



# Parent Handbook



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### **Mission Statement**

Reach Dane changes the lives of underserved children and families in our communities through education and supportive services.

### **Reach Dane Core Values**

1. We value healthy, creative, nurturing environments that model dignity and respect for children, families, and staff.
2. We believe quality early education, care, and comprehensive services positively impact the lives of children, families, and the community.
3. We believe in a continuum of care, education, and services that allow stable, uninterrupted support to families and children during and after their Head Start experience.
4. We believe children and families should be provided with opportunities and support that maximize their abilities to become self-sufficient.
5. We believe that opportunities for personal and professional growth must be provided for families and staff.
6. We believe in open communication, sensitive and proactive approaches with staff and community members.
7. We value integrity, pride, self-worth, commitment and accountability from staff, volunteers, parents, and community partners.
8. We believe the agency's success is linked to our ability to be responsive and respectful of the diverse community we serve.
9. We believe that successful services are delivered in the context of relationships that are based on respect and positive regard.

# My Program

**Program Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Time and Days:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Assistants:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Service Provider:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Nutrition Service Provider(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Transportation Specialist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Site Director:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Location of Parent Bulletin Board:** \_\_\_\_\_  
(Child Care License & Current Compliance/Non-Compliance is posted)

**Other staff are available by contacting the Reach Dane Main Office,  
 2096 Red Arrow Trail, Madison, WI 53711  
 (608) 275-6740**

<b>Executive Director</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Jen Bailey</p>	<b>EHS Comprehensive Services Director</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Amy Selenske</p>
<b>Director of Business Operations &amp; Career Pathway</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Luann Williams</p>	<b>Education Support Manager</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Lindsey Quimby</p>
<b>Education Programming Manager</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Erin Finger</p>	<b>Senior Enrollment Supervisor</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Lorena Ramirez</p>
<b>Disabilities Specialist</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Kayla Sadowski-Metcalf</p>	<b>Director of Mental Health and Wellness</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Rebecca Miller</p>
<b>Health and Nutrition Manager</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Melinda Froehlich</p>	<b>Family Engagement Managers</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Ashley Jansen &amp; Katie Osterholz</p>
<b>Pediatric Nurse Practitioner</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Anna Barnier</p>	<b>Registered Nurse</b> <p style="text-align: right;">Karli Holverson</p>



2096 Red Arrow Trail  
Madison, WI 53711

TEL (608) 275-6740  
FAX (608) 275-6756  
www.reachdane.org

**Dear Parents,**

**WELCOME to Reach Dane’s Early Head Start and Head Start Program!** Our entire team is looking forward to your child’s enrollment, getting to know you, and involving you in our programs. This Parent Handbook is designed to help you become more familiar with the Early Head Start and Head Start Program and the policies and procedures of Reach Dane. We hope your family will take advantage of the many opportunities for family involvement that our programs provide.

**Our agency’s first priority is the same as yours, your child.** You are your child’s first and most important teacher. Your involvement with our staff will greatly enhance your child’s success in the program. While attending Head Start, your child will learn many things that will prepare him/her for kindergarten success. They will also learn about themselves, their world, and how to develop successful social skills. **The Early Head Start and Head Start Program is designed to partner with parents.**

Once enrolled in the program, you will hear more about becoming an important partner in our program. There will be special family events throughout the year for your whole family to participate in. We strongly encourage you to come to your child’s center to volunteer. **Your assistance is a very valuable contribution to your child and to our program.** This Parent Handbook will provide you with more information about the many ways you can become involved.

**We look forward to seeing you and to sharing a great year with your child and family!**

Sincerely,

Jen Bailey  
Executive Director

“Reach Dane changes the lives of underserved children and families  
through education and supportive services”

Early Head Start     Head Start        Child Care        Family Services

## **Information about Reach Dane**

- This center is a program of Reach Dane. Reach Dane's central offices are located at 2096 Red Arrow Trail, Fitchburg, WI 53711.
- Reach Dane serves almost 1,000 children in 16 locations throughout Dane and Green Counties in Early Head Start and Head Start and group childcare settings.
- As a program of Reach Dane, this center has access to family services and resources, mental health services, pediatric nurse practitioners, and other child referral services.

## **Welcome to Early Head Start and Head Start!**

### **Early Head Start Philosophy**

This center provides a quality program for children in a healthy, caring, and safe environment. The program strives to support the needs of each child's physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Reach Dane staff recognizes that children have individual rates of development, as well as individual interests, temperaments, languages, cultural backgrounds, and learning styles.

The program is based on the developmental needs of each child. Parents are informed about what happens at the center and are encouraged to share information about their child's activities and progress at home. We feel the stronger the communication between home and center, the better the experience for both the child and parents.

Because children learn best when they have a strong relationship with another adult, the teachers will work closely with a small group of children to provide the attention and security they need.

**This is called primary care grouping.**

A child's typical day will provide opportunities to explore the environment according to his/her own developmental level, in the following ways:

- Opportunities for dramatic play, music, books, science, art, language development, sensory exploration, motor development and free play.
- Each child's emerging communication skills will be supported by providing daily opportunities to interact with others and express himself/herself freely.
- Children will have a chance to play outside in safe, secure play areas every day (weather permitting).
- Care will be taken to balance indoor and outdoor activities, and active and quiet activities, and to protect children from excess fatigue or over-stimulation. Classroom daily routine and schedule will be posted in the classroom.
- All interactions, activities and materials will be respectful of the cultural and family diversity of each child, as well as their developmental needs.
- Each infant shall be allowed to form and follow his or her own pattern of sleeping and waking. Toddlers will begin to follow classroom resting routines, with accommodations for individual needs.

- Reach Dane 0-3 programs use the Creative Curriculum® to create a developmentally appropriate curriculum based upon the individual needs of the children. Lesson plans that address the needs of the group and each individual child will be posted in the classroom.
- Transitions from one activity to another will be respectful of the children's needs. Routines and transitions will be planned to occur in a timely, predictable, and unrushed manner.

### **Head Start Philosophy**

- Promote school readiness through positive social and educational skill development in our children. Reach Dane provides health, educational, nutritional, social, and other services to Head Start children and families who request support in these areas.
- Recognize parents as their child's most important teacher in their social and educational development. Reach Dane staff encourage parents and children to read, play and have fun together.
- In partnership with parents, teachers encourage children to develop self- confidence and a belief in their abilities to succeed.
- Support children to develop curiosity, spontaneity, and self-discipline, all of which will help to develop their self-esteem, social skills, and emotional health.
- Provide parents with resources and support to help them be the best parents that they can be and to achieve goals for themselves and for their children.



## Reach Dane Core Values

We value healthy, creative, nurturing environments for children, families, and staff that model dignity and respect. Our agency is committed to responsive and respectful support to the diverse community we serve and staff we employ. As such, we build Environments, Relationships, Trust, Communication, Equity and Social Justice.

### CORE VALUES

- **Environment**  
Create a safe and welcoming environment every day with everyone.
- **Relationships**  
We believe in the power of authentic and positive relationships.
- **Trust**  
Trust is the foundation that holds all relationships.
- **Communication**  
We value ongoing transparent communication that supports connection.
- **Equity and Social Justice**  
Our charge is to lead with compassion for social justice. We strive to stand in the gap to support all those who are affected by inequity.



### TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE

#### *Treating Trauma First*

Reach Dane is committed to adopting and applying Trauma Informed Care philosophies, practices, and principles at all program levels. The goals of Trauma Informed Care are to strengthen program foundations and improve outcomes for our children and families, while improving staff professional quality of life. Trauma-Informed Care is a culture change for our entire organization.

#### *What is Trauma?*

Trauma refers to extreme stress that overwhelms a person's ability to cope. It can be a single event, a series of events, or a chronic condition such as childhood neglect or domestic violence. According to a national study, 61 percent of men and 51 percent of women will experience at least one traumatic event in their lifetime.

