



Education Service Center, Region 20 Head Start Program



Volunteer Guide

For more information and resources please visit:

www.esc20.net

and search under A-Z Index for Head Start.

<http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc>

for the Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center

Welcome to the Education Service Center, Region 20 Head Start Volunteer Program. Through this training it is our goal to build a better understanding of the role of parents in the education of their children. For many parents, serving as a Head Start volunteer is the first step on the career ladder. Effective and responsible volunteers are essential to the success of the volunteer program. Volunteers often serve as positive role models and mentors for parents who wish to improve their skills. We are confident that participation in the Head Start Volunteer Program will be a fulfilling and rewarding experience for you.

Parent, Family & Community Engagement Outcomes

1. FAMILY WELL-BEING

Parents and families are safe, healthy, and have increased financial security.

2. POSITIVE PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIPS*

Beginning with transitions to parenthood, parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.

3. FAMILIES AS LIFELONG EDUCATORS*

Parents and families observe, guide, promote, and participate in the everyday learning of their children at home, school, and in their communities.

4. FAMILIES AS LEARNERS*

Parents and families advance their own learning interests through education, training and other experiences that support their parenting, careers, and life goals.

5. FAMILY ENGAGEMENT IN TRANSITIONS*

Parents and families support and advocate for their child's learning and development as they transition to new learning environments, including Early Head Start to Head Start, EHS/HS to other early learning environments, and HS to kindergarten through elementary school.

6. FAMILY CONNECTIONS TO PEERS AND COMMUNITY*

Parents and families form connections with peers and mentors in formal or informal social networks that are supportive and/or educational and that enhance social well-being and community life.

7. FAMILIES AS ADVOCATES AND LEADERS*

Parents and families participate in leadership development, decision-making, program policy development, or in community and state organizing activities to improve children's development and learning experiences.

**Impacted through the volunteer training opportunities.*

Getting Started

- ___ 1. Complete the Volunteer Interest Survey during Initial Visit/Orientation.
- ___ 2. Participate in a Volunteer Training session.
- ___ 3. Complete the school district Criminal History Inquiry process.
- ___ 4. Read and sign the Standards of Conduct & the Confidentiality Agreement.
- ___ 5. Complete the Tuberculosis (TB) Screening Questionnaire.
- ___ 6. Complete the Confidentiality Agreement.
- ___ 7. Follow all program and school requirements.

Scheduling Volunteer Time

- ◆ Volunteer with an interest in supporting and improving education programs for all children.
- ◆ Schedule and keep volunteer appointments.
- ◆ Be consistent and dependable.
- ◆ Sign up for the days you can work in the classroom on the volunteer chart. Indicate if you plan to eat breakfast or lunch.
- ◆ Sign-in at the office & get a volunteer name tag. You must wear the name tag while volunteering.
- ◆ Return the volunteer name tag at the end of the day and sign out.
- ◆ Notify the teacher if you are unable to volunteer as scheduled.

Tracking Your Contributions

Effective and responsible volunteers are essential to the success of the Head Start program. This requires a professional attitude and interest in education and a real desire to help students become responsible, productive citizens. Volunteer time serves as “In-Kind” contribution for the Program as required for Head Start. Your time is greatly appreciated!

1. Some common ways to achieve volunteer hours include:

Classroom Volunteer Time

Assist on Field Trips, as approved

Preparing materials at home for the classroom

Parent Center tasks (as planned with FSA staff)

2. Volunteers will be responsible for signing in and out on the Head Start logs.
3. Children’s relatives are also encouraged to volunteer.
4. Volunteer hours achieved by March 31 will be used to honor the top volunteer during the last Parent Committee / Transition Meeting.

Safety & Security

- ◆ Know what to do and where to get help in an emergency; know your school emergency procedure plan (fire, first-aid, dental, blood borne pathogens, etc.).
- ◆ Understanding that discipline is the teacher's responsibility, however, volunteers are encouraged to intervene in unsafe conditions.
- ◆ Help supervise children at all times.
- ◆ When you need to leave the classroom, cafeteria, or playground please be sure to inform another adult in the group. Head Start maintains a child to teacher ratio for safety.
- ◆ Report any suspected child abuse to the classroom teacher.

