attempt to contact you to ensure your child's well-being. If your child is absent or going to be absent FOR ANY REASON, you are to notify your child's Teacher or Family Service Worker. When notifying staff you should state the reason for the absence and give a possible date of which your child will return to class. If your child cannot return by the date stated, again contact staff with an explanation. If your child is absent due to sickness for three days in a row we request that you bring a note from your doctor. Exceptions may be made for vacations, illness, out-of-town emergencies etc. by contacting the Family Advocate in advance for extended absences.

If a child is absent for (4) consecutive days or has a pattern of irregular attendance, family contact will be made by telephone or in person by a Head Start staff member to discuss absences and offer assistance to ensure that any attendance challenges are addressed and an attendance plan may be initiated.

In order to offer every Head Start child the best services, attendance is extremely important. Those who attend infrequently deny other children who could attend regularly an opportunity for service. Federal regulations require that our attendance rate be at least 85%. Children who have patterns of irregular attendance or fall below the 85% will receive a letter explaining the importance of their child's attendance at school. If a child's chronic absenteeism continues with no response or cooperation from the parent/guardian, then the child's slot may be withdrawn.

If there is no contact made with parents, the following procedures will take place:

Day (3) Phone Call or Home Visit by Family Service Worker if unable to reach by phone

Day (4) Contact attempt

Day (5) Child dropped from program

In the event that the child is dropped from the program, parents have the option of contacting the Family Service Worker and having the child placed on the waiting list. Communication between the parent/guardian and Head Start staff is very important!

Arrival & Departure

While these rules may seem stern, I-CARE, Inc. feels it is important to establish healthy routines for children and families that will promote optimal learning in the classroom, and help prepare children to enter into the public school system ready to learn. Children must be signed in and out daily by an authorized care giver or other adult with release permission. Adults must sign in and out using their full name.

Arrival

Head Start arrival time is typically 8:00 a.m-8:30 a.m. (please see chart above for specific times). If your child has an appointment, you will need to inform the teacher the day before or by 8:30 the morning of the appointment, so that lunch can be ordered for your child. Please bring a doctor's note to ensure

proper documentation of absence. If after the doctor's appointment your child cannot arrive by 10:00 a.m, you will need to make other arrangements for the day.

Departure

Departure time is the ending time for your child's center location. In the event that an emergency arises and you cannot be at the center to pick up your child by ending time, you must immediately call the center to inform the teacher. We will attempt to contact your emergency contact person(s). Emergency contacts must be up to date and will be verified by the Family Service staff.

If the occasion arises that children are not picked up on time, the following procedure will be used:

- 1st Time: Parent conference with the teacher
- 2nd Time: The Head Start Family Service Worker will contact the parent
- 3rd Time: Parent conference with Parent Family Community Engagement Manager prior to bringing the child back to school.

The incident may be reported to the local Department of Social Services who will have access to all Head Start records, as applicable.

Emergency Contact Information

Emergency contact numbers are required and must be listed on the Application and kept up-to-date. You must report any changes to your child's Teacher or Family Service Worker immediately. Your child will not be allowed to stay at Head Start without current emergency contact information. If your child must be picked up due to an emergency (sickness or behavior), you must arrive within one hour. We encourage you to list as many emergency contacts and individuals for pick-up as necessary. They must be 18 years or older. We cannot and will not release a child to anyone who is not listed on the transportation or emergency contact by the parent/guardian. A photo I.D. is required for persons unknown. There will be no exceptions to this policy so that we may ensure the safety and confidentiality of your child and your family.

If an emergency arises and you cannot be reached at any of your contact numbers, Head Start may be required to contact local law enforcement or DSS.

Accidents/Incidents/Daily Health Checks

Accident/Incidents are reported the day an accident or incident occurs by staff to the on-site administrator and parent or guardian by paper notification. Health checks are performed daily by staff to ensure no child enters the center with cuts, bruises, or unexplained medical conditions.

Custody/Release of Information

I-CARE, Inc. strives to ensure that parents are kept up-to-date on their child's progress. Upon written request, Head Start will release information to both parents regarding a child's record or progress at Head Start, unless a current court order document is provided to the Head Start staff. Head Start will also release children to both parents unless court ordered custody documents are provided. If you have questions regarding this procedure, please contact your Family Service Worker to ensure orders are in child's file.