#### *What is the Impact of Trauma on an Adult or Child?*

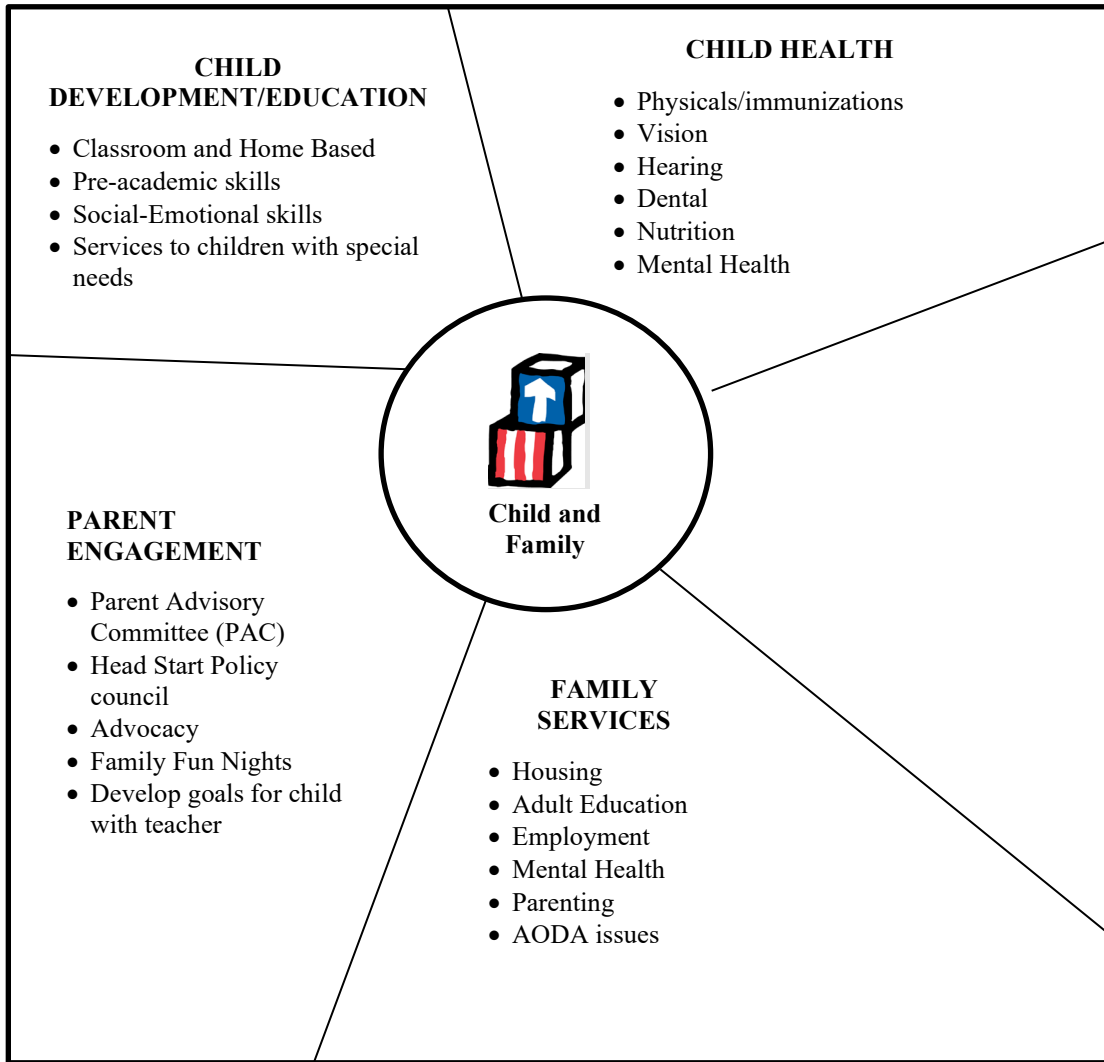
Research shows trauma disrupts the central nervous system and overwhelms a person's ability to cope. It often results in feeling vulnerable, helpless, and afraid. It interferes with relationships and fundamental beliefs about oneself, others, and one's place in the world. It also is linked to long-term health issues and generally poorer life outcomes. For children, it can result in increased hypervigilance and a lowered ability to be available for learning.



*Staff shift from asking "What is wrong with you?" to "What happened to you?"*



**Head Start Performance Standards**



**Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework**

**Reach Dane Policies and Procedures (Blue Book)**

**WI Childcare Licensing Regulations**

# **Early Head Start & Head Start Partnership**

## **Early Head Start and Head Start is a Partnership with Families**

### **Early Head Start and Head Start provides your children:**

#### **A supportive environment**

All children need love, security, and positive guidance to become individuals with a secure and positive self-concept.

#### **Opportunities for socialization**

Children enter Early Head Start and Head Start with other children who will be learning concepts of sharing, taking turns, using polite words, and problem solving.

#### **Health and nutrition**

Good health and nutritional habits encourage the child's growth and development at this important time in their life.

#### **Opportunities for language and cognitive development**

Children will have many chances to develop language skills through hearing and speaking. Children will also have many chances to explore, analyze, solve problems, be creative, and use new learning tools.

### **Your family will be provided:**

#### **Services for the whole family**

Early Head Start and Head Start help to support family strengths and parenting needs and provides assistance achieving family goals.

#### **Opportunities to be involved**

Participate in educational activities in your home, in the classroom, at your program site and with other families from across the agency. There are many opportunities for individual growth, leadership and meeting new friends.

#### **Information and Resources**

Learn about your child's development and plan for his/her success. Early Head Start and Head Start and community resources can help you achieve your family's goals.

*Reach Dane does not discriminate against any family, child or employee because of age, race, sex, disability, religion, color, or national origin.*

## **Getting Started at Reach Dane**

### **How can I get my child ready for the first day of school?**

- Starting school can be very exciting for a child, but it can also be scary because it is a new experience. It is important that you talk to your child before the first day of school to make him/her more comfortable with the idea. If you are excited about Early Head Start/ Head Start, your child will be, too.
- There are also pre-class visitation days that you and your child can attend. These days are set aside so children can become acquainted with classrooms and teachers before the first day of class.

### **Sneak-A-Peek / Phase-In / Open House**

A Sneak-A-Peek / Phase-In / Open House event is an opportunity for you and your child to learn more about your Early Head Start/Head Start Program. You and your child will be invited to visit the classroom to see where and how your child will be learning and to meet the staff. Parents will also be provided with valuable information to help you understand how Early Head Start/Head Start will support your child and family.

### **What will my child do at Early Head Start/ Head Start?**

In a play-based environment, your child will develop skills in:

- Language development
- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Science
- Creative Arts
- Positive Social Relationships
- Physical activities, health, safety, and nutrition

Your child will develop these skills through a variety of activities, including...

- Choosing his/her own activities within the planned curriculum
- Small group learning activities with other children
- Large group activities with other children
- Outdoor play (movement activities inside if weather does not allow outdoor time)
- Having two or three meals
- Tooth brushing, hand washing, and other healthy habits
- Napping or resting if your child is in a full-day or extended-day program

## **Learning at Reach Dane**

### **What will my child learn?**

Children learn best through active play. Teachers observe children during play and provide learning activities that build on their interests and natural curiosity. Our Early Head Start and Head Start teachers use the Creative Curriculum. Your child's teacher designs many learning experiences every day especially for your child in language, literacy, writing, pre-reading, pre-math, science, music, art, and social development. Other activities such as field trips to parks, musical concerts, and visiting artists occur on a regular basis to provide enhanced opportunities for children to learn about the community around them. Early Head Start/ Head Start will help your child be ready for school and your family to become ready for the important transition to kindergarten.

### **How is the classroom arranged?**

Your child's classroom is arranged into learning centers. These centers include writing, reading, large and small blocks, puzzles, music and movement, science, pre-math, art, pretend play, and sand and water play. You can expect to see many pictures of children and your child's name in many places around the classroom. Your child's classroom will have labels on each of the activities on the shelves and on furniture and other materials providing many reading opportunities throughout the day.

### **What if my child has special needs?**

Early Head Start and Head Start serve many children with a variety of special needs. If your child has special needs, we work closely with the school district and community agencies to provide and coordinate any services needed. We can also help refer you to agencies that provide additional evaluation and other support for you and your child.

### **Will there be pets or animals at the center?**

Classroom staff will inform parents in advance if a pet (other than a fish) joins the classroom. You will be given a form to sign acknowledging this pet notification. If there are children or staff with allergies or significant fears, that pet will not be allowed in the classroom. In addition, WI Child Care rules prohibit some pets from entering the center. Please ask your child's teacher or Site Director if you have questions.

**4K programming happens in our preschool classrooms in collaboration with the local school district.**

## **Nutrition at Reach Dane**

### **What will my child eat at Early Head Start and Head Start?**

- Your child will eat nutritious meals and snacks each day at school.
- If your child cannot eat certain foods for religious or medical reasons, please talk to your child's teacher to make further arrangements. You may need to provide a doctor's note for us to provide food substitutes for medical reasons. The menu is posted at your Head Start site and on the parent page at reachdane.org. You may request a copy at any time.

### **Mealtime and Socialization**

Mealtimes are a valuable time for the children to strengthen relationships with adults and their peers and provide a wonderful opportunity to practice social skills. Meals are served "Family Style", meaning during meals teachers will sit with the children, talking and modeling language and social skills and guiding them as they interact with one another and foods are passed, and children are encouraged to serve themselves as they are developmentally ready. Teachers will assist infants and toddlers with feeding as needed.

### **Breakfast**

The center will provide a breakfast for the children that will meet USDA requirements and state licensing requirements.

### **Snacks**

In compliance with childcare regulations, the center will serve at least one nutritious snack each day (a second snack may be served dependent upon time of meals). Snack menus will follow state licensing guidelines.

### **Lunch**

The center will provide a lunch for the children that will meet USDA requirements and state licensing requirements.

### **Baby Food and Formula**

Formula and baby food will be provided according to state licensing guidelines. We will use pureed fresh foods in place of jarred baby foods whenever possible.

### **Milk**

- Children under 1 year will be served breast milk or iron fortified formula.
- Children between 1 year and 2 years will be served whole milk.
- Children over 2 years will be served 1% milk

## Allergies

Please advise the staff if your child has any food allergies. These will be posted in the classroom, office, and kitchen. Children with allergies will have a “Health Action Plan” on site. The Reach Dane PNP/RN or Health Manager will assist in developing the plan.

