



Early Head Start • Head Start • Early Learning and Care Division

PARENT HANDBOOK



Neighborhood House Association
Education, Instruction and Operations
5660 Copley Drive
San Diego, CA 92111
858-715-2642
neighborhoodhouse.org





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Neighborhood House Association

"A Neighbor You Can Count on...Since 1914"

Mission

To enrich lives through a continuum of education and wellness services.

Vision

Healthy and educated communities – where dreams become reality.

Head Start

Head Start is a federally funded child development and social services program for children 3 to 5 old and their families. Children receive comprehensive services at our Head Start centers or in their homes. We partner with our local school districts and other community agencies to provide special intervention and support services for those in need. Family goal setting, community resources, and parent trainings are provided to help families improve financial and educational self-sufficiency, as well as their overall well-being.

Early Head Start

Early Head Start promotes healthy outcomes for pregnant women and families with infants and toddlers (zero to three years of age) by providing comprehensive child development and family support services. Families partner with either a teacher or a home visitor, depending on the program type, who also coordinates special services to the family when needed. Childcare services are also available at selected Early Head Start centers.

Early Learning & Care Division

ELCD is an early childhood care and education program for infants, toddlers, preschoolers funded by the CA Department of Education.

Children eligible for ELCD services (preschool-aged children 3-4 years old and toddlers 18 months - 3 years of age) are enrolled in classrooms, and NHA "braids" ELCD and Head Start / Early Head Start funds to allow for a full-day (more than 6 hours daily) of comprehensive child development and family services.



Welcome from the President/CEO of Neighborhood House Association, and the Executive Vice President/General Manager, Education, Instruction and Operations

Enrolled in a Head Start program when he was a young child in Southeast San Diego, President and CEO of Neighborhood House Association, Rudolph A. Johnson, III, has a personal commitment to the children and families in Head Start.

I saw an opportunity to really give back to the community that had given me so much as a child. To come full circle as the CEO of an organization that helped jumpstart my life as a toddler is something very near and dear to me.

NHA is proud of the many vital programs and services we provide to San Diego County. We've accomplished many things and I look forward to continuing to make NHA strong for the children, families, individuals and seniors who depend on us. Together we can make a difference. Welcome to Head Start/Early Education and Support Division and the Neighborhood House Association, an agency committed to excellence.



Mr. Rudolph A. Johnson, III
NHA President & CEO

Welcome to Head Start/Early Head Start/California Department of Education-Early Learning & Care Division

Thank you and congratulations on joining or returning to the NHA Family! It means a great deal to the team here at NHA, that you are a part of our continuum of care model through your family's participation in our Early Learning programs. Whether it's Services to Pregnant Women, Early Head Start, Head Start or our State Funded Programs (CDE), you have made the best decision to demonstrate your love for your child by investing in their education. As a former Head Start child, I know the results of providing children of low-to-moderate-income families with a comprehensive program to meet their emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs.



Mr. Damon Carson, J.D.
Executive Vice President/General
Manager, Education, Instruction
and Operations

We are counting on you to embrace our philosophy that you are the most important teacher that your child will ever have. We have your children for a few years, you have the opportunity to teach them lessons that will last a lifetime. That's why it's important for you to take advantage of the numerous family participation opportunities we offer. Whether it's volunteering in a classroom, attending a site meeting or even joining our governing body, you have a chance to do a little or a lot within the program. We hope you do a lot!

This Handbook was developed as a tool to help you navigate and enhance your early childhood experience. Our ultimate goal is to do what's reasonably possible to provide many great experiences for our children and families. Please review the Table of Contents to get an understanding of what's included in the Handbook. We as staff are attempting to provide you with useful information that will support our journey together in preparing your child for success in school and life. Thank you!



Early Head Start/Head Start **Children, Youth and Family Services Division**



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San Diego, CA 92111-7902
Phone: (858) 715-2642
Fax: (858) 715-2672
www.neighborhoodhouse.org*

***Please see our NHA website for a detailed list of our Early Head Start/Head Start Centers, conveniently located throughout San Diego county.**

Area 1

Director: Lisa Grygera

2820 Camino Del Rio S. Suite 212
San Diego, CA 92108
Phone: (858) 244-0770
Fax: (619) 209-3629

All Kids Academy Head Start (AKA)

Executive Director: Yolanda Perez

620 West Madison Ave.
El Cajon, CA 92020
Phone: (619) 444-0503
Fax: (619) 444-5668

Area 2

Director: Sofia Torres

841 South 41st Street
San Diego, CA 92113
Phone: (619) 527-3300
Fax: (619) 266-1587

Episcopal Community Service (ECS)

Head Start Director: Elizabeth Boyer

401 Mile of Cars Way Suite 350
San Diego, CA 92105
Phone: (619) 228-2800
Fax: (619) 228-2851

Area 3

Director: Barbara Burt

2820 Camino Del Rio S. Suite 212
San Diego, CA 92108
Phone: (858) 244-0770
Fax: (619) 209-3629

National School District

Early Education Programs Director:

Charmaine Lawson

2401 East 24th Street
National City, CA 91950
Phone: (619) 336-8670
Fax: (619) 336-8673

San Diego Unified School District- Head Start Collaborations (Area 4)

Director: Angelica Valadez

841 South 41st Street
San Diego, CA 92113
Phone: (619) 263-7761
Fax: (858) 527-0270

Chicano Federation

Chief Executive Officer:

Nancy Maldonado

3180 University Avenue, Suite 317
San Diego, CA 92104
Phone: (619) 285-5600
Fax: (619) 285-5614



Neighborhood House Association

"A Neighbor You Can Count on...Since 1914"

HOME-BASED SERVICES

Home-Based Director: Zoraida Abear

286 Euclid Ave Suite 308
San Diego, CA 92114
Phone: (619) 684-9060
Fax: (619) 527-3301

Services to Pregnant Women Supervisor: Danyelle Mitchell

286 Euclid Ave Suite 308
San Diego, CA 92114
Phone: (619) 450-1229
Fax: (619) 527-3301

Early Head Start Home-Based Supervisor: Danyelle Mitchell

286 Euclid Ave Suite 308
San Diego, CA 92114
Phone: (619) 450-1229
Fax: (619) 527-3301

Head Start Home-Based Supervisor: Kongkea Klatt

286 Euclid Ave Suite 308
San Diego, CA 92114
Phone: (619) 736-2711
Fax: (619) 527-3301

California Department of Education-Early Learning and Care Division

Program Advisor: Jennifer Stewart, MPA

2820 Camino Del Rio S. Suite 212
San Diego, CA 92108
Phone: (619) 624-3373 (ELCD)
Confidential Fax: (619) 374-1699



Program Options

Neighborhood House Association Head Start/Early Learning and Care Division provides various program options to meet the needs of the families we serve.

