

**PATHFINDER KIDS KAMPUS  
EARLY HEAD START HANDBOOK SUPPLEMENT**

**Program Description and Options**

Kids Kampus Early Head Start is comprehensive child development programming providing services for eligible children ages 0-3 years old, as well as pregnant women. We serve children in the following program options:

***Combination:*** Children ages 18 months to 3 years attend Kids Kampus 2 days per week for 3 ½ hours each day and receive 1 home visit per month. Combination Continuity of Care classrooms have up to 8 children per room and 2 family/child educators per room. The children stay with the same child/family educator until they finish Early Head Start. This continuity helps children to form strong bonds and relationships with their caregiver and to feel secure in their environment. In order to receive the full benefit of Early Head Start programming all children must arrive by 8:30 a.m. for the morning session or 1:00 p.m. for the afternoon session. Failure to arrive by the requested times will result in loss of service for that day.

***Home-Based:*** Pregnant mothers and children from birth to age 3 can participate in Home-based services. Participants receive a weekly 90 minute home visit and can participate in 2 Parent/Child Group activities per month.

**Attendance Policy**

Your child should attend Early Head Start on a regular basis or you will be depriving him/her of opportunities to learn and develop socially, physically, and emotionally. It is important that home-based children see their teacher regularly for the same reasons.

***Center-Based Program & Combination Program***

Attendance is taken daily by the teacher and the reason for absence must be recorded. Call Kids Kampus as soon as you know your child will be absent.

With each day of unexcused absence (no contact by you to us), your child's teacher will attempt to contact you to determine the reason for the absence, refer your family for support services if needed, and discuss further attendance.

***Home-Based Program***

Excused absence include illness of your child, yourself or the home visitor, emergency or scheduled doctor appointments, a family emergency, or your home visitor cancels or is more than 15 minutes late.

Unexcused absences include any reason not already mentioned or missing a visit without a notice...no phone call or note. You can only have 2 “no shows”.

### **Parent/Teacher Home Visits**

Parent/Teacher Home Visits for center-based children are held at least 2 times per year. Your child’s teacher will contact you about setting appointments.

Parent/Teacher Home Visits for combination children are held 1 time per month. Your child’s development is discussed and ideas for implementing similar activities from the classroom setting are reviewed.

Meeting with you child’s teacher is very important. You can discuss your child’s development and ask lots of questions. You need to stay informed about your child’s education in Early Head Start and beyond.

### **Parent/Child Group**

Early Head Start Home-Based program offers the Parent/Child Group twice a month. What a great time to meet with other parents and socialize! Your Home Visitor will remind you of the Parent/Child Group meeting times. Come meet with other parents to learn together and have fun together.

### **Parent Involvement Policy & Opportunities:**

All parents are requested to complete a *Family Partnership Agreement (FPA)* with Early Head Start Staff. The partnership is a process that begins at enrollment. The FPA is an outline of family/child/ parent goals. The FPA is how Kids Kampus Early Head Start staff can support the family in their growth and development.

Studies have shown that parent involvement is a key to children being successful in school. One of the best ways of helping your child be successful in school is to visit the classroom. By giving of your time, you are showing your child that you care about his/her education.

Participation forms (In-Kind forms) are used to document parent involvement activities. For every hour that you are involved in your child’s education, our Early Head Start is credited with in-kind matching funds. To encourage parental involvement, the federal program requires our local program to have in-kind from both parents and community members. Pathfinder Kids Kampus believes that parents are their child’s first and most important teacher. You will be asked to sign forms to document your volunteer time. (Always sign for in-kind).

### ***Policy Council***

Policy Council is a group that works in partnership with Pathfinder Kids Kampus Early Head Start staff. The group is comprised of at least 51% of parents of children currently enrolled in each of the EHS program options (home-based, combination, and center-based) and community representative members. Policy Council members are actively involved in decision-making related to the entire operation of the Early Head Start program. Policy Council members agree to adhere to the code of conduct, maintain confidentiality and attend meetings regularly.

### ***Parent Committees***

All parents of children enrolled in the Early Head Start program are automatically members of the parent committee. At a minimum the Parent Committee assists in planning, conducting, and participating in informal and formal programs and activities for parents and staff.

