

IOWA TRIBE OF  
OKLAHOMA  
EARLY HEAD START  
FAMILY  
HANDBOOK



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## TO EVERY PARENT

There are little eyes upon you,  
And they are watching night and day;  
There are little ears that quickly take  
In every word you say;  
There are little hands all eager to do  
Everything you do,  
And a little child who's dreaming of  
The day he'll be like you.

You're the little child's idol,  
You're the wisest of the wise,  
In his little mind about you,  
No suspicions ever rise;  
He believes in you devoutly,  
Holds all you say and do;  
He will say and do in your way when  
He's grown up to be like you.

There's a wide-eyed little child who  
Believes you're always right,  
And his ears are always open and he  
Watches day and night;  
You are setting an example  
Everyday in all you do  
For the little child who's waiting  
To grow up to be like you.

—Author Unknown

## Additional EHS Programs offered:

### Expectant Families Program

A major focus of EHS is services to pregnant women and their families through the *Expectant Families Program*. A healthy pregnancy has a direct influence on the health and development of a newborn child. EHS strives to have the greatest impact on participants by offering supportive services as early in life as possible. The prenatal period of growth and development has a lasting impact on the child's potential for healthy growth and development after birth.

Early, continuous supports and services provide the best opportunity for:

- healthy pregnancies and positive childbirth outcomes
- supportive postpartum care for the parents and child
- fully involving fathers in the lives of their very young children

For more information call:

Theresa Ferguson, Expectant Families Specialist  
(405) 547-2402 ext. 271.

### Tribal Child Care Assistance

In addition to our Early Head Start program we also offer a Early Childhood Program through our Child Care Development Fund Grant for children ages three to twelve at the Child Development Center. This grant also allows us to offer a Tribal Child Care Assistance Programs for families whose children have a CDIB card. The assistance program helps families who are eligible pay for child care services in a contracted and licensed Child Development program while they are working or going to school.

For more information call:

Misty Horne, Early Childhood Director  
(405) 547-2402 ext. 269



Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma  
Tah-Je Do-Weh Che  
3524 W. Worthy Rd.  
RR 1 Box 721  
Perkins, OK 74059  
(405) 547-5826  
(405) 547-5991 fax

Dear Family,

Head Start is a federally funded program which provides comprehensive health, education, nutrition, social services, parent involvement and other services to low income children ages zero (0) to three (3) and their families. In addition, Early Head Start provides 10% of their enrollment to children with special needs. The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma, Tah-Je Do-Weh Che Early Head Start is a two star facility fully licensed by the State of Oklahoma.

Misty Horne, Director  
Early Childhood Department  
Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma

## Mission Statement

**To provide quality, comprehensive childcare that addresses educational, environmental, medical, social and cultural needs of the children of the Iowa and other Native Americans residing in the Area.**

## Location

Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma Early Head Start is located just west of the Iowa Tribal Complex. The telephone number is (405) 547-5826 and the fax number is (405) 547-5991. Most EHS activities are carried out at this location with the exception of field trips.

## Schedule

The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma Early Head Start Program operates between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m.. Tah-Je Do-Weh Che operates extended child care between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. and 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. Children MUST be picked up by 6:00pm. Late fees will be added after 6:00pm.

## Holidays

The ITO EHS Program is closed the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Native American Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

## Attendance

In order to receive full benefit of the Early Head Start Program, it is encouraged for children to be at the center by 9 a.m. In the event a child must arrive late, please notify the center by 8:30 a.m., if possible. This notification allows the center nutrition staff to serve the correct amount of food at breakfast and allows meal planning for the remainder of the day. If the child will be late due to a medical appointment, please notify the child's caregiver as soon as you are aware of the medical appointment date and time.

## Absences

In the event a child is staying home, the parent should notify the Program of the absence. Families who consistently have a monthly attendance of less than 85% should be aware the following steps will be taken:

1. If a child is absent without contact from the family, the caregiver will attempt to call the family by telephone.
2. If contact cannot be made by third day, the ERSEA and FCP Manager will attempt a home visit in order to ensure the family has access to any services they may need.
3. If the parent and EHS staff have not made contact, a certified letter will be mailed to drop child from program with the option to be put back on the waiting list.

## ***PROCEDURES:***

Families or community members with an issue or grievance concerning Early Head Start will inform the classroom teacher/home visitor and/or Family & Community Partnership Manager.

If the informal discussion process fails, a written complaint must be given to the Family & Community Partnerships Manager. The FCP Manager will have a maximum of five working days to respond.

