

CRESTON HEAD

START

FAMILY

HANDBOOK

2021-2022



Classroom Information:

801 North Elm St.

Creston, IA 50801

Phone: 641-782-8002

MATURA Head Start Central Office Information:

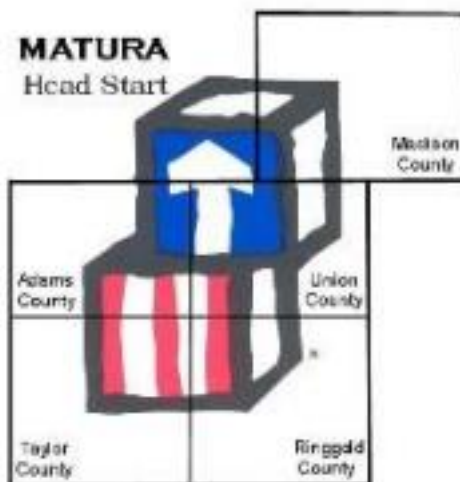
Hours: 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Mon. - Fri.

209 North Elm St. Creston, IA 50801

Telephone: 641-782-6201

Fax Number: 641-782-6302

<http://www.maturacommunityaction.org>



Find us on:  @MATURAACTION

Follow us on  @MATURA Head Start

WELCOME TO CRESTON HEAD START

Dear Family,

We are happy to welcome you to our Head Start Preschool program! Our program offers services for 3 and 4 year olds. We provide a preschool with small class sizes that have a maximum enrollment of 20 students each.

Head Start is a comprehensive preschool program that depends on family engagement to succeed.

- ✓ We need each of you to assist our classroom staff in making decisions regarding the education of your child.
- ✓ We need you to visit and volunteer in the classroom to gain a better understanding of how the classroom staff promotes your child development.
- ✓ We need you to become actively involved in home activities with your child. Classroom staff will provide you options and opportunities to bridge learning between the classroom and home.
- ✓ We need you to participate in “Family Event” opportunities that are provided throughout the year to give you the opportunity to gain new understanding of child development, meet other families, learn new skills, and be actively engaged with your child.

Remember – you are your child’s first and best teacher. The little things you do will make a big

difference! Be sure you talk with one of our classroom staff anytime you have a question, idea, or concern.

Again, welcome and enjoy your year in the Head Start Preschool program!

Sincerely,

Julie Lang

MATURA Head Start Director

JULIE LANG, HEAD START DIRECTOR

I started in Head Start in 1993 as a Lead Teacher with only an AA Degree. I then became the Family Engagement Coordinator enrolling students and working with families for several years, then finally becoming the Director in 2001. I finished my BA Degree in Human

Services/Psychology at Buena Vista University with support of MATURA Action Corporation.

I currently continue to oversee the staff and operations of Head Start classrooms in Bedford, Mt. Ayr, Corning, Creston, and Winterset. Community collaboration is my ideal vision for providing services to children and families in our service area. We can always do more by working together!



Email: jlang@maturaia.org

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IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

- Your child’s teacher will send you a monthly calendar at the beginning of each month to keep you informed of important dates.
- You may also refer to your school districts calendar
- Please listen to your local radio/television station or sign up for text/e-mail alerts through the Creston Community School district for any late starts, early outs, or cancellations.

TEACHING STAFF

Classroom 1: Lisa Konecne (lkonecne@maturaia.org) Classroom Associate: Whitney Nyang
 Classroom 3: Teacher: Heidi Brown (hbrown@maturaia.org) Classroom Associate: Debbie Russell

Staff Professional Development

Within the first 3 months of hire, staff will complete the following training:

- ❖ Pediatric CPR/First Aid (every 2 years)
- ❖ Universal Precautions (yearly)
- ❖ Mandatory Reporter (every 3 years)
- ❖ Essentials training (every 5 years)
- ❖ Meet with Coordinators to complete onboarding
- ✓ During first year of employment, staff will receive 15 professional development hours of training.
- ✓ Every year thereafter, staff will receive 15 hours of professional development training.
- ✓ Directors and on-site supervisors will receive 15 hours of professional development training.
- ✓ Compliance Coordinator will monitor monthly to ensure all staff are current on required training.
- ✓ Coaching is available to staff as needed .

