# Phone Directory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Center</th>
<th>Physical Address</th>
<th>Mailing Address</th>
<th>Phone #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BAXTER COUNTY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotter HS</td>
<td>208 Lucille Street, Cotter</td>
<td>PO Box 70, 72626</td>
<td>870-435-5040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Home HS I</td>
<td>1414 Post Oak Road</td>
<td>(same as physical) 72653</td>
<td>870-425-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Home HS II</td>
<td>1414 Post Oak Road</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-425-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Home HS IV</td>
<td>1414 Post Oak Road</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-425-9111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Home ABC</td>
<td>1414 Post Oak Road</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-424-5515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mountain Home Early HS (First United Methodist Church)</td>
<td>605 W 6th St</td>
<td>PO Box 1400, 72602</td>
<td>870-424-0260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfork HS</td>
<td>215 Mildred Simpson Drive</td>
<td>(s.a.p.), 72658</td>
<td>870-499-5611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norfork ABC</td>
<td>215 Mildred Simpson Drive</td>
<td>(s.a.p.), 72658</td>
<td>870-499-5611</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>BOONE COUNTY:</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Springs HS</td>
<td>7349 School Street</td>
<td>PO Box 640, 72682</td>
<td>870-429-5524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison HS – rooms I</td>
<td>701 E. Prospect Ave.</td>
<td>PO Box 1400, 72602</td>
<td>870-741-906 x201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison HS – room II</td>
<td>701 E. Prospect Ave.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-741-906 x202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison HS – room III</td>
<td>701 E. Prospect Ave.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-741-906 x203</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison HS - room IV</td>
<td>701 E. Prospect Ave.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-741-906 x204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harrison HS - room V</td>
<td>701 E. Prospect Ave.</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>870-741-906 x205</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HSN Early HS and ABC</td>
<td>220 Arbor Dr</td>
<td>PO Box 1400 72602</td>
<td>870-391-2228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MARION COUNTY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruno-Pyatt HS</td>
<td>4754 Hwy 125, Everton</td>
<td>(s.a.p.), 72672</td>
<td>870-427-5661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellville Summit HS</td>
<td>1124 N. Panther Ave</td>
<td>PO Box 296, 72687</td>
<td>870-321-7437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEWTON COUNTY:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jasper HS</td>
<td>600 School Street</td>
<td>PO Box 82, 72641</td>
<td>870-446-5818</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Grove IIS</td>
<td>300 School Street</td>
<td>(s.a.p.), 72685</td>
<td>870-429-8242</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SEARCY COUNTY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Joe HS</td>
<td>250 Hwy 65 S.</td>
<td>(s.a.p.), 72675</td>
<td>870-439-2210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VAN BUREN COUNTY:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinton Early Head Start</td>
<td>1367 Hwy 95 W.</td>
<td>PO Box 398, 72031</td>
<td>501-745-5905</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shirley HS</td>
<td>154 School Street</td>
<td>PO Box 196, 72153</td>
<td>501-723-4301</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Welcome**

Revised 04/2020
Welcome to the Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (OOI) Early Childhood Education Family. You are now a part of a comprehensive program designed to end the cycle of poverty by closing the achievement gap between children from lower income families and children from higher income families. Our program focuses on educating children by strengthening families. Our two main objectives are School Readiness and Family Engagement.

If you need additional information that is not contained in this guide, please feel free to contact your child’s teacher, your Family Service Worker, or anyone at the Central Office. We look forward to working with you.

About Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (“OOI”) & OOI Early Childhood Education

Ozark Opportunities, Inc. (OOI) is a non-profit corporation registered with the State of Arkansas and the Internal Revenue Service. As stated in our organizational documents, Ozark Opportunities, Inc. is here to do everything reasonable and lawfully necessary to achieve its purpose of providing services to the community. The eighteen (18) board members of the corporation consist of six (6) Community Representatives, six (6) Low-Income Representatives and six (6) elected officials. Each county in the six county service area is represented by three (3) board members.