If the issue is not resolved or if no action occurs within five working days, the written complaint will be presented to the Early Childhood Director, who has five (5) working days to hold a meeting with the individuals concerned and make recommendations.

If the grievance is concerning Early Head Start Policies and Procedures or a personnel issue, Tribal Grievance Procedures will begin.



### **Alcoholic Beverages and illegal Drugs**

Consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages and/or use of illegal drugs will not be tolerated on Tribal land or any other tribally owned property. Staff must adhere to the no tolerance Drug-Free Workplace policy of the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma.

In the event any person(s) arrive to drop-off or pick-up a child showing strong indications of being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs, the following will take place:

1. The child's caregiver shall keep the child in their care.
2. The caregiver will notify the person in charge who will contact Tribal Police and the emergency contact on the child's information card.
3. In conjunction with the Iowa Tribe Police Department, Indian Child Welfare or The Department of Human Services will be contacted.

### **Concealed weapons**

The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma prohibits all persons who enter tribal property from carrying a handgun, firearm, knife, or other prohibited weapon of any kind regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon or not.

The only exception to this policy is the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma Police Force, security guards or other persons who have been given written consent by Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma to carry a weapon on the property.

### **Suggestion Box**

A Suggestion Box has been placed in the foyer next to the Access machine. All suggestions are welcome and encouraged. A Policy Council member will open the box at each monthly meeting and discuss the suggestions.

### **Grievance**

**OBJECTIVE:** To resolve issues at the lowest level of authority, with the least amount of program disturbance, The Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma Early Head Start will implement these procedures for managing grievances from families and/or community members.

## **Nutrition**

### **Meal schedule**

**Breakfast** 8:30—9:15  
**Lunch** 11:30—12:15  
**Snack** 2:30—3:15

The EHS Program provides two-thirds of a child's daily nutritional requirements.

The meal program is under the USDA and Early Head Start requirements and offered at no cost to the children. Children will receive breakfast, lunch and snack daily and served family style. The children serve themselves under the supervision of the adults sitting at the table.

Due to USDA regulations, no outside food can be brought into the facility and food served in the center cannot leave the site. Families are welcome to join the children for all meals. Contact the Program by 8 am if you plan on joining your child for a meal, or if you are going to be late so you may be included in the meal counts.

## **Family Involvement**

### **Policy Council**

The ITO EHS Policy Council is comprised of at least 51% of current Early Head Start parents. The Policy Council works in partnership with Early Head Start Management Team and the Iowa Tribe Business Committee to develop, review and approve or disapprove all funding applications, policies and procedures, share decision-making, program planning, and program goals and objectives. The ITO EHS Program acknowledges parents as being the first and most important teacher of their children. Therefore, it is very important for parents to be involved in the program.

### **Parent Involvement & Volunteerism**

Parent Involvement means families take an active role in their child's education and development by helping with decisions about their program in partnership among other parents, staff and community members. The contribution of family experience, perspective and participation is of tremendous value to our EHS Program.

Parents are wanted, needed, and welcome in our center. There are many ways to participate:

- Conducting cultural activities for parents and/or children
- Cooking a dish for potluck meal social events
- Drawing pictures for classrooms
- Participating in Family Fun Nights
- Playing games with children
- Playing musical instruments
- Preparing classroom materials
- Reading to children
- Singing songs to children

Parents can share in making decisions for the Iowa Tribe Early Head Start Program through the Parent Committee and the Policy Council.

### **Parent Committee**

Parent Committees provide every parent with the opportunity to assist in the development of activities that address their interests and needs that support the education and healthy development of their children.

If interested in serving on the Parent Committee, please contact Crystal Springer, Family and Community Partnerships Manager at (405) 547-5826.

### **Workshops & Trainings**

Families are invited to participate in all scheduled EHS trainings and workshops, on site and off.

### **Family & Teacher Conferences**

Families are invited to meet with their child's teacher at the scheduled conference each August and February. Conferences include a written report from the teacher on the status of your child's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development. Additional conferences can be arranged as needed. We urge families and our staff to discuss significant events or situations that may affect your child at home or at the center to help ensure children's needs are met. Daily communication with staff is encouraged.

### **Home Visits**

Home visits will be conducted twice a year, in November and May and also one within 45 days of enrollment. This allows the exchange of important information about each child without the interruptions that may occur during drop off and pick up times.

### **Outdoor Play Policy**

Outdoor play is an important part of the daily curriculum, as weather permits. Our hopes are that children will be able to experience all types of weather with the children's safety being the main priority when deciding times to experiment with the weather. With this in mind, it is important for parents to provide the appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (i.e. rain gear, or extra clothing, coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc. for winter outdoor play and lightweight clothing for summer outdoor play, including sandals and flip flops with straps on the back). The Program has a few extra changes of clothes and warmer things for children to wear, but not enough for everyone.

