



Strengthening Communities, Empowering People



**HEAD START &
EARLY HEAD START
PARENT HANDBOOK**

**WWW.WACOG.COM
FACEBOOK.COM/WACOG.AZ**

Revised July 2019

WACOG HEAD START PROGRAM

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Yuma Office

1235 S. Redondo Center Drive
Yuma, AZ 85365
(928) 217-7145
(928) 782-0042 FAX

Kingman Office

208 N. 4th St.
Kingman, AZ 86401
(928) 377-1074
(928) 753-7038 FAX

Brian Babiars

Executive Director

WACOG HEAD START SUPPORT STAFF

Deb Schlamann

Head Start Director
928-217-7146
hesdirector@wacog.com

Norma Arreola

Early Childhood
Education Coordinator
928-217-7154
education@wacog.com

Bill Reinson

Yuma & La Paz Area Manager
928-217-7157
yumaam@wacog.com

Kyla Hernandez

Disabilities & Mental Health Specialist
928-217-7152
disabilitiesandmentalhealth@wacog.com

Tina Zerkle

Mohave Area Manager
928-377-4703
mohaveam@wacog.com

Bobbi FireBush

Family Development Specialist
928-217-7156
familyengagement@wacog.com

Arturo Yeomans

Food Service Manager &
Special Projects
928-217-7155
foodservices@wacog.com

Jacqueline Follmuth

Community Resources Data Specialist
928-217-7165
dataspec@wacog.com

Marya Olmos

Health & Nutrition Services
Specialist
928-217-7192
healthandnutrition@wacog.com

CENTER INFORMATION

MOHAVE COUNTY CENTERS

Brian Meyers-Davis

601 Van Buren
Kingman, AZ 86401
(928) 753-8730
brianmyerdaviscenter@wacog.com

***Bullhead City**

1055 Marina Blvd.
Bullhead City, AZ 86442
(928) 758-3334
bullheadcitycenter@wacog.com

Cerbat

2689 Jagerson Ave.
Kingman, AZ 86409
(928) 757-7574
cerbatcenter@wacog.com

Golden Valley

3404 Santa Maria Rd.
Golden Valley, AZ 86413
(928) 565-4507
goldenvalleycenter@wacog.com

Havasupai

880 Cashmere Dr.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404
(928) 505-6046
havasupaicenter@wacog.com

***Hubbs House**

421 Golconda St.
Kingman, AZ 86401
(928) 753-1066
hubbshousecenter@wacog.com

Kingman North

1971 Jagerson Ave.
Kingman, AZ 86409
(928) 692-7481
kingmannorthcenter@wacog.com

Lake Havasu City

2385 N. Pima Dr.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86403
(928) 680-6212
lakehavasucitycenter@wacog.com

Mohave Valley

1425 E. Willow Dr.
Mohave Valley, AZ 86440
(928) 768-1090
mohavevalleycenter@wacog.com

Nautilus

1425 Patrician Dr.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404
(928) 680-3355
nautiluscenter@wacog.com

Oro Grande

1250 Pawnee Dr.
Lake Havasu City, AZ 86406
(928) 680-4962
orograndecenter@wacog.com

YUMA & LA PAZ COUNTY CENTERS

Carlisle

241 N. Congress Ave.
Somerton, AZ 85350
(928) 627-3922
carlislecenter@wacog.com

Carver

1341 W. 5th St.
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 782-0005
carvercenter@wacog.com

***Foothills**

2950 S. Ave. 10E
Yuma, AZ 85365
(928) 305-1652
foothillscenter@wacog.com

***Gwyneth Ham Early Learning Center**

840 E. 22nd St.
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 502-8400
gwynethhamcenter@wacog.com

Helping Hand

384 S. 13th Ave
Yuma, AZ 86364
(928) 783-4706
helpinghandcenter@wacog.com

Orange Grove

3525 W. Co. 16 ½ St.
Somerton, AZ 85350
(928) 627-2601
orangegrovecenter@wacog.com

***Pecan Grove**

600 S. 21st Ave.
Rooms 10 & 11
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 502-8126
pecangrovecenter@wacog.com

***Rancho Viejo**

930 S. Ave. C,
Bldg. 800
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 782-3621
ranchoviejocenter@wacog.com

***San Luis**

720 E. Juan Sanchez Blvd.
San Luis, AZ 85349
(928) 627-3981
sanluiscenter@wacog.com

Wellton

29126 San Jose Ave.
Wellton, AZ 85356
(928) 785-4118
welltoncenter@wacog.com

Yuma West

2505 W. 20th St.
Yuma, AZ 85364
(928) 782-2130
yumawestcenter@wacog.com

Ehrenberg

49241 Parker-Poston Hwy.
Ehrenberg, AZ 85334
(928) 923-9866

TABLE OF CONTENTS

WACOG HEAD START PROGRAM	2
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES	2
WACOG HEAD START SUPPORT STAFF.....	2
CENTER INFORMATION	3
