

MID-WEST NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

*EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER
FAMILY HANDBOOK*

2018-2019



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MID-WEST NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

FAMILY HANDBOOK

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W E L C O M E

The Mid-West New Mexico CAP Grantee Board Members, Policy Council Members, and Staff would like to take this opportunity to welcome Parents/Guardians and your children to our Early Childhood Development Center.

DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES

- High quality preschool services for children 3-5 years old, Monday-Friday, operating September-May
- Morning or afternoon sessions where available
- Services for Children with Special Needs
- Breakfast and/or lunch and afternoon snack for enrolled children.
- Parenting and Literacy Classes where available.
- Quality staff - all staff (FBI) finger print State/National check
- Disability and Adult Education Services are provided through Community Partnerships.
- Medical/Dental exams and services are paid for by the program for families without insurance or Medicaid, as per funding availability.
- Computers in the classroom for the children.
- Computers available at the Center for parents (in the parent room) of children enrolled in the program.
- These services are provided at no cost to families who meet the eligibility requirement.
- Check with your local Center Director for other services in which you may qualify.
- Transportation may be available for enrolled children.
- Male Involvement activities

“Education is the best thing you can give your Child”

MID-WEST NM CAP EARLY CHILDHOOD MISSION STATEMENT

The Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program Early Childhood mission is to provide quality comprehensive services in the nine component areas of:

1. Education
2. Health
3. Nutrition
4. Social Service
5. Parent Involvement
6. Mental Health
7. Transition
8. Disabilities
9. Transportation

in accordance with the Head Start, NM Pre-K and other federal, state and local Performance Standards for the operation of an Early Childhood Program, through early intervention, at no cost to qualified children and families in Cibola, McKinley, Socorro and Valencia Counties.

MID-WEST NM CAP EARLY CHILDHOOD PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

We believe that early learning is the root of success and begins at birth. Head Start provides experience and opportunities to help parents in providing a “good beginning” for their children.

We believe that parents are the first and most important teachers for their children. To carry out this goal, the program helps build the skills and strengths of parents by giving them information and varied opportunities for application of these skills. We highly encourage family involvement and hope you have an opportunity to participate in your child’s classroom.

We emphasize an individual approach in working with the child and the parents based upon individually assessed needs agreed upon by both parents and staff. Our goals are directed towards the enhancement of the family and the involvement of the community in the services that we provide through an integrated approach to delivery of services.

We ensure that the learning environment is conducive to the health, safety, well-being and comfort of children, families and staff by adhering to all applicable rules and standards and by implementing best practices in early childhood development which

include: inclusivity, multiculturalism and early childhood development room arrangement best practices as addressed in the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale and current research as well as the fostering of positive relationships between teaching staff and the children and families that they serve.

INTRODUCTION

The Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program (The “CAP” Office), is a Grantee Agency, Non-Profit Corporation which sponsors various programs in the Counties of Cibola, McKinley, Socorro and Valencia. The Mid-West NM CAP – Head Start Program is funded for a total enrollment of 824 children. These services are at no cost to the families.

The service areas are located in the Mid-Western part of the State of New Mexico and cover an area of approximately 20,000 square miles or approximately 1/5 of the State of New Mexico.

The Agency’s Grantee Board of Directors and the Policy Council, hereafter referred to as the Governing Body, are unified in shared governance, in which parents of currently enrolled children participate in policy making and in other decision making concerning our various programs.

This Handbook is for Parents/Guardians of currently enrolled children. Its purpose is to identify, explain and answer some of the most significant questions parents may encounter in the daily operation of the Program.

MWNMCAP EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTERS

Every ECDC in the Mid-West NM CAP family is state licensed child care centers. If you have any site specific questions, please feel free to contact the appropriate Center Director. Business hours are from 8:00AM-5:00 PM Monday through Friday.

