

**Youth In Need  
Early Learning Programs**

**FAMILY HANDBOOK**

**2021-2022**

**2021-2022 School Information**

My Child's School is: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone Number is: \_\_\_\_\_

My Center Manager is: \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

My Family Advocate is: \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

My Child's Classroom is: \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_

My Child's Teachers are:

\_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

\_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

\_\_\_\_\_ email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

My Child's School Is: \_\_\_\_\_

School Phone Number is: \_\_\_\_\_

My Home Visitation Manager is: \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

My Child's Family Educator is: \_\_\_\_\_ ext. \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_ @youthinneed.org

## YOUTH IN NEED EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Agency Headquarters  
1815 Boone's Lick Road  
St. Charles, MO 63301  
Phone: (636) 946-5600  
**Facebook Page:** Youth In Need

St. Louis Early Learning Programs (ELP)  
Meramec Center ELC  
3013 Meramec Street  
St. Louis, MO 63118  
Phone: (314) 353-6906  
**Facebook Page:** Youth In Need Head Start East

Lincoln County Early Learning Programs  
Lincoln ELC  
19 Fairgrounds Road  
Troy, MO 63379  
Phone: (636) 462-6061  
**Facebook Page:** Lincoln County Head Start & Early Head Start

Montgomery County Early Learning Program  
Montgomery City ELC & Home Visitation (HV)  
908 South Sturgeon  
Montgomery City, MO 63361  
Phone: (573) 564-2600  
**Facebook Page:** Montgomery County Head Start & Early Head Start

St. Charles County Early Learning Program  
St. Charles Early Learning Center—St. Charles  
1815 Boone's Lick Road  
St. Charles, MO 63301  
Phone: (636) 946-5600  
**Facebook Page:** St. Charles County Head Start & Early Head Start

Warren County Early Learning Program:  
Warren County ELC—Marvin Marks  
1022 Steinhagen  
Warrenton, MO 63383  
Phone: (636) 456-1761

**Facebook Page:** Warren County Head Start & Early Head Start  
**You Tube Channel:** Warren County Early Learning Program

St Louis Early Learning Center (ELC)—Academy  
Neighborhood  
5183 Raymond Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63113  
Phone: (314) 553-9169  
**Facebook Page:** Youth In Need Head Start East

St. Louis Home Visitation  
3001 Meramec Street  
St. Louis, MO 63118  
Phone: (314) 353-6906 ext. 1702  
**Facebook Page:** Youth In Need Head Start East

Lincoln Home Visitation  
19 Fairgrounds Road  
Troy, MO 63379  
Phone: (636) 462-2014

St. Charles ELC--Wentzville & Home Visitation  
1200 Continental Drive  
Wentzville, MO 63385  
Phone: (636) 332-0265

Warren County ELC—Daniel Boone, Rebecca Boone,  
Warrior Ridge & Home Visitation  
119 West Boones Lick Road  
Warrenton, MO 63383  
Phone: (636) 456-5990

## YIN Early Learning Program Services at Community Child Care Providers

Every Child's Hope  
8240 St. Charles Rock Road  
Overland, MO 63114  
Phone: (314) 427-3755

Hilltop Child Development Center  
6155 W. Florissant Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63136  
Phone: (314) 389-1001

Lemay Child and Family Center  
9828 S. Broadway  
St. Louis, MO 64125  
Phone: (314) 544-3338  
**Facebook Page:** Lemay Child and Family Center

Hope House--St. Louis (STL)  
1611 Hodiament Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63112  
Phone: (314) 382-3801

Urban Sprouts Child Development Center  
6757 Olive Blvd.  
University City, MO 63130  
Phone: (314) 997-2259  
**Facebook Page:** Urban Sprouts Child Development

Flance Early Learning Center  
1908 O'Fallon Street  
St. Louis, MO 63106  
Phone: (314) 881-0881  
**Facebook Page:** Flance Early Learning Center

Kid's World North LLC  
9833 Halls Ferry Road  
St. Louis, MO 63136  
Phone: (314) 867-2333  
**Facebook Page:** Kids World North

Southside Early Childhood Center  
2101 S. Jefferson Avenue  
St. Louis, MO 63104  
Phone: (314) 865-0322  
**Facebook Page:** Southside Early Childhood Center

University City Children's Center  
6646 Vernon Avenue  
University City, MO 63130  
Phone: (314) 726-0148  
**Facebook Page:** University City Children's Center

## Table of Contents

WELCOME!	1
YOUTH IN NEED'S HISTORY & OVERVIEW	1
EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS	2
PROGRAM GOVERNANCE	3
CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	3
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	5
HEALTH SERVICES	5
NUTRITION SERVICES	8
NUTRITION POLICIES	9
FAMILY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	9
GENERAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES	11
SPECIFIC POLICIES & OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION	13
PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES	18
PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT	18
GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR CLIENTS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS	20
PROGRAM CLOSING DATES 2021-2022	22
THE HEAD START CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING FRAMEWORK	23
PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK	24

# WELCOME!

Dear Parents and Guardians:

I want to officially welcome you to the 2021-2022 school year! We are so excited that you are here! The early years are critical times of development for children, and I am so glad that you choose us to be your partner in your child's education. It is our goal to provide your child with a safe learning environment where they can grow and develop. We recognize that you are your child's first and most important Teacher. So, we want to partner with you, to ensure your child is healthy and ready to learn and we want to support you in understanding your child's development and how you can support their learning. Families are always welcome as observers and participants at YIN. We encourage you to become as involved as your schedule allows.

Lastly, I know you have many choices for your child's early education experience. Thank you for choosing YIN! We are confident you will be happy that you made YIN your early care and education provider! If there is anything I can do now or as the school year progresses, please do not hesitate to reach out to me. Have a great year!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'M. Chan', written in a cursive style.

## YOUTH IN NEED'S HISTORY & OVERVIEW

Youth In Need (YIN) is a non-profit child and family services agency, headquartered in St. Charles, MO. Through a variety of crisis prevention and intervention programs, Youth In Need is dedicated to building positive futures for the community's most vulnerable children, youth, and families.

Youth In Need was originally founded by community volunteers, who opened the organization's Emergency Shelter in 1974. It is through the generous support of community volunteers, business leaders, and donors that Youth In Need has been able to continue its mission throughout the years. Youth In Need became the grantee of the Early Learning Program in 1998.

### Youth In Need's Mission

*To build on the strengths of children, youth and families so they find safety, hope and success in life.*

### Youth In Need's Core Values

- \* **Safety:** Everyone is safe so we can accomplish great things.
- \* **Strength-Based Principles:** Everyone has an opportunity to reach their full potential.
- \* **Quality Service:** We are passionate about what we do.
- \* **Diversity & Inclusion:** Everyone is comfortable, respected, and included.
- \* **Transparency:** We are open and honest in all aspects of our work.
- \* **Accountability:** Everyone takes responsibility for their actions and attitude.
- \* **Learning & Improving:** We reflect on our experiences to learn and grow.

## **Youth In Need's Vision**

Youth In Need will be the leader and driving force for future generations in helping children, youth and families to realize their potential and positively impact their communities.

## **Youth In Need's Diversity Definition**

Believing in the power of potential, Diversity is intentionally embracing and valuing the differences and similarities, both visible and invisible that make us who we are -One Community.

Together our attitudes, actions, policies and physical environment are vital to ensure that all feel comfortable, respected and included regardless of race, sex, gender identity or expression, age, income, faith, ability, political affiliation, sexual orientation or cultural background.

# **EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS**

## **Early Learning Program (ELP) Service Options**

*Youth In Need ELP partners with families to make things happen* by providing a variety of services to meet your family's needs, including center-based services (full and extended day), home-visitation services, and community childcare providers.

