2026-2027

KIDS' CORPS INC. EARLY HEAD START HOME-BASED

PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to Early Head Start

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

"We provide a head start to families with children who need it most"

CORE VALUES: Family Empowerment, Equal Dignity & Respect, Nurturing, School Readiness, Wellness.

Family Empowerment:
We support and respect parents as decision makers.

Equal Dignity and Respect:
We accept and value families whatever their economic, educational or social status.

Nurturing:
We strive to provide an environment where children, families and staff feel wanted and safe.

School Readiness:
Children have a love of learning and the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning.

Wellness:
We focus on helping our families, children and staff achieve & maintain mental, physical and emotional health.

ENVISIONED FUTURE

Every KCI child who leaves the program has 100% of the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed for optimal learning and development. We achieve this by partnering with families to provide comprehensive, quality services that ensure children are safe, healthy, learning and engaged in positive relationships.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Parents and Guardians:
Welcome to Kids' Corps, Inc. Head Start & Early Head Start. We are excited that you have enrolled your child with us. We look forward to working with you to make sure your child learns and grows in a safe, nurturing environment.

Head Start is much more than "daycare;" it's for parents and other important adults too! We are here to support you as a parent or guardian, as an individual with your own goals for your employment or education and as your child's first and most important teacher. By working together, we can make sure your child is successful in school and life.

Thank you for enrolling your child at Kids' Corps. We hope that you and your child enjoy a year of learning and discovery with us.

Sincerely,
Katrina Ahlfield - Executive Director

Centers & Locations

EHS Home-Based Office 101 Davis St. Anchorage, AK 99508 Office Phone: (907) 339-0154

KCI Support Staff

Located at 101 Davis Street 279-2021

Executive Director	**Katrina Ahlfield**	Katrina@kcialaska.org
Accountant	**Bernadine Cruz**	bernadine@kcialaska.org
Bookkeeper	**Namununa Lee**	Namununa.lee@kcialaska.org
Home Visiting Coordinator	**Selina Ellis**	sellis@kcialaska.org

907-272-0133

Program Manager – Education, Facilities, & Licensing	**Katelyn Balogh**	katelyn@kcialaska.org
Program Manager – Family Services, Health & Home Visiting	**Rachel Schafer**	rachel@kcialaska.org
Program Manager – Coaching, Disabilities & Mental Health	**Steffi Redhead**	steffi.redhed@kcialaska.org
Family Services Coordinator	**Megan Severson**	megan.severson@kcialaska.org
Disabilities & Mental Health Coordinator	**Sheena Lizama**	sheena.lizama@kcialaska.org
Early Childhood Behavioral Specialist	**Erika Kakazu**	erika.kakazu@kcialaska.org
Health & Nutrition Coordinator	**Ayla Haulbrook**	ahaulbrook@kcialaska.org
Enrollment Specialist	**Miriam Vazquez-Mateo**	miriam@kcialaska.org

General Information

Non-Discrimination Statement

Kids' Corps, Inc. will not discriminate in enrollment with regard to socioeconomic status or protected class.

Open Door Policy

Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit their child's school any time to observe or participate in activities.

Insurance

KCI Head Start carries liability insurance from Markel Insurance Corporation which meets the requirements of the Municipality of Anchorage Code 16.55.4.10.C.

If a Concern Arises

Parents are encouraged to discuss concerns with their family's Home Visitor. If additional discussion is needed contact the Home Visiting Coordinator or Program Manager.

Security Policy

For the safety of all children & adults, each KCI center entrance door is equipped with a keypad or buzzer on the entrance door.

Safety

Violence or threats on KCI property will not be tolerated. Any parent, family member, volunteer, contractor, consultant or visitor who engages in violence or engages in making threats of violence or intent to harm

another individual or themselves will be asked to leave the premises immediately until an investigation can be conducted. Parents, family members, volunteers, contractors, consultants or visitors who engage in violence or threats of violence may be asked to stay off KCI premises and sponsored events indefinitely depending on the results of the investigation.

Weapons Policy

Weapons of any kind are not allowed in any KCI facility or event. This includes staff, parents, and community volunteers. Any person who brings a weapon to a facility or event will be asked to leave immediately. If a parent brings a weapon, it could result in their child being withdrawn from the program.

Alcohol & Drugs Policy

Any parent under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be allowed at any KCI facility or event. If a KCI staff has a reason to believe a parent is under the influence when dropping-off or picking-up their child, the APD will be notified.

Smoking Policy

KCI maintains a smoke-free environment at all centers, including any vehicle used to transport children. Smoking is prohibited inside the center and in the play yard.
East Center is a completely smoke-free property. Smoking is prohibited within 50 feet of the entrance of any KCI center. **KCI personnel may not smoke while responsible for the care of children and they may not expose children to second-hand smoke.**

CLOSURES FOR 2026-2027

September 7, 2026	Labor Day Holiday – Visits
October 12, 2026	In-Service – NO VISITS
November 11, 2026	In-Service – NO VISITS
November 26 & 27, 2026	Thanksgiving Holiday – NO VISITS
December 18, 2026	In-Service – NO VISITS
December 21, 2026 through January 1, 2027	Winter Break: NO VISITS
January 18, 2027	Martin Luther King's Birthday – NOVISITS
February 15, 2027	President's Day – NO VISITS
March 12, 2027	In-Service – NO VISITS
March 15 – 19, 2027	Spring Break – NO VISITS
April 19, 2027	In-Service – NO VISITS
May 21, 2027	In-Service – NO VISITS
May 31, 2027	Memorial Day Holiday-NO VISITS
June 18, 2027	Juneteenth Holiday Observance – NO VISITS
July 5, 2027	Independence Day observed- NO VISITS
August 16, 2027-August 27, 2027	Program year transition

Early Head Start Home-Based

To ensure each family enrolled benefits from the positive impacts of home visiting, children enrolled in the home-based program will not be eligible to transfer to the center-based Early Head Start program until they have been enrolled and actively participated in the home visiting program for a minimum of 90 days. After a minimum of 90 day of participation, families may request to transition to center based care if/when an opening becomes available.