Center	Contact	Telephone	Address
Valencia County ECDCs	Anthony Perea <i>Director</i>	(505) 864-6700	2747 Highway 47 Los Lunas, NM 87031
Gallup ECDC	Duane Casias <i>Director</i>	(505) 722-7428	310 E. Maloney Ave Gallup, NM 87301
Grants ECDC	Christina Montano <i>Director</i>	(505) 287-4470	246 Mountain Rd. Grants, NM 87020
Socorro ECDC	Lindsey Lopez <i>Director</i>	(575) 835-0008	239 Garfield St. Socorro, NM 87801

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. We are required to provide orientation to parents of enrolled children prior to the children's first day of school.

During this orientation you will be provided with additional information. Center staff will be available to help you by answering any questions or addressing any concerns you may have on a one-to-one basis.

2. Mid-West NM CAP is an equal opportunity employer, which prohibits physical segregation or any other discriminatory action against any children, or their families based on eligible income and eligible age, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, sexual orientation or spousal affiliation.
3. MWNMCAP is dedicated to ensure complete confidentiality of all information gathered and/or utilized by its various programs. All employees and volunteers of MWNMCAP must sign a declaration of confidentiality before service can begin.

SAFETY

4. All personnel working at a child care facility and/or volunteers of child care facilities having primary custody of children for six (6) hours or more per week will have a nationwide criminal record background check (fingerprinted).
5. All visitors must sign in at the Center Office and briefly state their business to the Center Director or designated staff member. All visitors will be provided with a pass and must sign in and out.
6. The ECDC are authorized to release children only to authorized parent/guardians and/or to emergency adults 18 or older.
7. Children should wear comfortable, wash-n-wear play clothes, since most of the planned activities involve playing on the floor, out doors, finger painting, water/clay play. An extra set of clothing will be requested seasonally.
8. Parent will be provided with their child's scheduled school hours. **Children may not arrive earlier than their scheduled time.** This includes those school days when school is on 'delay time', due to weather conditions.
9. If a child is not picked up at the Center or at the Bus Stop and a parent is not able to be contacted, Center Staff is required by State law to report this as possible 'child neglect'.
10. Parent/Guardian must sign-in their child in his/her classroom and sign-out at the end of the day. **A child must never be left alone in the classroom.**

11. The Agency is responsible for enrolled children from the time they are signed-in/signed-out by Parents or authorized adult, 18 years or older.
12. Emergency/evacuation procedures are posted in every classroom (parents may review at any time). Center staff are trained on evacuation and emergency procedures prior to first day of instruction.
13. Every staff member is required to sign a statement of confidentiality to protect sensitive information and family rights.
14. Mid-West NM CAP employees are required to notify New Mexico Children Youth and Families Child Protective Services at ANY sign of abuse or neglect.

FOOD AND NUTRITION

15. All children will be offered breakfast, lunch, and snack, with no physical segregation of or other discriminatory action against any child because of race, color, age, origin, sex, disability or religion.
16. If a child has allergies to various foods, a **doctor's note** must be provided to the Health Specialist prior to the child's first day of attendance.
17. All food items brought into the Centers for special events must be purchased from a store or bakery and be in the original, sealed package.
18. Children are not allowed to bring any toys/special goodies or treats to the Center. Please explain to your child, these items need to stay home, or in your vehicle. Also, check your child's pockets on jackets, pants, and dresses for such items before they come to school!

ENROLLMENT/ATTENDANCE

19. Enrollment varies by Program. Head Start enrollment is based upon prioritization outlined in our ERSEA Plan.
20. The Program must document the cause of child's absences. When a child has been absent without a documented excuse for three (3) consecutive days, the staff will contact the child's parents and schedule a home visit and provide documentation on the home visit form, conference form or parent contact form.

When absenteeism persists, the child's slot will be considered an enrollment vacancy. After five (5) consecutive days of absences, the child may be disenrolled and placed on a waiting list. Center Director or designee will inform parents, in writing, of disenrollment.

21. Parent/Guardian must go to the Center Office for a 'student admit slip' when bringing a child late (more than 15 minutes) or they will not be admitted.
22. A child showing signs of a communicable illness and/or has a temperature at or above 100.5 degrees will be sent home.
23. Medication can be administered at each ECDC with parental consent and signed physician orders on how and when the prescribed medication is to be administered.
24. Mid-West NM CAP ECDCs will follow local school district weather policies.

