



South Central Iowa  
Community Action Program



# 2021-2022

# Volunteer Handbook

**Happy 55th  
Birthday  
SCICAP  
Head Start!**



*“Providing a quality program to empower children  
and families for lifelong learning and success”*



## Benefits

### What does the parent volunteer give to the classroom?

- A familiar and friendly face.
- Comfort to a child when the teacher is involved in another activity.
- Opportunity for children to get used to many friendly adults.
- Individual skills for the enrichment of the program.

### What does the parent receive from the classroom?

- An understanding of their children through other children.
- New ways to keep a schedule that could be used at home.
- Ways that children grow and learn.
- How school and families work together to educate their children.
- Information about community resources and developmental activities



## Responsibilities

Volunteers will assist the teacher in providing learning experiences for children that will develop approaches to learning, social/emotional skills, language/literacy skills, cognition skills, and physical skills and to incorporate these activities into the home.

When volunteering in the classroom, you are a mandatory reporter of child abuse and neglect. If you suspect this at any time, it is your responsibility to call **1-800-362-2178**, which is also posted at the center.

### Parent/Guardian Volunteer Responsibilities:

1. Assisting the teacher by preparing classroom materials and activities, sanitizing furniture and toys, organizing, planning events, washing and/or folding laundry, etc.
2. Accompanying classes on outings such as nature hikes.
3. Attending in-service training, parent meetings and other family activities.
4. Serving as a member of Policy Council.

### Community Volunteer Responsibilities:

1. Upholding confidentiality with regard to parents, children and staff.
2. Assuming duties as assigned by the teacher.
3. Giving names of families who have children who might be interested in enrolling in the program.
4. Being aware of community resources in your county.
5. Serving on the Governing Board.
6. Encouraging other people to volunteer!

### Suggestions for Volunteers

1. Give children a smile to start their day.
2. Talk to each child, show them you are interested in their lives.
3. Listen to what children tell you and respond with another question.
4. Speak slowly and clearly.
5. Get children interested in other activities if desires are in use.
6. Share a book with a child.
7. Mix paint and wash brushes after the children are done painting.
8. Explore the classroom with children who need extra attention.
9. Remember that all children are unique, and they all have their own strengths and difficulties.
10. Overlook children's failures- "Sometimes I find it hard to do things too. We'll try again."
11. Be enthusiastic about children's small successes.

## The Value of Your Time

Head Start is a federally funded program in which money is awarded through an annual grant process. The Head Start Act requires that 20% of program costs are covered by In-Kind contributions such as donations of material, time or services to our program.

## Exploring Your Center

**DIRECTIONS:** Each of the items listed below are located in the center. Check off each item as you find them. You may ask other parents or staff members to help you find items that you cannot find.

- First Aid Kit
- Fire Extinguishers - How many? \_\_\_\_\_
- Parent Bulletin Board
- Volunteer Sheets
- Day Care License



- Lunch Menu
- Lesson Plans
- Emergency Routes
- Telephone
- Daily Schedule

- Bathrooms
- Toothbrushes
- Art Supplies (paper, paint, etc.)
- Computer
- Writing Center



- Sand Table
- Art Area
- Block Area
- Dramatic Play Area
- Quiet/Book Corner

- Musical Instruments
- Paint Easel/Paint Shirt
- Table Toys
- Large Motor Area
- Broom



- Mop
- Flashlight
- Volunteer Calendar
- Storm Shelter

## Volunteer Policy

**It is the goal of the SCICAP Early Childhood Program to utilize volunteers in classrooms on a regular basis.**

- Volunteers shall be at least 16 years of age per Iowa DHS Licensing Standards and Procedures.
- Community volunteers will be recruited in a variety of ways including word of mouth, posters, etc.
- Parent orientation will include reviewing the volunteer handbook with all parents.
- Families will receive a copy of the volunteer calendar at the beginning of each month with correspondence asking them to volunteer in their child's classroom.
- Staff will review the volunteer handbook with all volunteers before they begin helping in the classroom.
- All volunteers will be required to sign a statement indicating whether or not they have any unlawful convictions, record of founded child abuse in any state, record of founded adult abuse in any state and are free of communicable disease or other health concerns. The statement will include agreeing to notify staff if any of the information changes from the date of signing.
- Based on the DHS guidelines and Head Start Performance Standards at no time are Head Start or Early Head Start children left alone with a volunteer even if the volunteer is the child's parent.
- As a part of the SCICAP Early Childhood Program team, volunteers will be asked to maintain confidentiality concerning our Early Childhood children and families.
- Volunteers will be informed that during the time they are volunteering they are mandatory reporters. Staff will explain what that means and how to make a report if they feel it is necessary.
- In the 3-5-year-old classrooms volunteers will be required to wear shoes and shirts at all times. In the 0-3-year-old classrooms volunteers will be asked to remove shoes or wear provided covering over shoes.
- Adults serve as a role model, so we ask for volunteers to wear clothing that completely covers private parts and does not have offensive language/pictures.
- No smoking is allowed on SCICAP Early Childhood Program property or in any agency vehicles.