Confidentiality

I-CARE, Inc. is committed to ensuring the security and confidentiality of personnel, children and family files. Only authorized personnel will have access to files for children and families. Information will not be released to outside agencies without written authorization from parents except when a court order is in place to release information.

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting

All I-CARE, Inc. personnel, vendors, contractors, and volunteers are mandated reporters. If abuse or neglect is suspected either inside the home or outside the home, a report will be made to our local Department of Social Services for investigation. Any suspected case of child abuse or neglect, within the Head Start program, is directly reported to the Department of Social Services and the Family & Community Partnership Manager, who will then contact the Head Start Director for immediate investigation and action with the appropriate authorities. State laws' permits the Department of Social Services investigators access to the reported child and their records at I-CARE, Inc.-Head Start. Anyone participating in good faith in the making of a report shall have immunity from any liability, civil or criminal.

Nutrition

Breakfast, lunch and a snack will be provided. Menus will be posted in the classroom monthly. Outside homemade food or any type of candy cannot be brought in for any meal or snack here at I-CARE, Inc. and only nutritionally beneficial items will be served at center events and parent engagement activities. Please look for food sign-up sheets in the classroom and work with your child's teacher.

Screenings and Health Related Services

All Head Start children will receive a free dental screening provided by one of our local dentistry partners. If needs are assessed by the dentist, your Family Service Worker will contact you to schedule with your dentist for necessary work to be completed. As a parent/guardian you are expected to take your child to have work completed and keep up with monthly appointments. The Family Service Worker must track this information in our database system until child's dental work is completed. Should you or your dentist decide work is not necessary, I-CARE, Inc. requires written documentation from your dentist and/or a signed declination. Transportation and/or assistance will be provided as needed. In an effort to fight tooth decay, children will brush teeth daily, after breakfast in their classroom.

Tooth brushing: Fluoridated tooth paste

Frequency: Once daily

Amount: 1/8 tsp. (pea sized)

I-CARE, Inc. will provide, through contractual registered nursing services, any health screenings not provided by child's pediatrician. These health screenings include: hearing, vision, heights, weights, and blood pressure readings.

It is the goal of I-CARE, Inc. that every child has a current physical on-site before enrollment.

Allowances will be made if a family has documentation of an upcoming appointment or if it creates a barrier for attendance. However, Division of Childcare and Early Education mandates a physical must be on site within 30 days of enrollment. As physicals begin to expire, a reminder will be sent 30 days prior to the expiration of current physical. Families will have 30 days after expiration to have a current physical in place before child will be excluded from program until documentation is submitted.

Any child requiring medicines for rescue or emergency purposes must have an action plan and medicine on site before enrollment into center. When action plans or medicines expire new forms and medicines must be in on-site for child to return. Please see your Family Service Worker for any needed forms.

It is the goal of I-CARE, Inc. to ensure every child has a dental and medical home. This is identified through enrollment forms and Family Partnership Agreements. Referrals will be provided to assist families in establishing care.

Allergies

All food allergies must be documented by a doctor and a copy of the documentation must be given to the Director of Children's Services. We cannot accept a verbal statement from the parent or child. All food allergies must be posted in the child's classroom and also in the kitchen at all times. Your child will be served an alternate item with the same nutritional value. Also, if your child is not allowed to eat a particular food for religious reasons, a form will be provided during the child's enrollment to be completed by the parent.

Daily Outdoor Activities

The Division of Child Care requires that all children have one hour of daily outdoor play. Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Also know that there is a possibility that your child may get dirty or stains on their clothing when outdoors. If a child cannot go outside for allergies or other medical reasons, a note from the child's physician must be on file stating the reason the child cannot participate and/or limitations of outdoor play. **If a child is not well enough to go outside, the child is not well enough to be at the center.**

Sick Policy

Children with any of the following will be sent home or not allowed to return until seen by a doctor and return with a doctor's note:

