

CHIPPEWA-LUCE-MACKINAC COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY HUMAN  
RESOURCE AUTHORITY, INC.

## EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS



## 2023-2024 PARENT HANDBOOK



*These materials were developed under a grant awarded by Michigan Department of Education.*

**Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac  
Community Action Agency  
Human Resource Authority, Inc.  
Early Childhood Programs**

*Information About Your Center*

Center \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Lead Caregiver \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher/Lead Caregiver Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Assistant/Caregiver \_\_\_\_\_

Family Services Worker/Home Visitor \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Family Services Worker/Home Visitor Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Bus Driver \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Cook \_\_\_\_\_

*Administrative Office*

CLM Community Action Agency  
Ronald J. Calery Community Center  
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Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783  
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Email: [headstart@clmcaa.com](mailto:headstart@clmcaa.com)  
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## ***Welcome to the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs!***

Since 1965 the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency has been providing high quality, comprehensive early childhood programs in the Eastern Upper Peninsula. Program staff forms partnerships with parents to help their children develop their full potential while strengthening the family and community. A partnership between parents and the program best supports children in their early childhood experience.

The Parent Handbook provides an overview of program policies and procedures. If you have any additional questions, please contact your child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Family Services Worker.

### ***Mission Statement***

Our mission is to support children and families in realizing their potential by providing quality programs in partnership with our communities.

### ***Philosophy***

The CLM Community Action Early Childhood Program believes that parents are the first and most important teachers in their child's life. The curriculum, High Scope, is based on developmentally appropriate practices. Children learn by actively exploring their environment, through the use of classroom materials, and by interacting with other children and adults. Staff are trained in child development and provide a nurturing, learning rich environment where children can best learn.

Children who are served in the Home Base program are provided educational learning opportunities by using materials in their own home and by interacting with their Home Visitor and their family, their most important teacher. Home Base children are also provided regular socialization opportunities.

### ***About the CLM CAA Early Childhood Programs***

Early Head Start and Head Start are federal grant programs funded by the Department of Health and Human Services. The Great Start Readiness Program and Strong Beginnings are funded by the Michigan Department of Education. The C-L-M Community Action Agency operates Early Head Start, Head Start, Strong Beginnings and the Great Start Readiness Program. This agency is dedicated to families and individuals seeking to improve their quality of life.

NOTE: Procedures and Policies have been written in accordance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, Great Start School Readiness Preschool Standards of Quality, the State of Michigan Child Care Licensing, and the governing board of the C-L-M Community Action Agency. C-L-M Community Action Agency complies with the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Michigan Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990. To inquire about reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, please contact the agency at (906) 632-3363.

## *Program Options*

### **Head Start**

- 3-4 years old
- 3 ½ or 5 hours per day/4 days per week – 8 months per year
- 7 hours and 15 minutes per day/4 days per week – 9 months per year
- No Fees for services

### **Early Head Start**

#### **Center Based**

- 6 weeks – 3 years old
- 8 hours per day/5 days per week - Early Head Start-Extended day (hourly fee- Fee policy will be provided)
- Full Year Program

#### **Home Base**

- Pre-birth – 3 years old
- Weekly Home Visits
- Biweekly Socialization Experiences
- Full Year Program
- No Fees for Services

### **Strong Beginnings**

- 3 years old
- School day – 4 days per week
- 8 months per year
- No Fees for Income Eligible Children- Sliding Fee Scale will be provided when applicable

### **Great Start Readiness Program**

- 4 years old
- School day – 5 days per week - Soo Township Only
- School day – 4 days per week - Brimley & Cedarville Centers
- 9 months per year
- No Fees for Income Eligible Children- Sliding Fee Scale will be provided when applicable

#### **NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay System at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by: **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independent Ave. SW, Washington D.C. 20250-9410; or **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or **email:** [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

USDA Civil Rights Complaint Link: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>

**CHIPPEWA-LUCE-MACKINAC COMMUNITY ACTION  
EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS**

*Parent Agreement*

**I HEREBY AGREE OR PERMIT AND/OR UNDERSTAND:**

- I will meet all program requirements in a timely manner or as mandated by Federal/State regulations.
- A responsible adult must be present with the child and sign for pick up and drop off.
- Name(s) of adults who may accept a child **MUST** be listed on the Child Information Card or your child will be returned to school and you will be responsible to pick-up your child.
- I will meet my responsibility to the program by volunteering in the classroom or by using my talents and resources to enhance my child's educational experience, and to participate in family engagement activities.
- The Teacher/Lead Caregiver and/or other support staff will make home visits while my child is enrolled in the Early Childhood Program and I will participate in the minimum number of required home and/or center visits.
- My child will attend school on a regular basis as long as he/she is in good health. If my child must be absent from school, I will contact the Family Service Worker or Teacher and provide the reason for absence. I understand that if I do not call within one hour of the start of the school day, I will receive a wellness call from the center to determine the reason for absence. If 3 unexcused absences occur with no contact, the Family Service Worker or Teacher will attempt to complete a home visit. If it is determined that my child has chronic absences a mutually agreed upon Attendance Improvement Plan will be put into place in order to increase attendance. I understand that if this Attendance Plan is not adhered to my child may be dropped from the program for excessive absences.
- Early Childhood Program Staff will conduct screenings and assessments to plan my child's educational progress.
- I will allow my child to participate in activities outside the classroom (field trips) conducted by the program during school hours. I understand I will be notified separately of each activity. Activities that are part of the regular routine such as walks, trips to the playground, or gym may occur without prior notice.
- **My child must have the required physical examination, dental examination, and immunizations required by the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the State of Michigan.**
- I will keep my child at home whenever he/she is ill. I further understand that the Early Childhood Program may exclude my child from school for health reasons, if health requirements are not met in a timely manner, or as mandated by Federal and/or State regulations.
- In the case of accidents or illness at school, I will be notified and agree that I am responsible for any necessary treatment or services.
- The Early Childhood Program may provide records to parents throughout the year.
- Medications will not be sent to school in backpacks or diaper bags. These shall include but are not limited to Epi-pens, inhalers, antibiotics, or over the counter products such as sunscreen, diaper rash ointment, cold medicine, etc.
- The Early Childhood Program Staff will release information to all people listed on the Child Information Card regarding the illness of my child in the event that I am unable to pick him/her up (i.e. stomach flu, lice, diarrhea, fever, etc.).
- I will work on a mutually agreed upon toilet training plan with the Early Childhood Program staff for my child if he/she is not trained upon entering the program.
- I will ask my child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Family Service Worker if I have questions or concerns.
- I have reviewed the Code of Conduct policy with my child's Teacher/FSW and agree to comply with all aspects of the policy.
- If my child is diagnosed with a special need, I have the right to request a daily record of my child's food intake, sleeping patterns, elimination patterns, developmental milestones or changes in child's behavior.
- I received a Parent Handbook, Orientation, and a copy of a typical daily routine from my Family Service Worker, Teacher or Home Visitor. At that time, the content of the Parent Agreement was explained, and I agree to comply with the policies and procedures presented therein.

## *Parent/Home Visitor Agreement*

### *Early Head Start Home Base Children*

#### **I, THE PARENT, HEREBY AGREE OR PERMIT AND/OR UNDERSTAND:**

- This is a year-round home-based program. If I cannot make my scheduled visit, I will let my Home Visitor know in advance.
- That my involvement in the home visit is required and will try to limit distractions.
- I will be responsible for all Early Head Start materials and return them on request.
- To work with my child on activities left by the Home Visitor.
- To keep all health requirements up to date, including immunizations, well baby checks and dentals.
- Early Head Start playgroups will be offered twice monthly. I will make every effort to attend playgroups and let the Home Visitor know if I am not able to attend for any reason.
- The Individualized Family Partnership Agreement (IFPA) process and will work on goals established.

