

# Family Handbook



## Head Start Song

Written for Head Start Programs by "Miss Jackie" Silberg

**Look at me  
Look at me  
I'm a Head Start kid.**

**Look at me  
Can't you see  
I'm a Head Start kid.**

**And everywhere I go  
I want the world to know  
I'm a Head Start Kid.**

**I like my colors.  
I like my numbers.  
I like my ABCs.**

**I like my letters  
I like my teachers  
But most of all  
I like me!**

**Look at me  
Look at me  
I'm a Head Start kid.**

**Look at me  
Can't you see  
I'm a Head Start kid.**

**And everywhere I go  
I want the world to know  
I'm a Head Start Kid.**

**I'm a Head Start Kid.  
I'm a Head Start Kid.**



Head Start Main Office  
(406) 457-7308

Watch a video here! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFkJ77muUHo>

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC. (Rocky)**  
**HEAD START**  
**EMERGENCY RELOCATION**

In the event of an emergency, Rocky Head Start's main objective is to attend to the health and welfare of children and to see that children get home safely by bus or parent transportation.

In most emergencies, children will remain and be cared for at the building he/she attends. If it becomes unsafe to stay, children and staff will move immediately to that building's relocation site. For any questions regarding this information, please call Head Start's main office at 457-7308.

In case of emergency:

1. Listen for emergency broadcast information on radio or television.
2. Wait for instructions about picking up your child.
3. ALWAYS MAKE SURE HEAD START HAS CURRENT CONTACT INFORMATION.

We are prepared to respond immediately and effectively to emergencies.

**Relocation Sites**

**Neighborhood Center Classrooms**

will evacuate to:

**Lewis and Clark Public Library**

120 S. Last Chance Gulch, Helena, MT

*Contact Person:* John Finn (406) 447-6699

OR

**St. Helena Cathedral**

530 N. Ewing, Helena, MT

*Contact Person:* Jennifer Fenton

(307) 763-6350

*Alt. Contact:* Father Mark Lenneman (406)

442-5825, ext. 1000

**Valley Classroom**

will evacuate to:

**Helena Bible Church**

1225 Fern Rd., Helena, MT 59602 *Contact*

*Person:* Marilyn Walt

(406) 603-0846

**HHA Classroom**

will evacuate to:

**Helena Housing Authority Administrative**

**Offices** 812 Abbey Street, Helena, MT

*Contact Person:* Keith Hatch

(406) 442-7970

**Eastgate School Classrooms**

*Contact Person:* Brandon Crusat, Principal (406)

227-7770 or (406) 227-6155)

will evacuate to:

**Lifepoint Church**

2526 Lake Helena Drive, East Helena, MT *Contact*

*Person:* Pastor Jon Gardner

(406) 227-6155

**Townsend Classroom**

will evacuate to:

**Townsend Elementary School**

201 N. Spruce, Townsend, MT

*Contact Person:* Townsend Elementary Principal

(406) 441-3451

**Whitehall Classroom**

will evacuate to:

**Liberty Place**

313 W. Legion

Whitehall, MT 59759

(406) 287-3154

## Table of Contents 2024-2025

**Front Cover:**

**Head Start Song – Lyrics**

**Inside Front Cover**

**Emergency Relocation Information**

<b>Quick Start-Up Guide.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Personnel Reference Guide.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Director’s Letter.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Rocky Head Start Philosophy, Vision, and Mission.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Rocky Head Start Universal Language – At Home.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Rocky Head Start Universal Language – Program Wide.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Positive Redirection Statements.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Backpack Connections: “How to Use Positive Language to Improve Your Child’s Behavior”.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Backpack Connections: “How to Help Your Child Understand and Label Emotions”.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Sample ‘Rocky Rumbings’ Newsletter.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>All about “The <i>Creative Curriculum®</i> for Preschool” and <i>Second Step®</i>: <i>Social-Emotional Early Learning</i> and <i>Second Step®</i>: <i>Child Protection Unit</i>.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Second Step Introductory Family Letters.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b><i>Teaching Strategies GOLD™</i> Assessment.....</b>	<b>23</b>
<b><i>Creative Curriculum</i> Objectives for Development and Learning.....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>All About Screening.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Carroll College Nursing Students Child Selection for Screening.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Ways to Participate at Head Start.....</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Classroom Leader Opportunity.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Policy Council Opportunity.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) – Family Advocates.....</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>Pyramid Model Family Handout.....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>“Positive Solutions for Families” brochure.....</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Help Your Child Succeed in Preschool: Build the Habit of Good Attendance.....</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>Attendance Flyer.....</b>	<b>38</b>



## Rocky Head Start Quick Start-up Guide

**Classroom Rocky Head Start Staff** - Every Rocky Head Start staff member has had background checks and training through Montana State Licensing. Rocky Head Start Classrooms are scored at a level 5 (highest rating) through the state Stars to Quality assurance division also known as STARS.

- **Teacher** – You! We acknowledge and value that you are your child’s first and most important teacher! We look forward to partnering with you! We welcome and value your input and participation!
- **Classroom Teaching Staff** – Classrooms have one Teacher and two Assistant Teachers to support the individual development of each child. Classrooms can have up to 16 children in them.
- **Family Advocates** - Each classroom and family has a Family Advocate that works to support needs and identify and celebrate strengths of each family.
- **Coach** – Teaching staff have a coach that works with them to support learning in the classrooms.
- **Supervisor** – You may see a supervisor in your child’s classroom from time-to-time. They may be playing alongside the children, observing staff to provide feedback, checking health and safety postings and practices, subbing for a staff member, etc.

**Rocky Head Start “Big Rules”** – We have 3 “Big Rules” that everyone in the program and classrooms use.

**Be Safe**

**Be Kind**

**Be Responsible**

- Teachers will be sharing these “Big Rules” with the children and then develop their own set of “Little Rules” to follow in their classroom. An example of a “Little Rule” is “We use walking feet inside” – this falls under the “Big Rule” of Being Safe. An example of its use would be, if a child started to run in the classroom, a teacher would say, “Sally, I need you to be safe and use your walking feet inside.”

- We will share the “Little Rules” your child’s classroom developed in our November Program Newsletter, “Rocky Rumbblings”.

**During Drop-off and Pick-up please remember:**

- **Do not leave children alone in private vehicles in parking areas.**

**Drop off** – Your child must be walked to the classroom and signed in.

**Pick up** – The person picking your child up must be on the “Release to” list and have a picture identification.

We will only release your child to those listed on your “Release to” form so please make sure we always have your updated/current information.

Please let anyone who is picking up your child know to bring their photo ID with them. We encourage anyone, including parents, to always have their photo IDs with them in case of substitutes in the classroom. We take the safety of your child very seriously and will not release your child to someone we don’t know or who is not on your list.

- We do ask that children are picked up by the time class is finished, due to the other duties the teaching staff have at the end of class. To help with this, please know that if your child’s classroom gets finished at 2:45, you can plan on picking your child up anytime between 2:30 and 2:45.
- If your child isn’t picked up by the end of class, teaching staff will begin calling the primary and secondary numbers on the “Release to” list. If they can’t get a hold of you or them, the teaching staff will begin calling other numbers you have listed on the “Release to” list. After 15 minutes of no contact, the Program Director will be notified to support with contact of the family. By 30 minutes if no contact is made, a report to Child and Family Services Division will be made.
- Please be sure to let the teaching staff or your Family Advocate know if you have a new phone number, change of address, or change of person for your child’s “Release to” list etc.

**Absence** – If your child is not going to be in class, please contact the Attendance Line at (406) 457-7307 or at [headstartattendance@rmdc.net](mailto:headstartattendance@rmdc.net).

- If you don’t call the Attendance Line within an hour of class start time, Head Start staff will send a text and/or email asking you to contact the Attendance Line.
- Please contact the Attendance Line FIRST! You may also contact your teaching team.

**Illness** – If your child is sick, please keep them home so they can be comfortable, and we can attempt to limit the spread to others.

- If your child develops symptoms such as a fever of 100.4°, vomiting, diarrhea, or is just tired and not able to participate in the classroom activities, teaching staff will call and request your child be picked up and taken home until they can return, ready to comfortably play and learn. This would require they have been fever-free without medication for 24 hours. The same applies to vomiting and diarrhea due to illness.
- Head Start staff will not administer over-the-counter oral medications without a doctor's note.
- Please talk with your child's teacher about any medications your child needs that have been prescribed by their doctor.

**Emergencies** – Rocky Head Start conducts regular fire, earthquake, and “safe place” drills.

- In case of an emergency, there is a specific plan to relocate the classroom.
- Families must keep their contact information current to be used in case of an emergency by informing Rocky Head Start staff of name, phone, and address changes. Staff are First Aid/CPR certified.

**Volunteering** – You are always welcome in the classroom!

- Please visit with your child's teacher on ways you can be directly involved in your child's classroom.
- If you aren't able to help during classroom hours, your child's teacher or Family Advocate can offer/suggest other ways you could volunteer your time.
  - Becoming a member of Policy Council is another great way to be involved with Rocky Head Start! This council is made up of Head Start parents that meet monthly and help make program decisions.

**Meals** – Rocky Head Start provides your child with breakfast, lunch, and snack.

- You will receive a menu each month so you can see what will be provided for each meal and snack.
- We serve “Family Style” which means the food is all at the tables, the children learn to dish up their own food (with assistance as needed), pour their own milk, and pass food to the others at the table along with saying please and thank you. Children also get to help set and clear their own dishes from the tables.
- Children choose what they put on their plates. As children see others eating and trying new foods, they are more likely to be open to trying a new food when it is their choice. The teachers are also eating the

same foods, and making comments such as, “Yum, this celery is so crunchy! Can you hear me crunching my celery?” Before you know it, children are eating celery and talking about the crunch and if you can hear their crunching. Staff talk about the colors, textures, tastes, etc. as they participate in the meal with the children.