EXAMINATIONS, SCREENINGS AND ASSESSMENTS

25. Performance Standards requires that each child enrolled in said Program receive a complete medical and dental examination within the first 45 days the child is enrolled in the program.

Parents must provide a copy of their child's Medical and Dental examination. If your child has a Medicaid Card or private insurance, you must take your child to your own Medical or Dental provider.

If your child does not have Medical/Dental insurance, the Health Specialist will assist parents to make a Medical or Dental appointment. Your cooperation in keeping these appointments is very important. Rescheduling causes undue hardship on all program participants and also risks local Medical or Dental Professionals discontinuing services with our Centers.

26. Each child enrolled in the Program will be screened and assessed in accordance with program requirements. Results will be discussed with child's parents during Parent/Teacher Conferences. On-going observations will take place on a daily basis.
27. Head Start Performance Standards requires a minimum of two (2) home visits and two (2) Parent/Teacher Conferences per year.

The Agency requires during 'home visits' two staff members must be present at all times, **with no exception to this regulation.**

TRANSPORTATION

28. Transportation will be provided based upon availability and with designated boundaries. Children living close to their local ECDC may not be eligible for transportation, but must be addressed on a case by case basis depending on the

child's individual needs. Parents must have children at the pick up location 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to arrive. Parents must arrive at the drop-off location 5 minutes before the bus is scheduled to drop off their child. Children will only be released to those that are found on the Child's Transportation Authorization Form.

Parents are to notify the Center Office immediately when they will not be able to pick up their child at the bus stop. **All children will be brought back to school** if an eligible adult is not at the bus stop to sign the child off the bus.

29. School bus 'STOPS' will **not** be changed and 'BUS SCHEDULES' will **not** be altered by the bus driver or other staff prior to the Center Director, Transportation Manager, and Auxiliary Specialist consulting with each other.
30. Route Requirements: On morning routes, a complete stop shall be made at all established school bus stops whether students are present or not, unless a parent or guardian, school district administrator or transportation provider has notified the driver that the student will be absent. The driver will not wait for students unless they are observed making an effort to reach the bus or unless otherwise specified and justified in the student's IEP. The bus will be brought to a complete stop with the park brake activated before taking on or letting off students. The driver will use good judgment and not impede traffic unnecessarily.
31. In transporting school projects, in school bus, the following shall apply:
 - a. No item shall occupy a bus seating space.
 - b. No item shall be placed in the bus driver compartment.
 - c. Transportation Staff/Teaching Staff must assist children when sending correspondence and artwork home.
 - d. Children's artwork is to be in a paper bag provided to the children or in child's backpack.
 - e. Items will be under control of the child at all times and carried on child's lap, to include jackets, when not wearing them.
 - f. No rolling backpacks will be allowed on the bus.

Bus Drivers are authorized to disallow the transportation of any objects that can become a danger while the bus is in motion. Parents must make arrangements with the Center Director or designated staff, for these items that need to be taken from home to school or school to home. This includes using school bus for transporting other items when children are not being transported; this is a danger to the bus driver and is not allowed.

FIELD TRIPS AND ACTIVITIES

32. Field trips may be taken throughout the school year. These trips are educationally oriented and reflect the curriculum.

Each child must have a signed permission slip in his/her file from parents or guardians for each individual field trip taken. Prior notification of any events will be sent home with your child.

Your child will not be allowed to participate without your signed permission slip, please remember to return permission slips with your child. Buses will be used for field trips in transporting the children.

33. Non-local field trips may be allowed with the approval of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.
34. All grounds and facilities are smoke free. Childcare facilities prohibit smoking, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and/or firearms(s). This regulation applies to all functions held at all facilities and grounds.
35. All special events including holiday and birthday celebrations are at the discretion of the Center Director.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Enrolled children with developmental disabilities or special needs are included in all classrooms and activities.

