

Family Handbook and 2023 - 2024 School Calendar



Strengthening Families since 1965



Bennington County Head Start and Early Head Start Farm to School Program values:
Local Partnership Family and Community Collaboration
Comprehensive Education Good Nutrition and a Healthy Lifestyle
1/2/24

2023 / 2024 Family Handbook Table of Contents

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~Message from the Director~

Welcome to the new program year 2023 - 2024! With each September we begin the new schoolyear with hopes and dreams. This year our hopes and dreams are that we can return to our West facility this September after our fire last winter and for this year we can return to our "new normal" and have a more regular schedule for classes and parent engagement opportunities; however, we all understand that keeping children and staff healthy is our priority. We are also dreaming about our new Pownal facility that we plan to have completed by next summer.

We are looking forward to new educational programming with enhanced curriculum for all ages. I am so grateful to all the teachers and staff for the extra work they have done to get through last year and start this year with new ideas and excitement. We will also be having a Head Start program review so we will be reaching out to parents for your participation in Center Committees and Policy Council. These groups are great ways for parents to have a voice in our program.

I hope you will join your classroom's Facebook page so you can enjoy all the wonderful activities your child will be participating in with their classmates, as well as Remind as important program updates and family/parent activities are sent through this application.

I look forward to meeting you, and please know I am always available to answer questions at brgunn@ucsvt.org or 802-442-3686 ext. 134.

Cheers to a great new school year!

Betsy Rathbun-gunn

Director of Early Childhood Services

Mission Statement

Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Positive outlook
- Responsibility
- Equality
- Accessibility

Mission

Preparing children and their families for school through collaborative approaches to high quality education, health, and social services.

Vision

All children and families will be successful, life-long learners.

Strategies

- Providing comprehensive community-based programs
- Strengthening families and building resilience
- Serving families in a trusting and welcoming environment and working with families to provide life-long opportunities.
- Providing infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and their families opportunities that foster personal growth and well-being.
- Building collaborative relationships with the community through open communication with families and the community.

Bennington County Head Start / Early Head Start Locations

* Mailing Address for Centers: P.O. Box 588, Bennington, VT 05201

Head Start Centers:

Hours: Monday – Thursday 7:30 AM – 4:30 PM <u>and</u> Fridays 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM

Please attend only your registered hours of enrollment

* North Bennington Campus

2 Park Street North Bennington, VT 05257 Telephone # (802) 442-3686

* Pownal Center

Monday – Thursday: 8:00 AM – 4:00 PM
Fridays: 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM
97 Schoolhouse Road
Pownal, VT 05261
Telephone # (802) 442-3683 ext. 180
Fax # (802) 823-4031
Emergency # (802) 375-453

Park Street Center

Fax # (802) 447-3423 Emergency # (802) 379-0689

West Street Center

Fax # (802) 442-0227 **Emergency** # (802) 379-2478

* Spring Center

655 Gage Street
Bennington, VT 05257
Telephone # (802) 442-3686
Fax # (802) 445-4005
Emergency # (802) 430-9272

Partnership Locations

* <u>UCS/Infant/Toddler Center</u>

7:30 AM – 4:00 PM
Fridays - 7:30 AM – 3:00 PM
100 Ledge Hill Drive
Bennington, VT 05201
Telephone # (802) 442-3686 ext. 258
Fax # (802) 442-3363
Emergency # (802) 442-5491

Manchester Elementary

PO Box 2288, 80 Memorial Drive Manchester, VT 05254 (802) 362-3950 Ext. 638 (UCS Office) Fax # (802) 362-0325

Northshire Day School

5484 Main Street Manchester Center, VT 05255 Telephone # (802) 362-1395 Fax # (802) 362-1374

Forever Friends Playschool

1735 East Road Bennington, VT 05201 Telephone # (802) 447-8843 Fax # (801)-672-7952

Myers Prouty Children's Campus

MONUMENT CENTER
1 Monument Circle
Bennington, VT 05201
Telephone # (802) 681-7539
Fax: (802) 447-2412
Myers, Jackie (Co-owner/Office Mgr.)
Prouty, Michelle (Co-owner)

Oak Hill Children's Center

72 Schoolhouse Road Pownal, VT 05261 Telephone # (802) 823-7839 Fax # (802) 823-7837

Community Numbers at-a-Glance

 $Police, Fire, Ambulance \ (Emergency) - 911$

Bennington Police – (802) 442-1030

State Police – (802) 442-5421

Hospital (SVMC) - (802) 442-6361

Poison Control – 1-800-222-1222

Human Service Informational & Referral Hotline – 211

WIC - (802) 447-3531

United Counseling Services (UCS) – (802) 442-5491

DCF/Economic Services - 1-800-479-6151

BROC - (802) 447-7515

Bennington County Child Care Assoc. (BCCCA) – (802) 447-6936

Green Mountain Express– (802) 447-0477

Legal Aid - 1-800-639-8857

Bennington County Court House – (802) 447-2700

Family Court – (802) 447-2729

VT Department of Child Care Licensing - 1-800-649-2642

Voc. Rehab – (802) 447-2780

Subsidy @ BCCCA - Rachel – (802) 442-0059

Ashley – (802) 442-0052

Child's Doctor

Child's Dentist

Family Dentist

Vermont 211 - the number you dial to find out about hundreds of important community resources, such as emergency food and shelter, disability services, counseling, senior services, healthcare, childcare, drug and alcohol programs, legal assistance, transportation needs, educational and volunteer opportunities and much more.