#### **I, THE HOME VISITOR, HEREBY AGREE OR PERMIT AND/OR UNDERSTAND:**

- To provide support toward the family's goals.
- To be on time for the visit or let the parent know differently.
- To work with the parent in using developmentally appropriate materials with their child.
- To provide information on health, nutrition, and community services.
- To work with the parent in using materials in the home as learning opportunities to promote development of school readiness skills with their child.
- To provide information on child development and appropriate discipline strategies as needed.
- To provide any other information that is requested by the family.
- To provide socialization opportunities twice monthly for the parent and child through scheduled playgroups.
- To maintain confidentiality and professionalism during home visits and socializations.

## ***Policies and Procedures***

### **Admission/Withdrawal Policy**

**Admission** - A child can be enrolled in the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs if the following eligibility criteria are met and determined reasonable:

- Family meets poverty guidelines or is categorically eligible as determined by the Federal government
- Early Head Start center-based participants must be between the ages of 6 weeks to 3 years old. Home based participants must be between the ages of birth to 3 years old or a pregnant mother and verifying documents are on file with the program's Administrative Office.
- Head Start participants must be 3 years old on or before the cut-off date determined by the public schools for that current program year and verifying documents are on file with the Administrative Office.
- Proof of immunization records are on file with the program's Administrative Office.
- A child with a diagnosed special need(s).
- Families and children demonstrating the most need will receive priority.

A child may be enrolled in the Great Start Readiness Program (4 year old program) if the following criteria are met:

- Child must be 4 years old on or before the cut-off date determined by the public schools for that current program year and verifying documents are on file with the program's Administrative Office.
- Family meets poverty guidelines or categorical eligibility requirements and risk factors contributing to the educational risk of children as established by the State of Michigan Department of Education.
- Families and children with the lowest income and demonstrating the most need will receive priority.

A child may be enrolled in the Strong Beginnings Program (3 year old program) if the following criteria are met:

- Child must be 3 years old on or before the cut-off date determined by the public schools for that current program year and verifying documents are on file with the program's Administrative Office.
- Family meets poverty guidelines or categorical eligibility requirements and risk factors contributing to the educational risk of children as established by the State of Michigan Department of Education.
- Families and children with the lowest income and demonstrating the most need will receive priority.

**Withdrawal** – A child may be dismissed from the Early Childhood Program if:

- They are chronically absent without a doctor's excuse, failure to comply with an established Attendance Plan, repeated missed home visits for Home Base participants, or whereas frequent absences drop the mandated average daily attendance rate below 85%.
- They do not meet the health/licensing requirements by the required deadlines.
- The parent fails to follow program policies.
- When a parent creates an unsafe situation, which poses a threat to the safety and security of children and staff.
- If after a program has taken all possible steps to address persistent severe challenging behaviors and is unable to ensure the child's safe participation in the program.
- A parent may withdraw their child at any time during the program year. Please notify the Administrative Office by calling (906) 632-3363.



### **Arrival/Pick-up Procedure**

**Arrival Procedure:** Parents are responsible for their child whenever they are present at the school. Upon arrival at the Early Childhood Program, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the sign-in sheet located at the school. Children are required to be escorted by their parent or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the childcare facility.

**Pick Up Procedure:** Parents or other authorized adults are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet located at the Early Childhood Program. Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on the agency premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents are reminded to be extremely cautious of parking lots, alley ways and streets when exiting the buildings with their children.

**Emergency Alternate Pick Up:** At enrollment, parents will be presented with Child Information Cards. Parents are encouraged to include on this card all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick up their child from the Early Childhood Program. **NO ONE may pick up your child if you have not listed them on the Child Information Card or without written authorization.** In an emergency situation the child's parent(s) will be called first. If they cannot be reached staff will call the person(s) listed on the Child Information Card as an emergency release. Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Persons on the Child Information Card will be required to provide photo ID. ***There will be no exceptions to this rule.*** Please ensure that those you list on the Child Information Card are aware that you have designated them as an authorized person to pick up your child.

List all individuals, including parents/legal guardians, in order of preference, to be contacted in an emergency on the Child Information Card. If possible, include at least 1 person other than the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) to be contacted in an emergency and to whom the child can be released.

### **Attendance/Illness Policy**

Consistent attendance and being on time are not only required but are very important. Young children need a regular routine which they know will remain the same each day.

If a child must be absent, the parent must notify the Teacher or Family Service Worker with the reason for absence. If we are not contacted by the parent/guardian within 1 hour after the start of class time a wellness call will be made to the family. If a child misses 3 consecutive days for unknown reasons, a Family Service Worker (FSW) or Teacher will attempt to make a home visit.

If it is determined that a child has chronic absences, a mutually agreed upon Attendance Improvement Plan will be put into place to increase attendance. If the Attendance Improvement Plan is not followed and frequent absences continue that drop the mandated average daily attendance rate to below 85% a child may be dropped from the program.

**Please contact your child's Teacher or FSW if you are having difficulty getting your child to school.** FSWs will work closely with parents to assist them in making the necessary arrangements to ensure regular attendance.

It is important for families whose children are enrolled in the Home Base program to keep their scheduled home visits and attend the socializations. Completed visits are required to remain enrolled in the Early Head Start program and cancellations may result in a drop from the program.

There are times when it is appropriate for your child to miss school. If your child is too sick to attend, do not send him/her to school. Your child's Teacher or FSW will explain to you what is considered too sick to attend school. If your child does become sick at school, you will be called to pick him/her up. If you cannot be reached, we will use the Child Information Card (Emergency) to contact an alternate person. A child will only be released to an individual listed on the Child Information Card and the adult must provide photo identification, such as: driver's license, Michigan I.D. card, etc.

### **Child Abuse/Neglect Reporting Policy**

Parenting is a great responsibility. Most people are not trained in parenting skills. Sometimes you may feel overwhelmed by the experience. There are resources available to assist you should you find yourself in need of help. The Family Service Worker may be able to put you in touch with services or agencies that can help you. Feel free to call and ask them for resources.

**Reporting: Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs are considered mandated reporters under this law. The employees of this program are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at CLMCAA Early Childhood Program take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.**

**As mandated reporters, the staff of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith".**

### **Child Accident, Incident, Injury Policy**

Anytime an accident or incident happens, no matter how small (including bumps and bruises) it is reported to the Administrative Office and an accident report is completed. If an injury is caused by another child or adult a form is completed for both the injured child and the child causing the injury. Only the name of the child to whom the form belongs will be used on the form. Parents are notified immediately of any injuries or of any amount of first aid treatment, (i.e. cold pack, band-aid, etc.) that was provided. Parents will also be notified in the same manner as for accidents and injuries when an incident occurs at the time the child is attending school.

### **Child Custody Policy**

**Please do not put your child or the program staff in the middle of child custody disputes. Staff must remain neutral.**

**Parents Right to Immediate Access to Their Children:** Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (i.e., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program must be provided with a **certified copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto**. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program

cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program recommends that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Parents/Guardians are always welcome and never need an appointment to come into their child's classroom unless there are legal restrictions.

Visitors other than parents are asked to schedule appointments with the Site Leader and are allowed in the childcare facility only at the discretion of the Site Leader. An employee of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program will accompany visitors at all times throughout the school.

