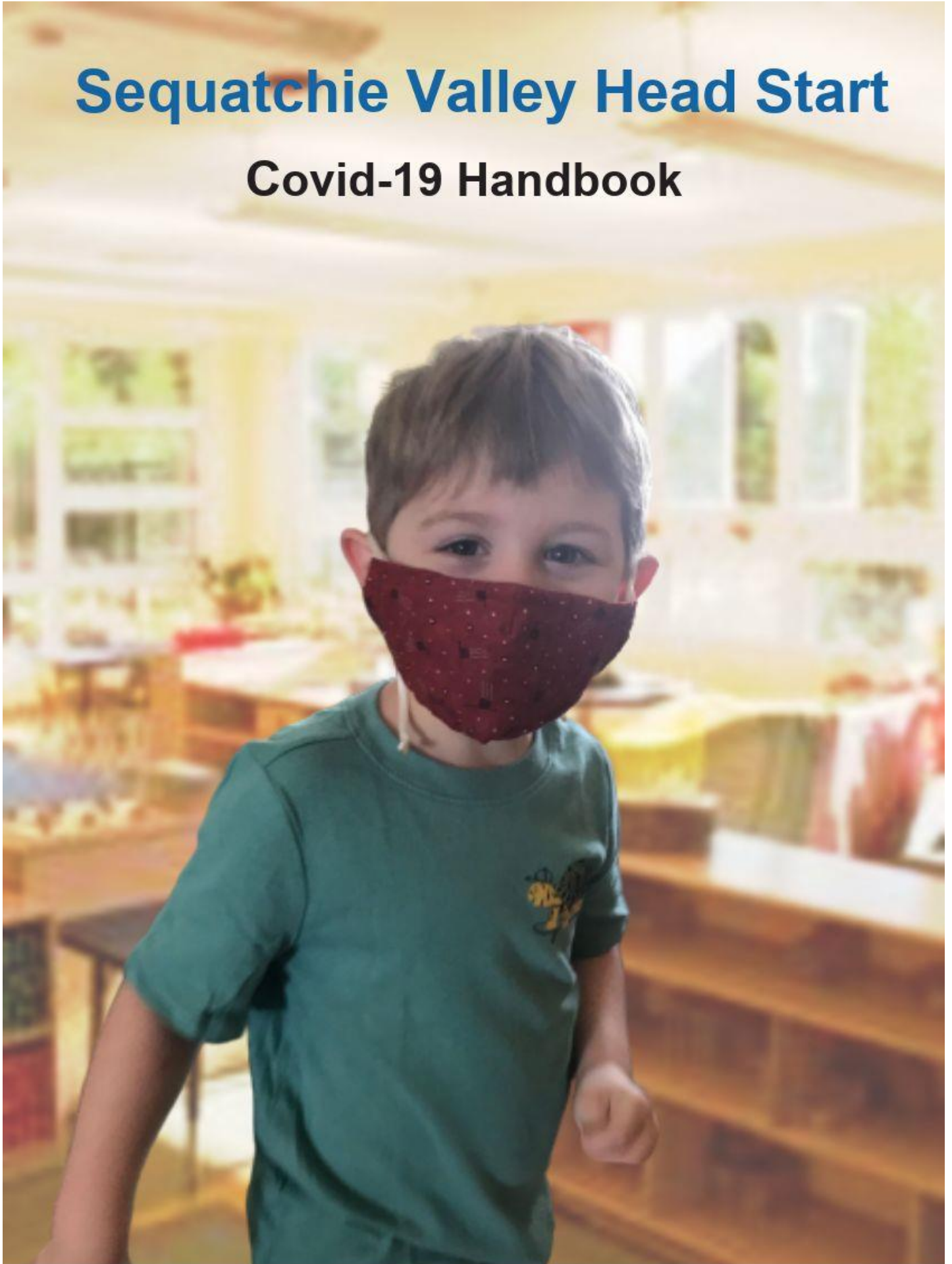


Sequatchie Valley Head Start

Covid-19 Handbook



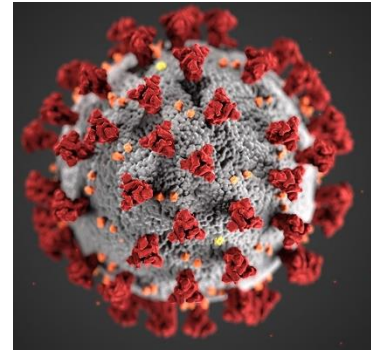
*All items in this Handbook Insert are subject to change based upon new guidance from the CDC and other experts.