Telephone Extension List

Main Number for all below is (802) 442-3686

North Bennington Campus

137 ATTENDANCE LINE

185 Rebecca Bishop Ware, Director

121 Lisa Biddle, Administrative Coordinator/Transportation Supervisor

129 Grace Winslow, RN BSN, Health Manager

135 April Dunham, Family & Community Partnership Manager

128 Linda Darlington, Health Assistant/Food Services Coordinator

138 Tonya Havens, Head Start Education Manager & West Street Site Manager

124 Cindy Randall, Operations Coordinator

127 Jo-Anne Main, Transportation Coordinator/Bus Driver/Office Assistant

147 Erin Shulman, Family Support Generalist

144 Angela Brothers, Family Support Generalist

137 Lynn Trefry, Reception Clerk/Attendance Line

132 Mary Gates, Cook

126 Wendy Ballou, Kitchen Assistant

North Bennington Campus Classrooms

122 South Room, Park Street Center (Early Head Start)

142 North Room, Park Street Center (Early Head Start)

125 East Room, Park Street Center (Early Head Start)

123 Pre-k 1, West Street Center (Head Start)

130 Pre-k 2, West Street Center (Head Start)

131 Pre-k 3, West Street Center (Head Start)

Spring Center

454 Kim Lawlor-Batty, Assistant Director/EHS Manager/Site Manager

459 Jocelyn Boyd, Disabilities Coordinator

461 Stephanie Eames, Family Support/Community Partnership Liaison Coordinator

462 Allyson Gerity, LPN, Early Head Start Health Case Manager

PAGE Makayla Lindsey, Behavior Interventionist

PAGE KC Tiffany, Family Support Generalist

451 Ashley Prestipino, Admin Associate

189 Angel Bermudez Sanes, Cook

189 Thomas Lake, Cook

450 Vinny Cote, Afterschool Assistant

Spring Center Classrooms

305 Pre-k A Classroom (Head Start)

469 Pre-k B Classroom (Head Start)

304 Infant-Toddler Classroom C (Early Head Start)

150 Infant-Toddler Classroom D (Early Head Start)

465 Infant-Toddler Classroom E (Early Head Start)

Pownal Center

180 Classroom – Lisa Dale, Teacher/Site Manager

181 KC Tiffany, Family Support Generalist

UCS Infant /Toddler Center

258 Classroom - Rose LaCroix, Teacher/Site Manager

203 Kim Batty, Assistant Director, Early Head Start Manager

Manchester UCS Office

638 TBH



Bennington County Head Start/Early Head Start has a Facebook page! We strongly encourage you to follow us, as we post school closings and delays, reminders, important programming updates and occasional photos of classroom events!

Remind App: We ask that families sign up for the Remind App. Our staff use this virtual technology to communicate with families and individuals, important reminders, and updates. You can choose to receive message via text or email.

Bennington County Head Start/Early Head Start

Bennington County Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) has been serving families in Bennington County since 1965. We offer a comprehensive program that strives to meet the needs of the whole family. HS/EHS must adhere to Federal Standards and the Vermont State Child Care Licensing Regulations, which are posted at each center and can be found online at: http: www.state.vt.us/srs/childcare/license.htm Copies are also available by calling 1-800-649-2624. Any staff or manager can assist you with questions or concerns as well.

How to Obtain a Birth Certificate:

The Bennington Town Clerk, located at 205 South Street, will have a birth certificate on file if:

- 1. The child was born in Bennington, or
- 2. The parents resided in Bennington at the time of the birth, but the birth took place elsewhere in Vermont. The cost for each certified copy is \$10.00 and uncertified copies are \$1.00. Just come by the office with name and date of birth and you'll be able to get the birth certificate immediately. IF YOUR CHILD WAS NOT BORN IN BENNINGTON AND YOU DID NOT RESIDE IN BENNINGTON, contact the Town Clerk in the town and state in which you resided when your child was born to get a copy of the birth certificate.

Parent Fees & Policy at all HS/EHS Centers: Head Start hours are 8:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. and Early Head Start hours are 8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

If your child is enrolled in the full day/full year program, please be aware and knowledgeable of the payment and late fee policy.

Payment Policy: It is essential that childcare fees be paid promptly at the beginning of each week. Payment is due on Monday for the week to follow; never for childcare already received. Checks or money orders should be made out to United Children's Services. Credit /debit cards and auto-pay options also available. If fees become more than 5 days past due and you have not spoken with the Associate Director, childcare services may discontinue immediately. Payment is due regardless of actual attendance. If your child does not attend, the program is reserving their slot and program expenses are the same.

Please contact Rebecca Bishop Ware, Associate Director, if you expect that your payment will be late, or you need assistance, 442-3686 ext. 133.

Late Fee Policy: If for any reason (accidents, hospitalizations, sickness) you anticipate being late to pick up your child from childcare, you need to call and let your child's teacher know how late you will be. Our program has a "3 strike policy" so if your child is picked up past their own scheduled pick-up time you will first have a verbal warning that there will be a \$5.00 per 15-minute charge per child; the 2nd time it happens you will receive a written letter advising of the policy and a reminder that the 3rd incident will result in the implementation of the late fee. The late fee must be paid by the end of the month to insure uninterrupted childcare. Please be considerate of the teachers and their families and be sure that your child is picked up on time.

Child Care Subsidies/ Financial Assistance:

Please call Bennington County Child Care Association (BCCCA) at 802-442-0052 for assistance.

It is your responsibility to keep your certificate current. You may be billed for childcare hours that you attend that subsidy does not cover.

Whenever you receive paperwork from BCCCA, please fill out and return it immediately so the staff has time to process it **before** your certificate expires. Your Family Support Worker is also available to answer any questions about subsidy and paperwork and to assist you.



