

WELCOME TO
Upper Arkansas Area Council of Governments

FREMONT COUNTY HEAD START Handbook

*Fremont County
Head Start*

Safety, Teamwork
&
Respectful Relationships

S. T. a. R. R.

1718 Brookside
Canon City, CO 81212
(719) 275-8636

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FEE SCHEDULE

Fremont County Head Start operates federally funded Head Start programs and the state funded Universal Preschool Program. These programs are provided for families at no cost.

Enrollment and Eligibility

We welcome all eligible children and families to our program. Registration and enrollment are provided without discrimination based on sex, race, color, religion, or political belief. We are committed to creating an inclusive environment and providing services and support to children with disabilities.

Eligibility for our program is based on the child's age and the family's income, in accordance with the Head Start Performance Standards. As part of the enrollment process, parents or guardians will be asked to provide documentation verifying the child's age and proof of family income.

Our staff are available to assist families with the enrollment process and answer any questions about eligibility or required documentation.

Quick Info

Fremont County Head Start Phone Number: 275-8636

Shows up on caller ID as Upper Arkansas Area COG with any of these numbers:

(719) 275-8636, (719)275-4435,(719) 269-3019

Office Hours: Monday – Thursday, 6:30 am – 5:00 pm

Report an absence: (719)275-8636

FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL: Aug. 10th – 13th

Class Time for 7:30 am – 2:30 pm

First day of school: August 10th 2026

Breakfast Served at: 8:00 am

Lunch Served at: 11:00 am

Snack Served at: 1:30 pm

Class Times for 8:30 am- 3:30 pm

First day of school: August 11th 2026

Breakfast Served at: 9:00 am

Lunch Served at: 12:00 pm

Snack Served at: 2:30pm

Class Times for 9:30 am – 4:30 pm

First day of school: August 12th 2026

Breakfast served at: 10:00 am

Lunch served at: 1:00 pm

Snack served at: 3:30 pm

Children cannot arrive more than 15 minutes before their class begins and/or be picked up 15 minutes later than their class ends.

DO NOT EVER LEAVE A CHILD UNATTENDED IN YOUR CAR WHILE DROPPING OR PICKING UP A CHILD AT HEAD START.

***Age eligibility:* 3years of age before August 1st to 5 by august 1st of the school year.**

NO SCHOOL DAYS

2026-2027

Labor Day Holiday - September 7th
Columbus day - October 12th
Veteran's day - November 11th
Thanksgiving Break - November 25th – 29th
Winter Break December 21st – January 3rd
Martin Luther King Holiday - January 18th
Presidents' Day – February 15th
Spring Break March 15th – 19th
Safety Town, USA - April 12th – 15th

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER

Home Visits – August 3rd – 7th March 1st – 11th
Policy Council Every 1st Tuesday
Family Night Every 2nd Tuesday (except December & April)
Fremont County Dads August 26th, Oct 28th, Jan. 27th April 28th
Fremont County Mom's September 30th & March 31st
Family Field Day Friday, September 25th
Attendance COUNT Window, September 24th – October 8th
Grandparents Day Luncheon October 20th, 21st 22nd
Parent – Teacher Conferences, as scheduled
LAST DAY OF CLASS-May 26th
Family Zoo day, May 27th
Extra School day April 9th

You can also visit our web page at

<https://www.uaacog.com>

Check out our Facebook & Instagram sites. You can find us at Fremont County Head Start.

Program Mission Statement

Fremont County Head Start will provide a quality, respectful and accountable environment for children, families, staff, and our community through a comprehensive system which promotes healthy relationships leading to lifelong success.

Vision Statement

Establish relationships and create an environment of respect, acceptance, safety, teamwork, and trust where children, families, staff and the community become lifelong learners.

Belief statements

We believe...

All children and families have the ability to succeed. Early education opportunities promote positive outcomes. All children and families deserve respect and acceptance. Positive relationships are the foundation of our program. Teamwork makes the dream work.

Code of Conduct

Who must abide by the Code of Conduct?

All Staff
Parents
Volunteers
Consultants

We will respect and promote the unique identity of each child, family, and staff member and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability.

We will follow program confidentiality policies concerning information about children, families, and staff members.

No child will be left alone or unsupervised while under our care.

We will use positive methods of child guidance and will not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, or humiliation. In addition, we will not employ methods of discipline that involve isolation, the use of food as punishment or reward, or the denial of basic needs.

