



# Champlain Valley Head Start Family Handbook



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# INTRODUCTION TO HEAD START

## What are Early Head Start and Head Start?

Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start are programs to help families and children grow and do well in school and life. Both programs include support around:

- education
- health
- nutrition
- mental health
- social services

Head Start Preschool is for children ages 3-5 and their families

Early Head Start is for pregnant people, and children from birth to age 3 along with their families.

Champlain Valley Head Start has programs at sites in Franklin, Grand Isle, Chittenden and Addison Counties.

## Who can be part of Head Start?

People who are pregnant, and families with children ages 0-5, are eligible for Early Head Start or Head Start if:

- the child's family receives Reach Up, 3Squares or Supplemental Security Income (SSI); OR
- the child is in foster care; OR
- the child's family is currently experiencing homelessness; OR
- the child's family meets income limits

Head Start services are free for all eligible families, although some fees may apply in child care centers in which Head Start services are provided.

We can also enroll a few children from families that do not meet the above rules.



## Our Core Values

At Head Start we:

- create a place where everyone can learn new skills and feel good about learning
- are aware that families and staff come from many different backgrounds. We honor different cultures and diversity
- encourage you to help make choices about the program by:
  - being part of Policy Council (Head Start's "government")
  - sharing your ideas with us
- keep children healthy and safe
- respect all parts of your child's growth, including social, emotional, learning,

and physical growth

- build a community in which you and your child feel like part of a group
- connect you with area agencies that provide services to children and families
- develop services that support you and your child after you leave Head Start

## **Our Mission**

The Champlain Valley Head Start mission is to provide high quality services to help children and families grow and do well in life. Our top goal is to be sure children are healthy and safe.

## **The Organization**

Champlain Valley Head Start serves Chittenden, Franklin, Grand Isle and Addison Counties.

Champlain Valley Head Start is part of the Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (“CVOEO”), a private, non-profit group that offers programs including:

- Head Start Preschool, Early Head Start
- Community Action
- Weatherization
- Fuel Assistance
- Financial & Budgeting Assistance
- Housing Assistance programs
- Emergency Food Shelves
- Domestic & Sexual Violence programs
- other services



## **Collaborative Partners**

Champlain Valley Head Start offers some programs in partnership with other early childhood education/childcare programs to provide services to families. Currently those partners include Otter Creek Child Center, King Street Center and Burlington Children’s Space. If you are enrolled in one of these programs, please refer to their Family Handbook for questions about how their program operates.

# POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Our staff will talk about important Head Start information with you. Please be sure that you understand this information. Please ask questions if you do not understand. We have shortened some of the information for this handbook. Copies of the full policies are available on request.

## **Inclusion Statement and Non-Discriminating Policy**

Champlain Valley Head Start 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. We embrace the diversity of our community and staff, and strive for equitable and inclusive access to services, resources and support.

## **Equity Statement**

Champlain Valley Head Start supports educational equity, which means that every student has access to the educational resources they need regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, disability, sexual orientation, family background and/or family income. The Agency of Education along with CVHS are determined to eliminate the inequity that persists. See the VT Agency of Education website for more information: <https://education.vermont.gov/student-support/vermont-multi-tiered-system-of-supports/educational-equity>

## **Confidentiality**

All child and family records are confidential (private) and in secure locations. Champlain Valley Head Start keeps child and family records for 3 years after the child leaves the program. After 3 years, all paper records are destroyed.

- You will get a copy of your rights about confidential information related to your child and family every year.
- In most situations, we do not share information about you or your child with anyone outside of Champlain Valley Head Start unless you agree to it.

Champlain Valley Head Start can share information with any of the following people without a signed release:

- Champlain Valley Head Start staff
- Champlain Valley Office of Economic Opportunity (CVOEO) staff that work with Champlain Valley Head Start
- Childcare programs, schools, and other agencies that work with (or may work with) you and your family
- Head Start consultants (dietician, mental health, tooth tutor, nurse, education)



- Other people who work with Champlain Valley Head Start, and only on a need-to-know basis
- Qualified people who are doing research, or doing a review of our program
- People at your child's kindergarten school (if they are going to kindergarten). We will share information about your child's educational experience in preschool unless a parent or legal guardian notifies us in writing that they do not want the information shared.
- Vermont Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division if there are concerns about injury or neglect. (See Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting)

You will sign a form if you agree that it is okay for the teacher to take pictures of your child. Sometimes we use these pictures for Head Start newsletters, brochures, posters or the Champlain Valley Head Start website and social media.

### **Standards of Conduct**

All Champlain Valley Head Start staff, consultants, volunteers and substitutes agree to follow our Champlain Valley Head Start Standards of Conduct Policy. This means they agree to:

- Follow our Confidentiality Policy
- Never assume things about a child or family based on gender, race, ethnic background, culture, religion, family make-up or disability
- Never leave a child alone or unsupervised
- Use positive teaching methods with children and never hurt a child, physically or emotionally
- Never try to teach a child to behave by isolating them, or by using food as a punishment or reward, or by denying them basic needs
- Use truthful information to only enroll eligible children and families.

### **Providing False Information on Applications**

When filling out the CVHS application, please be sure that all information is correct. If you provide false information, on purpose, CVHS will update your application to see if your family can still be in the program. Leaving out key information on the application will be treated the same way as if you provided false information.

If your family is re-determined to be "not eligible" due to:

- Age
- Residency (where you live)
- Pregnancy status
- Income above the current limits

...then your family will be exited from the CVHS program within 30 days.

If your family is exited because it is over the income limit, you may choose to re-apply to the program for an "over-income" space. The new application will follow the CVHS written selection process.

## Positive Behavior Support & Management Policy

All children learn and develop at their own pace. In early childhood, children develop social and emotional skills and learn behavioral expectations. These skills are taught over time and require LOTS of practice, just like reading and math skills. Some children need extra support in working on challenging behavior. By this we mean behavior that isn't working for the child, occurs often, and impacts their ability to learn and play.

We work with children to help them have better self-control. We use positive methods to do this. We might:

- Teach skills by using songs, books, games and reminders
- Show them how to behave
- Redirect them to a better activity or set limits
- Let them know what will happen if they keep doing something they should not be doing
- Provide the space or time needed to get back in control

If you have concerns about your child's behavior at home or school, please talk with your Head Start staff person. CVHS will work with you and other people supporting your family to make a plan about how to help your child.



