



Parent and Child  
Together  
(PACT) for  
West Central Illinois

Home-Based  
Parent Handbook

2017-2018

[www.pactheadstart.com](http://www.pactheadstart.com)



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## Home Based Evacuation Plan

Program Year: \_\_\_\_\_

Area/Site: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated Staff in Charge: \_\_\_\_\_

PACT Employee personal emergency numbers should be in Health and Safety notebook.



### Fire, Bomb Threat or other serious condition

If it is a Bomb Threat-do not sound any electronic devices or alarms. Do not use cell phones inside the building. (Bombs can be activated by electronic devices)

1. Sound the alarm or tell everyone in the building verbally to evacuate.
2. Teacher will take Health and Safety Notebook and children to the exit door and proceed to the designated location used during a fire drill. If there is another teacher present or parents, the lead teacher will direct all adults.
3. Before exiting the building yell, "Is everybody out" to ensure all adults have made it out.
4. Do not re-enter the building until an all clear signal has been given by appropriate person.



When you cannot return to the building:

1. Do a head count to ensure all children and parents are accounted for.
2. Take everyone to the location listed below.
3. Designated staff will call 911 with an available cell phone.
4. Teacher will call the Central Office and keep in touch using an available cell phone.
5. Designated staff in consultation with emergency personnel will contact parents.
6. Teacher will release children and obtain parent signature on the Departure Log.
7. Refer all media inquiry to the Executive Director.

The local evacuation site is established through a partnership with a local business or organization that can provide a comfortable, safe space for children, parents and staff.

EMERGENCY TEMPORARY HOUSING			
Location of Shelter	Shelter phone #	Contact Person of shelter	Phone # of contact person

Keep original in Health and Safety notebook along with Crisis Management Manual. Post copy on Health and Safety Bulletin Board and send copy to Supervisor yearly.

HB ED 12

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Mt. Sterling, Illinois 62353  
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www.pactheadstart.com

**HEAD START  
CENTRAL OFFICE STAFF**

Executive Director .....	Shanna Edison
Assistant Director.....	
Fiscal Officer .....	Diane Knight
Administrative Assistant.....	Sheila Vose
Office Manager .....	Lynn Foote
Center Based Education Coordinator.....	Teresa McGrew
Home Based Education Coordinator.....	Millie Young
Health Coordinator.....	Melissa Tschirgi
Disabilities/ Mental Health Coordinator.....	Fran Parker
Social Service Coordinator .....	Sara Mixer
ERSE/Transportation Coordinator.....	Mary Dunmire
Clerk/Typist .....	Diann Aden
Social Service Aide.....	Glynda Koch
Health Aide .....	Sherri Cook

The Central Office is located in the former South Grade School building in Mt. Sterling.  
Mt. Sterling is the approximate geographical center of our 8 county service area.  
Office hours are Monday through Friday 8:00-4:30

Communication Device for persons who are hearing impaired: Illinois Relay Center & Voice  
**1-800-526-0844**

**IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS AT ANY TIME, PLEASE CALL US COLLECT OR USE OUR  
TOLL FREE NUMBER. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!**

## WELCOME TO PACT

Welcome to the exciting learning adventure called Parent and Child Together. Your family will be embarking with us on a wonderful trip through the world of early learning. The PACT program has been in existence since 1978 serving young children and their families.

This handbook will explain our basic philosophy, goals, rules, and policies. Please read through this handbook, and if you have questions, concerns, or suggestions, feel free to contact us. We hope your family enjoys their time with us. Thank you for entrusting your child to our care.

### Our Program Philosophy.....

#### PACT BELIEVES.....

Parents are their children's first and most important teacher.

Parents care about their children and will put forth strong efforts to improve their child's well being.

Parents can and do learn new and better ways of interacting with their children given sufficient information and encouragement.

Resources for health and human services in West Central Illinois are limited and must be delivered without duplication to produce the most effective results.

Involvement of parents and the community in decision-making increases the commitment to the program while enhancing the quality of decision-making.

### Our Mission.....

**The mission of Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central Illinois is to provide a high quality comprehensive program of education, health, and social services to children and their families, developing life-long learners.**



The PACT program works because we believe that. . . .

**Parents are their child's first and most influential teachers. It is hoped that by working together, parents and staff will be better able to help children make the most of school and life experiences.**

How does PACT do this?

1. **Parent Engagement** through Family Events, Advisory Committees, Parent Committees, Policy Council, and through parent initiated activities, including parents' ideas and interest in their child's development and learning. Although parent participation is not mandatory, we believe it is the single most important factor in determining how much benefit your child will receive from our program.
2. **Education** is designed to meet each child's needs through individualized learning experiences. The curriculum includes developmental screening, ongoing assessment, goal setting, individualized activities, and parent involvement. The pre-school education program is delivered in an informal, child-centered setting, emphasizing learning through play.
3. **Health** emphasizes early recognition of health problems as well as preventive health care. Physical and dental exams, vision and hearing testing, and mental health and nutrition activities are all emphasized in this component.
4. **Social Services** are provided to the families of Head Start children through referrals to appropriate community agencies with support services being provided by PACT staff as needed. Staff assist families to achieve educational goals as well as individual family goals.
5. **Special Services:** At least 10% of PACT's total enrollment is reserved for children with special needs. Provisions are made based on the child's needs and the families' wishes.
6. **Transitions** assist parents in becoming their child's advocate as they transition into Early Head Start, from the home or other child care setting, and from Early Head Start into Head Start or other setting, and from Head Start to elementary school, preschool programs, or a child care setting.