- **If you would like to join your child for a meal, you are very welcome to! Please let the teacher know at least 24 hours ahead of time so they can let the kitchen know to send the extra food.**
- We can recognize your child on their birthday by singing to them. If you would like to bring something in you are welcome to, although you do not have to do this. If you do, only pre-packaged food can be brought into the classroom.

**Toothbrushing** – Rocky Head Start promotes dental health and wants to be a part of establishing this lifelong healthy habit. Children at Head Start get to brush their teeth each day!

- We provide toothbrushes and toothpaste. Teaching staff provide guidance following health and safety guidelines.

**Child Guidance** – Rocky Head Start staff guide children’s behavior in positive, effective ways through:

- maintaining a positive, encouraging learning environment
- establishing positive classroom rules
- consistent schedules, routines, transitions, and activities
- teaching social skills
- attending to challenging behavior with a planned team approach

**Daily Classroom Activities** – Rocky Head Start provides a balance of teacher and child-directed activities.

- We know the value of play in early childhood – it’s proven this is how children learn best! The Creative Curriculum we use is based off that! The items that are put into the classroom are intentionally chosen because they provide interest, challenge, exploration, and learning through engaging play. Children have extended time to play in these classroom specific areas each day: Art, Blocks, Dramatic Play, Sand/Water Table, Library, Discovery, Toys & Games, Music & Movement, and Technology.
- Second Step is another Curriculum we use in the classroom. These lessons consist of social-emotional and safety lessons. You will receive information on what was taught each week so you can continue reinforcing the lessons at home.

**Outdoor Activity** – Classrooms offer time outside daily unless the weather is below 0° or the air quality is unhealthy. Outdoor play is such an important part of a child’s day and provides them with healthy opportunities to run, jump, climb, and play with others. Sending your child in closed toe shoes (i.e., tennis shoes) provides them with the safest, most comfortable shoe to participate in these activities. Being in Montana, we also want the children to be prepared for the variety of weather we experience so please keep that in mind as you prepare your child for the day.

- If you need help with providing winter weather gear for your child (coat, snow pants, winter boots, etc.) please visit with your child’s Teacher or Family Advocate.

**Screenings** – Rocky Head Start staff will conduct a variety of “screenings” to help identify children who may need some extra support in their development.

- Each child will have their vision, hearing, and growth (height and weight) checked by the Rocky Head Start Health & Nutrition Manager.
- Parent(s)/Guardian(s) completed the Behavioral Social-Emotional screening at intake – the ASQ:SE2
- First year (new) children will have a developmental screening called the DIAL-4 completed by teaching staff – consisting of sections in small and large muscle skills (balancing, hopping, throwing, cutting, etc.) a section of concepts (counting, naming body parts, shapes, colors, etc.)
  - A speech pathologist will complete the language section of this screening.
- Results of screenings will be shared with families.

**Assessments** – Teaching staff assess your child’s developmental progress through observations of your child demonstrating a certain skill. There is a total of 53 developmental skills teaching staff are assessing on. The teacher will be sharing your child’s developmental levels/skills using the “Report Card” during Family/Teacher Conferences.

**Home Visits** –

- Your child’s teacher(s) will meet with you at your home two times during the school year.
  - For the first Home Visit, the teacher and an assistant teacher will come to your home before classes begin. This is a practice Head Start has proudly done for years! This allows the child to meet the teacher in their home where they feel most comfortable. The teacher will meet with the family member(s) to share and learn about your child and the Head Start program.



- The second home visit will happen towards the end of the school year (May). The teacher will share the developmental growth of your child since the fall.
- Your Family Advocate will meet you once in your home to visit about any needs or goals they can support you in. They will continue to have contact with you through a variety of ways throughout the year (phone calls, texts, in the classroom, etc.)

### **Family Conferences** –

- Your child’s teacher will meet with you 2 times during the school year to share your child’s development assessment and screening results. These meetings will be held in your child’s classroom during the months of November and February. The teacher will share your child’s strengths in each area of development, as well as a recommended goal. The goals are part of your child’s individualized learning at Head Start. Teachers will also provide family friendly activities to help you support the recommended goals at home. The areas of development are: Social – Emotional, Physical, Language, Cognitive, Literacy, and Math.

**School to Home** – Reading to/with your child is such a valuable activity that promotes success in school. Each month your child will bring home a School-to-Home bag that includes a book (they get to keep!) along with an activity you get to do together! After you have finished the activity with your child, send it back to the classroom to be proudly displayed.

**Social Media** – Check out Rocky Head Start on Facebook for program information and events.

- If you are visiting your child in the classroom, or on a field trip, please remember to only take pictures of your child. We do have children that are not allowed to have their pictures taken. Approved group and classroom pictures submitted by teachers can be seen on the Rocky Head Start Facebook page.
- Your child’s teacher can share lesson plans, newsletters, observations, learning activities, etc. through the TSG app. Teacher’s will be sending invites to join, please visit with your child’s teacher if you haven’t received the invite.

### **Confidentiality** –

- All child and family information obtained while working as a staff member, volunteer, or observer of Rocky Head Start will be held in the strictest confidence from any outside person or agency in locked cabinets or protected computer files.

- Only non-identifying information will be used in reports, surveys, presentations, or in the media unless a specific release of information is completed.
- The only exceptions to confidentiality include:
  - Parent/guardian requests in writing that the program release information
  - Any and all information regarding known or suspected child or elder abuse or neglect
  - Family member threatens to hurt self or others
  - Court orders disclosure via subpoena
  - All other disclosures as required by law.

**Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting** – Under Montana State Law, Head Start staff is mandated to report to the Department of Family Services any reasonable cause to suspect that a child is being abused or neglected.

- 1-866-8205437 is the Montana Child Abuse Hotline – Centralized Intake (Child and Family Services Division)
- <http://app.doj.mt.gov/apps/svow/> is the Sexual or Violent Offender Registry.

**Tobacco Prevention** – For the health of children and staff, all Rocky Head Start campuses (including parking lots) are tobacco and vaping free.

**Community Complaint** –

- Anyone can air complaints they may have about Rocky Head Start without concern of retribution. No anonymous complaints will be accepted or considered.
- Complaints should be made with the Rocky Head Start Director or Rocky Executive Director.
- Every attempt will be made to resolve a complaint at the lowest level of authority.
- The program has a *formal* complaint form.

## **Personnel Reference Guide**

*This document is intended to be used as a quick reference regarding **general responsibilities** of each position within Rocky Head Start. Should questions arise, please use this guide to help you find the correct person to contact.*

### **Head Start Director (Ashley Pena-Larsen):**

The Head Start Program Director is responsible for overseeing the general operation of the Head Start program. Please see if you have questions regarding:

- Grants
- Budgets and fiscal records
- Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS), Federal regulations and initiatives, the State of Montana's Department of Public Health and Human Services Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers; STARS to Quality (Montana's Quality Rating Improvement System)
- Procuring and monitoring facilities, equipment and materials;
- Policy Council (PC) and the Board
- Annual and consumable orders

### **Support Services Manager (Leslie Cochran-Olson):**

- Payroll Details and process questions
- Personal Info changes
- Clerical Support
- TSG (login/passwords)
- **ChildPlus**
- In-kind
- Classroom phone extensions
- Classroom Assignments document
- Vehicles

### **Support Services Assistant (Lane Nash):**

- Large printing jobs
- Office, nutrition and health supplies
- Monthly shopping list (Costco, etc.)
- Clerical Support
- Office Copier Issues

## **Education Department Focus Area**

### **Education and Child Services Manager (Felina Lee):**

- IEPs and Special Education services
- School District collaboration
- Mental Health Consultation
- Additional private support services (OT, PT, Speech, etc.)
- Referrals
- Developmental and behavioral screenings (scoring, entering, providing results)
- Professional Development and submission of ECP trainings
- Staff Attendance Line
- Class and site closures
- Rocky Rumblyings Newsletter information

**Education Coordinator/Supervisor (Kim Nash):**

**Rural Support Coordinators/Rural Site Supervisors (Phyllis Oliver and Rhea Armstrong):**

- Any teaching staff questions and concerns
- Classroom paperwork (i.e., timesheets, injury/incident reports, leave requests, end of month paperwork, etc.)
- Team dynamics
- Questions regarding teaching roles and responsibilities
- Teacher Monitoring Calendar
- Classroom observations
- Appraisals
- Staff education and Rocky HS and STARS professional development tracking
- Assessment data and support

**Education Coach/Curriculum Specialists (Elizabeth Perrier):**

- Support teaching teams with Tier 1 Practice Implementation
- Curriculum implementation (Fidelity Tool teacher checklist indicators)
  - Creative Curriculum
  - Second Step
  - Interactive Read Alouds
  - Vocabulary Notebooks
- Lending library
- Google drive
- Demonstration of instructional practices
- Coaching cycles (goal setting, focused observations, reflection and feedback)

**Health and Nutrition Manager (Cassie Drynan):**

- Menus
- Meal Delivery slips
- Food substitutions/special diets
- Meal observation
- Food safety logs
- Medication questions
- First aid kits
- Go kits
- Health care plans (seizure, asthma, etc.)
- Questions regarding short term exclusion (sick policy)
- Sanitizing and disinfecting
- Hearing/vision/growth screenings

**Family Services Focus Area**

**Family and Community Partnership Manager (Jaymie Hazel):**

- Family Support Services
  - Family involvement/engagement strategies
  - Training and supporting all aspects of family education and services across the program
  - Facilitating Circle of Security Parenting class
- Community Outreach

- Partnerships with community agencies to support school readiness for children
- Develop and maintain community partnerships to facilitate family access to services provided by community partners
- Questions regarding 1520s

**ERSEA Specialist (Jennifer Filipovich):**

- Attendance
- Class placement/enrollment
- New applications

**Family Engagement and Volunteer Coordinator (Signe Ask):**

- Family events
- Community Events/Outreach
- Recruitment
- Volunteer information and orientation
- School to Home projects
- Facebook page
- Parent meetings
- Classroom Leaders
- ID badges

**Policy Council (parents, guardians, family members, community members)**

- Help to lead and make decisions about how the program spends money, what children do in their classrooms, and how the program works with community partners.
- Represents parents' voices and perspectives.
- Parents and family members from all backgrounds and family structures are welcome.
  - They may be mothers and fathers of all ages, grandparents, foster or adoptive parents, or other important adults in a child's life.