Whether you are new to parenting and home-based programs or are the parent of several children who have been in a program for years, you are your child's first teacher. Your child pays close attention to what you say and do because of how important you are to them. They learn by watching and listening to you and other family members day after day.

Your child learns about themselves, other people, and the surrounding world every day. For your child, everyday moments—getting dressed, preparing a meal, setting the table, taking a walk, taking a bath, reading a book—are learning moments. They are filled with interesting things to see, touch, smell, hear, taste, explore, and do.

Your home is filled with interesting things to see and do for your infant, toddler, or preschooler. Things that are fun and can help them learn are right there in your own kitchen, living room, closet, and even the garage.

The home-based program consists of weekly home visits with a regular Home Visitor. The parents and Home Visitor will work together to establish goals based on the child's development, through parent observation. Home visits provide opportunities for the parents to strengthen their relationship with their child and help them develop and enhance skills they already have. The Home Visitor will also work with the parents to establish family goals, provide community resource referrals as needed and will share information about program activities and training opportunities that are available. Home visits should be scheduled for an hour and a half at the parent's home. Parents will be encouraged to help plan the home visits and should expect to participate in the planned activities with their child/children.

Home visits are opportunities for:

- Strengthening parent-child relationships
- Learning more about parent-child interactions
- Developing positive relationships, which allow parents and staff to get to know one another
- Identifying learning opportunities in home environments
- Identifying techniques that can be generalized to other children in the family
- Focusing individualized attention on family strengths, interests and goals
- Allows communication with parents about their child's everyday routines and their child's progress

Group Socializations and Parent Committee Meetings:

In the home-based program, we will provide the opportunity for group socializations and PCMs two times each month. These are times when you, your child, and other parents and their children come together. These events allow children and parents to interact with others, using age-appropriate

activities. They are also a chance for parents to participate in group discussions on topics like safety, nutrition, parenting, and to develop new skills through different activities and interaction experiences. Socializations are also opportunities to build on the goals you have set for your family and child during your home visits.

Parents and guardians are encouraged to participate fully in the group socialization experiences. The Early Head Start Home Visitor assists in guiding parents with activities, but parents are encouraged to participate in the planning process for these events.
During socializations, you will be focused on different things, depending on your situation:

If you are the parent of a new baby, Group Socializations may be a time for you to hold your baby in your arms and watch how they respond to what is going on or a time for you to talk with another new parent. As your child grows, activities you do together such as finger-plays, singing a song, or playing "roll the ball" are a chance to get to know your child better and to have fun together.

If you are the parent of an infant or toddler, the focus of these Group Socialization experiences is your relationship with your child. From birth, babies are aware of other people and are eager to build relationships. They interact with you by making eye contact, smiling, cooing, reaching out, and over time, by talking. As you and your infant or toddler participate in a group, you can learn about how your child responds to you and others. This information will help you make decisions about how best to respond to your child.

If you are the parent of a preschooler, the focus of these Group Socialization experiences is learning about how your child interacts with other people. What you learn will help you figure out ways to support your child's social development.
Remember to dress children in comfortable play clothes and shoes that are appropriate for the weather. **It is advisable to bring an extra set of clothes for your child to the Group Socialization experience.** Please put your child's initials on all coats, boots, snow pants, hats and gloves.

Benefits of Group Socialization & PCM Experiences
No matter what your child's age, group socializations will give you the chance to:

- be out of the house and meet other parents.
- assist in organizing activities, gathering materials, and preparing snacks.
- share what you know and learn with other parents and Early Head Start staff members.
- attend presentations about safety, nutrition, discipline, or other topics of interest.
- learn that you are not alone in the joys and challenges of raising a young child.
- share activity ideas and things you learn with family members.
- most important of all, strengthen your relationship with your child.

The parent committee formally elects program representatives to the Policy Council in October. We would love to have a representative from EHS Home-Based. **Your ideas, energy, and passion to see your child succeed is greatly valued – get involved and make the most of your family's KCI experience!**

Plan to join each month!

Parent Involvement

YOU, the parents, are the first and most important teacher for your child. There are many ways in which parents can be involved at school. Remember **Volunteering can be fun!**

You can...

- Read to your child – all parents are encouraged to participate in KCI's Monthly Reading Log program
- Participating in home visits
- Participate in Parent Committee Meetings
- Join the Policy Council and help guide the program
- Learn new skills at monthly parent education meetings

All adults who are in a classroom for more than 15 minutes at one time will be asked to sign in on a classroom volunteer sheet. Any adult who volunteers in a classroom for more than 8 hours per month is required to have a state name based criminal record review and sex offender registry check.