**School Readiness Statement:**

Parent and Child Together (PACT) believes that relationships with families, schools and communities are the foundation for school readiness. Developing those relationships will assist us in creating safe and nurturing experiences which support young children to develop their individual interests, talents and goals to become successful lifelong learners.

**Approaches to Learning**

Children will develop the ability to stay focused, interested and engaged in experiences.

**Social Emotional**

Children will develop social relationships and self regulation.

**Physical Development & Health**

Children will understand and maintain safe and healthy practices. Children will achieve control of large and small muscles for movement, balance, self care and exploration.

**Language and Literacy**

Children will develop the ability to use and understand English and/or home language.

**Cognitive**

Children will use logic and reasoning skills to understand math concepts, scientific exploration and their history, culture and environment.

The children will progress in meeting expectations of the objectives.

**Objectives**

- 8b. Follows directions
- 11a. Attends and engages
- 11c. Solves problems

**Objectives**

- 1b. Follows limits and expectations
- 2b. Responds to emotional cues
- 3a. Balances needs and rights of self and others

**Objectives**

- 1c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
- 4. Demonstrates traveling skills.
- 6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
- 7a. Uses fingers and hands
- 7b. Uses writing and drawing tools

**Objectives**

- 9c. Uses conventional grammar
- 15a. Notices and discriminates rhymes
- 16a. Identifies and names letters
- 16b. Uses letter-sound knowledge.
- 19a. Writes name.
- 18c. Retells stories
- 37. Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English (DLL only)
- 38. Demonstrates progress in speaking English (DLL only)

**Objectives**

- 20a. Counts
- 20b. Quantifies
- 21b. Understands shapes
- 23. Demonstrates knowledge of patterns.

**School Readiness**

Statement:

Parent and Child Together (PACT) believes that relationships with families, schools and communities are the foundation for school readiness. Developing those relationships will assist us in creating safe and nurturing experiences which support young children to develop their individual interests, talents and goals to become successful lifelong learners.

**Family Well**

**Being**

Families will understand and maintain safe and healthy practices, and meet basic economic needs.

**Positive Parent Child Relationships**

Families will understand the elements of positive relationships and have the ability to identify and address the challenges of parenting.

**Families as Life Long Educators**

**Family Engagement in Transitions**

Families will see themselves as their child's first and most important teacher.

**Families as Learners**

Families will identify their strengths and address their needs to support their parenting, career and life goals.

**Family Connections to Peers and Community**

Families will engage with social and service networks to achieve personal growth and enhance community life.

**Families as Advocates and Leaders**

Families will develop and utilize decision making and leadership skills within program, community and state to support children's well being.

**Family Objectives**

Families complete and return weekly goal chart .

Families ensure their child has good attendance.

Families read to their child daily.

**Family Objectives**

Families attend 25% of socializations.

## **MY RIGHTS AS A PACT PARENT**

1. To take part in major policy decisions affecting the planning and the operation of the program.
2. To help develop adult programs which will improve daily living for me and my family.
3. To be welcomed in the classroom.
4. To choose whether or not I participate without fear of endangering my child's right to be in the program.
5. To be informed regularly about my child's progress in Head Start.
6. To always be treated with respect and dignity.
7. To expect guidance for my child from the teachers and staff, which will help his/her total individual development.
8. To be able to learn about the operation of the program, including the budget and the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.
9. To take part in planning and carrying out programs designed to increase my skill in areas of possible employment.
10. To be informed of community resources concerned with health, education & improvement of family life.

## **MY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A PACT PARENT**

1. To learn as much as possible about the program and to take part in major policy decisions.
2. To accept the program as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and my children's lives.
3. To take part as an observer, a volunteer, or a paid employee, and to contribute my services in whatever way I can toward enrichment of the total program.
4. To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, to explain the program to other parents, and to encourage their full participation.
5. To welcome Teachers and Staff into my home to discuss ways in which Parents can help their children's development at home in relation to school experiences.
6. To work with the Teacher, Staff, and other Parents in a cooperative way.
7. To guide my children with firmness, which is both loving and protective.
8. To offer constructive criticism of the program, to defend it against unfair criticism, and to share in evaluating it.
9. To take advantage of programs designed to increase my knowledge about child development and my skills in areas of possible employment.
10. To become involved in community programs which help to improve health, education, and recreation.
11. To teach my child to show proper respect and correct language to use in the classroom

## **PARENT COMPLAINTS**

PACT Policy Council has established the following procedures to govern the hearing and resolving of parent complaints regarding the PACT Program.

- Step 1: Parent complaints should be remitted to the Teacher currently working with the family and at the Center level. If the complaint is not resolved to the parent's satisfaction, parent proceeds to Step 2.
- Step 2: Parent should submit complaint, by contacting the Executive Director or the Assistant Director. Parents should receive a response a week. If complaint is not resolved to parent's satisfaction, complaint proceeds to Step 3.
- Step 3: Parent complaint (in dated and in writing) will be remitted to Policy Council for consideration and resolution. Parent will be notified as to when the committee will consider the complaint and given sufficient opportunity to be present. Complaint will include written documentation of steps taken by staff to resolve complaint prior to Step 3.