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, INC.**  
P.O. Box 1717 | 200 South Cruse Avenue | Helena, MT 59624-1717  
phone: 406.447.1680 | toll free: 800.356.6544 | fax: 406.447.1629

Dear Head Start Families,

Welcome to the 2024-2025 Head Start program year! You are an elite group who will mark Rocky Mountain Development Council, Inc. Head Start's 57<sup>th</sup> year serving the children and families of Lewis & Clark, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties! Rocky Head Start began as a summer program in 1967 in Helena!

**"Strong Families, Successful Children"** continues to be our program's tag-line. **YOU** are your child's first and most important teacher. Head Start is a family program; we ask that you participate as much as you can. We will support you in every way we can to help make your **family strong** and your **children successful**.

As you all know, **Head Start is FREE for your child to attend. Federal Head Start funds cover a substantial portion of the program costs for each child. However, additional support is needed to ensure the program is fully funded. This support comes through in-kind donations, volunteering, and working with your child at home.** Each hour you work in the classroom, volunteer at events or on policy council, or engage with your child at home significantly contributes to our in-kind requirements. Ask your teacher or family advocate for more information about how you can support. I encourage you to take serious responsibility for helping our program stay funded by supporting and volunteering in your classroom and by meeting various federal, state, and local requirements.

✦ **Bring your child up-to-date with his or her well-child (physical) exam and dental exam within 90 days of their first day of school.** A well child exam and dental exam are "preventative medicine" and provide lasting benefits to your child's long-term health. We will help you find a medical and dental home and funding to ensure these exams are completed.

✦ **Make sure your child has excellent attendance.** Regular attendance helps children grow in all areas of their development...social/emotional skills, physical skills, speech and language skills, and academic skills. Attendance is monitored daily. Make sure you are familiar with Head Start's Attendance Policy.

✦ **Apply to Child Care Connections, 1-800-962-0418 or online for a child care scholarship at <https://bozemanccc.org/Families/Program/best-beginnings-scholarship-online-application>.** Head Start is eligible for child care dollars because the program is not fully funded for the costs of the services we provide. If you are eligible for a child care scholarship (also called Best Beginnings Scholarship), and you list Head Start as your primary provider, your co-payment will be waived. Contact your Family Advocate with questions.

Head Start has fun family activities and events during the year. Check out your Family Calendar, watch monthly newsletters, and check backpacks and cubbies for flyers! AND... Parent leadership is what makes Head Start a one-of-a-kind program! Consider serving in a leadership role on Policy Council or as a classroom parent leader! We look forward to partnering with you to make this a fun and exciting year for your family and to promote **"Strong Families, Successful Children"**.

Sincerely,

Ashley Peña-Larsen, Director  
Head Start Program

[www.rmcdc.net](http://www.rmcdc.net)

Affordable Housing  
Home Buyer Education  
Rocky Mountain Preschool Center  
Head Start

LIEAP  
Weatherization  
Energy Share  
Spirit of Service  
Area IV Agency on Aging

Meals on Wheels  
Senior Centers and Nutrition  
Foster Grandparent Program  
Senior Companion Program  
RSVP

# Rocky Head Start

## **Our Program philosophy is.....**

As their child's first teacher the role of the parent(s)/guardian(s) is to nurture, protect, and prepare their child for social and academic success.

Children learn in an environment that honors the whole child, appreciates and respects individual differences, and promotes a sense of safety, belonging, and worth.

The role of staff is to honor and support the parent(s)/guardian(s) and child, promote healthy relationships, treat all with respect, and provide developmentally appropriate learning experiences for both parents/guardians and children.

We must work in partnership with the community to create bridges between needs and resources and to promote a sense of shared responsibility for the welfare of low-income children and families.



## **Our vision is.....**

To be a leading child and family development center working with Head Start families and community partners in Lewis and Clark, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties, to promote healthy life choices and develop skills necessary for academic and social success.

## **Our mission is....**

To be a supportive and safe learning environment for children and families by enhancing their sense of belonging and self-worth while encouraging them to reach their highest potential.



# Rocky Head Start Universal Language

## Linking Positive Language to Behavior Expectations



### AT HOME

At Rocky Head Start we have three program wide expectations for our entire program.

### *Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible*

Linking positive language to the expectations will reinforce the behaviors we want to see. The following are examples of positive descriptive feedback statements that can be given to children, in a variety of settings, when they demonstrate the expectations and follow the rules.

#### Getting Up

##### Be Safe

You pushed the dresser drawer back in. Thanks for being safe!

Thank you for letting me know you are awake. Way to be safe!

##### Be Kind

How kind of you to wait patiently for your turn in the bathroom!

Thank you for getting up so quietly. That was so kind to let your sister sleep.

##### Be Responsible

Thank you for hanging the towel up. You are so responsible!

You got dressed all on your own. You are so responsible!

#### Getting to School

##### Be Safe

You got into your car seat right away. You are so good at keeping yourself safe!

##### Be Kind

That was so kind of you to let your brother have a turn at choosing what to listen to in the car.

##### Be Responsible

You were so responsible in remembering to grab your backpack.

#### Time to Relax

##### Be Safe

Thank you for asking permission first. That's how to stay safe!

##### Be Kind

Look at you taking turns! You are so kind!

Thanks for entertaining the baby while I answered the phone. You are so kind!

##### Be Responsible

You remembered to put your things away. What a responsible person you are!

Thanks for turning off the light when you left the room. You are super responsible!

#### Meal Time

##### Be Safe

Thanks for asking for help with cutting your apple. You know how to keep your body safe!

You remembered to wash your hands. You know how to keep your body safe from germs!

##### Be Kind

That is so kind of you to use such nice manner words.

That was so kind of you to play by yourself so I could finish making dinner.

##### Be Responsible

You took care of your dishes. You are so responsible!

#### Bed Time

##### Be Safe

Look at you brushing your teeth. You know that keeps them safe from cavities!

##### Be Kind

That was so kind of you to wait patiently for your bedtime story.

##### Be Responsible

You put your dirty clothes in the hamper. Way to be responsible!

#### Community (grocery store, doctor, dentist, waiting rooms)

##### Be Safe

You are doing such a great job of staying with your adult. You know how to stay safe!

You are walking on the sidewalk. What a great way to be safe!

##### Be Kind

You remembered to use your inside voice. How kind!

##### Be Responsible

You turned the pages in the book so carefully. I am proud to see how responsible you are.





# Rocky Head Start Universal Language

## Linking Positive Language to Behavior Expectations



### PROGRAM WIDE

At Rocky Head Start we have three program wide expectations for our entire program.

### *Be Safe, Be Kind, Be Responsible*

Linking positive language to the expectations will reinforce the behaviors we want to see. The following are examples of positive descriptive feedback statements that can be given to children, in a variety of settings, when they demonstrate the expectations and follow the rules.

#### Office Area

##### Be Safe

*You are staying with your teacher. You know how to be safe.*

##### Be Kind

*You are being kind to the office workers by using your quiet voice.*

##### Be Responsible

*You remembered to look with your eyes instead of touching. You are so responsible!*

#### Hallways and Stairwells:

##### Be Safe

*Look at those walking feet. You know how to be safe.*

*You are keeping your hands and feet to yourself. You are good at being safe!*

##### Be Kind

*That is so kind of you to walk on one side so others can get by.*

##### Be Responsible

*Look at you being responsible by keeping your hands and feet to yourself.*

#### Classroom

##### Be Safe

*You remembered to push in your chair. Thanks for being safe.*

*You remembered only adults open doors. Way to be safe!*

##### Be Kind

*That was kind of you to listen when your friend said "stop".*

*Thanks for asking. You are so kind!*

##### Be Responsible

*You cleaned the blocks up. You are so responsible!*

*You are so responsible. You put your coat away all by yourself!*

#### Parking Lot

##### Be Safe

*Thank you for holding a grown-up's hand. You know how to keep your body safe!*

*You know how to stay safe by waiting at the door!*

##### Be Kind

*You are using your polite voice. You are so kind!*

##### Be Responsible

*Thanks for putting your wrapper in the trash can. You are so responsible!*

#### Playground/Park

##### Be Safe

*I noticed you are using the equipment appropriately. You know how to keep yourself and your friends safe.*

##### Be Kind

*That was so kind of you to wait your turn.*

*You are such a kind friend for sharing.*

*Thank you for inviting (accepting) a friend to play. You are so kind!*

##### Be Responsible

*You remembered to put your toys back on the cart. You are so responsible.*

*You were being so responsible putting your garbage in the trash. Thank you!*

#### Bathroom

##### Be Safe

*You remembered to wash your hands. Way to keep your body safe from germs!*

*Thanks for staying safe using those nice walking feet. You remembered that bathroom floors can be slippery!*

##### Be Kind

*That was so kind of you to wait your turn.*

*Thanks for only using one or two paper towels so your friends have some too. You are so kind!*

##### Be Responsible

*Thanks for throwing your paper towel in the trash. You are so responsible.*

# Positive Redirection Strategies and Statements

## 1) Rephrase your request in a positive way:

- Instead of saying, "No, don't run," try, "Please walk inside."
- Instead of "No, don't touch!" try, "You want to touch the lamp, but it might fall and break. Please just look with your eyes."
- Instead of, "No, don't touch the cat," try, "Please remember to touch the cat gently." (You may have to stay close to demonstrate gentle touches.)