Ozark Opportunities, Inc. Early Childhood Education program is funded through the Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. The Department of Health and Human Services administers the program through the Early Childhood Education Bureau. Our program is under the auspices of Region VI which has its headquarters in Dallas, Texas. Our program is governed by the Early Childhood Education Performance Standards, the Early Childhood Education Act and state licensing requirements.

Nondiscrimination Policy

Admission to Early Childhood Education program is based on the application for enrollment and on meeting established criteria for enrollment. Early Childhood Education does not discriminate because of race, age, religion, sex, national origin, handicap, political affiliation or belief.

SCHOOL READINESS- PREPARING CHILDREN FOR A LIFETIME OF LEARNING

Many parents and guardians are concerned about what their children will learn in preschool. They want their children to enjoy school yet be well prepared for the more formal environments of kindergarten and elementary school. The best teaching strategies for three to five year olds build on children’s natural inclination to play. Some preschool programs focus on academic content like helping children learn their letters and sounds, their numbers, colors and shapes but our program does much more than that.

Rich play experiences during the preschool years increase a child’s success in reading, writing, math, science, social studies and the arts. Preschool programs, like ours, that strengthen social and emotional skills through play have a positive effect on all aspects of a child’s development. The positive benefits that come from rich play experiences during the preschool years make a lasting difference on a child’s cognitive and intellectual development.

How are we preparing our infants and toddlers? Research demonstrates the critical role early relationships play in fostering young children’s social and emotional development and shaping their cognition. Staff help Revised 04/2020
children develop characteristics that are now proven to be predictors of later success in school, including confidence, curiosity, intentionality, self-control, relatedness, and the capacity to communicate and cooperate.

**Curriculum**

OOI classroom teachers use a standardized, research-based curriculum that is designed to maximize the educational benefits that the children who participate in our program receive. We have elected to use *Creative Curriculum* because it uses exploration and discovery (a rich play environment) to promote learning. *Creative Curriculum* contains lesson plans that improve three and four-year-old children’s physical development and health, social and emotional development, language and literacy skills and cognition and general knowledge in addition to promoting a positive approach to learning. The academic content in *Creative Curriculum* satisfies all the requirements of the Arkansas Early Childhood Education Framework and matches the Common Core standards for Arkansas Schools and Benchmark and the Early Childhood Education Child Development and Early Learning Framework.

That means that your child will learn everything that he or she needs to know to do well in kindergarten by doing what children do best – by playing. Your child will create art projects, play with building blocks, read stories and engage in storytelling, perform parts in a play, write songs, go outside, and play in the sand and sometimes the water. This rich play environment will help your child develop confidence, creativity and critical thinking skills that will last a lifetime.

**DAILY ACTIVITIES**

Our daily routine is designed to help families meet the requirements of their local public school system. Each day includes arrival time, small and large group activities, free choice time, outdoor learning sessions (when weather permits), mealtime, rest time and departure time. Activities may vary depending of the ages of children. You will find each day’s schedule and the weekly lesson plan posted on the Parent Board.

We strongly encourage parents and guardians to bring their children every day and to ensure that their children arrive on time because the public school system does not have lenient attendance policies. Our small and large group activities are designed to help children learn the social skills they need to fit in and to make friends in the kindergarten classroom. Free choice time is designed to help children become more confident and more independent. Outdoor learning experiences, meals and rest time promote strong and healthy children. No religious activity may occur in the classroom regardless of the source of funds used.

*Any parent spending time in a classroom (beyond dropoff/pickup) must abide by the same requirements for classroom conduct that our staff follows, as established by licensing standards and agency policies.*

**ASSESSMENTS**

Our goal is to provide your child with the type of individualized education that he or she needs to succeed not only in kindergarten but throughout life. To do this, we must assess both your child’s strengths and weaknesses. Our classrooms with 3 to 5-year-old children use a tool called the Teaching Strategies Gold to

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determine what skills your child has mastered and what skills your child needs to improve. We assess your
child at the beginning of the school year, the middle of the school year and at the end of the year. We will
provide you with the results of each assessment and we will provide you with a list of activities that you
can do with your child to build on his or her strengths and to address any weaknesses he or she may have.

