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Dear Parents/Guardians,

Welcome to Community Progress Council’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs!

Because of the Coronavirus pandemic, this year is especially different for CPC and its early childhood education programming. Our agency has worked hard over the past several weeks to ensure that our programs are operating in the safest way possible for you, your children and our staff.

While we are beginning the school year off through a virtual format, we do hope that we can bring your child back for in-person education in the new year.

We hope you are ready for a year full of learning for you and your child. As parents, you are your child’s first and best teacher. Our Head Start, Early Head Start and Home-Based programs will offer you opportunities to join in your child’s learning and build your own skills. We hope you will take advantage of these opportunities to show your child that learning is important and fun for everyone.

Community Progress Council’s mission is to empower individuals and families to move toward self-sufficiency. We hope you will share your goals with our staff in Early Head Start/Head Start. CPC has a number of programs that can build on your strengths and help your family.

We invite you to talk with your Family Engagement Specialist or Family Development Specialist to learn more about our programs that help residents of York County reach financial stability.

We look forward to building a positive, helpful relationship with your family.

Best wishes for a wonderful year,

Robin K. Rohrbaugh,
President and CEO
Community Progress Council
rrrhbaugh@yorkcpc.org
(717) 846-4600
MISSION

Community Progress Council, York County’s community action agency, empowers individuals and families to move toward self-sufficiency and advocates for change to promote community growth.

VISION

All people in York County live free of poverty.

CPC LEADERSHIP

ROBIN ROHRBAUGH  
President & CEO

GREG LINDEMUTH  
Chief Financial Officer

RUTH ROBBINS  
Chief Program Officer

KAREN STONE  
Director of  
Outcomes & Assessment

CAROLYN LEREW  
Organizational  
Development Director

CARL WHITEHILL  
Director of  
Marketing & Communications

HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START MANAGEMENT

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(717) 846-4600, ext. 216

KARIN FOSTER  
Health and Nutrition Manager  
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(717) 846-4600, ext. 200

RICH KEYES  
Transportation Manager  
rkeyes@yorkcpc.org  
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JOLENE NUSOM  
Inclusion Manager  
jnusom@yorkcpc.org  
(717) 846-4600, ext. 205
This handbook is intended to be a tool to help support our families with virtual learning during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The policies and practices in this handbook have been adapted to reflect virtual learning and engagement. A new handbook with updated policies will be issued once children and families are able to participate in programming in person. Please take a moment to review the information and store this handbook in a safe place for reference.

Our program will use the following apps and technology to support children and families with virtual learning:

**CLASSDOJO** - This app is your main communication tool connecting you to the classroom team. Important information about upcoming events, recorded lessons and learning activities will be posted here. You can connect with other parents and staff through the use of this app.

**ZOOM** - Individual student meeting, virtual home visits, parent events and classroom gatherings will be held through Zoom. You can access Zoom through the Zoom app or through dialing into a phone number. The best way to use Zoom is either through a phone or computer with a camera - this way you can see and interact with the other people on the call.

**YOUTUBE** - Videos will be available for your viewing on CPC’s YouTube page. Here, you can find tips from our teams to use at home with your children. We will post the YouTube links on CLASSDOJOs and on our CPC Facebook page. You may also receive links through communication with your FES/FDS.

*If, at any time, you or your child have questions or issues connecting with CPC’s virtual programs, please let our staff know, and we’ll be happy to assist or correct any issues.*

**Resources for you and your child**

Although our program is being offered virtually, we still want to offer comprehensive support and services to your family. These include food delivery for your family, toothbrushing supplies and school supplies for your home, technology support, parenting classes and nutrition classes. If there is something your family needs to help you be more successful with your at-home learning, connect with your classroom team.
The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework

From the beginning of life, families nurture their children to be healthy and to develop the capacities they will need to be ready for school and successful in life. Head Start and Early Head Start program staff share these goals and collaborate with families as they work toward these goals. The Head Start Parent, Family and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework is an organizational guide for collaboration among families and Head Start and Early Head Start programs, staff, and community service providers to promote positive, enduring outcomes for children and families.