- Fahrenheit temperature over 100 degrees underarm, cannot return till fever free for 24 hours, without medication.
- Strep throat, cannot return until 24 hours after treatment has started
- Two or more episodes of vomiting within a 12 hour period
- Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis) If either eye is draining, cloudy or has colored discharge, return after 24 hours after treatment or accompanied with a doctor's note stating that the drainage is a non-contagious condition.
- Head lice-child may not return until treatment recommended by physician is completed. Parents must make every effort to remove all nits and provide proof of treatment. Head Start will provide one free box of treatment. An I-CARE, Inc.-Head Start staff will check the child upon returning. Children will not be admitted to school with live lice. I-CARE, Inc.-Head Start can assist with lice treatment kits for families.
- Ringworm, child may return after one treatment as long as lesion can be kept covered by clothing or bandage.
- Chicken Pox, if diagnosed with Chicken Pox, child may return to Head Start after 7 days from the onset of the rash or when all lesions are dry and crusted over.
- Rash, child with an undiagnosed rash will be sent home if the rash spreads over a period of time, has fever, is widespread, persist more than two days, consist of blisters, and looks like it is bleeding under the skin.
- Tuberculosis, cannot return until a health professional states that the child is not infectious and cleared by a physician to return.
- Impetigo, cannot return until 24 hours after treatment has started
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), cannot return until five days of 14 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Sudden onset of diarrhea characterized by an increased number of bowel movements, 2 or more and with increased stool water
- When a physician or other health professional issues a written order that the child be separated

- from other children
- Scabies-Cannot return until treatment is completed.

If any medical problems should arise while the child is at Head Start, a staff member will contact the family so that the child can be picked up from the center.

Doctor's note is necessary for an excused absence and must cover the time the child was absent. If a sick child is cared for at home, the parent/guardian will need to provide a note. Should the child need medical treatment, then the parent/guardian should also provide a note.

Rest Times

Children will observe rest time for 45 minutes, each day, after lunch. The center supplies a cot, a cot sheet and a blanket for each child. Coverings and cots are washed weekly, and as needed. All items are LABELED with the child's first and last name. Please do not send blankets, pillows or stuffed animals for your child to sleep with, they will be sent back home due to sanitation rules.

Educational Services

I-CARE, Inc. utilizes DIAL-4 (Developmental Indicator Assessment of Learning 4th edition) as our screening tool for children's development. Through the DIAL-4 children are screened for potential delays. If a delay is suspected by staff administering the DIAL-4, a referral will be made to the local education agency. Every child will receive a DIAL-4 screening within the first 45 days of enrollment. If suspicions of a potential delay are present the second year a child returns the DIAL-4 will be administered again.

I-CARE, Inc. will provide two home visits and two parent teacher conferences each year, giving parents/guardians an opportunity for goal setting and discussion concerning their child's development. Dependent on the child's enrollment the amount of home visits and parent teacher conferences may be reduced.

I-CARE, Inc. utilizes COR (Child Observation Record) as our assessment tool for children's learning and development. Observations and scores related to school readiness are recorded in an electronic data base system. Reports will be generated three times quarterly and discussed with parents/guardians during either home visits or parent teacher conferences. The amount of COR reports available will be dependent upon child's enrollment date. If a child enrolls after the third period COR is completed, teacher observations and daily interactions will be reported to parent/guardian for discussion of progress toward school readiness goals and development while enrolled in the Head Start program.

ADA/IDEA

I-CARE, Inc. Head Start strives to meet ADA requirements in all our classrooms and in the equipment used for children. Every effort is made to provide the same accommodations and services on an equal basis for those with disabilities and those without disabilities. IDEA-the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (P. L. 102-119) requires that all states and territories provide a public school education to children with disabilities from ages 3 to 21, no matter how severe the disability. This law promises to children with a disability a "free appropriate public education" at public expense, educational placement is based on an evaluation of each child's own special needs and that an Individualized Education Program (IEP) is planned for your child and states the services they will receive. If you have a child with a disability, be sure they are receiving the special education they deserve.

Health and Safety

I-CARE, Inc. makes every effort to ensure the safety of each child, family and staff member in our program. Due to our belief that safety is a top priority, please be aware that any child who creates an unsafe environment within the classroom setting will be sent home for the day and a meeting with the Mental Health/Disability Manager will be scheduled. However, I-CARE, Inc. staff will make every adaptation and accommodation possible before a parent/guardian is called for a child's behavior. I-CARE, Inc. contracts a mental health professional to assess classroom staff and child interactions to mitigate such extreme measure.

In accordance to our belief in maintaining a healthy and safe environment, I-CARE, Inc. practices fire drills every month with staff and children to ensure their safety in the event of an emergency. Tornado drills are practiced twice a school year. I-CARE, Inc. also participates in lockdown drills three times a year in partnership with local law enforcement. Please note that during lockdown drills or an actual lockdown, phones will not be answered and no person will be able to enter or leave the building. Bus evacuations will be completed three times a year as part of school readiness. Pedestrian safety is discussed during enrollment and information is disseminated to all families at this time.

