



2023—2024 Family Handbook

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Family Partnership

Welcome to our program.

You will be joining us to achieve Southern Oregon Head Start's mission:

“Prepare children and their families for success in school and throughout life.”

At Southern Oregon Head Start, we believe that **you** are your child's most important teacher. We recognize that **you** are the expert when it comes to your child's learning, whether that's ideas for learning in the classroom, sharing your own special skill or talent, or letting staff know the kinds of activities your child most enjoys.

Our Family Partnership continues through the duration of the program and offers families opportunities to meet with staff regularly in order to support you in reaching the goals you set for you child and family.

In this handbook, you will find information on:

- School Readiness
- Home Visits
- Positive Behaviors
- Parents as Leaders
- Child Guidance
- Transition to Kindergarten
- Addressing Concerns
- Privacy Statement and Mandates



You are a very important part of helping your child do his or her best. We look forward to an exciting and fun partnership with you all year long.

School Readiness

Together as partners with you we will focus on your child's:

Social-Emotional Wellbeing

Language

Thinking Skills

Early Reading Skills

Problem Solving Skills

Early Math Skills



Southern Oregon Head Start strives to deliver high quality teaching to children in our care. We use the following teaching methods and materials:

Creative Curriculum

Conscious Discipline

Second Step

Child Protection Unit

It is very important for your child to attend school regularly. Regular attendance will help better prepare your child for Kindergarten and beyond. As your child attends regularly, he/she will enhance their ability to make friends, learn to self soothe, and learn the skills of concentration and focus.

Home Visits

Throughout the year, there are many opportunities for family advocates and teachers to meet with you in your home, and it is our privilege to be your guest. Meeting in your home environment allows us to support your family in creating rich learning opportunities that build on your everyday routines. Through our home visits, we are better able to customize each visit, providing culturally and linguistically responsive services and opportunities to integrate your beliefs and values into the work that we do together to build your child's success.

Thank you for
having us!



Family Involvement in Learning

Make Learning Fun at Home!

Children learn by doing. Give your child opportunities to “learn” new things.

Give your child some space. Let them practice what they are learning.

Your child's confidence will increase as he or she learns new things. Self-esteem will help your child do better in school. Helping your child feel good about his/herself by looking for the positive in your child and telling them about it daily. Set them up for success by encouraging self-help and personal hygiene skills.

Listen to your child. Pay attention to what they say. Communication is a two way street... guaranteed to make a lasting difference in the relationship you have with your child.

Together we can teach Positive Behavior



The class rules are:

- We take care of ourselves
- We take care of others
- We take care of our things

You can use these rules at home, too!

Our goal is for children to learn the social skills needed to be successful in kindergarten.

Parents are Leaders at Head Start



Southern Oregon Head Start offers all parents and caregivers many different opportunities to be engaged in their child’s potential. Connecting with your center means you are a key part of an action plan that is focused on strengthening your child’s education and the family-school partnership. If you are looking for an opportunity to advocate for the needs of your child, travel and attend state and national conferences, and be a representative voice for your center, Policy Council is the place for you.

“Head Start changed the way I viewed society. Our team demonstrates the mission of diversity, inclusion, and belonging. I feel more confident to go out of my comfort zone and go back to the community—Looking for how I can contribute.”

- Head Start Parent, 2023

Head Start believes that parents and caregivers must have a voice in the decision-making and direction of the agency. Our policy council consists of peer-elected parents and caregivers who work closely with Board of Directors and key management staff to make decisions about our agency spending, classroom curriculums, facilities, hiring, and more.

Disabilities and Mental Health

Disabilities:

Head Start works Jackson County Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education Services and Early Childhood Services in Josephine County to provide services for children with special education needs.

Individualized education opportunities consisting of one-on-one, small groups, and/or large group activities are provided in an inclusive environment.

Mental Health:

Head Start has Mental Health Consultants and an Early Childhood Behavioral Specialist to support children and staff in the classroom.