General Guidelines:

- * Parents are asked to be aware of and respect the center's hours of operation. Staff will not be available to supervise your child during non-school hours because they have many other responsibilities. If you arrive early with your child, please be prepared to stay with him/her until your child's hours begin.
- * Anyone who picks up children must be on the emergency contact form. This person will be required to have a <u>photo ID</u> to show before your child can be released, and they must be at least 17 years old. If there is an emergency and you must call Head Start/Early Head Start, the alternate person will still need to have ID to pick up your child.
- * DO NOT leave other children outside in a vehicle while you bring the enrolled child in the classroom. Children "picked up" need to be buckled into their own car seat per Vermont State Law. <u>Both instances are against the law, and reportable to police.</u>

Vehicles must be turned off; idling is illegal.

- * Please be sure that children have <u>an extra set of</u> <u>clothing</u>, labeled with your child's name, at the center. Items can be kept in the child's cubby for emergencies or to keep your child comfortable. Please make sure that children have appropriate clothing for outdoor play (hats, boots, mittens, snow pants, winter coat, sweatshirt, and a change of shoes or slippers) because outdoor play is a daily part of the child's classroom play, 15°-90°.
- * No personal toys or food are to be brought into school or on the bus unless it is a toy share day and/or set up with your child's teacher in advance.
- * Check your child's **backpack**, as we put important reminders and information in them weekly. You are expected to read all letters and flyers sent home and return requested items.

Lead Water Testing:

Please be aware that schools and childcares are required to lead test water faucets that are used for cooking, drinking, and brushing teeth. When taps are tested, families are notified with the results. Results and more information can be found at https://leadresults.vermont.gov/

September



October 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	9	10	11	12	13	14
5	16	17	18	19	20	21
!2	23	24	25	26	27	28
19	30	31				

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	•	SATURDAY
27	28	29	30	31	1		2
3	4 Labor Day CLOSED	CLO Home Visits		7 First Day (Except West) Head Start & Early Head Start 12 p.m. Dismissal Home Visits (Centers Close @ Noon)	8 12 p.m. Dism (Centers Clos Noon)		9
10 Grandparents Day	11 Patriots Day WEST REOPENS 1st Day w/12 p.m. Dismissal for West ONLY ~ Welcome Wee Bagels & Notecard Making for Families @ Drop-off and Pick-up	tk ~ See Head Star Transportation/ Pedestrian Safety Policy Council	t/Early Head Start C Oral Health Activity	alendar for Daily Act Family Engagement	15 ivities Taste-testing	3 p.m. l	16
17	18	19	20 Explorer's Club 4:45 – 5:45 p.m.	21	22	Dismissal	23
24	25	Open House © Spring Center 4 – 5:30 p.m.	27 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers Open House @ Park & West Centers 4:30 – 6 p.m.	Open House @ Pownal & UCS Centers 3 – 4:30 p.m.	29		30

POLICIES

Enrollment/Classroom Assignment: Children are assigned to classrooms and teachers in accordance with the needs of the children, appropriateness of classroom curriculum and dynamic, available space, and other relevant factors.

- * Children with special needs enrolled in the program are placed among the classrooms and sites based on individual needs and space availability.
- * Before assignment of children to classes, a component team discusses children's needs for special services. Consideration must be given to the total make-up of the class determining placement after the initial IEP meeting.
- * At any time, program staff will work with parents and special education staff to evaluate and reassign a child's classroom placement if necessary, and with the approval of the Director.

ATTENDANCE / ABSENTEEISM

Parents are expected to call the attendance line at (442-3686, ext. 137) directly by 8:30 a.m. if their child will not be attending that day or if the child will be arriving after 9:30 a.m. and provide the reason for the absence or tardiness, including disease diagnosis or symptoms if your child is sick. If we do not hear from you, your child will be marked "absent" and you will receive a call later in the morning.

Attendance is directly related to school success. Good attendance habits developed in preschool can build the foundation for good attendance and school attendance for your child's lifetime and ensures that the students can achieve their potential. If a child has been absent for two consecutive days and Head Start has not been able to contact the parent or guardian, we are required to conduct a home visit to make sure everyone is safe. Please let program staff know if you need help with your child's attendance, as we are mandated to maintain at least 85% monthly attendance. Extended absences and lack of program participation after assistance has been offered will result in an attendance plan.

If conditions of the plan are not met, a letter will be sent stating that since you have chosen not to participate in the program, we can only assume that you have decided to make other arrangements for your child and your space will be offered to another child on our waitlist. In addition, for those students enrolled in SVSU Universal Pre-K (3 – 5-year old's), we must adhere to the SVSU Universal Pre-K attendance policy, so children who have unexcused absences will receive a personal contact from a staff person and a written letter outlining attendance practices. Parents of students who continue to have unexcused absences will be invited to attend a meeting with Head Start staff to mitigate barriers to school attendance. After this meeting children who continue to have more absences may be discontinued from the Universal Pre-K component until a meeting is held with Head Start and SVSU to remove barriers to student attendance.

Confidentiality Policy: All contacts and records in the Head Start/Early Head Start program are kept in strict confidence governed by Federal Confidentiality Regulations. No acknowledgement or releases of information are given without expressed written permission from parents/guardians.

Behavior Management: Children in this program are to be treated in a safe, positive, and reassuring manner. Staff encourages appropriate behaviors through positive recognition. When staff address children, it is done in a calm manner and on the child's level with positive approaches to help children feel safe. A child's parent(s)/guardians, and our management team may be consulted if problem behaviors persist or escalate.



- * Teachers and parents are encouraged to work together
- * Teachers and parents are encouraged to use positive discipline to develop appropriate social skills
- * Rules and limits should be made clear and consistent for children.
- * Teachers are encouraged to involve children in developing clear and consistent rules and procedures.
- * Redirecting is encouraged. All discipline is non-judgmental.
- * Children may be removed to an appropriate area for some time to give themselves a chance to settle down.
- * A teacher may remove a child from a room for short periods of time if they feel it has become necessary for safety. They will always remain with the child.
- * A child may move to a different classroom to better meet their developmental needs. Parents/guardians will always be involved in the process and the director must approve a transfer.