### **Child Information Policy**

Early Head Start families must complete 1 Child Information Card, while all Head Start, Strong Beginnings and GSRP families must complete 2 Child Information Cards. All lines on the Child Information Card must be filled out including complete addresses and phone numbers. These cards are used for emergency situations. It is important to update the cards as changes occur. For example: telephone and cell phone numbers, disconnects, addresses, allergy information, or to whom the child may be released. If you have changes it is important to call your child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver or FSW immediately with the new information. **Please ensure that those you have listed on the Child Information Card are aware they are an emergency contact for your child.**

### **Child Management/Discipline Policy**

The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program staff maintains that children must learn to be social by practicing acceptable social interactions among children and adults. We recognize that for many children this is their first group experience. Staff supports children in this learning process.

Effective discipline begins long before disruptive behaviors erupt. The adults' personal interaction style, the environment, the schedule and expectations all have an effect on children. Discipline problems can be expected when children are rushed, bored, when they have to wait, when they are over-stimulated without time to unwind, when they are tired or when unreasonable expectations (not age or developmentally appropriate) are put on them.

Staff shall use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. If the staff maintain a positive attitude, create an environment responsive to the child's needs and abilities, and provide interesting and appropriate learning activities, disruptive behaviors should be kept to a minimum.

Whenever a discipline situation occurs, the following principles will be asserted:

- The goal of discipline is to help children build their own self-control, not to have them behave through adult-imposed control.
- Any discipline technique will be most effective if it is applied in a way that maintains or enhances the child's self-esteem.
- Discipline must immediately follow the behavior. Children cannot be expected to relate future consequences to their current actions.
- Match the technique you use to the behavior and the child. No technique will be effective in every situation.
- Help the child understand why he/she is being disciplined after the child has gained self-control.
- Effective discipline requires follow through and consistency. Idle or impossible threats encourage children to test rules and push limits. When you use a disciplinary action, make sure the problem-solving solution works, that a re-directed child becomes involved elsewhere, or that a child in the classroom's calm area has an adult with whom to talk.

- Progress may be slow. If either you or the children are accustomed to other techniques, time and patience are required for these ideas to be effective. It takes time for children to understand self-control instead of adult imposed control. Also, it may take you a while to be consistent and in control of yourself.
- Help others understand the positive approach to discipline. Emphasize why helping children learn to control him/herself is an essential part of becoming an independent and caring person.
- Any one of the following discipline techniques may be appropriate as long as the previously stated principles are maintained:
  - Redirection - When reasons are stated, children can soon learn to redirect themselves.
  - Holding - In some situations a child will be so upset and so intense, that he/she cannot speak or even listen. Staff are trained in Conscious Discipline where they stay with the child, assure the child they will keep him/her safe and utilize stress reduction techniques such as deep breathing, until the child restores calm. Staff may need to carry a child away from the group or take the child for a walk to help him/her settle down and keep all of the children safe.
  - Ignoring inappropriate behavior - Children who behave inappropriately often receive the most attention from adults. Annoying, rather than harmful behaviors are best ignored. This technique usually takes longer to be effective than other methods and at first the inappropriate behavior may increase as children diligently try to attract your attention. These behaviors will also escalate if you sometimes ignore and sometimes criticize the children. Be consistent.
  - Conscious Discipline Techniques – All staff are trained in Conscious Discipline which is a strength-based approach to helping children learn to manage their behavior. Conscious Discipline is implemented in every classroom. All classrooms have a “safe or calming” area where children can go to get away from the group and regain composure. Some children may choose an area of the room other than the “calming area”. That choice can be left to the child as long as he/she is not hurtful to others or to equipment and materials. Staff model self-control and composure. Children learn these skills by following the adults’ example.
  - Conflict Resolution – Although these 6 steps can be very effective, they can also take time. If followed consistently, the 6 steps to conflict resolution can become a life-long skill.
    - Approach calmly and remain calm
    - Acknowledge the feelings of those involved
    - Gather information to find out what the problem is
    - Restate the problem
    - Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one that both parties accept
    - Be prepared to offer follow up support

**Staff and volunteers are prohibited from using the following as means of discipline:**

- Hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, slapping, spanking, or inflicting a form of corporal punishment
- Restricting a child’s movement by binding or tying him/her
- Inflicting mental or emotional punishment such as humiliating, shaming or threatening a child
- Confining a child in an enclosed area such as a closet, locked room, hallway or similar cubical
- Depriving a child of meals, snacks, rest or necessary toilet use
- Excluding a child from outdoor play or other gross motor activities
- Excluding a child from daily learning experiences
- Placing substances in a child’s mouth (i.e. soap, hot sauce, or vinegar)
- Using time out for children under 3 years of age

## **Children and Cursing**

We handle bad language just as we do all negative behaviors. In the event a child curses in the classroom or during school hours staff will utilize several methods to teach alternative strategies and life skills. Staff will remain calm and not encourage the continued behavior. Often ignoring the behavior and walking away will work but our goal is to explore the underlying need the child has to get attention and provide examples of appropriate language for the classroom and school environment.

Our goal is to provide a safe, positive environment for all children. If additional support is required to assure safety; the parent and Teacher or Family Service Worker will work together to establish a plan for school success.

## **Clothing**

Dress your child for play. Children will be involved in messy activities including paint, glue, play dough and sand/water play. You will want to send them in clothes that they can get dirty. Your child will be comfortable and willing to play if they do not have to worry about staying clean.

Each child should have a change of clothes at the school (shirt, pants, underwear, socks) as sometimes accidents cannot be avoided. Please label all clothing with your child's full name. Each enrolled Early Head Start child has a labeled box where extra clothing can be kept.

**The best shoes for school are tennis shoes or rubber soled shoes.** Other shoes may be dangerous both in the classroom and outside. If your child wears boots to school, be sure to send shoes to wear in the classroom.

**Anyone entering an Early Head Start Infant/Toddler Center must remove his/her shoes or wear the shoe coverings available at the door.** Infants and toddlers spend a great deal of time on the floor learning and exploring. Removing outdoor shoes helps keep their learning environment clean. Paper booties are available by the door or parents can remove their shoes if socks are worn. Bare feet are **strictly prohibited** for both children and adults.

Early Head Start also requires labeling of all feeding equipment, shoes and clothing brought to the school. You will find a place at the bottom of your child's daily report that lets you know if he/she needs additional diapers for extended day care.

## **Code of Conduct**

- Swearing/Cursing – No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on agency property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not.
- Threatening of employees, children, other parents or adults associated with the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program – Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. All threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. When a parent creates an unsafe situation which poses a threat to the safety of children and/or staff, a child may be dismissed from the program.
- Physical/Verbal Punishment of your child or other children – The Early Childhood Program does not support nor condone corporal punishment of children. Such acts are not permitted in the Early Childhood Program facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the Teacher or FSW, and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

- Confrontational interactions with employees, other parents, or associates of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program – While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.
- Violations of the Confidentiality Policy – The Confidentiality Policy applies to all children, families and employees associated with the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program.
- Smoking, vaping, drugs, alcohol, and weapons are prohibited on agency property and at agency events.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Within the Early Childhood Program facility, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees who have a “need to know” in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents or staff, as the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program strives to protect everyone’s right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to, names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and other health related information of anyone associated with the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program.

Outside of the Early Childhood Program facility, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, or overall general misbehavior). You may be curious or concerned about the other child, but our Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s right to privacy. Employees of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program are strictly prohibited from discussing anything confidential about another child with you.

All staff, parents and volunteers participating in the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program are expected to follow the Confidentiality Policy to protect the privacy of all children and families. Parents/staff must sign a Confidentiality Agreement as required by licensing regulations.

This Confidentiality Policy also includes social networking websites, such as Facebook, blogs, Twitter, Instagram, etc., where staff, parents and volunteers are not allowed to post any agency confidential information.

