

South Central Child Development, Inc.
Home Base Operational Practices

Program Design & Management

1. **SMOKING**

No smoking or use of tobacco products during **home visits, field trips, home base socializations**, or at any other time **when the children are present**. This rule applies equally to all staff and visitors while in the presence of the children. No smoking in agency owned vehicles or personal vehicles used for program business. (See Tobacco Free Policy Statement)

2. **EMPLOYEE DRESS CODE**

- A. Well groomed, neat and clean.
- B. Clothing suitable for the type of activities conducted. The Head Start image in your community is influenced by the conduct and appearance of its employees.

3. **TELEPHONE**

Often times it is necessary to make long distance calls when contacting parents or calling the central office. Telephone log forms are used to record such calls and **returned** to the central office at the **end of each month**.

- A. **Long Distance to the Office**: Toll free 1-877-384-3683
- B. **Length of calls**: All calls are to be kept brief, **5 minutes** or less. (Excessive or lengthy calls may be billed to the employee.)
- C. **No personal long distance calls**.
- D. **Cell phones**: Personal calls received or placed are to be minimal and limited to times when you are not with or responsible for children or during a home visit or PAL session.
- E. **Cell phone restriction when driving**: No use of cell phones or electronic communication devices by the driver/operator unless the vehicle is parked out of traffic.

4. **NON-ENROLLED CHILDREN**

- A. Employees are not allowed to bring their own child on home visits, socializations, parent meetings or field trips. The only exception would be if the son or daughter were old enough to be of assistance in the capacity of a volunteer. (As a volunteer, all appropriate volunteer documentation must be followed.)
- B. Employees are not allowed to bring their own children to staff meetings or trainings unless expressed consent is given by the program director in advance of the meeting.
 - Example: There may be times when an employee may wish to demonstrate an activity to other staff that would require child participation.
- C. There will be many homes, which will have younger and older siblings of the enrolled child. It has always been our policy to allow these children to participate in the educational activities of the home visit if they are interested. The parents are to work with the Head Start child and the home base teacher with the siblings.

5. **ENROLLMENT, HOME VISITS AND SOCIALIZATIONS**

- A. Home base unit enrollment will be **10 to 12 families** per home base teacher. Every effort will be made (by the home base teacher) to maintain that enrollment level but if it should fall to nine (9) or less, the home base teacher will then be paid at a rate of the % of families enrolled compared to 10 families (example: 9 families enrolled rate of pay would

- be 90% of base).
- B. To meet the federal guidelines, **a minimum of 32** home visits are offered to each family a year. Home visits for a one-child family will last a **minimum of 90 minutes**. For a family of two or more children, the home visit will last a minimum of 2 hours. Normally it will be possible to visit each home weekly, however, there may be other Head Start activities scheduled into the week, such as a training workshop or day of legal discontinuance.
 - C. Home visits are to be scheduled at a time convenient to the family. Thursday will be scheduled for socializations unless prior approval is given by your area manager that socialization be held on an alternative day (report immediately to the central office and area manager any changes in socializations). Friday will be open for staff meetings, preparation days and rescheduled home visits.
 - D. **Enrollment change forms are to be mailed to your area manager and central office the day the child has dropped or moved, etc. The Address change form will be filled out, listing both the old and new living and mailing address, telephone number, or change of name. The completed form will then be attached to the attendance sheet and mailed in at the end of the week.**
 - E. To meet the federal guidelines a minimum of 2-group socializations are to be offered per month for each child a minimum of 16-group socializations are to be provided each year (since May is a short month 1-socialization will be held). To provide this socialization experience, home base teachers need to be present, set-up, provide food (meal or snack) and remain at the site for the duration of the scheduled socialization regardless if any families attend.

6. ATTENDANCES AND ABSENCES

- A. When a family has not been home for a scheduled home visit for two (2) consecutive weeks without contacting the home base teacher, the home base teacher will:
 1. Refer the absence to their area manager by phone and in writing on a triplicate form. The area manager will contact the family and report any findings back to the home base teacher as well as document the parent contact on a triplicate form.
 2. The home visitor will note the absence in the week's attendance report and attach their written notification to their area manager to the week's attendance report.
 3. The home visitor will note the family's lesson plan for that week with the reason for the absence and send to the office with weekly mail.
- B. If a family has not been home for a scheduled home visit for three (3) consecutive weeks without contacting the home base teacher, the home base teacher is to refer the situation to their area manager who will then:
 1. Make a home visit to determine the continued enrollment of the child.
 2. Follow-up with a letter to the family with a copy of the letter to be placed in the child's file. The area manager will have the approval of the enrollment manager before dropping a child and notify the home base teacher of any decisions).
- C. All family contacts concerning absences need to be documented on a triplicate and sent to the enrollment manager.
- D. If a home visit is canceled for any reason it is the responsibility of the home base teacher to contact the family and reschedule the visit. This is to ensure that a minimum of 32 home visits are provided to each family. (Rescheduling of home visits is for the benefit of the family. Home visits should not be scheduled to meet the needs of the home base teacher).