Staff is prohibited from:

- * Use of corporal punishment, including spanking.
- * Subjecting a child to severe or cruel punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- * Using food as a form of punishment or reward.
- * Punishing a child for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
- * Physical restraint will only be used in extreme situations for a child's safety and only by staff trained in appropriate methods. The parent would be notified immediately in the event a restraint is used.

Abuse and Neglect Policy: According to Vermont regulations found in the revised statute regarding the reporting and investigating of child abuse and neglect, program staff are mandated reporters of suspected abuse and neglect. Bennington County Head Start/Early Head Start complies with Vermont law which states, 'Any day care worker who has reasonable cause to believe that any child has been abused or neglected, including medical neglect, shall report or cause a report to be made to the appropriate district protection agency within 24 hours. A copy of the full written law is available to parents / guardians upon request.

October (



November 2023									
S	M	T	W	T	F	S			
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11			
12	13	14	15	16	17	18			
19	20	21	22	23	24	25			
26	27	28	29	30					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDA	Υ	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4 Explorer's Club 4:45 – 5:45 p.m.	5	6 World Smile Da	y ↑ ↑	7
8	9 Indigenous People Day CLOSED	Policy Council 4:30 p.m.	Explorer's Club 4:45 – 5:45 p.m. Prevention Week	12 Spring Parent Committees 3:30 – 4:30 pm	13 Pownal Parent Committees 8:30 am	3 p.m. ← ← Dismissal	14
15	16	17 National	Explorer's Club 4:45 – 5:45 p.m. School Bus Safet	y Week	20	$\begin{array}{c} 1. \\ \mathbf{sal} \rightarrow \rightarrow \rightarrow \end{array}$	21
22	23	24	25 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers 12p.m. Dismissal (Centers close @ Noon)	26	27	\	28
29	30	31	1	2	3		4

National Dental Hygiene Month ~ Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Emergency Policy: Posted at each Head Start/Early Head Start Center is specific procedures in case of fire or in the event of other evacuations or medical emergencies. Emergency drills are scheduled regularly throughout the year. Each classroom is equipped with a First-Aid kit. All parent emergency phone numbers are kept on the attendance clipboard. All program staff received CPR/First Aid/AED training. Pursuant to CDD 3.4.4.1 each child is always required to have a minimum of two emergency contacts on file. Please let us know immediately if phone numbers change.

Holiday Policy: Head Start/Early Head Start staff and families strive to include all children and families; to treat individuals equally; and to realize, respect and allow for other people's differences and beliefs. We do not celebrate holidays, including costumes, presents, cards, or food in the classrooms.

Substance Use Policy: In compliance with state and federal regulations, all Head Start/Early Head Start centers, property (including the buses) and sponsored events, are substance free. This policy applies to staff, families, and visitors and includes personal vehicles on Head Start/Early Head Start properties. Substances include tobacco products, tobacco substitutes, alcohol, cannabis, and illegal drugs. Staff members who complete home visits will not smoke in children's homes and will ask parents to refrain from smoking in the room where the child and home visitors are working for the duration of the visit.

<u>DUI Policy</u>: This policy is put into place to protect all children. If a child's parent, guardian, or emergency contact comes to pick up their child and appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will not immediately release the child. We will:

- * Offer a ride to the person and the child;
- * Offer to call an emergency contact to come pick them up;
- * Call the police if the person reluses the ordered ride and insists on taking the child. The responsible staff member will make it clear to this person that a telephone call will be me informing the police of the condition of the driver and their license plate number.

<u>Dangerous or Disruptive Behavior Policy</u>: In accordance with Child Development Division Child Care Licensing Regulation 5.10.1.15, Head Start/Early Head Start does not tolerate any threats or verbal or physical abuse from parents.

Firearms/Weapons Free Policy: In accordance with Child Development Division Child Care Licensing Regulation 5.10.1.12, Head Start/Early Head Start facilities are firearms-and weapon-free. This extends to Head Start/Early Head Start sponsored events and activities help off-site.

Snow Day Policy for Head Start/Early Head Start Centers: We generally follow the Southwestern Vermont Supervisory Union (SVSU) when calling snow days or delays. When SVSU is closed, we are typically closed. When SVSU is delayed, we are typically delayed. You are responsible for being aware of snow days. School closings and delays are announced on local radio stations, and television channels 6, 10, and 13 and will also be posted to our Facebook page and sent out to families.

The Head Start Director or her designee reserves the right to make an independent decision from the SVSU.

Complaint Procedure Policy: It is the policy of Bennington County Head Start/Early Head Start to deliver services in a professional and high-quality manner and that services be of sufficient quality to meet the needs of those receiving services. If you have a complaint including, but not limited to any of the following: Denial of services; dissatisfaction with any aspect of services; amount of services; timeliness of services; dissatisfaction with staff, OR accessibility of services. You can obtain a form for this purpose which is available at each Head Start Center (866, ext. 134 or UCS at 442-5491.

HEALTH



Your child's health is the most important building block for early learning, so there are some things related to your child's health that are required, and some health and safety information that we want you to have,

Physicals: Every child MUST have evidence of a current well-child exam within 45 days after enrollment. This is required by the state. If your child does not have an up to date well child visit on record within 45 days, your child can be excluded from care until they are brought up to date. Your child should get their physical exams on time while they are enrolled in Early Head Start or Head Start to stay as healthy as possible to learn. Health records are kept confidentially in an online database.