Fees

A program must not charge eligible families a fee as a condition to participate in Head Start, but a fee may be established for services that are in addition to Head Start services or for non-eligible Head Start students. In order to support programs serving children from diverse economic backgrounds or using multiple funding sources, a program may charge fees to private pay families and other non-Head start enrolled families to the extent allowed by any other applicable federal, state or local funding sources. If a non-eligible Head Start family wishes to enroll a child and there is room in the classroom, a fee of \$150 per month for a full day program (including breakfast, lunch and a snack) will be charged. If a half day (AM only) is desired, the fee would be \$130 per month which would cover breakfast and lunch. If a family should choose to pay for an afternoon (after Statewide Voluntary Preschool funded hours), the fee would be \$100 per month. These fees are due by the 10th day of the month.

MISSION STATEMENT, VISION, BELIEF STATEMENTS & PHILOSOPHY

Mission Statement

The mission of the Head Start program is to help shape successful, independent children and families by providing a safe, high-quality learning environment.

Vision

All children will enter school with the necessary skills to be successful.

Belief Statements

We believe children are unique individuals with thoughts, feelings, and ideas, which should be respected by others. We believe children grow best in a non-threatening environment where values of respect, self-worth, honesty, concern of others, and trust are modeled.

We believe play is an essential ingredient in a child's learning by using hands-on experiences, imaginations, and choosing activities at their developmental level.

We believe children's basic needs must be met for healthy social, emotional, cognitive, and physical development.

Our Philosophy

We believe that children should be provided with a safe, secure, learning environment. This environment will provide a variety of successful experiences that help children make good choices, become independent learners, problem solvers, and learn to the best of their abilities. In this setting children will become productive individuals and community workers. We believe that by being in partnership with families, we will ensure the well-being and healthy development of the next generation.

Equal Opportunity Provider

This institution is an equal opportunity provider. In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Arrival/Dismissal Policy

- ❖ All parents/guardians will complete a Safe Arrival & Departure form. Any changes to this form over time must be communicated to the classroom staff.
- ❖ All parent/guardians will complete an Emergency Contact/Release Information form. You must call the teaching staff if someone else is to pick up your child, but that person must be listed on the pick-up/drop off form. IN AN EMERGENCY, a parent may phone a request that someone not listed be allowed to pick up the child. They must follow up with a written change to the form as soon as possible. Determining emergencies and allowing phone calls is at the teacher's discretion and they reserve the right to refuse the request.
- ❖ Anyone picking up a child at the center MUST be listed on the pick-up form and show identification when asked.

Staff is required to ask for identification if they do not know the person picking up the child.

- ❖ A child cannot be picked up by anyone other than a responsible adult. A responsible adult is defined as a parent/legal guardian or an individual listed on your child's emergency contact list.
- ❖ Staff may release a child to either biological parent, UNLESS we have a copy of custody orders or court documents on file. If there is no court document available or there is any doubt that the child should leave with the other parent, the following precautionary steps may be taken: call the parent/guardian or legal guardian that the child lives with or call the police department.
- ❖ Children are expected to arrive at school at the normal scheduled start time (unless previous arrangements have been made with the classroom teacher). When bringing or picking up your child at school, you are required to walk him/her into the classroom and sign him/her in. This will assure the safe arrival of your child.
- ❖ Children must be picked up promptly at dismissal time. If a child has not been picked up from the center within 30 minutes of dismissal time and a parent or emergency contact cannot be reached, the local law enforcement agency and the Department of Human Services will be contacted.

Parent or Primary Caregivers Concerns

The following procedure is what you must follow when you have a concern with your child's teachers or any other people your child may come into contact with at Head Start.

The first step in any situation involving a complaint should be an attempt to resolve the issue at the local level thus discussing concerns with the child's teacher. If the parent is uncomfortable for any reason they may address the center support person. If results are not as desired, concerns should be made in writing to the Head Start Director.

All complaints must include:

- ❖ Name, address, and telephone number or (TTY number) of person making the complaint
- ❖ Names (including addresses and telephone numbers if known) of those against whom the complaint is lodged and/or the name of others involved;
- ❖ Date of filing;
- ❖ A single set of facts, situations or conditions which caused the complaint;
- ❖ The date(s) that the situation/problem developed;
- ❖ The remedy/solution requested by the complaint.
- ❖ Signature of person filing the complaint.