- E. Any notes (received from a family or given to a family) regarding an incomplete home visit, should be attached to the weekly attendance report.

7. **PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS**

All staff will have at least one performance evaluation per year, to be completed by their area manager before April 13th each year. (This will included a review of the self evaluation and personal training plan and current job description) Your area manager, as well as the program director, or other Head Start staff may accompany the home base teacher on home visits throughout the year, please discuss this with your families.

8. **INSERVICE TRAININGS AND STAFF MEETINGS**

The following is a list of required meetings and who should attend and when:

- A. In-service sessions are intended for the benefit of the staff and parents and to maintain the quality of the program. Training has been scheduled regularly throughout the year. **Employees are required to attend training and may be excused only by the Head Start Director.** Unexcused absences or tardiness from staff meetings or trainings will result in disciplinary action. Time for training days and staff meetings will be **9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** unless a notice indicates a change of time. When in-service training topics pertain to parents they will be notified in writing by staff of upcoming training two weeks prior to the in-service date.
- B. Parent Unit Committee Meetings – Monthly, but excluding the months of December and May. (Note: meetings are held at a time and location that is convenient to the majority of the parents in that unit as indicated by the parent survey).
- C. Regular Policy Council Meeting: If unit representative needs a ride the **home base teacher or area manager must provide it.**
- D. The Annual Parent Recognition Event. (Required attendance. See activity calendar for dates.)

9. **Field Trips**

- A. A field trip is a fun way for children to experience new and different activities. Field trips conducted during class time need to be kept at about 30 minutes & within a 30 mile radius of the socialization site.
- B. Only one field trip experience per socialization.
- C. A child's participation on a field trip experience is contingent upon prior notice given to parents and written approval from the parents prior to each trip.
- D. Field trips will be planned at parent meetings.
- E. Field trips will be listed on the parent's monthly calendar that is given to parent with a copy being sent to the central office.
- F. Written notification will be given to families and sent to the area manager and central office one (1) week prior to the field trip. (Walking and non-walking)
- G. Signed permission slips should be kept in each child's file at the center following the completion of the field trip.
- H. Home base teachers can plan walking field trips as part of the lesson plan and should be considered to be part of the learning experience for that day with manager approval (under 30 minutes).

The field trip request form may be used by any parent group to request a field trip for a home base group. Four **off-site** field trips are allowed each program year (2 fall and 2 spring). Program

funds may be used to pay for trips based on available funding – the program can only pay for the enrolled child(ren) and up to two parents/guardian if there is a cost associated with the trip. Program transportation guidelines must be followed.

The person/group requesting the Field Trip completes the form and then turns it into the Area Manager who will turn it into the office for approval. The following information is considered: appropriateness of event, location, transportation cost/payment, food, staffing required, and child care. A decision will be made and noted on the form as well as any follow-up instructions. Once the form has been reviewed and approved a copy will be returned to the Area Manager.

If there is a program cost associated with the field trip, the request form goes to the fiscal office.

If there is food associated with the event, please complete the Meal Request portion of the Field Trip/Event Request form. This will be reviewed by the nutrition manager for approval.

If the request is denied the field trip/event will not take place.

The staff/area manager will attach a copy of the approved form to any bills or receipts to be turned into the Fiscal Office for payment.

The completed Field Trip/Event Request Form will be held in the Fiscal Office and attached to the voucher for payment when the bill is received.