The center will not serve the following foods to children under the age of 1 year due to the possibility of allergic reactions: nuts and honey.

**If you do not wish your child to eat a particular food because of a suspected allergy, please bring in a medical statement from your doctor.**

## Choking Hazards

For toddlers, the following items create a danger of choking. Inhaling food can cause a child’s lungs to collapse.

The following foods can be dangerous:

- Whole Grapes
- Chunky Peanut Butter
- Snappy Vegetables
- Seeded Fruits
- Popcorn
- Raisins
- Hard Candy
- Thick Skinned Fruit
- Hot Dogs
- Gum
- Jellybeans

\*Grapes will be cut into small bites sized pieces to prevent choking

Federal Head Start regulations require that all food served to children for meals are to be prepared on the premises in licensed kitchens. This means **we cannot accept food from home in the classroom** for any meal.

## **USDA Nondiscrimination Statement**

In accordance with federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Program information may be made available in languages other than English. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication to obtain program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language), should contact the responsible state or local agency that administers the program or USDA’s TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339.

To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online

at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/ad-3027.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

1. **mail:**  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. **fax:**  
(833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. **email:**  
[program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

## **Can I bring food to the classroom for celebrations?**

- We are seeing an increase in children with severe food allergies. In order to protect all children, we will no longer allow any outside food in the classroom for celebrations.
- The only time families can bring food is for the End-of-Year Celebrations, see section below for guidelines.

## **Food at End-of-Year Celebrations**

- Early Head Start/Head Start will supply the basic meal for the End of Year Celebration. Parents can bring extra food to share if they wish.
- If you bring food to share, **you must include a full list of ingredients for that food item.**
- There will be enough food without families bringing extra. No family is required to bring food. We want every family to attend & have fun!

**For the safety of children and adults with peanut allergies, no peanut products are allowed at our sites.**

## **Breastfeeding**

By following safe preparation and storage techniques, nursing mothers and caretakers of breastfed infants can maintain the high quality of expressed breast milk and the health of the baby (Guidelines provided from resources through the CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics).

### **Handling of Breast Milk before Arriving at the Center**

1. All breast milk should be brought to the childcare center with the child's full name and date.
  - a. Each breast milk container should include the following dates:
    - i. Date pumped
    - ii. Date thawed if previously frozen
2. Breast milk is stored in the refrigerator or freezer right after they express it
3. Bottles are filled with the amount of breast milk the baby usually drinks at one feeding
4. Bottles of refrigerated or frozen breast milk are brought to the facility in a cooler with an ice pack to keep the milk at a cold temperature

### **Breast Milk Storage and Usage**

1. Refrigerated (never frozen breast milk)
  - a. Must be discarded after 48 hours
2. Frozen Breast Milk
  - a. Frozen milk that is thawed should be used within 24 hours
3. Freshly Expressed (never refrigerated)
  - a. Can be kept at room temperature for 6-8 hours

### **Handling and Storing Breast Milk at the Center**

Breast milk from a mother is designed specially to meet the needs of her baby. Always make sure every bottle, bag, breast milk container is clearly labeled with the child's name.

1. Refrigerate bottles immediately when they arrive and until ready to use, unless freshly pumped (freshly pumped milk can stay at room temperature for 6 to 8 hours)
2. Ensure the breast milk is stored in a refrigerator kept at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or under
3. The refrigerator must contain a small storage container labeled with the child's name for each child that has breast milk stored in the classroom
4. If a parent wants to keep 1 bag of frozen expressed milk to have for back-up on site, contact the health team for additional guidance on how to store at the site
  - a. Store milk toward the back of the freezer, where temperature is most constant
    - i. Freezer compartment of a refrigerator-Can be stored for 2 weeks
    - ii. Freezer compartment of refrigerator with separate doors-3-6 months
    - iii. Chest or upright deep freezer-6-12 months
5. Use bottles of breast milk only for the baby for whom they are intended. In the event a child has mistakenly been given another child's bottle of expressed breast milk, contact the health manager or PNPs and direct the parent to consult their health care provider

If you wish to breastfeed your baby on site, staff will show you a quiet, discreet place to do so.

### **Diapering**

Teachers will change the diapers of your child when they are wet or soiled. Diapers will be checked or changed at least every 2 hours. We follow Wisconsin State Childcare Licensing procedures when changing diapers. Please check the licensing guide at the site for more information. **Parents/guardians are responsible for supplying diapers for their child.** Sites will maintain a supply of diapers for emergency use only.



**Please complete a medication authorization if you wish caregivers to put diaper cream on your child.**

**Toilet Learning**

Toilet learning shall be planned cooperatively between the teacher and the parent/guardian so that the toilet routine established is consistent between the center and the child's home. No routine toilet learning attempts will be made with children less than 18 months of age. Children will learn on the toilets at the site, with a seat insert if necessary. We do not use potty chairs.

## Family Services at Reach Dane

- We at Reach Dane understand the value and importance of serving the **whole** family. Many programs serve either adults or children, rather than focusing on the entire family together.
- Parents, families, and communities are important!! 😊
- Early Head Start and Head Start is here to meet families' where they are and support them in growing.

### **How does Early Head Start/Head Start support my family?**

Some ways we will work together...

- Develop a *Family Partnership Agreement* (FPA) to explore strengths and areas for growth. The Family Partnership Agreement is a way to set goals achievable goals for your family.

- Some examples of the types of interests or concerns you may have:

Employment	Parental Stress
Nutrition	Domestic Abuse
Health	Child Guidance
Child Care	Adult Education Classes (ESL/GED)
Clothing	Financial Support
Housing	Family Relationships
Transportation	Single Parenting
Child Development	Stress Management
Budgeting	Mental Health

- Your Family Service Provider or Home Visitation Teacher will work together with you by:
  - Listening to you
  - Problem-solving
  - Finding information and resources
  - Making referrals to community agencies
  - Advocating for you
  - Offering training, workshops, and support groups.

- Parenting support classes are available for Reach Dane families!

Do you want to learn more about how your child is developing? Do you want support in dealing with your child's behavior and emotions? Do you want to learn positive discipline methods that fit your child's age? Would you like to learn ways to teach your child how to resolve conflict without violence? Would you like to have calmer responses with your child? If you answered yes to any of the questions above, then please join us for our ACT/Raising Safe Kids Curriculum! This is an interactive 8-week program that focuses on creating an environment where children and parents can thrive. More details will be shared closer to the time the classes are offered by your Family Service Provider. Please let them know you are interested at any point in the program year. We hope to see you there!

## **Parent Engagement: Getting involved at Reach Dane**

Parent engagement is an important part of the Early Head Start/Head Start Program which benefits you and your child. We encourage you to get involved as much as you are able!

### **Can I visit my child? Of course!**

Parents/guardians are welcome to visit or participate at the center during the program's hours of operation (unless restricted by a court document). You are also always welcome to call to check in on your child. Staff are often busy with the children so please leave a message if the phone is not answered and we will return your call as soon as we are able.

### **When will I meet with the Early Head Start/Head Start Family Service Provider?**

Early Head Start/Head Start staff will meet with you at least three times throughout the year to explore strengths and areas for growth and to support you in setting goals for your family and your child and working towards those goals. These meetings typically take place in the home and are a great time for Family Service Providers and Teachers to get to know parents and families a bit better and show children that we care about the whole family, not just the child at school!

### **Can I volunteer at Reach Dane?**

Yes! It is important that parents and community members volunteer in our Early Head Start and Head Start programs! You will receive training for whatever volunteer job you choose. Please remember that your time is important to us! Volunteer Opportunities include:

- Volunteering in your child's classroom.
- Working with your child on assigned learning activities at home.
- Keeping appointments for home visits.
- Taking your child to required medical, dental and follow up appointments
- Helping staff plan classroom activities and events.
- Doing work at home, such as cutting, coloring, or making phone calls for the teacher.
- Helping with special projects.

### **Volunteer Time is a Donation to Early Head Start/Head Start!**

In order to receive funds for the Early Head Start and Head Start Program from the federal government, Reach Dane is required to get a "match" of volunteer time, goods, or funds from the community. This match is called "In-Kind." Your Family Service Worker, Home Visitation Teacher, or Classroom Teacher can speak to you more about "In-Kind" and volunteering opportunities.

### **Does Reach Dane have special events for families?**

Yes! Family Fun Events or "Socializations" happen throughout the school year. Enjoy a meal, family activities and an informational meeting time just for parents while the children have fun in the classroom. There are also events throughout the year including Child of the Week and special field trips.

## **How can fathers and other male figures get involved?**

We want fathers and male figures to get involved too! Male Engagement events are offered each school year and are a great way for dads or any male in your child's life to have fun and get involved in your child's education!

## **How else can I get involved?**

Get involved in your child's activities so that your child and family will get the most of your experience at Early Head Start/ Head Start!

- Talk to your child about school, read and play together, and talk to your child's teacher regularly about ways you can help your child and family.
- Work on the goals you have made with your child's teacher.
- Talk with your child about the work they take home.
- Work with your child at home on activities you receive from the classroom.
- Read information and newsletters from your classroom.
- Attend Family Fun Events and participate in home visits.
- Become involved in your Parent Advisory Council (PAC) and Head Start Policy Council (HSPC).
- Volunteer in your child's classroom and go on field trips.