Upon receipt of the complaint, in proper form, the Head Start Director will take action to attempt resolution. Review of complaint will be made within 60 days of notification. In the event the complaint party receives an adverse decision he/she may request a review by the Executive Director of MATURA. In the event the complaint party receives an adverse decision he/she may request a review by the Region VII program specialist. If a person is not familiar with English, a written or oral translation into a language understood by the individual will be provided. If a person is illiterate or semi literate, such person must be advised of their rights to the satisfaction of that person's understanding. The identity of any person who has furnished information relating to or assisting in an investigation of a possible violation will be kept confidential to the extent possible, consistent with due process and a fair determination of the issue. Parents or primary caregivers may or may not see results from a filed complaint due to confidentiality within the program.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT/ENROLLMENT COORDINATOR - Angie Larson, alarson@maturaia.org

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT/MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATOR - Taylor Lynch, tlynch@maturaia.org

Family Engagement

We recognize the family as the cornerstone of a child's life. For this reason, classroom staff are available to serve the entire family. Our staff is here to answer questions, help with family issues/barriers, and refer families to services in the community as needed. We do this by determining family's strengths, assessing their needs, and setting family goals.

Dual Language/Information Accessibility

Upon the enrollment of a participant that requires Dual Language services, MATURA Head

Start will find and ensure, to the extent possible, a qualified bilingual staff, contractor, or consultant. MATURA Head Start will conduct family engagement services in the family's preferred language, or through an interpreter, to the extent possible, and ensure families have the opportunity to share personal information in an environment in which they feel safe. The Head Start program will ensure that all parents/guardians can access information and clearly understand the contents through translations, reading assistance, etc. as needed.

Parent Curriculum

MATURA Head Start will offer a researched-based parent curriculum to all families.

Staff and Family Communication

The following information will be made available to all families:

- ❖ Parent/guardians must call each time their child will be absent from school, for any reason, before 8:30 am. If parents do not notify the classroom, the teaching staff will try to contact the family. If they are unable to contact the family a home visit may be conducted by staff or law enforcement to ensure your child's safety.
- ❖ Two way communication folders will be sent with children daily for classroom staff and parents to communicate when needed.
- ❖ Weekly or monthly notes, telephone calls/emails/texts from teachers, monthly newsletters, parent activities, and calendars.
- ❖ Bulletin board notices of community resources, upcoming events, and Policy Council minutes will be posted.

In Kind

The success of Head Start depends upon the support of the general community. Twenty-five percent of the total cost of the program must be met from local, non-federal sources. You help meet this goal when volunteering in the classroom, by being an active participant in your child's education, and by completing the Homework Volunteer Sheet.

Enrollment/Admission/Orientation

Registration is planned for new and returning children for each center in the spring. For new enrollees, the following items are to accompany the application and be brought on this day:

- ❖ Birth Certificate
- ❖ Income verification
- ❖ Immunization records
- ❖ Medical insurance information

Upon acceptance into the program an orientation day will be held in the fall for new and returning students. This day allows both parents and children to become comfortable with our preschool environment, staff, and schedule. This meeting gives you the opportunity to have a personal visit with staff, fill out paperwork, and review policies and requirements. Staff will ask that you bring your child's completed physical and dental exams to this meeting.

A home visit will also be conducted by the staff prior to your child's first day of class. This visit will allow us to get to know your family better and your child's daily routine. A second home visit will be conducted at the end of the school year to discuss your child's progress and to answer any questions you may have about transitions to Kindergarten or the 4 year old program. Teaching staff will also conduct two Parent/Teacher conferences to inform parents of progress and to answer any questions parents may have.

Both of these times are meant to ease the transition into preschool for your child and for your family. New children accepted throughout the year will follow the same pre-enrollment procedure.

Access Policy

Parents/Guardians will be afforded unlimited access to their children and teaching staff during the center's hours of operation or whenever their children are in the care of teaching staff, unless parental contact is prohibited by court order. MATURA Head Start shall inform all parents of this policy in writing at the time the child is admitted.

Due to day care regulations, all volunteers will be asked to sign a statement indicating whether or not they have one of

the following:

- ❖ A conviction of any law in any state, or any record of found accused child abuse, accused child abuse, or dependent adult abuse in any state.
- ❖ A communicable disease or other health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of the children.

All volunteers will be under the direct supervision of staff.

While the Iowa Legislature in 1998 exempted volunteers from the two-hour mandatory reporting training requirement, a volunteer is deemed an “employee” for purposes of being a mandatory reporter of child abuse. If child abuse is seen or suspected, please call 1-800-362-2178. Please be ready to provide identifying information and the whereabouts of the child. You may remain anonymous.

A criminal history record check and request for child abuse information are required for any volunteer that would be included in staff ratio, or who volunteer for 10 hours or more a week.

Volunteers younger than 18 years of age must also sign the statement, and may also be asked to provide a copy of their immunization certificate.

Community Visitors who visit sites must have management/supervisory approval. They must always be under the direct supervision of the MATURA Head Start staff. They will not perform program duties nor have unsupervised contact with ANY child.