## **Center-Based Services**

Youth In Need's center-based programs offer a variety of individual learning experiences and individual activities especially designed to promote intellectual, social, emotional, physical, self-help, and wellness skills to children in a group classroom environment. We provide diapers for all Infants/Toddlers, as well as our 3–5-year-olds as needed, wipes, formula, containers for transporting breast milk, and food while in the classroom.

All our centers are licensed by the Missouri Department of Health's Bureau of Child Care Safety and Licensure and are equipped with cameras and video monitoring for internal use only. Center attendance is offered in two options, Full-Day and Extended-Day.

## **Full-Day Services**

The full day option for Youth In Need's Head Start day is from 8:00/8:30 a.m. to 2:00/2:30 p.m. and is free of charge. Due to community needs, the days and hours for Montgomery Center and Warren R-III Classrooms vary. Please contact your Center Manager for exact days and hours.

## **Extended-Day Services (where available)**

Extended-Day hours are designed to meet the needs of parents who are working, in job training, and/or are going to school. Extended day services have limited space and are on a first come, first serve and eligible basis. Extended-Day hours vary, for specific Extended-Day hours at your center please contact your Center Manager. Extended-Day services are not available in all classrooms.

## **Fee for Extended-Day Services**

Families must apply with the Division of Social Services for childcare subsidy. Families who do not qualify for childcare subsidy will be charge a fee. If you are interested in learning more about the Extended-Day hours, speak to your Center Manager.

## **Home-Visitation Services: Individualized Education Visits**

Weekly 90-minute home visits provide the opportunity for your family to receive individualized services that strengthen your skills in identifying and meeting the needs of your children and family. Visits are scheduled at a time that is consistent and convenient for you. We believe parents are the first and most important educator. During home visits you will take on the role as your child's Teacher with support from your family educator, you will plan experiences that support your child's developmental goals, through the utilization of everyday items.

In addition to home visits, the Home-Visitation program plans socialization events twice per month. Socializations provide to develop social skills, interactions with peers and are individualized based on the age and developmental goals of your child. Talk to your Family Educator today to find out more about the fun, engagement, and learning that takes place during socialization events!

## **Community Child Care Providers**

Youth In Need has formed partnerships with ten childcare centers in the community with the purpose of expanding high-quality early learning opportunities. The program integrates comprehensive services and resources into an array of traditional childcare and family care settings. These sites are supported to meet the highest standards of quality for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

## **PROGRAM GOVERNANCE**

***Parents Make Early Learning Programs Work!*** For the benefit of your child, you are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the Early Learning Programs. Parents and families help to lead ELP in the following ways:

### **Family Engagement**

Family Engagement is a collaborative and strengths-based approach through which staff and families build positive and goal-oriented relationships that focus on building relationships and on-going partnerships that support family well-being and promote positive, enduring change for children, families and communities. Parent groups are established in each county.

### **Policy Council**

Policy Council provides program parents/guardians and representatives from the community to participate in shared decision-making for the growth and development of ELP Programs. Policy Council discusses and acts on program issues, approves program policies, and addresses any community concerns that may impact the lives of children and families. In addition, they approve funding applications, policies, and school readiness goals. Policy Council Parent Representatives are elected by their local Parent Committees. If you would like more information about Parent Committee and/or Policy Council, please talk with your ELP Staff.

## **CHILD DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

### **Philosophy**

We believe that every child deserves the commitment to grow up safe, nurtured, healthy, and educated. We respect and strongly believe that parents are their child's first and most important Teachers. We honor the privilege to partner with parents in establishing goals, providing experiences, and building the foundation for each child's growth potential. We will provide opportunities for exploration and creativity so children may construct their own knowledge through hands-on learning experiences. We value and respect inclusion and diversity, and we believe it is highly important for children and families of all abilities and cultures to become integral members of Youth In Need's ELP.



## **Curriculum**

The Creative Curriculum is the main curriculum framework utilized in our center programs that uses knowledge of child development theory and careful consideration of the latest research in the field of early childhood education. It aligns with Youth In Need's philosophy, the Head Start Child Development & Early Learning Framework, and our program school readiness goals.

The Home Visitation Program utilizes the Hawaii Early Learning Profile (HELP) it is a comprehensive, on-going, family centered curriculum-based assessment process for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and their families. The Prenatal Program utilizes Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum it includes materials that promote child development and family well-being and is organized around children's ages and topics to support age-appropriate learning and family development.

## **Guidance Practices/Discipline**

Conscious Discipline is the Social/Emotional Curriculum we use in our program. Conscious Discipline provides behavior management strategies and classroom structures that our Teachers use to turn everyday situations into learning opportunities. It equips Teachers with the ability to integrate social/emotional learning, discipline and self-regulation.

Youth In Need ELP is committed to individualizing for each child's needs. If children exhibit behaviors which jeopardize the safety and security of the classroom environment, responsive measures will be put in place. In the event that all efforts, strategies, and resources have been exhausted, and it is determined that YIN Early Learning Center (ELC) placement cannot fully support the child's success, program staff will work collaboratively with the family and community entities to further develop individualized plans and identify alternate services options that best meet the child's needs and promote school readiness.

## **Developmental Screening and Assessment**

Every child enrolled in ELP receives a comprehensive assessment and developmental screening. Developmental screenings include hearing, vision, motor, language/communication, cognitive and social/emotional development. On-going Assessments of each child's development is monitored, utilizing the Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework as well as Teaching Strategies Gold—an online assessment tool for Centers and KinderCharts/ASQ for Home Visitation. Staff collect observations, writing and work samples, photographs, and video to measure your child's progress on-going.

## **Individualization for Children**

All children are special and individual. They have different interests, needs, strengths and abilities with regards to education, behavior, health concerns, and disability services. Children learn in a variety of ways and at individual rates. Youth In Need will collaborate with families and other professionals (schoolteachers, psychologists, doctors, etc.) to identify a child's strengths & needs, develop strategies for support, and to create plans that lead to success and learning.

## **Family Engagement Opportunities – Education**

Families can engage in the following opportunities: work on take-home activities with your child, attend socializations, volunteer, family-teacher conferences, home visits, develop goals for your child and family, attend Parent Committee meetings, participate in father/father figure focused events, maintain on-going communication with your child's Teachers/Family Educators, play and talk with your child, help with the evaluation of the program by participating in the self-assessment process, attend IEP/IFSP meetings and other important meetings.

# MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

## Mental Health Program for Children and Families

The mental health program promotes positive mental health practices to enhance the social and emotional wellness of the children and families in ELP through *prevention, identification/referral, and treatment/support*. If you are in immediate crisis and need to speak with someone, please call Life Crisis at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

## Trauma Smart

Youth In Need staff receive initial as well as annual training on understanding trauma and the Trauma Smart model to become a trauma informed agency. Trauma Smart:

- \* Actively includes parents in their child's school experience
- \* Improves the work environment for Teachers and school personnel
- \* Creates practical and enduring change for children, families and communities

## Inclusive Services

We are an inclusive program, and we believe that bringing children together with developmental delays and/or disabilities, and their typically developing peers in a classroom, nurtures the acceptance of diversity among children. When children have a disability or special need we coordinate with existing service providers and parents to ensure that the needs of the child are met. When appropriate, we participate in the Individual Education Plan (IEP) for preschool-age children with disabilities and Individual Family Support Plan (IFSP) for infants and toddlers with disabilities. The goals of the IEP and IFSP are implemented into your child's educational experience. We utilize on-going assessments to ensure the child's needs are met and that they make continued progress towards the goals in their IEP/IFSP. There are times when YIN ELC Classrooms may not be the least restrictive, or best place, for your child. If that determination is made, we will support your family in identifying alternative services in the community that will meet the needs of your child and family.

