

ENFIELD HEAD START VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



2018-2019



VOLUNTEERING

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the Enfield Head Start program. You are welcome to share in all the activities. You will have many enjoyable experiences.

The Enfield Head Start staff would like to welcome you. We rely on you. You provide support for us and the children and are a vital part of our program. We want you to know we are grateful for your important contribution to the operation of Enfield Head Start.

Head Start aims to help children work and play together in an atmosphere which fosters creativity, curiosity and growing independence. Carefully planned and supervised large/small group and individual activities in art, cooking, music, storytelling and literature, imaginative play, and the sciences through observation and testing are the vehicles for experiences.

The program aims to provide a balance between social play and interaction and developing skills in an environment which is warm, supportive and responsive to each individual child's needs. The staff is skilled in encouraging children to talk about their feelings and in helping them to feel competent with themselves, with other people and with classroom materials.

CONFIDENTIALITY

In the course of your volunteering, you may hear and see things that are of a confidential nature. As part of the Head Start community, we are requesting that you do not share confidential information with anyone except staff that you feel has a need to know. This will assure confidentiality to you and your family as well. Thank you for your cooperation in this very important matter.

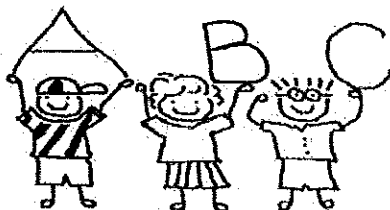
DISCIPLINE

A positive approach is used. Children want to please and will respond to verbal praise. Encourage appropriate behavior. Redirect.

Children become familiar with the classroom and bus routine and rules. Aggressive behavior (hitting, biting) is NOT allowed.

VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM

- You may come in just to observe your child and our program.
- We need volunteers in the classroom to assist with many activities.
- Always sign the in-kind attendance sheet.
- Please call the office if you are unable to come in on a scheduled day.
- We try to be flexible. You may come in as often as you like. However, only two adult visitors can be in the classroom at one time. We suggest you sign up for a schedule each month.
- You may stay all day or part of the day.
- Wear comfortable, washable clothing.
- Review the lockdown procedures posted in the classroom.
- Review the medical and dental procedures posted in the classroom.
- At the beginning, stay in the background for awhile and observe.
- Avoid chatting with adults (this divides your attention).
- Sit on chairs or the floor whenever possible. (A child's world is lower scaled).
- Be a positive role model.
- Allow all creative initiative to come from the child. (Avoid making clay models, painting or drawing on a child's paper or building in the block corner).
- Allow children to be as independent as possible with self help skills.
- Use positive suggestions with children. Avoid using "don't". Example: "The sands stays in the sandbox" instead of "Don't dump the sand out of the sandbox."
- Use a quiet voice at all times.
- Encourage children to speak. Ask questions that require more verbal responses.
- When in doubt, always ask the teacher.
- Plan to act as support for teachers and children.
- Please continue to observe our **NO CELLPHONE** rule.



- Observe the means and method the staff has developed for dealing with both ordinary and problem situations. Try to be as consistent as you can with these methods while still maintaining your own individuality.
- During organized play times it is helpful if you serve as a “floater.” Pay attention to children who need direction, teachers who need help with materials, children or activities, areas that need supervision (e.g. blocks, sand, water, outside).
- If you are at the program during breakfast, lunch time or snack time, please help to serve the food (we eat family style) and to clean up. But also sit down and eat with the children.
- During outside play time, please supervise. Often outside time is mistakenly thought of as staff relaxation time. It can be less structured, but you must be extra vigilant. The play yard is difficult to supervise because children are using their large muscles.
- Moderate physical contact and displays of affection are fine. Avoid physical over involvement with children (e.g. rough-housing, tumbling, carrying, and clinging). This may inhibit their interaction with other children, or over excite them and encourage over dependence on adults.
- If you are at the program at the end of the day, try to help teachers with general cleanup such as picking up papers, washing dishes and table, and bringing in outdoor equipment.

HEALTH PRACTICES WHEN VOLUNTEERING IN THE CLASSROOM

- Always wash your hands after entering the classroom, using the bathroom or assisting another person in the bathroom; before and after preparing food, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing, after changing a diaper,* after break times, and all those other times!!!

*Volunteers can only change their own child's diaper-not any other child.

- Disposable gloves are available in the classroom. Wear them if you may come in contact with any bodily fluids such as urine, feces, saliva, etc. Always change your gloves and wash your hands between children or events.
- Review the medical and dental emergency plans posted in the classroom.