## 2) Let your child know what they may do instead of telling them what they can't do:

- Instead of, "No, you can't have a cookie now," try saying, "You may have a cookie after dinner. If you are hungry now, you may have fruit or a piece of cheese."
- Instead of, "No climbing on the furniture," try, "The chair is for sitting in. If you'd like to climb, you may climb here (showing him)."
- Instead of, "No, we can't go to the playground because it's raining," try saying, "I know how much you love to play outside. We can go out as soon as the rain stops. Would you like to read a story or build with your blocks while we wait for the rain to stop?"
- Instead of, "No! No throwing balls indoors," try saying, "You can roll the ball indoors or take it outside and throw it. What's your choice?"

## 3) Ask for your child's help and thank them when they get it right:

- Instead of, "No! I told you not to take your shoes off because we're getting ready to go," try saying, "You need your shoes on to go outside. Please help me find them so we can get ready to go."
- Instead of, "No more playing for you. I'm not going to ask you to pick up your toys again," try, "Thank you for helping me to clean up all the toys!"
- Instead of, "I said no yelling!" try lowering your own voice and saying, "Thank you for remembering to speak softly while your baby sister is sleeping."

## 4) Explain the reason for your request, and state what behavior you want to see instead:

Instead of saying, "No, don't \_\_\_\_\_," try stating, "I want you to \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_."

- "No, don't throw the sand," becomes, "I want you to keep the sand low in the sandbox, so it doesn't get in anyone's eyes, because that might hurt."
- "No, don't bang on the table," becomes, "I want you to stop banging on the table because the sound it makes is loud, and it's hurting my ears."

## 5) Use "sportscasting" to say what you see:

- Instead of saying, "No throwing food!" try saying, "You're throwing your food. That tells me you're done eating, so I am going to put the food away now."
- Instead of "No splashing in the cat's water bowl," try saying, "You are playing in the cat's water bowl, and splashing water all over the floor. That water is for the cat to drink. If you want to play in water, let's fill the tub with water."

## 6) If your child is hitting, kicking, or biting:

Instead of saying, "No hitting/kicking/biting!" try saying, "Hitting/kicking/biting hurts! I won't let you hit/kick/bite me. If you want to hit/kick/bite, you may hit the floor (or these pillows)/kick this ball/bite this teething ring."



## Backpack Connection Series

### About this Series

The Backpack Connection Series was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

### The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).

### More Information

More information and resources on this and other topics are available on our website, [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).



[ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org)

# How to Use Positive Language to Improve Your Child's Behavior

Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron y Jill Giacomini

"Stop it." "No." "Don't do that!" As a parent, you might find yourself using these words and phrases more often when your child begins to make his own choices. Now, stop for a moment and consider how the conversation might feel if you couldn't use these words? What if, rather than telling your child what he can't do, you instead chose words to tell him what he can do? While this shift in language might seem small, it actually provides a powerful positive change to the tone of the conversation. When you focus on using positive language with your child, you will likely find that he has fewer tantrums, whines less and overall experiences fewer challenging behaviors.

How can such a small change make such a big difference? While it is obvious to adults, young children are not able to make the logical connection that when they are told not to do something, what they actually should do is the opposite. For example, the directions, "Don't climb on the counter" can be very confusing to a child. However, "Please keep your feet on the floor" tells the child exactly what the expectation is and how he can change what he is doing. Using positive language also empowers a child to make an appropriate choice on his own, which can boost his self-esteem. When you are specific in your directions by telling your child exactly what he can do and when, it is easier for him to comply and he is more likely to cooperate with the request.



### Try This at Home

- **Replace "don't" with "do".** Tell your child what she can do! If you saw her cutting the leaves of a plant, rather than saying "Don't cut that!" you could say, "Scissors are for cutting paper or play dough. Which one do you want to cut?" It is more likely that your child will make an appropriate choice when you help her to understand exactly what appropriate options are available.
- **Offer a choice.** When you provide your child with a choice of things that he can do, wear or go, he is more likely to select one of the options you have offered because it makes him feel like he is in control. This strategy also works for you as a parent because you approve of either choice.
- **Tell your child "when."** When your child asks to do something, rather than saying no, acknowledge her wish and tell her when she might be able to do it. This answer feels more like a "yes" to a child. For example, if your child asks to go to the park, but you are on the computer finishing up a work project, you could say, "The park sounds like a great idea! I need to finish this letter for work right now. Would you like to go after your nap today or tomorrow morning after breakfast?"
- **Use "first-then" language.** Another way to tell a child when he can do something in a positive way is to use a "first-then" statement. For example, if he wants to watch TV but you would like for him to pick up his toys, you could say "First, pick up your toys and then

you may watch a TV show."

- **Give your child time to think.** Sometimes, you may feel frustrated when your child does not respond quickly to requests and feel tempted to use demands and raise your voice. When that happens, remember that your child is learning language and how to use it. She needs time to think about what you said and how she is going to respond. It can take her several seconds, or even minutes, longer than you to process the information. If you remain calm and patiently repeat the statement again, you will see fewer challenging behaviors and enjoy more quality time with your child.
- **Help your child to remember.** Children are easily distracted. Sometimes your child may need you to help him remember what you asked him to do in order to do it. "I remember" statements are very useful in these situations. For example, imagine you have asked your child to put on his shoes so that he can go outside, and he comes over to you without his shoes on and is trying to go outside. You can say, "I remember you need to put your shoes on before you can go outside." Stating the information as a simple fact, rather than a command, gives him the information he needs to make the right choice on his own without blaming him or making him feel like he has failed.



### Practice at School

Teachers use positive language at school to help children become more confident and independent. When teachers tell children what they can do, children begin to manage themselves, classroom routines and interactions with peers by themselves. For example, a child who is throwing sand on the playground can be shown that, instead, she can use a shovel to put the sand in a bucket. The teacher might say, "If you want to play with the sand, you can fill this bucket. Would you like a blue bucket or this red one?" In this way, the teacher honors the child's interest, but directs it to a more appropriate play choice.



### The Bottom Line

Positive relationships with parents, teachers and other caregivers provide the foundation for a successful and happy child, are the building blocks for your child's self-esteem and ability to empathize and predict future positive behavior choices. The manner in which you talk to your child has a significant impact on his behavior. Making positive changes to your communication style can be hard work, but with a little practice, you will see a big difference in your relationship with your child. Your child will feel more encouraged, positive and independent and, as a result, you will enjoy better overall cooperation.

Reproduction of this document is encouraged. Permission to copy is not required.

This publication was produced by the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) for Young Children funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), U.S. Department of Education (H3268070002) and updated by the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations also funded by OSEP (H3268170003). The views expressed do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education, July 2013/January, 2018.





# How to Help Your Child Understand and Label Emotions

Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron & Jill Giacomini

You can help your child expand her emotional vocabulary by teaching her words for different feelings. Once she knows and understands these words you can help her to label her own feelings and the feelings of others. For example, do you remember a time when your child had a meltdown at the grocery store or other public place? Perhaps you tried soothing your child by telling her to “calm down” and felt confused and unsure of what to do next when she continued the tantrum. Next time you can better help your child understand and deal with the emotions she is feeling by saying, “You look sad and disappointed. Sometimes I feel that way too. I wonder what we can do to feel better?” Teaching your child about her emotions can be a fun and rewarding experience and prevent challenging behavior from occurring in the first place.



## Backpack Connection Series

### About this Series

The Backpack Connection Series was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child’s backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

### The Pyramid Model



The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child’s individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).

### More Information

More information and resources on this and other topics are available on our website, [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).

### Try This at Home

- Simply state how your child is feeling. “You look really excited! I see your eyes are big and your mouth is open.”
- State how others are feeling, “Wow, that little boy is really mad. I see he is crying and making fists with his hands. I wonder why?”
- State how you are feeling. “I am really frustrated that the lawn mower is broken. I think I’m going to take a break and come up with some solutions to this problem.”
- Use books as teaching tools. There is a huge selection of children’s books that focus on emotional literacy. Visit <http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/resources/strategies.html#list> where you will find a book list, book activities and other resources for teaching emotional literacy.

### The Bottom Line

Children with a strong emotional vocabulary:

- Tolerate frustration better
- Get into fewer fights
- Engage in less destructive behavior
- Are healthier
- Are less lonely
- Are less impulsive
- Are more focused
- Have greater academic achievement

### Practice at School

Talk with your child’s teachers to see how they are teaching your child about emotions at school. Many emotions are seen and experienced at school. With adult help, children are taught how emotions look and feel on their bodies. Through books and real experiences, teachers show that a child looks sad because he is crying or mad because her fists are tight. As children begin to recognize what emotions look like, they can begin to manage their own emotions and show empathy toward others.



[ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org)



Reproduction of this document is encouraged. Permission to copy is not required.

This publication was produced by the Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention (TACSEI) for Young Children funded by the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), U.S. Department of Education (H326B070002) and updated by the National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations also funded by OSEP (H326B170003). The views expressed do not necessarily represent the positions or policies of the Department of Education, July 2013/January, 2018.





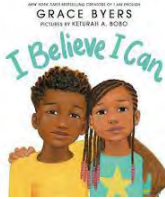
# Rocky Rumblings

Strong Families, Successful Children

Ashley Pena-Larsen, Director [apena@rmdc.net](mailto:apena@rmdc.net)

Main Office: 406-457-7308 Attendance Line: 406-457-7307 Website: [rmdc.net](http://rmdc.net)

## May Monthly School to Home



A fabulous book with an important message for our children!