The Agency must have parent's written consent for all screenings, such as the following and any others that may come about:

- a) Speech and Language
- b) Other Developmental Concerns
- c) Physical and/or Health Concerns

Parents will be notified when their child is scheduled for screening. Parents are notified of the results of their child's screening. After the assessment is completed, parents are invited to a meeting where the results will be shared. An IEP will be developed, if the child is eligible. Parents need to attend the IEP meeting.

DISCIPLINARY METHODS OR ACTIONS USED BY CENTER

DISCIPLINE/GUIDANCE: Discipline means training that enables the child to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationships to peers and adults. Guidance is a matter of helping children learn appropriate behavior and self-control. It involves helping children develop their own inner control.

- a. These disciplinary practices are designed to encourage the child to be fair, to respect property, and to assure personal responsibility and respect for others.
- b. Discipline shall be consistent, age appropriate, clear and understandable to the child. Explain to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action.
- c. Discipline shall include positive guidance, redirection, and the setting of clear limits that encourage the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Reward desirable behavior with verbal and nonverbal statements (“Thank You”, “I like the way you...”, “That was/is very colorful, neat...”, or a smile, hug or your physical presence near the child, etc.). Do not reward behavior that is inappropriate or undesirable. REMEMBER – The behavior that is rewarded with extra attention is the behavior that will be repeated!
- d. Positive discipline may include a brief, **supervised** separation from the group.
- e. At no time will the child be left alone. Staff will be interacting with children at all times.
- f. CORPORAL PUNISHMENT will **NOT** be used, even if the parents request it.
- g. Discipline can become an issue. If need be, we have a conference so provider and parents can work to improve the child's behavior. A child may be temporarily suspended until disciplinary action is resolved. When a difficult situation arises, the situation will be analyzed and activities changed if possible.
- h. All classroom rules will be stated in a positive manner. Talk about what to do, not what NOT to do (“We will push in our chairs after we finish eating”, “We use walking feet indoors”).
- i. The children in each classroom are included in developing Classroom, Playground and Field Trip rules using clear, simple, positive language. These Classroom Agreements are posted in the classroom. Rules are reviewed periodically by children and staff.
- j. Children are given advance notice when transitioning from one activity to another (“Ten minutes until clean-up”, “Five minutes until clean-up”, “Two...”, “Clean-up time!”).

- k. Environment is arranged to promote small and large group interaction. Children will have opportunities to work in small/large groups and individually with adults.
- l. A developmentally appropriate daily schedule is posted in each classroom. Daily schedule is written using word and pictures that encourage positive behavior.

The center will **not** use the following disciplinary practices:

- Physical punishment of any type, including shaking, biting, hitting, pinching or putting anything on or in a child's mouth;
- Withdrawal or withholding of food, rest, bathroom access, or outdoor activities;
- Abusive or profane language, including yelling;
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment, and/or
- Unsupervised separation.

IN CASE OF CRISIS:

- Be decisive and know when to intervene. If there is physical contact with a chance that a child may be hurt, intervene immediately.
- Intervene before trouble occurs.
- Accept that it is sometimes necessary to physically restrain a child if a child can hurt him/herself or others.
- Control emotions; remain calm, firm, and fair.
- Explain that there are consequences for behavior and follow through.
- Make positive statements about appropriate behavior.

IF A CHILD CONTINUES TO MISBEHAVE:

1. Warn the child and redirect if possible. If a child has to be removed from the situation, explain why, based on the appropriate rule. Remain with the child, explaining to the child that he/she may join the group when ready.
2. Take time to talk to the child about his/her feelings.
3. Go back to the group with the child and assist him/her in getting along with the others.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION POLICY

MWNMCAP is committed to working with our families in order to prevent expulsion of a child.

This expulsion policy of MWNMCAP follows mandatory guidelines established by the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD 8.1.6.2.22.C.(3)) and the 2016 Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS 1302.17) for preventing and severely limiting expulsion and suspension practices in early childhood settings. The goal of this policy is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children and families that severely limits expulsion, suspension, or other exclusionary discipline; these exclusionary measures are to be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a determination of a serious safety threat that cannot otherwise be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications. Expulsion due to a child's behavioral challenges alone is prohibited and will be addressed through the MWNMCAP All-Star referral and intervention process.