## **How can you help your child succeed?**

- Bring your child to class or make sure they are ready for the bus on time, each day.
- Continue to strengthen the amazing bond you have with your child by listening to his or her feelings and supporting him or her through both joys and challenges at school.
- Attend parent-teacher meetings and home visits with your Family Service Provider and be active in your child's on-going assessment.
- Take the initiative with any concerns you may have.
- Make sure your child gets enough rest; 10 – 12 hours of sleep each night.
- Provide nutritious meals to help your child be healthy and at their best for learning.
- Dress your child appropriately for the weather.
- Label all of your child's clothing and any possessions brought to Head Start.
- Create opportunities for learning at home and talk with your child about the things they do every day.
- Keep your child home if he/she is ill.

## Opportunities for Parent Leadership

### How can I be a part of planning in my child’s classroom?

- Parents’ ideas for classroom activities and field trips, etc., are always welcome.
- Share your ideas with the teacher before or after class, during a home visit or during a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meeting at Family Fun Events.

### Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

#### What is the Parent Advisory Council (PAC)?

- Each Early Head Start and Head Start program at Reach Dane has a *Parent Advisory Committee* (PAC) that participates in planning and decision making for the program.
- **You are a member of the PAC where your child is enrolled!** Every parent becomes a member of the PAC as soon as your child enrolls in our program.
- The PAC meets during Family Service Events throughout the school year.
- PAC meetings give parents the opportunity to share their ideas with staff, ask questions about their program, and discuss what is happening in the classroom, at your site and in the agency. It is also an opportunity to help plan and provide input to Family Service Events.
- During the first PAC meeting of the school year, parents will elect one Chairperson, Co-Chairperson (HSPC Rep) and Secretary from your program. See the position descriptions below.
- PAC is an excellent opportunity to make your voice is heard! Your voice matters!
- The elected parent leaders will work with staff to:
  - Plan Family Service Events
  - Help with program planning and get other families involved

<b>PAC Leader Position Descriptions</b>	
<b>Chairperson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with staff to plan Family Service Events</li> <li>• Lead the PAC meeting at Family Service Events throughout the school year</li> <li>• Recruit other parents to get involved and help with projects</li> </ul>
<b>Co-Chairperson / HSPC Representative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend HSPC meetings at Reach Dane Headquarters monthly representing your program. Share information between your PAC and HSPC</li> <li>• Lead the PAC meeting if the Chairperson is absent</li> </ul>
<b>Secretary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take notes during PAC meetings and display them on the parent bulletin board</li> </ul>

## **Head Start Policy Council (HSPC)**

### **What is the Head Start Policy Council (HSPC)?**

- HSPC is a committee made up of representatives from each Head Start and Early Head Start Program, as well as community members.
- Through HSPC, parents have input into agency-wide policies and decision-making.
- HSPC members attend monthly meetings. The HSPC meetings are a place for parent leaders from each program (PAC) to meet one another, share ideas, discuss program issues, and make decisions that will be best for the whole Head Start and Early Head Start programs.
- The HSPC meets monthly throughout the year at the Reach Dane - Head Start main office.
- Representatives learn a lot about the agency and their child’s program.
- Members have the opportunity to join the HSPC Executive Committee, as well as other agency committees.
- What do HSPC members do?
  - Support Fundraising
  - Serve on agency committees
  - Advocate for their program
  - Get other parents from their program involved in these activities.
  - Attend leadership training
  - Meet other parent reps and agency staff.
  - HSPC provides input to and approves:
    - Reach Dane Policies & Procedures
    - Head Start and Early Head Start Grants
    - Program Budgeting

### **Join the Head Start Policy Council Executive Committee**

<b>HSPC Chairperson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with staff to plan the HSPC agenda</li> <li>• Lead HSPC meetings</li> </ul>
<b>Co-Chairperson</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the HSPC meeting if the Chairperson cannot</li> </ul>
<b>Secretary</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take notes during HSPC meetings. Distribute the minutes to HSPC members and sites</li> <li>• Ensure Roster is up to date and reps have signed in</li> </ul>
<b>Treasurer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve/Monitor revenue and spending of HSPC Emergency Fund</li> <li>• Leadership role in the HSPC Finance Sub-Committee</li> </ul>
<b>Reach Dane Board of Directors Representative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend the monthly Reach Dane Board of Directors meeting</li> <li>• Share information between HSPC and BODs</li> </ul>
<b>WHSA Representative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend WI Head Start Association (WHSA) meetings representing Reach Dane and report back to HSPC</li> </ul>

## **Guidelines for Success at Reach Dane**

### **This is what you can expect from our staff...**

- Acceptance, compassion, and operating from a strengths-based approach
- Open communication and proactive approaches to building strong partnerships with you
- Respectful interactions with you and your child
- A nurturing environment for children and families
- Professionalism

### **This is what we expect from you...**

- Respectful interactions with staff
- Open communication and appropriate language used at our centers
- An openness to problem-solving together when facing concerns

## **Attendance and Child Release Policies**

### **Does my child need to be at school every day?**

Yes! Children get the most out of Early Head Start/Head Start when they come to school each day for the full classroom time. **EHS and HS Attendance Policy**

The EHS and HS attendance policy requires 85% attendance. Except for occasional illness or doctor's appointments it is expected your child attends every day the program is in session.

### **What should I do if my child must be absent?**

- If your child will miss school for any reason, please call the teacher ahead of time to explain the absence.
- Illness and some family emergencies will be considered excused absences.
- Staff will contact you (or your emergency contact) if your child does not arrive at the center without prior notice of absence as part of Childcare Licensing and Child Tracking policies.

### **Who can be an “emergency contact”?**

When you enroll your child, we will fill out an emergency card with you. On this card, you will be asked to name an emergency contact. The emergency contact is the person we call if we

cannot reach you when your child is sick or injured. It is extremely important that the person you list is dependable in the event it is a true emergency. The emergency contact must have a phone and must live close enough to the site to pick up your child quickly in an emergency. If you have challenges identifying an emergency contact, please problem solve with your Family Service Provider alternative solutions.

## **What if there is a custody situation?**

Early Head Start and Head Start recognizes the importance of both parents in a child's life. We provide services to both parents of an enrolled child. When there is joint custody, both parents will be provided with school information such as newsletters, home visits, conferences, invitations to Family Fun Nights, etc. Head Start staff will only provide child-related information to each parent. Any family related goals set by each parent will be kept in confidence.

Court orders, visitation schedules, and/or restraining orders will be closely followed. Copies of any court orders must be provided to your child's teacher or Family Service Provider. Reach Dane staff cannot prevent a biological parent from accessing their child unless there is legal documentation in place.

Reach Dane staff will not take sides during a custody disagreement and will report factual information to the courts if subpoenaed. Each parent has the right to complete a separate Emergency Contact form for his/her assigned visitation days.

## **Arrivals and Departures**

Parents/guardians **must sign their child in and out** every day (this includes the time of arrival and departure). A full signature is required when signing your child in and out. The Sign In/Out Sheet is in your child's classroom and staff will help to remind you of this task. **It is a licensing requirement that centers keep a tracking system in place to maintain your child's safety.**

Teachers will also maintain a daily attendance sheet that will be taken with them to outdoor play areas, on field trips and on walks.

## **Child Absence**

If your child will be absent, please notify the center as soon as possible, but at least with in ½ hour of your scheduled drop off time (leaving a message on the center's voicemail is fine). It is required to know why your child will be absent. In accordance with our child tracking policies, staff will contact you if your child does not arrive at the center without prior notice of a planned absence. If staff are unable to reach you, they will call your emergency contacts. These days will be paid at the child's regular rate.

## **Child Pick-Up**

As your child's custodial parent or guardian, you must authorize anyone to whom we may release your child. (An exception to this would be if a court document is on file at the site restricting a biological parent from contacting the child.) You can do this by listing their name, address, and phone number on your child's emergency form. If another individual needs to pick up your child, you will need to provide written information. When we release your child to



anyone we have not met before, we will need to see a photo ID from that person, and we will verify that he/she is listed on the emergency form.

**Anyone other than a parent who is authorized to pick up a child under age 3yrs should be at least 18 years of age.**

**Late Pick-Up and Late Pick-Up Fees:**

Parents/Guardians are expected to adhere to their scheduled drop off and pick up time. If a situation occurs where a parent is unable to pick up their child at the regular time, the parent **MUST CONTACT THE CENTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE**. If a parent is unable to pick up the child, arrangements must be made by the parent to have the emergency contact or authorized person pick up the child at his/her regular time. Staff will attempt to reach the emergency contact person for children not picked up within 15 minutes of the scheduled pick-up time. If the child is not picked up by the child's scheduled pick-up time the parent will pay a fee of \$10.00 after each 15 minutes that they are late (first 15 minutes waived). If staff are unable to reach the emergency contact person by the center's scheduled closing time, Dane County Human Services Division of Protective Services will be called, and the child will be released to them.

**Repeated failure on the part of the parent/guardian to pick up the child in a timely manner could result in termination of enrollment.**

**Payment is due on Monday after the late fee was issued.** Payments need to be put into an envelope with your child's first and last name and placed in the white payment box located outside of the Site Director's office. A receipt will then be placed in your child's folder after the payment is processed.