You are your child's first teacher... Here are fun summer activities to do with your child...

1. Blow bubbles because who doesn't like bubbles.
2. Make a homemade kite out of paper and string.
3. Sidewalk chalk drawings.
4. Plant a garden and watch it grow.
5. Go for a walk and play "I Spy".
6. Have a picnic at the park.
7. Stargaze/camp in your backyard.
8. Go to the farmer's market.
9. Paint rocks and place them around town.
10. Meet friends at the playground.

Remember getting outdoors can help reduce stress and as a bonus, the littles burn off a lot of energy!

### Share a laugh with your child!

**Q:** What is a dinosaur called when it is sleeping?

**A:** A dino-SNORE



Classroom Happenings: Each classroom will have their own classroom specific info here!



## Head Start Upcoming Events

- May 4 - In-Classroom Meeting/Event
- May 5 - No School, Vigilante Day
- May 15-26 - Home Visits
- May 20 - Bike Rodeo in Townsend 11-1
- May 29 - No School, Memorial Day
- June 2 - Last day/Spring Picnic, Townsend/Whitehall
- June 5 - Spring Picnic, Helena/East Helena

### Family Wellness: Surviving the Transition from School to Summer

**Maintain Routines** - Kids rely on steady routines as a way to feel safe and knowing what to expect helps them build confidence. Do your best to keep a regular bedtime during the summer, even if it's an hour later than normal. Likewise, maintaining regular mealtimes will help give shape to the day and keep your child in good health, both mentally and physically.

**Stay in touch with friends** - You may assume your child is having fun, but they may get lonely. Arrange playdates to continue friendships and practice social skills.

**Give your kids (and yourself) things to look forward to** - Summer is a great opportunity to spend time and bond with your kids, and to make happy family memories! Consider making a summer bucket list or just planning out fun things to do throughout the summer. Giving yourself and your kids things to look forward to can help combat boredom and frustration on long summer days.

Be flexible and have fun!

The Big Idea: Through play, kids make big leaps in developing fine and gross motor skills.



**Why is physical play important?**

Little ones are constantly developing their bodies in new ways, learning to jump, climb, skip, and hop – skills that build on one another. Developing gross-motor, or large-muscle, skills help increase kids’ strength, coordination, and confidence.

**Here are some fun ways you can help:**

- Introduce a tricycle or pedaling toy.
- Encourage kids to climb and swing at the playground.
- Play catch or kick a ball.
- Get kids involved in individual or group activities such as soccer, jump rope, or swimming.
- Put on some music and dance!

Small-muscle, or fine-motor, skills are another big part of development. Hand-eye coordination lets kids draw, scribble, and write – all important skills for school. Consider these ways to build fine motor skills:

- Do art projects that include drawing, cutting with scissors, and pasting.
- Do puzzles that have pieces of different sizes.
- Provide toys that allow for sorting or stacking.
- Play with trains or cars that need to be pushed along the track.
- Create objects by molding clay.
- Give kids practice with buttons and snaps.



Play is the work of childhood!

**Let’s Have a Playdate!** Foster the friendships your children have made and help them develop new ones by connecting with other parents in your child’s classroom and arranging playdates!

Playdates have many health benefits for kids – physically, socially, mentally, and emotionally. The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that play builds many skills, including language, executive function, social-emotional skills, problem-solving, collaboration, and creativity.

**Here are some tips to ensure your child’s playdate will be successful:**

- Set a time limit. Playdates need to have a fixed start and finish. This will not only help with the success of the playdate but will also help to avoid conflict. Remember to make the necessary adjustments to accommodate meals and naps.
- Talk to your child beforehand and let them be involved. Ask them what activities or toys they would like to play with and what snacks they would like. If there is a toy your child may not want to share, agree to put it up before-hand.
- Set the rules, gently. Establish the do’s and don’ts – like having safe hands, staying in designated areas, and taking care of toys and furniture. Inform the children about your rules at the start of the playdate and announce the rules calmly, but firmly.

**Final thoughts and considerations:**

A playdate allows your child to have fun with playmates in a safe environment. Moreover, it’s an important learning and growing opportunity. Playdates are also an opportunity for parents to observe how their child interacts with peers. Playdates can also be especially beneficial for shy kids. It’s not easy for them to get out of their comfort zone of playing alone or with just their siblings, but it will pay off in the long run. Most importantly, just have fun!

**Summer Fun in our Communities!**



Summer Camps & Activities 2023! Day Camps, Dance, Sports, Arts, And Education All Summer Long!



**STORYTIME IN THE PARKS** returns for summer 2023!



Join the Lewis & Clark Library at a different Helena City park every Thursday at 10 am for storytime. *In addition to storytime in the Helena City parks this program is traveling to East Helena, Augusta, and Lincoln too.*

Enjoy 30 minutes of stories, songs, rhymes, and more. Library services will be offered at the Lewis & Clark Library Bookmobile after the storytime program. **These programs are geared towards children between the ages of 3 to 8 years old but everyone is welcome.** Cancellations due to weather will be posted by 9:30 am the day of the event on the library website, www.lclibrary.org, and social media accounts @LewisandClarkLibraryHelena and @LCLBookmobile. Don't forget your sunscreen and a blanket to sit on!

Thursday, June 15th   10 am Cherry Hill Park, Helena	Thursday, June 29th   10 am Skelton Park, Helena	Thursday, July 20th   10 am Lockey Park, Helena
Thursday, June 22nd   10 am Cherry Hill Park, Helena	Thursday, July 6th   10 am Skelton Park, Helena	Monday, July 24th   11 am Outside at the Lincoln Library Lincoln
Monday, June 26th   11 am Outside at the baseball field Broadway St, Augusta	Thursday, July 13th   10 am Skelton Park, Helena	Thursday, July 27th   10 am Lockey Park, Helena
	Monday, July 17th   10:30 am Main Street Park, East Helena	

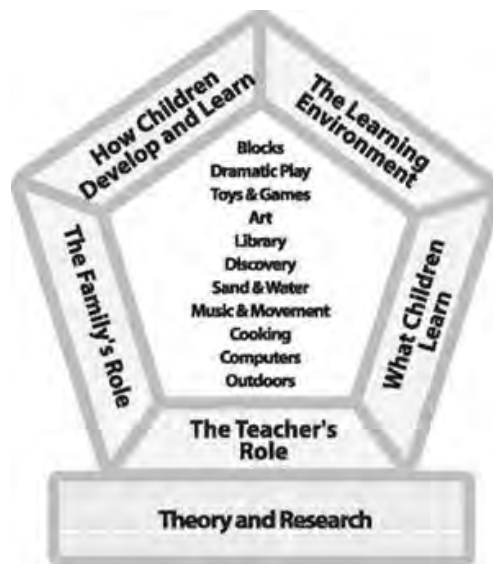


## Dear Families,

Three curricula are used in every classroom at Rocky Head Start to promote school readiness for all children. They were chosen by committees of parents/guardians, Head Start teachers and administrators, and community partners. They were adopted by the Head Start Policy Council as our core curricula.

- ***The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition***- Based on theory and research, a carefully organized and rich environment is the foundation for *The Creative Curriculum®*. It describes what and how children learn and the teacher's role in using each of the interest areas to support children's development. We partner with families to support the experiences for children. The weekly lesson plan is posted to keep you informed. ***The Creative Curriculum® System*** includes a wide variety of resources for staff to use as they carry out in-depth investigations with children throughout the year.

Framework for  
*The Creative Curriculum® for  
Preschool, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition*



- ***Second Step®: Social-Emotional Skills for Early Learning*** is a curriculum that promotes your child's school success and decreases problem behaviors by teaching your child skills for learning, managing emotions, solving problems, and making friends.
- ***Second Step®: Child Protection Unit*** curriculum helps your child learn self-protection skills and teaches adults to recognize, respond to, and report child abuse and neglect.

**You will get a "Home Link" family letter from your teacher each week that will keep you informed about what your child is learning.**

Dear Family,

The preschool years are very important. We want your child to be as ready as possible for kindergarten. This is not just about knowing letters and numbers. It's also about knowing how to learn and get along with others. We will be using the *Second Step* early learning program in your child's classroom to teach these important skills.

The *Second Step* program teaches skills in the following four areas:

- 1. Skills for Learning:** Children gain skills to help them be better learners, including how to focus their attention, listen carefully, and ask for help.
- 2. Empathy:** Children learn to identify and understand their own and others' feelings. Children also learn how to show care for others.
- 3. Emotion Management:** Children learn how to calm down when they have strong feelings, such as worry or anger.
- 4. Friendship Skills and Problem Solving:** Children learn how to make and keep friends and to solve problems with others in a positive way.

Your child will be learning a lot this year—and he or she will need your help! Throughout the year, your child will be bringing home “Home Links” that go with each of the *Second Step* Weekly Themes. Home Links are simple, fun activities for you and your child to do together. They are a great way for you to understand what your child is learning and for your child to show you what he or she knows.

If you have any questions about the *Second Step* program, please contact me for more information. Thank you for supporting your child in learning the skills that will help get him or her ready for school and life.

Sincerely,

Felina Lee  
Education and Child Services Manager  
406-594-9832  
[flee@rmdc.net](mailto:flee@rmdc.net)

P.S. Make sure to join [www.secondstep.org](http://www.secondstep.org) with the activation key **SSPE FAMI LY68** to get information about what your child is learning in the *Second Step* early learning program!



Dear Family,

As you know, we are using the *Second Step* program in your child's learning environment. The *Second Step* program teaches children important skills for getting along with others and doing well in school. It also helps our school be a safe and supportive place where everyone can learn.

To help our school be even more safe and supportive, we are also going to use the *Second Step* Child Protection Unit.