ATTENDANCE

In order to give each child the full benefit of the Early Childhood Education Program, it is important that
parents and guardians have their children in attendance and on time every day the center is open. We
understand occasionally, illness or unforeseen circumstances prevent children from attending.

Early Childhood Education Performance Standards 1302.16 requires that Early Childhood Education
Programs maintain a monthly average daily attendance of 85%. Each time a center’s average falls below
85% the cause must be evaluated and reported.

This evaluation must include a study of the pattern of absences for each child, including reasons for
absences as well as the number of absences that occur on consecutive days. Early Childhood Education
staff will provide appropriate family support for all children.

Parents and guardians will be expected to call, text, or email within one hour of start time for each day their
child cannot attend the class and to explain the reasons for absence. [Attendance Agreement, Early
Childhood Education form #1e, signed during Parent Orientation.]

Families of children experiencing absenteeism of 10% or more per month will be contacted to
complete an attendance improvement plan in order to establish regular attendance routines. If
regular attendance cannot be established through classroom participation, another child on the
waiting list must be given the opportunity to enroll in the program. Families will be given every
opportunity to establish regular attendance and will be withdrawn from the program only when they are
unable or unwilling to participate.

SIGN IN/OUT

Every child must be checked into the center and signed in/signed out by a parent or guardian each morning
and afternoon. Only persons listed on the Authorization for Child Pick-Up Form will be allowed to sign out
and pick up children.

Should a situation arise that a child is requested to be released to an individual that is not on the
Authorization for Child Pick-Up Form; permission must be granted by the OOI Central Office.

Photo I.D. may be required to pick up a child. It is helpful to let the teacher know where you can be reached
when you drop the child off each day. If a child is left for more than 15-20 minutes after pickup time and
the teacher cannot reach any of the contacts on the Authorization for Child Pick-Up Form, teaching staff
have been instructed to contact the local Police or Sheriff’s office for pick-up of the child to insure their
safety.

LATE ARRIVAL

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Children who arrive late miss important learning and social opportunities. If a child is consistently late, a conference may be conducted in order to identify the problem, set goals and monitor the progress. Parents and guardians are asked to call the center if the child is going to be late so that appropriate plans can be made for providing meals.

**PICK UP POLICY**

All children must be picked up no later than the time designated by the center. If you know you will be late, a phone call to staff can eliminate the need to initiate the “Late Pick-Up Policy”.

If a parent/guardian is significantly late (approximately 30 minutes) the “Late Pick-Up Policy” will be initiated.

**Children will only be picked up by the person(s) listed on the Authorization for Child Pick-Up Form.**

- At least three different names and numbers must be listed on the form.
- These must be current and working numbers to meet licensing requirements.

**Late Pick Up Policy:**

1. Center staff will make every attempt to contact every individual on the *Authorization for Child Pick-Up Form*.
2. Center staff will call the Central Office to let them know of the issue.
3. If no contact has been made with individuals listed, Central Office staff will contact the Department of Human Services (DHHS) for further instructions and/or local law enforcement for pick-up of the child(ren) to insure their safety.

**BACKPACKS**

Early Childhood Education children may not bring backpacks to the Early Childhood Education Center. Backpacks will be treated the same as toys from home- the classroom teacher will store the backpack until it can be returned to the child’s parent or guardian.

**INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Early Childhood Education will follow the inclement weather policy of the public school for dismissal of students. For school closings, please listen to local radio stations and other media outlets. All inclement weather absences are excused.

**Anti-Bullying Policy**

Revised 04/2020
Ozark Opportunities, Inc. facilities must be safe learning environments for the children in our program and safe working environments for our staff members. OOI Early Childhood Education program investigates all allegations of bullying; both of children and staff members.

We define bullying as “any written or verbal expression or physical act or gesture or any pattern of written, verbal or physical acts that is intended to or does cause distress and fear.” We define extreme bullying as “any humiliating or embarrassing act or action that is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive enough to limit a child or a staff member’s ability to participate in or benefit from our Early Childhood Education program.”