**How will my child get to and from school?**

Most Head Start children are bussed to and from school. Some programs are "parent transport" programs and some families living within 2 blocks of their child's center are expected to "walk-in". In these programs, children must be brought to and picked up from school.

**If your child rides the bus:**

- Please have your child ready and at your pick-up point on time. To make sure we get to school on time, the bus will not wait if you are not there.
- Children will be assigned a pick-up location for boarding the bus. Parents need to have their child at this location on time and be waiting for their child, at the assigned location, on the return trip.
- Please call the office before your pick-up time if your child will not be in school.
- Someone from your child's emergency card must be present when picking up your child.
- We will release your child only to those people named on your child's emergency card.
- A signature is required when your child gets on and off the bus each day.
- Please do not send food or toys on the bus.

- We will ensure your child wears a seat belt on the bus.

### **If you bring your child to and from school:**

- Please make sure to bring and pick up your child on time.
- Always accompany your child into the classroom.
- It is required that you sign your child in and out each day. The teacher will show you where to find the sign-in sheet.
- Before you leave, please make sure the teacher knows your child has arrived.

### **Who can take my child from school or the bus?**

As your child's custodial parent or guardian, you must authorize anyone to whom we may release your child. You can do this by listing their name, address, and phone number on your child's emergency card. When we release your child to anyone we have not met before, we will need to see a photo ID of that person, and we will verify that he/she is listed on the emergency card. Photo IDs can include driver's license, ID card, school ID, and passport.

Please note: For program children 0-3 years old, anyone authorized to take your child must be at least 18 years old and children 3 - 5 years old, anyone authorized to take your child must be at least 12 years old.

All children must always be signed in and out. This includes the time of arrival and departure, as well as a parent signature. Teachers will maintain the sign in/out sheet, which will be taken with the class to the playground, on field trips and walks.

### **What if I am not home when the bus comes to drop off my child or if I do not pick up my child on time?**

Please call the center as soon as possible if you expect to be late or early in picking up your child so that we can plan our activities accordingly.

If your child rides the bus and you are not at the pick-up location...

- We will try to drop your child off with the alternate drop. The alternate drop is someone who you list on your emergency card who will take your child if you are not home. The alternate drop must live on the program's bus route and have a working phone.
- If the alternate drop is not home, we will bring your child back to the Head Start Program site where your child will stay with a Head Start staff member for up to two hours after the program ends or until 4:30, whichever is earlier. During this time, we will try to reach you, the alternate drop, and the emergency contact or other people listed on your child's emergency card to pick up your child. Every effort will be made to find alternative arrangements. If no arrangements can be made in this time, Head Start staff will call the County Department of Human Services to take responsibility for your child.

### **If you transport your child, and do not pick them up at the end of class...**

- We will try to call you to pick up your child. If we cannot reach you, we will call the alternate drop and emergency contact, or other people listed on your child's emergency card to make arrangements for your child to be picked up.
- If we cannot reach anyone on the emergency card, we will keep your child at the Head Start Program site. Your child will stay with a Reach Dane staff member for up to two hours after the program ends or until 4:30 (6:00 for full day programs), whichever is earlier. During this time, we will try to reach you, the alternate drop, the emergency contact, or other people listed on your child's emergency contact card to pick up your child. Every effort will be made to find alternative arrangements. If no arrangements can be made in this time, Head Start staff will call the County Department of Human Services to take responsibility for your child.

Reach Dane staff will not release your child to someone who is not on the emergency card, unless parent or guardian provides written consent, and the person can provide a photo ID.

## **Health and Wellness at Head Start**

### **What kind of health screenings are done at Head Start?**

- Your child will be *weighed* and *measured* during the school year.
- Your child's *hearing* will be tested within the first forty-five (45) days of starting school. If your child fails the test, we will let you know so you can take him/her to the doctor for a follow up.
- Your child's *vision* will be tested within forty-five (45) days of starting school. If your child does not pass the vision test, we will let you know so you can take him/her to an eye doctor for a follow up.
- When your child first enrolls in Early Head Start/Head Start, you will be asked to complete the *Ages & Stages Questionnaire: Social Emotional* (ASQ:SE) screener. This will help your child's teacher determine what social skills (sharing, turn taking, managing feelings) should be taught to all of the children in the classroom, as well as any additional support your child may need.
- When your child first enrolls in Early Head/Head Start, you will also be asked to complete the *Ages & Stages Questionnaire:3* (ASQ:3) developmental screener. This will help your child's teacher to individualize teaching to your child's strengths and areas that are still developing.

### **Does my child need a physical or dental exam?**

- Your child needs a physical exam each year. Make an appointment with your regular doctor for a physical exam. The physical must be done within thirty (30) days of starting the program or no more than twelve (12) months before your child enters Early Head Start/Head

Start. If your child does not have a regular doctor, we can help by providing a list of physicians.

- Your child also needs to have a dental exam each year. If your child has not had one yet, please have this done as soon as possible. If your child does not have a regular dentist, we can help by providing a list of dentists and help with scheduling appointments.
- Your child must have up-to-date immunizations to stay healthy and to enter school. In order to come to Head Start, **we must have a copy of your child's immunization record.** Please let us know if your child gets any more shots during the school year.

## **When is my child too sick to be at school?**

Childhood illnesses are frequent occurrences among children. Excluding a child from Head Start is necessary when it can prevent spreading illness or if a child is so uncomfortable that he/she requires constant one-on-one attention. We ask for the cooperation of all families in trying to limit children's exposure to infectious diseases. If your child becomes ill while at the center, please pick him/her up within one (1) hour of staff contact.

Keep your child home when your child has...

- Any communicable disease
- Had a temperature of 100.5° F or higher, either under her/his arm or by mouth, during the last 24 hours
- Vomited 2 or more times in the last 24 hours
- Had diarrhea (runny, watery, or bloody stool) in the last 24 hours
- Pink eyes with white or colored drainage from the eyes with fever and/or behavior change
- Untreated head lice or nits
- Cold sores with drooling
- A rash with fever or a change in behavior

## **What if my child has a contagious illness?**

If your child is diagnosed with an illness, please let the teacher know right away. Teachers will send home a note when children are exposed to contagious illnesses at school.

In addition, Wisconsin Day Care Licensing has strict requirements regarding the length of time a child with a contagious disease must be kept out of school

(<https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p4/p444397.pdf>). Please check with your child's teacher.

## **What if my child needs medicine at school?**

If your child needs medicine at school, we ask that you please do the following...

- All medication must be handed directly to staff. Please do not put medicine in your child's book bag or pocket.

- Ask the teacher for a “Medication Authorization Form”. Reach Dane staff will help make sure to fill the form out completely. You must sign this form, or we **cannot** give your child the medicine.
- Bring the medicine in the **original** container. It must have a current label with the child’s name, doctor’s name, the name of the medicine, dosage, and any directions for giving the medicine. The teacher **will not** give medication that is outdated or over one (1) year old.
- If any medication needs to be kept at Reach Dane for longer than 10 days, a Health Action Plan must be completed.
- If two children in the family are taking the same medicine, each child must have his/her own bottle labeled with his/her own name and information.
- Follow these steps for both prescription and over-the-counter medicines.
- Over the counter medications need a doctor’s order with purpose of the medicine.
- Children with a prescribed epi-pen **cannot start school** until the epi-pen is at school.
- Children with prescribed seizure rescue medication **cannot start school** until the medication is at school.

**Your child’s teacher will give the medicine according to the label directions only for the period of time listed on the authorization form.**

## **What happens if my child gets sick at school?**

If your child gets sick at school, we will call you right away. You will need to pick up your child within one hour. If you **cannot** be reached, we will call an emergency contact to pick up your child.

The teacher (after talking with the Pediatric Nurse Practitioner/Registered Nurse, whenever possible) will make the decision to send a child home if any of the following conditions exist:

### **Fever**

Fever with other signs of illness such as sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, etc.

Exclude until 24 hours fever-free without the use of fever reducing medicine.

- A temperature of 100.5°F., either under the arm or by mouth. Staff will take your child’s temperature twice to verify the fever before calling you.
- A fever of 99.0 degrees axillary (with or without other sign of illness) in infant younger than 4 months of age

Exception - Infant with fever is behaving normally on the day after an immunization is given and has no other symptoms.

### **Vomiting**

Exclude for 24 hours after last episode of vomiting

- Defined as vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours unless determined to be caused by non-infectious condition and child remains adequately hydrated.
- With infants, not just spitting up. Child should not be excluded if vomiting is suspected due to teething, stressful situations, or introduction to new foods.

### **Diarrhea**

- Infants & toddlers: three or more large watery stools in a diaper or three large stools that cannot be contained in a snug fitting diaper.
- Preschoolers: three or more large, watery stools in 8 hours, or one loose uncontrolled stool for which the child is unable to make it to the toilet in time.
- Children may return 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea

### **Lice** – presence of lice or nits (lice eggs)

- Children with lice may be in the center until the end of the day with a cap on to cover his/her head
- Children with lice must be treated before returning to the center
- Children with nits must have the nits combed out daily.