COVID-19 Related Phrases and Definitions

COVID-19 - On February 11, 2020 the World Health Organization announced an official name for the disease that is causing the 2019 novel coronavirus outbreak. The new name of this disease is coronavirus disease 2019, abbreviated as COVID-19. In COVID-19, 'CO' stands for 'corona,' 'VI' for 'virus,' and 'D' for disease.

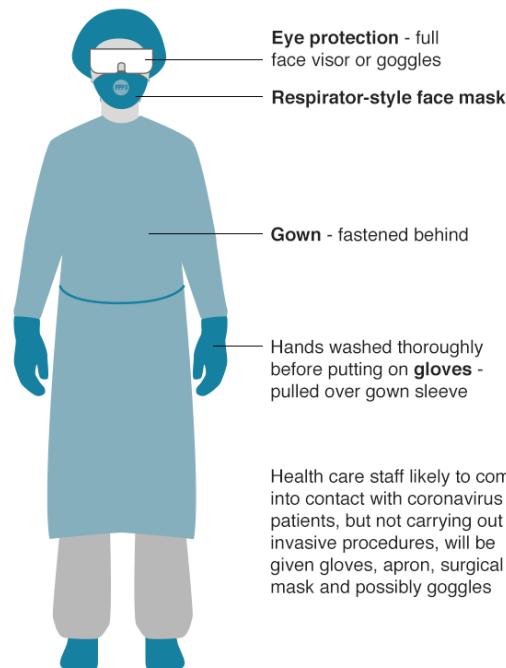
There are many types of human coronaviruses including some that commonly cause mild upper-respiratory tract illnesses. COVID-19 is a new disease, caused by a novel (or new) coronavirus that has not previously been seen in humans.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) - Personal protective equipment (PPE) refers to protective clothing, helmets, gloves, face shields, goggles, surgical masks, respirators, and other equipment designed to protect the wearer from injury or help prevent wearer exposure to infection or illness.

Personal protective equipment for health staff handling coronavirus patients

Full protective gear given to staff carrying out procedures likely to generate airborne droplets from mouth, throat or lungs



Health care staff likely to come into contact with coronavirus patients, but not carrying out invasive procedures, will be given gloves, apron, surgical mask and possibly goggles

All the equipment is disposable

Source: Public Health England

BBC

Sequatchie Valley Head Start

Parent Handbook COVID-19 Instructions and Additions

Sequatchie Valley Head Start Parent Handbook Covid 19 Instructions and Additions Hours/Days of Operations

Generally, our centers will be open for children for the hours and times noted in the center calendar. We prefer staggered hours which means you will have a preferred arrival time that is specific for your child. Our Early Head Start and Preschool Head start classes are generally operating about six hours a day, four days a week. Assuming that the Center for Disease Control guidance relaxes, we will be adding hours and days of service. Many of our children will be on remote learning, because our class size is currently limited or because that is the model that their family believes is best for them. If your child does not attend regularly, we may need to place you in the remote learning group so another child can attend. If there is a need to close the center for a short period or a longer indefinite period due to a local Covid outbreak, we will offer remote learning to all the children in the classroom.



Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Families will be assigned a time for drop off and pick up in order to ensure proper social distancing and to make it easier for cars to navigate the parking lots at our centers. We encourage parents to closely check their time expected for arrival and to advise if they will be late arriving. Please keep the pick up list up to date.

At the end of the day, we will monitor the Parent Parking lot, and will text you or wave as we recognize your vehicle. We hope to deliver your child to you, or to meet you back in the area where your child entered in the morning. Check with center staff for more specific directions. Please avoid sending others to pick up your child especially as we get our new processes perfected. A photo ID will be needed, so if you or any other people on the pickup list need a photo ID, let your family worker know so we can provide one.

Please try to be on time for drop off and pick up. Any late arriving families will need to call into the center and wait for a staff person to come do the arrival health check and sign the child into the center. If you plan to pick your child up

early, please let your child's teacher know as soon as possible. When you arrive to pick up your child, wait for a staff member to acknowledge your arrival and follow your center's protocol for picking up your child. These protocols will vary by center. Please contact your Center Team Leader with any questions related to specific center operating procedures.