Program Expectations

Join us in becoming a Head Start STARR!



S. T. a. R. R.

Fremont County Head Start strives to provide a stimulating and secure environment where your child can grow socially, emotionally, intellectually and physically healthy and happy.

By joining forces as a team together we can make your STARR shine! To have a successful team there are some things we expect from you as a family, and some things we know you will expect from us.

Fremont County Head Start History

Head Start began nationally in 1965. Fremont County initiated a program in 1967. Children enrolled receive a “head start” with academics, social and emotional skills. Fremont County Head Start strives to meet and exceed National Head Start Performance Standards, State Child Care License requirements, the National Association for the Education of Young Children requirements, and local regulations so that Head Start children have a quality preschool experience.

Director of Administration

Chris Henager

chris.henager@fcheadstart.org

Managers:

Shelby Wells -Education shelby.wells@fcheadstart.org

Jeanne Piper – ERSEA (Eligibility, Recruitment, Selection, Enrollment Attendance), Family & Community Partnerships, Mental Health, Behavior
jeanne.piper@fcheadstart.org

Doug Moody -Transportation doug.moody@fcheadstart.org

Shawwna Lancaster –Health Shawwna.lancaster@fcheadstart.org

Misty Atkins – Disability Manager/Behavior Assistant
misty.atkins@fcheadstart.org

Melissa Newby – Family and Community engagement
melissa.newby@fcheadstart.org

Support Staff:

Heather Lee – Office/Data Entry

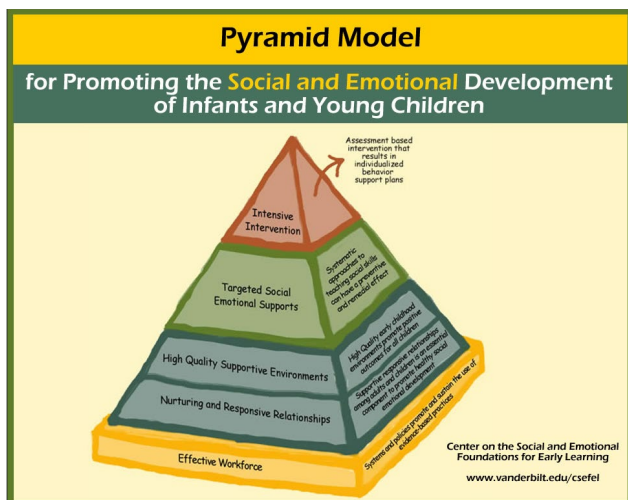
Shakoda Walck - Nutrition Supervisor

Family service coordinators

Jeanne Piper jeanne.piper@fcheadstart.org

Misty Atkins misty.atkins@fcheadstart.org

Melissa Newby melissa.newby@fcheadstart.org



Effective Workforce

(Foundation)-Fremont County Head Start is dedicated to delivering high quality evidence-based practices through well trained educators and staff, parent participation and a seamless delivery of community collaboration and services.

Nurturing & Responsive Relationships (1st Level) - Relationships are essential in promoting social and emotional development; so relationships are important to us! Not just the relationship between your child and their teacher but the relationships between staff and parents, parents and your children and even staff with other staff! So please get involved, talk to your teacher or staff member about your child's likes and dislikes. Need a friendly ear? Come on in. Come to volunteer or just drop in to say hello!

High Quality Supportive Environments (2nd Level) - Research shows children in early years learn best through hands on activities, experimentation and play. So the environment in an early childhood setting is extremely important. The classrooms and playground are set up in such a way to promote exploration of materials that are carefully selected based on the needs of **each individual child**. The environment should feel comfortable and inviting to promote social and emotional skill building such as problem solving, friendship building, sharing and turn taking and areas to be alone for emotional self regulation.

Targeted Social Emotional Supports (3rd Level)-Social and emotional development is one of the key indicators of academic success in K-12. Statistics show that children who lack social and emotional skills are significantly more likely to drop out of school in early grades. Even children who excel academically but lack social skills are 50% more likely to not graduate than peers who are average academically but have good social skills.

Intensive Intervention (4th Level) - The intervention level was created for children that may need some additional support around behavior. In this level the parent, teacher and behavior consultant will work together to create an individualized behavior support plan.

