

Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start

VOLUNTEER POLICIES/ HANDBOOK

(revised 08/2/2011)

As parents of a child or children enrolled at Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start, you are automatically registered as one of our volunteers. Any time that you spend time at the Center, you are volunteering and supporting you child as well as our program. Other volunteers are registered before serving in that capacity anywhere in the center.

We have certain expectations of all our volunteers, whether or not they are parents. Please review this brief handbook so that you are aware of what is expected of you while you are here. Your presence here affects not only your child, but every other child, parent and staff member present. We strive to ensure that every person here feels safe and welcome and you play a part in that effort.

CONFIDENTIALITY

It is absolutely essential that program confidentiality be maintained. Anything you learn about a Head Start/Early Head Start family or an employee is confidential. We ask that you sign an agreement stating that you understand and will abide by this regulation.

PROCEDURES

There are specific procedures for most of what happens at the Center. A copy of the procedure manual is in the Parent Resource Room, and another in the Partnerships office, if you would like to check a copy out. Others are located throughout the Center, as well.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

The Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start program is established as a DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE and CAMPUS.

SAFETY

Work areas are to be kept clean and orderly at all times.

Everyone working in the Center is expected to follow common-sense safety rules. These include:

- don't move heavy furniture alone;
- don't leave things where someone can trip on them;
- turn off all electrical appliances when no longer in use;
- close drawers immediately;
- don't stack items so high they could fall;
- don't place more than 20 pounds of material located over children's heads.
- don't pick up Head Start children

Follow the directions of your supervising staff member.

If you are injured, notify your supervisor IMMEDIATELY.

If you see any condition which could be considered unsafe, report it immediately to the Safety Coordinator and/or your supervisor.

SECURE WORKPLACE

In order to maintain a safe environment for children and adults, the Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start, along with the Southern Ute Community Action Programs, have enacted specific rules about keeping the workplace secure. A copy of those rules is available in the Partnerships office. Please follow the lead of your child's classroom teacher in any unusual situation.

SMOKING

The Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start are established as a SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT. This includes all indoor space and ground within 25 feet of all Center buildings, as well as all vehicles used to transport children. Staffs are also prohibited from smoking inside or immediately outside the homes of families during home visits.

If you wish to smoke during your time at the Center, you must go off the Center grounds – most people usually cross the street over to the park.

FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Volunteers who are working with the children during the lunch period are entitled to eat with them, as are the teachers, free of charge.

Food and beverages are not allowed at computer workstations.

Food and beverages, other than those actually being served to the children at meal and snack times, are not to be consumed while working with the children. (In other words, a can of pop on the side while helping children with their work just isn't fair to them.)

TELEPHONE CALLS

Volunteers are discouraged from making personal telephone calls while working at the Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start Program. If you should need to make a call, it must be limited to five minutes or less. You should also make sure that the line you pick up does not block the last available phone line. One line should remain open at all times for emergency purposes.

Long distance calls must NEVER be charged to the Center.

For incoming calls, if you do not have direct access to a phone at the Center, the Center personnel may take a message. This includes when you are working in the classroom. Calls to the classrooms are disruptive to the routine and are kept to a minimum.

You must turn off your cell phone while you are here, the safety of the children must come first.

PARKING

Volunteers at Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start may park in the parking lot on the West side of the main building. The parking area between the modular units is strictly for parents' pick-up and drop-off of children.

APPROPRIATE DRESS

Volunteers are expected to dress in a manner appropriate to the work situation.

These items are not acceptable to wear while working at the Center:

- shorts which are shorter than knee length;
- halter tops, tank tops, or muscle shirts;
- thin strap or strapless dresses, unless covered by a shirt;
- clothing with symbols or print related to drugs, alcohol or violence.

Hair should be clean and neat.

Sideburns, moustaches, and beards should be neatly trimmed.

Everyone must keep in mind that skirts must be long enough, tops must be high enough, and all clothing must be loose enough to enable working with children at the children's level. This involves bending over, squatting and sitting on the floor or in very low chairs.

HAND WASHING

As in any public place, the spreading of contagious disease is a significant concern at Southern Ute Montessori Head Start and Early Head Start. Research has shown that the simple act of effectively and frequently washing one's hands results in a dramatic decrease in the spread of disease. The procedure to be followed is posted at every hand-washing site.