All I-CARE, Inc. properties (centers, vehicles and buses) will be smoke, tobacco, tobacco less products (vape, chew, and dip), alcohol, drug and firearm free to ensure children's health and safety at all times.

The Emergency Medical Care Plan is placed in each classroom once completed to ensure all classroom or support staff are aware of all local emergency contacts.

1. Emergency information of staff and children is kept:
2. Medical Consultant:
3. Emergency Room:
Address:
Phone Number:
Hospital:
Address:
Phone Number:
4. Dental Emergency:
5. Poison Control:
6. Available emergency transportation:
Name: Phone Number:
Name: Phone Number:
7. EMS/Fire Dept.:
Rescue Squad:
Emergency:
8. Persons in the Center responsible for giving CPR/First Aid:
9. Persons responsible for determining the degree of care needed, contacting medical assistance and determining appropriate transportation:
10. Persons in center responsible for accompanying the ill or injured person for medical attention and assuring that signed authorizations is taken to emergency room with person:
11. Persons responsible for administering medication:
12. Persons responsible for notifying parents or emergency contact person of illness or accident:
14. Person responsible for obtaining floater or substitute staff:
15. Location of telephones:

Center Rules

- In accordance with local daycare law governed by the Division of Child Development and Early Education, each child must have an extra change of clothing on site at all times. If a child soils clothing or must be changed for any reason their clothes will be sent home and a new change of clothing must be brought the following day for the child to be admitted into the center.
- In accordance to DCDEE law, a child must wear closed toe shoes at all times. Sandals and/or flip-flops hinder a child's play and exploration. I-CARE, Inc. does not allow children to wear beads in their hair at any time, as this may pose a health and safety concern within an active classroom setting.
- It is the expectation of I-CARE, Inc. that all persons entering the facilities will conduct themselves in a manner that is respectful. Any of the following will not be tolerated and persons may be asked to leave: foul language, inappropriate dress or threats. Staff will call 911 in the event they feel unsafe or fear for the safety of the center.
- I-CARE, Inc. ask that children utilize book bags that are provided by the Head Start staff and that no items be brought from home in the book bag such as: stuffed animals, towels, blankets, chap-stick, cough drops, or medicines.
- All adults entering the center must be appropriately dressed at all times. No undergarments may be visible, pajamas and slippers are not to be worn inside the center or through the car rider lines. If in violation of this rule you will be unable to enter the Head Start site.
- All adults entering a facility or utilizing the car line must adhere to the policy above under Health and Safety concerning all I-CARE, Inc. properties (centers, vehicles and buses) will be smoke, tobacco, tobacco less products (vape, chew, and dip), alcohol, drug and firearm free to ensure children's health and safety at all times.

Extended Day Services

I-CARE, Inc. offers before and after school services only at the Southeast site, located in Iredell County. This is not a free service. Those who participate must have a voucher from Iredell County Department of Social Services or private pay for services. Pay rates vary by year and are set by Iredell County DSS. Extended Day operates from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. All rules or regulations created by I-CARE, Inc. within this handbook will be followed during the Extended Day program. Monthly bills are dispersed by the 5th of each month. All payments for children receiving a voucher are due by the 15th of each month. Families who utilize the service without a voucher are considered private pay. These fees are due each Monday for days the child will participate that week. Refunds will not be given for days paid for and not used. All balances not paid for voucher children by the 15th of each month will be shared with DSS. They may choose to suspend your voucher at our request due to non-payment. Private pay families will not be accepted without payment prior to the child participating. Payment arrangements can be made with the Extended Day manager, if a payment arrangement form is signed and approved by the manager.

Family Services

Family Service Workers will conduct a Home Visits. However, additional Home Visits may be scheduled when needed. Home Visits will be scheduled with location and time options available to meet the needs of individual families. Every effort is made to conduct the visit in the home. During the Home Visit, the Family Service Worker works with the family to complete a Family Partnership Agreement and complete needed referrals.

- Housing assistance
- Utility assistance
- Alcohol or substance abuse services
- Domestic violence services
- Food and clothing assistance
- Adult Basic Education (ABE)
- Adult High School Diploma or GED
- English as a Second Language (ESL)

Parent Family and Community Engagement

I-CARE, Inc. is committed to 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 the kinds of outcomes that lead to positive and enduring change for children and families. It outlines an approach to building solid foundations for successful parent and family engagement in three areas: Program Leadership, Continuous Program Improvement, and Professional Development.