The buildings and porches often shelter the playground from the cold wind and hot sun and awnings are placed around the playground in areas where shade is needed. Staff members use the following general guidelines when determining whether to go outside:

**Winter:** If temperature and/or wind chill is at or falls below 32\* F, staff will keep children indoors and will utilize the multi-purpose area for gross motor play.

**Summer:** If temperature and/or heat index reaches 95\* F, staff will keep children indoors and will utilize the multi-purpose area for gross motor play.

### **Rest time**

Our EHS program is a sleep-on-demand program. Children will be allowed to rest when they are tired. If a child is resting and misses a meal, their meal will be refrigerated, then properly heated and served to them when they awake.

Cots with a sheet and blanket are provided. Children who sleep on cots are allowed to bring blankets and or/stuffed sleep buddies. For the safety of infants, no heavy blankets, stuffed animals, etc., will be used in cribs. Personal sleep items must be taken home every Friday to be washed.

## Confidentiality Policy

Confidentiality is upheld to respect the privacy of children, families and co-workers and hold in confidence all information that is given to any EHS employee. This policy is strictly adhered to by all Early Childhood Staff.

## Toilet Learning

ITO EHS will work in conjunction with families to assist children in toilet learning. Staff will encourage children to use the toilet hourly while in care. Children will not be forced to sit on the toilet. Please consider the following points when working towards toilet learning:

- Early Head Start Staff encourages a conference between parents and staff involved to ensure that all are using the same guidelines concerning praise, terminology used, method and routine.
- In order for the child to begin this big step in their own "comfort zone," training needs to begin at home, preferably on the weekend.
- The child needs to exhibit the "signs of readiness". This information can be obtained from your child's teacher.
- Clothing needs to be easy for the child to get up and down. Overalls and belted outfits and outfits with snaps/buttons are highly discouraged.
- It is recommended that children wear thick, absorbent underwear with rubber pants as opposed to pull-ups due to the fact that pull-ups feel much like diapers which pull moisture away from the body and may inhibit toilet learning.
- A pair of underwear and a pair of plastic pants need to be provided for each hour the child is in care in addition to the three changes of outer clothing, socks and shoes. Soiled clothing will not be rinsed out or washed. It will be placed in a sealed plastic bag.

## Health

### Daily health Checks

EHS Program Staff will conduct a visual Daily Health Check to assess a child's health as they are dropped off. This usually occurs as the family signs the child in.

### Screenings and Assessments

The ITO EHS Program uses tools to identify the child's strengths and needs in their development. Family participation is encouraged throughout the assessment. The first assessment must be completed within 45 days of the child's first day of attendance to identify concerns regarding a child's:

- Development
- Sensory (visual and auditory)
- Behavioral
- Motor
- Language
- Social
- Cognitive
- Perceptual
- Emotional skills

In the event a concern is noted, the parent will be notified by the Early Childhood Manager.

### Food Allergies

If your child is allergic to any food or milk, please bring a doctor's note. The menu will be adjusted accordingly. The statement will be posted in the kitchen area and your child's classroom for your child's health.

### Immunizations

To protect children in our care and staff, that program allows the immunizations and schedules for children and staff established by the ITO EHS Health Advisory Board and shall not be less than the immunizations and schedule recommended by the State of Oklahoma.

Vaccine	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months	12 Months	18 Months
DTaP	1	2	3	4	
Polio (IPV)	1	2	3		
Hib	1	2	3	4	
MMR				1	
Hep-B	1	2	3		
PCV	1	2	3	4	
Hep-A				1	2
Varicella				1	

### **No Nit Policy**

The ITO EHS Program will work cooperatively with the families and local health professionals to control and limit the spread of head lice in the center.

To control the spread of head lice outbreak, the following actions will be taken:

- Head checks will be performed every Monday morning on all children.
- Children with head lice will be secluded from the classroom and parents contacted immediately for pickup. They may not return to the Program until they are checked by the family doctor or public health nurse at Perkins Family Clinic and have a note to return.
- Children with chronic occurrences of lice will be referred to the Family Partnership Manager and Early Childhood Manager for family assistance.

### **Medication handling storage and Administration**

The ITO EHS staff will properly store and administer medication, following written authorization of the child's guardian. Medications are stored away from children, under lock and key and at the proper temperature when at the center. Medications must be taken on field trips.