Good Morning Health Check

As we have in the past, staff members will do a quick morning health check on your child at drop off or at your bus pick up point. We will be staggering arrival times to promote social distancing. This year the morning health check will include checking your child's temperature and asking parents a few short health questions. Children who have a fever of 100.40 (38.00C) or above or other signs of illness will not be allowed to attend or to remain at our center. We encourage parents to be on the alert for signs of illness in their children and to keep them home when they are sick.



Take your child's temperature before coming to the center

We ask that parents/guardians take their child's temperature before coming to school. If you do not have a thermometer, we can loan you one to use at home.

What if I forgot to take my child's temperature?

If a child comes to school before having a temperature check, staff will need to treat your child as if the child is sick. Masks, gloves, face shields, and gowns (Personal Protective Equipment or PPE) are usually needed, and let's try to keep them to use just for sick children. Please work with us to keep

this process safe, fast and efficient. Again, if you do not have a thermometer, just ask for one. Children with any fever will be closely monitored, although the Center for Disease Control recognizes 100.4 degrees as an absolute stay at home number for both you and your child. We are happy to take your temperature too, as time permits, and if you have a fever, please head home with your child.

What to expect at the Health Check

A health check station will be set up at your child's center. When possible, the station will be located inside the building but outside your child's classroom. In some locations, the health check stations will be located on a porch, breezeway, or under an awning. In small entryways, only one family will be permitted inside at a time. It is always best to be outside in fresh air, so we hope to enjoy as many "outside" opportunities as possible-weather permitting.



Staff will be wearing masks and gloves but are not required to wear other personal protective equipment (PPE) if parents can maintain a distance of 6 feet and your child has already had a temperature check at home. For that reason, we urge you to take temperatures at home (or even in your car) and stay back until the health check is completed. Spaces will likely be marked off to show parents where to stand with their child. If you actually must enter the building, you are required to at a minimum use hand sanitizer and wear a mask (some rare medical exceptions allowed). Staying six feet apart is also the goal.

Staff will use a non-contact (temporal) thermometer or alternate with a disposable covering to check your child's temperature. To keep kids safe, the thermometer will be cleaned with an alcohol wipe (or isopropyl alcohol on a cotton swab) between each health check when inadvertent contact occurs. To speed up the health check process, staff who do not have physical contact with the child will not need to change gloves before the next check.

What to expect at the Health Check

Staff doing the morning health check will ask that you confirm that the child does not have fever, shortness of breath or cough and any other questions recommended by the center for disease control, which include:

- Have you or your child been in close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19 within the past 14 days?
- Is your child experiencing a cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, or stomach symptoms?
- Has your child had a fever in the last 72 hours? Have you had a new loss of taste or smell?
- Has your child had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours?

Staff will make a visual inspection of the child for signs of illness which could include flushed cheeks, rapid breathing or difficulty breathing (without recent physical activity), fatigue, or extreme fussiness. Since it is so easy to take the temperature, parents are welcome to have theirs checked also! If parents have a fever of 100.4 or more, we ask that they leave immediately and make appropriate plans for their child as they should not return to the center for 72 hours.

When does your child need to stay home?

Your child will need to stay home if they have any of the following ailments or symptoms

- Fever of 100.4 or above in the last 72 hours
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Cough, sore throat, chills, muscle aches, loss of taste or smell
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the last 72 hours
- Contagious Illness such as flu, pink eye, ringworm, scabies, chicken pox, measles, Shigella, strep throat, measles, Impetigo, or other contagious diseases.
- Untreated head lice
- In need of a breathing treatment using a nebulizer (Due to Covid 19, we are unable to administer treatments using a nebulizer.)
- Unable to go outside and/or participate in class due to cold or other ailment.

**Parents, volunteers, and other visitors**

After the morning health check, your child will be escorted to the classroom by one of our center staff members. At this time, parents, volunteers, and other visitors are not allowed to enter the classroom. If your child has separation issues, we will do everything we can to reassure your child. We are happy to work with parents on a plan to make this process easier for all. We hope this requirement does not last all year. We love to have our parents and volunteers visit! Parents will use face coverings if they enter the building space and we can provide reusable or one time use masks as needed.