Early Learning Centers

Our early learning centers provide either part-day, full-day or full working-day care and education services for children ages 12 months through 5 years. Teachers and family support staff at the centers are the primary providers of services. Some of our centers are funded both through Head Start and the State of California - Early Learning and Care Division.

Home-Based Programs

Our home-based programs provide children and families weekly home visits with a qualified parent educator who provides comprehensive services in your home. As children's "first teachers", parents gain new ways to strengthen their families and help their children grow and develop. Home-based families also get together two times a month for fun learning events that we call "socializations". This program option serves families from pregnancy and with children through five years of age.

School Readiness: The NHA Head Start Approach

The Head Start Approach to School Readiness means that **children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children.** With appropriate support, we believe that all children can be successful learners and achieve the skills, behaviors, and knowledge described below in our NHA School Readiness Goals.



NHA School Readiness Goals

Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers



Social and Emotional Development:

Children will be aware of self and others, and show greater understanding of others for supportive relationships.



Language and Literacy:

Children will increase their communication, participation in conversations, awareness of sounds, understanding of letters, words, books and print.



Approaches to Learning:

Children will pay attention to people, activities and things, show self-comfort and self-control.



Cognition:

Children will increase their ability to compare, match, and sort; develop an understanding of cause and effect; increase knowledge of the world, measurement, greater number sense and math operations.



Perceptual, Motor and Physical Development:

Children will demonstrate healthy and safe practices, personal care, fine and large movement skills.

August 2019 rev, Training & Staff Development

Note: Soon to be released, updated School Readiness Goals to include 3rd period child assessment aggregated data.

Quality, Comprehensive Services for Children and Families

Head Start/Early Learning and Care Division Prepares Children for Kindergarten

NHA's Board of Directors, Policy Council and staff support a comprehensive, integrated approach to promoting children's school readiness in the areas of social and emotional development, approaches to learning, language and communication, literacy, cognition, mathematics development, scientific reasoning, movement, and physical development. School readiness support services are family-oriented, address children's developmental goals, and link families to community resources.

Staff Development

Strengthening our early childhood workforce is a priority of NHA Head Start/ELCD. Staff are offered a variety of learning opportunities, for example, coaching and mentoring, workshops and conferences, onsite college courses, on-line early education course work, and peer learning groups. Professional development plans are created to guide each staff person's individual professional development.



Environmental Rating Scales (ERS)

NHA's Head Start/Early Learning and Care Division provides high quality, safe, and healthy learning environments for infants, toddlers and preschool age children, and well-equipped space for staff. Environmental Rating Scales assess space and furnishings, personal care routines, language, learning activities, interactions, program structure, parent engagement, community resources, and staff professional growth.

Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP)

Staff use the DRDP to assess children's growth and development. The DRDP informs staff and parents of the child's progress and provides information for lesson planning of each child's individualized learning activities.

Monitoring For Quality

Due to NHA's commitment to high quality services, we are dedicated to regularly visiting each classroom in NHA-operated and delegate agency centers to monitor for high quality services. The Quality Assurance team is comprised of professionals who are knowledgeable in early childhood education, health, nutrition, social services, parent engagement, and disabilities. Our monitoring process generates reports that identify strengths and opportunities for growth, as well provides an overall picture of the entire NHA Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD program. Growth opportunities are readily addressed and quality operations are assured.

Parent Pledge

I am my child's first and most important teacher! I'll support my child to build the skills required for success in school and life. I will:

- 1. Bring my child to school every day.**
 - Attending school on a regular basis helps my child expand knowledge and skills.
- 2. Stick to a daily routine.**
 - A predictable, consistent schedule helps my child feel secure. Daily routines help him/her understand what's expected and reduce difficult behavior, like tantrums.
- 3. Provide my child with nutritious and healthy snacks.**
 - Healthy food helps children grow and learn. I'll allow my child to help plan, shop for, and prepare healthy meals. We'll talk about the meals eaten at school and I'll encourage my child to try new foods.
- 4. Keep my child physically active.**
 - Regular exercise helps my child build strong muscles and bones, prevents obesity, and increases my child's self-esteem.
- 5. Read to my child each day.**
 - Reading to my child helps him/her to learn new words, recognize words in print, and develop a love for reading. When I read to my child, I'll encourage him/her to ask questions and discuss the story.
- 6. Listen and talk to my child and be curious about his or her discoveries.**
 - Simple conversations help build vocabulary and my child's ability to express his or her self. I'll ask open-ended questions and listen to my child's responses.
- 7. Make sure that my child gets enough sleep each day.**
 - Toddlers need between 12-14 hours of sleep each day and preschoolers need between 11-13 hours of sleep, including nap times. Lack of sleep can affect my child's growth, impact motor skills and concentration and lead to poor performance in school. I'll support my child with healthy sleep habits.
- 8. Play Learning Games and Activities with my child.**
 - Play supports my child's academic, physical, and social-emotional skill development. I will play games, explore, and try new activities with my child.
- 9. Take my child to the dentist and doctor for regular exams and complete any needed treatment.**
 - Regular visits ensure that my child's medical and dental needs are met and offer me the chance to ask questions about my child's behavior or development.
- 10. Volunteer in my child's classroom.**
 - When I am involved in my child's school, I learn more about what my child is learning and I have better communication with the school staff.



Learning in Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD

Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD's philosophy is based on developmentally appropriate practices, multicultural and anti-bias principles, and recent research on children's brain development, Head Start Program Performance Standards, California Department of Education Title 5, and our many years of experience working with young children.