MOHAVE COUNTY CENTERS.....	3
YUMA & LA PAZ COUNTY CENTERS	4
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
PROGRAM INFORMATION	7
MISSION STATEMENT	7
PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES	7
GENERAL INFORMATION	8
SAFE ENVIRONMENTS	8
ACCESS TO CENTERS	8
CHILD’S LEGAL NAME.....	8
CHANGE IN INFORMATION.....	8
CLOTHING	8
PICKING UP & DROPPING OFF CHILDREN	8
EMERGENCY CLOSINGS	10
CENTER OPERATIONS.....	10
ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES.....	10
NOTICE OF EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE	11
MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY	11
ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURE.....	12
EDUCATION SERVICES & CURRICULUM	13
EDUCATION PROGRAMS	13
HOME EDUCATION ACTIVITES	13
CURRICULUM.....	13
CHILD ASSESSMENT, HOME VISITS & PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES	14

OFF-SITE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES	14
TRANSPORTATION	15
DISABILITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	15
BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE	16
SCREENING/ASSESSMENTS	16
HEALTH & NUTRITION SERVICES	17
ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS	17
SAFETY PROCEDURES	17
INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION	18
MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY	18
NUTRITION SERVICES	18
SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS	19
MENU PLANNING	19
FAMILY SERVICES	19
PARENTS & STAFF AS PARTNERS	19
PARENT COMMITTEE	19
POLICY COUNCIL	20
SOCIAL SERVICES	20
PARENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	21
CONFIDENTIALITY	21
CELEBRATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASES	22
NON-DISCRIMINATION	22
PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF PARENT CONCERNS	22
INSURANCE AND FUNDING	24

PROGRAM INFORMATION

WACOG Head Start has a long tradition of delivering comprehensive quality services to young children and families in Yuma, La Paz and Mohave Counties. Our entire range of services is responsive to each child and family's developmental, ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage and experience.

The program serves over 1,000 children annually. All centers are licensed and regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services and Bureau of Child Care Licensing. We provide a variety of part and full day services. WACOG Head Start classrooms have highly qualified teachers with all staff receiving extensive training in early childhood education and family services. Center staff partner with you to provide personalized, family-directed services for you, your child and your family.

All services and programs are free of charges and fees.

MISSION STATEMENT

It is the program's mission to provide the foundation for the development of self-sufficient, healthy, caring, and productive children and families by establishing an environment of achievement.

PHILOSOPHY, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

We believe children grow and develop when they have loving, high quality care; a clean, safe and interesting environment; good communication between home and school, and active family involvement.

Our goal is to provide all children with experiences that allow growth and learning, ensuring school readiness, and building foundations for successes in life.

Our objectives are to engage families in:

- Family well-being
- Positive parent-child relationships
- Families as life-long educators
- Families as learners
- Family engagement in transitions
- Family connection to peers and community
- Families as advocates and leaders

GENERAL INFORMATION

SAFE ENVIRONMENTS

All Head Start centers and facilities are safe licensed environments. Smoking is prohibited at all facilities. Possession or use of all weapons, firearms, controlled substances, and alcoholic beverages are strictly prohibited at all facilities.