Program parents/guardians, who do not sign the statement will not be allowed to perform program duties nor have unsupervised contact with any child other than their own.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor and who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry under the provisions contained in Iowa Code chapter 692A shall not operate, manage, be employed by or act as a contractor or volunteer at a child care center.

The sex offender also shall not be present upon the property of a child care center without the written permission of the Head Start Director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender’s own minor child or ward to and from the center.

Written permission shall include the conditions under which the sex offender may be present, including:

- ❖ The precise location in the center where the sex offender may be present; the reason for the sex offender’s presence at the facility; the duration of the sex offender’s presence; and description of the supervision that the center staff will provide the sex offender to ensure that no child is alone with the sex offender.
- ❖ Before giving written permission, the Head Start Director shall consult with a DHS licensing consultant. The written permission shall be signed and dated by the Head Start Director and the sex offender and kept on file for review by a DHS licensing consultant.

Personal Identification Information (PII) Sharing

Families are asked to sign a Parent Permission/Release of Information upon enrollment to give permission to share information.

MATURA Head Start is allowed to disclose PII from child records without parental consent to:

- ❖ Early Childhood Programs staff or service providers providing services for MATURA Head Start.
- ❖ Officials from or acting for a federal or state entity, in connection with an audit or evaluation of education or child development programs, or for enforcement of or compliance with federal legal requirements of the program.
- ❖ Officials from or acting for a federal or state entity to conduct a study to improve child and family outcomes,

including improving the quality of programs, for, or on behalf of, the program.

- ❖ Appropriate parties, including Iowa Department of Public Health, in order to address a disaster, health or safety emergency during the period of the emergency, or a serious health and safety risk if the program determines that disclosing the PII from the records is necessary to protect the health or safety of the children or other persons.
- ❖ Comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena.
- ❖ Authorized representatives from the USDA or Child and Adult Care Food Program.
- ❖ A caseworker or other representatives from the Department of Human Services, who have the right to access a case plan for a child who is in foster care placement.
- ❖ Officials the Iowa Department of Human Services or their contracted service providers in order to address suspected or known child maltreatment and is consistent with applicable federal, state, local, and triable laws on reporting child abuse and neglect.

In cases where families would like to share information with outside agencies or an outside agency requests information from MATURA Head Start, families will need to complete and sign an Authorization to Release Confidential Information form that will be given per request.

Intoxicated, Under the Influence, and/or Dangerous Person

If any person on the premises exhibits inappropriate behavior, bearing arms, and/or showing signs of drugs/alcohol use (this also includes any person who is prohibited by court order – copy contained in the child’s file), the classroom staff will take necessary precautions to keep everyone in the classroom safe. These precautions could range from removal of children from the classroom to contacting local law enforcement (Classroom Staff have the right to call 911 if they feel anyone’s well-being is threatened.)

Mandatory Reporting

By law, our staff members are mandatory child abuse reporters. Our goal is to provide help and referral services to families when and if any problems occur. When you volunteer in the classroom, you will also be a mandatory reporter.

Attendance/Withdrawal from the program

All families are encouraged to maintain consistent attendance in the Head Start program. Consistent attendance is defined as present or participating for 85% of expected hours, or more. Head Start staff help families in identifying barriers to consistent attendance and support the family as needed.

- ❖ If consistent attendance cannot be established, either by classroom participation or by participation in alternative service, another child on the waiting list must be given the opportunity to enroll in the program. Families should be given numerous opportunities to establish regular attendance, and should be withdrawn from the program only when they are unwilling or unable to participate.
- ❖ If all attempts to communicate with the family have failed using phone, letter, text message or visit to the home, the slot will be considered open for enrollment after a two week period.

Vacations

- ❖ One scheduled vacation, family visit, or other planned absence of up to two calendar weeks will be permitted each program year.
- ❖ Families may request additional vacation weeks. Requests should be sent to the Family Engagement/Enrollment Coordinator.
- ❖ Families who do not re-establish regular attendance after planned absence may be withdrawn from the program.

EDUCATION/DISABILITIES/MENTAL HEALTH COORDINATOR- Shannon Weed, sweed@maturaia.org
Taylor Lynch, tlynch@maturai.org

Daily Program

Although each teacher arranges the day to best meet the needs of that group of children, a typical day will include the following activities:

- ❖ Free choice for child selected activities
- ❖ Large and small group activities
- ❖ Quiet time/rest time (full-day program)
- ❖ Outdoor/large motor
- ❖ Meals and snacks
- ❖ Individualizing
- ❖ Books and story time

Teacher/Child ratio will be maintained at all times in and out of classrooms. The ratio for 4 year olds is ten children to one adult. The ratio for 3 year olds is eight children for one adult.