Suspension- Should a child's behavior present a serious safety threat for themselves or other children or adults, necessitating a temporary removal or change to the child's current program (suspension), MWNMCAP will collaborate with parents to utilize appropriate referrals and community resources, such as a mental health consultant or other appropriate specialists. Even in such extraordinary cases, MWNMCAP will assist the child and family in accessing services and an alternative placement through community-based child care resource and referral agencies. In the event of a temporary suspension, MWNMCAP must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring all children's safety. If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, a program must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by (HSPPS 1302.17 (a)(4)):

- (i) Continuing to engage with the parents and a mental health consultant, and continuing to utilize appropriate community resources;
- (ii) Developing a written plan to document the action and supports needed;
- (iii) Providing services that include home visits; and,
- (iv) Determining whether a referral to a local agency responsible for implementing IDEA is appropriate.

Expulsion- Should a situation arise where there is documented evidence that all possible interventions and supports recommended by qualified professionals, such as an early childhood mental health consultant or school district Child Find team, have been exhausted – and it is collaboratively determined by the family, teacher, program, and other service providers that another setting is more appropriate for the well-being of the child in question – all parties, including the receiving program, will work together to develop a seamless transition plan and use that plan to implement a smooth transition from MWNMCAP to an appropriate receiving program. (HSPPS 1302.17 (b)(3))

REPORTING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

These Policies and Procedures in Child Abuse and/or Neglect are intended to comply with State and Federal Laws and established standards of performance and expectation for Mid-West NM CAP employees.

New Mexico State Law (NMSA-8-32A) and the Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) amended in 1996 (PL 104-235 Section 106); requires by law that anyone who suspects child abuse and/or neglect must report. **Failure to report: if you suspect abuse and/or neglect and do not report your suspicion, you can be charged with a misdemeanor in a court of law.**

STAFF and PARENT TRAINING:

1304.52(K)(3)(I): The Agency, at the beginning of each Program year, will coordinate with Children Youth and Families Protective Services Division, Local Law Enforcement Office or others in providing Staff and Parents of enrolled children with training on Child Abuse and/or Neglect, Policies and Procedures, how to identify and report suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect, in accordance with applicable State and Local Laws using, so far as possible, a helpful rather than a punitive attitude towards abusing or neglecting parents and/or caretaker.

STAFF/PARENTS:

Staff and Parents will be provided with a copy of this Child Abuse and/or Neglect Reporting Policies and Procedures and with a statewide Central Intake Packet, which includes how to identify and report suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect.

EVERYONE:

Anyone who has a reasonable suspicion that a child is being abused and/or neglected, must report the matter to the Child Protective Services or Local Law Enforcement.

EMPLOYEE:

If an employee has evidence that a child is in immediate danger or in a life threatening situation, the employee must immediately call 911 and report the matter to the local Law Enforcement. In addition, the staff member must immediately notify the Center Director and the Center Director must notify the Deputy Chief Executive Officer by telephone when a report has been made, and within twenty-four (24) hours, will submit the completed report form, stamped confidential, to the attention of the DCEO.

REPORTING PROCEDURES:

1. To protect the child and staff member; when reporting “Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect” in good faith, all staff members must file a report by making a telephone call to Child Protective Services Division when he/she has a reasonable suspicion of a child abuse and/or neglect incident(s).

2. All calls, including anonymous calls on suspected child abuse and/or neglect are investigated by Law. If employee feels the child is in a dangerous or life threatening situation, the employee must immediately report the matter to the local law enforcement agency, afterwards notify the Center Director and follow up with a written report.
3. Employee will completely fill out the Agency's "Suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Incident Report Form". The employee will immediately submit written report to the Center Director.
4. The Center Director will immediately notify the DCEO by telephone when a report has been made, and within twenty-four (24) hours, will submit the completed report form, stamped confidential, to the attention of the Deputy Chief Executive Officer.
5. The DCEO and Center Director will keep all suspected Child Abuse and/or Neglect Incident Reports received in a locked cabinet.