ACCESS TO CENTERS

You are welcome in your child's classroom and playground at any time during business hours. Visitors are required to check in first at the office. Head Start's success depends on strong family engagement and involvement.

CHILD'S LEGAL NAME

Your child's legal name, as it appears on their proof of birth, will be used on all records, unless you provide legal proof of a name change. However, classroom staff will use your child's preferred name at your request.

CHANGE IN INFORMATION

Whenever there is a change in address, phone number, email, emergency contacts, health providers, health conditions, work/school schedule, family situation, or other related information; please notify your center as soon as possible to ensure we have the most current information for your child and family.

CLOTHING

Please dress your child in comfortable clothing. Keep in mind that your child will participate in "messy" fun activities, such as sand and water play, painting, and outside play on a daily basis. Please keep a change of clothes (pants or shorts, shirt, socks, and undergarments) in your child's cubby. To avoid lost items, please print your child's name on all clothing articles. **For your child's safety, we recommend closed-toe and closed-heel shoes be worn at all centers.**

PICKING UP & DROPPING OFF CHILDREN

WACOG Head Start teachers plan developmental activities throughout the entire day, including meal times. Please allow your child the full benefit of the

program, which includes nutritious meals, by ensuring that your child is at school on time and remains for the entire school session.

The safety of your child is of the utmost importance to us. All people that may pick up your child, including any child care provider or school district, must be listed on your child's Emergency Information Immunization Record (EIIR) card. Authorized persons unknown to the staff will be required to show picture identification before being allowed to pick up your child.

If you must have someone not identified on the emergency card pick up your child; our staff will do the following for safety purposes:

- Verify and document that the person calling is the parent/legal guardian.
- Obtain from you the full name and description of the individual that will pick up your child.
- Request a picture ID from the individual picking up your child upon arrival at the center.
- Have the individual sign your child out on the regular Sign-In/Sign-Out Sheet.

Classroom doors open 10 minutes prior to the beginning of class time. The person bringing your child must come in to the center and sign their name on the Sign-In/Sign-Out Sheet. The same procedure must be done when your child is picked up at the end of their day.

If a child has not been picked up 15 minutes after school ending, the staff will attempt to contact you or one of your emergency contacts by phone.

Please contact your child's center when there is a situation that makes arriving or picking up your child on time difficult. Together we may be able to find a solution.

If your child is still at the center one hour after the class has ended and we are unable to reach you or any of your emergency contacts we are mandated to contact the local police department and/or the Department of Child Safety (DCS). Please notify us whenever a phone number or emergency contact information changes.

Our centers and parking areas get very busy during drop off and pickup. Please be patient and use caution when arriving and leaving the Head Start Center. Avoid double parking or blocking driveways. Follow all safety procedures when crossing the street and in parking lots. Hold your child's hand at all times. Arizona law requires the use of appropriate child and adult safety restraints when driving. Never leave any child alone in the car. It can be

dangerous and it is against the law! You are required to escort your child to and from the classroom.

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

Head Start classes will be cancelled if area schools are closed for weather or emergency reasons. Staff will contact you in the event of an emergency closure.

CENTER OPERATIONS

WACOG Head Start is open Monday – Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. unless staff is attending required training. If the center will be closed for training, it will be posted on the door in advance. Class times vary at centers. Please refer to the center hours of operation on the parent board. WACOG observes the following holidays and the centers will be closed:

- Labor Day
- Fall Break (Ehrenberg only)
- Veteran’s Day
- Thanksgiving Holiday
- Winter Break
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President’s Day
- Spring Break
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

ATTENDANCE & ABSENCES

School success goes hand in hand with regular attendance (AttendanceWorks.org, 2018). However, we do understand that children may have occasional illnesses and are unable to come to school. Please contact your child’s center before class begins and inform the staff of the reason for your child’s absence and when you expect your child will return to school.

If your child is absent and you have not called, center staff will contact you within the first hour of class. This policy is in place to protect children from accidentally being left in vehicles, to identify emergency situations in homes, and ensure child safety overall.