The overall daily program is planned according to federal guidelines called Head Start Performance Standards and state DHS licensing guidelines.

Curriculum

Our classrooms use the research-based Creative Curriculum with fidelity. This curriculum helps teachers create a high quality learning environment and build a thorough understanding of best practices. Daily resources help teachers plan and manage every moment of their day. Through studies, which are hands-on, project based investigations, The Creative Curriculum for Preschool helps teachers build children's confidence, creativity and critical thinking skills, and promote positive outcomes. Along with the curriculum, each classroom uses the Teaching Strategies GOLD to assess and document the growth of your child in the areas of social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, and the arts. These are on-going throughout the school year and finalized 3 times per year.

Positive Guidance Policy

- ❖ To fully implement Positive Behavioral Interventions & Support (PBIS) to children & families
- ❖ Help children become self-disciplined, problem solvers, & independent
- ❖ Develop a positive self-image, and a healthy, positive self-esteem
- ❖ To communicate clear behavior expectations and rules in the classroom
- ❖ Partner with families and other agencies to meet these goals

- Staff will have children help set up classroom rules and expectations the first week of school. · Staff will discuss classroom rules and positive behavior expectations with children throughout the day, prior to transition, & especially before beginning the next activity.
- Staff will provide positive reinforcement of the rules by explaining, making visual contact, giving visual cues, modeling behaviors, encouraging, offering new activities, redirecting, ignoring the behavior, or assisting the child. The teacher's response is based on the child's individual needs, (individualized accommodations, & modifications).
- When a child does not communicate understanding or self-regulate in accordance with classroom rules or expectations consistently, parents will be invited to help problem-solve.
- Staff will support the child by using picture cues, social stories or other self-regulating techniques. The child will be assisted with strategies to gain self-control.
- Consistent unacceptable behavior observed and documented by staff and other professionals will facilitate a team meeting, which may include parents, Education/Disabilities Coordinator, AEA & Classroom staff, to problem solve and determine strategies for corrective behaviors. Additional meetings will be held as needed or the referral process may be initiated.
- Corporal punishment is prohibited. Food cannot be used as a punishment or reward (unless directed by an IEP). Children will not be belittled or threatened by loss of snack or outside time, etc.

Mental Health Services

We recognize the importance of providing mental health and psychological services to children to encourage their emotional and social development. Mental health professionals are available to our program to provide training and support for staff and families to make them aware of the need for early attention to the developmental needs of children.

Screening and General Education Intervention Process

Each child will be given an initial developmental screening using the Brigance screening and an Ages and Stages Social/Emotional screening. Parents will receive their child's screening scores when they are concluded. Children who are not within "normal" range, according to these screenings, will be referred to AEA for assistance with interventions. Interventions are activities to help your child develop their preschool skills and/or social/emotional competence. Professionals from Green Hills AEA, Staff at Creston Community School District, and the Head Start Education/Disabilities Coordinator will assist in developing and implementing these interventions. These professionals work collaboratively with your child's teaching staff to resolve difficulties your child may be experiencing. Teachers will discuss concerns (such as hearing, speech, development or behavior) with parents and fully involve them in the entire process of decision-making, referrals and suggested plans for your child. If parents refuse services, the AEA may still work with the teaching staff to ensure developmentally appropriate interventions are being used in the classroom.

Field Trips

Occasionally we are able to take children on field trips that are within approximately 10 miles of the center. These field trips give your child an opportunity to experience the world outside their home and school. Field trips supported by Head Start will be attended only by children in our program. Children who are not enrolled in our program will not be allowed to attend.

Guest Speakers

Since we will be providing a wide array of educational opportunities for your child, we will be having guest speakers come into the center on a regular basis. These speakers may talk to your child about their profession, their cultural background or their hobbies. They may also bring items to share with your child that relate to the subject. We strongly encourage family members to be guest speakers.

Clothing

- ❖ We use a variety of materials in our classrooms and many of them are messy. We believe that children cannot learn to experiment freely if they are fearful of getting dirty.
- ❖ Your child should be dressed for the season. During winter month's coats, mittens, hats and boots are needed. Please mark these items with your child's name.
- ❖ Shoes should be comfortable and secure so that your child can easily run and climb. Flip flops are not recommended to wear to school.
- ❖ At the beginning of the year please send an extra change of clothing for your child. Include a pair of pants, shirt, socks, and underwear. The teachers will store the clothes and mark them with your child's name.

