

# Community Action Partnership of Kern Early Head Start of San Joaquin Parent Handbook



**IMPORTANT NAMES, NUMBERS, AND DATES**

CENTER OR HOME BASE:

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HOME~BASED EDUCATOR:

---

CENTER OR EDUCATOR PHONE NUMBER:

---

TEACHER NAME:

---

FAMILY SERVICE WORKER:

---

OTHER STAFF:

---

CENTER HOURS OR HOME~BASED VISIT TIME:

---

PARENT MEETINGS ARE HELD ON:

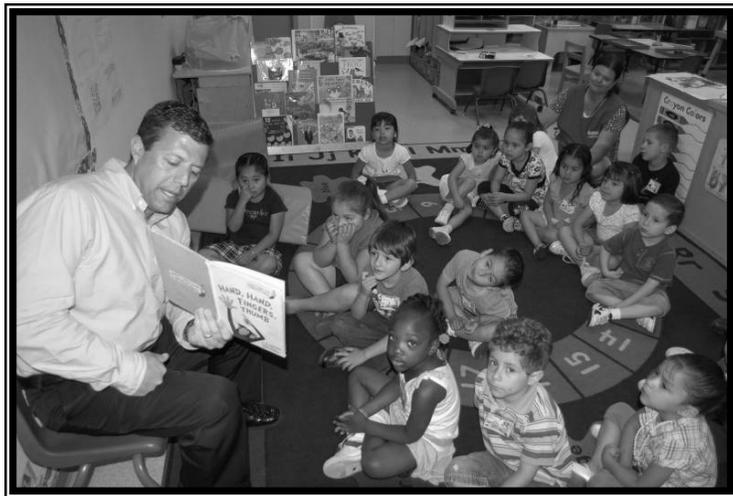
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# WELCOME TO COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF KERN!



Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for choosing Community Action Partnership of Kern's (CAPK) Early Head Start program to provide essential services to you and your family. We are excited to be part of the community in San Joaquin County.

For half a century, CAPK has cared for communities in Central California and works hard to ensure that our services meet the needs of our diverse families. Our Early Head Start Division continues to provide quality, comprehensive, and effective early childhood education and development services to prepare children for life-long learning.

This Handbook has been developed to provide all families in the program with detailed information about Early Head Start. I encourage you to carefully read this handbook so that you can participate in the many planned activities throughout the year and avail yourself to a wide range of early education and family services.

I look forward to your participation in the CAPK Early Head Start program knowing that it will provide many opportunities to grow, learn, achieve, and thrive.

Sincerely,

Jeremy T. Tobias  
Executive Director

# WELCOME TO CAPK HEAD START / STATE CHILD DEVELOPMENT

*Dear Families:*

*On behalf of Community Action Partnership of Kern (CAPK) Early Head Start of San Joaquin (EHS), I would like to welcome you to our Early Head Start program. We look forward to working in collaboration with you to provide you and your family with quality child development education, activities, and experiences.*



*It is our pleasure to be able to assist you in being the best teacher of your child.*

*The program provides both a center-based and Home-based model. Both models are designed to offer plentiful opportunities for parent engagement and participation. In addition, supportive and comprehensive services are available to expectant families.*

*We look forward to building a strong partnership with you as we expand services in the San Joaquin County. We thank you for your trust in us to provide services to you and your family.*

*Sincerely,*



*Yolanaa Gonzales*

*Director of Head Start / State Child Development*

## *PROGRAM DESCRIPTION*

Early Head Start (EHS) is a federally funded community-based program for low-income pregnant women and families with children 0 ~ 3 years of age.

Early Head Start:

- ♥ Promotes healthy prenatal outcomes for pregnant women.
- ♥ Enhances the development of very young children birth to age 3.
- ♥ Promotes healthy family functioning.

CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin offers a full-day/full-year center-based program and a Home-based (including pregnant women, infants, and toddlers) and socialization program.

EHS programs enhance children's physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development; support parents' efforts to fulfill their parental roles; and help parents move toward self-sufficiency.

## *ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS*

Families enrolling in CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin must meet Federal poverty guidelines. Families who have income above the Federal poverty guideline may apply for Early Head Start, but will be placed on a waitlist pending enrollment of income-eligible families. No more than 10% of families who are over-income can be enrolled. To enroll in this program, children must be age eligible (ages 0 ~ 3yrs).

## *SERVICE AREAS*

*Support Services Provided ~*

- ♥ *Disabilities*
- ♥ *Child Health and Developmental Services*
- ♥ *Education and Early Childhood Development*
- ♥ *Nutrition*
- ♥ *Mental Health*
- ♥ *Family Engagement*



Home Base services are currently located in the areas of: Lodi, Manteca, Stockton, and Tracy.