In these lessons, children will learn three types of skills:

- **Personal Safety.** Children will learn important safety rules, such as safety with guns, sharp tools, and fire, and when riding on wheels or in cars. They will also learn ways to help them decide if something is safe or not.
- **Touching Safety.** Children will learn about safe, unsafe, and unwanted touches, and rules about touching private body parts. They'll also learn to say no to unsafe or unwanted touches, and to tell a grown-up if someone breaks rules about touching private body parts.
- **Assertiveness.** These lessons will also give children a chance to practice asking a grown-up for help, telling a grown-up about an unsafe situation, and being assertive to get out of unsafe situations.

Your child will bring home simple, fun activities called Home Links that will help you understand what he or she is learning about safety at school and give your child another chance to practice safety skills.

To keep your child safe and protected, everyone at school needs to be involved. So all our staff will get special training in how to:

- Recognize and report suspected child sexual abuse
- Respond to and support children who have been abused or who are facing other challenges
- Use strategies that promote a safe and supportive climate for learning

If you have any questions about the Child Protection Unit or the *Second Step* program, please contact me. For more information on our school's child-protection policies and procedures, you can also talk to me or our program's director.

Go online to **SecondStep.org** and log in with the activation key CPUE FAMI LYGE to get more information about what your child is learning in the *Second Step* program. Thank you for helping us to make our school a safe and supportive place where everyone can learn.

Sincerely,

Felina Lee  
Education and Child Services Manager  
406-594-9832  
[flee@rmdc.net](mailto:flee@rmdc.net)



# Teaching Strategies GOLD<sup>®</sup>

## Birth *Through* Kindergarten

### Assessing Your Child's Progress

Every child in our program is an individual, with different interests, skills, strengths, and needs. Our goal is to get to know as much as possible about each and every child so that we can guide learning and plan experiences that are just right. To do this, we use an authentic, ongoing, observation-based assessment system to gather information on each child's development and learning.

#### What is "authentic, ongoing, observation-based assessment"?

This kind of assessment simply means that we will

- observe your child during regular, everyday activities on a continuous basis;
- document what we see and hear;
- take notes, collect samples of your child's drawings and writing attempts, or take photos or video clips;
- compare the information collected to research-based, widely held expectations for children of similar ages or grades; and
- use the information to support your child's learning and meet his or her individual needs.





We can work together to ensure that your child has the skills needed to be successful in school and in life.

### **What tool will be used to assess your child's development and learning?**

We use a valid and reliable assessment tool called *Teaching Strategies GOLD*®. The starting point for the assessment is 38 research-based objectives, including many predictors of future school success. *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® describes the pathway, or progression, of how children develop and learn. We use the documentation collected to determine your child's progress related to these objectives.

### **What information will be shared with me about my child's development and learning?**

Rather than send you a report card or checklist, *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® offers a variety of tools for sharing information with you, such as reports, online portfolios containing samples of children's work, and suggested activities. We also invite you to share your own observations about your child's development and learning. We will discuss the ways to support your child's development and learning in the classroom and share information about what you can do at home to help.



P.O. Box 42243  
Washington, DC 20015  
800.637.3652

[TeachingStrategies.com](http://TeachingStrategies.com)

To learn more about *Teaching Strategies GOLD*® visit [TeachingStrategies.com](http://TeachingStrategies.com).

Copyright© by Teaching Strategies, LLC. Permission to duplicate this flyer is granted to programs that use *Teaching Strategies GOLD*®.

# What are The Creative Curriculum® for Preschool Objectives for Development & Learning?

The 38 research-based objectives are the heart of the curriculum and define the path teachers take with children in their classroom. They inform every aspect of teaching, include predictors of school success, and are aligned with state early learning guidelines and the *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework*.



## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

1. Regulates own emotions and behaviors
  - a. Manages feelings
  - b. Follows limits and expectations
  - c. Takes care of own needs appropriately
2. Establishes and sustains positive relationships
  - a. Forms relationships with adults
  - b. Responds to emotional cues
  - c. Interacts with peers
  - d. Makes friends
3. Participates cooperatively and constructively in group situations
  - a. Balances needs and rights of self and others
  - b. Solves social problems

## PHYSICAL

4. Demonstrates traveling skills
5. Demonstrates balancing skills
6. Demonstrates gross-motor manipulative skills
7. Demonstrates fine-motor strength and coordination
  - a. Uses fingers and hands
  - b. Uses writing and drawing tools



## LANGUAGE

8. Listens to and understands increasingly complex language
  - a. Comprehends language
  - b. Follows directions
9. Uses language to express thoughts and needs
  - a. Uses an expanding expressive vocabulary
  - b. Speaks clearly
  - c. Uses conventional grammar
  - d. Tells about another time or place
10. Uses appropriate conversational and other communication skills
  - a. Engages in conversations
  - b. Uses social rules of language

## COGNITIVE

11. Demonstrates positive approaches to learning
  - a. Attends and engages
  - b. Persists
  - c. Solves problems
  - d. Shows curiosity and motivation
  - e. Shows flexibility and inventiveness in thinking
12. Remembers and connects experiences
  - a. Recognizes and recalls
  - b. Makes connections
13. Uses classification skills
14. Uses symbols and images to represent something not present
  - a. Thinks symbolically
  - b. Engages in sociodramatic play



Our latest edition of the curriculum, features expanded objectives for development and learning from birth through third grade. New progressions for first, second, and third grade enable teachers to see children's development and learning along a progression across the whole of the early childhood years.

The objectives cover 10 areas of development and learning, including broad developmental areas, content areas, and English language acquisition. Many objectives also include dimensions that guide teachers' thinking about various aspects of that objective and help clarify what it addresses.

LITERACY	
15.	Demonstrates phonological awareness, phonics skills, and word recognition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Notices and discriminates rhyme</li> <li>b. Notices and discriminates alliteration</li> <li>c. Notices and discriminates discrete units of sound</li> <li>d. Applies phonics rules and knowledge of word structure to decode text</li> </ul>
16.	Demonstrates knowledge of the alphabet <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Identifies and names letters</li> <li>b. Identifies letter-sound correspondences</li> </ul>
17.	Demonstrates knowledge of print and its uses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Uses and appreciates books and other texts</li> <li>b. Uses print concepts</li> </ul>
18.	Comprehends and responds to books and other texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Interacts during reading experiences, book conversations, and text reflections</li> <li>b. Uses emergent reading skills</li> <li>c. Retells stories and recounts details from informational texts</li> <li>d. Uses context clues to read and comprehend texts</li> <li>e. Reads fluently</li> </ul>
19.	Demonstrates emergent writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Writes name</li> <li>b. Writes to convey meaning</li> <li>c. Writes using conventions</li> </ul>



MATHEMATICS	
20.	Uses number concepts and operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Counts</li> <li>b. Quantifies</li> <li>c. Connects numerals with their quantities</li> <li>d. Understands and uses place value and base ten</li> <li>e. Applies properties of mathematical operations and relationships</li> <li>f. Applies number combinations and mental number strategies in mathematical operations</li> </ul>
21.	Explores and describes spatial relationships and shapes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Understands spatial relationships</li> <li>b. Understands shapes</li> </ul>
22.	Compares and measures <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Measures objects</li> <li>b. Measures time and money</li> <li>c. Represents and analyzes data</li> </ul>
23.	Demonstrates knowledge of patterns
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY	
24.	Uses scientific inquiry skills
25.	Demonstrates knowledge of the characteristics of living things
26.	Demonstrates knowledge of the physical properties of objects and materials
27.	Demonstrates knowledge of Earth's environment
28.	Uses tools and other technology to perform tasks
SOCIAL STUDIES	
29.	Demonstrates knowledge about self
30.	Shows basic understanding of people and how they live
31.	Explores change related to familiar people or places
32.	Demonstrates simple geographic knowledge
THE ARTS	
33.	Explores the visual arts
34.	Explores musical concepts and expression
35.	Explores dance and movement concepts
36.	Explores drama through actions and language
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION	
37.	Demonstrates progress in listening to and understanding English
38.	Demonstrates progress in speaking English



# All about “Screening”

Early identification and intervention are “best practice.” Your child will be screened within 45 days of enrollment. Screenings will be done in the following areas:

- Vision
- Hearing
- Height and weight
- Development (through the use of the “Dial-4”)
  - Cognitive
  - Fine and gross motor
  - Speech and language
- Social/Emotional Development (through the use of the “Ages and Stages-Social and Emotional” screening tool)
- Screening results will be provided to you with informational resources.

## Screening Descriptions

### Developmental Screening

The Development Indicators for the Assessment of Learning (DIAL-4) developmental screener is individually administered and assesses your child's skills in the following areas: motor (skipping, hopping cutting, writing), concepts (knowledge of colors, counting), and language (knowledge of letters and words and problem solving skills). The DIAL-4 screening helps you and your child's teacher decide if further testing or interventions are needed.

### Behavioral Screening

The Ages and Stages Questionnaire: Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE-2) screening assesses your child's social-emotional strengths and needs based on the parent-completed questionnaire filled out at time of application. It addresses your child's behavior in seven areas; self-regulation, compliance, adaptive functioning, autonomy, affect, social communication, and interactions with people.

### Vision

Automated technology was used to determine if there are any concerns with your child's vision. Your child will be referred to the eye doctor if any concerns were identified. Not all conditions are detected by this screening, if you or your child's teacher have other vision concerns it is recommended that you child have a full vision exam as soon as possible.

### Hearing

Automated technology was used to screen your child's hearing. If a child fails this screening it is likely due to untreated ear infections, wax build-up or other middle ear conditions. Head Start recommends your child be seen by a pediatrician to treat or rule out these possibilities. Your child's hearing will then be re-screened. If your child does not pass this screening, they will be referred to the audiologist to check for possible hearing loss.