We act as a link to community mental health and social services agencies. Your family advocate can assist in obtaining information on mental health services.

Child Guidance

Southern Oregon Head Start is committed to using positive, age-appropriate strategies to help children learn how to get along with others and follow the class expectations.

Children to learn the social skills they need to be successful in kindergarten.

- Manage their feelings and behavior
- Follow class rules
- Have friends and play nicely with others



*We use child guidance procedures for children when they need some extra support to learn some of these skills. We work on teaching children skills they need to have rather than what they need to stop doing. We want children to learn different ways to behave and give them opportunities to practice those skills. That helps a child know how to deal with other conflicts that come up.

*If a child has on-going difficulty, we will include you, the family, in planning.

*We also have Child Development Specialists who visit classrooms and share suggestions with teachers on how to improve activities and interactions in the class. They also make suggestions to help individual children, make referrals for other services and are available for parenting questions.

We have classroom plans and procedures in place to ensure the safety of all children. Situations can occur in the classroom where we are only able to share with you information as it pertains to your child. This is to protect the privacy of all children and families. If you should have any questions, regarding the guidance policy, please talk to your child's teacher.

Transition to Kindergarten

You are your child's first and best teacher. You and your teacher will be working together to help your child enter kindergarten successfully.

Things you can do to get ready are:

- Attend kindergarten Launch
- Attend Head Start Center Parent Transition Meeting
- Attend the kindergarten Orientation/Roundup
- Sign up for more information about your school's PTO/PTA
- Visit your child's future school and participate in school events
- Have fun with your child as you work together on summer goals



Concerns, Questions, & Assessments

When you have concerns ...

If you are worried about how your child sees, hears, talks, walks, plays, learns or responds to others, please talk to your teacher. Our program helps families decide if their child should be referred to an early childhood special education program professional for further screening and evaluation.

Screenings: Screenings are used to show each child's level of development and identify any concerns early on.

Assessments:

This includes quarterly:

- Checkpoints on child developmental strengths and needs
- Family conferences
- Sharing child observations with families

Parent Concerns: If you have questions, concerns, or ideas, you are invited to speak with relevant staff. There is a parent concern resolution procedure that your Family Advocate can help you with.

Cell Phone Use and Photography at the center: Head Start cannot control, monitor or prevent photos/videos shared by others through social media. To keep our classroom, hallways and playgrounds focused on children, please keep your cell phone off while at Head Start Centers.

Active Camera Monitoring and Recordings: SOHS sites have cameras actively recorded and monitored for educational and safety purposes. Video monitoring and recording follow all confidential procedures.

Important things to know:

Privacy Statement/Confidentiality: Information you share is kept confidential and is only shared with staff as necessary. No one else outside our agency has access to your information unless you give written permission. SOCF may disclose personally identifiable information without prior consent in the event of a public health emergency to the County Health Department.

Child abuse and Neglect: Head Start complies with state laws relevant to reporting suspected abuse or neglect.

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

SOCFC is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

What you need to know about your child's Students Education Records

A child's student education records will be forwarded to the school they will be enrolled in after Head Start.

OAR 518-021-0255 Student Records

OAR 166-400-0060 Student Education Records

The education Records include:

- Attendance Records
- Behavior Records:
 1. Child Support Plan
- Screenings & Assessments:
 1. ASQ/ASQSE
 2. Family Conference Form
 3. Individual Child Profile
- Student Health Records
- Student Health Screening Records
- Student Immunization Record

Early Childhood Special Education Records will be sent to your child's next school district by Early Childhood Services (Josephine County) or Jackson County Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education.

You have the right to:

- Inspect and review your child's education record and request a copy. To do this, please let your child's teacher **know in writing**. Your request will be honored as quickly as possible and not later than 45 days after the request.
- Ask for the record to be changed if it is inaccurate, according to OAR 581-021-0300.
- Give consent for disclosure of confidential information,
- Get a copy of the Student Education Records Policy from your center's Area Assistant.