**Note: Minutes of the Local Unit approving this request must be attached.
Field Trip and Event Request Form Protocol**

10. **TRANSPORTATION POLICY**

A. **Program Cars**

Program cars are issued to those home base teachers who normally drive the greatest distances to and between visits. The assignment of cars can change from year to year and even during a program year. It is the responsibility of the person to which the car is assigned to:

1. Have the oil and filter changed every **3000** miles, and tires rotated every **6000** miles.
2. Arrange with a local business to charge gas, oil, tires and other maintenance to the Head Start program.
3. It is the employees responsibility to ensure that they keep the vehicle in safe mechanical and driving condition. Keep winter survival and emergency first aid kit up-to-date.
4. Keep the car clean both inside and outside. Repair of damage to vehicles from beverage or food will be the responsibility of the employee assigned to the vehicle.
5. Keep vehicle log book showing miles driven, destinations, purchases of gas, oil, or maintenance charges (**to be done daily**). This original form is to be mailed into the office at the **end of each month**, along with any signed charge tickets due in the office by the **3rd working day**.
6. Daily, prior to driving, visually check the vehicle for obvious wear and tear, which could have an effect on the vehicle's driving condition.

7. No smoking/tobacco products or alcoholic beverages in vehicles.
8. Use of program vehicles may be terminated by the Executive Director at any time. **(See Transportation Section of Personnel Manual)**

It is a program best practice to have all maintenance and tire purchases made in the home community of the employee. Prior approval of purchases over \$25.00 must be granted by the fiscal manager.

B. Use of Personal Cars

Mileage will be paid at a rate per mile as authorized by the Board of Directors for authorized Head Start travel when an agency vehicle is not available or has not been assigned. It is necessary to keep a log form showing the date, odometer reading before and after the trip and destination and purpose of the travel. Reimbursement log forms can be obtained from the central office through your area manager **or off the program web site**. Personal vehicle log sheets to be submitted by **the 5th** of the following month. Reimbursements may not be paid for mileage forms and claims past two (2) months. The driver of the vehicle must have liability insurance of \$250,000 and provide proof of insurance coverage to the program director or fiscal manager.

All safety practices and policies must be followed, including the use of seat belts.

11. **OUTSIDE EMPLOYMENT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION**

If you are or will plan to take outside employment or enroll in continuing education classes, please refer to the SCCD, Inc. Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual, and contact the executive Director.

12. **SNOW DAYS**

- A. Due to the fact that the children are not transported for a home visit, there would probably not be as great an incidence of canceled visits due to weather, however, there is no need to be on the road if visibility is poor and road conditions are impassable due to ice and snow. You will have to use your own discretion as to when to cancel visits due to snow and weather driving conditions. If it is necessary to cancel a visit or a whole day, you will need to inform the family as well as your area manager and central office. The taking of a snow day should be noted on a leave form and on the attendance form and/or socialization planning form.
- B. Home base teachers have the option to use weather related cancellations as a prep day at home and to reschedule the home visits to minimize the loss of services of families. A maximum of one (1) prep day per week is allowable.

13. **PURCHASING**

- A. No equipment or maintenance purchase can be made without prior approval of your area manager **and** fiscal manager. Purchases over \$25.00 require a purchase order number to be issued by fiscal manager. Prior approval must be granted in writing by the fiscal manager for major purchases.
- B. When purchasing or making a charge purchase to the program, it is necessary that you obtain an itemized list of each item bought and its cost. The signed receipt is necessary for our fiscal department to make payments to the vendor or yourself.
- C. Turn all purchase and charge receipts into the central office at the end of the month.

(Reimbursement may not be made for expenses submitted after 2 months.)

- D. Purchases for the Head Start program are **tax-exempt**. If the vendor should request a letter of verification, one will be provided. Our Tax number is: **1015-5240-RA** and is to be used only for program charges and **NOT Parent Committee purchases**.

14. **INJURIES/CHILDREN/VOLUNTEERS**

Any time a child or volunteer is injured as a participant in a program activity, report the injury to the central office **immediately**, and contact your immediate supervisor, health manager and executive director (following emergency medical plan). An **incident report** is to be completed each time a volunteer or an enrolled child sustains an injury in relation to a program activity. These reports are to be forwarded to the fiscal office **within 24 hours**.