Sick Child

Center staff will check child temperatures throughout the day. If your child begins running a temperature of 100.4 or greater, or if your child shows any symptoms of COVID, your child will be taken to an isolated area in the center to await pick-up. A staff member wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) will be assigned to stay with your child until you arrive for pick-up.



If your child becomes ill, we will contact you by phone so that you may pick up your child as soon as possible. It is very important that your emergency contact information be kept up to date. Please let your family service worker or other staff member know if there have been any changes in your contact information. If we are unable to contact you, we will begin calling the individuals you have listed on your child's emergency contact list. If you list a grandparent, uncle, aunt, cousin, friend, or neighbor, please make sure we also have their updated contact information. Please inform those listed on your child's emergency contact list that you have identified them as being able to pick your child up from school should they become ill.

When you arrive to pick up a sick child, call the center to let them know you are in the parking areas. The staff caring for your child will be happy to escort them to your car.

Positive COVID-19 Cases

We are required to report all positive cases of Covid-19 to the Tennessee Department of Childcare Licensing and the local health department. Should a child or staff test positive or for COVID 19, we will send home a letter (hand delivered or in the mail) informing parents that someone at the center has tested positive. In the event that a staff or child tests positive for Covid-19, we will follow the guidance from the local health department and the CDC.

Contact information for children and staff that have been in close contact with the individual testing positive for Covid-19 will be shared with the local health department. If a child comes in close contact with someone with Covid-19, the health department will likely ask that your child be quarantined for 14 days.

Close contact is defined as any individual who was within 6 feet of an infected person for at least 15 minutes starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to positive specimen collection) until the time the patient (infected person) is isolated.



Classrooms Strategies to Prevent the Spread of Covid-19

We have put measures in place to keep children and staff safe in the classroom. As we will only have 10-12 children in a Head Start classroom and 8 children in an Early Head Start classroom, there will be plenty of room for children to spread out and play. What a great chance for individual attention! Usually there will be three teaching staff in the room and the children will be exposed only to those adults and those classmates, to the extent possible.

A few strategies we are putting in place include but are not limited to:

- Requiring all staff to have a **daily health screening** before beginning their day. Staff with a fever of 100.4 and above or displaying COVID symptoms will not be allowed to remain at the center.
- Screening all children. **All children will have a daily health screening** before entering the classroom. Children with a fever of 100.4 and above or displaying COVID symptoms will not be allowed to remain at the center.
- Loaning a thermometer to parents that do not already have one. Asking parents to take their child's temperature before coming to class. If your child has not had a temperature check before coming to school or entering the bus, our staff must put on **personal protective equipment (PPE)** before being allowed to complete your child's health screening.
- Adding tape on the floor to mark distances and using plastic dividers to help children to be physically distant but stay socially connected.
- Encouraging the use of masks for children 2 years and up. **Requiring all staff and visitors to wear a mask** (rare exceptions) when social distancing is not possible.
- Providing each child with their own clear shoebox of art supplies, playdough and sensory items, encouraging children to use their own materials.
- Limiting the number of children allowed to play in a play center and sanitizing toys after each use to the extent possible. As we have always done, should a child place a toy in their mouth, the toy will be added to the "yuck bucket" to be sanitized before being returned to the classroom.
- Continuing to assist children with handwashing and providing small amounts of hand sanitizer to the older children as needed. Hand sanitizer will be kept out of reach of all children.
- Spreading children out at mealtimes. We have purchased additional tables to allow children to be physically distanced at mealtime. Early Head Start teachers will wear gloves when feeding bottles and baby food to babies.
- Discontinuing family style meals. All food coming to the classroom from our kitchen will be pre-plated and covered with plastic wrap. We will no longer allow children to serve themselves at mealtimes.
- We will not be brushing teeth at our centers this year. We do encourage parents to allow their child time for tooth brushing at home. We will be sending home reminders about the importance of promoting good oral health. If your child needs a toothbrush, please let us know.
- Wearing scrubs and bringing extra changes of clothing. Our classroom staff will now be wearing scrubs when working with children. Our staff will bring extra clothing to have on hand should their clothing become soiled or "exposed" due to close contact with children.
- Enjoying the outdoors! With fresh air and more space between children, the risk of Covid 19 goes down. Children and teachers will spend a significant amount of the day outside. We have purchased additional shade structures and water misting stations to help keep children and teachers cool during the summer and early fall. Please dress your child daily for outdoor play. We have planned picnic lunches for the Head Start children each Friday!