We are able to address most bullying incidents that do not meet the definition of extreme bullying under our Behavior Guidance Policy. If an investigation determines that the bullying behavior meets the definition of extreme bullying, the Early Childhood Education Director or OOI Executive Director may drop the family from the Early Childhood Education program.

CLOTHING

It is important that your child be dressed for play. Your child will play outside every day (weather permitting), and experience all kinds of materials (water, paint, play dough, food). Please send at least one change of clothing to the center in case of mishaps. The items should be labeled on inside tags, with your child’s name. Children in toilet training may need additional changes of clothing. It is not recommended your child wear flip-flops or high-heeled shoes due to the risk of injury at the center.

TOILETING/SOILED CLOTHING POLICY

All Early Childhood Education classrooms will follow the AR Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers:

1. For children who are in need of toileting assistance, the caregiver shall assist children in toilet routine and hygiene practices. OOI will ensure there is a safe changing area which shall be sanitized after every use and equipped with necessary supplies and cleaning materials.

2. The child’s soiled clothing will be changed immediately upon discovery of any toileting accident and replaced with clean dry clothing. The caregiver shall ensure that children are properly cleaned and dried. Parents and guardians must supply OOI with a change of clothing to be used in the event of a toileting accident.

3. Soiled clothing shall not be rinsed. Soiled clothing shall be doubled bagged and discreetly given to the parent/guardian to be taken home daily.

**The following methods shall not be used in toilet learning:**

- Placing child on toilet or potty chair for prolonged time periods
- Using harsh language
- Punishing or berating in any way for soiling clothing
- Using physical force to keep child on a toilet or potty chair against their will
- Leaving child unsupervised on toilet

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HOME VISITS

Home visits are a unique feature of the Early Childhood Education program. Family Services Workers and teachers don’t come to your home to inspect your housekeeping skills or to find fault with the way you live your life. The purpose of the home visit is to give families an opportunity to meet teachers and Family Service Workers in an environment where they feel comfortable.

We recognize that nobody knows a child better than his or her parents or guardians. During home visits, we want to find out what children like and what children dislike. We want to give parents and guardians an opportunity to help us individualize our program to meet their child’s unique needs.

We also want to give parents and guardians an opportunity to speak privately with their child’s teacher and the Family Service Worker. We recommend that parents use this time to express any concerns that they may have about their child’s progress or about the way the classroom is operating. We also recommend that parents use this time to raise any other sensitive issues that they would like help addressing.

Early Childhood Education regulations require us to conduct two home visits per year. We conduct the first home visit as early as possible during the school year. During this visit, Family Service Workers and teachers will likely make sure you have all your enrollment paperwork complete. We conduct the second home visit during the last part of the school year. During this visit, your child’s teacher will discuss your child’s progress and ways to help your child transition into kindergarten. Your child’s teacher will also give you tips on how to keep your child engaged and learning over the summer months.

We ask that you consent to these home visits. If you do, we will schedule the home visit at a time that is convenient for you and we will give you plenty of advance notice before we come out. If you are unwilling to let us visit your home, we ask that you consent to two additional parent/teacher conferences so that we can share the same information with you. If you prefer parent/teacher conferences, we must document your refusal to allow the home visit and keep that in our files.

HOME TASKS

Home tasks are activities that are designed to encourage children to look to their parents and their guardians as educators. Home tasks help family members fulfill their natural role as a child’s first and most important teacher.

Each home task ties into our curriculum and the unit of study that the child is working on at school. Home tasks include activities like reading, playing games, asking and answering questions, cooking and preparing meals together, exploring the environment, working on simple projects or simply talking to each other.

It is very important that you return the Home Task to your child’s teacher. OOI must report the amount of parent involvement in the Early Childhood Education program to the federal government. The more parental involvement in the program the more likely we are to receive continued funding.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Revised 04/2020
The Early Childhood Education Program’s commitment to strengthening families distinguishes it from other early childhood education programs. Family engagement means building supportive relationships with families and encouraging strong parent-child relationships which promote ongoing learning and development. We believe that the Early Childhood Education program shares the responsibility of ensuring a child is ready for school with the child’s parents and guardians and all those who support the child’s learning.