Developmental SCREENINGS/SPECIAL NEEDS (ECHO): **Head Start and UPK Policy**

To support your child's healthy development, our program offers voluntary developmental screening services. Please speak to the Disabilities Manager for information on setting up a screening time:

- Vision
- Hearing
- Talking, listening, and speaking clearly
- Problem solving skills (building with blocks)
- Large muscle skills (crawling or running)
- Small muscle skills (crayon markings or drawings)
- Social skills (playing or having a friend)
- Independent skills (dressing or using a spoon)



Children will enjoy the activities of the screening as you are asked questions about your child's development. If during the screening process, it becomes necessary to take a closer look at your child's development you will be asked to return to ECHO at the access center for further testing. Children that are found to need an "extra boost" will then have an individual Education Plan developed for them by you (Their Parent), an Early Childhood Special Educator and / or a Speech/ Language Therapist and Occupational Therapist. This plan will be shared with your child's teacher to provide activities within the classroom with support from the therapist. During Parent/Teacher Conference week families with Children with Special needs will have conferences with Teacher, in addition to, those therapists working with your child.

CLOTHING/BACKPACKS:

It is recommended that children come dressed in “play” clothes. The weather tends to change quickly, so please send a jacket with your child. It is also important to put your child’s name on his/her clothing. We also ask that children **do not bring backpacks** to school since everything they will need is provided by Head Start.

CALENDARS/NEWSLETTERS:

A yearly school calendar will be given to you at Registration/Orientation. During the school year, you will receive each month a calendar and newsletter which will have the most current information about no school days, conferences, activities, meetings, field trips and community events. **MAKE SURE YOU GET YOUR COPY EVERY MONTH!!** From Bus driver or main office.

HOME VISITS:

Head start will be asking you to participate in two home visits. The first home visit will typically take place before your child starts school. This visit gives you, your child and your child’s teacher a chance to get to know each other before school starts. Your Family service coordinator will also attend if available. This home visit helps you and your child feel more comfortable on the first day of class.

The second home visit will take place in March. This is a very informative visit about your child’s classroom and what will be taking place as the end of the year approaches. **Home visits will take place in your home or at a location you are comfortable with.**

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES:

Parent/Teacher conferences will also take place twice a year. Parent/Teacher conferences are an important part of your child’s Head Start experience. During conferences, parents and teachers work together as a team to set child and family goals and a plan to reach these goals. Your input is a vital part of this process and Head Start will assist you to make your family’s Head Start experience a success. Please watch for the dates when Parent/Teacher conferences will be held. The dates will be on the yearly calendar and, if necessary, updated on the monthly calendar. **Parent / Teacher conferences are held at the center, usually in your child’s classroom.**

A FAMILY Program



Head Start & UPK Family and Community Engagement

Fremont County Head Start is a FAMILY program. We believe you are your child's first and most important teacher. First and most importantly we are here for your child. We are also here for your FAMILY. Each classroom has a Head Start Family service coordinator assigned to them and is available to your family.

Our program is committed to partnering with you in the following ways:

Goal Setting: We will partner with you to set individual learning and development goals for your child. Help families identify and use their strengths and resources; identify and reach their goals; and advocate for their children. Offer opportunities for family members to enhance their skills or build new ones.

Provide access to community resources, and emergency or crisis assistance when needed; and

Support any pre-existing family plans.

Language Support: We provide opportunities to utilize interpreters or other language resources as needed to ensure clear communication.

Cultural Sharing: We invite and encourage you to share your home's cultural and social practices within our classroom community.

Program Decision-Making: We offer opportunities for families and community partners to engage in our program's operational decision-making processes.

Transitions: We will actively involve you in your child's transitions between classrooms or when moving to a new school.

Feedback: We value your perspective and provide opportunities for you to give feedback on the quality of program-family and program-staff interactions.

Your Family service coordinator will be available for you if you have any immediate needs or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact us at (719)275-8636 or by email.

Classroom Family Service Coordinator

Each classroom will be assigned a family service coordinator. They will contact you.

Family service coordinators

Melissa Newby melissa.newby@fcheadstart.org

Misty Atkins misty.atkins@fcheadstart.org

Jeanne Piper jeanne.piper@fcheadstart.org

Attendance

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in PRESCHOOL so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day, is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work. If your child falls into chronic absences and action plan will be required.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in Preschool, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 8 days the whole school year) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.
- Children with special needs who frequently miss school are unable to receive therapy services in the classroom. This could result in loss of services.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

- Set a regular bedtime and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes the night before.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your child to their teachers and classmates before school starts to help with their transition.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, family managers, bus drivers or other parents for advice on how to make her feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting your child to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

CONTACT THE CENTER (719) 275-8636 when your child will be absent. If the school has not heard from you in One hour of your child's class start time, we will be calling you to find out where your child is, If it is 2 days in a row we will be coming to do a well child check on your child.