## *PROGRAM CHOICES*

*Services for pregnant women* ~ A healthy pregnancy has a direct influence on the health and development of a newborn child. Early Head Start (EHS) strives to have the greatest impact on participating children by offering supportive services as early in life as possible.

The prenatal period of growth and development has a lasting impact on the child's potential for healthy growth and development after birth. EHS programs provide services to pregnant women and their families and through the child's first three years of life, and assists pregnant women to access comprehensive prenatal and postpartum care.

Home-based ~ Home visiting is a method of service delivery. It is a way to offer support, guidance, information, and child development services directly to families in their homes. The Home-based program is one of the options for delivering comprehensive Early Head Start services. Home visiting is unique because it offers an opportunity for families to get the support they want in their own homes. It also offers two socialization activities a month.

Center-based ~ Early Head Start (EHS) programs were established to provide early, continuous, intensive and comprehensive child development and family support services on a year-round basis. Classrooms are colorful, clean and provide a safe and nurturing environment for infants and toddlers to grow and develop genuine relationships with caring and responsive teachers/caregivers.

### CURRICULUM

CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin implements the Creative Curriculum approach to learning for infants, toddlers, and twos. The curriculum is based on the principle that children learn best through direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, events, and ideas. During this active learning process, children are encouraged to discover the world around them by exploring and playing. Learning and development are anchored by long-term, trusting relationships with teachers/caregivers, who are close at hand to support the children as they play.

In the Home-based program, where families are visited by a Home Base Educator once a week, the curriculum is integrated with an enhancement curriculum which recognizes the parent as the child's first teacher, and gives parents the opportunity to discuss their child's progress and plan activities that support continued development.

### PARENT GUIDE

On the first day at any Early Head Start center, parents will need to bring the following (with child's name on each item):

- ♥ A change of clothing
- ♥ A comfort item, such as a blanket
- ♥ Family Photo ~ for comfort

When parents come in the classroom make sure to look for these places:

- ♥ Parent board ~ lesson plan, daily routine, menu, licensing information, community information, job openings, trainings, school readiness goals and parent education
- ♥ Sign In Book ~ daily sign in/out, notes from your child's teacher, or the office
- ♥ My Cubby ~ artwork, soiled clothing



Upon daily arrival, parents should:

- ♥ Sign-in their child, noting time of arrival (i.e. 8:00; please do not just write the number 8)
- ♥ Complete a Daily Communication Sheet for their child
- ♥ Make contact with their child's teacher

### Separation ~ Saying Good-bye

Often at the beginning of a new year, upon enrollment, or returning from a long absence, the parent feels guilty or sad about leaving her child at the center. Parents need to prepare their children for their leaving by telling them when they are leaving and when they will be back. The parents can have the teacher help with transition, if necessary, and then go. Parents may see their children unhappy or crying at times, but the children will soon learn to trust that the parent will return.

A good idea:

- ♥ *one kiss,*
- ♥ *one hug,*
- ♥ *one good-bye.*



The longer the parent takes to depart, the more uncomfortable the child will be about the parent leaving.

At CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin you should expect:

- ♥ *Family Partnership Meetings* ~ to build partnership between our family and school and to help us meet our family goals
- ♥ *Screening* ~ dental, vision, hearing, developmental and behavioral
- ♥ *Home visits* ~ two times each year
- ♥ *Parent Conferences* ~ two times each year
- ♥ *Assessment of developmental progress* ~ three times each year
- ♥ *Parent orientation* ~ to meet the teachers and other parents

When you need help, you can call one of these people:

- ♥ *Center Staff* ~ absence call-ins, scheduled vacations
- ♥ *Center Director* ~ concerns and all site related issues
- ♥ *Early Head Start Program Administrator* ~ anytime

### **FAMILY ENGAGEMENT**

*Parent Meetings and Classroom participation* ~ The program staff, in consideration of parent input and with the help of parents, will offer a variety of activities that meet the parent's needs, requests and shared goals. Educational topics covered include health and safety, child development and family support. Regularly scheduled activities are: Monthly Parent Meetings

and Father/Male Involvement. Home visits and parent conferences are scheduled twice a year for the center-based program. Each EHS center has a Parent Information Board where parents can check the board daily for important information such as announcements of meetings and notices about available services.

