



2020 - 2021

Parent Consent for Child Release Policy

POLICY

Head Start ensures children are only released to a parent, legal guardian, or other individual identified in writing by the parent or legal guardian. Head Start must maintain lists of authorized individuals.

PROCEDURES

- A. A Release/Emergency Contact Transportation form will be completed for each child by their parent/guardian at intake. The original form will be kept in the family services locked files. This form allows the parent/guardian to identify all persons with the authority to pick up their child from the classroom, receive their child from the bus and be notified of an emergency. Household members listed on the enrollment application will be allowed to pick up the child if they are 16 years of age or older.
- B. A list of all children and the persons they may be released to, will be kept in the classroom, the transportation office and on the buses at all times for reference by staff. Release names from the Release/Emergency Contact and Transportation form will be entered on ChildPlus, which will be used by the front desk. Authorized adults picking up a child have to sign in at the front desk and the classroom. At the front desk, authorization will be verified using ChildPlus. In the classroom, teachers will verify the authorization using a release list. This list is updated monthly and modified upon the receipt of a Change of Status Form.
- C. Any changes to the Release/Emergency Contact form are to be entered on a Change of Status form and completed only by the parent/guardian. This form must be filled out in the presence of a staff member and signed and dated by both staff and parent/guardian. The information will be entered in ChildPlus and the original will be placed in the child's file. Copies will be given immediately to teachers, transportation, and the front desk. Release lists used on ChildPlus, in the classroom and on the bus will be updated immediately to reflect this new information. Head Start will not accept modifications to the release list over the phone or from persons other than the parent/guardian.
- D. If an authorized person does not pick a child up from school, or is not available when the child's bus arrives, the child will be brought to the Main Center. If an authorized adult has not arrived by 3:45PM, Child Protective Services will be contacted.

Lendy Baughman
Policy Council Chairperson

01-15-20
Date

ACTION INC. HEAD START
1000 S. Arizona St., Butte, MT 59701

Phone: 406-723-4078

Fax: 406-723-5620

Action Inc. 406-533-6855



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Child Abuse / Neglect Reporting Policy

Under Montana law, if any school staff member has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, it remains that individual's obligation to see that the situation is reported.

An employee from the Department of Child and Family Services will provide annual training on child abuse and reporting to the Head Start Staff, Action Inc. Board of Directors and the Policy Council.

PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

FIRST: Document all information immediately while the situation is clear in your mind and untainted by discussion with others. Include a physical description when necessary, verbal comments the student may have made and other pertinent information.

SECOND: It is the staff's obligation to report all suspected cases of abuse and neglect to Centralized Intake (CI) 1-866-820-5437. The Head Start's policy is that the Family Service Advocate be consulted and assist with reporting. In her absence, ask for the Director. Relate all relevant information about the child and incident when reporting.

THIRD: The Family Service Advocate and Enrollment Coordinator will follow up with the appropriate people when necessary. Staff is to report only, leaving investigating to Department of Family Services.

WHAT DOES CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES INVESTIGATE?

Child and Family Services investigate the following types of child abuse: physical abuse, physical neglect, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, and psychological abuse. Montana's child abuse and neglect mandatory reporting laws apply equally to administrators, aides, bus drivers, counselors, custodians, food service workers, nurses, secretaries, teachers, and all school personnel who work during the regular school hours. Child abuse and neglect must be reported before a child can be protected and services offered to the family.

Wendy Baughman

Policy Council Approval

02-19-2020

Date

*This policy will be in effect for one year from date of approval.