Sign In/Out

Teachers will be responsible for signing children in and out of the center. Individuals who come to pick up children will **still need to be on the pick up list and bring a photo ID at the specific pick up time.** Our enrollment process will include your permission on the signature form that will allow staff to sign your child in and out of the center



Cleaning and Sanitation



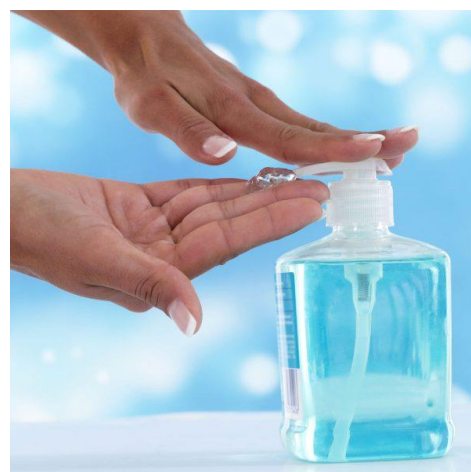
Sequatchie Valley Head Start will continue to follow the National Association of the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) cleaning schedule as we have followed in the past. The schedule calls for routinely cleaning, sanitizing, and disinfecting surfaces and objects that are frequently touched, especially toys and games. We will also be cleaning objects/surfaces such as doorknobs, light switches, keyboards, electronic devices, and other high touch surfaces often, using Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance. We have temporarily removed carpets and soft toys that cannot be easily cleaned from

classrooms. We have selected an EPA approved cleaning product that will kill the Covid-19 virus and have additional products and/or dilution schedules for bloodborne pathogens. All cleaning products are labeled and will be kept out of reach of children. It appears that COVID-19 is a real airborne danger, and fortunately is relatively easy to clean on surfaces.

Hand Hygiene

SVHS will continue to teach children good hand hygiene. Teachers will assist children with handwashing, including infants who cannot wash hands alone. Our staff will continue to follow the [CDC guidelines for handwashing](#) along with other CDC recommendations to the extent feasible.

If hands are not visibly dirty, alcohol-based hand sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol may be used if soap and water are not readily available. Hand sanitizer does not take the place of good handwashing. However, we have placed hand sanitizer stations throughout our centers as an extra resource. Our staff will supervise children when they use hand sanitizer to prevent ingestion. Hand sanitizer dispensers and bottles will be kept out of reach of children.



Cloth Masks

Parents- *Parents entering the center with their child for the morning health check will be required to wear a mask.* If you do not have a mask, a mask will be provided to you.

Children- *We encourage the use of masks for children over the age of 2 years.* We realize that children will likely be taking the masks on and off; playing with the masks, etc. Masks are an important part of keeping children and staff safe and virus free.

- Children will be offered a cloth mask on arrival to our center during the morning health check.
- *Children will not be forced to wear a mask.* Children that remove their mask may store them in their cubby. Masks are removed during rest times and drinking and eating activities and stored in a labeled plastic bag.
- Child masks will be washed daily by our staff. Routine laundry practices kill covid and it is not necessary to wash masks alone. Parents do not need to send a mask to school with their child unless the child has a favorite mask. We will provide masks to all children ages 2 and up.
- Children who become ill will be more strongly urged to use a mask while waiting to be picked up. If you call or text us when you arrive for a sick child, we will walk or carry the child to you.

Staff Members -Cloth masks will be worn by Head Start staff when social distancing is not possible. Staff members may step six feet away from children and other staff and remove their mask for a short period of time. A teacher who is distant from children, may “hold their breath” and “peek a boo” with children. Nutrition workers, center team leaders, and family service workers will not be required to wear a mask when working alone in their assigned work area (unless they prefer to) or are assigned some select tasks. They must keep a mask nearby to pop on when visitors arrive.



Center Closings



Our centers will **follow the local public-school schedule** for closures due to weather and Covid-19. If the local school district closes for 5 consecutive days, Head Start and Early Head Start children will revert to remote/virtual learning. If this should occur, your child's teacher will provide more information.

Transportation

Due to Covid-19, we will be forced to limit the number of children on our minibuses to about half our usual number. Parents may request bus service by speaking with their family service worker. Only children without transportation will be considered for bus services this school year. If the minibus is full, a family may decide to participate in our remote learning model. We have very limited bus space as we are trying to maintain physical distancing (at least 6 feet between children) on the bus and separate children who do not live with another child. This means that our buses will operate at about half their usual number. Bus pick up will be in places where we can conduct a health screening before the child gets on the bus, so this is also a new challenge.