### Growth Assessment

Genetics, nutrition, physical activity, health conditions & environment all influence a child's height and weight, and many of these factors vary widely from family to family. Whatever their size, we can tell children are healthy and growing well when they grow consistently. That is, their weight, height, and/or BMI follow pretty much along the same percentile. Your child's growth pattern over time is more significant than a single measurement. Your health care provider will interpret your child's growth charts in the context of their overall well-being, environment, and genetic background.

### Well-child

A complete physical exam (head to toe) is important for a child. Sick visits are not a complete exam. Unknown health problems are more likely to be identified this way. A child who has a health problem identified during this exam is encouraged to receive the necessary treatment to correct this problem.

### Dental

A Dental check-up should be done at least once every year. This is essential to maintaining good dental health for a child. The cleaning and fluoride treatments that most dentists provide are very beneficial for prevention of cavities. Furthermore, if there are any new cavities, the dentist can treat them early before the cavities become a problem! A child who needs dental treatment is encouraged to complete the necessary treatment while enrolled in Head Start.

**ROCKY MOUNTAIN DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (Rocky) HEAD START  
CARROLL COLLEGE NURSING STUDENTS  
CHILD SELECTION FOR SCREENING/ASSESSMENT**

Rocky, Inc. Head Start has a partnership with the Carroll College Nursing Department which allows the Carroll College Nursing Students (CCNS) to do a short clinical rotation each semester at Head Start. During this rotation the CCNS will be screening/assessing some Head Start children. The CCNS are directly supervised during their entire rotation by a Carroll College Clinical Resource Registered Nurse. Following is the procedure that Head Start staff will follow in selecting children to be screened/assessed:

- Head Start teacher offers each parent/guardian the opportunity to have their child assessed by CCNS at time of initial family visit, explaining that their child may or may not be selected. If the parent/guardian agrees a consent form is signed by the parent/guardian.
- Head Start teacher chooses child/children from those whose parent/guardian has signed the consent form and confirms that the child has completed the DIAL screening.
- Head Start teacher informs the child's parent/guardian that their child was selected, and explains the process.
  - CCNS will come to Head Start class on Tuesdays. There will be three student cycles in the fall and three student cycles in the spring.
  - Each student comes for 12 hours (3 - 4 hour days); some come in the morning and some come in the afternoon. Teacher will be given a schedule at the beginning of the semester.
  - First Tuesday – CCNS orients to the classroom and the students and begins interacting with their assigned student.
  - Second Tuesday – CCNS does the DIAL screening with their assigned student.
  - Third Tuesday – CCNS completes the physical exam (assessment). If the parent/guardian volunteered to be a part of the physical exam, please contact parent/guardian and inform him/her of the date and time the physical exam will take place.
- The Head Start teacher keeps a copy of the consent form. The original signed form is filed in the child's permanent Head Start file in the Head Start office.
- Head Start teacher prepares the child for the screening/assessment.



# Ways to Participate at Rocky Head Start

(Your time is valuable and helps with our Federal match: "In-Kind".)

- Go on a field trip with your child's classroom.
- Enjoy outside time with your child's class on the playground or on walks.
- Join in and play in the classroom Interest Areas.
  - E.g., Build in blocks, help with art activities, support the dramatic play area, assist in small and large group times, etc.
- Read books during free choice.
- Share in and support mealtimes.
- Clean up after mealtimes.
- Support during transitions.
- Come to your child's classroom to share things about your family such as pets, music instruments, favorite foods, traditions, your special skills, etc.
- Participate in a classroom food experience with your teacher and the children.
- Become a Classroom Leader.
- Help plan a family event with Head Start Classroom Leaders.
- Attend family events throughout the year.
- Have fun each month with your child completing the "School to Home" project.
- Recruit other parents to help.
- Volunteer to call other parents and extend a personal invitation to an upcoming event.
- Invite your child's classroom for a field trip to your workplace.
- Attend a "Build" with your child. (Watch for news about special events all year.)
- Represent your child's class and participate as a member of the Policy Council.
- Share a family recipe.
- Help put information into cubbies.
- Singing or playing instruments with the children.
- Participating on committees.
- Lawn care and facility maintenance.
- Decorating bulletin boards.
- Making copies.



ROCKY  
HEAD START

# CLASSROOM LEADER OPPORTUNITY

## WHAT IS FAMILY ENGAGEMENT?

When you enroll your children in a Head Start program, you may not realize you are enrolling yourself as well. From the beginning, Head Start programs were designed for both parents and children.

Families and staff share in the development of activities and events.

Families and staff work together to discuss, implement and share responsibilities in planning program events and activities.



## COMMITMENT

- Classroom Leaders meet once a month for one hour to put together projects and plan projects and events for the following month.
- A meal is provided at each meeting.

## YOUR VOICE MATTERS

- Meet with your classroom teacher help plan classroom meetings
- Help plan monthly School to Home Projects
- Help plan Head Start Events



1-406-457-7308



sask@rmdc.net



ROCKY  
HEAD START

# POLICY COUNCIL OPPORTUNITY

## WHAT IS POLICY COUNCIL?

When Head Start began in 1965, its founders understood that parents are essential partners in educating young children. They felt parents should help decide how Head Start services can most benefit their family and other families in the community.

Policy Council is an opportunity for parents to be part of program decision-making. The Policy Council is a group of Head Start parents and community members who help lead and make decisions about their program.

### COMMITMENT

- Policy Council meets once a month for about an hour.
- A meal is provided at each meeting.
- Policy Council membership is a one year commitment.

### YOUR VOICE MATTERS

- PC Members Vote On:
- Grant Approvals
- Program Budget Approvals
- Staffing
- Policies and Procedures



1-406-457-7308



apena@rmdc.net

# **Rocky Head Start**

## **Family and Community Partnerships (FCP)**

### **Family Advocates**

Children’s parents and families are their first and most important teachers. Family advocates collaborate with each child’s family to build a foundation for school readiness, coordinating with education staff and community partners. Head Start family advocates meet with every Head Start family. Visits may occur in a family’s home, in the child’s classroom or in other community settings. During visits, families look at their strengths and set goals for themselves and their family. Families set goals relating to housing, health, education, employment, parenting, and financial stability. Home visits begin at the start of the Head Start school year.

#### **Seven Family Outcomes that support school readiness for children and their families:**

##### **Family Well-Being**

Parents and families are safe, healthy and stable.

##### **Positive Parent and Child Relationships**

Parents and families develop warm relationships that nurture their child's learning and development.

##### **Families as Lifelong Educators**

Parents and families are their child’s first and most important teachers promoting learning in everyday experiences at home, school and in their community.

##### **Families as Learners**

Parents and families pursue education, training and other experiences that support their parenting, careers and life goals.

##### **Family Engagement in Transitions**

Parents and families support and advocate for their child as he or she transitions to new learning environments.

##### **Family Peers and Community Connections**

Parents and families build positive and supportive connections in their community.

##### **Families as Advocates and Leaders**

Parents and families lead and advocate ensuring a positive future for their children.

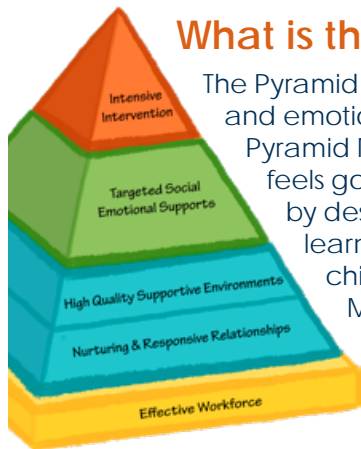


We have something important to share with you!

**Research<sup>1</sup> has shown that the skills your child needs to be successful in the future are social and emotional skills!**

The more socially skilled children are, the more likely they are to succeed in school. Because this is so important for your child, we are using the Pyramid Model in our program.

**What is the Pyramid Model?**



The Pyramid Model is a framework for supporting the social and emotional development of our children. The goal of the Pyramid Model is to create an environment where every child feels good about coming to school. This is accomplished by designing classrooms that promote engagement in learning and by building positive relationships among children, families, and staff. In our use of the Pyramid Model, our classroom staff will work together to ensure that all children understand behavior expectations, receive instruction in social skills, and those who are struggling receive individual support.

The Pyramid Model illustrates that the foundation for helping children develop social and emotional skills is nurturing and responsive relationships and high quality environments. The middle of the Pyramid, teaching of social and emotional skills, is provided to all children with some children receiving additional teaching and support. The top of the Pyramid shows that a few children will need the foundation, the middle AND individualized intervention to address challenging behavior.

To use the Pyramid Model, our program established a leadership team that will provide ongoing support to our staff and families. Our leadership team looks forward to sharing some of the important work we are doing, including teaching program-wide expectations, partnering with families, training staff in teaching strategies, providing classroom coaching to help teachers implement, and using data for decision-making. Stay tuned for ongoing updates about the Pyramid Model in our program!

<sup>1</sup> Jones, D. E., Greenberg, M., & Crowley, M. (2015). Early social-emotional functioning and public health: The relationship between kindergarten social competence and future wellness. *American Journal of Public Health, 105*, 2283-2290.

**What is gained by using the Pyramid Model?**

**FAMILIES**

- Receive information on how to help promote children’s social and emotional skills
- Team with teachers to help children grow and learn
- Receive support for preventing and addressing behavior problems

**TEACHERS**

- Are effective in helping children learn social and emotional skills
- Strengthen classroom management skills
- Have information and resources to support families

**CHILDREN**

- Increase their social and emotional skills
- Improve in their readiness for kindergarten



Adapted with permission from "Strategies That Help" Copyright © 2000 Regional Intervention Program



### Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children

University of South Florida  
Department of Child and Family Studies  
Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute  
University of South Florida, MHC 2113A  
13301 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33612-3807  
813-974-6100

The Technical Assistance Center on Social Emotional Intervention for Young Children, also known as TACSEI, is a five-year grant made possible by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. TACSEI takes the research that shows which practices improve the social-emotional outcomes for young children with, or at risk for, delays or disabilities and creates FREE products and resources to help decision-makers, caregivers, and service providers apply these best practices in the work they do every day.