## EARLY HEAD START HOME BASED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

**Service Area:** Services are provided to prenatal women and 0-3 families in the counties of Pike, Hancock, Cass, Schuyler, Adams, McDonough, Brown, and Scott on a year-round schedule.

**Enrollment Criteria:** Prenatal women to 3 years of age; families must meet income guidelines; program must reserve 10% of funded slots for children with special needs. The program is available at no cost to those who qualify.

The home visits for the Prenatal parents follow an INTENSE schedule (weekly visits from time of enrollment until time of delivery) or a MODERATE schedule (monthly visits during the first three months of pregnancy, visits every other week during the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> months of pregnancy, and weekly from the 7<sup>th</sup> month until time of delivery). The visits are 1 ½ hours unless family needs indicate otherwise.

Home visits for 0-3 families are held weekly in the home for 1 ½ hours. The home based teacher will guide the parent in ways to interact with their child and develop a secure relationship between the parent and child. Group socialization are held twice monthly for two hours. The parent is required to attend the socialization with the child. Parents are invited to attend center family events.

## WHAT IS PARENT ENGAGEMENT ALL ABOUT

Parents can work together with PACT to decide what kinds of learning experiences they want their children to have in PACT. Parents should be involved in running PACT because it is their children who are affected by the program. Making a good program calls for many people to work together, sharing their talents, knowledge, and energy so that children can receive the greatest benefit. The more knowledge and energy parents and staff can invest in the program, the better the program will be.

There are three areas of special knowledge Parents have which can make the program a better one:

1. The world's most informed expert on any child is the parent. No one else knows as much about a child as the parents. For PACT to help a child as much as possible, this knowledge must be shared with other people in the program.
2. Parents know the ways in which they want their children to be growing and learning. Young children are learning all the time! Only if the program staff, volunteers, and parents are working together can a child grow and learn as much as he is able. It is necessary for PACT PARENTS TO SHARE their thinking about the program so it can be the kind of program they want.
3. Parents know the community they live in. As a result, they may know of community problems which need to be worked on for the benefit of their children and their families. PACT Parent Groups provide a chance for parents to discuss and act on community problems that affect their children.

The more parents contribute their knowledge to the program, the stronger the program can be. We encourage you to become an informed and involved parent leader. PACT has an "open door" policy. Parents may and are encouraged to attend all program activities. This includes socializations, family events, Policy Council meetings and Advisory Committee meetings.

## **FATHER INVOLVEMENT**

PACT recognizes that both mothers and fathers play an essential role in the healthy development of children and believes a healthy family is a child's best and most powerful resource. Fathers and other men involved in the Head Start child's life are encouraged to participate in home visits, socializations, field trips, and program activities, including committees and Policy Council.



## **HOW PARENTS CAN PARTICIPATE IN PACT FOR WEST CENTRAL ILLINOIS**

Statistics have shown that children who have experienced the Head Start program have a greater opportunity for lifelong success. It is also known that parental engagement increases the chance for success even more. We offer many avenues for Parent Engagement:

- ✿ Be actively involved in Home Visits and planning goals and activities for children
- ✿ Achieve skills in decision making, group processes and leadership
- ✿ Join parent committees and Policy Council
- ✿ Volunteer in the classroom
- ✿ Apply for a job with PACT
- ✿ Work together with other parents on community problems
- ✿ Do volunteer work at the PACT office or Center Based site
- ✿ Attend Family Events, serve on Parent Committee
- ✿ Make materials for teaching the children

These are just a few of the general ways for you to be involved. Please feel free to talk with your Teacher about volunteering.

### **PACT Head Start is here for YOU and your entire family**

## **FAMILY EVENTS**

Family events are planned by the parent committees, with input from the parent group. Each site has an event planned for each quarter, with additional events planned and held based on parent interest/attendance.

The goals of Family Events include:

- To provide parents an opportunity to meet other parents in the program
- To provide opportunities for parents to participate in program planning and assist with activities
- To provide a forum for parents to explore areas of common interest and develop plans for dealing with common concerns
- To improve communication between parents and program staff
- To enhance parenting skills
- To provide leadership opportunities and growth
- To provide enjoyable activities for the whole family while providing support for their children's readiness for school

The first Family Event is the Orientation that is held at each Center. Parents will learn more about the PACT program and Parent Committees will be elected.

Family events may be held at the PACT centers, local parks and playgrounds, libraries, and/or other public locations such as bowling alleys, skating rinks, etc. based on the activities planned.

## **PARENT COMMITTEES:**

Parent committees are made up of representatives from groups of currently enrolled parents from each program option (Head Start, Early Head Start, home based & center based, as well as child care) and are selected at the Family Event/Orientation held at the beginning of the program year. Responsibilities of the parent committee include:

- Planning and carrying out program activities & Family Events
- Communication with the Policy Council representative at the committee meetings
- Advise staff in implementing policies/activities.
- Participating in the recruitment/screening of agency employees.
- Attending planned activities & encouraging other families to participate

Parent committees will meet, at a minimum, on a quarterly basis, during September, December, March & June.

## **POLICY COUNCIL**

The Policy Council is responsible for the direction of the PACT program. Policy Council is made up of parents that are elected to represent each Head Start parent group. Any major decisions made by management staff at PACT are subject to input from this group of parents and often the Policy Council group must approve those decisions before they can be implemented.