It is very important that your child is at school every day from September 24th through October 10th, 2026

HEALTH:

The following are some of the health rules, regulations, and guidelines we must follow as a program. As per Colorado State Child Care Licensing, it is required that all children have a physical from their medical provider within **30 days** of enrollment, or first day attended. This means we must have a current physical copy in our file, signed by the provider, always. Also, Head Start Performance Standard “A schedule of well childcare utilized by the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis, and Treatment (EPSDT) program”, which requires:

- Physical/Well Child Check - A current (within the last 12 months) exam.
Within **30 days** of enrollment
 - Lead testing is usually done at 12 and 24 months of age. If not done before 24 months, a test would need to be done between 36-72 months. **Due within 90 days of child’s enrollment**
- Dental exam – A current exam should be either a 6-month check-up or a yearly exam within **90 days** of enrollment.
- Developmental Screening within **45 days** of enrollment
 - Developmental (ASQ-3) (ASQ-SE)
 - Vision
 - Hearing
- Immunization Record – If your child has received shots in Colorado, we can get the records from CIIS (Colorado Immunization Information System). If done out of state, you will need to provide us with your child’s records.
- Documentation of immunization status or exemption as required by Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Immunizations must be updated and recorded as specified on the certificate of immunization or alternate certificate of immunization as supplied and approved by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE). Colorado law requires proof of immunizations be provided prior to or on the first day of admission.
 - In this case, if we do not have a copy signed by the provider (or cannot print the records from CIIS) in our file your child will remain enrolled but will be unable to attend school or activities until received.
 - Children under the McKinney Vento Act have **90 days** to provide immunization records or a waiver, beginning the first day of school, to allow you time to get the required immunizations up to date. In this case, if we do not have a copy signed by the provider (or cannot print the records from CIIS) in our file after 90 days your child will remain enrolled but will be unable to attend school or activities until received. Parents/guardians will be given a reminder of the upcoming deadline. Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians to find out if we can help in any way, such as providing a list of local providers, schedule of Public Health immunization clinics, providing transportation, setting up appointments, etc.
 - **Please note: There may be children attending here that are not fully immunized due to parent preference, religious belief, or allergy.**

If you have any questions, concerns, or need information on any of the above required well child schedules and tests, please contact **Health Manager**.

WHEN TO KEEP YOUR CHILD AT HOME

Young children frequently become mildly ill. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers experience a yearly average of six respiratory infections (colds) and can expect one to two gastrointestinal infections (vomiting and/or diarrhea) each year.

Deciding whether to keep your child at home or when to send a child home from school can be difficult. It is important for parents and caregivers to discuss what observations have been made and agree on a plan of action.

Please contact Head Start when your child is ill and describe the illness. If a specific diagnosis is made, e.g., COVID-19, strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), chicken pox, Or a temperature of 100.4 or higher, etc. let the office know so other families can be alerted.

Clearly there are instances when it is necessary for a child to remain at home. The following list gives guidelines and recommendations for exclusion from childcare or preschool.

Reference the CDPHE “How sick is too sick?” Public guidance document.

<https://cdphe.colorado.gov/communicable-diseases/infectious-disease-guidelines-schools-childcare>

MENTAL HEALTH:

Children’s mental health is cared for by using the social/emotional profile completed by parents at an ECHO screening, in the classroom and with professional observations of the child’s intellectual and emotional behaviors at Head Start.

If anyone in your family needs mental health services see mental health manager referral service are available.

What is mental health?

Mental health means that young children are growing in their ability to:

- understand and share feelings
- have close and positive relationships
- explore and learn

Why Is It Important?

Having Positive Mental Health Makes It Easier for Children to:

- Have close relationships with family and friends
- Do well in school
- Learn new things
- Solve tough problems

- Develop patience (or not give up)
- Focus on a task
- Ask for help

When Young Children Are Worried, Sad, or Angry, It Can Be Hard To:

- Make friends
- Follow directions
- Express feelings or wishes
- Follow simple directions
- Pay attention in class
- Solve problems in positive ways
- Do well in school



<https://headstart.gov/publication/mental-health-health-tips-families>

NUTRITION/MEAL SERVICE: Children with food allergies and/or special medical dietary needs MUST have a written statement from a physician BEFORE ATTENDING that includes foods to avoid and the required substitution. We are unable to work with food likes and dislikes. Please see Health Manager to obtain this Special Diet Form.