NHA Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD curriculum recognizes that:

- A child's family and culture provide the foundation upon which social and emotional competence develop.
- Parents are the primary educators of their children and the experts on their child's development. Parents and teachers work together in partnership to address the needs and holistic growth of each child so that learning will be supported in the home and at school.
- All areas of children's development – physical, social, emotional and cognitive – are interconnected, that each child learns at his or her own pace, and that each child has individual strengths, interests, needs and learning styles.
- Children learn best by active involvement with materials and in social interaction with peers and adults. Children construct their own understanding of the world around them and play is child's "work."
- The role of teachers is to use knowledge of child development, individual children, and cultural contexts to facilitate development and learning. Teachers interact with all children, provide concrete and age-appropriate challenging activities, and continually update and adapt the classroom environment.
- It is important to have a clear framework for the planning and practice of a developmentally appropriate program that address the following factors:



✓ **Social Emotional** – Classrooms

provide a safe emotional and social environment for children by respecting children's unique background, choices, and individual development, while encouraging self-discipline and self-control.

✓ **Equity and Inclusiveness** -

Classrooms are equitable and diverse and inclusive--reflecting and honoring differences of gender, language, culture, differing abilities and special needs of children and their family environments.

✓ **Cognitive and Physical**

Development – Classrooms support the individuality of each child, generate creative and independent thinking, promote literacy and numeracy development, and provide appropriate physical stimulation for the development of young children.

✓ **Parent Partnership** – Parents, staff and community partners work together in providing a safe and stimulating environment where each child has the opportunity and encouragement to achieve his/her greatest potential.



Head Start/Early Head Start/ Early Learning and Care Division Classroom Activities

Large Group Activities

Children engage in activities that are done in a large group setting. These activities include their greeting or circle time when they sing songs, play group games or read a story. Children learn how to follow directions, to wait for their turn, and to enjoy the experience of being with other children in a relatively structured setting.

Small Group Activities

Children are invited to join a small group to do an activity closely supervised and monitored by an adult. This is another opportunity for a child to learn how to get along with others through doing a common project and to follow instructions.

Child-initiated Activities

There is a separate time period in the class schedule that allows children to choose a learning area to develop an art project, to build structures, to play with puzzles and games, and to imagine and pretend.

The value of this experience is that it gives the child the opportunity to make plans, to be self-reliant, and to develop personal ways of interacting with other children.

Outdoor Play

In an outdoor setting equipped with safe and developmentally appropriate play structures, children engage in large motor activities while closely supervised by adults. Children have a lot of fun running around, riding the bicycle or simply observing and tinkering with objects of nature they find in the playground.



Family and Community Engagement

We would love for you to participate at the center, whether as a volunteer or at a parent meeting. Come share your culture and talents with the children! You have more to offer than you might think--come read a book, teach the class to sing a song in your language, help the children plant a garden, or learn new things at a training. Each family is invited to partner with a staff member to complete a screening to identify strengths, needs and interests, and to develop family goals. As trusted partners, we're here to help you with information and referrals for any kind of topic, so please reach out to us. When we work together, our children thrive!

What Head Start Says:

At the heart of Family Engagement is mutual respect for the roles and strengths both parents/guardians and staff have to offer. We honor and support parent-child and other family relationships that are central to a child's healthy development, school readiness, and well-being. Engaging families requires that we have a deep respect for the diverse cultures and languages of each one of our children and their families. It requires making a commitment to a healthy, supportive partnership that promotes family well-being.

Working with the Community:

NHA Head Start develops partnerships with organizations that give families access to services and resources that are available in their community. Strength and resiliency are gained from NHA's various partnerships to help us, together, achieve child and family goals. If you have a need, we will connect you with community resources or find out more information for you.

What Head Start Says:

Through community partnerships, Head Start programs build collaborative relationships with community organizations to support positive child and family outcomes. These may include libraries, health centers, schools and school districts, sources of economic support, the workforce, higher education, human services agencies, faith-based organizations, businesses, and others. Our partners can respond to families' interests and needs and promote successful transitions for children and families.



Nutrition

The Head Start program ensures that your child's nutritional needs are being met at school as well as support and resources for home.

Family Style Meals

Head Start centers are served meals from NHA's central kitchen. The preschool menu is nationally recognized for providing fresh, local foods and using made-from-scratch recipes to provide nutritious, whole and natural food

We use the "offer" method for meals, which means we allow children to serve themselves a portion of each item with guidance from staff.

Children learn to serve food and pour liquids. They can listen to their body to tell them when they are hungry and full, called "hunger cues" as well as develop fine and gross motor skills.

Try family style meals at your home. Your child will be excited to show you their new serving skills!

Menus are posted in the classroom and at www.neighborhoodhouse.org.



Child Care Food Program

We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). In accordance with federal law and the U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Please note: NHA Agency Policy does not allow outside food in our classrooms.

Nutrition Support Can Include:

1

- Nutritional assessments (height and weight)

2

- Nutrition presentations at parent meetings

3

- Healthy meals and snacks at school

4

- One-on-one meetings with our Nutrition Coordinator who is a Registered Dietitian

Staff may refer you to our Nutrition Coordinator if your child is at nutritional risk or if you request a meeting. Nutritional risks can include special diets prescribed by your doctor, underweight or overweight, anemia, and feeding tubes. See the Health Handbook for more information on nutrition, physical activity, and healthy lifestyle tips.

Medical and Dental Services

Head Start/Early Head Start ELCD in San Diego County provides a broad range of health services for children 0 to 5 years old. The program also provides resources that help link families to health care providers in the community.

Physical Exam

Due to state licensing regulations, a current physical exam or well-baby exam within the last 12 months will be required within the first 30 days of your child's attendance at all Centers.

Contagious Illnesses

If your child is sick with the following symptoms, we ask that you please keep them home: fever of 100° degrees or more; nausea; vomiting or severe stomach pain; diarrhea; frequent, loose or watery stools; sore throat; acute cold or persistent cough; earache; red, inflamed or infected eye(s); swollen glands around the jaws, eyes or neck; live head or body lice; skin lesion in the weeping stage; and any other symptoms suggesting acute illness. Please call your Head Start Center to notify staff that your child will be absent.

If your child's absence is due to communicable illness, written documentation from the child's doctor will be requested stating that the child may return to school.