### **Daily Operation/School Closing Policy**

**Early Head Start Programs** are a full day year-round program that operates Monday through Friday. School hours are determined at each site based on family need. Early Head Start does not operate on Federal holidays and are closed one Friday of every month for staff training or cleaning. Early Head Start programs also close for 2 weeks during the program year for center repairs and maintenance. These generally occur at the end of the month of August. Days and length of closure are subject to change due to unforeseeable circumstances. When this happens, you will be notified in advance. Read your monthly newsletter and calendar and watch for postings in the center.

**It is recommended that all parents receiving extended-day childcare services have a backup childcare provider in the event the center is not operating. Parents are encouraged to contact their FSW if they need assistance in finding alternative licensed childcare.**

**Head Start/Strong Beginnings classrooms** typically operate Monday through Thursday from September to May/June with holiday breaks. Fridays are set aside for make-up days, training, special field trips or Family Engagement events. Breaks usually coincide with the local school district break schedule, although Head Start/GSRP/Strong Beginnings breaks may be somewhat shorter. A monthly calendar noting specific dates will be provided. Hours of operation vary from school to school.

**Stand alone GSRP classrooms** typically operate Monday through Friday from September to June with holiday breaks.

The Early Head Start, Head Start, GSRP and Strong Beginnings schools may also close due to **severe weather conditions**. Listen to the radio. If you hear that your local area school district is closed due to weather, then the Early Childhood classroom/school in that area is also closed. If you are a home base family, when the road conditions warrant school closings in **your district**, your Home Visitor will phone you to reschedule your visit. Any playgroups scheduled for that day will be rescheduled.

When local school districts are on a **delay** due to weather individual schools will notify parents of the status of their classrooms. Early Head Start will follow local school delay.

Individual classrooms may close for a variety of reasons other than weather. If this happens, you will be notified in advance, if possible. Parents should refer to the Center Information at the beginning of this handbook if they have questions and need to contact classroom staff.

### **Emergency Procedures**

**Fire drills:** Will be practiced monthly with the children. Written procedures will be followed, reviewed, posted and updated annually by local safety officials.

**Tornado drills:** Will be conducted with the children twice per year, in October and April.

**School Security Procedures:** School security procedures will be written by local safety officials and updated annually. Lockdown drills will be practiced with the children. School staff will notify parents of school evacuations and lockdowns when they happen.

**School staff will notify parents on the day any emergency drill has taken place at the school and in the event of an actual emergency.**

### **Extended Care for Early Head Start Children**

Some Early Head Start children may be eligible for extended services where parents pay per hour while they work or attend school. Scheduling and payment are done through the designated employee at the Early Head Start center. Some families may be eligible for State of Michigan childcare payments. If the family does not qualify for this assistance, they will be responsible for making the payments themselves.

### **Grievance Policy**

When a parent has a concern regarding the program, it should first be discussed with your child's Teacher, Lead Caregiver or FSW. If the issue is not resolved at the classroom/school level, the Site Leader assigned to your school and/or the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs Director may be contacted. If the situation cannot be resolved at this level, contact the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs Director for a copy of the written Grievance Policy. This document is also located in the Policy Council Representative Manual.

### **Home Visit/Center Visit Policy**

**Center Based Option: Teachers/Lead Caregivers are required to make a minimum of two (2) home visits and two (2) center visits during the school year.** One of the benefits of the Early Childhood Programs is the home visit. Upon entering the program, the Teacher/Lead Caregiver and/or assistant

makes a home visit to meet you and your child. Throughout the program year another home visit is completed. You will have the opportunity to speak one on one with the Teacher/Lead Caregiver regarding your child's progress. These visits are scheduled at your convenience and give you the opportunity to speak with your child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver in a setting that is comfortable and familiar to both you and your child. This is also a time to voice your concerns about your child's development and to set goals that will enhance your child's education. Your child will take great pride in these visits and will see that family and Teachers/Caregivers work together, thus making school a positive learning experience. Please make every effort to assist us in meeting this requirement.

Home Based Option: **The Early Head Start Home Visitor provides one (1) home visit per week, per family. These home visits last approximately 1 ½ hour each.** The Home Visitor supports the fact that the home is the child's primary learning environment. Home Visitors work with parents to increase parenting skills, and to help them enhance their child's growth and development. The Home Visitor accomplishes this by modeling good educational strategies and providing educational activities for the parent and child in the home.

### **Immunization Policy**

The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program is required to comply with the rules and regulations of the Public Health Code (PA116) State of Michigan and Head Start Program Performance Standards. It is a requirement that your child's immunizations be up to date for their age according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention regulations upon entry into the program. Immunization requirements for children participating in CLMCAA's Early Childhood Programs are as follows:

DTP	-Series of 4 doses and a booster at 4th birthday
Polio	-Series of 3 doses and a booster at 4th birthday
MMR	-1 dose, and a booster at 4th birthday
HIB	-Complete series or 1 dose at or after 15 months
Hepatitis B	-Series of 3 doses
Varicella	-1 dose or parent's statement that child has had Chicken Pox
Pneumococcal	- As required by CDC

**All immunizations must be up to date by the 1st day of school to attend any center-based program. Any requested waivers must be obtained from your local health department.**

The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program staff will continue to advise parents regarding immunization requirements for kindergarten entry.

Every effort will be made to assist parents as needed to meet the above program requirements. In all cases, if the requirements are not met, your child may be excluded from the program and placed on a wait list for reinstatement.

### **Medication Policy**

Whenever possible please give your children prescription and over the counter medications at home prior to or after attending school. Medication will **ONLY** be given when prescribed by your child's doctor and/or when specific forms and procedures have been completed. **No medication such as Epi-Pens, inhalers, antibiotics, and over the counter products such as sunscreen, diaper rash ointment, etc. may be sent to school in backpacks or diaper bags.**



### **Moving to a Different Area**

If you are moving within Chippewa, Luce or Mackinac counties, call the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program office with your new address. If there are openings in the area you are moving, every effort will be made to transfer your child to that center. If there are no openings, your child will be placed on a waiting list.

### **Nutrition Policy**

Meals served are based on the dietary allowances for the appropriate age group and according to the requirements of the Early Childhood Program and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All centers serve nutritious food of sufficient quantity and quality for young children. Nutrition education is provided to all staff, families, and children, in order to understand the importance of eating healthy foods.

- The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program never forces a child to eat.
- Early Head Start serves ready-to-feed iron fortified infant formula to infants less than one (1) year of age. If you wish to feed your child a different formula you will be required to sign an Infant Formula/Food Sign-off Statement stating that you do not wish your child to receive the formula provided by the Early Head Start center.
- Prepared infant foods are served in compliance with State of Michigan Child Care licensing rules and CACFP regulations. When solid foods and table foods are introduced, we work closely with parents in order to make the feeding experience a positive one for your infant.
- All meals are served family style.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods, serve themselves and eat until comfortably satisfied. They are also encouraged to clean their eating area.
- Food cannot be used as a reward or punishment.
- Every effort is made to provide for children who have specific dietary needs. These situations will be handled on an individual case by case basis and all required documentation will be explained to the parent.
- Staff and volunteers are required to participate in meals with the children.
- **No food is to be brought into Early Childhood Centers due to program policy. This includes both homemade items and pre-packaged foods/beverages.** The safety of both children and staff is of utmost importance and many children enrolled in the program have dietary issues ranging from mild to severe from an abundance of sources. Food preparation from outside sources cannot be controlled and the safety of all children cannot be guaranteed. Policies are developed based on USDA, CACFP, State of Michigan Licensing requirements, Head Start Program Performance Standards, County Health Department requirements, Food Code and Michigan Department of Education. Exceptions to this are made only for those children whose family prefers to provide food for their own child due to special circumstances such as severe allergies/intolerances. Proper paperwork must be signed by the parent and/or physician and kept on file. All foods must meet CACFP guidelines and nutrition education will be provided. These situations are evaluated on an individual basis.
- Liquids and foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit will be kept out of children's reach.
- Only nutritious snacks will be served.