## Attendance and Participation

Champlain Valley Head Start wants to keep your family in our program for the full program year. Regular attendance supports you and your child by helping them be better prepared in life and in school.

We expect families to participate in classrooms, home visits and group socials when they are scheduled, unless they are sick. If you are unable to regularly attend scheduled days, we will work with you to develop a plan that lists ways we can support your family so you can stay in our program.

Children and families who attend programming on a regular basis:

- are more comfortable with routines
- know what is expected of them
- are more likely to make good friends
- and have the best opportunity to learn.

**Classrooms:** On any day that your child is unable to attend school, please let your child's teacher know. We will call you if we have not heard from you to make sure everyone is safe. If



your child misses many days of school, we will reach out to you to talk about it.

**Home Visiting:** If you or your home visitor cannot participate in a home visit, we will work together to set up a new visit. When 3 home visits are cancelled in a row, we will contact you to see if you want to stay in our program.

**FCP:** If you or your Family Education Specialist cannot participate in a family visit, we will work together to set up a new visit. When you and your child have not attended the program for one or more weeks, and we do not know the reason, we will contact you to see if you want to stay in our program.

**Pregnant Families:** When you have not attended the program or had a visit in 30 days, and we do not know the reason, we will contact you to see if you want to stay in our program.

Occasionally, Champlain Valley Head Start must exit families from the program. The reasons may be:

- Children or adults have not come to programming for many weeks.
- We haven't been able to contact your family over a long period of time.

If your family is exited from the program, we will send a letter to your last known address we have on file.

## **Emergency Contacts**

When you filled out your application, you completed an Emergency Form. We may use this information to reach you if we are unable to contact you about important matters. Parents must fill out new forms any time they want to add or remove a contact person. Parents should update important phone numbers any time they change.

## **Suspension and Expulsion**

CVHS follows Acts 35 and 166, which relate to the Task Force on Equitable and Inclusive School Environments. These acts prohibit the suspension or expulsion of students unless the student poses an imminent threat of harm or danger to others in the school. CVHS follows the "due process requirements" of these acts, and its own Protocol for Promoting Positive Behavior when considering suspending or expelling a student as outlined in Acts 35 and 166.

More information can be found here:

<https://education.vermont.gov/sites/aoe/files/documents/edu-k-to-age-8-suspension-and-expulsion-definitions-data-collection-and-reporting.pdf>

## **Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting**

All Champlain Valley Head Start staff, substitutes, consultants, and volunteers are required by law to call the Vermont Department for Children and Families, Family Services Division (DCF – FSD) if they think that a child has been hurt on purpose or neglected. Neglect can include situations where a child is at significant risk of harm due to not receiving treatment at a doctor or dentist. You will not be told if DCF has been called.

We want to continue to work with you and your child even if a report is made or your family is already working with DCF – Family Services. A report to DCF will never affect your child’s connection to our program. The same is true about any involvement with the law.

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to call DCF if they are concerned their child is being hurt by another caregiver, including a child care provider. The number to call is 1-800-649-5285.

### **No Smoking/Vaping Policy**

Head Start is substance free!

There is no smoking/vaping allowed at any Head Start event or location. This includes:

- classroom/playground
- group activities
- parent meetings
- home visits
- offices

### **Alcohol, Other Drugs and Impaired Drivers**

Alcohol, marijuana, or illegal drugs are not allowed at any Head Start activity or location, including home visits.

- If anyone comes to a Head Start event while using alcohol or drugs, they will be asked to leave. If the person does not leave, staff will call the police to assist.
- Head Start staff should not see any illegal drugs in the home. All staff members reserve the right to cancel a home visit if there are signs of drug or alcohol use.
- Head Start staff will contact DCF or the police if they believe that children are not being well cared for or may be at risk of harm due to a parent or caretaker using alcohol or drugs.
- If Head Start staff suspects an adult is using alcohol or drugs when picking up or driving a child, they will call police and DCF.

If you are concerned about alcohol or other drug use in your home, please talk to a Head Start staff person. We can help connect you to resources for help in the community.

## **Shots (Immunization Policy)**

Head Start believes that healthy children are up to date with their shots. Head Start staff will work with you and your child's health provider to make this happen if your child does not have the shots they need.

Shot records must be on file by the first day of class or home visit. This is a Vermont Child Care Licensing requirement for children in childcare or preschool. Head Start will try to get your child's records from the State of Vermont before he/she starts. If we cannot get your child's records before your child begins with Head Start, we will ask you to get them for us.

If you do not want your child to get all their shots, you must complete and sign a State of Vermont Immunization Exemption Form each program year.



## **Sick Policy**

For the safety of all, children and their family members who are sick or who are contagious (have something that can be passed on to others), should not go to school, childcare or be part of any Head Start activities.

Children and adults should not attend any Head Start class, home visit or activity if they:

- Are too sick to participate in activities
- Have signs of a sickness that can be spread, like a fever (101 oral or forehead, 100 degrees for underarm or higher), sore throat, throwing up, or diarrhea.
- Have something that can be given to others like: COVID-19, Chickenpox, Ringworm, or Strep Throat.

Please check with your Head Start staff person about when your child can return to Head Start if they get sick or have something they can pass on to others. Head Start follows the State of Vermont Licensing rules about keeping sick people out of the classrooms, home visits, and at Head Start events. Your Head Start staff person has more information if you need it. Parents and staff with the above signs or conditions should also not come to any Head Start activities until they are well.

Champlain Valley Head Start follows the latest guidance from the VT Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control around local health issues and pandemics.

## **Food Policy**

Head Start gives healthy meals and snacks to children. Due to food allergies and strict Federal and State rules, families cannot bring in food to share at any Head Start activity (including classrooms, parent meetings, and group events). Head Start provides food for all children and adults during scheduled classroom days and group socials. Families are welcome to volunteer

and prepare culturally relevant foods in classrooms or at family activities. This food must be prepared in a Head Start kitchen with food purchased by Head Start.

Head Start supports breastfeeding. Classrooms and group socialization spaces offer comfortable locations for lactating parents.

### **Holiday and Celebrations Policy**

Champlain Valley Head Start staff work with families to learn about their holidays and traditions. This information is used to offer activities that help children learn the following:

- Our school and community have families that have many different traditions.
- Other families may have traditions that are different than their own.
- What is a holiday, a tradition, or a celebration.
- What are respectful words to use when talking about holidays.
- They can respect the traditions of other families while also enjoying their own.