Parents who are elected to Policy Council must attend meetings once a month in Mt. Sterling. Pact will reimburse parents for mileage and babysitting costs at a rate determined by PACT policies.

Being a Policy Council representative can be a great experience. Members have the opportunity to attend conferences. They learn how a Board or Council operates. The parents on the Council have time to share information and ideas with other parents. All parents have an opportunity to hear Policy Council information from the Policy Council representative at Family Events. Be sure to attend your family events orientation and learn more about being a Policy Council Member!

## **ELECTIONS**

Policy Council members are elected at Family Event Orientations in September. During the year, individuals interested in becoming Policy Council Representatives or Representatives that needed re-elected, must notify the Family Advocate(s) at the center closest to them that they are interested. The interested individual will attend the next Parent Committee meeting at the center to ask to be elected. Once the individual is elected, it is noted in the Committee minutes and the FA will contact the ERSE Coordinator with contact information of the new Representative. The Family Advocate will let the new Representative know the date and time of the next Policy Council meeting. The Representative will then attend the next Policy Council meeting.

During the year, when HB representatives wish to be elected or need to be elected, the HB Teacher will make a ballot sheet marked yes/no, and have the parent write a statement about why they want to represent that area, sign, and date it. The Teacher will take the ballot to all of their families and explain what it is to the parents. If there are 2 parents in the home, then both of them should be allowed to vote.

The Teacher will place the ballots in an envelope marked confidential and send to the ERSE Coordinator. The Teacher is responsible for making sure all contact information is forwarded to the ERSE Coordinator as well. Once ballots are counted, the ERSE Coordinator will send the information to the Teacher, who will let the parent know they have been elected. The ballots will be kept on file at the central office. A packet will be sent to the new representative from the central office with the information for the next meeting.

## **HEALTH ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

The Health Advisory Committee members are selected from the eight county service areas served by PACT. The Committee meets at least once each year to evaluate services, identify and plan for screening of community health problems, help plan, and advise in areas of difficulty. Three parents are elected from Policy Council Representatives.

## **SCHOOL READINESS TEAM**

The School Readiness Team members are selected from the eight county service areas served by PACT. The School Readiness Team is responsible for reviewing the child outcomes, the annual self-assessment education findings, the federal review team education findings, etc. The School Readiness Team will advise and recommend program changes to the education coordinators. Parents are asked to assist the School Readiness Team by the Policy Council members.

## **HOME BASED INKIND CONTRIBUTIONS**



The PACT program operates through the support of federal and state funds. In addition, PACT must match certain funds by obtaining inkind contributions from parents and members of the community to show their support of the program. Inkind contributions are services, time, mileage, supplies, etc. donated by parents and the community.

PACT must match 20% of the grant with INKIND. We cannot meet that match without parents contributing weekly. The time you spend in face to face intentional teaching with your child is INKIND for PACT. The Fun and Learning handbook is distributed to all families. The Teacher explains the use of the Weekly Goal Chart/Inkind Record and discusses ways parents can donate inkind through teaching their child at home during the week. Please complete the Weekly Goal Chart/Inkind form every week and give them to your child's Teacher.

In addition, parents can contribute Inkind hours through a variety of other means.

The following can be counted as Inkind:

### Donated Time

- Time spent attending a Head Start Policy Council meeting or reading Policy Council materials.
- Time spent attending Health, School Readiness, Advisory Meetings, and reading the materials from these meetings.
- Time spent making games, name tags, or other things for the classroom as requested by the Teacher.
- Time spent interacting with children on Field Trips or other activities with learning experiences.
- Time spent at Family Events, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Parent Committee Meetings, or other contact visits as requested by PACT staff.

### Donated Mileage - Using Your Own Vehicle

- Mileage cost attending Health, School Readiness, Social Service Advisory, Parent Committee, or Policy Council Meetings.
- Mileage cost transporting your child to and from Field Trips.

## **MILEAGE REIMBURSEMENT**

**Early Head Start Parent Mileage Reimbursement for Attendance to Socializations:** Parents will be reimbursed \$.50 per mile for actual round trip miles traveled from the family's home to their socialization site when attending socialization activities. Only parents driving will receive the mileage reimbursement as the reimbursement is based on actual miles driven.

PACT employees are not to be involved in making any transportation agreements between families. The families must arrange any plans with other families on their own. This reimbursement will help to offset costs of attending socializations such as gas money, since bus transportation is not available for home based.

## **ABSENCES AND IRREGULAR ATTENDANCE**

It is important that parents help maintain good attendance. The Home Based Teacher will work with you to establish regularly scheduled home visits that are convenient for your family. It is important for your child's development as well as essential to the overall operation of the program that home visits are kept. Missed visits are missed opportunities for learning.

PACT realizes there will be some sickness or other emergencies that may cause a family to occasionally cancel a home visit. However, when at all possible, we ask families to schedule other appointments at times that do not interfere with your child's visit time. If families will be taking a vacation or will be out of the area for 30 days during the HS/EHS program year, the parent/guardian must communicate this request with their HBT in advance of the missed visits.