In order to help your child achieve his or her full potential, we ask that you and your family play an active role in the Early Childhood Education program. During the first month of the Early Childhood Education program year, we will ask you to complete our physical health and well-being requirements. We also ask that you attend our parent meetings and take part in our family involvement activities. We strongly encourage you to be one of our many parent volunteers who assist in the classroom and help us with the operation and management of the Early Childhood Education program.

We encourage parents and guardians to get to know their Family Service Worker. Your Family Service Worker is there to listen, to provide you with support, and to help you find any resources that you might need. Family Service Workers can answer your questions about the Early Childhood Education program and other programs offered through Ozark Opportunities, Inc.

**FATHERHOOD INITIATIVE**

The Early Childhood Education program is based upon decades of research. And that research shows that children do better with a father or father figure in their life. Our goal is to create an environment where men are comfortable taking part in their child’s daily education routine. We will have activities throughout the year specifically directly to our father figures, but we encourage you to volunteer in our classrooms any time and to attend Parent Meetings and Special Events.

**PARENT MEETINGS**

We recognize that your time is valuable but in order to provide the best possible services to your child and your family we must have regular feedback about how our program is working. Monthly Parent Meetings are expected- we will make every effort possible to schedule the meetings at a time that is convenient for everyone. We ask that parents use these meetings as an opportunity to ask questions and to make suggestions about how we can improve the Early Childhood Education program.

**VOLUNTEERS**

You don’t have to give us any advance notice before you visit your child’s Early Childhood Education classroom. We have an open door policy that encourages parents and guardians to drop in at any time. But we’d love it if you’d do more than just visit. We always have volunteer opportunities in the classroom.

**POLICY COUNCIL**

Revised 04/2020
Parents and guardians elect the members of the Policy Council. The Policy Council reviews the operations of the entire Early Childhood Education program and makes recommendations for improving our policies and procedures.

Parents and guardians elect two types of Policy Council members: Parent Representatives and Community Representatives. Any person who would like to be a member of the Policy Council must complete a Policy Council application form.

Most parent representatives are chosen from their child’s classroom although at our larger centers a parent representative may be asked to represent more than one classroom.

The best way to understand the Early Childhood Education program is to participate in Policy Council meetings. Membership on the Policy Council is one of the best resume builders available to Early Childhood Education parents and guardians.

The Policy Council reviews Early Childhood policies and procedures, leads their center’s Parent Engagement and has the opportunity to participate in several committees such as; Self-Assessment, Planning and ERSEA.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Many of our Early Childhood Education Centers are located in rural areas that only offer a few programs that are suitable for preschool children. Our staff members are always looking for events and activities that are appropriate for families with young children. Our staff members are also looking for events and activities that will help families fulfill their short term and their long term goals. We post a list of community activities on the Parent Board at each of our centers.

ADVOCACY

Early Childhood Education Staff encourage parents and guardians to become an advocate for their child. This is especially important during the transition process. Staff inform parents and guardians of their rights and responsibilities and ensure parents and guardians are knowledgeable of Early Childhood Education and public school policies. The appropriate Coordinator(s) ensures the transition is carried out with the involvement of staff, parents and guardians, school faculty and other personnel who may be associated with children with special needs.

DISABILITIES

The Disabilities Coordinator works with the local public school systems and Education Cooperatives to provide services to children with documented disabilities.

Within the first 45 days after enrollment each child is assessed in the areas of vision, hearing, speech and developmental progress. Parents/guardians are notified before any child is referred for services and parents and guardians are encouraged to take part in all conferences concerning their child.

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If needed, an Individual Education Plan (IEP) is developed by the local school system and Education Cooperatives to help the child reach his/her full potential. At least ten percent (10%) of Early Childhood Education funded enrollment slots are for children with Disabilities.

CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

All relevant staff are trained in the OOI Confidentiality Policy. It is the agency’s policy that the only information to be shared without a written consent is in regards to suspected child maltreatment. Staff will not reveal information about a child or his/her family to anyone other than the child’s legal guardian(s). In order to have information released to other agencies, the guardian must sign a release form stating exactly what is to be shared.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE - MINIMUM LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

Behavior guidance techniques will not be humiliating, frightening, or physically harmful to children. Behavior Guidance techniques will be consistent and individualized for each child, and will be appropriate to the child’s level of understanding and be directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior.