School & Classroom Procedures

- ◆ Assist with the daily cleaning of rest mats or tables to ensure sanitation.
- ◆ Assist with ensuring that children wash their hands after toileting and before meals.
- ◆ Understand that discipline is the teacher's responsibility, however, volunteers are encouraged to intervene in unsafe conditions.
- ◆ Become familiar with the entire school campus, particularly critical areas such as the principal's office, nurse's office, counselor, etc.
- ◆ Look at the volunteer program as a way to learn new skills, make new friends, and improve the school and the community.
- ◆ Maintain a sense of humor.
- ◆ Leave personal problems at home.
- ◆ Set a good example by being courteous and respectful; be a good role model.
- ◆ Help the teacher with classroom preparation.
- ◆ Eat the same meal as the children and model healthy eating habits.
- ◆ Assist with the opening and closing of the daily routine.
- ◆ Assist with all children during activities held away from school.

Procedures

- ◆ Keep discussions and actions in the classroom related to the volunteer task for the day.
- ◆ Keep all discussions and information about children confidential.
- ◆ Follow the classroom staffs' lead and instructions at all times.
- ◆ As a volunteer you are responsible for becoming familiar with your District Student Handbook and for modeling all of the guidelines stated therein.
- ◆ Understand and follow all general school rules (i.e., parking, sign-in, etc.)
- ◆ Appropriate clothing must be worn at all times when volunteering in the program.
- ◆ Personal phones or other electronic devices should not be used in the classroom.

Child, Staff, & Volunteer Interactions

- ◆ Become familiar with the classroom rules and discipline management system.
- ◆ Seek help from the teacher when additional information or instruction is needed.
- ◆ Share ideas and comments with the teacher and assistant.
- ◆ Refrain from sharing confidential information (child's home life, educational progress, discipline situations, etc.)
- ◆ Accept direction and supervision from the teacher or assistant.
- ◆ Adjust to the teacher's way of doing things.
- ◆ You will be working only under the supervision of a teacher or other members of the school staff.
- ◆ Respect the privacy of teachers, staff members, & children by not discussing school matters away from the school setting.
- ◆ Know that the evaluation of a child's learning must be done by the classroom teacher.
- ◆ Follow the planned daily routine/schedule.
- ◆ Parent Center rules must be followed at all times.
- ◆ Act as a responsible parent when dealing with the children.

Tips and Ideas

Reading with Children

- Choose a book of interest.
- Sit side by side.
- Talk about the cover picture and title.
- Read 1-2 pages at a time, then talk about what you read.
- Have child point to characters, items in the pictures, etc.

Meal Time

- Allow child to open utensils and milk cartons.
- Ask questions about the foods on the tray such as:
What are these vegetables called?
Do you grow any tomatoes at home?
Are they sweet or sour?
- Encourage children to try foods on the tray.
- Show the children you try new foods.
- Model good table manners.

Tips for Engaging Children in Conversations

(Source: Head Start: National Center on Quality Teaching and Learning)

Set the Stage

- 1) Get down on the child's level.
- 2) Listen to what the child says.
- 3) Match the tone of the conversation to the child's affect.
- 4) Take turns in talking.

Start the Conversation

- 1) Talk about what the child is doing or what the child is interested in.
- 2) Ask questions that relate to the child's experiences or interests.
- 3) Add to what the child says and model new language.
- 4) Give the child enough time to respond.

Helping Children Learn & Grow

- ◆ Volunteers should spend some time observing the children before interaction.
- ◆ Welcome children to class daily.
- ◆ Find ways to establish a good relationship with each child.
- ◆ Support and respect each child's feelings for the teacher and assistant.
- ◆ Be truly interested in each child; get him/her involved in the activities.
- ◆ Accept each child and work with all children fairly and consistently
- ◆ Encourage the best from each child.
- ◆ Use patience and kindness.
- ◆ Call each child by name, pronouncing it correctly.
- ◆ Avoid becoming emotionally involved with any one child.
- ◆ Be honest with the children
- ◆ Make no promise that cannot be kept.
- ◆ Be comfortable with silence, give the child time to think.
- ◆ Provide help without doing work for the child.
- ◆ Encourage independence in attempting tasks, opening utensils and food packets, etc.
- ◆ At meals and snacks encourage children to try foods.
- ◆ Talk with the children about the foods they eat, manners they show, etc.
- ◆ Be a good listener and respect the privacy of each child.

Thank You Volunteers!