Dental Care: An exam in a dental office is required for every child older than one. Children in our classrooms brush their teeth once a day to help prevent cavities and we strongly recommend also brushing at home. Children over the age of two will also receive oral health screenings, and if parents have provided permission, they will also receive fluoride varnish to strengthen tooth enamel and SDF to slow decay.

Immunizations: We are required to report vaccinations to the state annually. For any child who is missing any required immunizations by December we will notify you in writing of the need to bring your child up to date. Families will have about a month to complete immunizations (the due date will be on the written notification), get their child on a catch-up schedule or sign a waiver/refusal to immunize. If your child does not have any of these by the time stated, your child can be excluded from care until they do. The rederal Office of Head Start also requires that children be up to date for Hepatitis A and influenza to be considered "up to date". 22 23

Wg very strongly request* that all children over six months old obtain an annual flu vaccine to help protect members of our community from diseases that can potentially haspitalize them.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRID	AY	SATURDAY
29	30	31	1	2	3	•	4 UCS Sponsored Superhero 5K
5	← ← ← f	7 OSED Or → → → Prvice	8	9	OPEN	↑ ↑ ↑ ↑ ₽	11 Veterans Day
12	13	Policy Council 4:30 p.m.	15	16 Great American Smokeout	17	3 p.m. Dismissal → -	18
19	20	21	22 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers 12 p.m. Dismissal (Centers close at Noon)	23 Thanksgiving Day CLOS Thanksgivin		↓ ↓ ↓	25
26	27	28	29	30	1		2

Chronic health issues that impact learning: Head
Start/Early Head Start requires that every child have action of follow-up care for problems that can make it difficult for that child to learn. These include:

- * Blood levels: High lead (>3.5), or low hemoglobin (also called anemia), can cause poor attention span, chronic tiredness, or difficulty learning. These tests are usually done when the child is one and two years old.
- * Hearing: Every child must be screened for hearing within 45 days of enrollment if a hearing screening was not completed by your child's doctor our health staff will do this. If your child doesn't pass the hearing screening, they will be screened again in 2-4 weeks. If they also do not pass the second screening, they should go to their doctor to find out if there is something wrong



*Watery, frequent, painful, or hinco Atmeti Gambai a bayes home 24 hours or until Doctor OK's return; *Repeated vomiting in the past 24 hours; *Thick or colored drainage from ears, eyes, nose or any skin infections or rash;

- Diagnosed influenza = stay home 3 days, or 24 hours after fever is gone, *whichever is longer*; Headache, body aches, or pain in any body part that makes it impossible for your child to participate without 1:1 staff attention; Frequent cough;
- Difficulty breathing; Any diagnosed condition for which your physician has said your child should stay

*Watery, frequent, painful, or thinco Americann Dialetes Month leave in overnight (this is not what the directions state). Ri

Nix, do n else on ha

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hats, scarves, jackets, hair ties, etc. in hot water and hot dryer after treating hair. • EVERY DAY spend 10 minutes per treated head picking nits under a bright light, so you don't miss any. If the egg is farther from the scalp than the width of your pointer finger, it is not alive, and you can ignore it... or pick out so it does not distract your polar dector for another prescription to use in a week. Repeat all the above treatment, in full, every 7 days (not 10), for at least several weeks in a row without skipping any weeks.

December



January 2024								
S	M	T	W	T	F	S		
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
7	8	9	10	11	12	13		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27		
28	29	30	31					

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY		
26	27	28	29	30	1	2		
					Temp Temp	endarlabs.com		

3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	Policy Council 4:30 p.m.	Pine cone Bird Feeders @ All Centers 3:30 – 4:30 p.m.	12 p.m. Di (Centers clos: Parent/Teacher & Staff M	e @ Noon) Conferences	16
17	18	19	20	21	12 p.m. Dismissal (Centers close @ Noon) Extensive Cleaning & Staff Mtg.	23
24	25 ←	26 ← ← CLOSI	27 ED for <i>Holiday Breal</i>	28	29 →	30
31 New Year's Eve	1	2	3	4	5	6

medicine in a way, or for a reason, that contradicts the doctor's order. For instance, if the order states, "two puffs of inhaler for wheeze or cough" and your child is not actively wheezing or coughing while in our care, we cannot administer the inhaler based on what the child was doing at home last night. This is a good reason to have an asthma action plan, which provides flexible treatment options. • Medicine should go from one adult's hand to another adult's hand, never in a child's backpack. If you cannot deliver the medicine in person, call the Health Manager at 442-3686 ext. 129 to make other arrangements. • Medicine cannot be sent back and forth between home and school, except in very limited circumstances that must be approved by the Health Manager in advance. Please ask your child's doctor for duplicate medicine/containers, so that one container can stay in your child's classroom.

• Over-the-counter medicines must be in the original container/packaging. • Prescription medicine must have a current pharmacy label on the original container. • Please check expiration dates on the

Parking Lots: PLEASE * Drive slowly: ** Drive slowly: ** Obey school bus laws; * Park in designated drop-off spots, never in loading zones or handicap areas; * Keep all children with you; ** Always hold child's

<u>Buildings</u>: Our buildings are inspected quarterly, with classrooms and playgrounds checked daily for safety. Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is also done periodically and as needed by a professional service to eradicate pests safely.

hand when in the parking lot.

Transportation to Medical Appointments: If your child has Medicaid or Dr. Dynosaur, transportation via the Green Mountain van to medical or dental appointments is a free service anywhere in the state, if the healthcare provider you're going to accepts Medicaid and you have a confirmed need. Call Green Mountain Express at 447-0477 at least 48 hours ahead. In some instances, staff can assist with transportation to healthcare appointments.