Fremont County Head Start provides Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) approved meals and snacks for your child. All meals are served in the classroom. Children are never forced to eat, but are encouraged to try new foods. Food is never used as a reward or punishment. Menus will be provided with the monthly calendar/newsletter. Remember that these menus are just plans and are subject to change. Please contact the Nutrition Manager if you have questions and/or comments.

You have chosen a childcare provider that participates in the (CACFP). Participating in the CACFP means that the provider cares about good nutrition for children, will introduce and serve a variety of nutritious foods for your child to eat, and will serve foods appropriate for your child’s nutritional needs. The provider you have chosen cannot charge a separate fee for meals, nor ask you to provide food for your child for meals claimed for reimbursement from the CACFP, except in some special cases. Depending upon the hours in care, your provider will be serving your child breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, supper, and/or late snack.

CACFP REQUIRED MEAL ITEMS					
MEALS	COMPONENTS	AGE 1-2	AGE 3-5	AGE 6-12	
Breakfast	Fluid Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup	
Juice or Fruit or Vegetable	¾ cup				
Bread or Bread Alternate	½ slice		½ cup	1 cup	
Snack	Fluid Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup	
Juice or Fruit or Vegetable	¾ cup				
Meat or Meat Alternate	½ ounce		½ cup	¾ cup	
Bread or Bread Alternate	½ slice		½ ounce	1 ounce	
Lunch	Fluid Milk	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup	
Supper					
Fruit or Vegetable or Juice	¾ cup total	¾ cup total	¾ cup total	¾ cup total	
(Must serve at least 2 different varieties)					
Bread or Bread Alternate	½ slice	½ slice	1 slice	2 ounces	
Meat or Poultry or Fish	1 ounce	1½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces	
Cheese or	1 ounce	1½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces	
Egg or	½	¾	1	1	
Cooked Dry Beans and Peas or	¾ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	
Peanut Butter or	2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp	4 Tbsp	4 Tbsp	
Yogurt, Plain or Flavored	4 ounces or	6 ounces or	8 ounces or	8 ounces or	
(May also be served at snack)	½ cup	¾ cup	1 cup	1 cup	

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964, (voice and TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer

To learn more about the Child and Adult Food Program follow the link below:
<https://www.cacfp.org/food-program/>

TRANSPORTATION

BUS RULES:

- ☆ A person listed on your child's Emergency Form **must accompany** your child **to & from** the bus. **18 years of age or older to release**
- ☆ **DO NOT COME UP TO THE BUS WITH A CIGARETTE (lit or not)**
- ☆ If your child misses the bus, it is your responsibility to bring your child to school.
- ☆ NOTIFY THE CENTER WHEN YOUR CHILD WILL NOT BE ATTENDING.
- ☆ **Call within one hour of your child's class start**
- ☆ **You must notify the school as soon as your child is ready to return to school. Your child will not be picked up if you do not call to be picked up**
- ☆ There is no food, drink or smoking/vaping allowed on the bus at any time.
- ☆ If no one that is listed on your child's emergency form is at the bus stop to pick up your child, your child will be returned to the center, and it will be your responsibility to pick up your child **immediately**.

**WE WILL NOT ACCEPT REQUESTS/PERMISSION FOR RELEASE
OVER THE PHONE.**

Head Start may cancel bus routes during the school year. **PLEASE HAVE AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN to get your child to school.** This decision is made after local streets are checked and all areas concerning your child's safety are considered. If any cancellation of the bus routes is necessary, it will be announced on KOAA TV channel 5, KRDO Channel 13, through the FlashAlert system between 6:30 A.M. - 7:00A.M.

WE DO NOT MAKE THIS DECISION WITHOUT CAREFUL CONSIDERATION.
IT IS MADE FOR YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY.

Buses are the main source of communication between families and the center.

PLEASE READ ALL THE INFORMATION GIVEN TO YOU BY THE BUS DRIVER.

Calendars, newsletters and menus are given at the beginning of every month. Important forms, letters and notes are also sent on the bus. Surveys and questionnaires will be sent in sealed envelopes-just complete and return them to your child's bus driver. If you have any questions about a note or form, just ask your child's bus driver or call the main office.

