
Tri-County Child and Family Development

Home Base Parent Handbook

2022—2023



Our Mission: To inspire every child and support every family.

Our Vision: Changing the world one mind at a time.

Our Core Values:

- **Compassion:** Building meaningful relationships through service, understanding, and empowerment.
- **Growth -Mindset:** Pursuing a forward-thinking approach to foster the development of lifelong learners.
- **Teamwork:** Striving together is the beginning...achieving together is success.
- **Excellence:** Delivering what we promise and exceeding expectations



Approved by Policy Council:

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Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc.

Central Office

Executive Director: Dr. Robert Welch

Deputy Director:

Chief Financial Officer: Lyz Schmitz

Educational Services Director: Dr. Latisha Smith

Human Resource Director: Jamie Moore

Family Services Manager: Trista Hill

Health Services Coordinator: Pauline Jones

Early Access Service Coordinator: Melissa Edwards

Education Specialist: Angela Syhlman

Enrollment Manager: Precious Clark

All agency employees may be emailed by using their first initial and last name @teamtricounty.org

[My Program Information](#)

My home visitor is _____.

My home visitor's phone number is _____.

My home visitor's email address is _____.

My Program Manager is _____.

My Program Manager's phone number is _____.

My home visitor is located at:

Community Services Building
2530 University Ave., Suite 4
Waterloo, Iowa 50701

The mailing address is:
Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc.
PO Box 1050
Waterloo, Iowa 50704

Our program follows the Waterloo School District for weather-related closings. The agency sends announcements to families via text and email through Child Plus. KWWL also posts delays and closings.

Note to families and visitors: Use of tobacco products is not permitted on any school property, this includes parking lots. Alcohol, illegal drugs, and weapons are also prohibited at all sites.

Home Visit Services/Parent Involvement

It is the belief of Tri-County Child and Family that parents are the most important teachers their children will ever have, and the home is the child's first learning environment. Tri-County Child and Family home visitors work closely with parents and families to provide support in the areas of:

- Child development
- Medical and dental health
- Nutrition
- Mental health
- Parent involvement

A home visitor comes to the family's home for 90 minutes each week. The parent and home visitor plan activities together based on the child's development. Each home visitor is trained in the program's curriculum which is used to help meet the individual needs of each child, along with parent input. Home visitors may also meet regularly with expectant families to share information about prenatal and postpartum health care, fetal development, breast feeding, and how to prepare for the birth of a baby.

In order for this program to be successful, required weekly visits and active participation during the visit are necessary. During those visits, you may be asked to sign and/or complete required Head Start documents that contribute to your child's enrollment. When emergencies arise and you must cancel your home visit, please call your home visitor and reschedule your appointment.

****If you are unable to maintain weekly visits, your family may have to exit the program.**

Change of Address and/or Phone Number

To avoid an interruption in services, it is **very important for you to notify your home visitor immediately if your address, phone number, or emergency numbers change**. We must have a current number and address to get in contact with you.

Attendance Policy

In order for your child to get the most out of the home base program, it is **federally mandated for families to meet with their home visitor once per week for 90 minutes**.

Due to the demand for services offered through our home base program, weekly participation is required unless there are certain emergency situations, such as illness or significant family problems. We cannot guarantee continued enrollment in the program if weekly visits do not occur.

Please stay in contact with your home visitor if you need to reschedule a visit.

Illness Policy



We want to protect children, families, and staff against the spread of illness. Hand washing with soap and water is the best source of protection against illness.