<u>Tobacco products</u>: No tobacco product use is permitted at any Head Start site or event, including

Children up to the age of 18 months are only served foods to vihigh they have been availed at home applease ke eaten. Af 12

Head Start emphasizes *healthy* foods. Shortly before change of season, 'menu committee' meetings are held in fall, winter, and spring. We welcome your ideas at "menu committee', either in person or by sending in healthy family recipes or suggestions for healthy foods.

Head Start provides recommended serving sizes. A quarter of a sandwich is a full serving of grain and meat for most preschoolers. We also serve 1/4-1/2 cup of vegetables and/or fruit at lunch, breakfast, and snack. Children who don't like many vegetables or fruits but are accustomed to a whole sandwich (up to 4 servings of grain and treat treat free learners) and servings of grain and treat treat treat to the increased vegetables in their diet.

Special Diets: We do not permit parents to send food into the classroom, except temporarily when medically

January



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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDA
31	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5	6
	CLOSED	CLOSED Staff Meeting & In-service			↑	
					Templa	endarlabs.com

7	8	Policy Council 4:30 p.m.	10	11	12	13
14	15 Martin Luther King Jr. Day CLOSED	16	Virtual Pizza Cooking & Parent Committee 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.	18	19	20
21	22	23	24 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 12 p.m. Dismissal (Centers Close at Noon) Staff Meeting	1	2	3



Emergencies: If your child attends one of our partner programs (Forever Friends, Northshire Day School, MPCC-Monument, UCS Infant/Toddler Center, Oak Hill, or MEMS). Please check with that program for emergency plans and notifications.

- * If you hear that there is a Head Start building emergency, please do not call our buildings directly. Incoming calls tie up phone lines that are needed to cope with the emergency. In any emergency involving your child, our staff always have your emergency contact information with them and will call you as soon as they are able. It is important that you update your emergency contact information as soon as it changes. The main UCS line can be used for urgent messages for your child's teacher during an emergency when our phones are inaccessible: (802) 442-5491.
- * All classrooms practice evacuations monthly, in addition to annual medical emergency, missing or abducted child alert, lockdown/lockout, and shelter in place drills. In case of an emergency evacuation, staff

- * In case of severe weather: Staff receive emergency weather alerts and take precautions. Children are brought indoors to a safe area in each building, where they wait for the weather to pass. Our centers usually follow SVSU snow cancellations and delays. If we vary from SVSU's schedule, families will be notified via phone, Remind, or our Facebook page.
- * For any emergency: Please do not immediately come to get your child. We may be unable to let you into the building, or we may be in an alternate location that is difficult to access. Doing so may place you in danger or could contribute to increased turmoil during the emergency. In an emergency we need to be able to reunite children with parents or guardians safely, so please be sure to bring photo ID when you pick up your child. Staff handling an emergency may not be the regular staff who are familiar with which parent and child go together and it is imperative that we know when, and with whom, children leave.



EDUCATION PROGRAM

learning experience.

Philosophy and Goals: Our goal is to support children in gaining skills to prepare them for school. We work with families to build on the child's strengths and interests. We believe children learn about themselves and the world through their play with other children and their relationships with familiar caregivers. We value that each child is unique and we work to provide opportunities for your child to learn and develop at his or her own speed.

We believe in the family and will do all we can to help strengthen and support that unit. We support and assist the family in recognizing and achieving their own goals. The goal of the education component is to promote the Head Start/Early Head Start characteristics that most influence how well a child learns in school.

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March 2024							
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4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13 Policy Council 4:30 p.m.	14 ♥ 12 p.m. Dismissal Staff Meeting (Centers close at Noon)	15	16	17
18	19 Presidents' Day CLOSED	For the Hor	21 nter Break or Child Co lose Signed-up in Adv ne Visits to be Schedu	ance **********	CLOSED Staff Meeting In-service	24
25	26	27	28 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers	29	1	2

<u>Creative Curriculum</u>: Head Start/Early Head Start provides an individualized developmental curriculum for every child. The curriculum is based on child development principles about how children grow, think and learn. Children learn by doing—experiencing with all their senses; playing and exploring in a variety of settings; experimenting and problem-solving on their own; and feeling successful in learning.

The program provides for learning experiences that promote the growth of the whole child. It provides for activities and interactions based on the age and developmental stage of each child. There is a wide range of equipment and materials for children of all ages. Some of the experiences include sensory - sand and water tables, block building, dramatic play, doll corner and puppets, puzzles, pegs, and matching /sorting games, playdough, painting, cutting and drawing materials, large motor activities, books and musical experiences, science and math experiences, emergent literacy and numeracy. Creative curriculum aligns with Vermont Early Learning

_ fine and gross motor, cognitive reasoning, socialemotional skills, and self-help skills. If after this screening is complete and there are follow up questions around results options include ongoing monitoring, and possible Early Intervention/SVSU Early Ed referrals.

<u>Disabilities Services</u>: The program is required to make available, at a minimum, ten percent (10%) of its enrollment opportunities to children with disabilities. We work closely with families and local and state education agencies to provide accommodations and individualization according to each child's needs. We collaborate and partner with families throughout their child's Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP); or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) process while in our care.

<u>School Readiness</u>: The parent committee meets 2-3 times per year under the facilitation of the Head Start and Early Head Start Managers, and includes review of the program school readiness goals, curriculum, and transition topics.

<u>Kindergarten Transition</u>: The goal of the Head Start kindergarten transition process is to work

Mental Health

Benningt unty Head Start/Early Head Start embracy

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staff mental health professionals and the community.

- Promote awareness of the benefits of mental wellness.
- Promote awareness of mental health resources in the community.
- Provide information about these resources to our families.

To meet these goals for, we provide:

- Referrals to local mental health agencies.
- Discussion, workshops and trainings for staff and families.
- Access to our Mental Health Consultant, Dr. Bob Hemmer.
- Consultation with staff and families.