Each child will receive a health screening including a temperature check before entering the bus.

- When at a pick-up point, parents are asked to remain in their car with their child until instructed to approach the bus for the health check by the bus aide. Please hold your child's hand when approaching the bus. Parents should wear a cloth mask while participating in their child's health check.
- When entering the bus, children will be given a small amount of hand sanitizer to rub on their hands and be encouraged to put on a cloth mask if they are not already wearing one. No child will be forced to wear a mask, but for the safety of the children and staff we will encourage them to do so.
- See Good Morning Health Check above for more information.



Parent Communication

Maintaining good parent/staff communication is key during this time. In addition to the programs listed below, we want to encourage parents to contact us at any time with their comments, compliments, or concerns. Contact information for our management team is listed inside our parent handbook or you can reach us by calling 1-800-762-8432 or 423-939-1005.



Ready4K

Our program sends out educational text messages to parents 3 times per week via Ready4K. In addition to the educational text messages, we like to share community resources and local events with families. During the Covid-19 pandemic, we have been able to share information about local food banks and school food programs; Covid-19 resources; childcare certificate for essential workers; and many other resources. Parents who do not want to sign up for the service, may choose to opt. We want to encourage all parents to participate in Ready4K. If for some reason, your phone number changes, please contact your family worker about updating your number in the Ready4K system.

Visit our Website

Parents are encouraged to visit our website at www.svheadstart.info. In the past few months, we have added many new parent resources. New sections of our website include an online Community Resource Guide with Covid 19 resources, Mental Health Resource Guide, and an Internet Services section. To provide families with the most up-to-date information about Covid -19, we have also added links to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and the Tennessee Department of Health to our Home page. Please check back from time to time as we will be adding more resources in the near future.

Facebook and Twitter



We want to encourage your family to send us a friend request and to “Like” our page on Facebook. You can follow us on Twitter at **@svheadstart**. We post new content to our Facebook page a couple of times per week but we are brand new to Twitter and hope to post more soon.

On Facebook, parents may also send us private messages with questions and comments. We will get back to you as soon as we can. Please feel free to tag us in pictures and posts. We love to see pictures and videos of our Head Start kids in action. In the past some family workers and teachers have hosted closed Facebook groups. We have recently decided to move our closed groups over to an education-oriented platform called Class Dojo. Please read more about Class Dojo below.

Class Dojo

To support parent/teacher communication, we are excited to announce the addition of Class Dojo. Class Dojo is a free communication portal (Like Facebook but even more secure) that can be accessed through the web or from a free, downloadable App. Families can access ClassDojo when they are invited by their child's teacher, and receive updates on what's happening at Head Start, view their whole class's story and see a timeline of their own child's experiences in the classroom through pictures and videos. You will be learning more about Class Dojo soon! We think you will love it- we do! Although we typically limit group pictures, we feel safe including some here (unless parents object) as the classroom shots are just for that classroom. Please refrain from reposting group pictures on other social media, and know that we don't have absolute control over this process! We do want you to have more information than ever about what is going on in our classrooms, since for right now we can't have guests inside.

Remote Learning

Head Start:

- All families will have access at home to Cognitive Toybox. Cognitive Toybox does not require an Internet connection so if you do not have access to the Internet at home, your child can still play the learning games and access the other activities from a downloadable app. For directions on how to download the app, visit our website at www.svheadstart.info
- We have a **limited** number of touch screen tablets available for check out. Families without an electronic device may request to **borrow a device**. To the extent possible, we want to provide a tablet so the child can enjoy our activities and not need to use the parent's phone or cellular data.
- Families without Internet must visit the center at least every 2 weeks for tablets to update and for the data from the Cognitive Toybox App to be uploaded. For audit reasons, we will need to see the tablet regularly-please take care to have it handy and to call us if you have any questions. There is a separate agreement about our expectations for loaned items.



Early Head Start



- Select Early Head Start families will be participating in LENA Home, an at-home version of the LENA Grow system we use in the classrooms.
- In the event that the centers are closed, all students will be included in remote learning opportunities. Your child's teacher will provide more information if this does occur.