IF YOUR CHILD IS PICKED UP AND/OR DROPPED OFF AT A DAYCARE PLEASE MAKE ARRANGEMENTS WITH YOUR PROVIDER TO RECEIVE YOUR HEAD START PAPERS.

Training

Some other services provided to our Head Start families and the community:

- First Aid, Infant/Child/Adult CPR
- Nutrition information
- Classroom volunteer training
- Family Night activities
- Parenting classes
- Fremont Dads
- Fremont Moms
- GED information

These classes and activities are offered to parents of Head Start children at no cost. Childcare and transportation are available with advance notice, if needed.

PARENT ROOM:

Parents have access to a computer with printer and internet. By appointment only.

VIDEO CAMERAS:

Video cameras are in all classrooms, the Parent Room, the Literacy Center, on the playground, in the kitchen and at the front gate for your child's safety and for assurance of quality services for you and your child.

Security Door systems

Main entrance will have a buzz in security system. You will get buzzed in to enter the building.

CELL PHONES

Please refrain from using your cell phone while at our center, we encourage positive adult / child interactions.

CHILD CARE LICENSE

Your child is now enrolled in a childcare facility licensed by the Colorado Department of Human Services. The license indicates this program has met the required standards of operation. Please ask to see this license. Licensed facilities make every effort to provide a safe and healthy environment for children. Child care services play an important role in supporting families, and strong families are the basis of a thriving community. Your child's educational, physical, emotional, and social development will be nurtured in a well-planned and run program. Remember to observe the program regularly, especially regarding children's health and safety, equipment and play materials, and the staff. For additional information regarding licensing, or if you have a concern about a childcare facility, consult the Colorado Office of Child Care Services at (303) 866-6958.

Grievance/Complaint Procedure

Policy Council, together with Head Start staff, has developed a Grievance/Complaint Procedure for parents and community members. These forms are located in each classroom, on the Parent Board in the Parent Room and are available in the main office. Please be advised that anonymous complaints cannot be investigated. The UAACOG section 504/ADA Grievance procedure is available upon request in the main office.

IN-KIND:

Head Start is a federal program. This means we have a yearly grant awarded from the government. We are given 80% of our required operating funds and are mandated to get the other 20% through donations from our community. Whenever parents donate something to Head Start, such as time to volunteer, share special skills, participating in school activities, reading logs/activity logs or donating materials (Children's clothes, books, toys, etc.), these donations are called In-Kind. In-kind is how we meet our 20%. It is important to sign a green In-Kind sheet whenever you donate something. Your child's teacher will provide you with a list of many more ways in which you can provide In-Kind for the program. In-kind is also provided by individuals from the community and many local businesses.

Updating/Changing family information

CHILD RECORD UPDATE

If at any time during the school year, information about your child needs to be updated, a **Child Record Update** must be filled out and signed. Please note that ***CHANGES MAY TAKE UP TO 2 SCHOOL DAYS TO BECOME IN EFFECT*** after turned into the main office. This information will be placed in your child's file. Forms are available from the bus and in the main office. **CHANGES CANNOT BE TAKEN OVER THE PHONE.**

If there are specific custody guidelines for your child, we must have a copy of the legal documents for your child's safety while in our care. Biological parents are allowed to pick up their child unless we have documentation that states otherwise.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

While the Head Start staff recognizes that all families have their own methods and parenting styles, **Colorado law requires that providers report all known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.** Head Start's Child Abuse/Neglect Policy states that concerns are reported to the Ersea Manager or to the Director of Administration, who contact the Department of Human Services. **Law does not permit school employees to contact the child's family or other persons to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or neglect.** Once a report has been made to the Fremont County Department of Human Services, the responsibility for investigation and follow-up is with DHS, not Head Start. ***Colorado now has a statewide child abuse and neglect reporting number 1-800-CO-4-KIDS.***

SMOKING POLICY located in policy handbook.

Due to the acknowledged hazards of tobacco smoke, especially to young children, it is the policy of Fremont County Head Start to provide a smoke free environment for our children, volunteers, and staff. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited anywhere on site, this includes the parking lot.. Thank you for your cooperation!

PROGRAM DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

Policy Council

The Policy Council is an important part of our Head Start program and provides parents and community representatives with an opportunity to participate in shared decision-making. The Policy Council operates according to locally established bylaws and works with program leadership to help guide program operations and services.