Medication

If your child needs medication at school, you and your child's doctor will need to sign an "Authorization to Administer Medication" for us to do so. An Individualized Health Plan will be created with you and staff at the Head Start/Early Head Start center that your child attends.

Dental Care

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) recommends that a child visit the dentist by age 1 or within six months after the first tooth erupts. In alignment with the AAPD, NHA encourages parents to take their children to the dentist every six months to prevent cavities and promote good oral health habits. We offer resources and support when dental treatment is needed due to cavities or other oral health problems. Children brush their teeth with fluoride toothpaste daily in the classroom with adult supervision.



Keep me Home if...

I'm
Vomiting



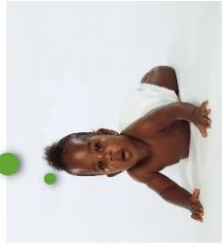
Two or more
times in 24
hours

I have a
Rash or
Live Lice



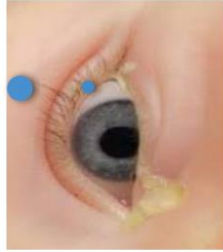
Body rash,
especially with a
fever or itching.
In order for child
to return to
school, child
must be lice
free.

I have
Diarrhea



Three or more
watery stools in
24 hours

I have an
Eye
Infection



Thick mucus or
pus draining
from the eye.

I have a
Sore
Throat



With fever or
swollen glands

I'm just
not feeling
good



Unusually tired,
pale, lack of
appetite,
confused or
cranky

I have
a Fever



Temperature of
100° (F) or more
(taken under arm)
AND sore throat,
rash, vomiting,
diarrhea, earache,
or just not feeling
good.

When your child is sick:

1. Have plans for back up child care
2. Contact your Center and notify them of child's absence.

Mental Health and Family Support Services

Mental Health Services

The mental health services of the program seek to support the success of both the family and the center by increasing the capabilities of children, parents and staff to adapt to and manage stress. Services are directed at prevention, early identification and early intervention. Mental Health services are provided by qualified Mental Health professionals in collaboration with parents, caregivers, teaching staff, and outside service providers. Mental Health Professionals visit centers regularly to provide crisis intervention, consult with staff, children, and to work with identified children needing additional support and services.

At the centers, workshops on mental wellness and mental health issues are offered to parents. Topics include positive discipline techniques, stress-management, domestic violence, depression, separation, anxiety, and other relevant topics.

Family Support Services

At some point, all families need support. Families may need assistance when they are experiencing stress, health issues, unemployment, or difficulty paying bills. In situations like these, NHA staff are able to provide supportive services and resources. Please speak with your teacher, home visitor, site supervisor or Family Support Services staff for resources and referrals!

For free community resources, families can contact www.211sandiego.org or dial 2-1-1. 211 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and provides assistance for food, employment, health, housing and transportation assistance, as well as over-the-phone help in completing Medi-Cal, CalFresh and Prescription Assistance applications.



Disabilities Services



Our Commitment to Inclusion



NHA Early Head Start and Head Start programs support the participation of children and families with and without disabilities. We are committed to providing early childhood learning environments that:

- ♥ Engage children, families and the community.
- ♥ Recognize the importance of supporting diverse relationships.
- ♥ Acknowledge and celebrate the uniqueness of the individual.
- ♥ Promote the inclusion of all.

This commitment is fulfilled through active recruitment and enrollment of children with a wide variety of disabilities and special needs; individualizing curriculum and supporting access to specialized services; providing training, technical assistance and networking opportunities to parents and staff; and active participation in agency and community inclusion initiatives.

Disabilities Services

Head Start regulations require that at least 10% of enrolled children have identified disabilities. While it is recognized that there are a wide variety of disabilities, only children with active Individual Education Plans (IEPs) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSPs) document on file are counted towards this 10%. These plans mean that the child has been evaluated by San Diego Regional Center or the school district and is eligible for special education and/or related services.

- ♥ Special Education Services for children with disabilities and their families are provided in coordination with local early intervention and education agencies, community organizations, support services and school districts.
- ♥ Be sure to notify the program if your child is receiving any of these services.
- ♥ Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD staff work closely with families to assist in requesting and/or accessing services and resources for their children. Services may be provided at on-site for children attending an Early Learning Center.
- ♥ Staff also support children by attending IEP or IFSP meetings with parents, communicating with service providers, providing trainings, and meeting with parents regarding their child's unique needs. Staff that specialize in disabilities

Parent Engagement Opportunities

Neighborhood House Association encourages parents to become involved in their children's education both in and out of the classroom. Involvement opportunities include: volunteering in the classroom, attending parent meeting, and/or serving on a committee. Some additional ways to support your child and the program are:

Parent Committees

Parent Committees are comprised exclusively of parents of children currently enrolled in the program. Parents meet at the center, with staff, to develop and implement local program policies, activities and services.

Area Parent Advisory Committee

The Area Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) is comprised of one representative from each grantee-operated center. Parents and staff work together to help families become more involved in their children's education. Parents are invited to discuss the many ways they can be advocates and leaders in their programs and community.

Policy Council

The Policy Council is comprised of current parents and community members. The Policy Council is responsible for the direction of the program including program design and operations.

Male Engagement

NHA believes that fathers and other male caregivers have a unique and invaluable contribution to the well-being of children. A comprehensive male engagement program is provided to help men enhance their knowledge of child development and positive parenting practices—while having fun! NHA Head Start is pleased to provide a variety of opportunities for you to spend meaningful, quality time with your child/relative. Be sure to check your EHS/HS site bulletin board for information regarding fun male engagement events.

Health Services Advisory Committee

This advisory committee brings together staff, parents and local health providers. We engage parents in identifying and accessing health services and resources that are responsive to their interest and goals.

Open Door Policy

Head Start/ELCD employs an "open door policy" for parents/guardians, who are welcome to come to the center to visit their child(ren) and the staff at any time during the program's operational hours.

Parent Engagement Field Days

Parent Engagement Field Days allow parents, children, and teachers to explore learning opportunities outside of the classroom setting. Parent Engagement Field Days are scheduled on days when traditional classroom sessions will not occur. Participation is optional, however, parents and children are strongly encouraged to attend.