### **Sensory Play**

Sensory play is about exploring materials using our senses: touch, sight, hearing and smell. Children are very curious, and sensory play uses their senses at a level that is right for them. They learn so many things when they do sensory play:

- How to use their muscles (motor skills)
- New words and ways of describing things (language and communication)
- How to play with others (social skills)
- Memory
- Observation skills

Sensory play is one of the best learning experiences young children can have.

In our classroom or on a home visit, you may see children playing with sand, water, dough, paper items, and natural materials. Food items might also be used in sensory bins for children to explore. Sensory play using food provides a very specific tactile feel for children and can also serve to celebrate the rich food cultures of the families we serve.



CVHS understands that many people have food insecurity. We do not promote wasting food for play and try to only use food that is no longer recommended for eating. This food would otherwise be thrown away in the landfill or composted. Some items you may see are expired rice, beans, or flour. Please talk with us if you have any concerns.

## **Toileting Policy**

Children are encouraged to develop self-help skills independently when toilet learning. Champlain Valley Head Start staff watch for the child to show signs they are ready (i.e. staying dry for 2 hours, telling the staff when they are wet, understanding the concept of wet and dry, are interested in using the toilet or curious about others using the toilet, able to understand and respond to requests, language or sign language skills and awareness of own elimination).

CVHS staff will have ongoing conversations with the family to see if the child is showing the same interests at home and what the family's preferences or concerns may be. CVHS staff will work with collaborative partners in meeting the needs of the child and the family throughout the toilet learning process.

Children will be supervised and staff-child interactions will be attentive, supportive and relaxed. This should be a positive experience for the child as they are skill building through undressing/dressing, coordinating their bodies, developing language, and learning about their bodily functions. Staff will also provide toileting books in the classroom environment.

## **Sources of Funding**

In order to provide high quality education and family services, Champlain Valley Head Start (CVHS) layers funding from multiple sources, including but not limited to:

- the Vermont Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)
- Vermont universal pre-k funding (Act 166)
- the Child and Adult Care Feeding Program (CACFP), and Office of Head Start (OHS) federal grants

Families with children enrolled in CVHS licensed classrooms are asked to apply for all applicable funding assistance for which they may be eligible. Support with this process will be provided by CVHS to families as needed.

- No child or family will be denied enrollment in the program due to ineligibility for non-OHS funding. This includes families who are unable to obtain the required documentation to apply for non-OHS funding, as well as those whose funding/assistance is directed to another needed provider.
- Enrollment in CVHS licensed classrooms is provided at no cost to families with support from the funding sources.

## **Complaint Procedure for Champlain Valley Head Start Families**

Champlain Valley Head Start offers you a high-quality program, but sometimes you may have concerns. It might be about the classroom days or times, home visits, or about someone who works with your child. Talk to your Head Start staff person first. Also, you can contact the Supervisor for your program. The Champlain Valley Head Start Director and managers can also help you. Please call us with any questions, 1-800-854-9648.

# HOME-SCHOOL CONNECTIONS

## Communicating with Families

Head Start teachers, home visitors, and family support specialists will be in regular contact with you about your child's learning and family needs. Head Start will communicate with you in the following ways:

- Telephone
- Email
- Text & TalkingPoints messages
- Notes in your child's backpack
- Regular newsletters
- Parent meetings



We strongly recommend you download the TalkingPoints for Parents app available for free for iPhones and Android devices. Please update your phone numbers with a staff member anytime it changes.

# EDUCATION SERVICES

## Play-Based Early Education

In Head Start and Early Head Start, our goal is to help your child grow and develop. We know that you are your child's first and most important teacher. We believe that young children learn best when they play. Children learn by exploring, trying new things and asking questions. When children play, they use their imaginations, bodies, power of choice, and problem-solving skills. This helps them to become good learners.

In Head Start we focus on areas of child development:

1. Social and emotional
2. Different ways to learn
3. Language and Literacy
4. Physical development
5. Logic and reasoning
6. English  
(if your family's main language is not English)

Champlain Valley Head Start provides activities to help kids develop in all of these areas. You will be invited to participate in ReadyRosie, a fun way to:

- Engage with your child's learning at home
- Learn new ideas about parenting



## Screening & Assessment

Soon after your child starts in our program, your Champlain Valley Head Start staff person will do a screening with you and your child. The screening, called the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, is completed by you. The information you give will:

- show the things that your child does well
- show any areas of concern
- help our staff find areas to focus on with you and your child.

We also gather information about your child's learning using a program called TS GOLD. We want to hear from you about how your child is learning because you know the most about your child. All of this information is used to make Home Visit and Classroom Plans, and to be sure our activities help your child to grow and learn best.

## Ready for School?

Children are more likely to do well in school if they have had the opportunity to practice many important skills. You and your Head Start staff person will work together to find ways for your child to learn and try new things. Getting ready for school starts early.

The skills that most affect how well a child learns in school are:

- **Self-Control:** The ability to make decisions about how and when to express feelings and control our actions; developing inner control
- **Confidence:** Believing in oneself and feeling successful
- **Curiosity:** A sense that finding out about things is good and fun.
- **Intentionality:** Setting a goal and working on it
- **Relatedness:** A sense of belonging; connecting to others
- **Capacity to Communicate:** Having the ability and desire to share ideas and feelings with others either with words, gestures, or movements
- **Cooperativeness:** The ability to balance one's own needs with someone else's needs.

Our goal at Head Start is to support you as your child's best teacher.

Over the year, we will help you to:

- Help your child feel good about their play
- Observe your child to see if there are skills that need more focus
- Come up with parenting methods to improve behavior
- Use things around your home to help your child learn
- Help your child do well when they go to kindergarten

We will send you ideas and information to support your child's learning at home through Ready Rosie.



# **SPECIAL EDUCATION SUPPORT & INCLUSION SERVICES**

Champlain Valley Head Start works with community professionals to provide services and support the needs of all children. All Head Start Preschool and Early Head Start services, including all center activities, group events and field trips, are open to all enrolled children.

If you or a Head Start staff person identifies concerns with your child's learning or development, we will talk with you about a referral for a more in-depth evaluation. Champlain Valley Head Start staff will offer support during the whole process. If the evaluation shows that your child can receive special services through ECSE or CIS (see below), we will help you learn about these services and take part in making a plan to meet your child's needs. We will work together with you and the other service providers to follow this plan.