### **Child and Adult Care Food Program:**

- The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). In accordance with CACFP and the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program, nutritious meals are served that are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar and salt. Food served will provide

at least 1/3 of the minimum daily requirements. The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program **does not** meet all the daily nutritional requirements of your child.

- According to CACFP regulations, participants requesting a special accommodation due to disability or food intolerance must complete and submit the CACFP Special Dietary Needs Form. This form must be signed by a licensed medical professional and the accommodation must be clearly stated. These accommodations are reviewed on a case by case basis. Substitutions due to a parental preference that are not medically supported by the appropriate licensed medical professional are not the responsibility of the program.

#### **Nutrition Education for Children**

- Classroom teaching staff discuss the menu with children prior to each meal.
- Classroom staff teach nutrition education activities through food experiences, cooking activities, books, puzzles, games, puppets and other educational media.
- The program's nutrition education topics covered include but are not limited to the following topics: manners, hand washing and hygiene, where food comes from, colors, shapes, and textures of food, food safety, nutrition and cooking activities (2 per month).
- Teachers document nutrition education on weekly lesson plans.
- Teachers plan and document intentional nutrition education lessons at minimum twice per month on lesson plans.

#### **Parent Engagement in Nutrition**

- The program ensures that parents and appropriate community agencies are involved in planning, implementing and evaluating the Early Childhood Program's nutrition services.
- The program implements parent education activities with opportunities to assist individual families with food selection, preparation and nutritional skills.

*There are no fees for meals.*

#### **Outdoor Play Policy**

The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program provides outdoor play to optimize all areas of development for children in our care. Children (0-5 years) shall play outdoors daily when weather does not pose a health risk to children. The National Weather Service website shall be the reference source for weather checks for the tri-county area.

#### **Children will not utilize outdoor time when:**

1. The National Weather Service identifies the wind-chill at or below 15 degrees F. The staff will carefully consider all factors when determining if outdoor play time will occur. The current supervisor on staff will make the final determination for outdoor play time.
2. The National Weather Service identifies the temperature to be above 90 degrees F.
3. Air quality announcements from local health authorities or through ozone alerts shall require children to remain inside where air conditioners exchange indoor with outdoor air.
4. Children with respiratory health problems (i.e. Asthma) shall not play outdoors when unhealthy air quality levels are reached and announced by local health authorities.

#### **Recommendations for Parents:**

5. In warm weather, children shall be protected from the sun/insects by using shade, protective clothing, sunscreen with at least SPF-15 and insect repellent no higher than 30% concentration of Deet in products. Insect repellent will not be used on children under 2 months of age. Parents may elect to administer sunscreen/insect repellent at home before school or have it administered at the school. The Medication Administration forms will need to be filled out before sunscreen/insect repellent can be administered at Early Childhood Program schools.

6. Protective clothing for warm and cold weather should be worn as appropriate for the current weather conditions. We will encourage children to drink water during physical activity in warm weather. In cold weather children's clothing shall be layered and dry. Outerwear should include hat, mittens, jacket, boots and snow pants. Staff will check children's extremities for normal warmth and color every 15 minutes when outdoors.
7. All current and new staff will be trained to recognize symptoms of frostbite, hypothermia, and heatstroke. Written instructions for identification of frostbite, hypothermia, and heatstroke will be provided to staff.

### **Parent/Family Engagement Policy**

Parent and Family Engagement in the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program is about building relationships with families that support the Family Engagement Framework. When parents, families and the school community work together the 7 Family Outcomes (listed below) are met, resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school. Beneath each Family Outcome are examples of objectives to consider as you develop your individual family goals.

1. Family Well-Being
  - Housing
  - Transportation
  - Family Safety
2. Positive Parent-Child Relationships
  - Gaining new knowledge about child development
  - Participating in Parent Support Groups
  - Gaining new knowledge about parenting skills
3. Families as Lifelong Educators
  - Participate with children to complete school readiness activity sheets
  - Gain confidence in realizing their role as a teacher to their own child. Parents **are** the most important teachers.
  - Share family culture
4. Families as Learners
  - Participate in training and educational opportunities that relate to career, interests, and life goals.
  - Identify strengths and interests
5. Family Engagement in Transition
  - Participate in program supported transition activities
  - Gain knowledge about parental rights in education
6. Family Connections to Peers and Community
  - Volunteer in the Early Childhood Programs and other community organizations
  - Participate in problem solving and decision making with staff and other parents/families
7. Families as Advocates and Leaders
  - Participate on Policy Council, Center Committees, Great Start Coalition Parent Committee, School Readiness Advisory Committee, and Data Analysis Committee
  - Recognize the ability to make a difference in children's development and learning experiences through gained knowledge and community involvement

**Come in anytime and be a part of the learning and teaching process! In early childhood classrooms extra help is always needed.** Volunteering is a very important part of our program. Every hour helps us reach our volunteer goal but more importantly, it strengthens the child, parent, and school relationship. And once again, we need you! Much of our funding depends on our ability to recruit parent and community volunteers to maintain high levels of monthly volunteer hours. Research shows that children with involved parents have greater academic success. **You are always welcome at the center!**

**Here's a sample of how you can help, depending on your interest and comfort level:**

- Helping with coats, hand washing, or tooth brushing
- Reading stories
- Setting and cleaning up lunch tables
- Supporting children during small groups
- Rocking children
- Sharing your lap with a child at circle time
- Sharing information about your family, your hobbies, and traditions
- Attend Parent Committee meetings at the school
- Serve as an officer of the Parent Committee or Policy Council
- Attend conferences, workshops and seminars where you represent the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program and report back to your school
- Work on posters, parent bulletin boards, make name tags, etc.
- Volunteer as a Bus Monitor with training and CPR/First Aid
- Classroom prep work (cutting out materials, tracing, etc.)
- Make play dough, etc. for the classroom
- Repair classroom toys or equipment
- Work with your child on provided activities that are part of the curriculum and related to program school readiness goals

Individuals that volunteer and will work directly with children will be required to participate in a Volunteer Training in order to review both health and State of Michigan Licensing requirements.

**Every parent is important and the time and effort you put into the program is very much appreciated by your child and the Early Childhood Program Staff.**

**Family Engagement Activities**

Family engagement activities occur on a regular basis at your child's Early Childhood Program school. The purpose of these events is two-fold. First, it provides an opportunity for parents to connect, learn about and receive information important to their families, career, and current needs. Second, it is to gain parent input in all aspects of program planning. Several topics of interest may be presented at the monthly parent meeting or off-site at parent workshops. This is also a time to socialize and meet other parents, see your child's learning environment, and talk with the staff. Please plan on attending for a pleasant experience!

The first opportunity for the parents to get together will be scheduled in the fall. During the short parent meeting, the parents in attendance will elect two parents, one representative and one alternate, to represent their classroom at the monthly Policy Council Meeting. Parents are encouraged to provide input and participate in all areas of the program.

**Parent Notice of Program Measurement**

The CLMCAA Great Start Readiness Program is required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effect of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MDE might:

- Ask parents questions about their child and family
- Observe children in the classroom
- Measure what children know about letters, words, numbers, etc.

Ask Teachers how children are learning and growing. Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law. If you have questions, please contact:

- CLMCAA GSRP Office (906)632-3363
- The MDE Office of Great Start, Early Childhood Education and Family Services, at mde-gsrp@michigan.gov, 517-373-8483, or 608 W. Allegan, P.O. Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909.