Policy Council members participate on committees, including:

- Education
- Health and Safety
- Nutrition
- Grievance and Bylaws
- Personnel
- Fiscal

These committees and the Policy Council help make decisions and provide input about the nature, quality, and operation of the program.

Policy Council Meetings

Policy Council meetings are held on the **first Tuesday of each month**.

- **5:00 p.m.** – Committee meetings begin
- **6:00 p.m.** – Dinner is served
- **6:30 p.m.** – Official Policy Council meeting begins

Two representatives from each classroom are nominated and elected by the parents of that classroom to serve on the Policy Council. Parents are encouraged to participate in this process and to consider serving as representatives for their classroom.

Community representatives and community partners who are interested in serving on the Policy Council must submit an application of interest to the UAACOG Executive Director. Community representatives and partners must be approved by the Policy Council.

Family Night

Family Night is an opportunity for families to connect with one another, participate in classroom activities, and learn more about what is happening in their child's classroom and the program.

Each month features a different theme or activity. During the **September Family Night**, families will have an opportunity to meet other families, nominate candidates, and elect their classroom representatives to the Policy Council.

Family Night activities may include:

- Getting to know other families
- Discussing classroom events, activities, and concerns
- Receiving a classroom report from teachers
- Participating in a classroom family activity
- Connecting with Policy Council representatives

Family Night is held on the **second Tuesday of each month**. Policy Council members will be available during Family Night to answer questions and provide information about parent participation and program activities.

Annual Self-Assessment

Our Head Start program is committed to providing high-quality services and continuously improving the experiences and outcomes of children and families. The Annual Self-Assessment is one of the ways we evaluate our program's strengths, identify areas for improvement, and plan strategies to better serve children and families.

In accordance with the Head Start Performance Standards, the program conducts a Self-Assessment at least once each program year. Staff, families, Policy Council members, governing body members, and community representatives are invited to participate in this process.

The Self-Assessment helps us determine how effectively our program is meeting its goals and complying with Head Start requirements. It also gives families and community partners an opportunity to share their perspectives and contribute to program improvement.

The Self-Assessment process focuses on our ability to:

- Support children's growth, learning, and development
- Strengthening families as the primary nurturers of their children
- Provide comprehensive educational, health, and nutrition services
- Connect children and families with needed community resources and services
- Maintain well-managed programs that encourage and support parent participation in decision-making

How the Self-Assessment Works

Information is gathered from a variety of sources to help us understand what is working well and where improvements may be needed. The program reviews its management systems, services, practices, and progress toward program goals.

The information collected is used to:

- Identify program strengths and successful practices
- Identify areas that may need additional support or improvement
- Develop strategies to address identified needs
- Strengthen services provided to children and families
- Support continuous program improvement

Family participation is an important part of the Self-Assessment process. Parents and other program stakeholders provide valuable perspectives about their experiences with the program and the services we provide.

Through ongoing Self-Assessment and continuous quality improvement, we work together with families, staff, community partners, and program leaders to strengthen our program and ensure that we continue to provide high-quality services to children and families.



Fremont County Head Start is a UPK provider. Children enrolled in UPK at FC Head Start will receive 28 hours of services per week which is 1029 hours per school year.

Healthy Development & Child Screenings

To support your child's healthy development, our program offers voluntary developmental screening services. Please call the center at 719-275-8636 for information on obtaining any of the following:

- **Developmental or Health Screenings**
- **Vision, Hearing, or Dental Screenings**
- **Social-emotional, Cognitive, or Language Screenings**
- **Mental Health or Special Education Referrals**
- **Translation Services**

Family and Community Engagement

We believe you are your child's first and most important teacher. Our program is committed to partnering with you in the following ways:

- **Language Support:** We provide opportunities to utilize interpreters or other language resources as needed to ensure clear communication.
- **Cultural Sharing:** We invite and encourage you to share your home's cultural and social practices within our classroom community.
- **Goal Setting:** We will partner with you to set individual learning and development goals for your child.
- **Program Decision-Making:** We offer opportunities for families and community partners to engage in our program's operational decision-making processes.
- **Transitions:** We will actively involve you in your child's transitions between classrooms or when moving to a new school.
- **Feedback:** We value your perspective and provide opportunities for you to give feedback on the quality of program-family and program-staff interactions.

Annual CDEC Family Survey

Each spring, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) conducts an annual family survey. You will be notified of the opportunity to participate and share your experiences regarding your meaningful and culturally appropriate involvement in our program, as well as the healthy development supports provided.