15. **INJURIES – STAFF**: When an employee is injured at work, seek appropriate medical attention and notify the fiscal manager and executive director while following these steps:

1. Your employer has enrolled with the *Berkley Assigned Risk Services* to manage all necessary medical treatment for workers' compensation injuries.
2. If you have questions about managed care you may contact your supervisor, or the *BARS* at 1-888-548-7431.
3. If you are injured at work, you may receive treatment from any medical practitioner provided that his/her services are a reasonable distance from your home place of employment and is appropriate for the injury or illness.
4. If you are injured at work, report the injury immediately to your supervisor and Fiscal office who will help you access medical care under the managed care plan.
If your supervisor or fiscal office personnel are not available, you may access information about available services under your managed care plan by calling 1-888-548-7431.
5. In the event of an emergency, call 911 for immediate care.
6. If you are injured at work, you must notify the physician that you are covered by *BARS* on your initial visit. If you desire to change providers, you must submit a written request to the managed care plan.
7. If you should have questions regarding managed care, you may call your employers, *BARS* the South Dakota Department of Labor.
1-888-548-7431 Berkley Assigned Risk Service
1-605-773-3681 South Dakota Department of Labor

Report Workman Comp Claims

At the time of injury:

Employee reports the injury to your supervisor and the central office.

When medical care is needed the **SUPERVISOR**

- Calls the health care provider urgent care or Emergency room and informs them the employee is coming in and reports any pertinent injury data.
- Directs/accompanies the employee to the health care provider, urgent care center or hospital emergency room.
- Provides the employee with **TWO FORMS**:
 - Certificate of Release Medical Information
 - Workers Compensation Claimants Report

Within 24 hours of the reported injury:

The SUPERVISOR completes the South Dakota Employer's First Report of Injury form and the Incident Report form with the EMPLOYEE. Make sure all areas are completed.

The SUPERVISOR completes the Supervisor's Report of Accident form.

The SUPERVISOR submits the South Dakota Employer's First Report of Injury form, the Supervisor's Report of Accident form, the Certificate to Release Medical Information form, Incident report form and the Workers' Compensation Claimants Report form to the following:

SCCD Inc
401 Walnut Street SW
Wagner, SD 57380
Fax (605) 384-5696

IMPORTANT – Fax to the Central Office the South Dakota Employer's First Report of Injury form and the Incident Report form within 24-hours regardless if the other forms are not yet complete.

16. **IN-KIND**

In-kind is the non-federal contribution that is made by parents and others to the program and is documented on an in-kind form. These are to be returned to the area manager at the **end of each month**. Each Home Base unit is expected to generate an appropriate amount of documented in-kind based on enrollment and at a level set by the Board of Directors and Head Start Policy Council.

Early Childhood Development & Health Services

1. **SUPERVISION**

Children are not to be left unsupervised at **ANY** time. (If the bathroom is located away from your socialization site, an adult must accompany the child to the bathroom).

2. **PROGRAM OPERATIONS**

A. **Home Visits**

Home visits are held weekly in the family home and they last for 1-1/2 to 2 hours. The parent and the home base teacher plan each session, using activities that are derived from the child's individual school readiness/family engagement plan as well as developmental screening and/or assessment information that falls within a developmental approach.

Home visit routine:

- Greeting
- Follow-up discussion to include in kind
- Small group (parent/child activities)
- Child's choice
- Emergent Literacy Program
- Discussion and planning for next week (family resource handouts)
- Follow-up activities

The child's progress will be reviewed weekly using the anecdotal observations and the child's goals. The home base teacher and the parent will complete the home visit process together.

B. Socializations

Parents and children participate in socializations, which are typically held on Thursdays. If an alternative date is necessary, prior approval must be obtained from the area manager.

Socializations last a minimum of 2½ hours. Any changes in socializations, notify the central office and your area manager as soon as possible.

Home base teachers will be at the socializations site early enough so that all materials/activities are ready 15 minutes prior to the scheduled starting time. This means that if socialization starts at 9:00 am, all materials and activities must be ready at the site with the home base teacher prepared to greet parents and children by 8:45 am. Parent/Guardian must be in attendance with enrolled child at socializations as required by Federal Regulation (1306.33)(c). (Other children who are participating in the socializations may be doing so as part of a local school district's preschool special education placement)

Socializations sites should be neat and clean, with materials being displayed in a developmentally appropriate and attractive arrangement. Activities and materials need to be stored in clear, child-size containers; with containers being labeled with a picture of contents. Socializations space should be organized into work areas clearly recognizable by all participants. Choice time interest centers to be available at each socialization include (listed below are examples of minimum requirements that should be available for children to choose from at each group, additional developmentally appropriate materials may be added):

- Blocks - wooden blocks, town and car mat, vehicles
- Dramatic - dolls, kitchen items (stove set, dishes, play food), play clothes
- Language/Book area - various books
- Toy and games area - puzzles, pegboard, beads, building materials, etc.
- Science discovery table - magnet, prism, color paddles, kaleidoscope, magnifying glass
- Easel - tempera paint, paper, and brushes using primary colors.
- Art area - colors, paper, scissors, paste, collage materials, markers, etc.
- Sand/water table - sand or appropriate substitute, sand toys or manipulative appropriate for sand play; water or appropriate liquid substance.
- Literacy activities are included in each content area.