WHY SHOULD ABUSE BE REPORTED:

Answer: To protect the child. You are required by law to report what you suspect to be child abuse and/or neglect. You should not hesitate to speak out and promptly report to your immediate supervisor. The intent of the law is not to punish parents, but to keep the child in the home unless they are in a life threatening situation.

Individuals who report suspected child abuse and/or neglect are protected by the law; immune from civil or criminal liability for reporting in good faith. If you do not want to give your name, the case will still be investigated. Please care enough to help the children and keep them safe.

HOW TO REPORT:

A report of suspected child abuse and/or neglect may be made by telephone, and document in person or in writing to the local Social Services Division Office.

WHAT INFORMATION TO GIVE:

1. The name and address of the child and family and/or caregiver.
2. The age of the child if known.
3. The name of the person you suspected is abusing and/or neglecting the child.
4. The potential risk for the child, family and investigator.
5. Why you suspect the child is being abused and/or neglected.

6. Your name, if you choose to give it (makes it possible for Child Protective Service Worker to talk with you if necessary). An anonymous report will be investigated.

WHO INVESTIGATES:

1. Child Protective Services Division **only** investigates abuse and/or neglect in which the perpetrator is a caregiver of the child.
2. Law Enforcement investigates **all** abuse and/or neglect reports including day care providers, foster parents, and institutions.
3. Child Protective Services and Law Enforcement **jointly** investigate child abuse and/or neglect when appropriate.

**IF YOU SUSPECT CHILD ABUSE AND/OR
NEGLECT
REPORT IT!**

**1-855-333-SAFE(7233)
#SAFE**

Parent/Community Complaint Policy

All the staff at the Mid-West New Mexico Community Action Program are concerned about the well-being of young children and their families in this community. The staff, therefore, is anxious to listen to your suggestions and any concerns you may have regarding the day-to-day operations in the classroom or communication between families, staff and the community.

Complaint Procedures:

A. Complaints which involve child abuse or neglect must be referred to the Child Protective Services Division in the county where the child resides.

B. Submission of complaints: Complaints regarding any facility licensed or required to be licensed pursuant to these State regulations should be submitted to the Center Director.

1. Complaints should be submitted in writing and signed by the complainant.
2. Complainants telephoning the Licensing Authority should identify themselves and be able to provide necessary information needed by Licensing Authority in order to document the complaint.

C. Written acknowledgment: The Licensing Authority shall, whenever possible, acknowledge in writing all complaints received within ten (10) working days of receipt.

D. Initiation of investigation: If it is possible that the health, safety, or welfare of a child or children is in jeopardy, the complaint will be investigated promptly. Otherwise, the Licensing Authority shall initiate an investigation within twenty (20) working days from receipt of a complaint.

E. Results of investigation: Both the licensee of the facility against whom a complaint is lodged and the complainant shall be notified in writing the results of the investigation.

F. Anonymity may be requested by the complainant but cannot be assured.

G. In accordance with New Mexico Public Health Act 24-1-5J, when there is a complaint received which gives reasonable ground to believe that any child is in imminent danger of abuse or neglect while in care of a child care facility, whether or not licensed, or upon the receipt of a report pursuant to Section 32-1-115 NMSA 1978, the department shall consult with the owner or operator of the child care facility. Upon a finding of probable cause, the department shall give the owner operator notice of its intent to suspend operation of the facility and provide an opportunity for a hearing to be held within three (3) working days, unless waived by the owner or operator. Within seven (7) working days from the day of notice, the director shall make his/her decision, and, it is determined that any child is in imminent danger of abuse or neglect in the facility, the director may suspend operation of the facility for a period not in excess of fifteen (15) days. Prior to

the date of the hearing, the department shall make a reasonable effort to notify the parents of children in the facility of the notice and opportunity for hearing given to the owner or operator.