The Head Start PFCE Framework describes the program elements - Program Foundations and Impact Areas - in early learning programs that can work together to positively influence child and family outcomes. The Framework identifies equity, inclusiveness, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, and positive goal-oriented relationships as important drivers for these outcomes.
Promoting Self-Sufficiency and Family Wellness

The Family and Community Engagement (FCE) department works as the case management component of the Head Start/Early Head Start program. Family Engagement Specialists (FES) and Family Development Specialists (FDS) work closely with the families throughout the year to ensure the entire family receives the benefits of Head Start’s comprehensive services. Your FES/FDS is a partner in your Early Head Start journey, they are here to support your personal and family goals and provide resources and education along the way. Think of them as a coach - cheering you on, walking alongside you and providing you some feedback, strategies and helpful tips along the way.

Your FES/FDS will work with you to complete a Self-Sufficiency Assessment to help identify your family’s strengths and how our programs can support your progress. You will complete a Family Partnership Agreement based on your personal and family goals and the goals you have for your child’s education and development while your family is enrolled in our program. The FES/FDS is also a part of the classroom team and spends time in the learning environment to understand how children are learning, developing and growing.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Head Start embraces the ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of our families and aims to include and celebrate this in the classroom and office environment. Children are encouraged to speak their native language in the classroom and families are welcome to share special customs, traditions and songs. We use the “Multicultural Principles for Head Start” program as a guideline in supporting our staff’s understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity.

The principles are:
• Every individual is rooted in culture.
• The cultural groups represented in the communities and families of each Head Start program are the primary sources for culturally relevant programming.
• Culturally relevant and diverse programming requires learning accurate information about the cultures of different groups and discarding stereotypes.
• Addressing cultural relevance in making curriculum choices and adaptations is a necessary, developmentally appropriate practice.
• Every individual has the right to maintain his or her own identity while acquiring the skills required to function in our diverse society.
• Effective programs for children who speak languages other than English require continued development of the first language while the acquisition of English is facilitated.
• Culturally relevant programming requires staff who both reflect and are responsive to the community and families served.
• Multicultural programming for children enables children to develop an awareness of, respect for, and appreciation of individual and cultural differences.
• Culturally relevant and diverse programming examines and challenges institutional and personal biases.
• Culturally relevant and diverse programming and practices are incorporated in all systems and services and are beneficial to all adults and children.
**Policy Council**

The Early Head Start/Head Start Policy Council is a governing body of parents who help make important decisions for the program. Parents and community representatives in Policy Council approve budget decisions, help inform policies and practices and provide feedback to the program about how to best serve families. Policy Council is a great resume builder and provides an opportunity to let your leadership skills shine. Policy Council representatives have the opportunity to attend special trainings, plan events and connect with Community Progress Council’s Board of Directors. Meetings are held monthly through Zoom. If you are interested in joining the Policy Council, talk with your FES/FDS.

**Parent Meetings**

Each classroom will offer a virtual parent meeting with your teaching team, FES and representatives from our other departments. These occur during the first week of the month, starting in October. Your CLASSDOJO will offer for more specific information. This is a great way to connect with other parents in your classroom and learn best practices from each other. Socializations for home-based families will also be offered virtually.

**Parent Curriculum**

Children do not come with a manual. We offer parenting workshops using a research-based curriculum, “ACT Raising Safe Kids.” The workshop series offers tools to help better understand child development, behavior and ways to help your child be successful at home and in school. We will be offering these workshops virtually in the fall. They are available in Spanish and English.

The first offerings will occur starting the week of October 19 and run for five weeks:

- **English-** Mondays and Tuesdays, 2-3:30 p.m.
- **Spanish-** Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11:30 a.m.

Connect with your FES/FDS if you are interested in signing up.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences**

EHS/HS Staff believe parents are the primary educators of their children. Conferences are an opportunity for parents and teachers to discuss children’s progress, accomplishments, and areas of need. Our key goal is to help develop confident and capable children. Parents and staff work together to create goals for their children within family reports for each child to ensure his/her success in our program. These goals will incorporate strategies that parents can use in their home and community to help their child grow. Parents will contribute to these plans during weekly Zoom meetings with the education staff.
Parent Trainings

Parent trainings are informational workshops that focus on a variety of topics surveyed by HS/EHS parents. Those who participate in the workshops take home valuable information and tools to assist them in reaching their desired goals. We will have these scheduled throughout the year. The first parent training event we’re offering is a “Nutrition Links” cooking class offered through our partnership with the Penn State Extension. This five week course will allow you to learn how to stretch your food dollar, incorporate your kids in meal prep and get your family eating more healthy food items. The course begins the week of Sept. 24 from 10-11 a.m. To sign up, connect with your FES/FDS.