### **Pest Management**

As part of the Chippewa-Luce-Mackinac Community Action Agency Pest Management Program, pesticides are occasionally applied during the program year. You will be informed prior to any routine pesticide application. In the event of an emergency application, you will be notified immediately following the treatment.

In addition, preventative pesticides are sprayed during non-school (summer) sessions to maintain the grounds.

### **Phone Calls**

The school staff are available for telephone calls. Staff will let you know at the beginning of the year what is the best time of day to contact the school by telephone. In the event of an emergency, please call the school or Central Office at any time.

### **Phone (Cellular) Use**

In order to ensure the safety of the children, cell phone use is **prohibited** in the classroom or any function when children are present.

### **Photographs/Videos/Audio**

In order to protect the privacy of the children and their families, parents/visitors are asked to obtain permission from a Teacher/Lead Caregiver prior to taking photos, either in the center, on the bus or during field trips and other outings. Taking photos of children other than your own is prohibited. Parents or volunteers unwilling to abide by this policy may be asked to leave the center.

### **Physical and Dental Exam/Health Screenings Policy**

All children **MUST** have a completed Physical Exam (EPSDT Physical) on file in the Early Childhood Program's Administrative Office. Children who have **not** met this requirement within 30 days of enrollment **will be excluded** and may be dropped from the program. The health screenings required for all programs include vision, hearing, blood pressure, height, weight, hematocrit/hemoglobin, physical inspection, and blood lead screening (depending on child's age). The Early Head Start Program follows the EPSDT guideline for Well Baby Checks. Parents may want to contact their insurance providers regarding coverage for required components.

The Head Start Program requires a dental examination within 45 days of enrollment. The Early Head Start program requires a dental inspection at each well baby check up to 36 months. A dental exam performed by a licensed dentist is required at 12 months of age and once a year thereafter.

### **Policy Council**

Policy Council is the group of parents that makes the decisions about the nature and operation of the Early Childhood Programs operated by CLMCAA. Parents from Early Head Start, Head Start, Strong Beginnings and the Great Start Readiness Programs are elected from each classroom to serve on the Policy Council. Home Based families also have representation on Policy Council. Representatives are selected and voted for by other parents from the classroom at either Parent Orientation or the first parent meeting. The representatives, who meet monthly during the program year, serve as a link to school parent committees to provide communication with parents.

Policy Council representatives work in partnership with the CLMCAA Board of Directors and Management staff to develop, review and approve or disapprove policies and procedures which include funding applications, program planning, program philosophy, long and short-range goals and objectives, service area, selection and enrollment priorities and program Self-Assessment. The Policy Council Chairperson is a member of the Community Action Agency Board of Directors.

#### **The Role of Policy Council Representatives:**

- ❑ Attend the Policy Council meetings once a month (Mileage and childcare are paid each time you attend the Policy Council Meeting)
- ❑ Provide a link between program staff and classroom parents
- ❑ Attend parent meetings to share Policy Council information with parents, and in turn, bring their input back to Policy Council
- ❑ Provide input regarding program planning and activities
- ❑ Participate in the annual Self-Assessment of the program

This is one way you can participate and play an active role in the program and your child's education. If you are interested in participating in an opportunity for personal growth and program enrichment, call your Family Service Worker, Teacher, Lead Caregiver or your child's Home Visitor.

#### **Resting Policy**

In accordance with Michigan Child Care Licensing, children under school age, in attendance 5 or more continuous hours shall be provided naptime or quiet time.

CLMCAA will:

- Provide a mat, cot, or crib to each child
  - Cribs will be placed at least 3 feet apart
  - Mats will be placed at least 18 inches apart
- Provide approximately one (1) hour of quiet time/rest time but not less than thirty (30) minutes for children 3 to 5 years old
- Allow children to look at books, play with stuffed animals or other quiet objects if the child chooses not to sleep
- Not have bottles, beverage containers, or food in sleeping equipment
- Not wear anything around the neck (i.e. amber teething necklace) during naptime or quiet time
- Provide required staff supervision at all times per licensing
- Dim the lights, provide soft music and an atmosphere conducive to rest
- Allow children to sleep longer than one (1) hour unless otherwise requested by the parent

**Children under 18 months of age will be allowed to sleep on demand. Children under 3 years of age shall be provided opportunities to rest regardless of the number of hours in care.**

**All licensing standards for Sleeping, Resting and Supervision shall be followed in accordance with R 400.8188**

#### **Short Term Exclusion Policy**

EARLY HEAD START/HEAD START /STRONG BEGINNINGS/GSRP CENTER BASED:

Children who have been ill (i.e. persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, unexplained lethargy or vomiting) during the night or early in the morning should stay at home. A child should also stay at home if he/she does not feel well enough to participate comfortably in the program's activities. The staff cannot adequately care for a sick child without

compromising the care of the other children. Parents are asked to inform the school when their child is ill.

#### EARLY HEAD START HOME BASED:

Parents are asked to contact the Early Head Start Home Visitor or the Home Visitor's office if a child or another member of the household has any of the following symptoms or diagnosis, so a home visit can be rescheduled.

The following conditions also apply to the staff and volunteers that work with the children. A child is too sick to attend the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program if they have any of the following symptoms, unless a health provider determines that the child is well enough to attend and that the illness is not contagious.

- **FEVER:** (Above 100.4 degrees F. axillary) accompanied by behavioral changes and other signs or symptoms of illness (i.e. child looks and acts sick)
- **SIGNS OR SYMPTOMS OF POSSIBLE SEVERE ILLNESS:** (i.e., Persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing or unexplained lethargy)
- **DIARRHEA:** Changes from the child's usual stool pattern, increased frequency of stools, multiple loose/watery stools, stools that run out of the diaper or child cannot get to the bathroom in time or diarrhea accompanied by other symptoms of illness. \*Exception would be if child is taking medication that could induce loose stools such as antibiotics (should have been on antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school). Circumstances should be evaluated.
- **VOMITING:** The child should have no prior vomiting episodes for 24 hours prior to returning to school. Exception: A Health Care Provider has determined it is not infectious (note from doctor is provided).
- **MOUTH SORES:** Accompanied with drooling
- **RASH:** Spreading or open/weeping sores

A child is too sick to attend the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program if they have any of the following diagnosis from a health provider (until treated and/or are no longer contagious):

- **HEAD LICE:** Until after treatment and Nit free
- **CHICKENPOX:** Until 6 days after the start of the rash or all sores have crusted over
- **IMPETIGO:** Until 24 hours after treatment started
- **INFECTIOUS CONJUNCTIVITIS/PINK EYE:** With eye discharge that is yellow, white or green – until 24 hours after treatment has started
- **SCABIES OR OTHER INFESTATIONS:** Until 24 hours after treatment
- **FIFTH'S DISEASE:** When child feels well enough to be in school
- **STREP THROAT, SCARLET FEVER, OR OTHER STREP INFECTION:** Until 24 hours after treatment started and the child is fever-free
- **SHINGLES:** If lesions cannot be covered, until they are dry
- **PERTUSSIS:** Until 5 days after treatment started
- **TUBERCULOSIS (TB):** Until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious
- **HAND, FOOT & MOUTH:** If secretions from blisters can be contained and child is fever free
- **MUMPS:** Until 9 days after the start of symptoms (i.e. swelling of cheeks)
- **HEPATITIS A:** Until 7 days after start of symptoms (i.e. jaundice)
- **MEASLES:** Until 6 days after start of rash
- **RUBELLA (German Measles):** Until 6 days after the start of the rash

- **ORAL HERPES:** If the child is drooling or lesions cannot be covered – until lesions heal
- **RSV:** Until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious, and child is symptom free

Children that become ill during the time that they are at the Early Childhood Program school will be sent home. The staff will call the parents to come and pick up the child. If transportation is not available, the Head Start/GSRP bus may be available to bring children home. While the children are waiting to be picked up, they will be separated from other children in a designated comfortable area.