H. Action by the Licensing Authority:

1. Complaint unsubstantiated: A complaint which is unsubstantiated by the Licensing Authority is not made part of the facility file and the Licensing Authority takes no further action.
2. Substantiated complaint: The Licensing Authority may take the following action if a complaint is substantiated:
 - a. Require the facility to submit a written plan of correction to the Licensing Authority if violations of these regulations are found.
 - b. Other administrative sanctions as the suspension or revocation of a license, or the filing of criminal charges, or a civil action may be instituted by the Licensing Authority if deemed appropriate.

The complaint policy can protect an agency from potential liability to parents and providers. It can also help an agency meet two important service goals: 1) to improve the quality of the child care, and 2) to maximize the availability of child care in the community.

PLEASE KNOW THAT WE RESPECT AND VALUE YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR PROGRAM. YOUR IDEAS AND CONCERNS ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO US AND WE TAKE THIS POLICY SERIOUSLY. ALL CONCERNS WILL BE DOCUMENTED, INVESTIGATED, AND RESOLVED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE HEAD START PROGRAM OBJECTIVES.

MID-WEST NEW MEXICO COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

PARENT/COMMUNITY COMPLAINT FORM

Complainant Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip Code: _____

Contact Number: _____ Center/Site: _____

1. The date(s) during which the alleged actions occurred:

2. Please state reason for complaint:

3. The nature of the incident or action that led to the complaint:

4. Names and addresses of persons who may have knowledge of the incident or action:

Person Receiving Complaint: _____ Date: _____

*Please submit this form in writing within five (5) days after the events on which the grievance is based.

FAMILY LITERACY PROGRAM

The primary goal of our ECDCs is to help families in their efforts to improve the condition and qualities of their lives. The Family Literacy Program provides services to:

- a) Increase family access to materials, services, and activities essential to family literacy development; and
- b) Assist parents as adult learners to recognize and address their own literacy goals.

The Literacy Programs at each Center operate at different schedules. ESL (English as a Second Language) classes may be offered at each Center.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT

WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTINUE YOUR EDUCATION?

Career Development money is available for Head Start Parents who would like to take college courses at their local university. Please contact your local Parent, Family and Community Engagement Specialist.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Participate in decision making about the nature and operation of the program.

- a. Become an active member of the Center Committee, Policy Council and Male Involvement.
- b. Talk with other parents and staff about the Program and ways they can help.
- c. Share information with other parents and staff about the Program and ideas on ways to improve the Program.
- d. Get involved with your local Center.
- e. Observe how your child works and plays with other children.
- f. Communicate with the Parent Family and Community Engagement Specialist to assist in planning programs that are of interest to your family.
- g. Become aware of your community resources by working together on community problems that are of concern, such as housing, health or welfare.
- h. Keep appointment for Home Visits and Parent/Teacher Conferences.

- i. Parents are encouraged to apply for employment with the Agency when a vacancy becomes available, with proper qualifications.

PARENT COMMITTEE

One of the most direct ways for parents to be effective in the Program is through participation in the Parent Committee. This committee consists of all parents of children enrolled in each Center. You will have what is referred to as the Committee Officers and all other center parents of children enrolled in each center are Parent Committee Members.

ELECTIONS OF CENTER COMMITTEE OFFICERS

1. Each county Parent Committee's Chairperson will automatically serve as the first Parent Representative to the Policy Council.
2. The remaining Parent Representatives will be elected by the Parents of the Parent Committee at each local ECDC according to the number of Policy Council Memberships per county as listed on the Membership Chart.
3. Each Parent Center Committee will be eligible to elect two (2) alternates.

PARENT COMMITTEE NEWLY ELECTED OFFICERS

1. Parent Committee Chairperson will be responsible for organizing and conducting meetings. The Center Director, in conjunction with assigned staff, will be available to help plan meetings and assist the Parent Committee Chairperson.
2. Elected Parent Committee officers are seated and Chairperson takes over conducting business.
3. Nepotism: No person can serve as a member of the Policy Council while any member of his or her immediate family is employed in the Program. Immediate family will hereby be defined as spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, siblings, or relative by marriage of comparable degree. This definition covers any person related by birth, adoption, or marriage.
4. Conflict of Interest: No two members of the same family can serve on the Policy Council as a voting member or alternate.