# HEALTH SERVICES

## Health in the Classroom, During Socializations, and In the Home

Children will learn and practice good health and safety habits by:

- \* Good hand washing after bathroom visits and before handling food.
- \* Brushing teeth after meals.
- \* Following the guidelines to remain at home from the center or socialization if they have head lice, a bad cold, the flu or any other possibly contagious disease or condition.
- \* Notifying the Family Educator before the visit if there is illness in the home.
- \* Learning about health, safety, and nutrition.

## Family Engagement Opportunities – Health

Families are involved in all aspects of receiving health services for their child, including screenings, assessments and community resources. Families are invited to participate on the Health Advisory Committee, which has health related projects taking place throughout the year. For more information regarding this committee, please contact the Health Manager.

## Health Policies

ELP must have a health record for each child that shows the child has received health screenings and immunizations at the ages recommended by national experts. The Missouri Department of Health has established certain requirements and guidelines regarding children's health in a childcare center. We ask for your cooperation in complying with these mandated health rules.

## Law Related to Immunizations

On August 28, 2015, a new law regarding immunizations went into effect. Section 210.003.7, RSMo. states, “All public, private and parochial day care centers, preschools, and nursery schools shall notify the parent or guardian of each child at the time of initial enrollment in or attendance at the facility that the parent or guardian may request notice of whether there are children currently enrolled in or attending the facility for whom an immunization exemption has been filed. Beginning December 1, 2015, all public, private, and parochial day care centers, preschools and nursery schools shall notify the parent or guardian of each child currently enrolled in or attending the facility that the parent or guardian may request notice of where there are children enrolled in or attending the facility for whom an immunization exemption has been filed. Any public, private, and parochial day care center, preschool or nursery school shall notify the parent or guardian of a child enrolled in or attending the facility for whom and immunization exemption has been filed.”

In accordance with Section 210.003.7, RSMo., any parent or guardian of a child or children enrolled in or attending a Youth In Need Early Learning Program may request to be notified of any child or children enrolled at one of our facilities with an immunization exemption on file. We are required to have on file the actual exemption card—it cannot be faxed to us. To request information regarding an enrolled child or children with an immunization exemption please contact your Center Manager. Due to confidentiality, we will only acknowledge that there is a child or children enrolled (no names or identifying information will be given), attending our facility with an immunization exemption on file. If you choose not to immunize your child, you will be required to take your child home and keep them at home for the entire incubation period including any new outbreaks reported.

## Health Requirements in Our Program:

ELP staff will work with you to obtain the following documentation:

1. *Health History*— Your Teacher, Family Advocate, Center Manager, or Family Educator will fill this out with you.
2. A copy of the results of your child’s most recent **Blood Lead Test and Hemoglobin Test** conducted at 12 and/or 24 months of age. Children under 12 months of age are exempt. Children over 24 months of age, who have not had this test conducted, should still be tested to ensure healthy Blood Lead and Hemoglobin levels. Blood Lead Testing is required annually for children who live in high-risk areas. St. Louis City and Montgomery County are considered high risk areas by the Center for Disease Control and Infection (CDC).
3. A *Dental Exam Form* must be completed and signed by a Dentist within the last 12 months. This needs to be in our files *within 90 days of enrollment*. Beginning at 6 months of age children should see a dentist for regular check-ups.
4. A copy of your child’s up-to-date immunization record. **Per Missouri Licensing, immunizations MUST be up to date before your child enters the center.** Immunizations for children **younger than three** years of age must be up to date for their age, and **kept up to date**, as they get older.
5. A *Physical Exam Form*— **including growth measurements** - must be completed and signed by your child’s Health Care Provider and dated within the last 12 months. **Per Missouri Licensing, this MUST be in our file before your child starts class in the center-based option. Scheduled Well Child Checks must be kept up to date for children younger than three years of age and be documented in our files.**
6. *Medical Exam Form*—Must be completed and on file per Missouri Licensing.

The above listed requirements are essential for enrollment in our program and must be in our files **within 90 days** of enrollment unless otherwise noted.

## Child Illness

The following symptoms could indicate a contagious or communicable illness:

- Fever/pain
- Cough
- Sore Throat

- Shortness of Breath
- Extreme fatigue
- Diarrhea (2 abnormally loose stools)
- Swelling/redness of throat/trouble swallowing
- Skin rash
- Vomiting (2 incidents of vomiting)
- Reddened, discharging/drainage eyes, ears or other organs
- Draining wounds or sores

Families are encouraged to keep their child home from the classroom or socialization in the event of the above symptoms. If any of these symptoms develop while at the center or socialization, the child will be sent home. A *Child Illness/Injury Form* will be completed with a copy being given at the time of pick-up and a copy kept in the child's file. A communicable disease will require a statement from the child's physician. In addition, please notify your Family Educator if your child exhibits any of the above symptoms to reschedule your home visit. **Children will be admitted back to the classroom/socialization group or for home visits when they have been symptom free and have not required fever/pain medication for a minimum of 24 hours. In the event of a Pandemic, guidelines for admitting back to the classroom/socialization and home visits may change. Further information will be provided at that time.**

## Accidents & Injuries

Licensing requires that parents be contacted immediately (usually by phone), after a physical injury occurs to a child. The Classroom Teacher/Family Educator will complete the *Child Illness/Injury Form* as noted above. If the injury occurred to the head, the *Head Injury Form* is also completed, and a copy will be provided. In the case of a medical emergency, staff will call 911 and notify the parent/guardian immediately. Teachers, Family Educators and Administrators receive CPR and First Aid Training.

## Medications

If your child must take medications during the time, he/she is in the classroom or attending a socialization, the following must be done:

1. If medication is to be given by staff, it must be brought in by parent/guardian in the **original container** (a prescription bottle or over-the-counter bottle which is labeled).
2. The parent/guardian must sign a *Medication Consent Form*.
3. All medication must have a completed form stating directions for use with signed instructions and permission from the parent/guardian. Medication brought without the above will not be administered.
4. Staff will keep the medication in a locked storage container. Emergency medications, such as an Epi-Pen, may not be locked, but kept out of reach of children.
5. Staff will log and initial each dose given.
6. Any change in a medication dose requires a new-signed form by the Physician and the parent.

Youth In Need staff must be informed about any health problems your child may have before entering the program. Special health issues, including allergies, should be brought to the attention of the Center Manager or Family Educator. All allergies of children will be posted confidentially for easy access to staff. Food allergies will also be posted in the kitchen.

## Head Lice

Children suspected of having head lice will be checked by a Teacher, Family Advocate, Family Educator, Center/Home Visitation Manager or other Management staff. If lice or nits (eggs) are found, the child will be sent home to be treated. Other children in the class will be checked and sent home if necessary. Parents will be notified of the presence of lice,

so they can check their child daily for the next two weeks. In addition, this procedure may be put into place for other infestations, including but not limited to fleas, bed bugs, etc.

Due to the age of our children, close proximity to other children and the sharing of many items in a classroom, children must be lice and nit free to return to the classroom/socialization. For information on head lice treatment, see your child's Teacher, Family Advocate, or Family Educator.

## **NUTRITION SERVICES**

Youth in Need recognizes that it is important to establish healthy eating habits in young children that will promote healthy development and lifelong well-being. The goal of nutrition services is to achieve this by providing nutritious meals, evaluating children's nutritional status, and educating children and their families about nutrition.

In accordance with Federal and civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies offices and employees and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Parents will receive the pamphlet *Building for the Future*, upon enrollment.

### **Center-Based Food Service**

Children in classrooms will receive nutritious meals that comply with the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines and Head Start Performance Standards to provide at least 1/2 of the children's daily nutritional needs. Menus are distributed to parents and posted at each facility. Extra copies are available upon request.