### Record Checks for Volunteers

**IT IS A STATE REGULATION THAT ALL REGULAR VOLUNTEERS COMPLETE AND PASS A CRIMINAL BACKGROUND CHECK BEFORE VOLUNTEERING**

**REGULAR VOLUNTEERS MUST ALSO BE FINGERPRINTED**

- DHS has the responsibility to establish health and safety standards and requirements for childcare centers, including measures to protect children from neglect, physical, emotional and sexual abuse by childcare providers.
- Parents want and deserve assurance knowing offenders will not be taking care of their children, whether as paid staff or as a volunteer.
- Conducting record checks is one measure to prevent a person with a known criminal or child abuse record from having access to children.

## Children Not Enrolled

- Parent volunteers in the toddler-5 classrooms may bring siblings of the enrolled child to the center on days they are volunteering. Parents will be responsible for supervision of the child(ren) not enrolled in the program.
- Community volunteers in the toddler-5 classrooms may bring their own child with them on days they are volunteering in the center. They will be responsible for the supervision of the child not enrolled in the program.
- Parent/community volunteers in the infant classrooms will not be able to bring infants/children not enrolled in the center on the days they are volunteering in the classroom.
- ***Children not enrolled in the program will not be able to attend on party days or participate in field trips.***

**Before volunteering, a signed Volunteer Waiver and Volunteer Training Verification form is required to be on file at the center and a copy will be provided to the volunteer.**



## Dress Code Policy

This dress code is expounding on the Employee Code of Conduct included in the Policies and Procedures book. Staff members are expected to dress appropriately to work with young children and their activities while also maintaining a professional demeanor. Staff members must act as role models for children and families. These guidelines will be followed while staff members are working for and/or representing SCICAP.

Casual/dress shirts will be worn. No T-shirts, with the exception of T-shirts with center logos on them. T-shirts with center logos are considered appropriate when in the center. Kitchen staff and cleaning staff may wear t-shirts as long as they do not have anything offensive noted on them. Hooded sweatshirts are not considered appropriate attire. They may be worn when outside. Shirts must be of appropriate length so that when hands are lifted above one's head no skin is exposed below the shirt. Necklines must be such that no cleavage shows while standing, sitting, bending, squatting, etc. No inappropriate language, pictures, symbols will be tolerated on clothing.

Pants must be clean and comfortable. The waists of pants must cover stomach and back areas while standing, sitting, bending, squatting, etc. No sweatpants or flannel pants will be worn. Pants must be in good repair. Jeans with holes in them will not be worn during paid time.

Shorts must fall within 3" of the knee while standing. The waists of shorts must cover stomach and back areas while standing, sitting, bending, squatting etc. No boxers or biking shorts will be worn.

Skirts must fall within 3" above the knee while standing. The waists of skirts must cover stomach and back areas while standing, sitting, bending, squatting etc. When skirts are above the knee something must be worn under them to cover undergarments (shorts, tights, etc.).

Shoes must be clean, comfortable, and durable.



## Tobacco Free Environment Policy

The SCICAP Early Childhood Program's mission is to promote a safe and healthy environment for the children and families we serve. Because there has been considerable evidence that tobacco use is harmful to children and adults, the SCICAP Early Childhood Program has created a tobacco-free policy (the term *tobacco free* will include the use of electronic cigarettes, vapor related products and/or devices).

The SCICAP Early Childhood Program must prohibit any tobacco use at all times during the program hours. This includes any scheduled am/pm breaks and lunch.

No tobacco use is permitted during any SCICAP Early Childhood sponsored activity, including but not limited to; family activities, home visits, and training.

Facilities will be monitored to ensure a tobacco free environment. Tobacco use on the premises or during program hours will be against regulations and is just cause for dismissal.

***A tobacco free environment has been increasingly recognized as a safe and healthy requirement for SCICAP Early Childhood Programs.***



## Behavior Plan/Procedure

The policy of SCICAP Head Start/Early Head Start Program is to use the Conscious Discipline combined with Program Wide-Positive Behavior and Intervention Supports (PBIS) Model. PBIS is an approach for addressing challenging behavior, offering methods that identify circumstances and interactions that trigger problem behavior.