*Family Partnership Services* ~ CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin strongly advocates that parents are the primary educators of their children and recognize Family Engagement as an essential part of our program. Parents are partners in planning and implementing activities for their child, family goals and program outcomes.

An integral component of our program includes the development of a Family Partnership Agreement that is established during enrollment and is on-going throughout the year. Early Head Start staff work closely helping each family to determine their strengths and goals.

## *POLICIES*



### *Attendance* ~

*Regular Attendance Benefits Your Child* ~ Whether you're in the Home-based or Center-based option ~ every home visit, socialization, class session, appointment, and special event is planned to support you and your child's progress toward your goals. Regular attendance is a practice that will help your child be successful in kindergarten and elementary school.

*Let Staff Know When Your Child Will Be Absent* ~ Our program requires that all absences are documented. You are required to notify center staff by phone to let us know the reason for each day your child is absent.

If regular attendance is a challenge for your family, we will help you develop a plan of action for regular attendance. We will also let you know about other options for your child to receive full services and progress toward his/her goals.

*Chronic Absenteeism* ~ When your plan of action does not encourage regular attendance, it may then be decided your child/family are not in the most suitable program option. We will make every effort to help you make a smooth transition by providing community resources.

*Meals* ~ Meals are served to meet the dietary needs of each child. CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin is part of the Federal Food Program.

*Clothes* ~ Children should come to school dressed so that they can actively participate in the program. Parents should remember that children will be climbing, running, jumping working with play dough and paint, and children are encouraged to be involved with the program activities. Appropriate clothing is important for the safety of the child. Comfortable shoes that fit securely on the child's feet are important for the safety of the child. **No sandals or flip-flops allowed.**

*Daily Health Checks* ~ According to Title 22 California State Licensing requirements, before signing in your child each day, the center staff will briefly check for general signs of illness or any communicable conditions. If your child rides the bus to attend special day classes, staff will

conduct a health check upon your child's arrival at the center. Home Base Educators perform health checks prior to the beginning of home visits and upon arrival to socializations.

Illness-short term exclusion ~ Children will not be accepted at the EHS program with a communicable disease. Children who become sick while at the center must be picked up by the parent (or others listed on the emergency card). Staff will contact the parent or another authorized person listed on the emergency card to pick up the child. In accordance with licensing regulations your child will be excluded from program participation if showing signs or symptoms of a contagious illness.

Keep your child home if they have any of the following symptoms:

- ♥ Fever of 101 or above, or had a fever the night before.
- ♥ Wet sneezes, heavy nasal discharge, and/or a constant cough.
- ♥ Vomiting, and/or diarrhea.
- ♥ Irritable, fussy, and generally not her/himself.
- ♥ Rash or undiagnosed skin condition:

Exceptions include: diaper rash, old chicken pox scabs, and diagnosed skin rashes accompanied by clearance from a medical provider stating that the rash or skin condition is not contagious.

- ♥ Nits or Head Lice: The program has a nit-free and head lice-free policy. If assistance is needed, please let program staff know and resources will be provided.
- ♥ Any symptoms of a communicable condition or disease.



Medication ~ All medication will need to have a prescription label or doctor's note in order to be administered.

Injuries/Accidents ~ Staff members are trained in CPR and First Aid. Little injuries ~ When your child has a minor injury, an Accident Report will be completed. You will sign this form when you return at the end of the day. Injuries and Accidents ~ If your child has a more severe injury or accident, you will be notified immediately.

Toilet training ~ Teachers/caregivers will partner with parents to develop an individualized plan on how to best toilet train their child. Extra clothing must be kept in the classroom. Pants with elastic waists are best in teaching children how to use the restroom independently. Please do not dress children in suspenders, belts, hard buckles etc.

Siblings ~ Due to State and Federal regulations, only children enrolled in the program may attend. Siblings over two-years old are occasionally allowed to participate in the class, or while the parents/guardians are volunteering, with prior consent from the Center Director, and with a Tuberculosis clearance.

Parent Conduct ~ Please refrain from loud and abusive conduct around staff and children. Any verbal or physical misconduct is a violation of the State Education Code, which protects teachers and children in these situations. Parents/guardians engaging in such conduct will be asked to leave

the facility and are subject to termination of services.

*Discipline Policy* ~ Setting reasonable limits on the child's behavior gives children the security of knowing exactly what is expected. Children will be encouraged to make positive choices. As staff creates a developmentally appropriate environment, they will set reasonable limits, redirect unacceptable behavior, and nurture positive interactions. Our program refrains from any use of corporal or unusual punishment/violation of personal rights.