### **Pink Eye** - Purulent Conjunctivitis

- Red eyes with white or colored drainage with fever and/or behavior change

### **Rashes**

- Any undiagnosed rash with fever or a rash that affects behavior such as severe itching

**We may also need to send your child home if they have other symptoms of illness affecting their behavior or participation.**

Outside of the above guidelines for specific diseases, children will be excluded from childcare when:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in the program's activities.
2. The illness requires the caregiver to provide more care than the classroom staff can provide without compromising the care for children.
3. Other specific communicable disease (outside of the ones listed above) that the State of Wisconsin Child Care regulations identify that requires exclusion.

**All sick days are paid at the regular rate.**

## **What if my child gets hurt at school?**

- If your child gets hurt and might need to see a doctor or dentist, we will call you right away. If we cannot reach you, we will call an emergency contact.
- If the injury is minor, we will wash it with soap and water, apply ice for a bump, or apply a Band-Aid. We will tell you about any injury when you pick up or when we drop off your child. You will also receive a copy of the accident report.
- Reach Dane maintains liability insurance on all of our Child Care centers.
- If the injury needs immediate medical attention, we will call 911 and then call you or an emergency contact.
- An accident report will be completed, and the incident will be recorded in the Medical Log.
- If your child requires any medical follow-up for an accident/injury at the center, we will file an accident report with Child Care Licensing. Please inform your child's teacher any time you take your child to the doctor following an accident at school and let them know what the result of the doctor's visit is.

## **What if my child has special health needs – like asthma, allergies, etc.?**

Please make the teacher aware of any special health care needs for your child. A Health Action Plan will be jointly developed by parent/guardian and staff to ensure your child is kept safe and well at school. If new health needs occur during the school year, please contact your child's teacher or Family Service Provider, and report those changes/needs.

## **Will my child go outside every day?**

Yes! All children in the center should come with appropriate outdoor apparel including hats, coats, mittens, snow pants, and waterproof boots in the winter and sun hats and shoes in the summer. Children will go outside daily unless the temperature falls below 20°F (with or without wind chill) for children under age 2 or 0°F for children aged 2 and over, or the temperature or heat index is at or above 90°F as identified by the National Weather Service, or air quality is deemed unfit. If a child must stay inside because of a medical condition, a doctor's note is required.

- Please send appropriate outdoor clothes like hats, coats, mittens, snow pants, and boots in the winter. If you need help with getting these for your child, please let your teacher, site director, or FSP know; he or she may have extra clothing that your child can borrow.
- If a parent has a written statement from a medical professional prohibiting a child from going outside for health reasons, then that child will stay inside provided the center has adequate staff to supervise both the children that are inside and the children that are outside.

## **Positive Guidance at Early Head Start & Head Start**

All teaching methods utilize a relationship-based approach. This means that all staff will focus on getting to know your child and understanding his or her likes or dislikes, needs, interests, and the best way he or she learns. Reach Dane believes forming a relationship with children is the foundation to learning. It is also very important for the teaching team to have a strong relationship with you!

## **School Closings and Weather Emergencies**

### **When is Reach Dane closed?**

- Full Day Early Head Start/Head Start program participants should refer to their Child Care contract for more specific information about closings.
- Most Reach Dane programs are closed for seven staff event days a year, all the major holidays, as well as winter and spring breaks. Your child's teacher will give you a calendar of the days when your class does not meet.
- Sometimes Reach Dane closes due to bad weather. If the school district in which your program is located cancels all classes or early childhood classes, your program most likely will be closed. If the school district delays the start time of classes, we will follow the same

delay. If the school district closes early, Reach Dane will close early, too. **Full day Early Head Start and Head Start classes will stay open unless you are otherwise notified.** There may be times when our agency, Reach Dane/Green feels the weather is too severe for travel for everyone; all sites would be notified to close regardless of school district closings. If the school district is closed, please tune into the following radio/TV stations to determine whether we will be closed:

<b>In Dane County</b>	<b>Radio Stations</b> WZEE – 104.1	<b>TV Stations</b> WISC TV - Channel 3 WMTV – Channel 15 WKOW – Channel 27
<b>In Green County</b>	<b>AM:</b> WEKZ – 93.7 <b>FM:</b> WEKZ – 260	

## **What happens if there is a fire, tornado, or other emergency situation?**

- Your child’s safety is our priority. Teachers will stay with children in an emergency situation to keep them safe.
- Fire drills are conducted monthly. Tornado drills are practiced monthly from April – October. An off-site evacuation drill and on-site lock-down drill are practiced yearly.
- Every site has a copy of its emergency procedures and evacuation route posted at the center. Each site has emergency procedure plans you can receive from your child’s teacher.
- If you are picking up or dropping off your child in the middle of an evacuation, go to the nearest exit with your child and wait outside until you are notified that it is okay to go back into the building.

## **Other Questions**

### **Field Trips**

#### **Will my child go on field trips at Reach Dane?**

Your child’s teacher will let you know at least a week before any trip. Let your teacher know if you can join us on the trips. If you have ideas for field trips the children might enjoy, please let us know.

### **Child Guidance**

#### **What rules should my child follow at school?**

- The teacher will set some basic rules at the start of the year with the help of the children. Some examples of classroom rules are: “be safe” and “listen”.
- The children will review the rules often. Children learn rules more quickly and are more likely to follow the rules if they help to create them.



## **What happens if my child does not follow the rules?**

- The teacher tries to prevent problems by reviewing the rules often, having a regular classroom schedule and routine, providing appropriate transitional activities, giving the children lots of choices, and recognizing when children need help.
- The teacher works with the children to talk about and solve problems so that the children will learn problem-solving skills.
- When your child is engaged in inappropriate or unsafe behavior, the teacher will “redirect” him/her to a more appropriate activity.
- If the behavior continues, the teacher may use strategies such as “taking a break”. Taking a break in a safe space away from the group provides the child a chance to calm down and practice calming strategies (deep breaths, using fidget items, etc.). Before the child rejoins the group, he/she and the teacher will talk about what happened and what should have happened instead.
- If there are on-going behavior concerns, the teacher will meet with you to plan together how to help your child follow the rules. This could include support and consultation by other staff/consultants with your authorization.
- We recognize your child is learning new social skills and may need gentle reminders about appropriate behavior. The teacher will not do anything to make your child feel “bad” or “naughty.” Teachers will use redirection, positive reinforcement, positive language, and gentle reminders to encourage respect and caring among the children.
- Your child will never be sent home (suspended) from school or asked not to return (expelled) because of his/her behavior. If your child’s behavior is consistently challenging, we will ask you to help in the development of a behavior support plan so your child can succeed in school.

## **What if I have concerns about another child’s behavior in the classroom?**

Our number one priority in all classrooms is to ensure the safety of the children and adults in the room. For many children, we are able to do so by establishing classroom expectations, offering choices when possible, and teaching important social skills such as being a good friend and waiting your turn. However, for some children, either because of their brain chemistry or early life experiences, this is not sufficient. In these situations, we work closely with parents, support staff, and our mental health consultants to develop a Challenging Behavior Response Plan to address the specific needs of the child.

In accordance with Head Start Performance Standards, Reach Dane does not suspend or expel children from our programs due to challenging behavior. It is our belief that challenging behavior is an opportunity for teaching and learning. We believe that children who exhibit challenging behaviors need opportunities to learn new skills, time, and space to practice appropriate behaviors, and opportunities to engage with peers. Suspending and/or expelling children from the program does not teach them how to behave appropriately at school. It is our

goal that every child leaves Early Head Start/Head Start with the skills necessary to succeed in school and life.

**It is important to us at Reach Dane that your child feels safe at school. If you have concerns about another child's behavior, please contact your child's Lead Teacher or Site Director.**

### State Licensing

#### **Does the state license Reach Dane classrooms?**

Yes, all Head Start center-based classes are licensed by the State of Wisconsin Department of Health and Family Services and many classrooms are also Accredited. Your Head Start site will have their Wisconsin Child Care license and Accreditation posted. State Child Care Licensing Rules are posted on the Parent Bulletin Board.

### Confidentiality Policy

#### **Does Reach Dane share information about my child and my family with anyone?**

Information about your family is considered confidential. We will not share information, including whether a child is enrolled or not, without a written release from you. If the child is participating in our 4K program, the child is part of the school district and therefore information may be shared with them. Reach Dane Head Start staff are able to share pertinent information with each other. You have a right to read/review and request revision of your child's records. Head Start must respond to your request within 45 days. If you want to see your child's records, please call the headquarters office to make an appointment.

#### **Can I take pictures/videos in the classroom?**

You may only take pictures or video of your own child in the classroom. This is to protect the privacy and confidentiality of other children and families enrolled in our programs.

### Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect

#### **Does Head Start report suspected abuse and neglect?**

Yes, all Reach Dane staff are **required by law** to report any suspected abuse or neglect of enrolled children to the County Human Services Department. The purpose of this law is to protect children and identify children at risk of abuse or neglect. It is meant to protect the children; not to punish the parents. The County sometimes will not allow us to let a parent know that we have made a report until after they have followed up on it. We are here to offer support and services to families throughout any County Human Services Department involvement. If you have any questions about this law, please ask your child's teacher, site director, family outreach worker, or home visitation teacher.