Should an Early Head Start child or parent become ill during a group socialization activity, the parent and the child will be brought home, or the parent may use his or her own means of transportation. If a child or parent becomes ill during the home visit, the home visit will be rescheduled for another time.

**IF A PHYSICIAN OR OTHER HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL RECOMMENDS EXCLUSION FOR ANY ILLNESS NOT LISTED ABOVE, THE CHILD OR STAFF PERSON SHOULD REMAIN OUT OF SCHOOL/WORK AS DIRECTED. They may return with a release from the doctor.**

### **Smoke-Free Policy**

Due to the acknowledged hazards, both to adult non-smokers and especially to young children, arising from exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, it shall be the policy of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program to provide a smoke-free environment for staff, children and volunteers. This policy covers the smoking of any tobacco product or vaping and applies to both employees and non-employee participants of the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program. Parents of **Home Base** children are asked to refrain from smoking/vaping during the weekly home visit also. The CLMCAA Smoke Free Policy shall apply to all off site activities and functions.

### **Toileting**

Children do not have to be toilet trained to attend Head Start, GSRP or Strong Beginnings. We recognize that many 3 year olds and even many 4 year olds have toileting accidents. If your child has an accident at school, staff will change your child and send home the soiled clothing. Please wash the clothing and send a second set of extra clothing the next day. Toilet training will be planned cooperatively between the child's regular caregivers and the parent so that the toilet routine established is consistent between the school and the child's home.

### **Transportation Policy**

Transportation services are provided in most areas. Depending on location some children may not be transported by the bus. Routes are determined so that children are transported in an efficient manner. Individual routes cannot exceed one (1) hour per State of Michigan Licensing requirements.

- Children who are transported must be ready to leave their homes and board the bus in a timely manner.
- Once routes are determined they will remain the same for every day school is in session. It is not possible to determine an exact time the bus will arrive. After the first week or so, you will know the approximate time. Many things such as road conditions, weather, attendance, etc., may affect the schedule.
- If your child has a daycare provider, please inform them of our Transportation Policy.
- The bus will not be able to go back and pick up your child if he/she is not ready when the bus arrives. You will be responsible for transporting your child to the school.



- You, or a person you have designated on the Child Information Card, must be at the drop off destination for your child at the end of the school day. If you are not at the drop off destination, your child will be returned to the school and you will be responsible for picking him/her up.
- If you, or those listed on the Child Information Card, cannot be contacted and your child is not picked up within one (1) hour after they are returned to school, Child Protective Services or the local police may be called.
- Parents may ride the bus on their volunteer day or for parent meetings if space is available.
- All children are secured with 5-point harness restraints (safety belts) while riding the bus.
- **Appropriate restraints (safety belts) must be worn by all volunteers riding the Head Start/GSRP bus.**

**If you transport your child to the school:**

Please be on time if you are transporting your child to and/or from school. Children benefit most from experiencing the full daily routine. You must sign your child in and/or out of the classroom and notify the Teacher/Lead Caregiver of your arrival. Never leave/take your child without speaking with a school employee first. Anyone else picking up your child must be listed on the Child Information Card and will be asked to show picture identification. **This is for your child's protection.**

## *Early Head Start/Head Start/GSRP Services*

### Disability Services

**The Disability Services that the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program provides include comprehensive services for children with special needs through early identification, intervention, and programming in collaboration with other agencies and programs; as well as acting in an advocacy role on behalf of children and families.**

**What Disability Services Can Do For You:** The early childhood years are critical in the physical, mental and emotional growth of your child. Learning problems or physical problems that are found early, can often be corrected. The Early Learning Inclusion Specialist will assist in the following ways:

- Assist in referring your child if necessary
- Review forms completed by parents to determine needs
- Review screenings to determine needs
- Discuss special needs with the family as they arise
- Advocate and support families who qualify for school district/Early On services

**What You Can Do:** Take an active role in sharing information about your child with the Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Home Visitor and the Early Learning Inclusion Specialist. By doing so, you will help us to provide experiences that fit your child's specific needs. Here are some of the things you can do to provide a quality experience in the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program:

- Inform staff of conditions that you suspect or are aware of
- Notify staff of changes as they occur
- Sign releases of information if you are receiving services
- Call the Early Learning Inclusion Specialist with concerns, ideas or questions

### Education Services

**The Education Services that are provided strive to offer a comprehensive, individualized approach to learning through developmentally appropriate activities based on School Readiness**

**Goals that are aligned with the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework, Michigan's Early Learning Expectations, and the expectations of the local school districts.**

**Celebrations and Holidays:** Holidays in the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program are celebrated in a variety of ways. Many of the children talk about family traditions and various ways they celebrate holidays in their homes. In keeping with the High/Scope curriculum, it is our goal to support the interests of the children and keep away from planned programs. We support children's interests in the holidays by participating in their conversations and role-play about the festivities. We celebrate with children and families in ways that encourage all participants to be actively involved.

Program policies require that any food served for celebrations and holidays must be prepared at the school.

**Field Trips:** The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program frequently supplements the curriculum with field trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend field trips as part of the Enrollment Packet and on the Field Trip Permission Form given to the parent before every trip. Notification of a field trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information including destination, date, time, and reason for trip. Field trip information may also be included on monthly calendars.

Early Head Start children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian if a motorized vehicle is used. Parents will not be permitted to transport any child, other than their own, on an Early Head Start, Head Start, Strong Beginnings or GSRP sponsored trip. Routine walks and buggy/wagon rides to nearby parks and play areas are considered part of the daily routine and not as field trips.

**What the Education Services Can Do for You:** This service area provides each child with experiences to meet their educational needs. The individual lesson plan for your child invites you to participate in your child's education as a teaching partner. The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program provides you with the opportunity to observe child development and child management techniques that build on your knowledge and skills.

**The Education Services:**

- Provides your child with many learning experiences, including meeting school readiness goals
- Encourages your child to develop school readiness skills while participating in developmentally appropriate play
- Builds your child's self esteem
- Involves you as a teaching partner
- Builds your knowledge and skills about child development and child management

**What You Can Do:**

- Make sure your child attends school daily
- Participate and volunteer whenever possible
- Talk with your child about school
- Keep your child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Home Visitor informed
- Call the Teacher/Lead Caregiver, Family Service Worker, Home Visitor or Site Leader with any questions, ideas or concerns
- Attend School Readiness Advisory Committee Meetings
- Attend Policy Council
- Attend child development training
- Participate in home visits

## **Family Services**

**The Family Services component is committed to bringing comprehensive services to families. This includes training and resources that may be beneficial and would assist in building family strengths.**

**What Family Services Can Do for You:** A Family Service Worker (FSW) is assigned to your child's classroom. Your FSW can provide you with information on services, resources and trainings that are available if you are interested. This is done in a variety of ways:

- **Goal Setting** – During the first home visit and throughout the year, FSWs will review family goals, needs and strengths.
- **Parent Meetings** - Parents have an opportunity to attend parent meetings held at their schools throughout the year. This gives parents an opportunity to have input into program planning including special activities such as field trips, parent training opportunities and classroom events.
- **Family Engagement Activities** - Family engagement activities are another opportunity for parents to get together while including the entire family. The families and staff at the school plan family engagement activities together.
- **Parent Volunteering Opportunities** - The FSW works in conjunction with the teaching staff to provide a variety of ways you can participate in the classroom, at home, or as a Policy Council Representative.
- **Program Satisfaction Survey** – The Program Satisfaction Survey is a form the parent completes during the school year. This will assist with the annual Self-Assessment and program improvement.
- **Referrals** - When you discuss a need or situation with your child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver, they will submit a referral to your FSW if needed. Your FSW will contact you and assist in developing a plan of action.
- **Self-Referral** - If you are in need of assistance or just want to talk with someone about an issue, please call your FSW.
- **Assist with Health Services** (see Health Services)