[www.challengingbehavior.org](http://www.challengingbehavior.org)



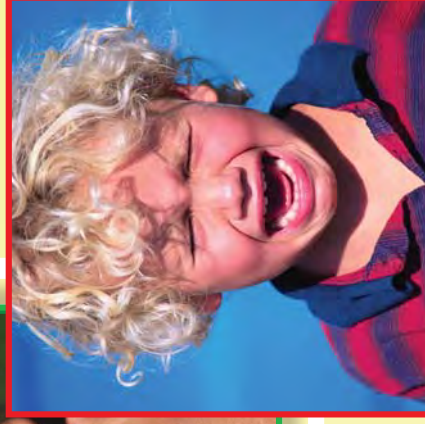
September 2006

Permission to copy not required—distribution encouraged

# POSITIVE SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILIES

## Eight Practical Tips for Parents of Young Children with Challenging Behavior

by *Matt Timm and Jill Giacomini*



Has life with your young child become filled with conflict and confusion? Does it seem as if even the simplest activity can turn quickly into disaster when your child's behavior is out of control? Are you beginning to feel as if things are getting worse instead of better? You're not alone. Many, if not most, parents find themselves struggling with the challenging behavior of their young child at some point in time. The good news is that there are evidence-based, effective strategies based on what the child is communicating that you can use to create positive solutions for your family.



### How to Use This List

Review each of the tips below and think about situations you have experienced that are similar to the provided examples. You will need to decide which strategies are likely to work best for your family. You might want to try one or two of the strategies at first and then add others as you become more comfortable with the process. Remember, the idea is to develop specific approaches for your own family that can be used in everyday life.

### Tip #1: Keep Your Expectations Realistic

It is important for you to know and understand your child's abilities and limitations. When you expect too much or too little from your child it can lead to problems and frustrations for you both.

~You are in a restaurant with a group of friends. The waiter took your order over 30 minutes ago and your food still hasn't arrived. 2 1/2 year-old Simone is getting impatient—she is throwing her crayons and saying that she wants down. Instead of getting angry and frustrated with her for acting up, try taking her for a short walk to give her and others a needed break.~

### Tip #2: Plan Ahead

Try to anticipate what your child may do or need in various situations. Make sure that you plan ahead to help your child have a successful experience. Hope for the best, but plan for the worst. Always have a back-up plan!

~Your family is in the car headed to your mother's house for dinner. It is usually a short drive,

but rush-hour traffic is snarled, it's 6:30 pm, and you're already 45 minutes late. Your 3 year-old is screaming for food in the backseat. Luckily, you remembered to bring some snacks and a sippy cup of water to hold him over until you can make it home~

### Tip #3: Clearly State Your Expectations in Advance

Some undesirable behavior occurs because your child can't act differently, other times it occurs because your child simply doesn't want to act differently. Either way it helps for you to remember that your child cannot read your mind. Be sure to give your child one clear instruction so that he knows what it is that you want him to do.

~You are visiting at your sister's house and your daughter has been playing with her favorite cousin. Over the course of the afternoon, toys have been tossed aside and scattered throughout the room. When you say, "Come on Alicia, it's time to get ready to go!" she ignores you completely and continues to play. A better approach might be to say, "All right, time to get going. Alicia, let's start by putting the blocks in their box. I see it over there in the corner!"~

### Tip #4: Offer Limited, Reasonable Choices

Most children are not born with the built-in ability to make decisions and then accept the consequences. In order for your child to learn to take personal responsibility they will need plenty of support and practice.

~You have just picked up your son at childcare and he doesn't want to get into his car seat. You sense a battle of the wills coming on. One way to avoid a struggle might be to say, "Zachary, we can't start the car until you get buckled in your seat. Do you want to climb up in there yourself, or do you want Daddy to put you in?"~

### Tip #5: Use "When...Then" Statements

A "when...then" statement is a simple instruction that tells your child what he or she must do in order to earn a desired consequence (what he/she wants to do). This is also known as a contingency statement.

When you use a contingency statement, be sure you:

- ✓ Give it a positive focus
- ✓ State it only once
- ✓ Set a reasonable time limit
- ✓ Follow through
- ✓ Are prepared for your child's response—it may be "NO"

~It's a sunny day and your barefoot child has decided she would like to go out in the backyard and play. She starts outside and you stop her and say, "No...put on your shoes." She starts to throw a tantrum. Here's an alternative approach you might want to use next time. "When you put on your shoes, then you may go outside". You are not just saying "No". You are letting her know what needs to happen in order for her to reach her desired destination.~

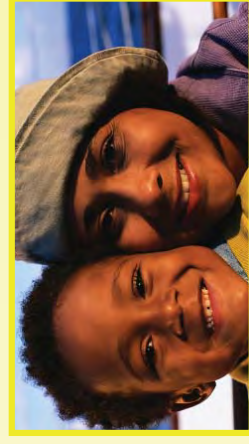
### Tip #6: Catch Your Child Being Good

Did you ever stop to think about how much time you spend telling your child what he should not do? Instead, try giving specific, positive attention to the behavior that you want to see. This will teach your child what you want him to do and increase the likelihood that this behavior will occur again and again.

~You are enjoying a remarkably calm family meal. Instead of waiting for your 4 year-old to begin fidgeting, trying to leave, or stuff green beans down his shirt, you look at him and exclaim, "Manuel, it makes Daddy so happy to see you eating your dinner like a big boy!"~

### Tip #7: Stay Calm

When your child's behavior is unacceptable, you can choose to either respond to it or ignore it. If you decide that a reaction is required, remember that the least response necessary is



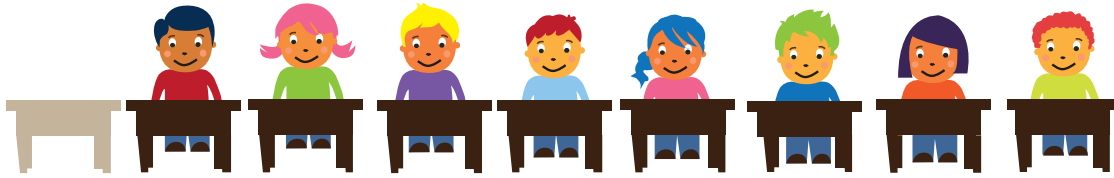
usually best. Acting calm with a minimum of attention will reduce the risk of strengthening the very behavior you wish to discourage. When you remain calm, it also gives you time to think about how you want to respond. Remember, you are modeling desired behavior for your child—the more out-of-control your child becomes, the more self-control you need to show. When you remain calm your child learns appropriate ways to respond to difficult situations.

~You are cleaning your house in preparation for your in-laws' annual visit. You go in the kitchen for just a moment and return to your family room to find that your 2 year-old son has colored on a white wall with red and blue crayons. Your immediate reaction is to respond negatively. However, you think twice, take a deep breath and say, "Christopher, paper is for coloring, Mommy's walls are not," and buckle him in his high chair where he can continue to create his art on paper. ~

### Tip #8: Use Neutral Time

Neutral time cannot be found in the middle of a difficult situation filled with strong feelings. Instead, neutral time is when everyone is calm enough to think and talk and listen. It's important to remember that neutral time can occur either before or after a child's unacceptable behavior occurs. You can talk about what happened earlier and talk about positive ways to handle problems in the future. The challenge is to identify neutral time and make use of these opportunities.

~You are sitting on the sofa reading books with your daughter when you look up at the clock and realize it is 7:30—bedtime is approaching fast. Getting Emma to brush her teeth each night has become more and more of a struggle. As you hold her on your lap you say, "Almost bedtime kiddo. Hey, tonight Mommy is going to brush her teeth at the same time you do—if it'll be fun for us to do it together!"~



## Help Your Child Succeed in Preschool: Build the Habit of Good Attendance

Early School Success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

### DID YOU KNOW?

**Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward.**

Missing 10 percent of preschool (one or two days every few weeks) can

- Make it harder to develop early reading skills.
- Make it harder to get ready for kindergarten and first grade.
- Develop a poor attendance pattern that's hard to break.

**High quality preschool programs have many benefits for your child. The routines your child develops in preschool will continue throughout school. You can make the most of preschool by encouraging your child to attend every day!**

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

**Work with your child and his/her teacher to help your child develop strong attendance. Your enthusiasm is a big boost to success.**

**Talk about it – sing about it – make it an adventure!**

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before
- Share ideas with other parents for getting out the door on time

**Before the school year starts:**

- Find out what day preschool starts and start the exciting count down!
- Make sure your child has the required shots.
- Attend orientation with your child to meet the teachers and classmates.

**Ready – Set GO!**

- Develop back-up plans for getting to preschool if something comes up
- Ask family members, neighbors or other parents to lend a hand if you need help dropping off or picking up your child
- Schedule medical appointments and extended trips when preschool is not in session
- If your child seems anxious about going to preschool, talk to the program director, teacher, your doctor or other parents for advice. If the problem persists, make sure the program is a good fit for your child.





# Rocky Head Start Attendance

Is your child sick? Will your family be  
out of town? Have an appointment?  
Just running late?

Contact the Rocky Head  
Start Attendance Line!

406-457-7307

or

[headstartattendance@rmdc.net](mailto:headstartattendance@rmdc.net)

Contact the Attendance Line **FIRST!**

You may also contact your teacher or classroom.