The following are acceptable reasons for missed visits or classes:

The child or another member of the family in the home:

- is hospitalized
- is incapacitated due to serious illness or injury
- contract a communicable disease (Our procedures state that if a family contracts a communicable disease such as lice, scabies, impetigo, pink eye, or others that could be transmitted to other homes, the Teacher cannot enter the home until the disease has been treated.)
- has a health ailment which temporarily prevents attendance
- has to receive medical treatment or therapy at the time of the scheduled visit or class and which could not have been scheduled for another time

Where participation is affected by a temporary family situation:

- There is a death in the family
- The Teacher cannot make the visit or class due to weather conditions, etc...

Reasons for missed visits are recorded weekly and the Teacher will work with you to make-up missed visits. Continued missed visits may result in your child's slot in the program being deemed vacant.

\*\*\* If your child has to miss a visit, please notify us as soon as possible by notifying your Teacher or calling 1-800-443-7228.

### **CERTIFIED COPY OF BIRTH CERTIFICATE**

**Within 30 days of enrollment, the parent or guardian must provide a certified copy of the child's birth certificate or other reliable proof of identity and age of the child.** If a certified copy of the birth certificate is not available, the parent or guardian must submit a passport, visa or other governmental documentation as proof of the child's identity and age, and an affidavit or notarized letter explaining the inability to produce a certified copy of the birth certificate. **PACT is required by law to notify the Illinois State Police or local law enforcement agency if the parent or guardian fails to submit proof of the child's identity within the 30-day time frame.**

### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

All personal cell phones must be set on vibrate while in PACT facilities or during PACT activities/work hours. This policy includes cell phones belonging to staff, substitutes, volunteers and parents. Adults will not use their cellphone when they are with the children.



### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Information shared with PACT staff is confidential. A signed release from parents must be obtained before sharing or discussing information with other agencies.

### **CHILD PICTURE POLICY**

Parents/families who take pictures of their children at PACT activities may not post any pictures that include other children on any social site such as Face Book, My Space, etc. and may not post them anywhere on the internet or send them via email to anyone else. It is very important to respect the safety and privacy of all families in the program. Anyone who violates this policy will not be allowed to take pictures at PACT activities in the future.



### **SECURITY SYSTEM**

PACT centers are equipped with a security system that requires each person to enter a 4 digit pin and scan a security card in order to gain entry into the center. Each family is offered 2 cards at the beginning of the year and asked to return these cards at the end of the year. Only the person assigned the security card is authorized to use that card and pin. Any person without a pin and security card will have to be buzzed in by staff who monitor each person's entry through the use of security cameras.

### **UNATTENDED VEHICLES**

**When you drop off or pickup children from the center, young children should not be left unattended in vehicles in the PACT parking lot. Under DCFS standards this is considered a required call to the DCFS Hotline. If this creates a problem for you during drop off or pickup please discuss with the Site Supervisor.**

### **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

In case of an emergency situation, parents should stay home and wait by the phone until they are contacted by either emergency personnel or PACT staff. Following consultation between emergency personnel and Executive Director of PACT, parents will be contacted and provided with instructions regarding transportation arrangements and responsibilities and an update on their child's health status.

## **FIREARMS/WEAPONS POLICY**

PACT employees and contractual workers, while in pay status and/or on PACT property or at PACT sponsored activities, are prohibited from introducing, possessing, using, buying, or selling unauthorized weapons, firearms, ammunitions, explosives, or items deemed by PACT management to be dangerous.

### **Parent/visitor policy:**

PACT parents and visitors, while on PACT property or at PACT sponsored activities, are prohibited from possessing unauthorized firearms or other weapons.

Unauthorized means any weapon, even if the owner has a legal state permit to carry the weapon. The following exception applies:

- a. A firearm in the possession of a law enforcement officer on duty who is authorized to possess the firearm by the employing law enforcement agency.
- b. PACT requests officers who are visiting classrooms for the purpose of safety education to refrain from bringing their weapons into the buildings.

## **HEAD START PHILOSOPHY REGARDING GUIDANCE AND DISCIPLINE**

The focus of Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central Illinois is on meeting the needs of children and families in ways that reflect the principles of child and family development. This focus is based on a belief that both the early childhood environment and the staff must provide and reinforce limits and realistic expectations that are consistent, clear, and positively defined. The philosophy for guidance and discipline in the agency is based on the belief that children develop self- or inner-control by being given opportunities to learn, understand, and follow simple rules. Children are most secure when they know what is expected of them and when the expectations take into account each child's needs and strengths.

Just as children need the security of being loved, they also need secure boundaries and limits that are geared toward the development of self-respect, healthy interpersonal relationships, skills in problem solving and ultimately the ability to make wise decisions for themselves.

The ultimate goal of PACT's Guidance and Discipline Policy is to promote basic human values, such as respect, trust, honesty, and caring for others. Every effort is made to provide the child with the type of learning environment which leads to development of inner controls and positive self-discipline.

### **How discipline will be implemented by staff:**

All teaching staff, including substitutes, entering our program will receive orientation to our "Child Management Training Guide" in order to ensure consistency. Only staff members and those trained may discipline children while participating in any Head Start activity/function. The mental and physical well-being of every child enrolled in PACT will be the primary concern of the organization. Staff will assist parents to set reasonable limits, guide, and teach them, and follow through with dignity and respect. PACT recognizes the importance of social-emotional development as a foundation to early they become more focused and engaged in learning.