Classroom Monitoring

CLASS

Each classroom will be monitored using the CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) two times per year at a minimum. The CLASS is an observation instrument developed to assess classroom quality in preschool through third grade classrooms. The CLASS dimensions are based on developmental theory and research suggesting that interactions between students and adults are the primary mechanism of student development and learning. The dimensions covered are:

- ❖ Positive Climate
- ❖ Negative Climate
- ❖ Teacher Sensitivity
- ❖ Regard for Student Perspective
- ❖ Behavior Management

- ❖ Productivity
- ❖ Instructional Learning Formats
- ❖ Concept Development
- ❖ Quality of Feedback
- ❖ Language Modeling

After the classrooms are observed, the observer will score the results using the CLASS scoring system. Classrooms will fall in one of three ranges. Low, middle and high. Classrooms who fall in the low to middle range will utilize the Coach to use an Action Plan to ensure scores are increased.

TPOT

Each classroom will also be monitored two times per year using the TPOT (Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool). The TPOT is an instrument designed to measure practitioners' implementation of teaching and behavior support practices associated with the Pyramid Model for Promoting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children. The development of the Pyramid Model was influenced by public health models of promotion, preventions, and intervention practices and schoolwide multi-tiered systems of positive behavior intervention and support.

Transition into Kindergarten

Activities will be planned throughout the year to help with transition into public school and may include:

- ❖ Your child may visit classrooms and attend kindergarten round-ups.
- ❖ The kindergarten teacher may visit with parents and children.
- ❖ Parents will receive information regarding rights and responsibilities along with summer activity packets, as their child goes into kindergarten.
- ❖ Health screening and immunization records will be provided to parents for Kindergarten round-up, as requested.
- ❖ Head Start staff will provide support to families whenever needed.

HEALTH/NUTRITION COORDINATOR- Shannon Gravlin, sgravlin@maturaia.org

Health and Safety

All classroom staff are certified in First Aid, CPR, Universal Precautions, and Medication Administration.

Injury/Incident

Teaching staff will complete the Child Care Injury/Incident Report when an injury occurs with a child in their care that results in first aid or medical attention, or could appear as a noticeable injury later.

1. Examples of injuries that should be documented include:

- ❖ Child maltreatment (physical, sexual, emotional, and neglect abuse)
- ❖ Bites that are continuous in nature, break the skin, left a mark, and cause significant pain
- ❖ Falls, burns, broken limbs, tooth loss, other injury
- ❖ Motor vehicle injury
- ❖ Aggressive/unusual behavior
- ❖ Ingestion of non-food substances
- ❖ Medication error
- ❖ Blows to the head
- ❖ Death

2. After the report is filled out by the teaching staff:

- ❖ Parent/guardian will be contacted (call, text, email) in regards to what is written on the Child Care Injury/Incident Report.
- ❖ The Child Care Injury/Incident Report will be sent home to the parent/guardian to sign and return.

(parent/guardian may request a copy if desired)

Health Screenings

Physical Exam (Well-Child Exam)

- ❖ Need a current physical before school starts
- ❖ If your child has had a physical/well-child exam since last September, please provide documentation. If an exam is needed, please make an appointment immediately
- ❖ Physicals are “current” for one year
- ❖ If physical expires before the end of the year, we need a new one within 30 days of the expiration date

Lead & Hemoglobin Results

- ❖ Need before school starts
- ❖ Normally completed at well-child exam or with WIC

Dental Exam

- ❖ Need within first 2 months of school
- ❖ If your child has had a dental exam since last September, please provide documentation. If a dental exam is needed, please make an appointment immediately. It could take 1-2 months before a dentist can get your child an appointment

Current Immunization Record

- ❖ Should have been turned in at time of enrollment (*signed by a physician, physician assistant, nurse, or certified medical assistant*)
- ❖ If immunizations need to be updated, see the Iowa Department of Public Health or your doctor’s office – then send a copy of the updated and signed immunization record to Head Start.

Vision Screening (completed at school)

- ❖ Your child’s vision will be screened by Iowa KidSight, if you give consent (results will be sent home)
- ❖ If your child has glasses or has been seen by an eye doctor within the past year, please provide us with documentation

Hearing Screening (completed at school)

- ❖ Your child’s hearing will be screened by AEA (results will be sent home)

Inclement Weather

MATURA Head Start classrooms will always follow the school district’s cancellation/late-start/early dismissal in regards to inclement weather. Tune in to local radio stations and news stations for school delays/closings. You may also contact your local school district to be added to their text/email system to be alerted of emergency/inclement weather announcements.