If we are unable to reach you, your emergency contacts will be called to ensure there are not serious child and family issues requiring support. In the event there is no response from emergency contacts, a home visit will be made to ensure family safety.

If your child displays any of the following symptoms, please keep your child at home:

- Fever of 101 degrees Fahrenheit
- Open, infected, or not easily covered sores

- Vomiting (more than twice in 24 hours)
- Diarrhea (more than twice in 24 hours)
- Lice, nits, scabies (must have been treated and all nits removed prior to return)
- Undiagnosed rash (skin problems with or without itching)
- Breathing difficulties
- Earache or drainage from the ears
- Sore throat with fever
- Signs or symptoms of communicable diseases such as: conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, strep throat, ringworm, chicken pox, whooping cough, MRSA, etc.

If your child becomes ill during the school day, you will be contacted to pick up your child.

Starting as early as preschool and kindergarten, chronic absence—missing 10 percent or more of the academic year or an average of 2 days per month—can leave third graders unable to read proficiently, sixth graders struggling with coursework and high school students off track for graduation. “From the first day of enrollment, a young child’s attendance matters! Good attendance leads to lifelong learning and positive habits. Getting into a schedule of regular attendance starts early. If young children miss many days in preschool, they are more likely to have attendance issues in elementary school. Others may drop out as they get older. Children don’t get to take advantage of all the available chances to learn” (Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center, 2018).

Case management will be provided to ensure children and families have the assistance necessary to resolve attendance difficulties and set children up for success.

NOTICE OF EXPOSURE TO COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

In the event of an exposure to a communicable disease, Head Start Staff will provide a notice within 24 hours of all documented and diagnosed communicable diseases. A notice is also posted for parents and visitors to view in the center. Please notify your Center Manager if your child’s physician has diagnosed your child with a communicable disease so others can watch for symptoms.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY

Please inform the staff at your center should your child require medication during school hours. You will complete a Medication Administration Packet

with staff. All medications must be in the original container with the following information clearly stated on the label:

- Child's Name
- Physician's Name
- Name of the medication
- Amount of the medication to be given
- Dosage frequency (i.e., every three hours)
- Prescription number
- How long the medication is to be administered (start and end date)
- Reason for the Medication
- Date of Authorization

Medications are stored in a locked container and out of reach of the children and in the refrigerator, if required. Emergency medication will not be locked, but will be out of the reach of the children.

Head Start Staff will complete a medication log after each medication administration. Staff will return all unused prescription medication to you when the date has expired or the medication is no longer being administered to your child. Staff will dispose of medications if we are unable to locate you after your child leaves the program.

ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In case of an accident or injury at the center, the staff will notify you of the injury and any first aid provided. All staff are trained and certified in First Aid/CPR.

In case of life threatening emergency or illness staff will call 911; then follow procedures 1-3 below.

1. Contact you and inform you of the situation. If we are unable to reach you, staff will contact an adult from your child's emergency card.
2. Accompany your child to the local hospital emergency room (with the child's emergency card).
3. Continue all efforts to contact you or a responsible adult about your child's status.

Note: It is very important that you keep your contact information current in case of emergency closures, injury to your child, failure to pick up your child, or any other emergency.

EDUCATION SERVICES & CURRICULUM

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

WACOG Head Start educational programs are designed to meet your child's individual needs within the context of his/her culture and community. The Head Start approach to school readiness means your child is ready for school, your family is ready to support your child's learning, and the schools are ready for your children.

HOME EDUCATION ACTIVITIES

Your active participation is important to your child's success. Every week your family will receive a Home Education Activities form. This form captures the time you spend teaching your child and is an important piece of the program requirements. Home education activities are tied to the lesson plans and reinforce what children are learning in the classroom."

CURRICULUM

WACOG Head Start uses The Creative Curriculum as the guidepost for planning the education program. The Creative Curriculum encourages strong adult-child attachment and interaction, active learning, a nurturing and inviting environment, and routines that support the needs and interest of the children. Staff and families work as a team to establish appropriate environments and assessments of each child's development.