Federal Head Start Performance Standards state that parents must be involved in making decisions that affect the quality of the program. As members of the Policy Council, parents have an opportunity to help KCI management, and the Board of Directors make many important decisions. Policy Council members can:

- Serve on the planning committee and help develop grants
- Serve on a hiring committee (training provided)
- Serve on an advisory committee (health/nutrition/mental health, family services, and education)
- Learn how to conduct a meeting (Roberts Rules of Order)
- Sharing important information with other parents at Parent Committee Meetings

Policy Councils Have Operating Responsibility For

- Working with the Board of Directors and staff to establish and maintain procedures for hearing and resolving community complaints about the program.

Policy Councils Also

- Help develop center activities (Parent Committee Meetings)
- Attend Policy Council meetings once a month

Policy Councils Interact With…….

- KCI Board of Directors
- Advisory Committees
- Staff
- Parent Committees
- Legislative Representatives

Parents on the Policy Council have FUN!!!

Childcare and dinner are provided. Transportation and translation are available as needed.

<u>Join Us Anytime</u>

Employment Opportunities for Parents

Parents are encouraged to apply for substitute and regular employment positions.

Parents who apply are required to submit the same documentation as a regular employee. Substitutes for classroom positions are required to meet the Municipality of Anchorage Child Care Licensing Code. Parents who serve on the Policy Council cannot work at Kids' Corps as a substitute or permanent employee and maintain their representation on the Policy Council. Parents hired as employees of KCI cannot work directly with their child. Contact your Home Visitor or Coordinator for more information.

Family Services

KCI Head Start seeks to support families as they work together to achieve their family's goals. Home Visitor will conduct 3 Family Service home visits with families each year to assist them to:

- Identify their family's strengths, interests, and needs
- Learn about community resources
- Utilize the social services available in the community
- Set and reach goals

Your home visitor is available to assist families with enrollment, community referrals and resources.

Parent Engagement Transportation Assistance

- KCI may offer transportation assistance to enrolled families to support parent/guardian participation in approved KCI parent engagement activities, meetings, volunteer opportunities, trainings, and events. Transportation assistance may be provided through a third-party rideshare provider, such as Uber.

- Participation in transportation assistance is voluntary and intended to help reduce barriers to family engagement and participation in KCI activities and program governance opportunities.

- Transportation assistance is available only for approved KCI-related activities and is not intended for personal use, routine childcare transportation, work transportation, errands, or non-KCI activities.

- Parents/guardians must accompany and supervise their child(ren) during all transportation arranged through this program. Children may not ride alone under any circumstances. Parents/guardians remain responsible for supervising their child(ren) and for complying with all applicable child passenger restraint and seatbelt laws, including providing any legally required car seat or booster seat.

- KCI does not own, operate, supervise, employ, or control rideshare vehicles, drivers, or transportation services. Transportation services are provided by an independent third-party provider. KCI does not guarantee driver availability, timeliness, routing, vehicle condition, or transportation outcomes.

- Transportation assistance must be requested and approved in advance and may be subject to funding availability, staffing capacity, scheduling limitations, and program priorities. KCI reserves the right to deny, suspend, modify, or discontinue transportation assistance at any time due to safety concerns, misuse of services, repeated cancellations or no-shows, violation of program policies, or other operational reasons.

- Families must sign the Parent Engagement Transportation Assistance Acknowledgement, Consent, and Release of Liability form prior to receiving transportation assistance.

Child Health & Developmental Services

KCI Early Head Start believes that early intervention improves a child's capacity to learn and develop. Early Head Start Performance Standards provide quality standards for all aspects of child development and family services. These performance standards require all Early Head Start programs to collect and share information with parents about their children's progress in Early Head Start programs.

The Early Head Start Home Visitor will partner with parents on how their child is progressing each week during home visits. The Early Head Start Home Visitor will encourage parents' input in setting goals for children. If you have ideas or questions concerning your child's progress in Early Head Start programs, talk with your Early Head Start Home Visitor.

The health education program offers parents information about:

- Finding a "medical and dental home"
- Preventative health care
- Lactation information and support
- Early intervention - height, weight, hearing, & vision screenings
- Child nutrition information & oral health
- Communicable disease awareness
- Home safety and injury prevention

Early Head Start performance standards require the following:

- Current Physical Exam (as required by EPSDT) & Immunization Records (current)
- Developmental Screenings (within 45 days of enrollment)

Curriculum & Education

Curriculum is the word used to describe what is planned and accomplished in a program. KCI's Early Head Start Home Based program uses Parents as Teacher curricula as its home visiting curriculum, with Creative Curriculum as a secondary curriculum. It is designed to meet the individual and group needs of children. The curriculum guides staff in providing activities that prepare children for pre-school.

Home Visiting includes:

- Weekly 1.5 hr Personal Visits
- Resource Referrals
- Group Socializations
- Screening

Area	Description
Parent-child interactions	Home visitors provide developmentally appropriate activities for parents and children using everyday household items to strengthen developmental parenting skills that are warm, responsive, encouraging and communicative.
Development-centered parenting	Home visitors provide information on child development and help parents make connections between the child's stage of development and his/her behavior. This helps parents identify and understand causes of behaviors and move towards solutions as needed.
Family well-being	Home visitors work with families to identify strengths, capabilities and skills, set goals and provide community resource referrals as requested. Home Visitors support families by learning about their perspectives, understanding their needs and wishes, and facilitating their decision-making abilities.

Education & Early Childhood Development

Developmental Screenings

KCI makes sure that all children entering the program receive a developmental, sensory, and social/emotional screening. Parental permission is obtained before the screening. The screening procedure will be sensitive to the child's cultural and linguistic background. This developmentally appropriate process may identify children who need to be referred for more formal assessments (multidisciplinary evaluations).