Building on this foundation, the framework highlights a set of desired family outcomes and examples of strategies to achieve them.

These outcomes include:

- Family well-being
- Positive parent–child relationships
- Families as lifelong educators
- Families as learners
- Family engagement in transitions (e.g., to Head Start and Kindergarten)
- Family connections to peers and the community
- Families as advocates and leaders

Month Engagement Activities:

- Male Monday- First Monday of each month
- Women Wednesday- Second Wednesday of each month
- Family Friday- Third Friday of each month
- Center activities as scheduled

As a Head Start Parent, I will:	As a Head Start Staff member, I will:
Make sure that my child attends school every day and on time.	Promote a welcoming and culturally sensitive environment that is respectful of your child and family's unique identity.
Provide my child a medical and dental home. If my child does not have a medical and dental home, I will work with the Head Start staff to find one.	Provide resources and information to help your family locate a medical and dental home and follow up with you to ensure that your child receives appropriate health screenings.
Make sure that my child's immunizations and well-child care visits with his/her primary care physician are up to date.	Work with you to ensure that your child's immunizations and well-child care visits are up to date.
Follow up on any medical, dental or other health concerns regarding my child.	Follow up on medical, dental, or other health concerns regarding your child in a timely manner.
Attend two parent conferences and work with my child's Teacher to develop and support my child's educational goals.	Collaborate with program staff to provide you information about your child's education.
Welcome Teachers and Family Service Worker into my home to discuss ways in which I can help my child's development at home and relation to school readiness.	Collaborate with family in order to set age-appropriate school readiness goals for your child.
Participate in parent programs and educational activities offered at my child's school.	Coordinate training and resources for you and your family.
Work in partnership with my Family Service Worker to set goals for my family and me.	Assist you on progress towards achieving your goals and provide referrals and support when you need social services and community services and community resources
Participate in leadership opportunities and Parent Committee meetings.	Assist in organizing the Parent Committee meetings and other activities.
When possible, I will volunteer and attend events at my child's school.	Inform you regularly about volunteer opportunities and other events in the classroom and at school.

Substitute Training

I-CARE, Inc. offers families a unique opportunity to become a paid professional within our Head Start centers. Interested adults must attend a four hour training, volunteer for four hours in a classroom, provide documentation of High School diploma or GED, provide copy of license or ID and pass a drug screening to qualify as a substitute and be placed on our as needed substitute list.

Center Concern Policy

It is our goal that all persons feel welcome and respected in our centers. If at any time a parent/guardian has a concern, I-CARE-Inc. wishes that this concern be discussed with the on-site administrator for the center. After discussion if further remedy is needed please speak with your family service worker. If resolution is not made, please contact either the Education Manager, PFCE Manger or Director of Children Services at 704-873-2858.

Non-Discrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal Law and Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

Please note the below chart is a daily, weekly, & monthly cleaning schedule to be posted in each classroom. This information will be posted weekly on the center/classroom parent board and stored for the entire program year for review and upon request. Staff ensures completion of each daily task by entering initials in each box as needed or required.



CLASSROOM AREAS	CLEANED	SANITIZED	FREQUENCY	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.
Countertops/Tabletops			Daily & When Soiled					
Tabletops used for eating			Before and after food is prepared or served					
Floors			Daily					
Carpet/Rugs			Vacuum daily and when obviously soiled					
Drinking Fountains			Daily & when soiled or mouthed					
Lids/Trashcans			Daily & when soiled					
Toothbrush holder & Tray			Weekly and as needed					
Window Ceils/Vents			Weekly and as needed					
BATHROOMS	CLEANED	DISINFECTED	FREQUENCY					
Handwashing Sinks			Daily & when soiled					
Sink faucet handles & cabinet doors			Daily & when soiled					
Surrounding Counters			Daily & when soiled					
Toilet bowl, seat, handle			Daily & when soiled					
Walls & Doorknobs			Daily & when soiled					
Floors			Daily & when soiled					
Lids & Trashcans			Daily & when soiled					
Diaper Changing Table			Daily & when soiled					
TOYS & PLAY STRUCTURES	CLEANED	SANITIZED	FREQUENCY					
Toys that are mouthed			Daily & after each use					
Larger Toys			Weekly & when soiled					
Dress-up Clothes & Hats			Weekly					
Cubbies			Between children & weekly					
Cots			Weekly					
Linens			Weekly					
SURFACES	CLEANED	DISINFECTED	FREQUENCY					
Any surface/objects that is contaminated by body fluids			Immediately					
Food & Milk on Chairs			Weekly & when soiled					
Step Stools			Weekly & when soiled					

The following requirements apply to both centers and homes.