The Creative Curriculum for Preschool includes the following ten areas of development and learning which describes the knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are most predictive of school success:

- Social-Emotional
- Mathematics
- Physical
- Science and Technology
- Language
- Social Studies
- Cognitive
- The Arts
- Literacy
- English Language Acquisition

The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos includes the following four areas of development and learning:

- Social-Emotional
- Physical
- Language
- Cognitive

CHILD ASSESSMENT, HOME VISITS & PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

MyTeachingStrategies™ (MTS) is an assessment system to track your child's progress and outcomes. MTS is designed to help teachers get to know each child's strengths, needs, and interests. Teachers plan appropriate individual learning experiences to help each child succeed on his/her path to school readiness and in life.

You may notice your child's teacher taking notes on your child's development in the classroom. We encourage you to make similar observations on your child's progress at home and share them with your child's teacher. These observations are entered into the MyTeachingStrategies™ system and teachers retrieve reports with valuable information about your child's progress. These reports are shared with you during the home visits and parent/teacher conferences. These reports help you and the teacher develop goals and strategies for your child. Your involvement in the planning of your child's development is important to his/her success. The final conference, held at the end of the year, summarizes your child's progress and develops a plan for continued growth.

OFF-SITE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

WACOG Head Start believes that educational experiences away from the center are beneficial and incorporates them into lesson planning. The following guidelines for off-site educational experiences have been developed:

- All children will wear identification tags with the center name, address and telephone number in plain view, upon leaving the center.
- The minimum ratio of HS children to adults is one adult for every five children. The minimum ration of EHS children to adults is one adult for every four children.
- The staff will carry a First Aid kit, attendance roster, prescribed medication if required, and emergency cards.
- Attendance is taken regularly throughout the off-site educational experience, and upon return to the center.
- Each child must have a signed permission slip to participate in off-site educational experiences. You will be notified one week prior about any planned off-site educational experience.
- When children are away from the center for an off-site educational experience, a plan is posted at the center that includes:

- ❖ The name of each participant child
- ❖ Staff members
- ❖ Telephone number
- ❖ Volunteers
- ❖ Contact person
- ❖ Location
- ❖ Departure and return time
- Parents are invited to accompany the class on off-site educational experiences, but will be responsible for the transportation and care of any other children they bring with them who are not enrolled in Head Start.

TRANSPORTATION

WACOG Head Start coordinates transportation to the Ehrenberg Center for families from Quartzsite. This is due to the distance of the center boundaries to the center. Transportation is coordinated with the Quartzsite School District.

DISABILITIES AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

At WACOG Head Start, we are committed to providing quality education for all our children. Every child deserves the Head Start advantage with the support and help they need to be successful.

Early intervention involves identifying children and families that may be at risk of running into difficulties and providing timely and effective support services. Years of research show that the earlier children's educational needs are met, the less likely they will need special education services in elementary school and beyond. Head Start is here to help.

Identifying children's individual needs starts with the developmental screenings, the ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE. Parents and teachers complete the screenings together. You know your child better than anyone and it is important that you share any information that will help teacher's better meet your child's needs.

If your child does need help or special services to catch up, we will work with you every step of the way. Head Start's primary goal is to make sure each child receives the services needed to reach his or her fullest potential. We partner with families, local school districts, and early intervention programs to build strong teams that support children and families.

If you have concerns or questions about your child's progress, please meet with child's Teacher, Family Development Advocate, Center Manager or the Disability and Mental Health Services Specialist.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

All children display atypical behavior from time to time. Behavior is one of the ways a child communicates with adults. Our classroom teaching teams use positive and research-based strategies for behavior guidance and support from the Center on the Social Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL). We strive to anticipate and prevent possible problems and set up an environment which meets each child's developmental needs, while creating a sense of safety and security for the entire class. This is done in an atmosphere of mutual respect by modeling and teaching social skills, positive reinforcement, and practicing problem-solving skills for a peaceful resolution of conflicts. It is very important for your child to learn problem-solving skills so they can begin to solve their own problems in positive ways. When they have these skills, and can use them successfully, children will gain confidence and self-control. In keeping with this philosophy, we do not withhold food or use physical punishment as a means to correct children's behavior.