**What You Can Do:** As a parent, become engaged in your child's education. Show your child that home and school work together. Ways to become involved:

- Send your child to school daily
- Volunteer in the classroom and at playgroups
- Attend monthly Family Engagement activities
- Serve as a Policy Council Representative
- Go to CLMCAA Early Childhood program sponsored workshops
- Attend Policy Council Meetings
- Complete the Program Satisfaction Survey which is then used to plan program improvements
- Call your FSW with any concerns, ideas or questions
- Work with your child on provided activities that are part of the curriculum and related to program School Readiness Goals
- Work with your FSW to develop goals that your family can work towards

## **Health Services**

**Health Services commit to the overall goal of healthy children and families through prevention, identification and early intervention of health problems. The Health component links families with the medical/dental community and other resources, emphasizes good health, nutrition and encourages positive, mental wellbeing and practices. All medical and dental information is submitted to the child's FSW, Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Home Visitor. It is reviewed throughout**

**the year by the Health Services Coordinator and you will be notified if information is not up-to-date.**

**What Health Services can do for you?**

- Assess your child's overall health status
- Act as a resource for health information
- Be available to discuss your concerns related to health
- Attend meetings that plan for children's health needs
- Assure that you are notified when health records are not up to date

**What You Can Do:**

- Take an active role in keeping your child healthy
- Take your child for a yearly annual exam or EPSDT age-appropriate well baby checks
- Keep your child's immunizations (shots) up to date
- Take your child for dental checkups every 6 months
- Submit health forms by the due date
- Keep your child home when ill
- Attend health meetings when requested
- Call the FSW, Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Home Visitor with any ideas, questions or concerns
- Attend Health Advisory Meeting

When children have the ongoing care and immunizations needed to keep them healthy, they are more prepared to learn. When children are sick, they can access care quickly and return to school. Time spent learning leads to academic success!

**Mental Health Services**

**A licensed Psychologist is available to provide a mental health consultation regarding specific child and classroom management techniques. The Mental Health Consultant is also available to work directly with families upon request. Appropriate referrals can be made if necessary.**

**What the Mental Health Consultant Can Do For You:** provide the parent, Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Home Visitor with an understanding of a child's behavior through early screening, intervention and training.

The Mental Health Consultant can assist in the following ways:

- Observe the child in the classroom
- Develop a Positive Guidance Behavior Plan for the classroom
- Assist the teaching and caregiving staff in implementing the plan
- Discuss behavior management classroom concerns with parents
- Provide information and referrals individually to parents as requested
- Promote positive mental health practices for children, families, and staff
- Assist in identification and referral services
- Coordinate mental health activities with other Early Childhood Program components

**What You Can Do:**

- Keep the staff informed of concerns that you may have about your child
- Collaborate with the Teacher/Lead Caregiver or Home Visitor and Mental Health Consultant to best meet the needs of your child
- Ask about the Parent Education Program offered

### **Nutrition Services**

**A Registered Dietitian reviews all program menus prior to the school year. The Registered Dietitian is also available to meet with families regarding nutritional needs and concerns throughout the year and works directly with families upon request.**

#### **What the Nutrition Consultant can do for you:**

- Provide information regarding food service rules and regulations
- Be available to discuss specific concerns and individual needs
- Meet with you if your child has specific dietary needs

#### **What You Can Do:**

- Please contact your child's Teacher/Lead Caregiver, Home Visitor or FSW if you would like to meet with the Registered Dietitian
- Keep the staff informed if your child's nutrition needs change

### **Transition Services**

**Children and families are supported during transitions. Parents are assisted in understanding what to expect in new environments. Staff assist children and parents throughout the year with transitions in and out of the programs by:**

- Encouraging children and parents to visit the next placement before the child begins. The parents and children visit, take part in sample activities, and meet staff, other children and parents
- Making orientation information available, including information about parental rights and opportunities for parent participation so that they are prepared for active involvement in the activities and committees of their child's Early Childhood program or next placement.

### **Transitioning children suspected or diagnosed with disabilities into Early Head Start/Head Start/GSRP or next placement**

The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program collaborates with the Intermediate School District or Early On to ensure referrals are received and services are provided to both programs. Parents are informed of what programs are available by both agencies.

A meeting will be arranged with the service providers, the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program Teachers/Caregivers or Home Visitor and the parent(s) to discuss your child, determine needs and what the staff needs to know to ensure a smooth transition. This meeting will take place prior to your child's enrollment in the program or as soon thereafter as possible.

If your child is suspected or diagnosed with a disability during the enrollment process, CLMCAA Early Childhood Program staff will contact the parents to explain eligibility requirements and services. If after the initial meeting the parent is interested in enrollment, releases of information will be secured to gather information relevant to the disabling condition. If required, a referral to Early On, the School District or Local Education Agency (LEA) will be made to request evaluations, determination of eligibility, and IEP/IFSP development.

CLMCAA Early Childhood Program parents sign a release form upon enrollment into the program, allowing all developmental and health records to be released to the public schools or appropriate agency. The School Readiness Advisory Committee meets annually for the coordination of services between the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program and the Public or local schools. A Transition Form is written on all 3 to 5 year old children and is forwarded to the school the child will be attending. Parents and Teachers

review the Transition Form at the last Parent/Teacher conference. The parent then signs the form allowing the CLMCAA Early Childhood Program to forward the information to the next placement.

The CLMCAA Early Childhood Program will facilitate the evaluation process by the LEA for children with suspected or diagnosed disabilities that are brought to the attention of staff during the end of the program year. Program staff will assist parents in completing and signing the necessary observation/assessment forms and releases before the end of the school year.

### **Transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start**

For children transitioning into Head Start, a Transition Form is completed and information is shared with the Head Start staff as confidentiality allows. Because Early Head Start operates during the summer months, transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start begins 6 months prior to the child's 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday.

When possible, the children transitioning from Early Head Start to Head Start are given time in the Head Start classroom to explore and become familiar with their soon-to-be new environment. Families are encouraged to be a part of this process. Family Service Workers, Teachers, Home Visitors and Lead Caregivers work closely together to ease transition.

### **Transitioning Children to Kindergarten**

The Head Start/GSRP staff will support families as their children leave the Head Start/GSRP to continue education with the School District of their choice. Support will be offered in a variety of forms:

- Kindergarten classroom visits will be arranged to familiarize the children with the new classroom environment. Together the Kindergarten Teacher and Head Start/GSRP Teacher will develop an activity that will orient the children to the kindergarten setting. Parents will be invited to accompany their child to the new and exciting environment.
- A Head Start/GSRP Kindergarten Parent Meeting will be arranged to discuss:
  - School district expectations and curriculums
  - Ideas for summer parent support of child development
  - Information of how parents can take an active role in their child's education
  - Special Education Services
- In the spring, a Parent/Teacher conference will take place to assist parents in understanding their child's progress over the year and identify areas of support for kindergarten entry.
- Also in the spring, transition information and activities will be distributed for parent support of child development.

### ***We are here to help***

***If you have any questions/concerns regarding any of the services provided, please contact the CLMCAA Early Childhood Programs***

***Central Office***

***(906) 632-3363***

***Email: [headstart@clmcaa.com](mailto:headstart@clmcaa.com)***

***[www.clmcaa.com](http://www.clmcaa.com)***