In order to keep everyone as healthy as possible, please inform your home visitor if you, your child, or anyone in the household has one or more of the following symptoms:

- Has a fever above 100 ° F orally (by mouth) or 99°F axillary (under the arm) within 24 hours. Must be fever-free without medication for 24 hours.
- Complains of not feeling well and being unable to participate in daily activities.
- Has diarrhea or is vomiting
- Shows signs of a contagious disease such as but not limited to:
 - Strep throat
 - Staph infections
 - Pinworms
 - Scarlet fever
 - E. coli
 - Diphtheria
 - Enterovirus
 - Pink eye
 - Chicken Pox
 - Rotavirus
 - Scabies
 - Ringworm
 - Measles
 - Influenza
 - Impetigo
 - Pertussis
 - RSV
 - Fifth Disease
 - Croup
 - Mumps
 - COVID-19

Education Services

Home visitors develop lesson plans according to the program’s curriculum. Early Head Start home visitors use the Partners for a Healthy Baby Curriculum and Head Start home visitors use Growing Great Kids for Preschool. Lesson plans follow the curriculum while also addressing the individual needs of the child and family. Through visits and discussions with you, your home visitor plans activities to match your child’s interests and abilities. Due to planning for each child individually, we welcome children who have disabilities.

When the time comes, we want to make sure your child is ready for kindergarten. We will provide you with information on their progress toward School Readiness Goals. We align these goals with the Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF), Iowa Early Learning Standards (IELS), and GOLD, our

assessment tool. This progress, along with activities you select and use at home, will be discussed during home visits. We encourage you to take an active role in your child's education by actively participating in each visit and helping your home visitor plan upcoming visits.

Early ACCESS

If there is a concern with any area of your child's development, Tri-County has an Early ACCESS Service Coordinator (EASC) on staff to refer your child (under age 3) to early intervention services. The EASC works directly with home visitors to follow through with the child's Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP).

Education Specialist

The Education Specialist and Educational Services Director are responsible for making sure the curriculum is implemented during visits and for monitoring the continuing education of the teaching staff. This ensures that high-quality services are delivered to children and families.

Screens and Assessments

Federal Head Start regulations require that every child in Early Head Start or Head Start programs receive developmental screens within the first 45 days of enrollment. This means the home visitor interacts with your child and asks questions or asks the child to do certain tasks. The home visitor may also ask you about certain skills your child can do. The information is summarized and shared with you. It is also used to better plan the experiences your home visitor offers to your child.

Screenings include the ASQ:SE-2, ASQ-3, Communication Checklist, and Brigance. The screenings depend on the age of your child.

Socializations

Home base families and their home visitors work together to create exciting activities to enhance family development. Regular socialization activities are set up so families can observe their child's interaction with other children. We encourage parents to help with the planning and preparation of activities.

During socialization events, home visitors guide children to follow a few simple rules to ensure the environment is safe for everyone. The rules protect the rights and property of others and assist the child in learning self-control. Socializations are intended for parents, children enrolled in the program, and siblings. Please check with your home visitor for socialization dates and times. You will also receive a monthly calendar with NEST events at the beginning of each month.

Pedestrian Safety

Tri-County Child and Family is committed to keeping your children safe. Please review the information below from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. You can also visit their website at www.nhtsa.dot.gov/kids. For your reference, a pedestrian is a person traveling on foot or someone who is walking. Safety is the condition of being safe and the freedom from danger, risk, or injury.

Pedestrian Safety Facts

- Children hit by cars can be hurt or killed, even when cars are moving slowly.

- Toddlers (1 and 2-year-olds) are most often hurt by a vehicle backing up.
- Preschoolers (3 and 4-year-olds) are most often hit when running across a street near home.

Young Children Are Not Small Adults

- Children cannot judge the speed or distance of vehicles.
- Children move quickly and can run into the street without warning.
- Children don't know safety rules and expect adults to watch out for them.
- Children are small and hard for the driver to see.

Here are tips to share with your child (when age appropriate):

Safety Tips for Walkers

- Always walk on the sidewalk.
- If there is no sidewalk and you have to walk in the street, always walk facing traffic so you can see any vehicle that might go out of control.

Crossing the Street

- Cross only at corners or marked crosswalks.
- Stop at the curb or edge of the road.
- Stop and look left, then right, then left again before you step into the street.
- If you see a vehicle, wait until it goes by. Then look both ways before crossing.
- Do not cross the street in-between cars.
- Children should hold onto an adult's hand while crossing.

Safety Education for Parents Offered Throughout the Year

Safety information will be available during the year for families in the agency newsletters through our website. You can access this information each month using this link:

<https://teamtricity.org/newsletters-menus/>. Please look over this information and when appropriate, talk with your child.