Transportation

Child care centers or family child care homes providing transportation for children must meet all motor vehicle laws, including inspection, insurance, license, and restraint requirements. Children may never be left alone in a vehicle and child-staff ratio must be maintained.

Program Records

Centers and homes must keep accurate records such as children's attendance, immunizations, and emergency phone numbers. A record of monthly fire drills and quarterly shelter-in-place or lockdown drills practiced must also be maintained. A safe sleep policy must be developed and shared with parents if children younger than 12 months are in care.

Discipline and Behavior Management

Each program must have a written policy on discipline, must discuss it with parents, and must give parents a copy when the child is enrolled. Changes in the discipline policy must be shared with parents in writing before going into effect. Corporal punishment (spanking, slapping, or other physical discipline) is prohibited in all centers and family child care homes. Religious-sponsored programs which notify the Division of Child Development and Early Education that corporal punishment is part of their religious training are exempt from that part of the law.

Parental Rights

- Parents have the right to enter a family child care home or center at any time while their child is present.
- Parents have the right to see the license displayed in a prominent place.
- Parents have the right to know how their child will be disciplined.

The laws and rules are developed to establish minimum requirements. Most parents would like more than minimum care. Local Child Care Resource and Referral agencies can provide help in choosing quality care. Check the telephone directory or talk with a child care provider to see if there is a Child Care Resource and Referral agency in your community. For more information visit the Resources in Child Care website at: www.ncchildcare.nc.gov. For more information on the law and rules, contact the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829 (In State Only), or visit our homepage at: ncchildcare.nc.gov

Reviewing Files

A public file is maintained in the Division's main office in Raleigh for every licensed center or family child care home. These files can be

- viewed during business hours (8 a.m. -5 p.m.);
- requested via the Division's web site at www.ncchildcare.nc.gov; or
- requested by contacting the Division by telephone at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829.

How to Report a Problem

North Carolina law requires staff from the Division of Child Development and Early Education to investigate a licensed family child care home or child care center when there has been a complaint. Child care providers who violate the law or rules may be issued an administrative action, fined and may have their licenses suspended or revoked. If you believe that a child care provider fails to meet the requirements described in this pamphlet, or if you have questions, please call the Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829.

Child Abuse, Neglect, or Maltreatment

Every citizen has a responsibility to report suspected child abuse, neglect or maltreatment. This occurs when a parent or caregiver injures or allows another to injure a child physically or emotionally. It may also occur when a parent or caregiver puts a child at risk of serious injury or allows another to put a child at risk of serious injury. It also occurs when a child does not receive proper care, supervision, discipline, or when a child is abandoned. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child maltreatment at a child care facility to report the situation to the Intake Unit at Division of Child Development and Early Education at 919-527-6335 or 1-800-859-0829.** Reports can be made anonymously. A person cannot be held liable for a report made in good faith. The operator of the program must notify parents of children currently enrolled in writing of the substantiation of any maltreatment complaint or the issuance of any administrative action against the child care facility. **North Carolina law requires any person who suspects child abuse or neglect in a family to report the case to the county department of social services.**



Summary of the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules

Division of Child Development
and Early Education

North Carolina Department of
Health and Human Services
820 South Boylan Avenue
Raleigh, NC 27699

Revised February 2018

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age or disability in employment or provision of services.

What Is Child Care?

The law defines child care as:

- three or more children under 13 years of age
- receiving care from a non-relative
- on a regular basis - at least once a week
- for more than four hours per day but less than 24 hours.

The North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services is responsible for regulating child care. This is done through the Division of Child Development and Early Education. The purpose of regulation is to protect the well-being of children while they are away from their parents. The law defining child care is in the North Carolina General Statutes, Article 7, Chapter 110.

The North Carolina Child Care Commission is responsible for adopting rules to carry out the law. Some counties and cities in North Carolina also have local zoning requirements for child care programs.