Activities:

The following activities must take place at socializations:

- Welcome/arrival
- Large Group Time – Message Board, movement activities, singing songs, finger plays, telling stories. Children are encouraged to contribute their own ideas to the activities.
- Small Group Time - hands on active learning time initiated by teaching staff. Adults initiate an activity by choosing, introducing, and making suggestions about the materials the children will use based on the children's interests. Children are not expected to do the same thing with these materials. They are free to use them in ways that are meaningful to them. Adults support, guide and help child extend their explorations.
- Choice Time – minimum time one (1) hour children engage in their choice of activity available in work time areas. Choice time forms the core of the socializations session. The reasons for this are:

- * It encourages the development of independence, choices and decision making, discovery, self-motivation and creativity.
 - * Provides the opportunity for staff and volunteers to work with children on their goals.
 - * Allows each child more direct involvement with the materials/activities.
 - * Allows children the opportunity to socialize with their own peers and learn from one another.
- o Meals or snacks are served family-style using child-sized tables and chairs. Small serving bowls are used to allow children to serve themselves. Children should help set tables and clear tables after eating. Children need to wash hands before the meal. Mealtime conversation is to be child directed and focused.
 - o Tooth brushing - children brush teeth after eating. Each toothbrush should be labeled with their name and stored in separate containers.
 - o Outdoor Time – children and adults spend time outdoors engaged in active play activities.

Parents and community members are recruited to serve as volunteers at the socialization area and in the preparation of food. Volunteers are an important part of socializations. **Remember - children are not to be left unsupervised at anytime.**

Home Base Teachers must conduct Safety Procedures and Drills (documented on the Safety Procedures & Drills Control Sheet)

1. Fire Drills - to be done on **first socialization** of the program year in September. Repeat drills October, January and March.
2. Tornado/Severe Storm Drill - to be conducted in April.
3. Playground Safety Check – the first playground safety inspection must be completed prior to the first socialization and then in November and March. Complete the Head Start Playground Safety checklist each time an inspection occurs.
4. Pedestrian Safety – Head Start staff must ensure that children and parents are taught safe riding and walking practices within 30 days of service and in November & March.
5. Fire Extinguisher – Smoke Detector – Fire Extinguisher Check – Monthly
Smoke Detector Check – Monthly
Smoke Detector Batteries – Change in October & April or as needed. Document on tracking form when completed.

3. **INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION LEARNING PLANS**

All IEP meetings will be attended by the home base teacher and/or area manager and/or any other appropriate program personnel. The home base teacher is to report any known services that a child is receiving to their area manager.

4. **CONTAGIOUS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASE**

Children should not be allowed to attend socialization if they are sick, show signs of having head lice or other communicable disease. When situations arise, the home base teacher will ask that such children return home. The teacher will notify their supervisor & the health manager of their actions. Once the supervisor has been notified they will provide any appropriated feedback &/or follow-up.

In the event that a child is found to have head lice, the home base teacher should contact their area manager.

Socializations: The parent(s) is to be informed of the situation while at the socialization. The parent will be encouraged to have the child seen by their own physician and treatment prescribed by the physician.

The child will be allowed to return to socializations on a regular basis when, in the opinion of the home base teacher and their parent there is no evidence of the condition posing a threat to the other children or staff. If a decision is not agreed on the supervisor and/or the physician will be contacted for further directions. The supervisor and the health manager will be notified of all medical/contagious/communicable disease/illness situations that occur. Documentation will be sent to the supervisor & the Health Manager. The Health Manager will notify the Executive Director.