OTHER PROHIBITED ACTIVITIES

In addition to those already mentioned herein, the following conduct is prohibited:

- II Use of profanity or abusive language;
- II Theft, destruction, defacement or misuse of program property or of another employee's property;
- II Horseplay, pranks, or practical jokes;
- II Disrespecting children or adults;
- II Failure to wear assigned safety equipment or failure to abide by safety rules

and policies.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Do not carry unnecessary amounts of cash or other valuables to the Center. Each work area will have a place where you can leave your personal belongings. The Center does not assume responsibility for items lost or stolen while you are working here.

REGULAR VOLUNTEERS

As part of the enrollment process, you completed a volunteer registration form. Included in the application process will be a check of the sex offender registries in the surrounding area.

Volunteers serving on a regular basis (more than 4 hours per week) must submit a request through SUCAP for clearance on the statewide child abuse registry, and must also be tested for exposure to tuberculosis by the school nurse.

Inkind Logs

Every day, following the completion of your volunteer duties, fill out a time log indicating the hours you were working, the miles you traveled to do so (round trip), and the kinds of duties you were performing. You may either sign your time log in the Partnerships Office, or, if you have been working in a classroom you may sign your inkind log located in the classroom "in kind" book.

It is extremely important that you remember to do this. These records must be kept in order to ensure our Federal funding by showing community support for the program. Every year we must show proof of donated goods and services valued at a total of 20% of our grant amount.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE CLASSROOM

Teachers are expected to manage the classrooms at all times - this includes the child of a volunteer. Here are some specific for volunteers in the classrooms. They are also applicable to anyone in proximity to or in contact with the children at any time

Support the teacher. Each classroom has a lesson plan and a schedule. Find out from the teacher what she wants you to do.

Quiet is a goal. If you are quiet and talk in quiet tones, the children will model your behavior. If you are loud, the children will also be loud and the noise level will increase. Approach the child you need to talk to and talk in a quiet voice. It is not appropriate to talk across the room, but rather, go to the child or adult you intend to speak with. Wrestling or tickling a child is not appropriate, it can over-stimulate the children and an appropriate classroom atmosphere is hard to restore.

Stay in the classroom. We have at least two teachers with the children at all times. As a volunteer, you should never be asked to be alone with the children. If you must leave the classroom, please let the teacher know.

Go gently. Young children are often uncomfortable around strangers. Do not push. Let the children come to you. Forcing your presence on a child in what, to that point, has come to be a comfortable environment will only make the child more fearful and insecure for some time to come, even after you leave. It helps to get down on the child's level.

Support the child's concentration, coordination, sense of order, and independence. These are Montessori goals. The room and schedule have been arranged by the teachers and should be maintained. The children are used to this schedule and will be more comfortable with the familiar routine.

Support independence. The children are working toward being able to handle the work in the classroom by themselves. When we help, we can interfere in this. If a child asks you for help, you may help, otherwise the child should be allowed to solve his/her own problems. If you are unsure, check with the teacher. Children's work is their own. Do not color/paint/write on children's work. The exception to this is when a child is dictating a story or word about the work. In this case you may write on the work exactly what the child is saying. You may also add names to the work of any children who are unable to write their own names.

Be a good model. The children in the classroom look to the adults as models. Please use the manners, language, and tone of voice you expect from them. It is not appropriate to eat/drink in front of the children unless they are eating/drinking the same things.

Mealtime We serve family style meals. We eat with the children and allow them to serve themselves (unless food is too hot). They open their own milk and pour it into glasses. They clean their area and take care of their own dishes.

Children are provided with healthy meals/snacks. Please do not give them other treats.

Do not ask children to take some of everything offered, they make that choice. Do not ask them to eat all that is on their plates.

Diapering Only teachers are permitted to change a child's diaper.

Do not carry children. Holding children while sitting down is comforting. Carrying children is not a good idea and can be a safety issue for you and/or the child. If working with the infants, a regular staff member will place a child in your lap or carry him/her to the changing table for you.

Medication No medication is ever dispensed by a volunteer. This includes such things as lotion and chapstick.

Sharing Children are taught that the work they choose is theirs. Other children may ask to watch or participate, but it is up to the child that first chose the work to give or decline permission to do so. If permission is declined, the other child must choose other work.