Children eat family style and take an active role in meal service. This allows the children to practice good eating habits and develop social, language, and self-help skills.

All infants will have an infant diet plan that outlines the type of formula/food and the amounts that are to be given (as discussed with the parents upon entrance into the center). Youth In Need provides Parent's Choice Formula and Beech Nut baby food for all infants and toddlers. If your infant/toddler requires a specific formula or baby food, please talk with your Teacher/Family Educator. Infant and toddler feeding schedules will be individualized to meet the unique needs of each child.

### **Home Visitation Food Service**

Children in the Home Visitation setting will be served a nutritious snack during socializations.

### **Nutrition Education**

Each child's nutrition status is assessed based on the child's dietary intake, growth information, hemoglobin, and other nutrition information. A nutrition plan will be completed for infants and children found to have nutrition-related concerns, and education materials will be shared with parents. You are welcome to join your child for meals, please talk to your center manager. Youth in Need's staff also provide opportunities for the children to learn about food and nutrition in the classrooms and on home visits.

Youth In Need ELP strongly supports the nutrition of your child and encourages breastfeeding for infants. All Youth In Need sites have designated space available for mothers to breastfeed their children. Youth In Need supports all nutritious feeding habits and will supply Parent's Choice Formula and/or storage containers and traveling coolers for mothers to carry breast milk back and forth to ELP sites.

# **NUTRITION POLICIES**

## **Food Ordinance**

Food may not be brought into or taken out of centers for the following reasons:

- Food served to children must be in compliance with the food safety and nutrition regulations set forth by the USDA Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP).
- The Missouri Health Department regulations & Missouri Licensing Rules for Child Care Centers mandate that no food or drink, including bottles, that are prepared or served in the center may leave the center or be sent home. This is to protect children from food borne illnesses and allergens.
- These same regulations mandate that food made at home may not be served in the classroom or at any ELP family function to protect children and families from food borne illnesses and allergens.
- Commercially prepared/purchased foods may not be brought into the classroom in order for the program to stay in compliance with CACFP regulations and Head Start Program Performance Standards related to nutrition.

## **Food Allergies and/or Dietary Restrictions**

It is the parent's responsibility to inform staff of any allergies a child might have. It is extremely important that staff is made aware of any allergies that your child may have prior to attending centers, socials or after-hour events. Every effort will be made to keep your child safe, and we must have all allergy information so that any necessary preparations can be made to accommodate. Documentation from the child's Physician is necessary. Families desiring food restrictions for religious reasons must submit a written statement to the Center Manager.

## **Peanut Allergies**

Youth In Need is committed to the health and safety of everyone. Youth In Need operates facilities that are peanut-free when needed, however classrooms within community operated buildings may not be peanut-free, so please notify staff upon program entry about your child's or your family members' allergies.

We support this decision to safeguard individuals whose allergic reaction can be triggered by eating, touching, or even smelling peanut products. We appreciate everyone's effort in keeping the health and safety of children and staff a priority.

# **FAMILY & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES**

## **Family Partnership Agreement Process & Family Goal Setting**

The Family Partnership Agreement Process refers to the set of opportunities that we offer your family to develop and implement individualized goals. This is an on-going process, to support child and family growth and development. Through positive goal-oriented relationships, staff partner with you to assess your child's and family's strengths, needs, and interests to develop meaningful goals and provide the highest quality services that lead to school readiness and on-going success for your child.

## **Community Services and Resources**

Staff make referrals to families as needed, and staff meet with families individually to offer support and information to assist families with their needs, interests, and goals. Youth In Need partners with many organizations and businesses within each of our service areas, including, but not limited to school districts, private businesses, non-profit organizations, and government agencies to help support families in getting their needs met, building upon their strengths, and expanding their engagement with their child and community.

## **Training Services**

The Youth In Need ELP training program is designed to meet individual and group needs. Trainings are intended to increase personal and professional knowledge, to enrich the program, to improve overall administration of the organization, and to transfer knowledge to the community. Trainings are offered to staff, parents, volunteers, Policy Council members, and community childcare partners.

## **Family Literacy Services**

If you would like to improve your reading/comprehension skills, or would like to further your education, Youth In Need can confidentially assist you. Additionally, staff can provide information on what programs are available locally. Youth In Need supports the development of the home language and culture while providing families with the tools to acquire English. English Language Learning (ELL) classes are available through agencies in the community. For more information, contact your child's Teacher, Family Advocate, or Family Educator.

## **Family Engagement**

As parents/guardians and families of ELP children, there are many ways for you to become involved and stay engaged in your children's education. Research shows that children whose parents/families are strong in the following seven family engagement areas do better in school and in life; therefore, we encourage parents to take an active role in all family engagement opportunities Youth In Need ELP has to offer.

## **Family Needs and Parent Gauge**

Family engagement is a collaborative and strengths-based process through which program staff and families, family members, and their children build positive and goal-oriented relationships. Youth In Need ELP utilizes a web-based instrument called Parent Gauge® three times per year to measure parent experience and the impact of ELP engagement efforts. This evidence-based tool fully aligns with the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework. Parent Gauge is an interactive conversation between parents and program staff with the purpose of collecting family strengths and perceptions of how the program is meeting your needs and supporting your family. Interviews are completed at initial enrollment, mid-year, and post/end of year. The information provides helps staff work with families on setting and achieving goals, planning enriching and meaningful family engagement opportunities, and enhancing quality services.

## **Parent Volunteers and other Volunteer Services**

Parents and other volunteers are an integral part of our program. There are a number of various opportunities to volunteer in our program. Assisting staff in providing one-on-one attention to the children, completing projects, reading to children, participating in restoration and building projects, organizing donation drives, assisting with special events and fundraisers, just to name a few. Youth In Need is always looking for individuals and groups in the community who are interested in donating their time and/or resources to assist with various needs. If you are interested in providing voluntary services, please speak to staff, or call 636-946-5600 for more information.

## **In-Kind**

The most valuable contributions come from you. The government provides 80% of the funds necessary to operate our program, the other 20% is from in-kind. In-Kind is the donation of time and materials used in the program that would otherwise be purchased by Youth In Need. Volunteer participation is critical to the operation of a successful program. You and your child's Teacher/Family Educator will identify individual goals for your child. You will also identify activities you can do to support your child in achieving their goals. These activities can be counted as in-kind and is helpful in fulfilling our 20%.

# GENERAL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

## Discrimination

Youth In Need does not discriminate in its enrollment, program services, and employment practices resulting from differences in race, sex, gender identity or expression, age, income, faith, ability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, cultural background, marital status or veteran status.

## Confidentiality

It is the policy of Youth In Need to protect, to the maximum extent possible, the privacy of every child, youth, and family that we serve by following strict confidentiality guidelines. Generally, information is not shared outside of Youth In Need without your written consent. Refer to Youth In Need's Notice of Privacy Practices for a listing of permitted disclosures. Please note that permitted disclosures include use of information for quality and auditing reviews. In addition, aggregated outcome data is used for reports, grant writing, and training. All employees are trained on Youth In Need's HIPAA policies and procedures to ensure compliant operations.

## Accreditation and Quality Improvement

Youth In Need is committed to providing exceptional services to all the children, youth and families. Global and nationally recognized models and tools are utilized to deliver strength-based care while demonstrating solid overall organizational results. Youth In Need is nationally accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) and all ELC's are licensed through the state of Missouri.

## Safety

Youth In Need is committed to providing safe environments for learning and education. All adults in the facility, staff and volunteers undergo an extensive background screening.

Adult anger, threats or violence will not be tolerated. Staff will call 911 in the event:

- An adult yells at another adult or child and is unable to calm down.
- An adult has a weapon or threatens to use one.
- An adult physically attacks an adult or child.