See: Employee/Child Communicable Disease Policy and Medication Policy

5. **CHILD REFERRAL FOR BEHAVIOR CONCERNS**

If there are any concerns about a child's behavior the following steps are to be followed:

1. Home base record observations for one month.
 - A. Look for patterns of behavior and record your observations including what occurs before and after the behavior.
 - B. Observe on different days if possible and at different times of the day.
2. Confidentially - discuss your concerns with other staff members
 - A. Ask other staff about their observations which pertain to the child in question.
 - B. Share your observations with specifics about the behavior in question.
 - C. Determine whether the problem occurs in relation to staff, other adults, and other children.
3. Involve the child's parent(s)/guardian(s).
 - A. Share your observations and concerns with the parent(s)/guardians(s).
 - B. Solicit new information from the parents, asking for their perspective.
4. Notify and send all pertinent information to the mental health manager. (**Follow Mental Health Protocol**).
5. The area manager and mental health manager will meet and make any needed referrals upon written agreement from parent/guardian.
6. Written parental consent will be obtained for specific mental health services.

6. **FLUORIDE TESTING OF WELL WATER**

Well water will be checked as needed using the following process:

1. Area managers will track enrolled families using well water systems and inform the health manager.
2. Health Manager will assemble master list of families using well water.
3. Health Manager will arrange for water testing dates.
4. Two weeks prior to testing, send out labeled water sample containers to (center teachers and/or home base teachers.) Send address and deadline for sending in samples. Provide area managers with copy of master list.
5. Send master list to water test site.
6. Upon return of results of fluoride testing, families will be contacted in writing with results of fluoride testing of their water and program recommendations, if needed.

When **finding a socialization location** the following things should be kept in mind:

- A. Accessible to physically challenged individuals (children/parents/staff)
- B. Adequate food preparation planned facilities.
- C. Adequate space and appropriate facilities for activities.
- D. Adequate storage space.
- E. Comfort level of facility (light, heating & cooling conditions).
- F. **Notify the central office and area manager immediately of any changes to a socialization site (start time, location, meal time etc. using the Center Site/Socialization Detail Information form).**

The following items must be posted at socializations:

Kitchen Area:

- A. Food Handler Gloves and Instructions for Use
- B. Hair Restraint Protocol

Meal Area:

- A. "And Justice for All" Poster (State Food Program poster)

Socializations Site

- A. "Welcome parents" sign or banner
- B. Socialization planning form
- C. Volunteer Sign-in Sheet
- D. Daily Schedule - (using pictures to identify activities)
- E. No Smoking Sign (at least two)
- F. Fire Exit Plan (Floor plan of site)
- G. Emergency Evacuation/Disaster Management Plan (Fire, winter storm, tornado, and loss of utilities, etc.) (Program and Site Plan)
- H. Label all storage areas in the choice time area with pictures
- I. Family Resource Directory
- J. Cleaning schedule

Health Emergencies

- A. Emergency Medical and Dental Plan
- B. Emergency Dental Procedures
- C. MSDS Resource Binder
- D. Emergency Phone Numbers (doctor, dental, and hospital, ambulance, law enforcement, poison control center, fire/rescue unit)
- E. CPR Comparison chart

Bathroom

- A. Tooth brushing Procedure (poster/information)
- B. Hand washing Poster (procedure poster/information)

Home base teachers must ensure that the items listed below are at the socialization site:

- A. Enrollment Data
- B. Emergency family contact names/addresses/phone numbers
- C. First Aid Kits
- D. Adequate number of covered trash cans
- E. Disposable drinking glasses
- F. Thermometers in refrigerator and freezer
- G. Smoke Alarm - to be tested prior to each session to ensure they are in working order and documented on socialization planning form. (safety procedures & drills control sheet)

- H. Up-to-Date Charged Fire Extinguisher - to be checked monthly and documented on socialization planning form. (safety procedures & drills control sheet)
- I. Pocket Protection Kits
- J. If there is not a sink/fountain in the classroom area, a pitcher of water and disposable glasses should be provided for participants to get a drink of water.
- K. Safety plugs are in place for outlets/safety outlets.

7. **SOCIALIZATION SITE SANITATION AND MAINTENANCE**

The socialization site should be neat and clean, with materials being displayed in a developmentally appropriate and attractive arrangement. All flammable and poisonous materials must be stored in areas where children do not have access as well as in a locked cabinet or area.

- It is the responsibility of the home base teacher to maintain a clean and sanitary site.
- Light housekeeping duties should include, but are not limited to:
 - Empty garbage/trash cans.
 - Sweep/vacuum floors and disinfect toys.
 - Wash floor as needed.
 - Clean and sanitize toys and equipment, as needed.
 - Keep home base teacher area (prep and storage) organized at all times.