Emergency Procedures

In case of an emergency, the staff will follow the Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan posted in their classroom. In case of evacuation, emergency phone numbers will be taken and parents/guardians will be contacted. Each classroom practices monthly tornado and fire drills. Child Care Emergency Preparedness Plan can be viewed upon request.

Medication Policy

No medication, over-the-counter or otherwise (such as, Tylenol, cough syrup, cough drops, etc.) shall be given without written authorization by a physician and the parent or guardian.

- ❖ The medication must be in its original container with doctor’s name, directions, and child’s name on it and the

date must be recent.

- ❖ The Medication Log must be signed each month, if the child continues to receive medication.
- ❖ When sending medication with a child on the bus or trolley, give medication to the driver. Medication should not be left in a child's bag.

Communicable Disease Policy

Daily Health Checks will be performed upon arrival of each child, each day by the classroom staff. Staff will objectively determine if the child is ill or well and determine which children with mild illnesses can remain in care and which need to be excluded. Staff will notify the parent/guardian of children who have symptoms that require exclusion and parent/guardian should remove the child from the child care setting as soon as possible. For children whose symptoms do not require exclusion, verbal or written notification of the parent/guardian at the end of the day is acceptable.

Key criteria for exclusion of children who are ill:

When a child becomes ill but does not require immediate medical help, a determination must be made regarding whether the child should be sent home (i.e., should be temporarily "excluded" from child care). Most illnesses do not require exclusion. The caregiver/teacher should determine if the illness:

- ❖ Prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities;
- ❖ Results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- ❖ Poses a risk of spreading harmful diseases to others.

If any of the above criteria are met, the child should be excluded, regardless of the type of illness. The classroom staff (or on-site nurse) should make the decision about whether a child meets or does not meet the exclusion criteria for participation and the child's need for care relative to the staff's ability to provide care. If parents/guardians and the teaching staff disagree, and the reason for exclusion relates to the child's ability to participate or the teacher's ability to provide care for the other children, the teacher should not be required to accept responsibility for the care of the child.

A copy of the communicable disease chart can be found at:

https://www.idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/128/childhood_illness.pdf?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery

**Any child with a potentially life threatening condition must have all the proper paperwork and medication in place at the preschool center before starting class. The medication must stay at the center and not go back and forth between home and school. If the required paperwork and emergency medication is not received, the child will be excluded until we receive it. The Health Coordinator will partner with the family to obtain information from the physician.*

Head Lice

The Iowa Department of Public Health and the Iowa Department of Education do not consider lice and/or nits to be public health hazards or a sign of abuse or neglect. While we understand that head lice in schools is a nuisance, we feel there are appropriate ways to handle the issue without excluding kids from school or making students feel excluded. If you believe your child has lice or the school notifies you your child has lice, treatment should be started before returning to school the next day.

The Iowa Department of Public Health recommends a 14-day treatment process. They are safe and not costly. The treatment days are scheduled to interrupt the lifecycle of the insect. A **nit comb** should be used to comb the hair and can be bought at most pharmacies.

Day 1- use an over-the-counter medicated head-lice shampoo containing pyrethrin or permethrin. Read and follow all directions on the shampoo.

Day 2- COMB hair carefully for 15 minutes from the scalp to the end of the hair. Do not wash hair today. Days 3-9- Wash the hair using your regular shampoo. Rinse. Apply hair conditioner to make the hair slippery. COMB the hair the entire length from the scalp to the end of the hair. Wipe the comb between each stroke with a paper towel, which removes

any lice or nits. Keep hair wet while combing. COMB all hair for at least 15 minutes. Day 10- Use an over-the-counter medicated head-lice shampoo (to kill any lice that hatched since the previous medication use). Read and follow all directions on the shampoo.

Day 11- COMB hair carefully for at least 15 minutes from the scalp to the end of the hair. Do not wash hair today. Days 12-14- Wash the hair using your regular shampoo. Rinse. Apply hair conditioner to make the hair slippery. COMB the hair the entire length from the scalp to the end of the hair. Wipe the comb between each stroke with a paper towel, which removes any lice or nits. Keep hair wet while combing. COMB all hair for at least 15 minutes.