Family Partnership Agreement (FPA)

We believe in building strong partnerships with our families. These partnerships are based on shared respect and trust. They are aimed at helping you reach goals for your family. Your home visitor helps you identify a goal that you want to work on. Your Family Partnership Agreement goal will be a family goal that you want to achieve. You review your FPA goal with your home visitor throughout the year. Once you reach a goal, you develop another goal. By working together, we can achieve great things! If you have any questions, please ask your home visitor.



Nutrition Services

Head Start follows the Child and Adult Care Food Program(CACFP) Guidelines. Our agency dietician provides a monthly newsletter and menu for families via the agency's website. You can access this information each month using this link: <https://teamtricity.org/newsletters-menus/>.

Your home visitor will help you plan and discuss nutrition and physical activities to promote life-long healthy habits. Your child will also learn self-help skills such as hand washing, brushing teeth, making healthy food choices, and mealtime manners. Please let your home visitor know if your child must avoid any foods for religious or other reasons (food allergy or

intolerance).

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Building for the Future

Our agency receives Federal cash assistance to serve healthy meals to children at our centers. Good nutrition today means a stronger tomorrow! Meals served must meet nutrition requirements established by USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Questions? Concerns?

Call USDA toll-free: 1-866-USDA CND (1-866-873-2263)

Visit USDA's website: www.fns.usda.gov/cnd

USDA Civil Rights Regulations and Policies

In accordance with Federal 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, age, disability, and reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) 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**. Additionally, program information is available in

languages other than English.

To file a complaint alleging discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call **(866)632-9992**. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by **mail**: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410. **fax**: (202)690-7442; or **email**: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

“It is the policy of Tri-County not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.7 and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by Tri-County, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400E. 14th St., Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; website: <http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html>

Nutrition and Exercise

MyPlate is a helpful guide for eating healthy. See below for guidelines for different ages of children.



Infants:

Start simple
with MyPlate



Healthy Eating for Infants

Healthy eating is important at every age. When it's time for solid foods, offer babies a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and lower in sodium and avoid added sugars. Start with these tips:



Feeding your young baby

If possible, feed your baby only breast milk from birth to about 6 months of age, and continue through at least the first year of life—longer if desired. If breast milk is unavailable, feed your baby iron-fortified infant formula. Talk to your healthcare provider about vitamin D supplements for your baby.



Look for cues

When babies are hungry, they usually let you know. But fullness cues are not as obvious. Babies may be full if they close their mouth, turn their head away from breast or bottle, or relax their hands. Recognizing and responding to these cues helps children learn how to self-regulate their intake.



Starting solid foods

At about 6 months, infants may show signs that they're ready for solid foods, such as bringing objects to the mouth or swallowing food rather than pushing it out. Do not put infant cereal or other solid foods in an infant's bottle, but small amounts of water may also be introduced when your baby starts solid foods.



Serving first foods

Introduce a variety of foods, flavors, and textures from all food groups. Include foods rich in iron and zinc, particularly for breastfed infants. Examples include lean meats, fortified infant cereals, and beans.



Prevent choking

Make sure your baby is sitting in a highchair or other safe, supervised place for meals and snacks. Offer foods that are the appropriate size, consistency, and shape for your child's age and eating skills.



Serving safe foods

Avoid feeding your baby any foods that contain raw or cooked honey. Honey can contain bacteria that could cause serious illness or death among infants. Also avoid unpasteurized foods or beverages, such as juices, milk, yogurt, or cheeses, as they could contain harmful bacteria.



Go to [MyPlate.gov](https://www.MyPlate.gov) for more information.
USDA is an equal opportunity provider,
employer, and lender.

**The benefits of healthy eating
add up over time, bite by bite.**

FNS-905-14
March 2022

Toddlers:

Start simple
with MyPlate



Healthy Eating for Toddlers

Healthy eating is important at every age. Offer toddlers a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and lower in sodium and avoid added sugars. Start with these tips:



Provide foods full of nutrients

Offer your toddler a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. Avoid foods and beverages with added sugars and choose those with lower sodium.