Screenings are conducted within 45 days of the child's entry in the program. Trained staff use a standardized screening tool one called the ASQ 3 (Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3) and the DECA-P2 (Devereux Early Childhood Assessment) screens the social and emotional development of children.

Screening results are shared with parents. Based on the results of the DECA screenings, home & school

Areas evaluated are:

- Behavior
- Social Skills & Emotional Development
- Speech & Language
- Motor
- Cognitive
- Height & Weight
- Perceptual
- Vision (for acuity and strabismus or "lazy eye") & Hearing

Children with diagnosed disabilities have been enrolled in Early Head Start since the program began in the mid-1990s. Children diagnosed with a disability and their families receive a full range of Early Head Start services. Early Head Start staff members work closely with community agencies to identify and provide services to meet the needs of the children enrolled. Parental consent is required for any disability services.

Conscious Discipline Curriculum

KCI implements Conscious Discipline which is a comprehensive classroom management program that changes the way adults and children see behavior. It is a way of organizing classrooms around the concept of a School Family, where each member learns the skills

needed to successfully manage life tasks such as learning, handling frustration, communicating effectively, being sensitive to people's needs and getting along with others.

Conscious Discipline says that providing safety, connection and helping children solve problems will give them the skills for lifelong success.

Children will explore Conscious Discipline in the classrooms during child interactions, in centers, and through the language of the teachers. Parents will encounter Conscious Discipline during home visits, parent nights, and educational opportunities and in the school newsletter.

The goal is for parents and teachers to have a common language for addressing behaviors which will provide the consistency to support the long-term success of the child.

In addition to Creative Curriculum, KCI uses the supporting curriculum strategies listed below:

- Cavity Free Kids (promotes dental health)
- Play Safe, Be Safe (teaches fire safety)
- I am Moving, I am Learning

Literacy

Literacy activities take place throughout the day in the home and other environments you and your child will be a part of. Children may be engaged in reading books, drawing/writing, listening to stories, looking at books, using writing tools, telling stories, singing songs etc. During home visits, your Home Visitor will help you identify and build on simple, fun, and easy literacy activities. Literacy activities also happen during group socials.

Transitioning to Head Start

As a family/child prepares to transition out of Early Head Start, the teacher will work with the family to create a transition plan to prepare for the changes that will be happening. Parents are encouraged to continue their involvement in their child's education after Early Head Start. Each child will have a portfolio containing information that shows the child's growth and development, while in Early Head Start. The portfolio is periodically shared with parents on home visits and is given to parents when children leave the program or transition into Head Start.

“Just Playing”

When I’m building in the block area, please don’t say I’m “Just Playing.”
For, you see, I’m learning as I play: about balance and shapes.
Who knows, I may be an architect someday.

When I’m getting all dressed up, setting the table, caring for babies,
Don’t get the idea I’m “Just Playing.”
For, you see, I’m learning as I play: I may be a mother or a father someday.

When you see me engrossed in a puzzle or some plaything at my school,
Please don’t feel the time is wasted in “Play.” For, you see, I’m learning as I play.
I’m learning to solve problems and concentrate: I may be in business someday.

When you see me learning to skip, hop, run, and move my body,
Please don’t say I’m “Just Playing.” For, you see, I’m learning as I play.
I’m learning how my body works: I may be a doctor, nurse, or an athlete someday.

When you see me sitting in a chair “reading” to an imaginary audience,
Please don’t laugh and think I’m “Just Playing.”
For, you see, I’m learning as I play: I may be a teacher someday.

When you see me combing the bushes for bugs, or packing my pockets with choice things I find, don’t pass it off as “Just Playing.”
For, you see, I’m learning as I play: I may be a scientist someday.

When you see me tasting foods, please don’t think that because I enjoy it, it is
“Just Playing.” For, you see, I’m learning as I play.
I’m learning to follow directions and see differences: I may be a cook someday.

When you ask me what I’ve done at school today, and I say, “I Just Played,”
Please don’t misunderstand me. For, you see, I’m learning as I play.
I’m learning to enjoy and be successful in my work,
I’m preparing for tomorrow.
Today, I am a child and my work IS play!

Dual Language Learners

KCI Policy Statement

It is the policy of Kids' Corps, Inc. Head Start & Early Head Start to honor, respect & preserve the home language of every child & family we enroll.

Helping Your Child Learn Two Languages

- Some families wonder which language to use with their child. The answer: do what is comfortable for you. For most people this means using the language their family used with them. We call this the family language.
- Speaking to your child in your family language will actually support your child learning English. Continue to talk, read, rhyme & sing to your child in their family language so they can develop language & learn important concepts.
- Learning another language is a huge task for young children which takes both time AND support. Supporting your child by maintaining their family language will help them continue learning concepts while they begin to decode their new language.
- We encourage parents to come to their child's classroom to share their family language. Some ideas are: reading a book in your family language aloud to the class, showing the children how to do a project while using your family language, or writing names of objects in the classroom in your family language.

Speak your language with your child every day!

Kids' Corps, Inc.

BENEFITS OF DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNING

• Children who grow up with more than one language develop better problem solving skills.

• Children who grow up with more than one language are better at multi-tasking.

• Bilingual children more easily solve problems that involve misleading cues.

• Bilingual children show the ability to focus on relevant task information, screen out irrelevant information.