Note: Over the counter medications must be accompanied by a doctor's medication form with correct dosage written and signed by physician

### **Children Exclusion/Readmission**

Please do not send your child to the Program if you feel that your child is too sick to go outside and play or join in on normal activities. This is best for your child, and helps to prevent the spread of illness. On the following page is a list of illnesses for exclusion.

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will move him/her to a quiet area away from the other children, and you will be notified to take your child home immediately. If we are unable to reach you, the alternate contacts you provided on the emergency card will be called. It is important that the individuals you list as alternate contacts live within **1 hour** of the center. If your child becomes ill at home with one of the communicable diseases on the next page, please let the Program know within 24 hours.

In the event that your child is sick but does not require a doctor's visit, a hand-written note from the parent will be required as documentation of absence.

### **Smoke Free Environment**

The ITO EHS Program prohibits the use of all forms of tobacco in all spaces used by the Program. This is in order to protect the children from adverse health effects from tobacco and to promote good health behavior to the children.

## **General Information**

### **Clothing**

Your child should dress in comfortable play clothes, suitable to the weather and appropriate for play. All children go outside everyday, weather permitting, as part of their daily activity, so please dress children appropriately for the weather.

*Please send three (3) sets of clothes for your child to change into in case of accidents or soiled clothing. All clothing must be marked with your child's name. If guardians have a difficult time providing extra clothes for their child, contact the Family & Community Partnerships Manager for assistance.*

### **Personal Belongings**

Children and families are discouraged from bringing personal items such as toys to the program. If your child comes in with a toy, you will be asked to take it back with you. The ITO EHS cannot be responsible for any toys lost or broken.

### **Birthday & Special Occasion Celebration**

The ITO EHS Program has celebrations as initiated and planned by the Parent Committee. Celebrations will be planned, organized, conducted and completed by parents of children enrolled in the Program. Children are the main focus for the staff, therefore staff will conduct regular classroom activities leading up to and following celebrations. Parent Committee members will be solely responsible for conducting celebrations including set-up and clean-up. Individual celebrations will also be observed for birthdays and additions to families. Food served for celebrations shall be prepared in a commercial kitchen. Below are some suggested ideas of recommended foods:

- Muffins
- Fruit cups
- Pudding cups
- Yogurt
- Graham crackers
- Finger sandwiches
- Cereal Bars
- Goldfish crackers
- Jell O cups

**Please avoid these foods: honey, popcorn, hotdogs, raisins, grapes, peanut butter, and nuts.**

Individual celebrations will be initiated, planned, organized, conducted and completed by the child's guardian, including set-up and clean-up.

## Fire Procedures

In the event of fire at the Iowa Tribe of Oklahoma Early Head Start Program:

- All children will be evacuated by EHS staff through designated fire escape routes.
- The Family & Community Partnerships Manager and Site Supervisor will be responsible for ensuring all children and staff have exited the building.
- EHS children will be escorted by the staff to the following area southeast side of the parking lot in the marked designated area.
- After children have been safely secured, families will be notified by telephone.
- In the event the family cannot be reached, the next individual on the Emergency Contact Note will be contacted.
- EHS children will be release **ONLY TO PARENTS OR THOSE INDIVIDUALS LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM.**
- Parents will be notified of the next class schedule.

## Injury

All Staff are trained and certified in:

- Infant, Child & Adult CPR
- Standard First Aid
- Blood Borne Pathogens
- AED

In the event of an injury/incident, the following will occur:

- First Aid will be administered, as necessary, and parent will be notified.
- If staff are unable to reach parents, emergency contacts or the child's physician, the child will be taken by ambulance to a hospital as previously instructed by guardians.
- Staff will complete an injury or incident report

Although we work hard at preventing accidents, it is also important to provide a challenging environment. We can be so worried about preventing every little accident at any cost that we are no longer providing a challenging environment. Minor bruises and scrapes are normal childhood events and should be expected occasionally in a challenging and developmentally appropriate environment.