Look for cues

When children are hungry, they usually let you know. But fullness cues are not as obvious. Children may be full if they push food away, close mouth, turn head away from food, or make sounds to let you know. Recognizing and responding to these cues helps children learn how to self-regulate their intake.



Prevent choking

Have toddlers sit at a table for meals and snacks and not wander around with food in their mouth. Foods such as hot dogs, candy, nuts and seeds, raw carrots, grapes, popcorn, and chunks of peanut butter can be choking risks. See the [USDA Team Nutrition worksheet](#) for more.



Drinks matter too!

Did you know the only beverages your toddler needs are water, milk, and, if available, breast milk? Avoid drinks with added sugars like soda, flavored milks, juice drinks, and sports drinks.



Try new foods

Try serving a new food alongside a familiar food in the same meal. It may take up to 8 to 10 tries for a child to accept a new food.



Serve safe food

Help your child learn to wash their hands before eating. Only serve foods that have been cooked properly and avoid serving your toddler unpasteurized (raw) juice or milk.



Go to myplate.gov for more information.
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FNS-905-15
March 2022

Three to Five Year Olds:

Start simple
with MyPlate



Healthy Eating for Preschoolers

Healthy eating is important at every age. Offer preschoolers a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding on foods and beverages, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Model healthy behaviors

Preschoolers tend to copy what parents or caregivers do at the table. If you eat your veggies, they'll eat their veggies. And, it's good for both of you.



Think about their drinks

Sugar-sweetened beverages like sodas and fruit drinks are sources of added sugars that are often high in calories. Beverages with no added sugars like water, unsweetened fat-free or low-fat milk (including low-lactose or lactose-free options), or fortified soy beverages should be the primary choice for children.



Prevent choking

Encourage children to sit at a table for meals and snacks and not wander around carrying food. Check out the [USDA Team Nutrition worksheet](#) for foods that are choking hazards at different ages.



Try new foods

Let children choose a new food to try at the grocery store. Serve something your child likes along with the new food. It may take up to a dozen tries for a child to accept a new food.



Get kids involved

Preschoolers can help at mealtimes by washing produce, tearing lettuce, stirring mixes, scooping ingredients, or setting the table.



Offer choices

Like adults, preschoolers like to have a say in what they eat. "A pear or an apple?" "Whole-wheat toast or some crackers?" You offer the healthy options, but they get to choose.










Go to [MyPlate.gov](#) for more information.
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FNS-905-16
March 2022

Here is a helpful guide for meals and snacks based on age:

Food group	2 year olds	3 year olds	4 and 5 year olds	What counts as:
Fruits Focus on whole fruits 	1 cup	1 – 1½ cups	1 – 1½ cups	½ cup of fruit? ½ cup mashed, sliced, or chopped fruit ½ cup 100% fruit juice ½ small banana 4-5 large strawberries 
Vegetables Vary your veggies 	1 cup	1 – 1½ cups	1½ – 2 cups	½ cup of veggies? ½ cup mashed, sliced, or chopped vegetables 1 cup raw leafy greens ½ cup vegetable juice 1 small ear of corn 
Grains Make half your grains whole grains 	3 ounces	3 – 5 ounces	4 – 5 ounces	1 ounce of grains? 1 slice bread 1 cup ready-to-eat cereal flakes ½ cup cooked oatmeal, rice, or pasta 1 tortilla (6" across) 
Protein Foods Vary your protein routine 	2 ounces	2 – 4 ounces	3 – 5 ounces	1 ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce cooked meat, poultry, or seafood 1 egg 1 Tablespoon peanut butter ¼ cup cooked beans or peas (kidney, pinto, lentils) 
Dairy Choose low-fat or fat-free milk or yogurt 	2 cups	2 – 2½ cups	2½ cups	½ cup of dairy? ½ cup milk 4 ounces yogurt ¾ ounce cheese 

Your child should be actively moving 60 or more minutes a day. To raise an active child:



Make active play fun for the whole family focus on fun, not performance, and limit TV and computer time to less than 2 hours a day.