Dr. Bob Hemmer, a licensed psychologist specializing in adolescent and child psychology, is on-site twice a week to work with Head Start children and classrooms. He is available to meet with staff and families. If you

March



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10	11	Policy Council 4:30	CLOSED Staff In-service	14	15	16
¹⁷ *	18	19 First Day of Spring	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers	28	12p.m. Dismissal Staff Meetings (Centers close @ Noon)	30
31	1	2	3	4	5	6

The three primary purposes of the DECA are:

- 1. To help individualize support for children in the areas of social and emotional development. Also, to provide strategies in both the school and home environment that can be implemented to strengthening protective factors.
- 2. To generate classroom profiles indicating the relative strengths of all children so the classroom environment and instructional strategies can build upon these strengths to facilitate the healthy social and emotional growth of all children.
- 3. To provide an assessment of child protective factors central to social and emotional health and resilience. The program uses the DECA to monitor children's strength and needs and to form individualized goal setting.

Family Support & Community Partnership

Engaging and supporting positive relationships with families and children.

The primary role of family services in Head Start/Early Head Start is to provide support and empower as parents work to strengthen their family units and improve the quality of their daily lives. This social services component of Head Start serves as a link between the family, the program, and the community. Each family will have a Family Support Worker (**FSW**) assigned to them during their school experience to guide them in setting and reaching their own goals. Your FSW will work with you to identify helpful community resources, providing referrals and assistance when appropriate. Each family is different. FSW's will ensure that families have opportunities to build on their unique strengths and to set goals to meet the needs identified in the Family Partnership Agreement (FPA). The FPA defines a family's strengths, needs, and goals as identified by the family at the first family services home visit and is updated throughout the year at subsequent home visits. It is the goal of our program to provide three family services home visits per year.

Family Engagement Matters! At Bennington County Head Start/Farly Head Start, we recognize that families

program evaluations and assessments, Health Advisory and other committees Parent education and trainin parent:

Evidence-vascu i arenung curriculum-reaugnosic.

Our program uses a resource called ReadyRosie to communicate with you and to provide meaningful activities that you can do at home to support your child's learning.

ReadyRosie is a simple tool for you to: • Hear what we are doing in the classroom; • Discover activities and games you can play that relate to classroom learning; and • Have more fun than ever with your child through meaningful interaction.

Male Engagement:

We encourage men to be equally engaged in their children's education and development. We believe that men want to and do make a difference when they feel they have contributed to their child's wellbeing!

Voluntaaring. We believe that parents are a child's







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14		ng Break or Child Ca se Signed Up in Advo		CLOSED for S	19 taff In-service	20
21	22 Earth Day	23	24 Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers 12 p.m. Dismissal Staff Meeting	25	26 Arbor Day 3 p.m. DISMISSAL	27
28	29	30	1	2	3	4

Volunteering allows parents to make new friends, get to know your child's teacher, and to learn new techniques for working with children. The program also considers volunteer work to be an "in-kind" donation to the program.

Volunteers fill out a form documenting the hours that they volunteered and the tasks they completed. Documenting your volunteer work lets the program demonstrate community support to its funding source. Volunteering can build new skills and may even count for college credit.

Some Ideas for Volunteer Activities:

- * <u>Center Committees</u>: where members plan and participate in special events at your child's center.
- * Male Involvement: attend special events that help increase the presence of dads or other positive male role models.
- * <u>Leadership Opportunities</u>: as an officer of your local Parent Committee or as a Policy Council member. An active Policy Council is a requirement of our grants. Our goal is for every classroom and every partner site to have a Policy Council member.
- * Parent Activities and Meetings: meet monthly for fun as well as group support.
- * <u>Advocacy</u>: attend IEP meetings, write letters, talk with other parents to enlist their support; join other

Program Governance & Policy Council:

The par dec Child Abuse Prevention Month

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parents, the director, the United Children's Services (UCH) Board President, and community members who oversee the organization and make decisions regarding policies, program assessments, and assist with the financial aspects of the program.

Policy Council meetings are scheduled typically the second Tuesday of each month. The meetings are open to all parents, but only elected representatives (or, in their absence, elected alternates) may vote on policies or important decisions. Each program elects members on Election Day in November and all programs and partner sites nominate parents to serve on Policy Council. A newly seated Policy Council may vote to change the meeting time and date if needed. Transportation is provided if needed. CHILD CARE IS PROVIDED DURING ALL IN-PERSON MEETINGS, and a meal is provided as well for all in attendance.

For more information contact the Director, Betsy Rathbun-Gunn at 442-3686 ext. 134 or Lisa Biddle, Administrative Coordinator, at ext. 121.

Parent Committees: The program strives to provide

ns 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.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement:

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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 Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online

at: https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the





June 2024						
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		Breakfast w/Buddies @ All Centers 12p.m. Dismissal (Centers Close at Noon) Parent/Teacher Conferences	23	24	25
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United Children's Services Civil Rights Complaint Procedure

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27 Memorial Day

CLOSED

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4:30 p.m. **Policy Council**

12 Mother's Day

19

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Individuals and groups are never discouraged from submitting a complaint of discrimination. Complaints may be written or verbal. Complaints may be anonymous. The United Children's Services instructs program participants to send complaints of discrimination directly to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (OASCR). The complainant must file within 180 days of the alleged act of discrimination. The superintendent or appointed designee is responsible for implementing the Civil Rights Complaint Procedure. The complainant can file on their own directly with the USDA or report the complaint to United Children's Services.

The contact information is found on the "And Justice for All" posters which are prominently displayed in all required areas.