Spanking and/or any form of physical punishment are not tolerated on Youth In Need's property or supervised Youth In Need events such as picnics and field trips. If you find that you need additional support in this area, please let us know.

## Lockdown Procedures

A lockdown is a precautionary measure in response to a threat directly to the school or in the surrounding community. In the event of a lockdown **no one** will be admitted into or released from the building for any reason until the lockdown has concluded. Parents will be notified of a lockdown at your site through our automated phone system as soon as possible and upon conclusion of the lockdown.

## Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

All staff members are **mandated reporters** of child abuse and neglect and receive annual training on what is required to be reported. Determination of suspected child abuse and neglect is completed by the Missouri Department of Social Services—Children's Division. Youth In Need complies with Missouri law, which requires all staff working in the program to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Children's Division Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline.

The law tries to protect children from abuse and tries to help you as the parent find alternative ways to handle the stress of raising children. If you would like help in coping with any area of your child's behaviors, please speak with your



child's Teacher, Family Advocate, Family Educator, Center/Home Visitation Manager. We are here to assist you in finding ways and resources to deal with your concerns.

## **Tobacco Free Environment**

Smoking including e-cigarettes is not permitted by staff, volunteers, community members or parents within Youth In Need's buildings, offices, agency vehicles, employee vehicles when transporting clients for agency business, outdoor play areas, during home visits and all off-site program activities. In addition, smoking is not permitted in the visual presence of our clients.

## **Inclement Weather & Youth In Need's Automated Announcement System**

Safety permitting, every effort will be made to keep classrooms open in the event of inclement weather. When we need to close our centers, cancel home visits or have late start days due to unsafe weather conditions, this information will be posted on KSDK News Channel 5 and your family will receive an automated message from Youth In Need. The earliest you will receive a message is 6 a.m., and the latest being 9 p.m. Information will also be posted on each program's Facebook page.

It is important to provide your current contact information, as the automated system is dependent on this information being correct in our database. For families that have more than one phone number (home/cell/work) it is important that you indicate which number you would like to receive messages on. We will only be calling the phone number listed as your primary phone contact. Please be sure to inform staff of changes as they occur.

In addition to providing information about weather closings, the automated phone system will allow us to increase our communication by providing reminders about program events, meetings, or requirements, as well as delivering other important information as needed.

## **Holidays/Celebrations**

Youth In Need will be the leader and driving force for future generations in helping children, youth and families to realize their potential and positively impact their communities by providing opportunities to see other cultures and traditions in an inclusive environment. Our curriculum supports the celebration of the customs and traditions of all children. Through study-based exploration children will study holidays and celebrations from around the world. Experiences and activities will emerge from children's interests and provide opportunities for families to come together and celebrate learning.

Each child will be given the opportunity to celebrate their birthday or special day (for those that don't celebrate birthdays) with their friends. If you are planning a celebration for your child's birthday or special day, please notify your child's Teacher one week prior to the celebration. Staff will discuss possible activities with parents and the child to determine what activity they would like to take place. Parents are always welcome to participate in celebration activities.

**\*\*The use of balloons is prohibited around children because they pose a choking hazard.**

## **Clothing**

Please dress your child in play-clothes that are comfortable, washable, and suitable for all activities, both inside and outside. Our curriculum celebrates messy play, learning and exploration! In addition, make sure your child has a full change of clothing during all program activities. Please mark all items with your child's name. Parents are strongly encouraged to dress their children in closed toe shoes for safety and comfort. Clothing should be appropriate for school. Scary, play or costume masks are not appropriate to wear at school.

## **Weather**

Licensing rules require us to go outside every day for a minimum of one hour. Please be sure to send your child with jackets, hats and gloves suitable for outside play. We follow St. Louis Children's Hospitals Guidelines for outdoor play activities. For more information, please refer to the Licensing Handbook.

## **Personal Toy Guidelines**

Children have sufficient equipment and materials available while in the classrooms or while attending socializations. However, personal items are often a comfort to children, help to bridge the transition between home and school, and may assist parents in transitioning children from home to school. Youth In Need staff are not responsible for personal items brought from home. Parents and children have the understanding that personal items promoting violence or aggression will not be allowed. Please talk with your child's Teacher if you have questions about items which can be brought to school.

# **SPECIFIC POLICIES & OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

## **Rest Period**

The Missouri Department of Health requires that all children attending a full day childcare program rest a minimum of 30 minutes each day. After the 30 minutes, children who are awake will be offered quiet activities. Napping children will be undisturbed for approximately 1-2 hours.

## **Safe Sleep Practices for Infants and Toddlers Policy**

This policy ensures our compliance with state licensing regulations, which are in place in order to protect the safety of infants and toddlers while napping and sleeping. Families are strongly advised to apply these practices within their own homes to support the health and safety of infants & toddlers.

The General Requirements of Indoor Nap & Sleep Furniture and Equipment for Infants and Toddlers include:

1. An individual cot or bed with an individually assigned sheet and blanket must be provided for each child who naps or sleeps. An individually assigned sheet and blanket shall be provided for each child over twelve (12) months who naps or sleeps.
2. All bedding must be clean with sheets laundered at least once a week. Once bedding has been used by a child, it shall not be used by another child until it has been laundered.
3. If two-year-olds are in care, they shall be napped in an area separate from the other children so they can sleep undisturbed longer than the older children.
4. Sleeping equipment shall be arranged to provide at least a two-foot (2') aisle on one (1) long side of the equipment.
5. An individually assigned crib, portable crib or playpen must be provided and used for each infant and toddler. Stack cribs shall not be used.
6. With written parental consent on file, cots may be used for napping or sleeping for toddlers twelve (12) months and older.
7. Cribs and playpens must meet the Consumer Product Safety Commission and ASTM International safety standards for full size baby cribs.
8. The crib mattress or playpen pad must be sized correctly to the crib or playpen, in good condition, waterproof and kept clean and dry, be firm and maintain its shape even when the fitted sheet designated for that model is used, such that there are no gaps between the mattress and the side of the crib or playpen. Only tight fitted sheets should be used and must be changed immediately when soiled or wet.
9. Cribs and playpens shall be left consistently in place for infants and toddlers who use them for napping.

10. Soft materials or objects such as pillows, quilts, comforters, or sheepskins, even if covered by a sheet, must not be placed under a sleeping infant. If a mattress cover to protect against wetness is used, it must be tightly fitting and thin.
11. Cribs, portable cribs and playpens must be free of soft objects/toys, loose bedding or any object that can increase the risk of entrapment, suffocation or strangulation. Examples include bumper pads, pillows, quilts, comforters, sleep positioning devices, sheepskins, blankets, flat sheets, cloth diapers, bibs, pillow-like toys, wedges, infant positioners, special mattresses, special sleep surfaces, and other similar items.
12. Blankets or other soft or loose bedding must **not** be hung on the sides of cribs or put under the fitted sheet. Covering cribs or playpens with blankets or bedding is prohibited. Only sleep clothing that is designed to keep an infant warm without the possible hazard of covering the head or face may be used during sleep or nap time.
13. In accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics; American Public Health Association; the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Childcare and Early Education and Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition--no longer recommended or believe it is necessary to swaddle infants. Therefore, we will no longer swaddle infants in our care. Infants will be placed only in approved sleep sacks and/or sleep clothing designed to keep them warm.
14. Sitting devices such as car safety seats, strollers, swings, infant carriers, infant slings, and other sitting devices shall not be used for sleep/nap time. Infants who fall asleep anywhere other than a crib, portable crib, or playpen must be placed in the crib or playpen for the remainder of their sleep or nap time.