PBIS Teams

HS/EHS has Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) Teams throughout York County. Each PBIS team consists of teaching staff, family engagement specialists, a member of the inclusion team, an administrator; a PBIS facilitator and a parent/family member. This team meets once a month to elicit input, plan and provide implementation activities, create and implement a PBIS implementation plan and review data regularly to monitor progress toward goals. If you are interested in participating in one of the PBIS teams, contact Jessica Shimmel at (717) 430-1709 or jshimmel@yorkcpc.org. More on PBIS can be found on the next page.
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

EHS/HS is implementing Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) at all our sites. PBIS is a process designed to help all students experience social, emotional, and academic success. The purpose of program-wide PBIS is to establish an environment where appropriate behavior is the norm.

Our staff will introduce, model, recognize and reinforce three universal behavior expectations: “Be Safe, Be Helpful, Be Respectful.” Research has shown that teaching behavioral expectations and rewarding students for following them is a much more positive and successful approach than reacting to and/or punishing children after they misbehave.

PBIS helps children learn to care for themselves and others, communicate their needs, make friends, and calm themselves when upset. Other areas will also be addressed which have been proven to support school readiness. We are excited to have two PBIS coaches who are available to support our program staff as we continue to improve our PBIS practices.

The Prevent Teach Reinforce for Families (PTR-F) Model

In CPC’s programs, we use individualized social emotional supports when a child has severe and persistent behavior that makes things like transitions, communication, and/or making friends difficult for the child.

Prevent Teach Reinforce for Families (PTR-F) is a team-based model of individualized positive behavior support that our program uses to support a child and their family so that the child is able to be successful in the home and community. The team is made up of family members, teachers, family development specialist, education coordinators, family engagement specialist, a PTR-YC facilitator and anyone else who is supporting the child in the classroom.

The team will work collaboratively to make a plan that will support the child’s social emotional competence. This plan is called a behavior intervention plan and includes strategies that: prevent challenging behavior from occurring and promote more desirable behaviors; teach the child how to use more desirable behaviors in the classroom/home; and reinforce the desirable behaviors so the child is likely to keep using them.
Inclusion and Mental Health

Head Start/Early Head Start partners with parents and several area agencies [including Early Intervention (EI), Lincoln Intermediate Unit #12 (LIU), and Capital Area Intermediate Unit (CAIU)] to help identify and serve children with educational needs. We also partner with agencies such as Meadowlands, TW Ponessa, PA Counseling, True North Wellness Services, etc. to help identify and support children with mental health concerns.

With parent permission, all children are screened by our program staff to identify concerns regarding developmental, behavioral, motor, language, social, cognitive and emotional skills. Screening results are then shared with parents. Our staff will be available to help support the child and family through the referral process if this is indicated.

If a child enters our program with a current educational or mental health diagnosis from another program/agency, our team will work with parents and a team of professionals from that program/agency to develop a plan to continue to provide services while the child attends HS/EHS. Our Inclusion Team is available to provide support, information and recommendations to staff and/or parents when needed.

You may direct any questions about mental health screenings with your FES/FDS.
Use of Photographs, Video and Audio

With parental consent, we may use pictures, videos and audio (sounds) shared with our program or taken during our video calls to post on our social media, website or in publications. We ask that parents and guardians do not take pictures or recordings of any video calls as other children may be present. This is to protect the confidentiality of all children and families in our programs.

Religion and Holidays

Head Start/Early Head Start is made possible through federal and state funding. Consequently, religion cannot be a part of any HS/EHS activity. CPC understands, however, that seasonal and holiday celebrations are appropriate and meaningful for young children and families in our programs. Teachers, FES/FDSs are sensitive to the religious practices of our families and make every effort to consider those practices when planning activities and classroom curriculum.
Health and Screenings

Please remember to update your child’s information with your FES/FDS. The following is required to assure your child is healthy and up-to-date on all his/her health needs:

- A current physical and a copy of your child’s immunization record. Each time you visit the doctor, make sure to get a copy of the updated Well Child Check and/or vaccinations.
- Immunizations must be up to date. If they are not, we require a note from the child’s physician providing a “catch up plan” or “exemption note.”
- Up-to-date medical insurance card. If you change your insurance, please provide your FES/FDS with an updated copy of the medical card.
  This helps us ensure your child is insured and can be cared for in the event of an emergency. If you need assistance finding insurance, your FES/FDS can help.
- A doctor/dental home for the child is required. If you are in need of finding a doctor for your child, your FES/FDS will be able to help. Head Start offers dental services through Family First Health – please talk with your FES/FDS to sign up for our dental screenings.
- If your child has a health condition that requires a health care plan (determined during intake process) the program must receive the child’s Individualized Care Plan (ICP), Medication Permission Log, and/or Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) form(s) from the doctor before your child can start. The EHS/HS staff will inform families which form(s) are needed. These should be updated yearly and when changes are made.
- Head Start provides health screenings to all enrolled children with parental permission. We review dental, vision, hearing, and height/weight. If your child fails a health screening, parents/guardians are responsible to make follow-up appointments with the appropriate practitioner. Your FES/FDS will work with you to follow up on any failed health screenings. If you require assistance with finding the right doctor, making the appointment or transportation – your FES/FDS can help.

Nutrition and Meals

Breakfast and lunch are provided by the Child and Adult Care Food Program for center-based students. These meals will be delivered to the home every week by the Head Start transportation department. A weekly menu will be created and distributed with every delivery.

Fruits, vegetables and milk will be included in your daily menu. We encourage you to have your children serve themselves and to try new foods. If your child has a special health or nutrition concern, please share this with your FES/FDS. If your child has any food allergies or intolerances, a Medical Plan of Care will be needed before your child can be enrolled in HS/EHS.
Parent Attendance Agreement for Virtual Classrooms

Consistent participation in virtual learning opportunities is important to your child’s development and helps ease the transition into kindergarten. Children learn best when they have a routine that makes them successful. Attendance is also important for parents and guardians. Keeping appointments, attending scheduled meetings, and participating in your child’s learning is key to school success.

We understand that participation in virtual programming may be limited because of your family’s needs. We ask that you do your best to participate with our program fully.

We will use the following guidance to support your family as best as possible during this difficult time:

- A primary adult should log in to CLASSDOJO a minimum of three times weekly and participate in the activities with the enrolled child. We are able to view when adults have logged into the system.
  - Should we notice that your family has not checked into the CLASSDOJO in three consecutive days, your Family Engagement Specialist will give you a call to make sure your family has everything you need to be successful in online learning.
  - If we notice that your family has not checked into the CLASSDOJO in five consecutive days, we will conduct a home-visit to make sure your family is safe and healthy.
- The primary parent or guardian should participate with the child during the weekly one-on-one meeting with the classroom teachers.
- Should you or your child not feel well enough to participate in any daily activities or meetings, please communicate with your classroom team.
- Families may also request a leave of absence for up to two weeks for any reason.

Parent Attendance Agreement for Home-Based Program Options

To receive the full benefits of the EHS/HS Home-Based Program, it is important for your child and you to be home, awake and ready at the scheduled visit time each week. Attendance during the home visits is essential for your family to excel in the Home-Based Program.

Please note the following parent expectations regarding attendance:
- A primary adult should log weekly to the virtual visit. The home visiting program is aimed to help you be your child's best teacher. Your participation compliments this goal.
- Parent must call the FDS ahead of time to cancel a home visit.
- Excused absences include: illness, medical appointment, family emergency, work schedule that cannot be changed or a death in the family.
- A leave of absence can be taken for up to three weeks. When taking a leave of absence, please notify your FDS at least two weeks in advance of the first date.
Conflict Resolution

Our program values our relationship with you and your family, and we encourage you to communicate with us whenever you have any questions, concerns, or feedback.

Please speak first with your child’s Family Engagement Specialist (FES) or Family Development Specialist (FDS) and they will work with you toward a resolution. If you have a concern that cannot be resolved after speaking with your FES/FDS or you require further assistance, please use the contact information below:

In writing:  
Ruth Robbins, Chief Program Officer  
Community Progress Council  
226 East College Avenue  
York, PA  17403

By Phone:  
(717) 846-4600, ext. 231

By e-mail:  
rrobbins@yorkcpc.org

Or contact any of the Head Start/Early Head Start managers listed on Page 4.

“NO BEND RULE”/Guiding Children’s Behavior

Head Start has a “NO BEND RULE”, which states that staff and parents shall not use any form of physical punishment, including spanking. Disciplinary methods used may not humiliate, shame, or frighten children.