When atypical behaviors re-occur, the Teacher, Center Manager or Family Development Advocate will contact you to schedule a meeting and develop a plan with your input to determine which interventions will be used for your child's success.

SCREENING/ASSESSMENTS

All children enrolled in the programs are screened within the first 45 calendar days of enrollment. We use standardized health and developmental screening instruments to capture information on a child's physical and behavioral health and development. Screening results are used to help identify strengths and concerns about your child's development, as well as to determine if a referral for further evaluation is necessary.

Your involvement in the process begins with the gathering of information through the "Child Health Record" during the enrollment process. At the time of the first home visit the "ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE" will be completed by you with the support of the teacher. If concerns regarding your child's development arise; you will approve any referral for services provided by an appropriate community agency or consultant in collaboration with the team.

HEALTH & NUTRITION SERVICES

Your child's health affects his/her total development and ability to learn. Staff partner with you and your healthcare provider to ensure your child's health and developmental concerns are identified and addressed. Children are linked to an ongoing source of continuous, accessible health care, which provides physical and dental examination, vision and hearing screenings.

ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

An enrollment meeting, orientation, home visit and/or Jump Start will be provided for you and your child to get to know the Head Start program. During the enrollment process please inform the staff if your child is on any medications, has specific allergies, or has any health and safety needs. Before the school year begins we will need physician's instructions and your guidance or training to ensure we meet the needs of your child while in the center.

According to the Arizona Administrative Code, your child must have a current immunization record prior to attending class. Exemptions will be given for religious/medical reasons only with supporting documentation.

Head Start staff will provide support to acquire immunization records. Head Start requires an initial physical exam and a dental exam within 90 days of enrollment. These examinations must be signed and dated by your health care provider.

SAFETY PROCEDURES

To ensure the safety and well-being of each child present in our program, the following guidelines are followed:

- Children are always supervised and never left alone.
- Anyone removing a child from our program must be authorized on the emergency card and provide picture ID.
- Staff has immediate access at all times to a working telephone.
- Fire drills are held once a month.
- Classroom evacuation plans for fire and other emergencies are posted by the exit door of each classroom.
- Staff is CPR and First Aid Certified.
- Medications are kept in locked containers when on-site and out of the reach of the children. Emergency medications remain unlocked, but are out of the reach of the children.
- Chemicals are stored in locked cabinets and inaccessible to children.
- Staffs distribute the Notice of Exposure to Communicable Disease to families within 24 hours of all documented exposures.

- Staffs post Pest Management Notifications prior to pesticide use on-site.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT NOTIFICATION

WACOG Head Start centers post a notification of pesticide application at least three business days (72 hours) prior to any pesticide applications in the center or on grounds with exception of exempt applications. Antimicrobial agents, such as sanitizers and insecticide and rodenticide baits are exempt from notification requirements. Other exemptions from prior notification include emergency situations and applications of bait or container-delivery systems.

Pesticide information is available to you, upon a request, at least 48 hours before a pesticide application occurs on the premises.

MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT REPORTING POLICY

All WACOG Head Start staff are mandated by law (A.R.S. 13-3620) to “report abuse, physical injury, neglect and denial or deprivation of medical or surgical care or nourishment of minors.” The statute requires, “Any person who reasonably believes that a minor is or has been the victim of physical injury, abuse, child abuse, a reportable offense or neglect that appears to have been inflicted on the minor by other than accidental means or that is not explained by the available medical history as being accidental in nature shall immediately report or cause reports to be made of this information to a peace officer or the Department of Child Safety (DCS). A person who violates any provision of this section is guilty of a class 6 felony.”

NUTRITION SERVICES

Our food service program promotes a healthy nutritional lifestyle. Nutrition education is provided on a variety of topics for both children and families. Information from your child’s Nutrition Screen will be used to identify needs or concerns.