• Benefits last into adulthood- the slowing down of cognitive process is not as fast for bilingual people.

• Being bilingual helps people retain memory as they age.

"Research shows that school aged dual language learners who receive support in their home language are less likely to be socially isolated, victims of bullying, and viewed negatively by teachers."

Online Resources for Parents:

Colorín Colorado | A bilingual site for educators and families of English language learners (colorincolorado.org)

Children's Picture Book Database
https://diversebookfinder.org/books/

National Association for Bilingual Education
NABE – NABE

NAEYC: Bilingual Learner Resources
https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dual-language-learners

KCI Anchorage Head Start
3710 E 20th Ave, Suite 2
P (907)272-0133
www.kcialaska.org

Family Pets

KCI staff goes to families' homes for home visits. If a family has a pet or shares a common yard with a pet that staff feels may present a danger, a plan may be needed to address safety.

Television and Computer Use Policies

Television, video games, hand-held devices, and computers will not be used in Early Head Start.

Guidance & Discipline

To ensure a positive and safe experience for children at Early Head Start centers, physical punishment such as spanking or striking, as well as name-calling or threats, are strictly prohibited during any program activities, including on buses and field trips. These rules apply to all individuals involved with Early Head Start, including staff, parents, siblings, volunteers, and visitors.

Our approach at KCI emphasizes the following principles for guidance and discipline:

- Noticing without judgement
- Empathy
- Redirecting inappropriate behaviors
- Using logical or natural consequences
- Maintaining consistency and follow through
- Providing safe spaces within classrooms for relaxation and learning
- KCI will always teach the children through their behavior by providing alternative responses and practicing them with the children. If teaching the children does not prove effective, this may prompt an action plan meeting.

In the event of ongoing safety concerns, a meeting will be scheduled with parents and Home Visiting staff to develop strategies for addressing the behavior both at KCI events and at home. This collaborative approach allows parents and Home Visiting staff to share effective behavior strategies.

If parents or staff become concerned about a behavior or behavioral changes in a child, an individual observation by a mental health consultant may be done. Individual observations are only done with the advance written approval of parent or guardian. The individual observation gives parents and staff recommendations for positive learning.

General group socialization observations will occur periodically. They are conducted to assist parents and staff in promoting the development and learning of the children. Focus areas of the observations are:

- Respect for individual and cultural differences
- Ability to form relationships
- Positive self-esteem
- Social responsibility
- Positive coping skills
- Social skills
- Non-gender bias
- Ability to express feelings appropriately

Suspension & Expulsion Policy

Suspension

KCI will prohibit or severely limit the use of suspension due to a child's behavior. Such suspensions will only be temporary in nature. A temporary suspension will be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications.

Before KCI determines whether a temporary suspension is necessary, KCI will: Engage with our mental health consultant, collaborate with the parents, and utilize appropriate community resources – such as behavior coaches, psychologists, other appropriate specialists, or other resources – as needed, to determine no other reasonable option is appropriate.

If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary by the Disabilities or Behavioral Specialist (in consultation with the mental health consultant), KCI must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by:

- Continuing to engage with the parents and our mental health consultant
- Continuing to utilize appropriate community resources
- Develop a written Action Plan to document the action and support needed
- Provide services that include home visits

Determining whether a referral to the ASD Care Team is appropriate

Expulsion

KCI will not expel or withdraw a child from Head Start because of a child's behavior. When a child exhibits persistent and serious unsafe behaviors, KCI will explore all possible steps and document all steps taken to address such problems and facilitate the child's safe participation in the program. Such steps must include:

Engaging a mental health consultant

Consider the appropriateness of providing services and supports under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act to ensure that the child who satisfies the definition of disability in 29 U.S.C. 705(9)(b) of the Rehabilitation Act is not excluded from the program on the basis of disability, and consulting with the parents and the child's teacher, and:

> (i) If the child has an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP), the program must consult with ASD or PIC to ensure the child receives the support services needed; or,
>
> (ii) If the child does not have an IFSP or IEP, the program must collaborate, with parental consent, with ASD or PIC to determine the child's eligibility for services.

KCI will explore and document all possible steps. KCI will consult with the parents, the child's Home Visitor, ASD CARE Team (if applicable), and the mental health consultant to determine if the child's continued enrollment presents a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children. If it determines the KCI is not the most appropriate placement for the child, KCI will work with such entities to directly facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.

Communication

Families will receive fliers and electronic communication throughout the year which tell them about special events and activities.

Kids' Corps is on Social Media! Follow us on Facebook and Instagram for pictures of classroom activities, agency updates, resources and more!

- Facebook Handle: https://www.facebook.com/kcialaska
- Instagram Handle: www.instagram.com/kidscorpsinc/
- KCI Web-Site: www.kcialaska.org

Weather Conditions/center closure

Only in extreme cases will the school be closed. **If Anchorage School District classes are canceled, KCI schools may be closed as well.** Weather closure announcements are carried on local radio and television stations. Your Home Visitor will text to cancel.

A Message for Parents about Children-Pedestrian Safety

HERE ARE SOME FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

- Children are quick and often unaware of danger.
- Each year, many children are injured or killed when they suddenly dart into the path of a car.
- Most children are injured near their home or on their own street.
- Most crashes involving children happen between 3 p.m. and 6 p.m.
- Most crashes involving children occur in fair and warm weather.
- Twice as many preschool boys are injured than preschool girls.