Behavior guidance techniques will not be associated with adding or withholding food, withholding rest, or associated toileting issues. Staff will not label a child as “bad,” “naughty” etc.

In locations where Early Childhood Education resides on a public school campus, Early Childhood Education will honor the school policy regarding terroristic threatening unless it contradicts Early Childhood Education Performance Standards of the Early Childhood Education Act or 2007.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY

1. Behavior Guidance techniques used in a Early Childhood Education classroom will be “Redirection and Conscious Discipline.” Redirection of the child is the first step when the child is exhibiting undesirable behavior. If the child continues the undesirable behavior, then time-out may be used on a limited basis on a one minute per year of age. For children under two years of age, time out will not be used.

2. If the child is hurting himself/herself, other children, staff (biting, hitting, kicking, or other aggressive behaviors), or is destroying the classroom, the child’s parents will be called and the parent will be asked to come sit with the child and help with the behavior/s for the remainder of the day. The Mental Health Coordinator and/or Early Childhood Education Director will be notified immediately and prior to any child being sent home. The parent will be asked to work with the classroom staff so that their child will have a successful experience in the classroom. The parent will be asked to have a conference with the classroom teacher prior to the child returning to the classroom. The teacher and parents will discuss ways for the child to be more successful in the classroom without the aggressive behavior. The teacher may gather information from the parent to determine if the child has a medical issue or other issues that could be affecting the child’s behavior.

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3. When the child returns to the center, if the child still exhibits aggressive behavior, the parent will be called to come to the center and discuss alternative arrangements for classroom scheduling and to discuss ways for the child to be more successful in the classroom with the teacher and Mental Health Coordinator. The Mental Health Coordinator may request a Behavior Specialist or other professional to observe the child in the classroom. The professional may meet with the parent and the teacher and may request permission to provide a mental health developmental assessment. The professional may have suggestions and/or develop a plan for the parent and teacher to use in the classroom and at home.

4. **After the child returns to the classroom if the aggressive behavior persists, and the parent has declined any outside services (Mental Health/behavior services), the parent will be asked to put the child on a 30-day leave of absent from the classroom to work with the behaviors at home. When the child returns to the classroom, a parent or guardian must stay with the child during their stay or until behaviors improve or services are in place.** Once behaviors improve the parent or guardian will not need to accompany the child in the classroom until such time as behaviors return. This behavior policy reinforces the school requirements and prepares the child for school readiness.

5. The Mental Health Coordinator and/or Early Childhood Education Director shall be notified prior to any child being sent home or parent being called.

6. Another meeting will be called with the parents and referrals will be made available to the parents. Move to step five if this does not work.

7. After all steps have been exhausted, the parents will be asked to keep child at home for three days or until this behavior is taken care of. In some circumstances deemed necessary by Early Childhood Education Director, permanent expulsion may be the final decision.

8. **If a child displays threatening or harmful behaviors to any staff or other children, the child will be sent home until the child has met with a mental health professional. We must have documentation to allow the child to re-enter a classroom or until a meeting with the parents has occurred.**

The Mental Health Coordinator shall be notified immediately and prior to any child being sent home, the Mental Health Coordinator will then notify the Program Manager.

- Complete policy is given at Parent Enrollment/Orientation. Please ask your teacher if you need another copy or have any questions.

**CONSENT FOR EMERGENCY TREATMENT AND TRANSPORTATION**

Parents and guardians will be asked to complete a “Consent for Emergency Treatment and Transportation” form telling staff where they can be reached, the physician and hospital/clinic of their choice and at least three (3) persons to contact in the event that guardians can’t be reached.

**HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

The first step that you must take to ensure that your child does well in preschool and in kindergarten is to ensure that your child is up-to-date on his or her shots. **OOI** must follow the Arkansas Department of

Revised 04/2020
Health Child Care Facility Immunization Guidelines. We cannot allow a child to participate in our program unless the child’s parent or guardian can document that the child has received appropriate immunizations or is in the process of completing the minimum requirements. The only two exceptions to this policy are the religious exemption and the medical exemption and both require additional, adequate documentation.