All complaints alleging discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or disability will be forwarded to the USDA Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights immediately. mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture

Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 fax: (202) 690-7442; or

place such allegations in writing, the person to whom the allegations are made must record the details of the complaint for the complainant. Every effort will be made to have the complainant provide the following information:

• Name and contact information for the complainant.

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- The date(s) during which the alleged discriminatory actions occurred or, if continuing, the duration of such actions.
- The specific location and name of the entity delivering the service or benefit.
- The nature of the incident or action that led the complainant to feel that discrimination was a factor.
- The basis on which the complainant feels discrimination exists within any of the protected classes.
- The names, titles, and business addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the discriminatory action.

If the USDA determines that a civil rights compliant warrants an investigation, it will occur based on established FNS policy and procedures, and then finalized into a report. They will investigate the complaint, and this is the sole responsibility of the

launtion riogiams at vermont agency or Education of any complaints of discrimination. The State Agency maintains the information in a confidential database with limited access. Child Nutrition Programs does not investigate complaints of discrimination, but ensures complaints are received by the USDA and will cooperate in the

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tracking, processing, and resolving of complaints of discrimination.

The Vermont Agency of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, marital status, sex, disability, age, gender identity, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. Complaints alleging discrimination related to the Vermont Agency of Education protected bases of religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or martial/civil union status, will be sent to Clare O'Shaughnessy, Staff Attorney, at clare.oshaughnessy@vermont.gov or (802)-828-0105

23

June





SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY		
26	27	28	29	30	·.	•
2	3	4	5 Spring Bash	6 Spring Bash Rain Date	7 CLOSED	8
9	10 ← CLOSED f	11 or Staff Trainings/Su Policy Council 4:30 p.m.	12 mmer Prep →	First Day Head Start Summer Program Early Head Start Returns 12 p.m. Dismissal (Centers close @ Noon)	14 Flag Day	15
16	17	18	19 Juneteenth OPEN	20 First Day Summer	21	22

23	24	25	26	27	28	29		
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sportation & Pedestr	ian Safety Training	*** Parents r	nust ensure their children	are not				

Head Start Transportation Regulation / National **Performance Objective:**

The program has limited bus seating; families are required to complete criteria form to determine eligibility. We do not provide transportation to our Pownal HS Center or partner locations. However, all HS children will utilize our bus for fieldtrips.

The program ensures that children who receive transportation services are taught safe riding practices. Performance Standard # 1303.70 - 1303.74

Safety Procedures: (a) The program ensures children who receive transportation services are taught safe riding practices, safety procedures for boarding and leaving the vehicle and for crossing the street to and from the vehicle at stops, recognition of the danger zones around the vehicle, and emergency evacuation procedures, including participating in an emergency evacuation drill conducted on the vehicle the child will be riding.

(b) When the program provides transportation services it ensures at least two bus evacuations drills, in addition to the one required under paragraph (a) above, are conducted for each bus during the school year. (c) Proper car seat installation guidelines are also reviewed.

Summary of Training: » Safe procedures for boarding and exiting the bus which emphasizes the importance of parents escorting their child to and from the bus stop observing and adhering to the danger zones (10 feet around the bus in every direction - see danger zone picture on this page.)

» Safe riding practices that should be reinforced at home as well which include properly being buckled into the appropriate car or booster seat, or in a harness or lap belt, as well as being cautious of clothing items and backpacks as loose items can become stuck or tangled. We use a 5-

exhibiting any illness symptoms or been exposed to anyone with COVID. If so, keep them home and contact the attendance line immediately to report their absence and why, at 802 442-3686, ext. 137 ***

Pedestrian/School Bus Safety Training

- 1. Teach your children to be extra cautious in the School Bus Danger Zone – about five giant steps (10 feet) around the bus in every direction.
- 2. Remind your children to always watch for traffic when getting on or off a bus, and to move immediately from the Danger Zone to a safer area after exiting.
- 3. Instruct your children that if they can't see the bus driver, the bus driver can't see them. If they drop anything near the bus, they should ask the driver before they stop to pick it up.
- 4. Be aware, it is illegal in every state to pass a school bus stopped to load/unload students. Follow school bus laws when driving.
- 5. Learn the "flashing signal light system" that school bus drivers use to alert motorists if they are going to stop to load/unload students.

Yellow flashing lights indicate the bus is preparing to stop to load or unload children. Motorists should slow down and prepare to stop their vehicles.

Red flashing lights and extended stop arms indicate that the bus has stopped, and that children are getting on or off. Motorists MUST stop their cars.

- 6. Begin moving only when the red flashing lights are turned off, the stop arm is withdrawn, and the bus begins to move.
- 7 Nover pass a bus on the right side, where children

- **AROUND THE SCHOOL BUS** * (nev 24 streets at corners.
- * Children should cross streets with a grown-up until they are at least age 10.
- * Remind children to look left, right, and left again before entering or crossing a path, sidewalk, street or driveway. They should continue looking as they cross.
- * Children should make eye contact with each driver before they pass in front of him or her.
- Never cross the street from between parked cars.
- * Get to the bus stop at least 10 minutes early. Have children wait 4 giant steps back from curb.
- * Make sure everything is "tucked in" before children get on or off the bus so nothing can get caught.
- * When children get off, they need to immediately walk 10 steps away from the bus.
- * If children must cross the street, teach them to be sure they can see the driver's face, they need to cross in front of the bus, at least 10 steps away from the bus. **NEVER CROSS THE STREET BEHIND** THE BUS.



July



August 2024													
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August



September 2024

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Park Street Center ~ North Bennington



Pownal Center ~ Pownal



Manchester Elementary ~ Manchester



West Center ~ North Bennington



Spring Center ~ Bennington



Northshire Day School ~ Manchester