Health Services

Head Start is responsible for promoting the healthy development of children. Parents, as primary caregivers of their children, play a central role in child health and developmental services. In order to determine your child’s health status, parents must provide the following information:

- An up-to-date copy of your child’s Immunization Record that is current for his/her age.

- Well-Child Exam form with all necessary blood work, according to your child’s age. This must be signed by a health care provider within 30 days of program start date and remain current during the year. Regular, age-appropriate well-child exams must be completed throughout the year.
 - The Iowa EPSDT schedule recommends well-child exams as follows:
 - 2-3 days, 1 month, 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 9 months, 12 months, 15 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months, 3 years, 4 years, and 5 years
- Dental exams for all children 12 months of age and up must be signed and dated within 90 days of the program start date. Fluoride varnish will be administered three times per year with parent permission.
- Annual Health Update form for all children enrolled in the program.

Throughout their enrollment, children receive the following services with parental consent:

- **Vision screen**
 - Completed within the first 45 days of enrollment
- **Hearing screen**
 - Completed within the first 45 days of enrollment and annually after that
- **Newborn Check Up**
 - Completed by 2 weeks of age
- **Fluoride Varnish**
 - Completed three times per year
- **Nutrition Assessment**
 - Completed by parents 2 times per year

It is your responsibility to keep your child's health information up-to-date. If you do not have private insurance, Title XIX, or Hawk-I insurance, we will help you with the application process. If you need assistance or have any questions about health services, you can talk to your home visitor or call 319-235-0383 and ask to speak with the Health Services Coordinator.

Prenatal Services

Our Home Base Program can offer enrolled families a slot for newborns with a prenatal application. Home visitors meet with the parent to offer information regarding pregnancy and post-pregnancy healthcare, fetal development, breastfeeding, and how to prepare for the birth of the baby. Please inform your home visitor if you are expecting.

Transition Services

What is a transition? A transition is any kind of change in routine for children or families. Children and families may experience many transitions during their time at Tri-County. These transitions include moving from Early Head Start to Head Start and from Head Start to kindergarten.

Home visitors work with your family to help you and your child plan for program changes. You work together to make a transition plan that prepares your child for change and helps him or her find success during milestones in development.

Staff Qualifications

Tri-County Head Start is committed to the professional development of all our staff. We know that a quality program is

the result of well-trained, qualified, and dedicated staff. As a result, all of our home visitors have BA in Social Work, Family/Human Services, or Early Childhood Education. Home visitors receive training and/or certification in the following: CPR and First Aid, Universal Precautions/Bloodborne Pathogens, Mandatory Child Abuse Reporter, DHS Essentials, Mandt, PBIS, and CACFP/Nutrition and Civil Rights. There are several professional development days set aside during the year for training. Refer to Tri-County's program year calendar.

Confidentiality

At Head Start we respect your privacy. Your child's file is kept in a locked cabinet that can only be accessed by staff involved with your child's program. We carefully follow our policies and procedures for data management to protect the privacy of your child and your family's records according to all federal, state, local and tribal laws, rules, and regulations. We only allow access to this information as is required by law and procedures from agencies governed above. As a parent, you personally have the right to inspect your child's records. Others who legally stand in the place of parents also have the right to inspect the child's records or portions of the child's records. Please respect our need to verify your status as a parent or other qualifying individual before allowing inspection.

Inclement Weather/Closings and Cancellations

In order to ensure the safety of children, families, and staff, there may be times when we have to cancel home visits due to poor weather conditions. Our agency follows the Waterloo School District for delays, early dismissals, and cancellations.

Two-hour delay:

If Waterloo Schools delays classes, Tri-County Child & Family also delays all programming and operations. All centers and offices open at 10:00 am. If you have a visit prior to 10:00 am, the visit will not take place. Your home visitor will contact you to reschedule.

Early dismissal:

If Waterloo Schools dismisses classes early, Tri-County Child & Family also closes programming and operations. If you have a visit scheduled close to or after the dismissal time, your home visit will not take place. Your home visitor will contact you to reschedule.