The above are according to the Agency Bylaws, Article IV, Sections 1 and 2.

ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO THE POLICY COUNCIL

The Policy Council (PC) consists of members from the five Counties. Policy Councils and Policy Committees must work in partnership with key management team and the governing bodies to develop, review and approve or disapprove policies.

1. Mileage and Per Diem for parent representatives are allowed for PC meetings. Mileage and Per Diem for Community Representatives may also be allowed for PC meetings.
2. Policy Council membership consists of representatives from the four Counties. A total of fifteen (15) members and alternates, ten (10) Parent Representatives and five (5) Community Representatives.

Socorro County

- (2) Two Parent Representatives
- (2) Two Alternates to Parent Representative
- (1) One Member Socorro/Catron Community Representative

Valencia County

- (4) Four Parent Representatives (2 Adelino/2 Belen)
- (4) Two Alternates to Parent Representatives (2 Adelino/2 Belen)
- (2) Two Community Representative (1 Adelino/1Belen)

Cibola County

- (2) Two Parent Representatives
- (2) Two Alternates to Parent Representative
- (1) One Community Representative

McKinley County

- (2) Two Parent Representatives
- (2) Two Alternates to Parent Representative
- (1) One Community Representative

Policy Council Parents should have an alternate. Alternates do not vote when the member is present.

Parent Committee members play a vital role in the recruitment and screening of employees. Within the guidelines established by the Policy Council or Policy Committee, members of the Parent Committees:

- Assist agencies to determine how and where to recruit potential employees;
- Help determine the selection criteria; and
- Participate in the interview process.

***IMPORTANT:** Any staff/employee who may have a child enrolled in the ECDC program are obligated to follow and abide by Center Committee guidelines, decisions, participation, etc. However, they do NOT have any voting power. Nor can they hold an Office, or be a Representative to the Policy Council, Screening Selection Committee, or the Center Parents Grievance Committee.

ECDC CLASSROOMS/CURRICULUM STATEMENT

All classroom activities must be “developmentally appropriate” for the enrolled children, which means that activities must be planned at each child’s own level. School Readiness is the ultimate goal for all children and their families. MWNMCAP diligently selects School Readiness Goals each year to ensure focus and attention in the areas that children need to be successful in their education career.

These activities must lead to certain outcomes in the domains of literacy, language development, mathematics, science, creative arts, social and emotional development, physical health and development and approaches to learning. Children learn best through play, so the activities must be fun and meaningful to the children.

The biggest emphasis is on the literacy domain, which is the most important indicator of future school success and is related to all the other domains.

The Agency is currently using the Creative Curriculum in all classrooms throughout the Agency’s service areas. It is our belief and Creative Curriculum’s belief that children who are exposed to high-quality setting and educational materials gain better Literacy and Mathematical skills, develop better cognitive and social skills for everyday life. Creative Curriculum is a fully integrated, comprehensive curriculum with carefully sequenced and systematic instructions and provides a strong foundation in early Literacy.

The Creative Curriculum was developed based on several sets of Early Childhood curriculum guidelines including those of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education. The Creative Curriculum meets the Head Start Domains for measuring children’s outcomes.

MWNMCAP, with the support of the Creative Curriculum, believes in play as the primary mode of learning. The teachers will plan a variety of fun activities and set up their classroom environments to accomplish the outcomes. When you go into your child’s classroom you may think that your child is only playing but in reality that has been a carefully planned activity.

MWNMCAP, with the support of the Creative Curriculum, strives for the active engagement of all children by providing them various opportunities to make independent choices and to

experiment and explore their environment and creativity which leads to your child's positive emotional and cognitive development.

PARENT ACTIVITY FUNDS

It is the policy of the Agency: (a) to adopt and include, as an amendment, the same Purchasing Practices addressed in the Accounting Procedures Manual for the expenditures of appropriation of the Parent's Activity Fund.

Allowable Expenditures

- Educational/Cultural Activities: Costs associated with trips to museums, field trips, cultural events, and other educational activities, are an allowable expenditure.
- Educational Equipment
- Equipment Maintenance and Repairs