## **Early Intervention Services for Children from Birth to Age 3**

CIS (Children's Integrated Services) Early Intervention programs provide services to children from birth to age three and their families. This program serves children who have developmental delays or a health condition that may lead to a developmental delay. Program services are provided at your home or at your child's school.

Some examples of services include:

- assistive devices
- family support and training
- home visits
- nutrition services
- physical therapy
- occupational therapy
- speech and language therapy

If your child still needs services when they turn 3, they will transition to the Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) program. Early Head Start staff will work with you, starting up to six months prior to your child's third birthday, to move from CIS to ECSE.

## **Early Childhood Special Education from Ages 3 to 5**

Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE) is special education and services for children ages three to 5 years old. Your local school district provides these at no cost to families. Special education is instruction that meets your child's unique needs. Related services are services a child needs to benefit from special education, such as physical therapy or speech therapy.

# **HEALTH SERVICES**

Head Start believes that the health and well-being of every child and family is important. We also believe that parents play an important part in keeping their child up to date with health and dental exams. We have many health consultants who can support you with your child's health. These include dental hygienists (Tooth Tutors), a nurse and a dietitian.



## Health Insurance

If your family does not have health insurance, Head Start will help you to apply for public health coverage programs like Dr. Dynasaur.

## Physical Exams and Treatment

Vermont Child Care Licensing requires children to be up to date with health exams and treatment, within 45 days of enrollment. Physical exams, also called well-child exams, are visits your child has with their health provider when they are not sick. Sometimes they will get shots at these visits, but not always. We follow the State of Vermont's rules about what ages children need a physical exam:

Age of Child for Physical Exam (Well-Child):

- 1 month
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 9 months
- 12 months
- 15 months
- 18 months
- 24 months
- 30 months
- 36 months
- 4 years
- 5 years

If your child has not had the required well child visit, we will help you make and attend a visit so your child will be up to date. Head Start will contact your child's health provider to get the results of his/her last physical exam.

High levels of lead or low levels of iron in your child's body can make it hard for them to learn. We will also help to find out if your child has ever been tested for lead and anemia (low iron) before. Head Start staff will provide information on getting your child tested if needed.

If your child's health provider says that your child needs treatment (extra care or medicine for asthma, an allergy, or something else), we can provide support to make sure that treatment is received. If your child has a health condition, we will work with you and your child's health provider to be sure we have a plan in place in the classroom. These plans are very important for children who have life-threatening health conditions like asthma, allergies and seizures.

## Health Screenings

Head Start staff will do the following on all children in our program each year:

- a vision screening
- a hearing screening
- a nutrition screening
- a height and weight

We will let you know the results of these screenings. If you or your Head Start staff member have any concerns, we will connect you to information and resources.

## Dental Exams and Treatment

If your child does not have a dentist, a Head Start staff person, or one of our Tooth Tutors can help you find one. Tooth Tutors may also do an oral health screening and apply fluoride varnish, with parent permission.

The Tooth Tutors will call your child's dentist to get the results of his/her last dental exam before your child begins our program. If your child has a dental exam during the school year, we also get these results so we know what happened during the exam.



## Nutrition & Nutrition Education

Head Start supports healthy nutrition by:

- talking with you about what your child eats (a nutrition assessment)
- providing ideas for healthy snacks and meals at home, and eating on a budget
- connecting you with supplemental food resources (WIC, 3Squares, PantrySoft, local food resources)
- offering nutrition activities for home and in the classroom
- providing healthy meals and snacks for children in group settings

## Wellness and Emotional Health

Mental Health is an important part of good overall health. Head Start works with professionals in our community to support the mental health of our families. Our mental health consultants visit classrooms and other group events to be sure they are good environments for all children. Mental health consultants are available to set up a meeting with you to connect you with ongoing support. These professionals are available to go on home visits with parents.

Parents may wish to meet with a mental health consultant for help with:

- Responding to the challenging behaviors of their children
- Recognizing the signs of depression in children or adults
- Conflict between siblings
- Substance use concerns
- Physically or emotionally abusive relationships
- Incarceration of a family member
- Major changes to a family structure such as death or divorce
- Other parenting or family relationship issues

# FAMILY SERVICES

## Social Services Support and Referrals

Head Start is for the Whole Family! We believe that all children and families have strengths that can help them be successful. We also know it can be hard to raise a family with young children. Champlain Valley Head Start wants to help families grow and find the support and resources they need. Those resources will look different for each family because of their needs and cultural backgrounds. We find the best way to help families is through consistent, two-way, open and honest communication. Head Start works to build supportive, caring, and respectful partnerships with parents that focus on their abilities. Together we help families build resilience so every child has the best chance for success in school and life.

## Family Partnership Staff

Family partnership staff can work with you to meet the needs of your family by finding resources, setting goals, and more.

Family partnership staff can help you find resources for:

- housing issues
- fuel assistance
- transportation
- community and connection
- health services
- parenting support
- alcohol or substance use
- domestic violence services; or
- other social service issue

## Who is your family partnership staff person?

PROGRAM	HEAD START STAFF PERSON
Classroom	Family Support Specialist
Family Connections Program	
Home Visiting	Home Visitor

If you need help with something right away, please call 2-1-1. This statewide hotline can provide information and referrals to connect you with resources in your community.

## Family Goal Setting and Family Partnership Agreements

When you think about what you would like for your child and family in one year, two years, or even five years, you are thinking about family goals. Champlain Valley Head Start can help your family set goals and work towards making them happen. We call these *Family Partnership Agreements* and we use them to help families in figuring out their strengths and challenges, set goals for the future, and make plans to meet those goals. These goals are identified and developed by you for your family. They could include things like:

- reading with your child every day
- finding better housing
- learning computer skills
- making a household spending plan
- cooking more meals at home

Your Head Start family partnership staff is available to support you in making plans to meet your goals. She/He will check in with you during the year as you make progress toward achieving your goals.

## **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT: THE FOUNDATION OF HEAD START**

We need you! Every parent and family has different experiences, talents, and ideas to offer. We welcome your time and input in whatever way works best for your family. We also offer many opportunities for family engagement and education. There are many ways for families to learn and help at Head Start.

### **Volunteering in Head Start**

Why volunteer for Head Start?

- It helps our program run effectively.
- It is a good way to learn new skills and gain knowledge.
- It shows your child that you care about them and their education.
- It is a great way to be part of a supportive community.