This is how you can prevent these tragedies:

SUPERVISE CHILDREN AT ALL TIMES

Children should not be allowed to cross the street alone. Teach them who can help them cross the street safely.

TEACH BY EXPLAINING

Explain to your child the safe way to cross a street. Say: "When I cross a street, I always stop at the curb. I look for cars. I look left for any traffic coming, and then I look right for traffic coming that way. Then I look left again. When it is clear, I cross the street and keep looking left and right."

TEACH BY EXAMPLE

When you cross a street with your child, always:

- Stop at the curb.
- Look LEFT-RIGHT-LEFT for traffic in all directions.
- Cross when it is clear.
- Keep looking for cars as you cross.

Attendance

Upon enrollment in KCI's Early Head Start Home-Based Program, families will be asked to choose a set visit day and time for weekly visits, establishing a set visit schedule benefits parents, children and home visiting staff.

Families will be expected to participate in visits on this day/time weekly and notify the Home Visitor **in**

advance if they will be unable to participate in a visit.
If a family is unable to attend their scheduled visit on their regular day and time the Home Visitor will attempt to schedule a "make-up" visit that same week.
After enrollment, changes can be made to your home visit schedule on a permanent basis, but not week to week. Talk to your Home Visitor if you would like to change your visit schedule.

- When enrolling in the program, families are making a commitment to attend weekly family visits lasting 1.5 hours.
- It is expected that parents and children consistently attend and actively participate in family visits.
- It is expected that parents and children will consistently attend and actively participate in group socialization events.

Call or text your family's Home Visitor at _____

- Tell them why you or your child will be unable to participate
- Ask about scheduling a make-up visit later in the week

Attendance becomes a concern when……

- There are absences without family contact
- There are frequently canceled home visits
- There is a pattern of missed home visits or visits not being 1.5 hrs weekly
- Families do not cancel in advance for visits they are not able to attend

If your child's attendance falls below 75% for a month or they frequently miss 2 or more visits your Home Visitor will meet with you to create a plan to reestablish regular attendance. This process may require the completion of an attendance success plan. Once the plan is established, attendance will be closely monitored and reviewed with you regularly.

Continued poor attendance will result in the child's withdrawal from the program.

Prearranged Absence Policy

Early Head Start families may prearrange absences for up to two (2) weeks during the program year. Longer periods of absence may be authorized on a case-by-case basis for reasons that include but are not limited to serious health issues or family emergencies.

Parents must contact their Home Visitor or Home Visiting Coordinator to complete a pre-arranged absence contract. If the child does not return to the school on the scheduled return date and the parent/guardian has not contacted the program, the child will be withdrawn from the program.

Kids' Corps, Inc.

Closure & Delayed Start Policies

↘ Unexpected Closure Policy

To ensure the safety of those we serve and our staff, Kids' Corps Head Start & Early Head Start centers will close when the Anchorage School District closes due to inclement weather or hazardous road conditions.

In the event of an unplanned closure, we will post a closure notice on the KCI Facebook page and will attempt to notify families by text message or through an agency messaging system.

↘ Delayed Start Policy

If the Anchorage School District calls a delayed start due to inclement weather or hazardous road conditions all part-day KCI Head Start classes will be cancelled for that day. This includes Fairview classrooms 1 and 2, Muldoon Center, and Boniface Center.

Full day classes will be open on a delayed start schedule and will accept children into care beginning at 9:30 am. These classrooms include Fairview 3, 4, & 5, Mt. View Center and Ridgeline Center. If your child attends one of these classes, please follow normal absence procedures and notify your center if your child will be absent or tardy.

In the event of a part-day closure and full day delayed start, we will post a notice on the KCI Facebook page and will attempt to notify families by text message or through an agency messaging system.

Help Your Child Succeed in School: **Build the Habit of Good Attendance Early**

School success goes hand in hand with good attendance!

DID YOU KNOW?

- Starting in kindergarten, too many absences can cause children to fall behind in school.
- Missing 10 percent (or about 18 days) can make it harder to learn to read.
- Students can still fall behind if they miss just a day or two days every few weeks.
- Being late to school may lead to poor attendance.
- Absences can affect the whole classroom if the teacher has to slow down learning to help children catch up.

Attending school regularly helps children feel better about school—and themselves. Start building this habit in preschool so they learn right away that going to school on time, every day is important. Good attendance will help children do well in high school, college, and at work.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Set a regular bed time and morning routine.
- Lay out clothes and pack backpacks the night before.
- Find out what day school starts and make sure your child has the required shots.
- Introduce your child to her teachers and classmates before school starts to help her transition.
- Don't let your child stay home unless she is truly sick. Keep in mind complaints of a stomach ache or headache can be a sign of anxiety and not a reason to stay home.
- If your child seems anxious about going to school, talk to teachers, school counselors, or other parents for advice on how to make her feel comfortable and excited about learning.
- Develop back-up plans for getting to school if something comes up. Call on a family member, a neighbor, or another parent.
- Avoid medical appointments and extended trips when school is in session.

When Do Absences Become a Problem?

CHRONIC ABSENCE
18 or more days

WARNING SIGNS
10 to 17 days

GOOD ATTENDANCE
9 or fewer absences

Note: These numbers assume a 180-day school year.

For more on school readiness, visit **attendanceworks.org** and **reachoutandread.org**

Last Revised 07/2026

Video Cameras in KCI Centers

Kids' Corps, Inc. (KCI) has installed video cameras at all our locations outside of Anchorage School District sites. The purpose is to promote the safety and security of our children, staff, and facilities. This policy establishes guidelines regarding the appropriate us of video cameras and the proper notification of staff parents and the public.