In order for a child to attend a Parent Engagement Field Day, parent participation or the participation of the parent's designee of another responsible adult (over 18 years of age) is required. The agency provides trip-related fees for one parent/adult per child.

Community Care Licensing

California Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing (CCL) Division licenses and oversees both day care and residential facilities for children and adults in the State of California. The Department has the authority to:

- Inspect, audit and copy child or childcare center records upon demand during normal business hours. Records may be removed if necessary for copying.
- Interview children or staff without prior consent.

For additional information on Community Care Licensing, families may visit the CCL website at www.cclcd.ca.gov



Classroom Policies

(For NHA Operated Programs- Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD)

Attendance

Daily attendance is important for young children to learn daily routines, make friends, learn and develop skills that will help them succeed in school and throughout their lives. Children who miss school miss out on an opportunity to learn, build friendships, and develop the skills and attitudes needed to become good citizens and valued employees.

We miss your child when he/she does not attend. Please bring your child to school each day he/she is well!

Excused Absences

1. Best Interest of the Child/Vacation

(Maximum of 10 days per year July 1-June 30)

2. Court Ordered Visitation
3. Health reasons, Illness or Quarantine

Best Interest of the Child

"Best Interest of the Child" absences include family vacation, non-court ordered time with parent, time with relatives, family friends, religious or cultural events or family celebrations. A best interest of the child absence is considered excused when the parent has notified the center in advance that the child will be absent. Vacation is included in the **ten (10) total** best interest days per program year (July 1-June 30).



Court Ordered Visitation

Court ordered visitation is only excusable in the event that the court has issued a judgment/court order declaring when the child will visit the other parent. The court order must be on file. A mediation agreement is not a court order.

Health/Illness/Quarantine

Your child may be excused from school due to health, illness or quarantine of the enrolled child or parent. For example, if a sibling is sick, the enrolled child may not have an excused absence.

If your child is sick with the following symptoms, we ask that you please keep them home: fever of 100° degrees or more; nausea; vomiting or severe stomach pain; diarrhea; frequent, loose or watery stools; sore throat; acute cold or persistent cough; earache; red, inflamed or infected eye(s);

swollen glands around the jaws, eyes or neck; live head or body lice; skin lesion in the weeping stage; and any other symptoms suggesting acute illness.

If your child's absence is due to communicable illness, written documentation from the child's doctor will be requested stating that the child may return to school.

Unexcused Absences

Any absence other than those described above as "excused absences" are considered unexcused. If a child has more than **eight (8) unexcused absences** in a year (July 1 – June 30), services will be terminated or transferred to a Home Base program option. **For CCTR/EHS Fee Paying Families, fees will be charged for all unexcused absences.**

Birthdays

Birthday invitations are to be mailed unless you are inviting the entire class. This is simply to avoid hurt feelings that can occur at this young age. If you are in need of an address, please leave a note for that parent in his or her child's cubby, asking them to provide this information for you. Children are not to bring birthday treats to share in class.

Clothing

We feel that dirt, water, paint, or a combination of these things, are an important part in the learning process. The children leave school with the evidence of a good day! Please send them in clothing that is comfortable and practical.

Many activities involve climbing, kicking balls, riding bikes and running. Please protect your child's feet with rubber-soled shoes to avoid slipping on the equipment. Tennis shoes are the most appropriate. NO THONGS OR JELLIES MAY BE WORN ANY DAY.

Accidents do happen. Please keep a change of clothes that are weather-appropriate in your child's cubby AT ALL TIMES. Please mark all items with your child's name. When an accident occurs, please return a fresh change of clothes the following day so we do not have to call parents to bring a change of clothes immediately for their children.

Cubbies

Each child has his/her own cubby to keep their belongings in. Please check their cubby

each night for loose papers, notes or other items that may need to go home.

Discipline

Constructive methods will always be employed for maintaining group discipline and handling individual behaviors. Corporal punishment and other humiliating or frightening techniques will not be used.

We strive to help students continue to develop in self-control and self-regulation. We define the established limits so that our students know what is expected of them. Rules are lovingly, consistently and firmly enforced.

As much as possible, we allow logical consequences to determine the course of discipline. For example, if a child is playing in the block area and throws blocks, he/she will be removed from the block area. A student whose behavior is considered to be out of control may be separated from the rest of the students until self-control has been reestablished.

We use the following methods during the learning process:

1. Remind the child of the limits.
2. Redirect the child before he/she crosses the acceptable limits.
3. Reinforce positive behavior.

4. Remove the child from an activity.
5. A parent conference may occur in case of extreme or recurrent misbehavior.

Children are continually encouraged to problem-solve between themselves with as little interference as possible from teachers.

Lesson Plans

All notices are sent home or posted on the door or next to the sign-in/sign-out clipboard. It is your responsibility to check your child's cubby daily.

Notices

All notices are sent home or posted on the door or next to the sign-in/sign-out clipboard. It is your responsibility to check your child's cubby daily.

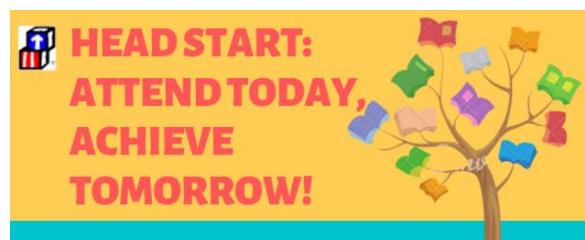
Sign in and out Policies

Parents **must** sign their children in and out each day, using their legal signature. Sign in and out documents will be used by the State to monitor program compliance, and It is imperative that parents use their full legal signature and the correct time on the sign in and out sheets.

Your child **must** be picked up at the agreed upon time. Failure to be consistent in this practice will result in a refusal of center service.

Lost and Found

From time to time mix-ups do occur during our going home and outside playtime. Occasionally one child goes home with someone else's jacket, toy or other item. If your child should take home something that does not belong to him/her, please return it as soon as possible. You should label all items. Coats, sweatshirts and sweaters all start to look the same.