*Child Behavior Standards and Intervention Policy* ~ Classroom rules are intended to protect the rights of all students and staff and promote a safe learning environment. The behavior of a child must not interfere with his/her safety or that of other children or adults in the classroom. When a child's behavior poses imminent danger to the physical well-being of her/himself or others, interventions may be used, which could include:

- ♥ Parent conference.
- ♥ A parent/guardian may be asked to pick up the child if the child cannot respond to adult interventions.
- ♥ A plan of action, developed with input from parent/guardian and staff.
- ♥ Inter-agency referrals.
- ♥ Recommendations for referrals to outside agencies.
- ♥ Adjustment of hours, or days of attendance, to meet the child's ability to comply with safety requirements.

If all appropriate interventions prove to be ineffective, other alternatives will be considered for the child. ([This is on pg. 13 of our Head Start Parent Handbook.](#))

*Arrival and Departure* ~ Participating in one of our programs can be an exciting opportunity for children. You are responsible to bring your child at the scheduled time, and pick them up at the scheduled time. Our responsibility is to ensure your child is safe and given the opportunity to learn.

To assist us in ensuring their safety, please follow the procedures below:

- ♥ Sign your child **in** each day. The California State Licensing agency has access to the daily sign in sheets and **requires** your full legal signature and time of day to be recorded each day your child attends.
- ♥ Sign your child **out** each day. Again, it is a California State Licensing requirement.
- ♥ Children will **only** be released to:
  - Someone over the age of 16.
  - Someone with proper authorization (on your emergency consent form.)
  - Someone with proper identification.
- ♥ Children will never be released to:
  - Anyone suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

- Anyone without proper identification.
- Anyone that is legally restrained from contact with your child.
- Anyone that is under the age of 16.
- ♥ Children become **extremely** worried, and staff becomes concerned, if you are late picking up your child. These are the steps we take when you are late and have not called us:
  - We will attempt to contact you by phone (home or cell).
  - After a reasonable amount of time (15 minutes), we call your emergency contacts to see if they know where you are, or if they are able to pick up your child.

Based on the written procedure, if we are unable to locate you or your designated emergency contacts within 30 minutes, we will contact law enforcement. This is a step that no one wants to take; please regard your child's pick up time as important as it is.

Holidays ~ CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin programs will be closed on the following holidays:

- |                      |                  |                          |
|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| ♥ New Year's Eve     | ♥ Memorial Day   | ♥ Thanksgiving Day       |
| ♥ New Year's Day     | ♥ Fourth of July | ♥ Day after Thanksgiving |
| ♥ Martin L. King Day | ♥ Labor Day      | ♥ Christmas Eve          |
| ♥ President's Day    | ♥ Veteran's Day  | ♥ Christmas Day          |

Special Needs ~ CAPK Early Head Start of San Joaquin programs accepts children with special needs into the program after the parents and program staff have determined that the needs of the child can be met by the program. Head Start/Early Head Start Child Development Centers provide the Least Restrictive Environment (in a class with their peers who do not have a disability) setting for children with disabilities.

The goal of Disabilities Services is to foster a positive environment where children with special needs are assisted in reaching their full potential. Head Start is a general education program, providing opportunities for all children with and without special needs to play and learn together, as well as learning to appreciate each other's differences. (Most of this is on pg. 15/16 of our Head Start Parent Handbook.)

Publicity

Television and radio stations, newspapers, and other media sources occasionally contact centers in order to photograph or interview children, families, and staff about our successful programs or accomplishments. Upon enrollment, prior to any names or photographs being released, parents/guardians are provided with consent forms to complete. Due to confidentiality requirements, foster children will not be photographed.

Pest Control

The Partnership utilizes a pest management program to effectively control pests with a number of techniques. This can include the application of pesticides that present the least possible hazard and effectively minimize risk to the environment. 24 hours prior to application, the Partnership will notify parents/guardians and staff of the name of the pesticide and active ingredients of all

pesticide products scheduled for application at the childcare facility. For three days after application this information will remain posted at the site.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND RECORDS**

- ♥ Agency staff respects the privacy of every parent/guardian and child. Confidential information is not discussed in the presence of another parent/guardian, children, or staff. All confidential information is kept in locked files.
- ♥ Upon request, the agency will provide authorized persons with access to information and records pertaining to the program, as deemed reasonable by the Head Start/State Child Development Director. The legal parents/guardians must make a request in writing. In the case of custody disputes, official court documents will prevail.
- ♥ Requests can also be made by court order or subpoena. Requests can be made by outside agencies and local education agencies with accompanying parental consent, including signatures.
- ♥ A minimum of three (3) working days is required for administrative staff to provide the requested copies.