The amount of daily housekeeping tasks will depend on the site you are operating in. If the facility is shared with another party, it is expected that you will leave it in tiptop shape. The home base teacher should watch for damaged equipment and objects; remove or replace them if need be, for the safety of program participants. Equipment needing repairs should be noted with the area manager.

If it appears that insects and/or rodents are inhabiting the site, proper preventative measures need to be taken to rid the premises of them when children are **not** present.

8. **FOOD HANDLING AND SANITATION POLICIES**

1. **NO** donated food can be served or given out at socializations unless the complete meal is potluck. Example would be a social or picnic at the program year-end.
2. Food cannot be transferred from one unit to another. (Example: left over casserole, etc.)
3. Parents or staff are not to prepare food at home for socializations. All food must be prepared on site unless it is for a potluck meal.
4. All foods must be thrown away at the end of the meal or snack and not sent home with anyone. **This policy is a health, safety and liability requirement of the Child and Adult Nutrition Food Program.**
5. All prepared or opened foodstuffs that cannot be properly stored for the next meal must be thrown out. Food items such as staples that can be safely stored (peanut butter, dressings, if they can be left refrigerated at the site; butter, bread, unopened cans or boxes of food) can be kept from one week to the next, if properly stored.
6. No food scraps are to be scraped to take home for pets, etc. Leftover scraps are garbage and are to be disposed of as such.
7. Parents need to give program staff a definite answer regarding attendance at socializations by the day prior to socializations. This will assist in purchasing and preparing foods without waste.
8. Written notice of any changes in meal times need to be documented on the Center Site/Socializations Detailed Information form and sent to the office for approval. Teachers must

also notify their area manager of the change.

9. **FOOD/BEVERAGE**

There will be **no personal food or beverage** inside the socialization site while the children are present. All personal beverage or snack items will be stored away and will not be visible during socialization hours when children are present. (Note: personal food and beverage items cannot be stored together with program food and beverage.)

10. **NO OUTSIDE FOOD**

Treats – Many children do not tolerate exposure to all food items and exposure to certain ingredients can cause a life altering reaction. The Head Start teaching staff may not be aware of the food sensitivity or not aware that food brought by a child to Head Start as a treat for everyone has included ingredients that could potentially cause a life altering reaction. We want everyone to be safe at Head Start, so we have a no outside food tolerance.

If you and your child wish to provide treats for children on special occasions, please provide something that is not a food item. Alternative items may include:

- a. Play dough
- b. Pencils
- c. Little Golden Books

Please work with your Teacher and/or Area Manager regarding this best practice.

11. **ENVIROMENTAL CHECKLIST REVIEWS**

Environmental checklist reviews will be conducted at least two (2) times per year in conjunction with any meal reviews by management or administrative personnel. A copy of the completed form and the results of the checklist will be reviewed with and given to the home base teacher. Corrective action, if necessary, must be completed as soon as possible.

Parent, Family & Community Engagement

1. **GUESTS AND VISITORS**

From time to time visitors may come to the socialization/home visit for various program reasons. If a visit is planned through the central office, every effort will be made to notify the home base teacher as to whom will be visiting and why. **Visitors to centers and socializations:** all visitors (anyone who is not listed on our application form) and/or who are unfamiliar to South Central Child Development, Inc. staff is required to sign in and state the purpose of the visit. The program staff will have the sign in form available at the center/socialization site.

2. **PARENT AND VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK**

The teacher or Family Services Worker distributes and reviews the “Parent and Volunteer Handbook” (documented on the Head Start Family Enrollment Form)

3. **SCHOOL READINESS**

An Individual School Readiness/Transition Plan will be completed in November and again in April/May. This form will be completed on all Head Start children twice a year.

4. **FAMILY SERVICES ASSESSMENTS & FAMILY PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS**
Family Services Workers and Area Managers typically completed the FSA within 45 days of entering the Program, however, Home Base Teachers may be asked by their supervisor to complete the assessment and/or agreement. A Family Outcomes Scoring Matrix will also be incorporated into the assessment process. This matrix is an important part of the program's overall "School Readiness" plan.

5. **ABUSE AND NEGLECT**
Any known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect are to be reported to your area manager who will in turn provide you with needed information as how to proceed with reporting such known cases to the proper authorities. **IT IS THE LAW THAT WE REPORT.** It is the responsibility of the home base teacher to document observations and keep such records confidential and in a locking file case. (See Reporting Procedures) Do not attempt to conduct your own interviews or investigation.