### Smoking, Alcohol, and Drugs

#### **What is Head Start's policy about smoking, alcohol, and drugs?**

For health and safety reasons, smoking, alcohol, and other drug use is strictly forbidden in Head Start vehicles or on any of the Head Start premises. Individuals must be sure to follow all smoking regulations including moving off the premises when smoking.

## Weapons

### **What is Head Start's policy about weapons?**

Weapons are not permitted on Head Start premises or at any Head Start supervised function.

## Moving or Transferring Programs

### **What if we move during the school year?**

We ask that you please tell us as soon as you know you are planning to move. If your new home is still on the bus route for your current program, the child will stay in the same class. If your new home is not in the same area, we will try to place your child in a program near you.

However, there may be a waiting list. We will make every effort to get your child in as quickly as possible. If you prefer, you may drive your child to and from school to keep him/her in the same class, but attendance must be maintained if self-transported.

### **Withdrawing from the program?**

A parent/guardian may withdraw their child for any reason. Please discuss this with your teacher or FSP. If the child is in a Full Day program, the family must give a 2-week written notice. Full Day parents/guardians will be expected to pay the full tuition rate agreed upon in their contract for the final two weeks of care.

## Transitioning to New Classrooms or Other Programs

Transition is a time of new beginnings for children, parents, and teachers. Our goal is to help prepare everyone so that transitions are as less anxious and frustrating as possible. Intentional planning and opportunities to experience new situations in a safe manner will help children and parents feel secure in their new setting will help staff be prepared to best meet children's needs. Reach Dane Early Head Start staff will ensure that parents are involved in planning for their children's transitions, and that children have opportunities to gently experience new classrooms when they are transitioning within our agency's programs. Staff will also provide parents with support and guidance when planning to transition their children to programs outside of our agency. Please speak to your child's teacher and Family Service Provider well in advance of changes so that you can plan together how to best support your child's transition.

- CBFS-EHS/ Teacher -IT will have initial planning conversation with parent 1month prior to classroom transition and 6months prior to their 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday for EHS/0-3 to HS transitions.
- CBFS/FOW, current teacher, receiving teacher and parents will have a transition meeting 2-4 weeks prior to transition date.
- Child will receive transition social story to help with the transition.
- Child will visit new classroom for 1 week (example schedule)
  1. Day 1- Visit 1 hour
  2. Day 2-Visit 2 hours

3. Day 3- Visit 9am to Lunch (Noon)
4. Day 4- Visit 9am thru Nap (3PM)
5. Day 5- Visit Whole Day (9 am-Parents Pick up at new classroom/site)
6. Staff will work closely with families ensuring that we provide a smooth transition.

## Kindergarten Transition

### **What happens when my child leaves Head Start for Kindergarten?**

Your child will be eligible for kindergarten if he/she is five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Head Start works to help make your child's transition into kindergarten a smooth one. We do this by:

- Letting you know when kindergarten registration takes place and helping you get your child registered
- Sharing information about helping your child succeed in school
- Helping you with any specific concerns you might have
- Reviewing a developmental summary with you and sending it to your child's school with your permission

## Resolving Parent Concerns

### **What should I do if I have a concern?**

You should feel free to ask any questions and let us know of any concerns that you have. Most concerns can be resolved easily when discussed directly with the staff involved.

#### **Steps to follow if you have a concern about your child and/or the classroom:**

1. Go directly to the Head Start teacher or Family Services staff and tell us about your concern. At that time, we will discuss it with you and try to resolve it.
2. If the teacher or family service staff does not address your concern in a timely manner, please bring your concern to the Site Director. **This chain of command is posted on your parent bulletin board.**

#### **Steps to follow if you have a concern about Reach Dane policy:**

1. Go directly to the Head Start teacher or family service staff and tell us about your concern. At that time, we will discuss it with you and try to resolve it.
2. If the teacher or family service staff does not address your concern in a timely manner, please bring your concern to the Site Director. **This chain of command is posted on your parent bulletin board.**

**The staff of Reach Dane welcomes you!**

We are excited about working with you and your child and are ready to help encourage your child's development with confidence, and life-long skills.  
Welcome!

Reach Dane Head Start Staff

**S**how you care by treating children with respect.

**U**se every opportunity to guide and inspire children.

**C**ommit to excellence in everything that you do.

**C**hoose to make the most of each day.

**E**xpress praise to children and co-workers for their good deeds.

**S**hare your enthusiasm for the value of education.

**S**trive to build a team spirit among children, parents, and staff.

# **Home Safety Checklist for Parents of Children 0-3 Years**

## **In your child's bedroom**

### **Changing Table:**

- Never leave your child unattended. Keep supplies within arm's reach and always use the safety belt to help prevent falls.
- Use cordless window coverings on all windows. If this is not possible, make sure drapery and blind cords are tied up high with no loops.

### **Crib:**

- Safe sleep: babies younger than 1 should sleep on their backs. The safest place to sleep is in a crib with a firm mattress with a fitted sheet. Infants should NEVER sleep in an adult bed or on a couch. Keep pillows, quilts, bumpers, comforters, and stuffed toys OUT of your baby's crib.
- Don't hang anything with strings or ribbon over cribs. Keep monitor cords well away from the crib.
- Use a crib that meets current standards. It should not have a drop side or any raised corner posts or cutouts. The slats should be no more than 2 3/8 inches apart.

### **In the bathroom:**

- Always stay within arm's reach of your infant or young child when he is in the bathtub.
- Keep the bathroom door closed when not in use. Keep the toilet seat cover down and consider using a toilet lid latch.
- Use nonskid mats or strips in the shower or tub to avoid falls. Use bathmats to keep the floor dry.
- Unplug and store hair dryers, curling irons, and other electrical appliances out of your child's reach.
- Turn the water heater down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent burns.

### **In the family room:**

- Pad edges and corners of tables
- Keep houseplants out of your child's reach
- Use brackets, braces, or wall straps to secure unstable or top-heavy furniture to the wall to prevent furniture or TVs from falling on children.
- Place a barrier around the fireplace or other heat sources
- Block all stairs with gates.

**In the kitchen:**

- Store sharp knives or other sharp utensils and dishwasher detergent and other cleaning supplies in a cabinet with child locks.
- Keep chairs and stools away from counters and the stove where a child could climb up and get hurt.
- Use the back burners and point pot handles toward the back of the stove to keep them out of your child's reach. Keep your child away from the stove when someone is cooking.
- Use a highchair that is sturdy and has a seat belt with a crotch strap.

**Preventing choking and strangulation:**

- Keep small parts, plastic bags, small toys, coins, and balloons out of reach of children.
- Keep cords and strings out of reach of children, including those attached to window blinds.
- Make sure that batteries are installed in toys correctly. Small button batteries can be swallowed which can cause choking and/or poisoning.

**Poison Prevention:**

- Store all household cleaning products and chemicals in their original containers, out of reach and sight of children.
- Keep all medications locked and out of reach of children.
- Keep laundry pods out of reach of children.
- Clearly post or pre-program the Poison Control Center on your phone. (The number for Poison Control is 1-800-222-1222.)

**Fire and Carbon Monoxide Safety:**

- Make sure there is a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector on every level of your home. Test the batteries every month.
- Create and practice a home fire escape plan with your family.
- Make sure you have a working fire extinguisher available.
- Keep all matches and lighters out of reach of children.

**Firearms:**

- If firearms are stored in the home, keep them locked and out of children's reach and sight. Lock and unload guns individually before storing them. Store ammunition separate from firearms.

**Tobacco:**

- Exposure to secondhand smoke greatly increases the risk of heart and lung disease in your child. For your health and your child's health, please keep your home and vehicles smoke-free.
- Keep all tobacco products out of reach and sight of children.
- If you would like help quitting smoking, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW



## **Home Safety Checklist for Parents of Children 3-5 Years**

### **In the kitchen**

- Install locks on cabinets that children should not have access to.
- Place knives and matches out of reach of children, or in locked drawers.
- Store alcoholic beverages out of reach of children.
  
- Cook on the back burners of the stove and keep pot handles turned away from the edge. Keep hot foods and liquids away from the edges of counters and tables
  
- Do not hold a child while cooking

### **In the bathroom**

- All children need to be supervised at all times when they are in or around water.
- Lock medicine cabinets. Make sure that all medications and drugs are in a locked location, out of reach of children.
- Use nonskid mats or strips in the shower or tub to avoid falls. Use bathmats to keep the floor dry.
- Keep cleansers, shampoos, soaps, toiletries, and cosmetics out of children's reach. (Many are poisonous if swallowed.)
- Turn the water heater down to 120 degrees Fahrenheit to prevent burns.

### **In the living room and bedrooms**

- Place your plants where young children can't reach them.
- Keep perfumes and cosmetics out of reach and sight of children.
- Use brackets, braces, or wall straps to secure unstable or top-heavy furniture to the wall to prevent furniture or TVs from falling on children.
- Keep furniture away from windows and install window guards on second- and higher-story windows.

### **In the garage and basement**

- Lock up all insect sprays, fertilizers, and weed killers, paints, gasoline, antifreeze, or any other poisonous items

### **Preventing choking and strangulation**

- Keep small objects out of children's reach and sight.
- Keep cords and strings out of reach of children, including those attached to window blinds.