Menus are posted on the parent board at each center and copies are provided for you to take home. Meal times are designed to promote the children’s learning experiences and promote language skills while enjoying a positive social experience, engaging in conversations with others at the table. Family-style eating with balanced, nutritious meals gives children an opportunity to learn about healthy eating habits. For safety and health reasons outside food is not allowed. Children serve themselves and practice skills like passing serving dishes, proper portion size, and asking politely for things. All meals provided must be eaten on site.

SPECIAL DIETARY NEEDS

The program works to meet the special dietary needs of all children. If an allergy, intolerance or religious belief is identified during enrollment, a Dietary Modification Special Meal Request Form is provided to you. The form must be completed, signed, and dated by the health care professional. For the health of your child, the dietary modification plan must be in place prior to your child attending class.

MENU PLANNING

Meals are planned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). CACFP is a federal program that oversees healthy meals and snacks to children enrolled in the program. The menus are developed in collaboration with parents, teachers, and food service staff. The menu is reviewed each year by a Registered Dietitian and approved by a CACFP specialist.

FAMILY SERVICES

PARENTS & STAFF AS PARTNERS

You are the most important teacher of your child and the primary responsibility for your child's development belongs to you! You and the staff are a team, working together to provide the most advantageous learning and support your child will need to succeed in school and in life.

Your active engagement is key to the success of Head Start! Your thoughts, ideas and suggestions for program improvement are valuable assets and your participation in all aspects of the program, including classroom activities, is critical to ongoing Head Start improvement. You have several opportunities to engage with staff by participating in the program's annual Self-Assessment, Menu Planning, Education Committee, Health Services Advisory Council, Family Engagement Committee, Human Resources Committee, Parent Committee and Policy Council.

PARENT COMMITTEE

Each WACOG Head Start parent of an enrolled child is a member of the center Parent Committee and as such, is strongly encouraged to participate in the center's monthly meetings. Committee meetings include important program and center information such as parent education, training opportunities and community events. The Committee also plans additional parent, family and center events and activities during the school year.

POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council is composed of WACOG Head Start parent representatives from each center and community representatives from Yuma, La Paz and Mohave Counties. Each Parent Committee elects its center representative and those representatives attend monthly Policy Council meetings. Community Representatives represent a variety of local child/family programs and are approved by the Policy Council. Policy Council is responsible for: reviewing and approving policies for implementing Head Start Program Performance Standards, proposing ideas and recommendations for program improvement; receiving monthly reports on activities and actions taken by WACOG Head Start regarding recommendations; approving/disapproving funding applications and proposed work plans submitted to the Office of Head Start; approving/disapproving major changes in budgets, program design and service area plans and working with program administration to identify potential WACOG Head Start centers in communities within the tri-county service area. Policy Council members also have the opportunity to work with program administration on sub-committees such as Finance, Human Resources, Program Planning and committees specific to Head Start content service areas. Policy Council members work with administration to ensure positive outcomes for all children and families participating WACOG Head Start programs.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The program partners with local service agencies to ensure families are linked to needed community resources. Referrals can be made for emergency/crisis assistance in terms of food, housing, rent or mortgage assistance, clothing and utilities. Resources are available for parenting education, child safety, adult education/ESL, employment, citizenship classes, domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse, marriage counseling and mental health services.

PARENTS' RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a WACOG Head Start Parent, I have the RIGHT:

- To be treated with respect and dignity.
- To be welcomed and included in the classroom.
- To be informed regularly about my child's progress.
- To learn about the operation of the program, including budgets.
- To participate in major decisions by attending Parent Committee and Policy Council meetings.
- To participate in training, parent day, workshops, and adult education activities.
- To receive at least 2 Home Visits per school year.
- To participate in at least 2 parent conferences per school year.
- To help my child in the classroom.
- To expect my child and family's information to remain confidential.