Should an emergency arise, we ask that you take the following steps:

1. In accordance with the NHA Late Drop Off and Pick up Policy, if a parent is unable to pick up the child on time, the parent must make arrangements with an authorized adult who is on the emergency card to pick up the child.
2. If the authorized adult is not on the emergency card to pick up the child, the parent must first call and identify that alternate person's first and last name with a physical description of the adult picking up the child.
3. The parent is to give the center a password that the alternate person will give to the center. The staff taking the call will write down the password the child's file. Each time the parent has an alternate person picking up the child a password must be given.
4. The alternate person **must show identification**, have the full name of the child and the child's classroom number, which will be compared to the Children's Log that is located in each Site Supervisor's office. The alternate person must also know the password.

The parent may also fax written authorization to the center, which includes the full name and physical description of the person they are authorizing to pick up the child, the parent's signature and date.



Drop Off and Pick Up Policy

Drop-Off

We expect your child to arrive at school on time every day, per your contract hours. It is important that you bring your child to school on time every day so that they can receive the full benefit of the school day. If a child is regularly being dropped off late, the child may be transferred to a more appropriate program option (i.e. Home Base/Part Day).

Pick-Up

It is important that children are picked up promptly when their contract hours end each day. Emergency contacts will be called for any child who is not picked up by the end of contract hours. If Staff are unable to reach an authorized adult, the police may be contacted to take custody of the child. If a child is regularly picked up late, the child may be transferred to a more appropriate program option (i.e. Home Base/Part Day). Center staff will not release your child to anyone who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or other substances (including recreational drugs).

If there are any changes to your emergency contacts during the program year, you must make changes in person with the center staff to update your emergency card information.

Child Abuse-Mandated Reporters

California law states that all employees of childcare centers are mandated reporters of child abuse. We are required by law to report any known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency immediately.

California law defines child abuse as, "A child is physically injured by other than accidental means. A child is subjected to willful cruelty or unjustifiable punishment. A child is neglected by a parent or caretaker who fails to provide food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or supervision."



Early Learning & Care Division (ELCD)

Program Types

General Child Care (CCTR)

This is our program for **toddlers** (18 through 36 months) and is a full-day, full year program designed to meet the needs of low-income parents who are working, looking for a job, going to school and/or are in vocational training. (www.cde.ca.gov). Families in this program must meet **income eligibility** and establish a **need** for service.

NOTE: If your child is in our toddler program, please pay special attention to the **NEED** located at the end of this section.

California State Preschool Program (CSPP)

This is our program for **preschoolers**. In this program, children ages 3-5 receive child development and education services from the ELCD program for 3 hours a day. The remainder of their day is spent in the Head Start program. This arrangement allows us to provide a third teacher in the classroom in the morning and in some cases provide longer hours of care for parents who are working and or going to school. Age 3 is determined by the local school district as any child whose birthday occurs on or before September 1.

Program Policies Establishing

Eligibility

Enrollment eligibility is based upon income guidelines and priorities established by the State Department of Education/Early Learning & Care Division, in accordance with California Education Code, Section 8200-8481 and California Administrative Code, Title 5, Section 18000-18305.

Families must also meet Head Start eligibility requirements, which are age and income.

Please note: It is the parent's responsibility to provide all the information and documentation necessary for the agency to determine if the parent meets both eligibility and need qualifications. If the documentation provided by the parents is inadequate, the agency is required to ask the parent for more documentation.

Definition of Family

The **definition of family** used by the state department of education is, “the parents and the children for whom the parents are responsible, who comprise



the household in which the child receiving services is living.” A **parent** is defined as, “a biological parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, foster parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian, and domestic partner of the parent or any other adult living with a child who has responsibility for the care and welfare of the child.”

The parent is required to provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family. The number of children can be documented by providing at least one of the following documents:

- A.) Birth certificates/adoption documents
- B.) Court orders regarding child custody
- C.) Records of foster care placement
- D.) School or medical records

E.) County welfare department records

In addition, we make ask for additional documentation to determine family size and income.

Eligibility According To Priority

Families are ranked on the waiting list according to priority, and are not ranked on a first come first serve basis. Priority is given to a family/child in the following order:

Priority 1A: Child has been referred by the County Welfare Child Protective Service Division (CPS), which stated that the child is under the protection of the court and the CPS plan specifics child development services as an integral part of the plan.

Priority 1B: A legally qualified professional has stated that the child is at risk of abuse, neglect, or exploitation and that child development services are necessary to reduce or eliminate the at risk situation. This legally qualified professional must also state that child development services are an integral part of the at-risk services plan.

Priority 2: The family has an income under 75% of the state median income. Enrollment priority is given to families with the lowest income based on an income priority chart develop by the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

Confidentiality

All information provided to the Head Start/ Early Head Start/ELCD Program is considered confidential.

Establishing Eligibility

Determination of eligibility is partly accomplished by verification of payroll receipts (pay stubs), income verification from parents' employer, and/or public assistance forms (Notice of Action). In addition, child support, alimony and monetary support that is not court ordered are included in the total countable income. Eligibility documents must be dated within 30 days of certification and cover an entire month for General Childcare Programs and 120 days for California State Preschool Programs.

Additional eligibility requirements

1. **Residency:** You must live in the State of California.
2. **Family Size:** Proof of birth must be provided for all children counted in family size.

****All income must be reported. If it is determined at a later date that all income was not reported your ELCD childcare services will be terminated via a Notice Of Action for termination****



Contract Hours

Contract hours are based upon the need for childcare services. Failure to adhere to contract hours may result in the termination of child development services.

Families who do not follow their contract hours will need to attend a case conference to discuss their non-compliance following the contract hours. If contract hours are not followed, three or more times during the program year (July 1st – June 30th) childcare services will be automatically terminated.

When Can I change my Contract Hours?

If you need to change your contract hours, please see the Site Supervisor and CDE Program Specialist.

Limited Term Services Leave (LTSL)

A Limited Term Service Leave (LTSL) may be granted for families that temporarily do not have a need for childcare and development services. Reasons for a LTSL include medical leave, family leave, break in employment, training

/vocational break, a school break, and child's visit with the non-custodial parent that is not ordered by the court, or a family vacation in excess of 10 best interest days. Family leave includes: leave to care for a newborn child, adopted or foster child, or to care for the parent's child, spouse or parent who has a health condition. The LTSL is subjected to program approval and must be requested in writing PRIOR to the child's leave and may not exceed 12 weeks.