#### Care of Infants and Toddlers while Napping and Sleeping:

1. Infants and toddlers must have constant care and supervision at all times including while napping. Home monitors or commercial devices marketed to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) are not to be used in place of supervision while children are napping or sleeping.
2. Caregivers must be alert to various needs of the child at all times while napping and sleeping.
  - a. At least one staff person must supervise the napping area at all times and monitor all children for signs of distress.
  - b. Lighting in the napping area must be enough to ensure staff can visually monitor children for signs of distress.
  - c. Physical checks to ensure children are not overheated or in distress must occur at least every 10-15 minutes.
  - d. Sound machines or music players must not interfere with staff's ability to hear a child's signs of distress.
  - e. Smoking is prohibited in child centers at all times. Refer to Smoking Policy for additional information.

#### Daily Activities for Infants and Toddlers Must Include:

1. Supervised "tummy time" for children under one (1) year of age to promote healthy development.
2. A supervised nap period that meets the child's individual needs must meet the following requirements:
  - a. A child under twelve (12) months of age must be placed on his/her back to sleep.
  - b. An infant's head and face must remain uncovered during sleep.
  - c. Infants unable to roll from their stomachs to their backs and from their backs to their stomachs must be placed on their backs when found face down. When infants can easily turn from their stomachs to their backs and from their backs to their stomachs, they must be initially placed on their backs, but shall be allowed to adopt whatever positions they prefer for sleep.
  - d. An infant must not be overdressed when sleeping, to avoid overheating. Infants should be dressed appropriately for the environment, with no more than one (1) layer more than an adult would wear to be comfortable in that environment.
  - e. When, in the opinion of the infant's licensed Health Care Provider, an infant requires alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements that differ from those set forth in this rule, the provider shall have on file at the facility written instructions, signed by the infant's licensed Health Care Provider, detailing the alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements for such infant. The

caregiver(s) shall put the infant to sleep in accordance with such written instructions. *[Unless a written exception from a child's physician is on file at the facility, a child under twelve (12) months of age must be placed on his/her back to sleep. An infant's head must remain uncovered during sleep.]*

- f. Pacifiers, if used, shall not be hung around the infant's neck. Pacifier mechanisms or pacifiers that attach to infant clothing must not be used with napping or sleeping infants.
  - g. After awakening, an infant may remain in the crib as long as s/he is content, but never for a period longer than thirty (30) minutes.
  - h. Toddlers shall be taken out of bed for other activities when they awaken.
3. Encouragement in the development of motor skills by providing opportunities for supervised "tummy time", reaching, grasping, pulling up, creeping, crawling, and walking.

#### Safe Sleep Staff Training for Staff:

1. Within thirty (30) days of employment and annually thereafter, all staff that provide care for infants less than one (1) year of age shall successfully complete department-approved training regarding the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) safe sleep recommendations.
2. The training will be documented and maintained in each employee's file.
3. Upon center-based enrollment the parent(s) or guardian(s) of each child less than one (1) year of age will receive a copy of the Safe Sleep policy and will sign a statement indicating the receipt of the policy.

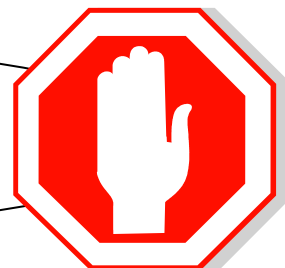
## Transportation

You will be responsible for the transportation of your child to the center. You can do this by:

- Driving your child, yourself
- Carpooling
- Making other arrangements (friends, relatives, etc.)
- All children must be properly restrained according to the law.



**As a reminder, and as required by law:  
Never leave your child unattended in a vehicle, not even for a minute!**



## Emergency Contact/Child Release

For your child's safety, it is extremely important that you notify your child's Teacher, Family Advocate, Center Manager, or Family Educator immediately if your address, phone number, or emergency contact numbers change. Staff will only release your child to authorized adults. Children will not be released to anyone under the age of 16 years (with the exception of biological teen parents) without written consent and a state issued photo identification card. Unfamiliar staff will require anyone picking up children to show proper identification (state issued photo identification card) before releasing children. You must give authorization in writing with the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of adults authorized to receive your child. This information must appear on the *Emergency Information Form* and must remain updated. We must have current numbers where you or the emergency contact person can be reached for any concern. The local police department or the Children's Division will be called if, after several attempts, you or the emergency contact person cannot be reached in the event of an emergency.

## Key Cards (where applicable)

Each family will receive 2 key cards at initial enrollment. Key cards are to be given only to those individuals authorized for pick-up/release. You may be asked to show picture identification before the child will be released. If you forget your

key card, you will be required to show picture identification before the child will be released. Each family will be offered up to 2 replacement cards for the entire time you are in the ELC, payment for any cards issued after the 2 initial cards and the 2 replacement cards will be the responsibility of the family. Key cards are in place for the safety of our children and staff, in the event your card is lost or stolen please notify the Director of Operations, Center or Assistant Center Manager immediately.

## Arrival and Departure

An easy transition often begins at home by establishing a routine in the morning. Parents are asked to have their child to school by the start of the ELC school day (8:00/8:30 a.m.) to assist with early morning transitions. Parents are asked to have their child in attendance by 8:00/8:30 a.m. so that children receive a nutritious breakfast, transition smoothly into the classroom community, and benefit from the educational activities that are offered in the morning hours.

Parents are also encouraged to let their children know when they are leaving and when they will be back. Some children may have difficulty separating, but we do not recommend “sneaking out” as this can leave a child with a feeling of abandonment. Staff will assist you and your child with strategies to work towards a positive separation. Sharing information about your morning or previous evening will enable the Teacher to help your child be successful (for example, if your child was up late the night before or spent the weekend with relatives).

Parents should advise all people who pick-up their children of Youth In Need’s pick-up/departure process, which includes confirming the identification of individuals with the name listed on the authorized consent to release. Youth In Need is required to abide by all legal paperwork, such as Orders of Protection, Custody Documentation, Parenting Plans, etc. It is normal for children to be hesitant to leave on some days. Staff can support transitions by sharing various strategies and techniques used to support transitions at school. To support the daily movement between school and home, parents are asked to be enthusiastic and excited about projects, activities, and artwork.

### Arrival Procedures

- Escort your child to their classroom and notify the classroom Teacher of your arrival.
- Sign your child in.
- Explain to the Teacher **and** write down any special instructions for the day.
- Always tell the Teacher you are leaving, thereby placing the child in their care.

### Departure Procedures

- Make sure you speak to the Teacher before taking your child.
- Check your child’s cubby and/or folder to make sure you collect any items that need to go home.
- Sign your child out.

## Attendance/Absentee/Late Arrival Policy

**Attendance:** *Regular attendance at the center is required for each child’s progress in the ELC program.*

- Parents are educated on the importance of regular attendance at the initial home visit and at the center orientation.
- Upon enrollment, parents are asked to review and sign the Family-Staff Agreement which details the importance of regular attendance.
- Center staff have consistent contact with families enrolled in an ELC classroom.
- Please notify staff before 9:00 a.m. if your child is going to be absent or late that day. We are required by Program Performance Standards to contact you by phone or home visit if we have not heard from you by 9:00 a.m. This phone conversation or the visit will be documented in the child’s file.

**Absences:** Parents must contact their ELC by 9:00 a.m. if their child will be absent for the day. ELC staff will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused.

- Each center has an answering machine/voicemail so calls can be made at any time to notify staff that a child will be absent from the center.
- If no phone is available, parents can leave a note at the center or arrange to have someone else call the center.
- Excessive excused absences are defined as three (3) or more consecutive or five (5) total absences in one month (first to last day of any given month).
- Parents should notify staff when circumstances change, and a full day classroom option no longer meets their family needs.
- Staff assist families with needed resources, referrals and/or education in areas that are affecting their child's consistent attendance.