As a WACOG Head Start Parent, I have the RESPONSIBILITY:

- To advocate for what is best for my child
- To notify the center office if my child will be absent.
- To be on time when dropping off and picking up my child.
- To provide leadership by taking part in Parent Committee elections, to explain the program to other parents and encourage their full participation.
- To treat others at the Head Start Centers with respect and dignity.
- To offer constructive criticism of the program, and to share in evaluating it.
- To attend parent center meetings and parent activities.
- To meet my child's medical and health needs by getting medical and dental check-ups for my child, with referral assistance if necessary.
- To help with classroom experiences for my child and with group activities.
- To work with my child at home to reinforce skills he/she is learning at the center.
- To respect the confidentiality of all participants at the center.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All family information and children's files are maintained in locked cabinets and are strictly confidential. Only authorized Head Start staff have access to these files. WACOG Head Start is obligated to provide access to children's files to State and Federal Licensing and Monitoring Representatives, Department of Child Safety (DCS), and Law Enforcement. You, as the parent/legal guardian, have the right to review and/or obtain copies of your child's records upon a

written request. Please allow the center a reasonable time, but no more than 45 days to prepare these copies.

CELEBRATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL SHOWCASES

We recognize that families have unique cultures, traditions and belief systems. We encourage you to share these with your child at home and within the community. With respect to these differences, we focus all classroom celebrations around classroom achievements. Classroom celebrations are opportunities for children to showcase the skills they are learning while attending the center. Centers may hold Fall, Winter or Spring educational showcases.

We understand that many cultures celebrate special occasions with food. As our program serves all children with a variety of nutritional needs, our policy is to serve children only foods purchased by our program. We ask families not to bring foods for special days or center educational showcases. Instead, we invite you to plan with the teacher to volunteer and to spend the day in your child's classroom where you may participate in classroom activities. You may volunteer to spend the day with your child on his/her special day, share the day's meal with your child, and lead a special activity planned with the teacher such as reading your child's favorite book, leading an art project, leading a dance to your child's favorite song, etc.

Note: Outside and/or Homemade food is not permitted at the Head Start center. Items such as candy, gum, pastries, sodas or items that can cause a choking hazard such as balloons, toys, or small items are not permitted.

NON-DISCRIMINATION

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. WACOG Head Start does not discriminate against its customers and applicants for employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, political beliefs, marital status, familial or prenatal status, sexual orientation, when all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department.

PROCEDURES FOR RESOLUTION OF PARENT CONCERNS

WACOG Head Start is dedicated to partnering with families. If you have a concern or complaint, we will work with you to address your concern/issue.

If your concern/issue is in regard to the classroom:

- Please discuss it first with your child's teacher.
- If the concern/issue is not resolved, WACOG Head Start has a written Parent Grievance Procedure that is posted on the parent board.
- Please discuss your concern/issue with the Center Manager and the Center Manger will assist you in completing the Parent Grievance Report.
- The Center Manager, Family Development Advocate (FDA) and Teacher will work with you to find possible solutions.
- If your concern/issue still is not resolved, request a meeting with the Area Manager. The Area Manager will work with you and the Center Manager to address your concern/issue.

If your concern/issue is still not addressed to your satisfaction:

- Address the concern/issue with the Head Start Director.

If your concern is of such a nature that the Parent Grievance Procedure above cannot reach effective resolution, it will be forwarded to the Policy Council for their review and final resolution.

INSURANCE AND FUNDING

WACOG Head Start & Early Head Start
Programs are insured by:

**Social Service Contractors Indemnity Pool
Hartford Life and Accident Insurance Company
The Fidelity and Deposit Companies**

Documentation of liability insurance coverage is available for review at each center.

All centers are regulated by the Arizona Department of Health Services & Bureau of Child Care Licensing

Located at 400 W Congress Suite 100, Tucson AZ 85701
Phone: (520) 628-6541
Inspection reports are available for review at each center.

WACOG Head Start & Early Head Start
Programs are funded by:

**Department of Health & Human Services
Office of Human Development
Administration of Children & Families**

San Francisco Regional Office IX
90 7th St., 9th Floor
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 437-8400
(415) 437-8444 Fax