Head Start staff receives annual training to learn effective strategies in guiding children’s behavior. Staff use a variety of techniques to assist children including consistency, routine, choice, planned ignoring, and redirection.

Teachers and home-based staff work with parents to help children learn appropriate ways to solve problems and develop self-regulation skills.

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect

All Head Start staff are required by Pennsylvania law to report any cases of suspected child abuse or neglect. Head Start staff receive yearly training on proper reporting procedures of suspected child abuse. We ask you to join us as advocates for children. If you suspect that any child is being abused or neglected, please call ChildLine at 1-800-932-0313.
Transportation of Children and Family Members

Head Start may transport your child in a company van with parental consent. All children enrolled in the Head Start program need to be accompanied by a parent or guardian or additional staff while being transported in the van. All passengers must be seated and have seat belt or a child restraint system on at all times.

We ask that you and your child follow three universal expectations while being transported by our staff:

**Be Safe:**
Seat belts are to be worn by all individuals riding in the vehicle. This is for your safety as well as staff and other riders. All children must be accompanied by a parent/guardian or additional staff members. Parents/guardians may initially buckle their child into the approved, program-provided car seat using the appropriate restraint system. The FDS will conduct a thorough check of the child’s restraints prior to moving the vehicle. All of our home-based staff, including family development specialists and home-based coordinator, have received car seat safety training from a certified Safe Kids Worldwide car seat technician. Additionally, no smoking, physical violence, weapons, or other dangerous articles will be permitted in the vehicle.

**Be Helpful:**
Please help us keep our transportation vehicles clean and sanitary for your safety and all other passengers. All food and drinks should be in a closed or lidded container to prevent spills and accidents. Please limit the number of items taken in the vehicles to provide more space for all passengers in the vehicle. Also, loose items are a safety concern in any vehicle, and we want to keep everyone safe.

**Be Respectful:**
Like all other experiences in our program, we want your transportation experience to be positive and respectful. Please use child-appropriate language. If you are unsure, please discuss this privately with your driver or FES/FDS. For the safety of all passengers, conversations and other noises should be kept at low volume within the vehicle to avoid any distractions that may cause the driver to lose focus during transport.

Access to CPC Facilities and Emergency Response Plans

To keep the children in our program safe, access to early learning spaces in all facilities is restricted and monitored to authorized personnel.
Community Progress Council provides comprehensive, integrated services that offer resources and support for individuals and families to move toward self-sufficiency. We work with low- and moderate-income people of all ages in York County to examine their current situations and determine how our programs best align with their needs. Our services don’t stop at emergency assistance, but rather create a bridge from crisis to self-sufficiency.

**Self-Sufficiency Program**
The journey from poverty to economic freedom is a difficult road filled with struggle, obstacles and governmental policies that unintentionally keep low-income residents right where they are at – in poverty. Low-income individuals and families certainly need emergency assistance – help to avoid eviction, the threat of utility shut-offs, or food for the family – but in many cases, they need a partner to help them bridge that gap to live a life of financial independence.

Community Progress Council’s new Self-Sufficiency Program provides that long-term help that so many of our neighbors, our friends and family members need to break free of government assistance.

**Housing and Financial Counseling**
Housing and rental education seeks to empower families and individuals to move toward self-sufficiency by providing the knowledge and tools necessary for home ownership and rental relationships. Community Progress Council offers housing and rental counseling, foreclosure counseling, financial coaching, and Pennsylvania Housing & Finance Agency (PHFA) approved homebuyer education workshops, which are often a prerequisite for several housing assistance programs.

**Workforce Development**
Workforce Development exists to help clients overcome barriers to become job ready. This program assists clients with limited employability options, who may have been unsuccessful in other programs. The structured community service activities offered by CPC and other participating non-profit agencies provide job skills training with the volunteer employment assignment.

**Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**
The Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children, also known as WIC, provides supplemental food and nutrition education for pregnant and breastfeeding women, mothers who have given birth within the past six months and children up to 5 years old. WIC offers free healthy foods, nutrition counseling and tips, breastfeeding support, and referrals to other services.

**Community of Hope**
Community of Hope’s mission is to increase resilience in children, youth and families of York City and encourages neighborhood participation and engaged community partners. Community of Hope has a dedicated space - a Family Resource Center - at Hannah Penn that serves as a hub for families.

More on Community Progress Council’s programs available to residents of York County can be found at YorkCPC.org or by calling (717) 846-4600.