### **Poison Prevention**

- Store all household cleaning products and chemicals in their original containers, out of reach and sight of children.
- Keep laundry pods out of reach of children.
- Clearly post or pre-program the Poison Control Center on your phone. (The number for Poison Control is 1-800-222-1222.)

### **Fire and Carbon Monoxide Safety**

- Make sure there is a working smoke alarm and carbon monoxide detector on every level of your home. Test the batteries every month.
- Create and practice a home fire escape plan with your family.
- Make sure you have a working fire extinguisher available.
- Keep all matches and lighters out of reach of children.



### **Firearms**

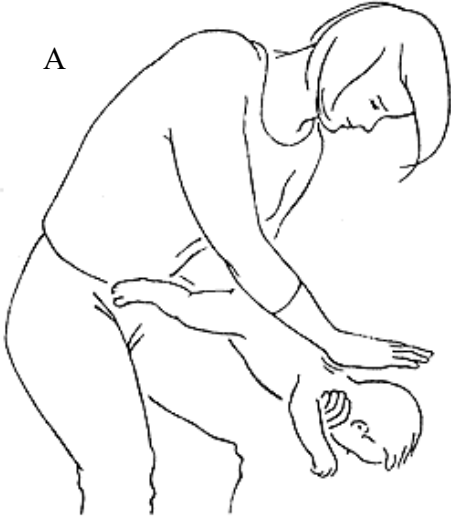
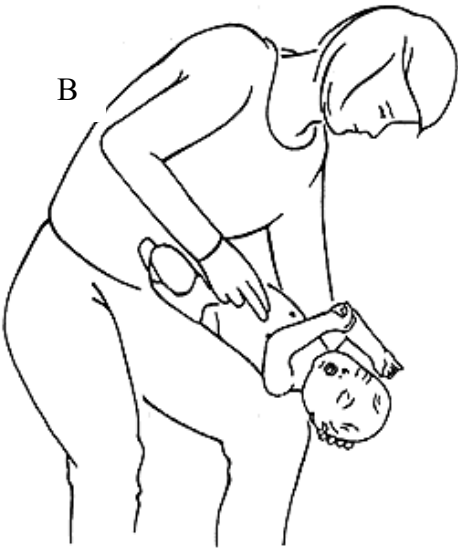
- If firearms are stored in the home, keep them locked and out of children's reach and sight. Lock and unload guns individually before storing them. Store ammunition separate from firearms.

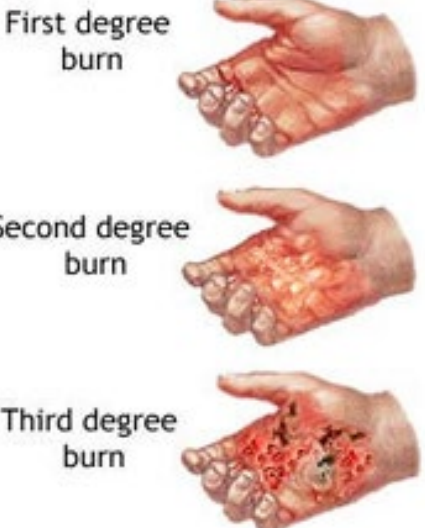


### **Tobacco**

- Exposure to secondhand smoke greatly increases the risk of heart and lung disease in your child. For your health and your child's health, please keep your home and vehicles smoke-free.
- Keep all tobacco products out of reach and sight of children.
- If you would like help quitting smoking, call 1-800-QUIT-NOW

## Basic First Aid for Children

Emergency Situation:	What to do:
<p data-bbox="73 331 430 363"><b>Cuts/Bleeding/Lacerations</b></p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Wash the wound thoroughly with water.</li> <li>2.) Place a piece of sterile gauze or a clean cloth over the entire wound.</li> <li>3.) Apply steady, direct pressure to the wound for 5 minutes</li> <li>4.) Call your doctor or seek immediate medical attention for all large cuts, or if:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. you're unable to stop the bleeding after 5 minutes of pressure, or if the wound begins bleeding again (continue applying pressure until help arrives)</li> <li>b. you're unable to clean out dirt thoroughly, or there's something else stuck in the wound</li> <li>c. the wound is on the child's face or neck</li> <li>d. the injury was caused by an animal or human bite, burn, electrical injury, or puncture wound (e.g., a nail)</li> <li>e. the cut is more than half an inch long or appears to be deep</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<p data-bbox="73 1108 641 1140"><b>Choking for Children 12 Months and Older</b></p>  <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; width: 100%;"> <span data-bbox="203 1795 235 1827">A</span> <span data-bbox="552 1795 584 1827">B</span> </div>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.) Choking Signs           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Unable to breathe, talk, make noise, or skin turning bright red or blue.</li> <li>b. If the child is coughing or gagging, the airway is only partially blocked. In this situation, let the child continue to cough.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2.) What to do:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Back Blows (Picture A): Firmly strike the child between the shoulder blades with the heel of your other hand. Each back blow should be separate. Give 5 of these.</li> <li>b. Then do abdominal thrusts (Picture B): Make a fist with one hand and place the thumb side against the middle of the child's belly, just above the belly button. Grab your fist with your other hand and give 5 quick, upward thrusts into the abdomen.</li> <li>c. Repeat alternating back blows and abdominal thrusts until the object is forced out or if the child becomes unresponsive.</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<p><b>Choking for Infants Under 12 months</b></p> <p>A</p>  <p>B</p> 	<p>d. Call 911</p> <p>1.) Signs of choking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unable to breathe, talk, make noise, or skin turning bright red or blue.</li> <li>If the infant is coughing or gagging, the airway is only partially blocked. In this situation, let the infant continue to cough. Do not attempt to get the object.</li> </ol> <p>2.) What to do:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Back blows (Picture A): Using the heel of your hand, deliver 5 first back blows between baby's shoulder blades.</li> <li>Then do chest thrusts (Picture B): Place the pads of two or three fingers in the center of the baby's chest, just below an imaginary line running between his nipples. To do a chest thrust, push straight down on the chest about 1 1/2 inches. Then allow the chest to come back to its normal position. Do 5, smooth, chest thrusts.</li> <li>Continue alternating five back blows and five chest thrusts until the object is forced out or until the baby starts to cough forcefully, cry, breathe, or becomes unresponsive.</li> <li>Call 911</li> </ol>
<p><b>Burns</b></p>	<p>First degree burns (Signs: Pain, redness, swelling)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Remove the child from the heat source.</li> <li>Remove clothing from the burned area immediately.</li> <li>Run cool (<b>not</b> cold) water over the burned area <b>or</b> hold a clean, cold compress on the burn for approximately 3-5 minutes (<b>do not use ice, as it may cause more destruction to the injured skin</b>).</li> <li><b>Do not</b> apply butter, grease, powder, or any other remedies to the burn, as these can make</li> </ol>

 <p>First degree burn</p> <p>Second degree burn</p> <p>Third degree burn</p>	<p>the burn deeper and increase the risk of infection.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5. Apply aloe gel or cream to the affected area. This may be done a few times during the day.</li> </ol> <p>Second and Third Degree (Signs: Pain, redness, swelling, blistering, white or blackened charred skin)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Call for emergency medical care, then follow these steps until medical personnel arrive:</li> <li>2. Keep your child lying down with the burned area elevated.</li> <li>3. Remove all jewelry and clothing from around the burn (in case there's any swelling after the injury), except for clothing that's stuck to the skin. If you're having difficulty removing clothing, you may need to cut it off or wait until medical assistance arrives.</li> <li>4. Do not break any blisters.</li> <li>5. Apply cool water over the area for at least 3-5 minutes, then cover the area with a clean dry cloth or sheet until help arrives.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Poisoning</b></p>  <p><b>POISON Help</b> 1-800-222-1222</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. If you suspect your child has ingested a poison, contact POISON CONTROL right away for advice. 1-800-222-1222       <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Symptoms: drowsiness, sudden change in behavior, unusual odor, pill fragments on lips or clothes, excessive drooling, vomiting, confusion.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Do NOT force the child to vomit.</li> <li>3. Think prevention: Keep medicines, cleaning products, alcohol, and all other items that are potentially poisonous locked and out of reach of children.</li> </ol>
<p><b>Serious Allergic Reactions/ Anaphylaxis</b></p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction and potentially life threatening. It is a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment. Symptoms of anaphylaxis include: difficulty breathing, swelling of tongue, swelling/tightness of throat, difficulty talking, wheezing, dizziness, and/or fainting.</li> <li>2. If you suspect a child is having an anaphylactic reaction, CALL 911.</li> <li>3. Lay the child flat. If breathing is difficult, you can allow them to sit.</li> <li>4. If the child has an EpiPen, give it right away.</li> </ol>

## **Emergency Phone Numbers**

Emergency Medical Services: 9-1-1 \_\_\_\_\_

Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222 \_\_\_\_\_

Fire Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Police Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Medical Clinic: \_\_\_\_\_

Nearby Hospitals: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

### **How to get CPR training:**

Check out the Dane County Emergency Management – CPR Training Classes for a list of local options:  
<https://em.countyofdane.com/CPR/classes>