Children will have reasonable opportunities to resolve their own conflict. Discipline will be the responsibility of the staff that has an on-going relationship with the child. When there is a specific plan for responding to a child's pattern of unacceptable behavior, all staff who work with the child will be aware of the plan and cooperate in its implementation, which may include a consultation with the Mental Health Professional in conjunction with parental and staff input and cooperation. When a challenging behavior occurs, the child will be disciplined appropriately, in a positive manner, to ensure the safety of others. If an unruly child endangers

others, the adult will make accommodations for the child away from the group while the child works to regain their composure. Teachers will document challenging behaviors to determine if there are any patterns or daily triggers.

In case of severe behavior, the child may be temporarily withdrawn from class until a Family Support Plan meeting can be held. Severe behavior is defined as behavior which injures the child, the teacher or classmates, or remains disruptive for an extended amount of time. No child will be removed without joint agreement of the teacher, site supervisor, and Education Coordinator and in consultation with the Executive Director. The parent/guardian must attend the FPS meeting before the child may return to class. During the FPS meeting staff and the family will work together to plan techniques and strategies to implement in the classroom and at home to teach the child self-regulation and problem solving.

When intervening in a situation that necessitates child management, the technique chosen will be positive. Multiple approaches such as redirection, cool down, solution kit, breathing techniques, restating behavior expectations, pictorial cues, buddy system and social stories are addressed in the Child Management Training Guide. Only a trained staff member can use restraint and holding.

**NOTE:** The following behaviors are prohibited:

- a. Corporal punishment -includes hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear.
- b. Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest, outdoor play, or use of the bathroom.
- c. Abusive or profane language.
- d. Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment.
- e. Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child.

Any staff or volunteer involved in any of the behaviors listed above will be subject to suspension or termination pending investigation.

Effective discipline begins long before disruptive behaviors that require child management responses ever occur. The teacher's primary role in terms of child management is **prevention**.

DCFS Question: How will parents be involved in the guidance and discipline process?

The classroom teacher or (assistant site supervisor for childcare) will discuss guidance and discipline policy with parents during their enrollment visit.

DCFS Question: What is the written procedure for termination of a child's enrollment because of disciplinary issues?

PACT will not terminate a child from enrollment solely on the basis of disciplinary issues

### **PEST MANAGEMENT AND USES OF PESTICIDES/HERBICIDES AT PACT FACILITIES**

Any extermination of pests of rodents at PACT centers will be conducted by a commercial pest control business, with certified technicians, and under the direct observation of a staff member. PACT will request the use of a variety of non-chemical methods as well as pesticides, when needed, to reduce pest infestations to acceptable levels and to minimize children's exposure to pesticides.

### **FUND RAISING**

Parents and staff are not allowed to fund raise for PACT Head Start

## **SMOKING POLICY**

**Smoking is prohibited on property owned, leased, or utilized by Parent and Child Together (PACT) for West Central II. This includes both indoor and outdoor premises, including parking areas. PACT staff or parents who smoke must do so off of PACT leased/owned property and out of children's view.**

PACT staff will discuss the Smoke Free Environment Policy with parents enrolled in the. PACT encourages an open dialogue between the parent and staff member regarding the use of tobacco on home visits. PACT does encourage parents to refrain from smoking on home visits, however PACT does not feel that it can mandate that parents not be allowed to smoke in their own homes if they so desire. PACT staff will provide parent education on the effects of secondhand smoke on young children.



## **NO PARKING ZONES**

At each center there are no parking zones in the front of the centers where the buses load and unload children. We ask that no one park in those areas for the safety of the children. If you park in one of those areas you will be asked to move your vehicle.

## **CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

PACT personnel are required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse and neglect and to cooperate with the Department of Children and Family Services in investigation of such cases.

## **CHILD SEX OFFENDERS AND MURDERERS**

No convicted child sex offender or murderer on the community notification lists shall be permitted to participate in socializations or center based activities for children, nor be on PACT property where children are present. The Illinois Sex Offender Registry is available online at the website [www.isp.state.il.us/sor](http://www.isp.state.il.us/sor)

## **CHILDREN'S RECORDS**

Children's records will be sent to the school district or program where the child seeks or intends to enroll after leaving Early Head Start or Head Start, or is already enrolled, as long as the disclosure of information is related to the child's enrollment or transfer. If parents would like to obtain a copy, challenge or refuse disclosure of information, they must notify PACT in writing.

## **INSURANCE**

Insurance coverage is provided at no charge to enrolled children during their participation in PACT sponsored activities.

## **SOLICITATION POLICY**

Parents are asked not to solicit funds, supplies, or anything of value from local businesses and/or the community for use by participants of the program. Questions regarding solicitation should be directed to Denise Conkright, PACT Executive Director.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Field Trips may be substituted for socialization activities and classes periodically throughout the year. Parents are encouraged to participate in the planning of all the field trips.

## **GIFTS**

Employees of PACT may not receive any gifts, money, or other gratuities from persons receiving benefits or services except under the following circumstances:

1. The gift is from an enrolled family and of nominal value.
2. The gift must be reported to the Supervisor.

## **WEATHER CLOSINGS**

In case of inclement weather, teachers have the option of rescheduling their home visits. Teachers will make every effort to notify the family by phone if that happens. If a socialization is canceled due to bad weather, staff will notify families by phone. If you do not have a phone and the weather looks questionable, please call the Central Office and we will give you information.