Star Rated Licenses

Centers and homes that are meeting the minimum licensing requirements will receive a one star license. Programs that choose to voluntarily meet higher standards can apply for a two through five star license. The number of stars a program earns is based upon the education levels their staff meet and the program standards met by the program.

Family Child Care Homes

A family child care home is licensed to care for five or fewer preschool age children, including their own preschool children, and can include three additional school-age children. The provider's own school-age children are not counted. Family child care homes will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants. Licenses are issued to family child care home providers who meet the following requirements:

- Home providers must be 21 years old with at least a high school education or its equivalent, and mentally and emotionally capable of caring for children.
- He or she must undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All household members over age 15 must also undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.
- All family child care home providers must have current certification in CPR and first aid, complete an ITS-SIDS training initially (if caring for infants 0 – 12 months) and every three years, the Emergency Preparedness and Response

(EPR) in Child Care training and create the EPR plan. They also must complete a minimum number of health and safety training and ongoing training hours annually.

All family child care homes must meet basic health and safety standards. Providers must maintain verification of children's immunization and health status. They must provide developmentally appropriate toys and activities, as well as, nutritious meals and snacks for the children in care. All children must participate in outdoor play at least one hour per daily, if weather conditions permit.

Child Care Centers

Licensing as a center is required when six or more preschool children are cared for in a residence or when three or more children are in care in a building other than a residence. Religious-sponsored programs are exempt from some of the regulations described below if they choose to meet the standards of the Notice of Compliance rather than the Star Rated License. Recreational programs that operate for less than four consecutive months, such as summer camps, are exempt from licensing. Child care centers may voluntarily meet higher standards and receive a license with a higher rating. Centers will be visited at least annually to make sure they are following the law and to receive technical assistance from child care consultants.

Licensed centers must meet requirements in the following areas.

Staff

The administrator of a child care center must be at least 21, and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Administration Credential or its equivalent. Lead teachers in a child care center must be at least 18 and have at least a North Carolina Early Childhood Credential or its equivalent. If administrators and lead teachers do not meet this requirement, they must begin credential coursework within six months of being hired. Staff younger than 18 years of age must work under the direct supervision of staff 21 years of age or older. All staff must complete a minimum number of training hours, including ITS-SIDS training for any caregiver that works with infants 12 months of age or younger. All staff who work directly with children must have CPR and First Aid training, and at least one person who completed the training must be present at all times when children are in care. One staff must complete the Emergency Preparedness and Response (EPR) in Child Care training and create the EPR plan. All staff must also undergo a criminal background check initially, and every three years thereafter.

Staff/Child Ratios

Ratios are the number of staff required to supervise a certain number of children. Group size is the maximum number of children in one group. Ratios and group sizes for licensure are shown below and must be posted in each classroom.

Age	Teacher: Child Ratio	Max Group Size
0-12 mths	1:5	10
12-24mths	1:6	12
2 years old	1:10	20
3 years old	1:15	25
4 years old	1:20	25
School-age	1:25	25

Centers located in a residence that are licensed for six to twelve children may keep up to three additional school-age children, depending on the ages of the other children in care. When the group has children of different ages, staff-child ratios and group size must be met for the youngest child in the group.

Space and Equipment

Centers must have at least 25 square feet per child indoors and 75 square feet per child for ½ the total licensed capacity outdoors, if licensed over 29 children. Outdoor play space must be fenced. Indoor equipment must be clean, safe, well maintained, and developmentally appropriate. Indoor and outdoor equipment and furnishings must be child size, sturdy, and free of hazards that could injure children.

Curriculum

Four and five star programs must use an approved curriculum in their four-year-old classrooms. Other programs may choose to use an approved curriculum to get a quality point for the star-rated license. Activity plans and schedule must be available to parents and must show a balance of active and quiet, and indoor and outdoor activities. Rooms must be arranged to encourage children to explore, use materials on their own and have choices.

Health and Safety

Children must be immunized on schedule. Each licensed center must ensure the health and safety of children by sanitizing areas and equipment used by children. For Centers and FCCs, meals and snacks must be nutritious and meet the Meal Patterns for Children in Child Care. Food must be offered at least once every four hours. Local health, building, and fire inspectors visit licensed centers to make sure standards are met. All children must be allowed to play outdoors each day (weather permitting) for at least an hour a day for preschool children and at least thirty minutes a day for children under two. They must have space and time provided for rest.