Per the Head Start Performance Standards, a program must establish, train staff on, implement and enforce a system of health and safety practices that ensure children are safe at all times. The use of video cameras will assist KCI in keeping children, staff, and visitors safe within the center, safeguarding them from outside intruders and protecting them from hazards to the fullest extent possible.

KCI must comply with all State and Federal laws applicable to the use of onsite video cameras. Cameras will be located in public areas where children may be present, including classrooms, common rooms, hallways, and playgrounds. Bathrooms, changing areas, and private offices and staff work areas where children should not be present will remain private. KCI will ensure signage is placed at center entrances informing entrants of video recording on-premises.

Video surveillance is intended for business purposes only. These purposes are to investigate allegations of injurious, illegal, improper, or unsafe conduct that threaten the health and safety of anyone present at a KCI workplace; to prevent workplace violence; to assist with the investigation as needed of workplace injuries. Video surveillance is never to be used as a substitute for active, direct supervision of children, nor is it intended to be used for coaching, training, or staff performance improvement. Child to staff ratios and competent supervision must be maintained at all times.

Video cameras will be recording at all times and must not be covered or obscured. Video will be saved for at least 30 days. In the case of an incident brought to KCI's attention before the 30 day period has expired, video captured by the cameras will be filed with an incident report and saved consistent with KCI's record retention policy. Only designated KCI and authorized representatives, determined by managers on a case-by-case basis, will have access to recorded video. Video recordings are considered confidential and will not be shared with unauthorized employees, volunteers, or parents/guardians. Inspectors and other representatives of the Office of Children Services (OCS), the Office of Head Start (OHS), or any other applicable agencies may be provided with access to the video footage and may have viewing privileges in the event KCI determines that access for such representatives is lawful, consistent with this policy, and appropriate and proper under the circumstances.

Child Abuse & Neglect Reporting Procedure

Children's safety always comes first. Alaska State Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting law (section 47.17) and the Municipality of Anchorage Code require Head Start staff and all licensed childcare providers to report suspected or known cases of child abuse and neglect to the Office of Children'. **Staff must report no matter where the suspected incidents occur.** All incidents of suspected or known child abuse or neglect will be reported to the Office of Children's Services (269-4000) within 24 hours. All reports are confidential. Any suspected abuse or neglect by a parent at a KCI facility or event will also be reported to MOA Child Care Licensing.

WHAT IS CONSIDERED "ABUSE" AND/OR "NEGLECT"?

State law defines child abuse or neglect to include:

- **Physical injury** that harms or threatens a child's health or welfare.
- **Failure to care for a child,** including neglect of the necessary physical needs: (food, shelter, clothing, and medical attention), emotional, mental, and social needs.
- **Sexual abuse,** including molestation or incest.

Unsupervised Child Policy and Procedure

Lack of supervision may be considered child neglect. This could include children twelve (12) years of age or younger left unsupervised at home or unattended in a vehicle. Alaska State Law requires that incidents of child abuse or neglect be reported to the office of children's Services (OCS). Kids' Corps are mandatory child abuse and neglect reporters.

It is the policy of this agency to ensure the safety of all children. If any children are left alone in your residence, a KCI employee may enter your home to use the telephone or to assure that children are safe.

PROCEDURE

1. If upon a KCI employee's arrival at an Early Head Start child's home a child answers the door, the employee will attempt to determine if an adult is present.
2. If the staff person determines that an adult or appropriate caregiver is not home, the staff is legally mandated to make a report to the Office of Children's Services (OCS) and the Anchorage Police Department.
3. Staff may enter the home to ensure the safety of the child. Staff will call the Anchorage Police Department (APD) at 786-8900 to request a child welfare check. The child's address will be given to the dispatcher.
4. Staff wait at the family home until APD arrives.
5. Staff will report the incident to the Home Visiting Coordinator and Family Services Coordinator immediately.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

The safety of young children is a primary concern of Kids' Corps staff are available to assist families who are in crisis or experiencing family problems

KCI Confidentiality Procedure

KCI respects your right to privacy. Parents/Guardians must sign an Authorization for Mutual Exchange of Information Form before any information will be released.

All staff and volunteers are informed of the Confidentiality Policy and reminded to keep all information regarding families confidential.

All staff shall be informed prior to beginning work and reminded regularly thereafter that any information concerning a KCI family is private and shall not be discussed with anyone outside the appropriate Kids' Corps staff without authorized parent/guardian permission. Staff who leave KCI will be reminded of the confidentiality still binding them.
All documents, forms, and files regarding families in the program will be kept in a locked space when not in use. There are some exceptions when written consent is not required:

- When the information is requested by a government agency for law-enforcement activity.
- When there is an appropriate court order, such as a subpoena.
- In emergency situations to protect the health or safety of an individual.
- In a program review or review audits conducted by Child Care licensing, Federal Head Start reviewers, or State agencies.

Breast Feeding Promotion & Support

Kids' Corps Early Head Start is committed to encouraging breastfeeding and providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Substantial research has documented that breastfeeding provides many health benefits to both mother and child.