Due Process

If you do not agree with Neighborhood House action as stated in the Notice of Action, you may appeal the intended action. To protect your appeal rights, you must follow the instructions described in each step listed below. If you do not respond by the required due dates or fail to submit the required appeal information with your appeal request, your appeal may be considered abandoned.

1. Within ten (10) calendar days following the agency's receipt of your appeal request, the agency will notify you of the time and place of the hearing. You or your authorized representative is required to attend the hearing. If you or your representative do not attend the hearing, you

abandon your rights to an appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

2. Within ten (10) calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or deliver to you a written decision.
3. If you disagree with the written decision of the agency, you have 14 calendar days in which to appeal to the Early Learning & Care Division (ELCD). Your appeal to the ELCD must include the following documents and information: (1) a written statement specifying the reasons you believe the agency's decision was incorrect, (2) a copy of the agency's decision letter, and (3) a copy of both sides of this notice.
4. **You may either fax your appeal to 916-323-6853, or mail your appeal to the following address:**

**California Department of
Education
Early Learning & Care Division
1430 N Street Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814
Phone: 916-322-6233**

5. Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of your appeal, ELCD will issue a written decision to you and the agency. If your appeal is denied, the agency will stop providing child care and development services immediately upon receipt of CDE's decision letter.

6. Uniform Complaint Procedures
It is the intent of Neighborhood House Association (NHA) to fully comply with all applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Individuals, agencies, organizations, students, and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding NHA's alleged violation of federal and or state laws. This includes allegations of unlawful discrimination (Education Code section 200 and 220 and Government Code section 11135) in any program or activity funded directly by the State or receiving federal or state financial assistance.

Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the State Department of Education:

**Child Development Division
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814**

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court. The complainant should seek the advice of an attorney or his/her choosing in this event.

A complainant filing a written complaint alleging violations of prohibited discrimination may also pursue civil law remedies, including, but not limited to, injunctions, restraining orders, or other remedies or orders.

Legal Reference: 5CCR, Chapter 5.1
Uniform Complaint Procedures

Special Section: **Requirements** **for**

Toddlers

Because toddlers in our centers are served by our General Child Care Program, the following requirements

must be met. The benefit of being in the General Child Care Program is that it is designed to provide full day, year round services to parents who meet eligibility requirements and demonstrate a need for childcare.



Demonstration of Need

The need for service is based upon guidelines and priorities established by the California Department of Education/Early Learning & Care Division, in accordance with California **Education Code, Section 8200-8481 and California Administrative Code, Title 5, Sections 18000-18305.**

In order to be considered for services, the child's family must meet both **eligibility** and **need** for service at all times.

Establishing a Need for Service

Families must demonstrate a need for services at all times, which means that you must provide documentation of a valid reason that you are requesting childcare services.

The following reasons have been deemed as eligible categories of need; please note that all the below listed categories are subject to additional Program approval:

- Child Protective Services/ At Risk of Abuse & Neglect
- Employment
- Self-Employment
- Participating in a Job Training/Education Program
- Seeking Employment
- Seeking Permanent Housing

*****If you have a scheduled break from***

your training/education program and DO NOT meet another need for service you are not eligible for care during that time (i.e. Winter Break, Spring Break, and Summer Break) **

Change in Circumstances:

Any change in address, phone number, income, TANF status, family size, employment, and/or training, must be reported within five (5) days to the Site Supervisor and/or ELCD Program Specialist.

Written verification of these changes must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the change in family size, income, or training status. It is the parents' responsibility to notify the center of such changes.

*****Failure to notify the program of a change in any circumstances will result in the termination of services and/or transfer to a more appropriate program option*****

Re-certification

Re-certification will take place between nine to twelve (9 to 12) months after initial or prior year's certification. A file update occurs every six months, unless need or eligibility has changed before then. Parents must provide current information concerning income, family size, single parent status, employment,

and/or job training to remain eligible for childcare.

- “At risk” referrals cannot be recertified after 3 months of service. Prior to the three month expiration of service, the need for service may be verified again as one of the following:
 - i. An open CWS case
 - ii. A CWS social worker, has deemed, childcare services are necessary for family stability
 - iii. Eligibility and need for service met
- CWS involved families will be recertified between 9-12 months, unless the duration of the CPS plan states a shorter period of time.
- Recertification of homeless families occurs every three (3) months.

A notice will be sent, either in the child's cubby or to the parents' home, when recertification or a file update is due. Failure to recertify or provide file updates by the due date will result in termination of childcare services. The use or disclosure of financial information concerning enrollees and their families will be limited to purposes directly connected with the administration of the ELCD program.

Dis-enrollment

We want to work with you in every way possible to prevent non-voluntary dis-enrollment. At times, however, we will be required to dis-enroll a family from the Program. Although not all-encompassing, some examples are:

1. Eligibility and need criteria are not met.
2. Delinquent parent fees.
3. NHA ELCD is not notified of status changes (in employment /school, or other need, etc.) within five (5) working days.
4. Program policies and procedures are not observed.
5. Contract hours are consistently not followed.
6. Recertification is not completed.
7. Fraudulent, false, or misleading information regarding family size, single parent/training/student status, employment, income, or eligibility relating to medical incapacitation is provided.
8. Disruptive, abrasive, or abusive behavior of the parent/guardian is demonstrated. It is not our intent to prevent parents from expressing their views but we must prevent scenes which frighten children and disrupt activities or minimize the respect and rapport between children, staff, and teachers.

Family Fees

Family fees are estimated based on family income and family size. State Guidelines require that fees be collected in advance. Fees must be paid no later than five (5) calendar days after the due date. If fees become delinquent, written notification (via Notice of Action) will be given or mailed to the parent stating that services will be terminated unless payment is received within two (2) weeks. If a parent receives a Notice of Delinquent Fees, more than twice, services will be automatically terminated even if payment is received within the two-week timeframe.

Please keep in mind that it may take several weeks to process your payments made by check.



Parent Fees

- **Money Order or Personal Check**
- Must be made payable to the

NHA - ELCD PROGRAM and the child's name and dates of care must be specified.