## **PROGRAM TRANSPORTATION**

PACT has limited resources to meet transportation needs of participants. Transportation is limited to enrolled families who would otherwise be unable to participate in program activities. Transportation may be provided to medical and dental exams, follow-up treatments, health screenings, parent committee meetings, and some social service appointments. Parents are encouraged to provide their own transportation whenever possible.

All parents are expected to accompany their child whenever they are being transported for PACT services.

## **EARLY HEAD START HOME VISITS**

Your Home Based Teacher will visit your home for a 1 ½ hour visit each week. The visits for prenatal families will follow the schedule selected by the family, as noted earlier in the handbook. Visits for children ages 0-3 will be scheduled to fit both the family and the teachers' schedule. The teacher assigned to your family will:

- Provide guidance and materials needed for you to interact with your child
- Use your ideas and input for activities for your child and for socialization
- Promote a strong parent-child relationship

The Parents as Teacher curriculum will be used to establish the Home Visits for the Prenatal and Infant/Toddler families. PACT's Individualized written education plan is guided by the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The Parents as Teachers Foundational 0-3 curriculum is used for all of our Early Head Start Home Based areas serving parents and children prenatal to three years of age.

## **EHS GROUP SOCIALIZATION**

Early Head Start will provide two socializations per month for 2 hours (22 per year) for infant and toddler and their parents. The purpose of the socialization experience for infants and toddlers is to support child development by strengthening the parent-child relationship.

- \*Help parents to better understand child development
- \*Encourage parents to share their parenting challenges and joys with another
- \*Offer structured and unstructured learning opportunities for both children and parents
- \*Model successful strategies for engaging children and support their development

## **TRANSITION SERVICES FOR EARLY HEAD START**

Children leaving EHS for Head Start or another placement receive a packet of information. This packet includes a booklet for you and your child to do together, information about preparing for a new setting and information on placement choices. If there are speech or language concerns your Teacher can help refer you to someone who can do a speech and language evaluation.

## **INFANT, TODDLERS, AND TWO YEAR OLDS DEVELOPMENT SCREENING**

PACT believes assessment of infants and toddlers should be done on a regular and periodic basis because of the rapid developmental changes in the early years. The ASQ-3 screens children systematically over time. The ASQ-3 system's involvement of parents meet the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990 (PL 101-476) and its 1997 amendments (PL 105-17), including the ASQ-SE, the mandate for early detection of social or emotional problems in young children. **The Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ-3): A Child-Monitoring System, Third Edition is composed of 19 questionnaires.**

### **ASQ-3 Ages and Stages Questionnaire: SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL**

The Ages and Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional takes the ASQ-3 a step further by concentrating on the importance of considering social and emotional competence in young children at eight stages. The ASQ-SE is used in conjunction with the ASQ-3 to identify the need for further social and emotional behavior assessment in children.

## **ONGOING ASSESSMENT-EARLY HEAD START**

*Teaching Strategies GOLD™* is an authentic, observational assessment system for children from Birth through Kindergarten. It is designed to help teachers to know children well- what they know and can do, and their strengths, needs, and interests. With this information, teachers can guide children's learning by planning engaging experiences that are responsive to individual and group needs.

## **DISABILITIES SERVICES**

No less than 10% of PACT's enrollment is reserved for children who have special needs. PACT tries to ensure that children who have special needs receive the full benefit of all components offered.

The Disabilities/Mental Health Services Coordinator is available to help locate resources, make referrals for evaluations, and access professionals.

The Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator can also help facilitate communication between families and providers, and can attend meetings related to your child's special needs. We are also here to help you learn to advocate for yourself.



Also available for parents and staff is a PACT Lending Library on a broad variety of topics related to disabilities, behavior, and inclusion. Parents see a list shown to them by their Family Advocate or Home-based Teacher, or they may have a list if they wish. To request a book, DVD/Video, or a pamphlet, parents make a request to their Family Advocate or Teacher, or call the Central Office. Parents may contact the Disabilities/Mental Health Coordinator with questions and concerns about their child.

## **MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES**

Mental Health is a state of well-being. It is the ability to meet the ordinary demands of every-day life, and it is the ability to cope with normal stresses which life presents. This is true for both children and adults.

PACT has several ways of helping children and families who may be overwhelmed or experiencing difficult situations. This could include sadness, frustration, children's behavioral problems, substance abuse, family relationships, and many other conditions which make life less enjoyable.

One thing PACT does is have a Mental Health Services Consultant observe every classroom and socialization at least once through the year to observe all of the children and their interactions with staff and other children. The Consultant will be watching for signs of behavior which is not typical for the age of the child. If our consultant notices anything of concern, it will be discussed with your Teacher. Your Teacher or Family Advocate will notify you of the concern and will assist you in locating and obtaining helpful resources.

Our Consultant is also available during a family crisis. A parent may contact her Teacher or Family Advocate, and they will help you arrange a phone or personal consultation. For children who require a Behavioral Plan to help him /her to be more productive in the classroom, the consultant may attend and the parent is offered private discussion with the consultant after the meeting if they wish. Our consultant also presents a workshop at every center which involves parents in discussion of what is typical for children's behavior and emotional state.

Also available for parents and staff is the PACT Lending Library which houses a broad variety of materials (books, videos/DVDs, and pamphlets) on mental health related topics. These are available for you to check-out upon request of your Teacher or Family Advocate. They will have a list, or you may ask them for your own list.