Fever	When accompanied by behavior changes, stiff neck, difficulty breathing, rash, sore throat, and/or other signs and symptoms of illness; or the child is unable to participate in normal activities. Use temperature measurement before fever reducing medications are given. Armpit temperature: 100.1 degrees or higher. Child may return after being 24 hours fever free, <u>unmedicated.</u>
Diarrhea	24 hours after diarrhea stops or until medical exam indicates that it is not due to communicable disease (diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools compared with a person's normal pattern, along with decreased stool form and/or water, bloody, or mucus containing stools. Parents will be called to come and get their child after two diarrhea diapers.
Vomiting	24 hours after last vomiting episode.
Eye Drainage (Pink Eye)	*24 hours after treatment has started when thick mucus and pus drainage is present.
Chicken Pox	*Child may return if all sores are dry and scabbed over, with a doctor's note.
Fifth Disease	*If all other rash-causing illnesses are ruled out, there is no need to exclude. Pregnant women who are exposed need to consult their doctor.
Impetigo	*Until child has been treated with antibiotics for 24 hours.
Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease	*Child may return when fever is gone and child is well enough to participate in normal activities. Must have Dr.'s note stating the child is non-contagious to return.
Whooping Cough	*Child may return 5 days after appropriate antibiotic treatment begins. <b>This must be reported to local and state health departments.</b>
RSV	*Child may return when child is without fever for 24 hours and is able to participate in normal activities.
Ringworm	*Child may return after 24 hours treatment has begun (must keep ringworm covered).
Scabies	*Child may return 24 hours after treatment begins
Shingles	*If blisters can be covered by clothing or a bandage, no exclusion is required. If blisters <u>cannot</u> be covered, children should be excluded until blisters have crusted. <b>Do not give aspirin to any child under the age of 18, until consult Dr. first.</b>
Strep Throat	*May return 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and until the child is without fever for 24 hours.
Mouth Sores	*Unless the child's physician or local health department authority states in writing that the child is not contagious.
Rash	*Until the physician determines the illness not to be communicable.

### **Dental Health**

After each meal, children will be encouraged to brush their teeth with their own toothbrush provided by the Program. Infants will have their gums swabbed with a gauze pad and water after each feeding. Tooth brushing will be introduced to children after the eruption of their first tooth and children's toothpaste will be introduced at this time. Toothbrushes will be replaced every 3 or 4 months, or as needed.

### **Child Abuse Reporting**

The State of Oklahoma Child Care Regulations require that all licensed providers report all incidents of suspected or actual abuse and neglect of children. The staff and parents are required by law to report such incidents immediately. If you suspect it, REPORT it. The National Child Abuse Hotline is 1-800-522-3511.

## **Education**

### **Curriculum**

ITO EHS Programs has chosen High Reach Curriculum for Infants & Toddlers as the foundation curriculum. Each family will receive the Parent Guide to High Reach Curriculum. In addition, staff utilizes Baby Signing Time to enhance curriculum.

ITO EHS provides a print-rich environment in order to stimulate and encourage the recognition of written language. Language development will also be supported and nurtured by caregivers through daily, open-ended conversations with children discussing activities, objects, nutrition, and indoor and outdoor environments. It is also supported and nurtured by daily reading times, doing finger plays, singing songs and playing music which are culturally and developmentally appropriate.

### **Behavior & Guidance**

ITO EHS Program uses a practical approach to guidance and behavior issues. Natural consequences are followed when incidents (i.e. if someone spills their milk, they clean it up) occur. Staff will use redirection and shadowing techniques as behavior and guidance issues arise. The Program does not use physical punishment and time out. Food will not be used as a form of punishment or reward.

In the event severe behavior occurs, a family conference will be scheduled. Families and staff will develop a plan of action together to best fit the child's developmental needs. This plan shall include but not be limited to observation by guardians and program staff using the classroom surveillance system and physical classroom observations, observations performed by Oklahoma State Department of Health Child Development Specialists assigned to the county Health Department, and referrals for further observation and assessment.

### **Individualized goals and objectives**

The ITO EHS Staff and families will come together to establish individual goals and objectives pertaining to their child. These goals will be drawn from observations and assessments, as well as developmental milestones.

## **Safety & Emergency Procedures**

### **Bad Weather**

In the event of bad weather, the authority to close the tribe rests with the Iowa Tribe Business Committee, Tribal Administrator or Police Chief. Please watch you local news stations and listen to local radio stations for closing information.

### **Storm/Tornado Procedures**

In the event of a storm or tornado at the ITO EHS Program:

- The children will be escorted by EHS staff to the safe room.
- The Family & Community Partnerships Manager or lead teacher will be responsible for ensuring that all classrooms have been emptied.
- The children will remain in the safe room until the Iowa Tribe Police Department or local authorities have given the all clear signal.
- The children will return to class to complete the school day if time allows.

### **If the center has suffered destruction:**

1. The lead teacher will notify the families by telephone. If the family cannot be notified by phone, the next individual on the Emergency Contact Note will be contacted..
2. The Iowa Tribe EHS children will be escorted to the following places:
  - The Iowa Tribal Complex White Cloud Building
  - The Iowa Police Department
3. The children will be release ONLY TO PARENTS OR THOSE INDIVIDUALS LISTED ON THE EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM.
4. Families will be notified of the next class schedule.