## **Early Head Start Service Areas and Goals**

### ***Education***

Teaching methods are developed to meet the particular needs of each child. Individual problems get individual attention. Children are introduced to the world of words. A learning environment with varied experiences help children develop in a manner appropriate to their age and stage of development. Self-reliance, self-esteem, and self-confidence are encouraged and fostered. Parents get involved in educational activities in the classroom and at home to enhance their roles as the primary teacher in their child's education and development.

### ***Disabilities***

Children with special needs are welcomed into the Early Head Start program. Special services are provided to children based on each child's needs and strengths. Children with special needs are provided an opportunity for early intervention, treatment and mainstreaming with other enrolled children. First Steps providers are welcomed participants and team members in Pathfinder Kids Kampus Early Head Start services.

### ***Health***

A healthy child is a strong child. We will work very closely with parents to see that their child's health needs are met. This area includes developmental screenings, visual and hearing tests, immunizations and periodic physical examinations for Early Head Start children. We need parent's assistance in meeting the following requirements of our infant and toddler program.

- \* Well baby checks at ages 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 24, and 36 months.
- \* Immunizations kept current; including varicella (chicken pox) vaccination at age 1.

Families are provided with the necessary skills and support to link with an ongoing health care system to ensure that their child continues to receive comprehensive health care even

after leaving the Early Head Start program. Early Head Start provides information and assistance when necessary to complete a medical examination for every child in the program.

### ***Nutrition***

Snacks and meals that are provided consist of foods which will help meet the child's nutritional needs. Staff, children, and families learn to understand the relationship of nutrition to health, understand factors which influence good food practices and use a variety of ways to provide for nutritional needs and to apply this knowledge in the development of good eating habits after leaving the Early Head Start program.

### ***Mental Health***

Prevention, early identification and intervention of problems that interfere with a child's development are provided. Development of a positive attitude toward mental health services is encouraged.

### ***Social Services***

Early Head Start can provide referrals for emergency assistance of crisis intervention and offers information on the available community services and how to use them. Families are assisted in their efforts to improve the condition and quality of home life by working toward family and /or personal goals. Parental participation in the classroom and other activities as observers, volunteers or paid staff is highly encouraged. Early Head Start has a strong emphasis on family literacy as part of family involvement.

### ***Transition***

Services are provided for children and their families through activities and opportunities that build on developmental experiences, family strengths, and established support systems. These services help facilitate continuity for children as they transition into and out of Early Head Start.

## **Curriculum & Screening Tools**

***Creative Curriculum*** is used in all center-based and combination Kids Kampus classrooms. Refer to Pathfinder Kids Kampus handbook for additional *Creative Curriculum* information.

***Parents as Teachers*** curriculum is used in Early Head Start home-based programming. *Parents as Teachers (PAT)* is an early childhood parent education and family support program for parents of young children (prenatal - age 5). Program components include parent/teacher administered home visits, parent meetings, child health/development screenings, and a referral service for community resources.

***The Ounce Scale*** is utilized as the general developmental screening tool for infants and toddlers. *The Ounce Scale* covers a wide range of ages from birth to age 3 ½ years covering six developmental domains. *The Ounce Scale* provides a structure to help parents and teachers observe a range of relevant behaviors to assess and document your

child's developmental milestones. The "Family Album" requires parental input of what happens at home, valuing the parent role.

***Ages & Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ:SE)*** is used as the social-emotional screening tool. The *ASQ:SE* is very highly-rated, covers a full range of ages, takes a nonthreatening approach, and relies on parental input providing new insight into your child's development. General areas which will be screened include: personal-social (self-regulation, compliance, communication, adaptive functioning, autonomy, affect, and interaction with people).

***Edinburg Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)*** is utilized as the screening tool with postnatal women. Postpartum depression is the most common complication of childbearing. The 10-question *Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)* is a valuable and efficient way of identifying patients at risk for "perinatal" depression. The *EPDS* is easy to administer and has proven to be an effective screening tool. The *EPDS* is only a screening tool and does not diagnose depression – if concerns exist as a result of the screening, appropriate referrals to a licensed health care personnel will be made.