- All payments can be dropped
- off at your center or mailed to the following address:

NHA-CDE/ELCD Office

2820 Camino Del Rio South Suite 214

San Diego, CA 92108

(619) 624-3373

Cash

Please call before you bring in a cash payment. Cash payments will only be accepted at the NHA CDE/ELCD Office

A receipt will be mailed for each payment that is received. Parents may find it valuable to save receipts. If a parent pays a fee to other providers at any time during the service period, these "other fees" shall be deducted from the family fee paid to the center when proper documentation is presented. If a parent is unable to pay fees on the due date, please call ELCD staff to make alternate payment arrangements. For further questions regarding parent fees; **please contact the Program Advisor at (619) 624-ELCD (3373)**

Tobacco-Free Policy

It is the policy of NHA Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD to provide a tobacco free environment for children and adults. This policy applies to the use of any tobacco product by employees and non-employee participants. All individuals on NHA childcare premises share in the responsibility of adhering to and enforcing this policy.

There will be no tobacco use on the premises of any NHA Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD centers or administrative offices, including classrooms, playgrounds, parking lots and parking spaces.

There will be no tobacco use at NHA Head Start administrative offices inside buildings. There will be no tobacco use by staff, parents or volunteers when children are present, including both indoor and outdoor activities, e.g., walks and other off-site activities. NHA Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD's tobacco free policy shall apply to all off-site activities and functions. During off-site outdoor functions, the designated smoking area will be out of sight of the children and at least 100 feet away from the activity area. The staff person in charge will be responsible for designating the tobacco use area and informing those in attendance.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Each Center is operated on a non-discriminatory basis. Equal treatment and access to services is given to every person who meets eligibility requirements without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical disability. Head Start/ Early Head Start/ ELCD refrain from religious instruction or worship of any kind, in compliance with funding requirements.

We welcome children into our programs and encourage families of children with disabilities to apply. NHA complies with the requirements of the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

Harassment Policy

NHA prohibits harassment, of any type, in the work place. The term harassment includes sexual harassment of its employees, job applicants and contactors by any other employee, job applicant, contractor, vendor or customer. Any person who believes they have been unlawfully harassed, must immediately provide a written complaint to NHA's VP & General Counsel. Every reported complaint of harassment will be investigated thoroughly, in a timely manner and, to the extent possible, handled in a confidential manner.

Community Complaint Procedure

The purpose of this procedure is to establish a process whereby members of the community having concerns regarding the Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD program in San Diego County may have those concerns or complaints heard. One of the important functions of the Parent Policy Council consistent with Federal Regulations is to establish a procedure for the airing of community complaints. Moreover, it is the position of this agency that parent engagement in the resolution of community complaints is a fundamental key to the successful operation of the Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD program.

The procedures outlined in this document have as their goal the informal resolution of complaints. It is recognized that frequently complaints or concerns arise out of a failure of communication. Thus, many complaints or concerns can be resolved when the interested parties meet informally to discuss the concerns. To that end, a complainant must demonstrate that he/she has attempted to solve his/her concern prior to filing a complaint under this procedure.

Neighborhood House Association's Head Start program is required by

government regulation to establish and maintain procedures for working with community (which includes families and individuals) complaints about the program.

It is the intent of NHA to foster positive community relations with agency partners and Head Start/Early Head Start/ELCD parents. In order to promote fair and constructive communication and identify appropriate levels of communication every effort will be made to resolve complaints in a timely manner.

The following are applicable to this complaint resolution procedure:

1. A formal hearing is not authorized at any step of the procedure. While a complainant shall be afforded a full opportunity to air his/her concerns, there does not exist the unlimited right to call witnesses. This procedure does not authorize the issuance of subpoenas to compel the attendance of witnesses. There shall be no right to cross-examination. Formal rules of evidence will not be followed at any step of the process.
2. This procedure does not apply to the complaint from any person

employed in any fashion in any Head Start program in San Diego County. Grievances of employees shall be handled consistent with applicable personnel policies.

3. This procedure does not apply to the complaints of any contractor of the Head Start program.
4. All complaints must be set forth in writing, outlining, in reasonable detail, the nature of the complaint and the remedy sought. Agency staff will be designated by the Vice President, Early Childhood Education, to assist complainants in preparing a written complaint

utilizing the NHA Head Start Complaint Form.

5. Petitions will not be accepted.
6. The complainant will receive a call back within three working days.
7. Complaints must be filed with the Head Start General Manager/Executive Vice President, Education, Instruction & Operations NHA, 5660 Copley Drive, San Diego, CA 92111.
8. Please see page 31-32 for complaints regarding CDE/ELCD.



Community Complaint Process:

Step One: Center Level

- Bring your written complaint to your Site Supervisor
- Site Supervisor will review the complaint within one working day of receipt.
- Site Supervisor will facilitate resolution, document steps towards resolution, and forward documentation to Area Directors within 24 hours of review date.
- If complaint is not resolved at this step, continue to step two.

Step Two: Area Level

- Bring or forward your written complaint to your Area Director.
- Area Director conducts a face-to-face meeting with the complainant within two working days of receipt.
- Area Directors will facilitate resolution, document steps towards resolution, and forward documentation to the their respective Supervisors, Chief Strategy Officer or Senior Director of Support Services, within 24 hours of review date.
- If complaint is not resolved at this step, continue to step three.

Step Three: Administrative Operations Level

- Bring or forward your written complaint to the Senior Management Analyst.
- The Senior Management Analyst and Director of Family Support Services will review the written complaint within one working day of receipt.
- The Senior Management Analyst and Director of Family Support Services will negotiate resolution, document steps towards resolution, and forward documentation to the Senior Associate Vice President who will advise the General Manager/Executive Vice President, Education, Instruction & Operations within 24 hours of review date.
- If complaint is not resolved at this step, continue to step four.

Step Four: Early Childhood General Manager/Executive Vice President

The General Manager/Executive Vice President, Education, Instruction & Operations will present and recommend a course of action to the President and CEO of NHA for approval.

- The President and CEO will send a summary letter of resolution to the appropriate parties.



Community Complaint Form



Date of Incident: _____ Time: _____

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Alternate Number: _____

Best time to call you back: _____

Early Head Start/Head Start Child (name): _____

Early Head Start/Head Start

Center: _____

Describe your complaint in detail (if needed, use back of paper):

Signature _____ Date: _____