### **How to volunteer:**

- Work on activities at home based on the goals you set for your child. Your time doing these activities helps make sure Head Start funding continues!
- Participate in parent leadership: Parent Committees or Policy Council.
- Share ideas with your Head Start staff person about activities you would like to see Head Start offer so families can connect with each other and their community.
- Please talk to your Head Start staff person or call the Family and Community Engagement Manager at 1-800-854-9648 x 202 to talk about what you would like to do.



## **Parent Committee Meetings and Activities**

All families are invited to participate in different meetings and activities throughout the year. Families come together to:

- learn about the Head Start program
- talk about their children
- do educational activities
- discuss community issues
- and create a shared community

Each Parent Committee elects 2 Parent Leaders to the Head Start Policy Council each year. The Policy Council representatives make sure each Parent Committee has a “voice” for important decisions. The Parent Leaders also report back to their Parent Committee on Policy Council issues and decisions.

## **Policy Council**

The Policy Council is like a school board or “PTO” for the Head Start program. Policy Council members include parents whose children are currently enrolled in the program and people from the community who are elected by Policy Council parents.

Policy Council works with the Head Start management team and CVOEO Board of Directors to develop and approve important program policies and procedures including:

- guidelines to use in selecting children and families for Head Start
- the program’s goals and objectives
- all funding applications and grant proposals to Office of Head Start
- the annual Head Start self-assessment
- the procedures for resolving community complaints
- the Head Start personnel policies and procedures

Policy Council meetings are held virtually, with an occasional in-person option. The meetings usually take place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month.

## **Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee**

The Health and Mental Health Advisory Committee meets at least two times a year to review and discuss program needs in the areas of health, nutrition, mental health and inclusion services. This committee provides support, guidance and advice to program staff around important health issues. Parents, Head Start staff, health care providers, community agencies and other non-profit organizations make up the committee. Contact your Head Start staff person if you are interested in being a part of this committee.

## **In-kind Donations**

You are your child’s best teacher. When you help your child learn at home, it counts as a donation to Champlain Valley Head Start. This donation is called “in-kind”. Our program is required to have over one million dollars in “in-kind” donations each year to keep our funding from the Federal government. You can generate in-kind at home every day by

reading and telling stories with your child, by completing activities provided to you by home visitors or teachers, or by using applications like Ready Rosie. These activities help your child get ready for kindergarten! They also help keep our program running because we are required to have in-kind donations.

### **Location of Family Activities and Events**

Head Start parent events take place at:

- Head Start classrooms
- Approved Group Socialization sites
- Public places such as a library, museum, or park



# CLASSROOM OPTION

## WELCOME TO THE CLASSROOM OPTION

This section contains important information specifically for children enrolled in our classroom options. Please talk with your teacher or family support specialist if you have any questions or concerns. If your child is enrolled at a collaborative program such as Burlington Children's Space, King Street Center, or Otter Creek Children's Center, please refer to their family handbooks for additional information.



## Permission to Pick Up / Permission to Transport / Emergency Contacts

Staff will only let children leave with people you list on Emergency Contact form. People picking up children will need to show ID if the staff do not know who they are. Parents must fill out new forms any time they want someone new to pick up their child. Teachers will ask you about this regularly.

You must have two adults (other than the legal parents/guardians) listed as Emergency Contacts for your child on this form. The State of Vermont requires we have this information for every child in our program. Emergency Contacts must be able to pick up your child if there is an emergency. Please let these Emergency Contacts know you have listed them on this form.

Staff will release children to parents or guardians unless there is a court order that says a parent can't pick up a child. Please be sure to share any court orders right away.

Children need to arrive and get picked up on time. If a child is not picked up on time, staff will try to contact the child's parent or guardian. If 20 minutes have gone by and the parent/guardian can't be reached, staff will call the emergency contacts. If staff cannot reach anyone, she/he will call the police or DCF. The police or DCF will then be responsible for the child.

## Medication Policy

Sometimes a child needs to take medicine during school hours. This is true for both prescription and non-prescription (also called over the counter) medicines. Your Head Start staff person can give your child medicine if you do the following:

- Fill out a Medication Permission Form. We also need a note, signature, or health plan (like an asthma action plan) from your child's doctor.
- You (or another adult) must give the medicine to your child's teacher. Do not send it

in with your child.

- All medicine must be in the original package. If it is a prescription, it must have the prescription label with it.

For “rescue” medicine (such as an inhaler for an asthma attack or Epi-Pen for a bee sting or food allergy), medicine must be in the classroom whenever your child is there. Ask your doctor for a second prescription of the medicine. You can keep one prescription in your child’s classroom and one at home so you don’t have to bring the medicine back and forth each day. If your child has a food allergy, we will post information about their food allergy, along with their picture, wherever food is served to keep them safe.

### **Classroom Schedule**

Teachers will provide you with a copy of the daily classroom schedule and the yearly calendar. Please ask for an additional copy if needed.

### **Classroom Closings**

- Check the classroom calendar for days your child will not have class or when the classroom is planned to close early.
- Each classroom usually follows the local public school’s schedule for bad weather closings. For example: if Burlington Schools have a snow day, our classrooms at Riverside and Franklin Square are closed, too. Closings are usually announced on the radio before 7:00am.
- Your teacher and/or family support specialist will contact you through TalkingPoints messages about any unexpected closures.

### **Education Home Visits**

Teachers will visit you and your child two times each year in your home. The purpose of the home visit is to help you set your home up as a place for your child to learn. You will be your child’s teacher long after your child leaves our program. We want to help you think about how to make the most of this important role.

### **Family Conferences**

Your child’s teacher will meet with you at least two times each year to discuss your child’s learning and progress. This is a great time for you to ask questions, share feedback, and learn ways you can help your child continue learning at home.

### **Family Support Visits**

Your Family Support Specialist will meet with you at least two times each year to talk about:

- identifying needs, interests, goals, services and resources to support your family’s well-being, including family safety, health and economic stability.
- your child’s health and nutrition, including health screening results.