- KCI Early Head Start program recommends breastfeeding as the optimal method of infant feeding. All expectant mothers will be encouraged to breastfeed, and new mothers will be educated on the benefits of breastfeeding.
- An area will be provided for mothers who want to breastfeed their child or express their milk in private. This space will include a comfortable seating area, an electrical outlet and water will be available. Mothers are also welcome to breastfeed in the classroom if they wish.
- Refrigerator and freezer space will be made available for the storage of expressed breast milk. Containers will be clearly labeled with name and date.
- Staff will be trained in the benefits of breastfeeding and techniques for handling and storing breast milk.
- A positive breastfeeding attitude will be conveyed by the distribution of culturally appropriate materials. Breastfeeding promotion information may be displayed in centers. Resource information will be available to families should questions or problems arise.

Early Head Start Parent Partnerships

Early Head Start Parent Rights

- To take part in major policy decisions affecting the planning and operation of the program.
- To help develop adult programs which will improve daily living for me and my family.
- To be welcomed in the classroom.
- To be informed regularly about my child's progress in Early Head Start.
- To always be treated with respect and dignity.
- To expect guidance for my child from Early Head Start teachers, drivers and all other staff who will help the child's total individual development.
- To be able to learn about the operation of the program, including the budget and the level of education and experience required to fill various staff positions.
- To take part in planning and carrying out programs designed to increase my skill in the areas of possible employment.
- To become informed about all community resources concerned with health, education, and the improvement of family life.

Early Head Start Parent Responsibilities

- To learn as much as possible about the program and to take part in major policy decisions.
- To accept Early Head Start as an opportunity through which I can improve my life and my children's lives.
- To take part in the classroom as an observer, a volunteer worker, or a paid employee, and to contribute my services in whatever way I can toward enrichment of the entire program.
- To provide parent leadership by taking part in elections, to explain the program to other parents and to encourage full participation.
- To welcome teachers and family advocates into my home to discuss ways in which parents can help their children's development at home in relation to school experiences.
- To work with the teacher, staff, and other parents in a cooperative way.
- To guide my children with firmness which is both loving and protective.
- To offer constructive criticism to the program, to defend it against unfair criticism and to share in evaluating it.
- To take advantage of programs and meetings designed to increase my knowledge about child development and my skills in areas of possible employment.
- To become involved in community programs which help to improve health, education, and recreation for all.

Parents and Visitors Code of Conduct

Kids' Corps, Inc. is committed to ensuring the safety of children, parents, visitors, and staff in all our facilities. To maintain an open, orderly, respectful and secure environment it is essential that all parents and visitors to our buildings be aware of their responsibilities and adhere to the expected code of conduct described below.

PARENTS/VISITORS ARE EXPECTED TO

- Behave in a respectful and orderly manner on KCI premises or when attending a KCI sponsored event.
- Speak to others kindly and with respect.
- Respect and honor the rights of other parents, children, and staff to a safe and welcoming environment.
- Address concerns in an appropriate manner, with the appropriate people.
- Recognize that the education and safety of children is a joint responsibility of the parents and the Head Start/Early Head Start school community.

SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Know, and help their children understand, the school and classroom guiding principles:
    - We take care of ourselves.
    - We take care of others.
    - We take care of our things.
- Keep our classrooms, hallways and playgrounds focused on children, by minimizing cell phone use while at Head Start/Early Head Start Centers.
- Convey to children a supportive attitude toward education and the Head Start/Early Head Start school.
- Build good relationships with school staff, other parents and their children's friends.

NO PERSON SHALL

- Intentionally injure any other person or threaten to do so.
- Disrupt classes, school programs or other school activities.
- Intimidate, harass or discriminate against any person.
- Possess, consume, sell, distribute or exchange alcoholic beverages, controlled substances, or be under the influence of either on school property or at a school function.
- Possess or use weapons in or on school property or at school function.
- Violate any federal or state statute, local ordinance or board policy while on school property or while at a school function.
- Use tobacco products in sight of, Head Start/Early Head Start children.

Parent/Visitor Code of Conduct Violations

The safety of children, families, and staff is our highest priority. To maintain a safe and respectful environment, any individual who behaves in a disruptive or threatening manner on KCI property or during KCI-sponsored activities may be asked to leave immediately. Law enforcement will be contacted if necessary.

Responding to Code of Conduct Violations

Immediate Response

- **If it is safe to do so**, staff will address the behavior directly and respectfully in the moment. For example:
  - "We don't use words like that in our classroom."
  - "You seem upset. Would you like to step outside the classroom to continue this conversation, or should I call a supervisor?"
  - "That comment made me uncomfortable. Please don't say things like that."
  - "This is not an appropriate time to discuss that issue."

Reporting the Incident

- Staff will report the incident to their **supervisor** and the **supervising manager.**

Internal Review

- The **supervisor and manager** will meet with the staff involved to review the incident and determine appropriate next steps.
- If necessary, the **manager will consult** with the **Executive Director** and **Mental Health Consultant**.

Possible Outcomes

- Based on the review, the parent or visitor may:
  - Be given a chance to correct the behavior moving forward
  - Have **limitations placed** on their future involvement with KCI programs.
  - Be **temporarily or permanently excluded** from KCI premises and/or activities.

Parent/Visitor Meeting

- Once all information has been gathered and it is safe to proceed, the **manager may meet with the parent or visitor** to:
  - Discuss the incident.
  - Communicate any decisions regarding exclusions or limitations.
  - Set clear expectations for future behavior.
- The parent or visitor will receive:
  - A copy of the **KCI Code of Conduct**.
  - A written summary of any **restrictions or limitations**, including consequences for future violations.