**Late Arrival:** Children arriving after 9:00 a.m. are considered late and have missed a significant portion of educational programming.

**Excessive Absences and/or Excessive Late Arrivals:** In the event of excessive absences or late arrivals we will work with you to eliminate any barriers that may be causing these issues. Including but not limited to requesting a care team meeting with you to determine an action plan. Excused/Unexcused excessive absences/late arrivals may result in termination from the center program option and services will be maintained through the home visitation program option.

## Late Pick-Up Procedure\*

The hours of operation for the ELC full day program may vary from 8:00/8:30 a.m.—2:00/2:30 p.m. and the hours of operation for the extended day program also vary please check with your Center Manager for exact times. Children are required to be picked up by 2:00/2:30 p.m. for full day program and at the end of the regular hours for extended day programs.

### Procedure for Late Pick Up

If your child is left at the center after 2:00/2:30 p.m. for full day or after your sites extended day hours, the following procedure will apply:

- Staff will contact by phone all emergency contacts and individuals authorized for pick up. Staff will continue to contact all above stated individuals frequently until child is picked up or arrangements are made for pick up.
- After 1 hour (60 minutes), staff will contact the Family Support Division and/or the local police department.
- At the time of pick-up, the parent or the person designated to pick up the child is required to sign a *Late Pick-Up Form*.
- The parent or the person designated to pick up the child receives a copy of the signed *Late Pick-Up Form*.
- **Three (3) late** pick up incidents occurring any time after regular program hours are determined to be chronic and will be reviewed by the Center Manager, Director of Operations and the Vice President of Early Childhood.
- Excessive absences/late arrivals may result in termination from the center program option, alternative options will be offered.

\* Due to community needs, the days and hours for Montgomery Center and Warren R-III Classrooms vary. Please contact your Center Manager for exact days and hours.

## Home Visit Cancellation Policy

Head Start Performance Standards state that each family receives a weekly 90-minute visit in the home. This policy is designed to ensure that all families are receiving quality services. Parents are asked to sign the *Family/Staff Agreement Form*. This agreement states the parents will make every effort to contact the Family Educator if a scheduled visit needs to be cancelled. Family Educators (FE) will make every attempt to reschedule any cancelled home visits (HV). The following are the essential goals in the Home Visitation program:

1. HV's are to be conducted in the home with the child(ren), parent/primary caretaker and staff for the entire 90-minute visit.

2. HV's are conducted Monday through Friday from 7 a.m.—7p.m.
3. Home Visitation Managers (HVM) will take into consideration reasons for cancellation/patterns of missed visits to ensure families are not unfairly penalized for illness/absences that would be considered excused.
4. HVM's will assist with inconsistent/missed visits through phone calls, going on visits or other supports as needed.
5. If there is no response to program contact after two missed visits, a drop letter will be sent giving one week for contact to be made in order to remain in the program.

## **PARENT/GUARDIAN RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Rights**

#### ***Early Learning Program Parents Have:***

- The Right to professional, responsible, and respectful service by a staff that values all kinds of differences between people including race, color, age, religion, gender, sexual orientation, national origin, and disability.
- The Right to get services quickly and with little extra effort.
- The Right to be involved with Youth In Need willingly; right to refuse services, and right to be informed about any consequences of refusing services.
- The Right to have information about you stay private.
- The Right to be given all help and information in a crisis situation.
- The Right to give your opinion about the quality of services you are receiving from Youth In Need.
- The Right to receive services in a setting that is safe and clean.
- The Right to work with Youth In Need staff in setting your individual goals.
- The Right to bring any complaint, question or concern to the attention of Youth In Need management (see Grievance Procedure).

### **Responsibilities**

#### ***Early Learning Program Parents Have:***

- The Responsibility to act in a polite, respectful way toward Youth In Need staff, volunteers, and clients.
- The Responsibility to be on time, or to change or cancel an appointment at least 24 hours ahead of time.
- The Responsibility to keep information about other clients private.
- The Responsibility to give feedback about your services and to share any concerns with the head of your program.
- The Responsibility to participate actively in the services offered by Youth In Need.
- The Responsibility to address misbehavior in their children in a positive way.
- The Responsibility to access Youth In Need during regular working hours, if possible.
- The Responsibility to never bring a weapon of any kind on to Youth In Need property.
- The Responsibility to never verbally or physically fight with anyone or to use abusive language.
- The Responsibility to tell the truth and to give the most accurate and complete information possible.
- The Responsibility to voice concerns openly.

## **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

### **Youth In Need Early Learning Program Parent Code Of Conduct**

It is Youth In Need's policy that the business of the company be conducted according to the highest ethical standards. In support of this policy, a set of ethics and standards of conduct are essential for Youth In Need to prosper and receive the desired trust and respect of children, youth and families, employees, the Board of Directors, suppliers, and the community.

The underlying principles of these standards are based on courtesy, moral standards, and the law. These principles ensure the continued success and growth of the services and programs provided by Youth In Need.

All staff, volunteers, and governing body members are subject to abide by the regulations and Code of Ethics set forth by law and by the staff's professional licensing board, as applicable. If a staff member is not licensed in the state of Missouri, they are subject to abide by the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics.

All employees and volunteers must abide by the following established standards of conduct. These standards include, but are not limited to:

1. Respect and promote the unique identities of all children, youth, families, and staff, and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of race, sex, gender, identity or expression, age, income, faith, ability, political affiliation, sexual orientation, and cultural background.
2. Follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, youth, families, and employees.
3. All children and youth must be supervised and not left alone while under the care of Youth In Need.
4. Positive methods of child guidance shall be utilized. Engaging in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation is prohibited; in addition, methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, and the denial of basic needs are not to be utilized.

The Parent Code of Conduct will include, but not be limited to, the following items:

1. **Parents will address the misbehavior of their children attending an ELP function or classroom in a positive way.** No physical or verbal punishment of children is allowed at an ELP function or classroom. This includes, but is not limited to, striking your child in any way or cursing at your child at an ELP function or classroom.
2. **Parents will direct all concerns regarding other children at an ELP function or classroom to ELP staff immediately.** It is never appropriate for a parent to discipline another child at an ELP function or classroom. It is not the intent of this standard to stop a parent from helping a child who is in immediate danger, but to use common sense in a situation where a child may be at risk of being harmed.
3. **Parents will treat ELP staff members with respect and follow agency policy regarding disagreements or concerns.** It is never appropriate for a parent to threaten a staff member in any way.
4. **If a parent has a disagreement or problem with another parent at an ELP function or classroom, that problem will be addressed with respect.** It is never appropriate for a parent to threaten another parent at an ELP function or classroom.
5. **When in the presence of children at an ELP function or classroom, parents will use language appropriate for young children to hear.** Cursing/swearing is not allowed.
6. **Smoking including e-cigarettes is not permitted by staff, volunteers, community members or parents within Youth In Need's buildings, offices, agency vehicles, employee vehicles when transporting clients for agency business, outdoor play areas, home visits and all off-site program activities. In addition, smoking is not permitted in the visual presence of our clients.**
7. **To promote a safe, happy environment for our children, parents will address problems with other parents and staff in private, away from children attending an ELP function or classroom.** No quarreling in front of children at an ELP function or classroom is allowed.
8. **To ensure the safety and health of all children, all safety rules, including but not limited to the following, will be enforced:**
  - a. **According to the law, all children will be placed in appropriate vehicle restraints at all times.**
  - b. **Parents will supply current emergency contact information to ELP staff at all times.** It is the parent's responsibility to keep this information accurate, including changes in names, addresses, and phone numbers for themselves and emergency contacts. Parents must meet with ELP staff every three months to update this information and provide the current information any time between meetings when changes occur.