## Things to Bring to Classrooms:

 <p>shirt</p> <p>pants</p> <p>underwear</p> <p>socks</p>	<p>Bring an extra set of clothes for your child to keep at school in case they get wet or dirty.</p> <p>Include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pants</li><li>• a shirt</li><li>• underpants</li><li>• socks.</li></ul> <p>Please label each piece of clothing with your child's name.</p>
	<p>Children play outside each day.</p> <p>In the winter, please remember:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• mittens</li><li>• boots</li><li>• hat</li><li>• warm coat</li><li>• snow pants</li></ul>
	<p>From May to September, please bring a sunhat for your child if you have one. We have sunhats at school if your child does not have one.</p>
	<p>We support breast feeding. Please bring expressed breast milk for your child if they are using it.</p>

## Things NOT to Bring to Classrooms:

	<p>Head Start supplies diapers and wipes so you do not need to bring them. Your Head Start staff person will work with you to get the right size. We do not use pull-ups and specific brands of diapers or wipes unless they are medically needed.</p>
	<p>Head Start provides formula (if your child is not using breast milk) and bottles for children while they are in our care. You do not need to bring bottles or formula to school. We do not use a specific brand of formula unless it is medically necessary.</p>
	<p>Please leave sandals, clogs, or slippery dress shoes at home. Sneakers are much safer at school.</p>
	<p>Children are not allowed to bring these to school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• toys</li><li>• money</li><li>• food</li><li>• drinks</li><li>• candy</li></ul>

## Sickness and Injury while at School

If your child becomes sick or injured while at school, we will ask you to pick him/her up as soon as possible. If we cannot reach you, we will call your emergency contact person(s) (ID will be requested). If your child needs emergency care, we will take him/her to the hospital while trying to find you.

## Additional Information about State of Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations

All Champlain Valley Head Start classrooms follow the State of Vermont Child Care Licensing Regulations. A copy of these regulations is available in the classroom or by visiting this link: <https://outside.vermont.gov/dept/DCF/Shared%20Documents/CDD/Licensing/CC-CenterBased-Regs.pdf>

Child Care Consumer Line

Call **1-800-649-2642** toll free in Vermont to:

- Get information about child care providers (e.g., when they became licensed, if they are accredited or have a STARS rating, and if they've had any licensing violations in the past year);
- Voice a concern about a provider (e.g., unregulated, lack of supervision, too many children, unqualified or not enough staff, inappropriate guidance and discipline, unsafe environment)
- Make a formal complaint about a child care provider.

## **Lead Testing of Water**

All Champlain Valley Head Start classrooms follow the State of Vermont's Child Care Licensing Regulations. Lead is a harmful substance that can make people very sick, especially children. Vermont law requires that we test all water taps used for drinking, cooking and tooth brushing for lead. You can find the results of water testing here: [leadresults.vermont.gov/](http://leadresults.vermont.gov/)

## **Meal Service**

All food and infant formula in classrooms is provided at no cost to families. Families may also provide breast milk for their child. We follow age-appropriate guidelines for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Head Start Cooks plan meals to be healthy, and low in salt, fat and sugar. The menus are made so that children can try some foods that they may not have tried before.

Meals are usually served family style, with children serving themselves from serving dishes.

## **U.S.D.A. Child and Adult Care Food Program**

Champlain Valley Head Start participates in the U.S.D.A. Child and Adult Care Food Program. All enrolled children are eligible for free meals and snacks. The program does not keep any eligible children from participating and follows the policy listed at the end of this handbook.

## **Safety Tips When at Preschool or Child Care**

### **Emergency Contacts**

Parents and guardians: Please make sure to inform the CVHS site staff as soon as possible if your emergency contact person/people have changed!

It is very important that all Champlain Valley Head Start children have a completed Emergency Contact Form on file with their classroom. A staff member will check with you every month to make sure your child's classroom always has updated information including names and phone numbers of people to call in an emergency.

The Emergency Contact Form must be signed by the parent or guardian and should include:

- child's name and date of birth
- medical home and dental home
- health conditions, allergies and any medications the child may be taking
- parent or guardian's names and contact numbers.

The CVHS parent or guardian is defined as a custodial parent or guardian who has the legal right to give permission for a child to participate in CVHS activities and who actively participates in the child's CVHS experience. When a child's parents or guardians live apart, CVHS staff will follow a court order or the written instructions given by the parent with legal rights and responsibilities regarding releasing a child from a CVHS activity site.

Emergency contacts, and other people besides the parent or guardian who are authorized to pick up and/or transport a child from a CVHS activity site. Emergency contacts are non-parent/guardians (i.e., family and friends) who can pick up and/or transport a child from CVHS activities, and who agree to be contacted when a parent or guardian cannot be reached in the event of an emergency.

### **At Drop-Off/Pick-Up or When On-Site with Your Child**

Parents and guardians: You are responsible for your child/ren any time you are on site (in the classroom, on the playground or in the parking lot) with them!

Some of the most challenging times to supervise children are when a child enters or leaves the classroom for any reason throughout the day. You can help make sure all children are safe by:

- Following the procedures for drop-off and pick-up.
- Contacting the classroom as soon as possible if your child will be late or absent.
- Informing the staff if someone other than you or another parent/guardian will be picking your child up from school.

# HOME VISITING OPTION

## WELCOME TO HOME VISITING

Children are born with the instinct to play and learn. Their learning begins at birth and parents/caregivers are their first and best teachers. Home Visiting is a parenting program where family educators work with parents/caregivers and their child(ren). Home Visitors are guides to enjoying your family and learning parenting as you go. Parenting doesn't come with instructions; it can be daunting and overwhelming. However, it can also be a lot of fun!

Parenting is a discovery of yourself and your child. It is an adventure you get to have each day. We look forward to being a part of that adventure. You will receive moral support and resources. Our visits are a combination of playing together along with introducing concepts from our Growing Great Kids parenting curriculum that includes developmental milestones such as social emotional, cognitive, physical, language, literacy, mathematics, social studies, science and technology and art. Home Visiting also includes regular group socials where you and your child can enjoy meeting and learning with other families.

## Home Visits and Group Socializations

Home visits are offered for 1.5 hours each week. 2 Additional group socializations are offered each month. EHS has 46 visits and 22 group socializations yearly, while HS has 32 visits and 16 group socializations.

Weekly visits are held in the home with the child and parent/guardian. Group socializations take place in a classroom or other public meeting space that meets safety standards.

## Home Visiting Services

- Support you in your relationship with your child to build a strong foundation for learning and growing
- Schedule convenient individualized weekly visits with your family
- Assess your child's developmental needs
- Offer educational activities for you to do with your child
- Address your needs, interests or questions and connect you with resources in your community
- Connect you with other families at group socializations



## **Home Visitor Responsibilities**

- Schedule a visit at a convenient time and place. The visits range from 1 ½ - 2 hrs
- Be respectful of each family's beliefs
- Provide information and resources.
- Be prepared for each visit.
- Support you in your interactions with your child.
- Support you on your parenting adventure.