Grab and Go Meals

We are working to provide families with Grab and Go meals beginning mid-September.

- Children attending class on Tuesday- Friday will be provided at least one breakfast and one lunch to cover the Monday meals when class does not meet. This Grab and Go meal will go home with the child on Fridays. We are considering increasing the take home food offered, as resources and need is considered.
- Children enrolled in virtual learning will receive at least 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches each week. These Grab and Go meals may generally be picked up on Monday afternoons. Your family service worker and child's teacher will work with you on an appointment time to pick up your child's Grab and Go meals and other items. We may be able to deliver some items, on an as needed basis. Should an entire center close due to Covid-19, Grab and Go meals will likely be interrupted. We will resume meal service as soon as possible.
- We are working on a plan to provide meals to children during long periods of closure due to Covid 19. Should a center close for long periods of time (as happened in the Spring of 2020) and all children revert to virtual learning, we are working on a plan to provide at least 5 breakfasts and 5 lunches to all of our children each week.
- Grab and Go meals will be similar to those provided by public schools during the Summer Food Program. We plan to send home whole fruits and vegetables; fully cooked entrees that can be reheated; ½ gallons of milk or cartons of milk; cereal and bread produces; and baby food and infant formula upon request for infants. We hope to work in a few of the children's favorite recipes including Busy Day Soup and Chicken Spaghetti.



Home Visits

Home visits are important because they help us get to know you and your child. They give your child's teacher a chance to see your child in the most comfortable place. Children are happier at the center if they have seen you and their teacher together first. Home visits are not an inspection. We want to visit all our families, so please think of home visits as a way to get to know each other. Our rules and regulations require these visits unless you wish to prohibit them.



This year, in order to ensure proper social distancing and provide extra ventilation, home visits will occur outdoors, if possible, or virtually if no outdoor setting is available.

Parent Conferences

We will continue to conduct three parent conferences during the school year. Normally, our center staff meets in-person with each family to discuss goals and progress for both children and the families. This year, these meetings will occur virtually or in a way in which social distancing can be maintained.

Book-a-Night and Literacy Backpacks



Both our Book-a-Night program and our Lending Library of Literacy Backpacks will be suspended for a short period. Paper is not considered dangerous, and we hope to rotate books and resume loaning books in the near future.

Parent Volunteers

Due to the restrictions on visitors to our centers, we are encouraging alternate types of volunteering. Here are some ideas:

- Remote Learning Volunteers: Families who are in the remote learning group should fill out an Inkind form each week to track the time spent on Head Start activities. These activities can be counted as volunteer hours.
- We need participants in our parent groups and Policy Council.
- Parents can be of great help in keeping up with community resources and also in letting other parents know about our program. Please suggest postings for our social media and community resource lists.
- We hope that our parents can find volunteer opportunities with other organizations, including some that call the elderly every day or help distribute food. We had some parents and staff reaching out to each other in amazing ways, and this was so helpful during the early days of the pandemic.

Please note that we are printing this handout “at the last minute” as we are revising our policies as the Center for Disease Control sends out new guidance based on science and best practices. Let us know if you need additional information or copies for other family members.

~ Notes ~

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Sequatchie Valley Planning and Development Agency is an equal opportunity employer. We do not and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion (creed), gender, gender expression, age, national origin (ancestry), disability, marital status, sexual orientation, or military status, in any of its activities or operations.



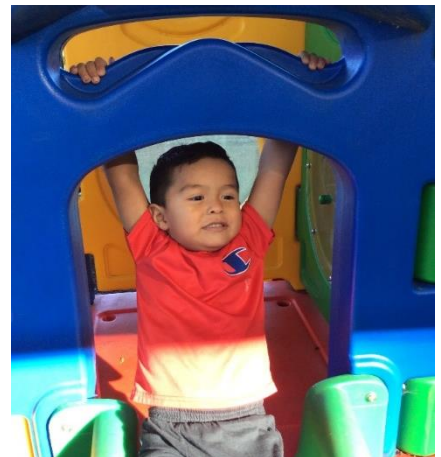
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Twitter: @svheadstart



Sequatchie Valley Head Start

For more information regarding locations and program services please visit us at **www.svheadstart.info** or call Sequatchie Valley Head Start at **(423) 939-1005**.

Needing to get something to us?

Fax Number: (423) 939-1011