Parents should feel free to contact staff at the centers, in the field, or at the central office if they have a concern or issue. As with all components of PACT, parents can be certain that any information discussed with staff or our consultant will remain confidential.

## **SOCIAL SERVICES**

The PACT Program believes that in order for a family to receive the most benefit from an educational program, the family's basic needs must first be met. It is unrealistic to expect a parent to be able to focus on their child if they are concerned about food, clothing, shelter, etc. PACT uses a Family Partnership Survey as a way to identify needs & strengths, set family goals, & provide opportunities for involvement.

PACT will provide social services within the scope of its knowledge, resources and expertise. Where needs exist that are beyond that scope, families will be referred to appropriate available agencies.

We offer:

- \*Referrals to outside agencies
- \*Parent mentoring groups
- \*Workshops on an individual/small group basis
- \*Family Action Plans to target specific goals
- \*Videos and written resources, including books & pamphlets



All information shared with staff by families is confidential and will not be released to other agencies without signed permission from the parent.

**HEALTH SERVICES**  
***SCHOOL READINESS BEGINS WITH HEALTH!***

The Health Component consists of several different aspects of health including physical health, mental health, and nutrition. The PACT Program believes that good general health is important to learning. We intend to educate our parents to the importance of preventative health and link them to an on-going health care system in their community. The Teacher is the primary contact with the family in assisting them to seek health services.

**NUTRITION**

A snack will be provided at Socializations not at a licensed center unless the group decides lunch is needed. Socializations at licensed sites receive the lunch served at the site. The menu will be developed by the PACT Nutritionist. Early Head Start parents may bring formula and baby food for their own infants, if they choose. If this is a concern, the HB Teacher will provide.

**NUTRITION POLICY**

Because of nutrition, safety of foods being served, and a variety of regulations, PACT prohibits parents from providing any food items at PACT sponsored activities, on or off-site. If your child is an infant, you may provide their formula and baby food. If you are unable to, please talk with your teacher.

**HEALTH SERVICES**

All enrolled children are required to be medically screened within 45 days of enrollment following an age appropriate schedule utilized by the EPSDT program of the Illinois Medical Program and by recommendation of your child's health care provider.

These screenings include physical exams (well baby check), dental exams, vision/hearing screening, blood lead level test, TB test, Hematocrit or Hemoglobin tests, and immunizations. Children will be excluded from attending socialization if physical exam, TB Test or Doctor sign-off, current immunizations, and blood lead/level test are not on file within 30 days of enrollment. PACT can assist with transportation, referrals, and has a limited amount of funds to assist with costs, with the approval of the Health Coordinator, if no other resources are available.





## GROUP SOCIALIZATION ACTIVITIES AND OTHER SERVICES

Socializations are an important part of our Home Based services. Attending socialization will enhance your child's school readiness goals. We hope you take the opportunity to meet and talk with other parents in your area. Your child will have a new environment to build their social, cognitive, language, and motor skills.

<b>PARENT AGREES TO...</b>
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\_\_\_\_ Accompany my child to Socializations twice a month.

My socialization time is: \_\_\_\_\_ Socialization day is: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please explain why you might not be able to join us for this play date:**

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**The teacher can give you a yearly schedule of all of the dates for your child's group.**

\_\_\_\_ Work with PACT staff to arrange, keep and accompany my child to appointments needed for required health screenings. I understand that my child cannot attend socializations if he/she does not have up-to-date physical/WBC, Lead, TB, and Immunizations.

\_\_\_\_ Communicate with my HB Teacher any struggles or needs I have for making, keeping and getting needed appointments.

\_\_\_\_ Not send or bring any food, drinks or candy to socializations. Formula or baby food is allowed.

\_\_\_\_ Not bring or send any medication to socialization with my child. If I have medication, I will leave it in my car or ask the teacher where it can be safely stored out of children's reach.

<b>TEACHER AGREES TO...</b>
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\_\_\_\_ Plan activities using your ideas and the Parents as Teachers curriculum for socialization.

\_\_\_\_ Plan activities that support you and & your child engaging in face to face contact

\_\_\_\_ Assist your family with any struggles or needs for making and keeping appointments for health screenings.

\_\_\_\_ Assist you and your child to attend socializations twice a month, including offering transportation.

Parent

Signatures \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Place original in child's education file at office site

Teacher will review if attendance falls below 85% or less than 85% of weekly goal charts have been returned.

EHS/HB ED 16



300 South Capitol, P.O. Box 231  
Mt. Sterling, Illinois 62353  
1-217-773-3903 FAX # 1-217-773-3906  
1-800-443-7228  
www.pactheadstart.com

### **Parent/Guardian Classroom Video Surveillance Acknowledgement**

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This is to *inform* you of the existence of classroom video surveillance cameras. The purpose of the video cameras is for your child's safety as well as the Head Start teachers, staff and parents. We take pride in striving to provide the safest preschool environment for your child(ren) and work environment for our staff.

All classrooms have a minimum of two (2) cameras, depending on size. Head Start has posted video surveillance signs in the classrooms to inform the general public of the video cameras. Extreme care is enforced in safeguarding the surveillance media against unauthorized use.

After reading the above notice, I understand that my child(ren) will be under videotape surveillance while in the Head Start classroom.

I understand that the cameras in the classrooms are there to protect the welfare of my child (ren), Head Start staff and parents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher/Home Based Teacher Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date