Cancellation:

When Waterloo Schools cancels school for weather related incidents, Tri-County Child & Family home visitors do not report to work. If you have a visit scheduled on a day when school is cancelled, your visit will not take place. Your home visitor will contact you to reschedule.

Please refer to KWWL for weather-related announcements. Our agency sends text messages and emails to keep families informed. Your home visitor may also contact you.

Gifts

Staff members are not allowed to accept gifts from our families. We appreciate the trust you show in us, and appreciate the opportunity to be a part of your child's life.



Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

All Head Start staff are mandatory reporters for child abuse. The Head Start program complies with the State of Iowa law requiring all mandatory reporters working in licensed child care to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. This is in the best interest of your child.

The law tries to protect children from abuse and helps others find ways to handle the stress of raising children. If you would like help in coping with any area of your child's behavior, please talk to your home visitor. There are resources to help you find solutions to your concerns.

Children's safety and best interests are always our goals. We will notify authorities should we have concerns regarding any child's safety. If you would like training in the reporting of child abuse, please contact your home visitor.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

As an agency, Tri-County implements PBIS strategies into our classrooms and home visits. PBIS stands for Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports. The goal of a teacher or home visitor is to create a positive, supportive environment and offer activities that are fun, safe, and promote learning. To do this, all staff provide a nurturing atmosphere, activities that are developmentally appropriate, consistency, and clear and reasonable rules and expectations. Tri-County's expectations are to *Be Safe, Be Respectful, and Be a Team Player*.

Family Fun Events

These events are held throughout the year at a variety of locations in the community. These events promote education

and offer a variety of activities for children and families to do together. Families involved in the home base program are invited to attend Family Fun Events.

Policy Council

Policy Council is made up of Early Head Start and Head Start parents, as well as community members. Center Base and Home Base parents/caregivers elect members of the Policy Council. Policy Council meets on the 3rd Monday of each month to discuss agency-wide issues, act on these issues, and discuss any community concerns that may impact the lives of children and families.

Volunteers and Access to Children

Volunteers are a very important part of the Head Start program. To provide the best services, Head Start encourages parents/caregivers and community members to be involved in program activities. Our programs also welcome students from area high schools, colleges, and universities. Volunteers may assist in the following ways:

- Recruitment of children for the program
- Provide special music or activities at socialization events
- Assist with snack or meal preparation and serving at special events
- Support ongoing events with active participation
- Donate supplies or equipment
- Assist with typing, record-keeping, and projects
- Work at home to prepare projects or activities
- Participate in socializations, family fun events, and Policy Council

Our agency takes the necessary steps to assure the safety of

your child and all children served through Tri-County with regard to volunteers.

According to Iowa Code, the Iowa Department of Human Services Licensing Requirements state all volunteers shall:

- 109.6(5)a
 - Be at least 16 years of age
 - Have signed statements indicating no conviction of any law in any state or record of founded child or dependent adult abuse
 - Have signed statements indicating no communicable disease or other health concerns that poses a threat to children
- 109.6(5)b
 - Have signed statement indicating they have been informed of responsibilities as mandatory reporters
- 109.6(5)c
 - Undergo a record check if any of the following apply:
 - They are used to meet child/staff ratio in the classroom
 - They have direct responsibility for a child or children
 - They have access to a child or children when no other staff is present

Staff members are always responsible for the direct supervision of parents and other volunteers to ensure children are safe at all times. Any person who exhibits inappropriate or unsafe behavior will be asked to leave and may be denied entrance to a Tri-County building.

Access denial of individuals on the sex offender registry

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor and who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code Chapter 692A):

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at a child care center
 - Shall not be present on the property of a child care center without the written permission of the center director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child or ward to and from the center
- (109.10(16)d)

Before giving written permission, the Program Manager for the Home Base Program shall consult with the DHS licensing consultant. The Program Manager is not obligated to provide written permission.

[Problem-Solving Procedures](#)

Step One - Staff

If you have a complaint or concern about the program or our services, we ask you to first discuss the issues with the staff you work with (home visitor) and try to work out a solution.