If you have further questions or want more information please visit this website:

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/resources/laws-and-regulations/legal-lessons/head-licenuisance-not-medical-or-health-hazard-april>

Biting Policy

- ❖ Head Start's perspective on biting: It is not unusual for children to bite as a form of communication. Biting is usually a response to the child's needs not being met or the child coping with a challenge or stressor. Proactively understanding the developmental stages of children and recognizing their needs can prevent biting behaviors.
- ❖ Head Start will respond to biting incidents by treating/cleaning the bite according to first aid procedures taught in certification classes and showing concern and support to the child that was bitten. Staff should address the child who did the biting in a firm, calm voice that it is not acceptable to bite and then discuss different strategies that can be used the next time instead of biting. Any injury report should be filled out for the child that was bitten and a copy sent home for the parent to sign and return.
- ❖ Head Start will assess the supervision, the context, and the environment in which the biting occurred. Children bite to fulfill a need or cope with a challenge. It is the preschool staff's responsibility to observe the child and determine the child's needs that are not being met. Staff should observe and document the behaviors and context (where, when, how, who) that occurs before and after the biting incident. Using these observations, staff should look for patterns and potential solutions. Knowing the triggers for biting can help staff to be proactive in preventing biting incidents from occurring.
- ❖ When informing parents that their child has been bitten or bit another child, the staff will maintain the confidentiality of the other child.

Nutrition Information

While at school, your child will receive a nutritious breakfast, lunch and snack that will supply 2/3 of their daily nutritional requirements. Menus are sent home monthly. Mealtime is a valuable part of our program experience. The goal is to develop good habits and attitudes by providing a variety of food experiences. The following policies will help us meet that goal:

- ❖ Adults are to set good examples for the children by their attitudes, actions, and acceptance of food during mealtime.
- ❖ Children, staff and volunteers eat together, sharing the same menus (no other food or drink unless required by doctor).
- ❖ Family style meal service is used to help children learn self-help and socializing skills. Each child serves their own food and pours their own drink as it is passed around the tables. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own spills and clearing their dishes when finished.
- ❖ At least one adult is seated at each table during the meal.
- ❖ Children are encouraged to taste all foods before seconds, but not forced to eat everything on their plates.
- ❖ All food is passed and served at the beginning of the meal and may be eaten in any order.
- ❖ Food is not used as a reward or punishment.
- ❖ Interesting table conversation about the child's total experience will be encouraged and mealtime should be 20-30 minutes.
- ❖ Teachers will establish their own rules for leaving the table and cleaning up. Volunteers will be informed of expectations.
- ❖ If you are volunteering or going to eat lunch with your child, please tell your teacher so she/he can order correctly

by 9:00 a.m.

Special Diets/Food Allergies

We will provide any special diets needed by a child after we receive a doctor's order and guidance on what is to be provided. If you have any specific concerns or need general guidance with food issues, please contact the central office. A licensed, registered dietitian is contracted with MATURA Head Start for consultation.

Meal Cost

MATURA Head Start students will not be required to pay for any meals your child eats while enrolled, unless you are on the private pay fee schedule. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and USDA will reimburse much of the meal cost. We follow guidelines they have set up for complete, nutritious meals. Head Start Federal Performance Standards add specific regulations for nutritional content of meals, snacks, and nutrition experiences.

Nutrition Activities

Nutrition activities will be offered at your center to broaden your child's food experience. Exploring new foods, cooking activities, tasting ethnic food, and good nutrition ideas are some examples. Parents are encouraged to share special nutrition activities or volunteer to help. Please contact your teacher for more information.

Food Donations

MATURA Head Start will not accept (in accordance to regulations) home-prepared, home canned, or repackaged food items) in the classroom or for dispersal after class. We encourage this practice to reduce liability in case of accidental food poisoning or blood-borne pathogen exposure. This ensures the safety of all of our children.

Birthday and Party Foods

We encourage you to volunteer and the staff will help you prepare a food experience, cultural food or a birthday snack for the children.

Sample list of approved foods:

Bread/Bread Alternatives: Raisin Bread, bagels, english muffins, pretzels, breadsticks, whole wheat crackers, WIC approved cereal.

Fruits: 100% fruit juice, oranges, apples, dried fruit, pineapple, bananas, melons.

Vegetables: Raw vegetables, celery with peanut butter, carrots, tomatoes, V8 juice, broccoli, cauliflower.

Dairy: Colby, Swiss, Cheddar, yogurt.

Try combining items from 2 different groups: Example – Fruit and cheese, peanut butter with apples, bananas, or graham crackers. Cereal snack mixes – cereal with dried fruits or fruit /cereal with yogurt, and vegetables with dips. Cakes, candy, and other sweets are only allowable for holidays and birthday treats. You may also decide to “treat” children with non food items such as: stickers, pencils, crayons, temporary tattoos, party blowers/noisemakers, or safe party favor items appropriate for 3 and 4 year olds.

Approved food has to be prepackaged - NO HOMEMADE TREATS. Please bring/send foods in the original sealed package.