Outside and in the gym Rules are posted. Actively watch the children. Adults must spread out to supervise the children adequately. Be where you are most effective. We do not push the children on the swings. Children may get up on equipment, but are never placed on equipment. Children on a trike or scooter boards must wear helmets. Volunteers should never use swings, a trike or scooter boards.

Injury of a child If a child is injured, immediately call the regular teacher, who will then care for the child. You can supervise and calm other children, as well as call additional help if requested by the teacher. All of our staff receives regular first aid training. (This is available to you, also)

Parents Parents are always treated with respect. Let the regular classroom teacher share any information about the child with his/her parent(s). Remember confidentiality and do not give out information about children or their families, either here or out in public. The Center has policies about dealing with behavior and family support. Please do not advise parents on how to handle their children or their lives. If they ask, you may refer them to the regular classroom teacher or to their Family Advocate/Specialist.

VOLUNTEERS IN THE POOL

Volunteers to help when children are in the SunUte swimming pool are ESSENTIAL for the success of the swimming program. Without our volunteers, we would be unable to provide this wonderful opportunity for our children.

THERE IS NO VOLUNTEER DUTY AT HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START THAT IS MORE CRITICAL TO THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN.

Because of the absolute necessity of the active participation of volunteers at all times during a pool activity, the following guidelines MUST be followed. Children can drown in just a few inches of water, and they can be seriously injured in a matter of seconds.

NO cell phones. Turn your phone off or leave it at home or in the car. Your attention MUST be on the children at all times.

NEVER take children into the deep end of the pool, even if it is on a one-to-one basis. NEVER!

NO hot tub use. Your attention needs to be on the children, so we can't spare you to use the tub yourself. The children cannot be taken into the hot tub. The heat from a hot tub is too extreme for young children's bodies. They don't have the protection from the heat that an adult body has.

IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO COMPLY WITH THESE RULES, THEN WE ASK THAT YOU NOT VOLUNTEER FOR POOL DUTY.

CHILD BEHAVIOR

Only teachers are to discipline the children. Each child's behavior reflects his/her

own individual developmental stage and only that child's teacher knows what those issues are and what constitutes developmentally appropriate discipline. This is a result of our overall system of teacher training - CDA, Montessori, etc. - screening results, observations, Child Study meetings, and input from specialists.

The Head Start philosophy recognizes each child as an individual and supports positive guidance, encouragement and clear, consistent rules. **At no time may a child ever be physically punished (spanked, pushed, shoved, or pulled) or verbally shamed. Food is never to be withheld as a consequence for behavior, nor is it to be used as a reward or punishment.**

EMERGENCY DRILLS

There are two types of alarms given for emergency drills. These are:

FIRE ALARM

This is a very loud, constant electronic bell/buzzer. All staff will close windows, make sure all children are lined up and evacuated from the building, and close doors behind them. Once outside the building, staff will assure that all children are present and accounted for. Occasionally, you may be directed to exit the building from alternate exits. These drills are conducted monthly.

LOCK-DOWN

Your supervising staff member will alert you if this alarm is given, and give you instructions for your safety. These drills are conducted in October and in March.

In all cases, all staff and children will remain in the "safe" areas until the "all clear" is announced by the Safety Coordinator or other management staff.

WHERE IS IT?

BATHROOMS

main building

basement – last doors to R (men) and L (women) at north end of hallway
before entering gym

main floor - next to last door on L before entering gym

HANDICAPPED ACCESSIBLE

(first room - children, including diaper changing table /
back room - adults)

second floor - top of stairs, R to end of hall, R to last door on L (north wall)

Head Start modulars - there is one restroom located in each of the modular units, between the two classrooms
 Early Head Start – second door on the R after main entrance
 (children's restroom facilities are located in each of the three toddler rooms, for use only by the enrolled children)

HANDWASHING FACILITIES

bathrooms
 each classroom

FIRST AID KITS

each classroom
 every bus
 nurse's office
 kitchen
 restrooms in main building on first floor, second floor and at Early Head Start

BREATHING BARRIERS FOR C.P.R.

(for use by a properly trained person to safely administer Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation)

main building, first floor
 on wall outside nurse's office
 on wall between classrooms 1 and 2
 on wall next to janitor's storeroom at NE corner of gym
 main building, second floor
 on wall between administrative assistant's office and parent resource room
 Head Start modulars
 on wall in the restroom area between classrooms
 Early Head Start
 on wall by phone, next to kitchen