Most issues get worked out with a simple conversation. If that does not work, go to Step Two.

Step Two- Program Manager

If you are not comfortable talking directly to the staff person OR you do not work out an acceptable solution in Step One, contact the staff person's Program Manager. Refer to your Program Information page at the front of this handbook or call the Tri-County Administration office at 235-0383 to get the Program Manager's name and contact information. The Program Manager

will help resolve the situation and may help facilitate a conversation between you and the staff person.

A few issues need more people involved in problem-solving. If working with the Program Manager does not resolve the issue, go to Step Three.

Step Three- Educational Services Director

If the Program Manager is not able to resolve the problem, contact the Educational Services Director at 235-0383. The Educational Services Director will try to resolve the issue and may request a group meeting with others who can help. That might include parents/caregivers, staff persons, the Executive Director, and/or the Policy Council's chairperson.

Occasionally problems need to be looked at by the agency policymakers. If the Educational Services Director is not able to help work out a solution, go to Step Four.

Step Four- Policy Council

If you still have a concern after working with the Educational Services Director, request the **Executive Director** to refer the issue to the Policy Council. The Policy Council will establish a special committee to talk to you and the other persons you have been working with to try to come up with a solution to the issue you raised. That Committee will make a recommendation to the Policy Council for action as a whole.

If you or the Executive Director do not agree with the decision of the Policy Council, the Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc. Board of Directors may be asked to review the decision of the Policy Council as Step Five.

Step Five- Board of Directors

If requested by either you or the Executive Director, the Policy Council Decision will be reviewed by the Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc. Board of Directors. The Board may appoint a special committee to make a recommendation to the Board.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why talk to the staff person if they are the problem?

Most problems come from a lack of understanding. Talking about it usually fixes the problem.

Do I have to talk to the staff person? I am not comfortable doing that.

No, if you are not comfortable talking to the staff person by yourself, you can go directly to **Step Two** and contact their supervisor, the Program Manager.

May we skip steps?

You may always skip Step One. Other steps may be skipped **only** if everyone in the steps being skipped agrees.

For example, if the parent/caregiver, the staff person, and the Program Manager all agree the situation should be handled by the Educational Services Director, Step One and Step Two could be skipped and the ESD would immediately assist in working on the issue.

Why not just quit the program if I have a problem?

Your family is important to us. We want to work with you to help our program be what you need. We need your feedback to

make our programs work.

Will my child be treated badly because I complained?

No. We encourage our families to let us know when they are not happy with our programs. It helps us make our programs better.

Making a Difference

Parents are key in helping children find success at school. Our agency receives funding from the federal government and as a result, we have to make a certain amount of in-kind. In-kind is like money. It is a form of money that you give back to the school for your child to have a good education. In-kind is donated time, space, or services that are provided by parents/caregivers and the community. Without enough in-kind, we get less money next year and if this happens, it can negatively affect our agency and programs. Please help us get the in-kind we need! Here are some ways you can help:

- Help staff plan Family Fun Events
- Complete at-home activities and return to your home visitor
- Participate in socializations
- Transport your child to and from dentist and/or doctor appointments
- Work on your child's goals at home
- Serve on Policy Council
- Serve on the Health Advisory Committee
- Join the Employee, Family & Community Engagement Committee

Your child's education depends on in-kind! Please contact your

home visitor for more information.

Community Resources for Families

You may visit the Operation Threshold link below for a listing of community resources available to you and your family. If you need additional assistance, please contact your home visitor.

<http://www.operationthreshold.org/resource-links/community-resources/>

Confidentiality Statement

Information shared with Tri-County Head Start Staff will be kept strictly confidential unless the family authorizes a release of information in writing. This includes your Family Partnership Agreement (FPA) goal or family goal you make for your family. FPA forms are kept in locked files.

I, _____,

received and reviewed a copy of the Tri-County Child and Family Development Council, Inc. Home Base Parent Handbook.

(Signature)

(Date)

(Home Visitor Signature)

Date entered in Child Plus: _____