Open Door Policy ~ Our program includes a strong emphasis on parent/guardian involvement and education in all phases of the curriculum. All parents and guardians of enrolled children are encouraged to visit at any time. We believe in and practice an “open-door” policy.

### **COMMUNICATION IS KEY!**

Most days everything goes just right for you, your child, your family, and staff. Occasionally, things do not. If you find yourself in this situation, here are some techniques to deal with your concerns to help you get the best results possible. Taking these steps can help clarify concerns you encounter in life.



- ♥ Take a moment to evaluate your feelings. Ask yourself, "Am I over-reacting?" or, "No, this really upsets me!"
- ♥ Take time to ask for an explanation.

Take time to listen to the other person. Ask for clarification. If it does not make sense to you, if it is not clear, or just does not seem right, ask. Use reflective listening terms such as, "Let me make sure I understand you." Or repeat back to the other person, "What I heard you say was..." Then wait for their response.

### **PARENT CONCERN AND COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

From time to time parents/guardians may have a concern or complaint, such as: relating to another parent, a staff who is not performing to his or her expectations according to his/her roles and responsibilities, or the condition of the center.

Our goal is that parents/guardians feel comfortable and are encouraged to discuss any concerns

which may occur during the program year with the appropriate center or Home-based staff.

Parents please review the following steps that have been put in place to assist you with sharing concerns or a complaint.

***Please note...A parent has the discretion of bypassing all steps and going directly to whom he or she feels comfortable requesting assistance for his or her concerns.***

**Step 1:** When a parent has a concern or complaint, the first step is to attempt a conversation with the agency staff person with whom there is a concern. **If the parent/guardian is not satisfied please go to the next step.**

**Step 2:** The second step is to contact the staff person's Supervisor immediately to discuss the area of complaint. At this point we encourage the parent/guardian, as well as the Supervisor, to document the complaint on the Parent Complaint Form. **If the parent/guardian is not satisfied please go to the next step.**

**Step 3:** The Supervisor will contact the Education Manager immediately. He/she will present the Education Manager with all the documentation and the completed Parent Complaint Form. The Supervisor will assist the parent/guardian in scheduling a meeting with the Education Manager. The Education Manager will offer a resolution to the parent/guardian. **If the parent/guardian is not satisfied please go to the next step.**

**Step 4:** The parent/guardian, with the assistance of the Education Manager, will bring the issue to the Program Administrator. The Program Administrator will evaluate the concern, bring the concern up the chain of command as necessary, and provide the parent an opportunity to discuss and accept a viable solution to their concern.

***\*\*\* It is our utmost goal to bring resolution to any concern or complaint shared. Some resolutions may be confidential especially if the concern is regarding a staff member or another parent.***

## **CHILD and ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM**

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) features a nutrition program that meets the nutritional needs and feeding requirements of each child, including those with special dietary needs and disabilities (with proper medical documentation).

The program serves a variety of foods, considers culture and ethnic preferences, and broadens the child's food experience. Foods served are high in nutrients, low in fat, sugar, and salt, and conform to the serving sizes and requirements of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and CACFP meal patterns. The CACFP provides meals for children enrolled in the Head Start / State Child Development programs. Infants are fed "on demand" and at appropriate intervals.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal and, where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or

parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

To file a complaint of discrimination write: USDA Director of the Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W Whitten Building, 14th and Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410, or call (202) 720-5964 (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **WOMEN, INFANTS AND CHILDREN - WIC PROGRAM**

The Head Start / State Child Development Division will provide you with information on the WIC program. The information will include the importance and benefits of the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, and the eligibility guidelines. This information will be provided to you at the time your child is enrolled in the program. For more information about WIC, please contact your program staff or contact your local WIC office.



Community Action Partnership of Kern  
Early Head Start of San Joaquin offices:

San Joaquin Early Head Start  
Child Development Centers  
Administrative Office  
1145 N. Hunter  
Stockton, CA 95202

Full-day center-based program for infants and toddlers

Home Base Program  
Administrative Office  
Barnett House ~ 347 E. Poplar St  
Stockton, CA 95202

Home Base program for Pregnant Women, Infants, and Toddlers

Community Action Partnership of Kern  
Administrative Office  
5005 Business Park North  
Bakersfield, CA 93309  
(661) 336 ~ 5236  
Yolanda Gonzales, Director  
Head Start / State Child Development

[www.capk.org](http://www.capk.org)

**“Sharing, caring and working together, helping to make the world a better place.”**

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