## **Parent Responsibilities**

- Share information about what my child has been doing.
- Check in and follow up on previous topics.
- Be present and ready to participate. Parents are expected to be present with their child for the entire visit.
- Have TV, cell phones, and devices turned off/put away.
- Gather agreed upon materials for the activity of the day.
- Be ready to participate with my child.
- Be my child's best teacher.
- Be responsible for my child at group socializations.
- Help plan group socializations.

## **Understanding What Your Child is Learning**

Your child's home visitor will regularly discuss your child's learning and progress. Every week you and your home visitor will discuss ways you can continue to support your child's learning outside the home visit. Your home visitor will collect information from you about what you notice your child doing at home. You are an important part of planning for your child's learning!

# FAMILY CONNECTIONS PROGRAM

## Welcome To the Family Connections Program

Children are born with the instinct to play and learn. Their learning begins at birth and parents/caregivers are their first and best teachers. Family Connections is a parenting program where family educators work with parents/caregivers and their enrolled child(ren). Family Education Specialists are guides to enjoying your family and learning parenting as you go.

Parenting doesn't come with instructions; it can be daunting and overwhelming. However, it can also be a lot of fun! Parenting is a discovery of yourself and your child. It is an adventure you get to have each day. We look forward to being a part of that adventure. You will receive moral support and resources.

Our group sessions, offered 4 times each week, are a combination of playing together, along with introducing concepts from our Growing Great Kids parenting curriculum that includes developmental milestones such as:

- social/emotional
- cognitive
- physical
- language
- literacy
- mathematics
- social studies
- science and technology
- art

## Family Education Home Visits

In addition to time in the group setting, your family will receive 1 family education home visit each month. These visits are a shared experience between the parent(s), child and Family Education Specialist, who supports the family member as the child's lifelong teacher.

## Family Support Visits

Your Family Support Specialist will meet with you regularly to talk about:

- identifying needs, interests, goals, services and resources to support your family's well-being, including family safety, health and economic stability.
- your child's health and nutrition, including health screening results.

## Family Connections Services

- Support you in your relationship with your child to build a strong foundation for learning and growing
- Offer parent and child group sessions four times each week
- Provide a healthy snack at each group session
- Schedule convenient individualized monthly visits with your family
- Assess your child's developmental needs
- Offer educational activities for you to do with your child
- Address your needs, interests or questions and connect you with resources



## Family Education Specialist Responsibilities

- Be respectful of each family's beliefs.
- Be prepared for each session or visit.
- Provide information and resources.
- Support you in your interactions with your child.
- Support you on your parenting Adventure.
- Schedule monthly family visits at a convenient time and place. The visits range from 1-1/12 hrs

## Parent Responsibilities

- Be present with your child for the entire time and be ready to participate.
- Be respectful of each family's beliefs in group sessions.
- Be responsible for your child's safety, appropriate language, and behavior:
  - in group sessions
  - in parking lots
  - on field trips
  - at monthly family visits
- Help keep the group session space tidy by supporting your child during clean-up.
- Wash your hands and help your child wash their hands when:
  - you arrive in the classroom
  - after toileting
  - before eating
- Have electronic devices and cell phones turned off/put away (plus televisions if a family visit occurs in your home).
- Be your child's best teacher
- Share information about what your child has been doing.
- Check in and follow up on previous topics.

## Understanding What Your Child is Learning

Your child's Family Education Specialist will regularly discuss your child's learning and progress. They will also share ways you can continue to support your child's learning at home. The Family Education Specialist will collect information from you about what you notice your child doing at home.



# EXPECTING FAMILIES PROGRAM

## Welcome To the Expecting Families Program

A healthy pregnancy has a lasting influence on a child's health and development. Our Expecting Families Program offers services in both the home visiting option and the Family Connections Program. A trained pregnancy visitor offers support and information about prenatal, birth, and post-partum issues. We focus on your individual needs to help you and your baby get a healthy start. Our program has a flexible schedule. You get what you need when it works best for you.

## Perinatal Visits

Your pregnancy visitor will meet with you according to the schedule below:

- First trimester: At least 2 times each month
- Second trimester: At least 3 times each month
- Last month of pregnancy: Weekly

Visits may take place at home, at a Head Start program location, or virtually.

The Nurse Consultant will be engaged with the pregnant family member prior to delivery and will schedule a visit with the newborn and parent within 2 weeks of the infant's birth.

Your Home Visitor will meet with you to:

- identify needs, interests, goals, services and resources to support your family's well-being, including family safety, health and economic stability.
- Discuss your health and nutrition status.
- Provide any information you may want about prenatal and postpartum topics.
- Offer parenting education opportunities such as Positive Solutions for Families, Growing Great Kids, Ready Rosie, or Your Journey Together.

## Expecting Families Services

- Convenient individualized visits
- Resources to address your needs, interests or questions, including:
  - medical, dental, housing, and education resources
  - preschool, early education and care, and playgroup information.
- Discussions about delivery options and time to get your questions answered.
- Information about your new baby:
  - growth and development
  - how to breastfeed
  - nutrition for you and baby
  - infant care
  - safe sleep practices



- activities to do with your baby
- postpartum care

When you join our program, your baby is enrolled in the Early Head Start Home Visiting Program. This FREE program provides ongoing support for children and their families.

### **Pregnancy Visitor Responsibilities**

- Be respectful of each family's beliefs.
- Be prepared for each visit.
- Provide information and resources.
- Support you in your pregnancy and post-partum.
- Support you on your parenting adventure.
- Schedule regular visits at a convenient time and place.
- Schedule prenatal and post-delivery meetings with our nurse to be sure all of your questions are answered regarding pregnancy, post-pregnancy and your new baby.

### **Family Responsibilities**

- Be present. Have electronic devices and cell phones turned off/put away (plus televisions if a family visit occurs in your home).
- Share your questions and hopes during your pregnancy and after your baby is born.

# Appendix A: ANNUAL NOTICE REGARDING CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION & PARENTAL RIGHTS

Updated July 22, 2019

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR CHILD MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED, AND HOW YOU CAN ACCESS THIS INFORMATION.

PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

By law, Champlain Valley Head Start (CVHS) must protect the privacy of your child's Personally Identifiable Information. Information that could be used to identify your child (known as "Personally Identifiable Information" or "PII") includes your child's name, name of a child's family member, street address of the child, social security number, or other information that is linked or linkable to the child. CVHS retains PII because your child receives Head Start/Early Head Start services from us and it is a part of each child's record with us. We take our obligation to protect the privacy of your child's PII data very seriously. This notice explains your rights and our legal duties and privacy practices.

We are required to give you a copy of your rights in writing every year, including definitions (which cover descriptions of the types of PII that may be disclosed), to whom we can disclose, and list when we do not need to receive your Consent to disclose PII from your child's record.

CVHS will abide by the terms of this notice. Should our data and child record practices materially change, CVHS reserves the right to change the terms of this notice, and will follow the terms currently in effect. Any new provisions we add will affect all PII we maintain from the time the new provisions go into effect, as well as any PII that we may receive in the future. If we revise our practices substantially, we will provide a revised notice mailed to the current address that you have supplied.

Definitions:

**Child Records** means records that: (1) are directly related to the child; (2) are maintained by the program, or by a Party acting for the program; and (3) include information recorded in any way, such as print, electronic, or digital means, including media, video, image, or audio format.

**Confidential** means to be kept private with certain specific protections.

**Consent** means written approval or authorization that is signed and dated. It may include a record and signature in electronic form that: (1) identifies and authenticates a particular person as the source of the electronic Consent; and, (2) indicates the same person's approval of the information. Consent can be revoked going forward.

**Disclosure** means to permit access to or the release, transfer, or other communication of Personally Identifiable Information contained in Child Records by any means, including oral,

written, or electronic means, to any Party except the Party identified as the Party that provided or created the record.

**Party** means an entity or individual.

**Parent** means a Head Start child's mother or father, other family member who is a primary caregiver, foster parent or authorized caregiver, guardian or the person with whom the child has been placed for purposes of adoption pending a final adoption decree.

**Personally Identifiable Information (PII)** means any information that could identify a specific individual, including but not limited to a child's name, name of a child's family member, street address of the child, social security number, or other information that is linked or linkable to the child.

#### Required Uses and Disclosures of PII

We must use and disclose information contained in Child Records that is PII in a number of ways to carry out our responsibilities. We keep PII in our Child Records. The following list describes the types of uses and Disclosures of PII that federal law requires CVHS to make and allows us to do so **without your Consent**:

- Within this organization for Head Start purposes;
- **To other organizations for Head Start purposes** (including but not limited to Contractors or Delegates/Sub-Recipients that help us provide services to your child);
- In connection with an audit or evaluation of education or child development programs or for enforcement or compliance with federal legal requirements (such as to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that funds our work);
- For studies to improve child or family outcomes or quality of services;
- **During Disasters or Health/Safety Emergencies to appropriate Parties** (including but not limited to local health departments, police, fire, EMS, etc.);
- **Pursuant to Court Orders or Subpoenas** (so long as we try to notify you in advance unless (1) a court has ordered that neither the subpoena, its contents, nor the information provided in response be disclosed; (2) the Disclosure is in compliance with an ex parte court order obtained by the United States Attorney General or his/her delegate concerning investigations or prosecutions of an offense listed in 18 U.S.C. 2332b(g)(5)(B) or an act of domestic or international terrorism as defined in 18 U.S.C. 2331; (3) a Parent is a Party to a court proceeding directly involving child abuse and neglect or dependency matters, and the order is issued in the context of that proceeding; or (4) if there is legal action between CVHS and a Parent);
- **For Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Monitoring** if the results will be reported in an aggregate form that does not identify any individual;
- **To Foster Care Caseworkers** who have the right to access a case plan for a child who is in foster care placement; and,
- To appropriate Parties in cases of suspected or known child maltreatment (such as Child Protective Services).
- CVHS may also disclose PII related to a child's enrollment in or transfer to another program, school, or school district, including for the purpose of transitioning to

Kindergarten. If a parent does not want this information to be shared, CVHS must be notified in writing.

CVHS also uses and shares your child's PII when requested by you or when otherwise required by law.

#### Other Permitted Uses and Disclosures

**Except as described above, CVHS will not use or disclose your PII without your written Consent.** You may give us written Consent to use or disclose your PII to anyone for any purpose that you choose. You may revoke your authorized Consent so long as you do so in writing; however, CVHS will not be able to get back any PII we have already used or shared based on your prior permission.

#### Parental Rights

You have the right to:

- **Ask to inspect** your Child's Record on-site containing PII that CVHS maintains. CVHS will create an opportunity for you to inspect your Child's Record on-site within 5 business days. You *do not* have the right to remove the original record from on-site nor to take any parts of the original record with you.
- **Ask for a copy** of Child Records disclosed to third Parties with Parental Consent, free of charge.
- **Ask CVHS to amend** your Child's Record if you believe that it is inaccurate, misleading, or violates your child's privacy. You must ask for this by notifying in writing, along with a reason for your request. CVHS will review your request and decide on it within 10 business days. If CVHS denies your request to amend your PII, we will issue you a written statement explaining why and explain your right to a hearing.
- **Ask for a hearing** if your request to amend the Child Record is denied. If the issue is not decided in your favor at the hearing, you have the right to place a statement in the Child Record that either comments on the contested information or that states why the Parent disagrees with the program's decision, or both.
- **Ask to inspect written agreements involving Disclosure of PII.** If a Parent requests, you can come on-site and review a redacted written agreement with a third Party that involves Disclosure of their child's PII. This right does not allow you to take any photos of it or make, or have copies made of the agreement.

#### Complaints or Questions

If you believe that your child's privacy rights may have been violated or if you have questions, please let us know as soon as possible. Complaints should be directed to:

CVHS Director, Sandra Graves  
255 South Champlain Street, Suite 10, Burlington, VT 05401  
sgraves@cvoeo.org

Filing a complaint or exercising your rights will not affect the care or services your child receives from Champlain Valley Head Start

## Appendix B: U.S.D.A. Child and Adult Care Food Program

Champlain Valley Head Start participates in the U.S.D.A. Child and Adult Care Food Program. All enrolled children are eligible for free meals and snacks. The program does not keep any eligible children from participating and follows this policy:

### **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, 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: [usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf](https://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 complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA:

by mail:

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410

or by fax:

(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442

or by email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)