When a teacher feels that a child needs more support regarding challenging behavior, she/he will:

- Examine the classroom environment, scheduling, and room arrangement
- Examine the grouping of the children
- Collect data using BIR's and ABC forms
- Teachers will have a conversation with family to see if they are seeing any changes in child's behavior at home and to talk about any changes that have happened that may be the cause of the behavior
- Review the curriculum for meeting the child's individual needs
  
- Reward appropriate behavior with verbal praise/visual cues
- Use active listening to identify and validate child's feelings
- Teachers role model behavior for children to learn new behavior skills
- Provide eye contact on a child's level
- Offer the child two positive choices, such as: "Do you want to play with blocks or look at a book?"
- Start the process of the PBIS Flow Chart (see attached)
- Contact parents to share positive ideas to help their child be successful and get parental input
- Consult with PBIS team, Mental Health Specialist and Mental Health Consultant as needed

If the child's behavior becomes a threat to themselves or others at the center, and the teacher has tried all strategies presented to them and is following the written plan for that child and the child is unable to control their behavior:

- The teacher will contact the Program Director before contacting parents.
- The teacher will contact parents to come and pick the child up-this is only after teachers have worked on implementing the plan that was presented to them by the PBIS team
  - And with permission from the HS/EHS Director
- Teacher will document all strategies tried and why the child was sent home in detail in Child Plus

Refer to Early Childhood 3-5 Classrooms Supporting Social Emotional Development Policy/Procedure, PBIS Flow Chart and Child Guidance and Behavior management Policy



The program must prohibit or severely limit use of suspension due to child's behavior. Before program determines temporary suspension, they must engage with: (Performance Standard 1302.17)

- Mental Health Consultant
- Parents
- Family Resource Specialists
- Community Resources
  - If child is on IEP or IFSP, the program must consult with the agency responsible.

If deemed necessary, the program must help return to full participation appropriately. The program must continue to engage with:

- Mental Health Consultant
- Parents
- Family Resource Specialists
- Community Resources
  - If child is on IEP or IFSP, the program must consult with the agency responsible.

The program must develop a written plan, provide home visits and determine whether a referral for implementing IDEA is appropriate. All of these steps must be documented.

If the serious safety threat continues, and the program determines this program is not the most appropriate placement for the child, the program must work with such entities to directly facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.



## **Confidentiality Policy**

As an employee of the South-Central Iowa Community Action Program, I the undersigned hereby agree to keep all information regarding clients in strictest confidence. This includes any information in the clients' file and any information, I myself, may obtain while an employee of SCICAP.

Information may be transferred between SCICAP programs as deemed necessary and under the supervision of program directors.

I understand that breach of this policy of confidentiality will be just cause for my immediate dismissal.



## Volunteer Waiver

All volunteers shall sign this statement indicating whether or not they have one of the following:

1. A conviction of any law in any state.  Yes  No

If yes, what was the conviction? \_\_\_\_\_

When were you convicted? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Any record of FOUNDED child abuse in any state.  Yes  No

3. Any record of FOUNDED dependent adult abuse in any state.  Yes  No

4. I am free of any communicable disease or health concern that could pose a threat to the health, safety, or well-being of children.  Yes  No

If no, please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If I, after signing the above statement, am convicted of any crime or have any record of founded child abuse or dependent adult abuse reported in any state, it's my responsibility to report this information immediately to my supervisor prior to reporting for volunteering again in the center.

The above-mentioned statements are true to the best of my knowledge.

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



## Volunteer Training Verification

- Received and reviewed Volunteer Handbook
- Received and reviewed a copy of the Behavior Plan/Procedure and been informed only staff are responsible for the guidance of the children
- Completed tour of Head Start/Early Head Start Center
- Am aware of where the following items are located:
  - First Aid Kit
  - Fire Extinguisher
  - Daily Schedule
  - Volunteer Sheets
  - Volunteer Calendar
  - Emergency Routes
  - Adult & Children's Bathrooms
  - Telephone
  - Flashlight
- Have been informed of the health, safety and emergency procedures
- Have been instructed where to take breaks and where to place personal items
- Have read the Volunteer Policy
- Have read the Confidentiality Policy
- Have read the Tobacco Free Policy
- Have read the Dress Code Policy
- Have completed and signed a Volunteer Waiver
- Have been instructed on my responsibility as a mandatory child abuse reporter when volunteering & have been instructed on the child abuse and neglect reporting procedures
- Understand that as a volunteer I cannot be left alone or directly responsible for any child(ren)

Volunteer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_