In the event of a dispute regarding discipline due to a child's redirection, a parent may request an informal investigation of the situation.

Failure to comply with the policies outlined herein may lead to a staff member or designated Policy Council representative to approach the parent(s) involved. It is not our wish to exclude or terminate the enrollment of any child or family. If a situation arises, however, that places staff, children, or family members at harm, the Youth In Need Early Learning Program reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of a family if Youth In Need deems that the appropriate action.

*\*Parent Code of Conduct is reviewed and approved by Policy Council on an annual basis with the Family Handbook. See Policy Council minutes for details.*

## **GRIEVANCE POLICY & PROCEDURE FOR CLIENTS, PARENTS/GUARDIANS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

**Policy:** Youth In Need provides both formal and informal mechanisms for expressing and resolving concerns, complaints and grievances. In the event where a client, client's parent/guardian, or community member has a concern, complaint or grievance it will be heard and addressed in an appropriate, respectful and confidential manner. Youth In Need encourages clients, parents/guardians, and community members to express their concerns freely and actively seek feedback to assess satisfaction with services.

**Procedure:** Clients (and/or parents/guardians) will be given a copy of their Rights and Responsibilities at intake/enrollment and as requested thereafter.

### INFORMAL Client, Client Parent/Guardian or Community Member Grievance Procedure

1. Routine and/or minor concerns and complaints can typically be resolved through discussions with program staff.
2. In the event that a concern is serious or is not able to be resolved by discussing with program staff, he/she may utilize our formal client, client parent/guardian or community member grievance procedure.

### FORMAL Client, Client Parent/Guardian or Community Member Grievance Procedure

1. The grievance should be immediately brought to the attention of the program/site supervisor (in the case that the grievance is against the program/site supervisor the grievance should be brought to the attention of that person's supervisor). If it is outside of normal business hours, the on-call employee should be contacted. The staff person who the grievance is initially brought to must complete an Incident Report documenting who made the complaint, the details of the complaint and all relevant information. Staff should be aware that regardless of request, all grievances must be reported to the appropriate individual(s). This must be communicated to the person filing the grievance.
2. In the case of a grievance made against a staff person, the program/site supervisor should contact Human Resources to consult with regarding the investigation of the grievance. In addition, the staff person may be suspended pending investigation depending on the circumstances of the situation. Finally, if the situation warrants, and the staff person involved is part of an ELP, management may be required to comply with the Protocol for Reporting Staff Incident/Allegation/Misconduct to the Administration for Children and Families. See Human Resources for details on this process. Consult with Youth In Need's Employee Policies and Guidelines Manual for further information regarding employment issues.
3. The program/site supervisor or most appropriate responsible individual will investigate (in conjunction with Human Resources, if appropriate) the grievance by gathering information from relevant sources as quickly as possible. The investigation should follow standard business practice and ensure all relevant parties are involved including the complainant, the accused and any witnesses. Interviewed individuals should sign off on the documentation of their interview as an attestation of their statement regarding the

events. Guidance on completing investigations can be obtained from management or Human Resources.

4. Once the information has been collected, the program or site supervisor must prepare an Incident Report, documenting the details of the grievance, the investigative process and statements of the interviewees. Both Incident Reports (Initial and Investigative) must be forwarded through the chain of command, up to the Vice President of the program within three (3) days, whenever possible, of the grievance. At this point the Vice President will review the Incident Reports and consult with staff and Human Resources as needed. If an action is to be taken with staff it should be documented and enacted as soon as possible.
5. A written or verbal response (depending on the circumstances as deemed by the VP of the program), by the VP of the program, will be given within 10 business days, whenever possible, to the individual who filed the grievance. This written response must also be filed with the case record, if applicable. In addition, the written response will also be kept with the Incident Reports related to the grievance and kept by the VP of the program.
6. If the situation cannot be resolved with the Vice President, the person filing the grievance may appeal and take the grievance to the Chief Program Officer for resolution. The Vice President may also take the issue to the Chief Program Officer for resolution if he/she deems it necessary. The Chief Program Officer may take the issue to the CEO for resolution if he/she deems it necessary.
7. If the situation cannot be resolved with the Chief Program Officer, the person filing the grievance may appeal and take the grievance to the CEO for resolution.
8. If the situation cannot be resolved with the CEO, the person filing the grievance may appeal and take the grievance to the Policy Council (If ELP) and/or the Youth In Need Board of Directors for resolution. The CEO may take the issue to the Policy Council (If ELP) and the Youth In Need Board of Directors for resolution if he/she deems it necessary.

*\*Last updated May 2014*

## Regulations

Youth In Need Programs operate in accordance with all applicable federal, state and local regulations.

Department of Health and Human Service, Office of Head Start  
Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS)

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/>

State of Missouri, Department of Health and Human Services  
Child Care Licensing Rules and Regulations

<https://health.mo.gov/safety/childcare/>

Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services  
Child and Adult Food Care Program (CACFP)

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program>

CACFP Eat Smart Certification

<https://www.health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/pdf/BeAnEatSmartChildCare.pdf>

## Council on Accreditation

In addition, our facilities are accredited. Accreditation is the benchmark of quality among programs. Accreditation means a program has met recognized standards for high Quality.

# PROGRAM CLOSING DATES 2021-2022

August 16, 2021—First Day of 2021-2022 Program Year (1<sup>st</sup> Day of School)

September 6, 2021—Classrooms Closed

September 27, 2021—Classrooms Closed & No Home Visits

October 15, 2021—Classrooms Closed & No Home Visits

October 18, 2021—Classrooms Closed

November 25 & 26, 2021—Classrooms Closed

December 24—31, 2021—Classrooms Closed

January 14, 2022, Classrooms Closed & No Home Visits

January 17, 2022—Classrooms Closed

April 15, 2022—Classrooms Closed & No Home Visits

April 18, 2022—Classrooms Closed

May 20, 2022—Classrooms Closed & No Home Visits

May 30, 2022—Classrooms Closed

July 4, 2022—Classrooms Closed

August 9, 2022—Last Day of 2021-2022 Program Year (Last day of School)

# THE HEAD START CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY LEARNING FRAMEWORK

The *Head Start Child Development and Early Learning Framework* represents the foundation of the Head Start Approach to School Readiness. It aligns with and builds from five essential developmental domains of birth to five:

1. Approaches to Learning
2. Social and Emotional Development
3. Language and Literacy
4. Cognition
5. Perceptual, Motor, and Physical Development

Each domain is related to and influences the others. For example, as preschoolers' working memory develops (a component of Approaches to Learning), their ability to follow multiple-step instructions improves, and their ability to learn complex math concepts increases.

The *Framework* guides curriculum selection, implementation, and assessment and can be used when planning and assessing teaching and learning experiences and children's progress toward school readiness goals. The Framework guides Head Start & Early Head Start services which are—

- \* RESEARCH-BASED—Informed by research as being reasonably achievable, age appropriate, and aligned with kindergarten expectations.
- \* COMPREHENSIVE—Cover the central domains of early learning and skills children need to succeed in school and provide sufficient breadth and depth in each area.
- \* INCLUSIVE—Relevant for children from diverse linguistic, economic, and cultural backgrounds and for children with disabilities.
- \* MANAGEABLE—Include a reasonable number of domains, sub-domains, goals, and indicators that programs can effectively implement.
- \* MEASURABLE—Reflect observable skills, behaviors, and concepts.

## PARENT, FAMILY, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

When parent and family engagement activities are systemic and integrated across program foundations and program impact areas, family engagement outcomes are achieved, resulting in children who are healthy and ready for school. Parent and family engagement activities are grounded in positive, ongoing, and goal-oriented relationships with families.