Early Childhood Education regulations require each child to have a medical and dental examination. We ask that you provide us with your child’s medical, dental and developmental history, so we can customize the services that we provide to you and to your family. We also need to know if your child has any special medical needs, such as a food allergy or a chronic medical condition like asthma or diabetes. We ensure that all necessary safety precautions are taken to protect the health and welfare of your child.

**IMMUNIZATIONS**

Children enrolled in an Early Childhood Education Program must follow the Arkansas Department of Health Child Care Facility Immunization Guidelines. A child will not be allowed to attend a childcare facility unless he/she has the appropriate immunizations. If a child is in the process of completing the minimum immunization requirements, parents must bring a signed written statement from a public health nurse or private physician stating that the child is in the process and a date when he/she must return for the next immunization. The child must stay on the schedule to complete immunizations.

**CONTAGIOUS/INFECTIONOUS DISEASES**

In order to meet Arkansas Licensing Requirements, we have established the following procedures to help protect the health of children, staff, parents and/or guardians associated with our program.

No child shall be admitted who has a contagious or infectious disease. Parents/Guardians shall be notified to pick up the child if the child exhibits symptoms of a contagious or infectious disease. While exposure to many contagious diseases is a normal part of childhood, these policies will minimize the risk of most serious and preventable diseases.

Parents and guardians are asked to keep the Early Childhood Education center informed of exposures to contagious diseases so the center can take preventive measures to protect the health of other children.

**DOCTOR’S RELEASE**

The State Board of Health requires any child who has been ill with a contagious disease to present a statement from a qualified health care provider (school or public health nurse or medical doctor) stating the child is no longer contagious or has shown no signs of disease for 24 hours with no medication. Your cooperation is appreciated as we have both legal and moral responsibilities to protect the health of the other children.

A doctor’s release is also required for any child who has been hospitalized for any reason or for a child who has suffered a serious injury that requires a physician’s care including, but not limited to, head and back injuries, sprained and broken bones, and exposed stitches that require bandages or other types of coverings.

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HAND WASHING POLICY

All persons entering the Early Childhood Education classroom are required to wash their hands! The best way to reduce disease risk in the center or at home is by following these recommended hand washing procedures.

1. Wet hands under running water. Apply soap. Rub your hands vigorously as you wash them. Wash all surfaces, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails. Rinse your hands well with the water running. Dry your hands with a single-use paper towel. Turn off the water using a paper towel instead of bare hands.

2. Wash your hands every time you engage in an activity that could spread germs.
   a. Staff (and/or Volunteers) should wash their hands when they arrive at the center, before preparing or serving any food, after assisting a sick child, after diapering or toilet use, if their hands are contaminated with blood or any other bodily fluid, after handling pets or other animals, before and after giving medications, before and after treating or bandaging a wound and any other time that their hands are soiled.
   b. Children should wash their hands when they arrive at the center, before they eat or drink, after they use the toilet, after sand and water play, if they have come in contact with a sick child or any other time that their hands are soiled.

3. Surfaces in the bathroom must be kept clean and sanitary. Bathroom surfaces must be washed and sanitized, when needed, but at least once daily. Tables should be washed, rinsed and sanitized before children eat and after each table activity.

USDA Nondiscrimination Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: How to File a Complaint, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
    Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights

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1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Meals and Snacks**

Early Childhood Education children are served breakfast, lunch and a snack at no cost. Each meal served meets the USDA approved meal pattern. Monthly or Weekly menus are posted on the Parent Bulletin Board in each center.

Our menus are evaluated by a Nutrition Specialist to ensure the children receive at least two-thirds of their daily nutritional needs as stated in the Early Childhood Education Performance Standards. Special nutrition plans are written for children with disabling conditions or documented food allergies.

Some of our centers have their own kitchen. Our Food Service staff use menus evaluated and approved by a Registered Dietitian. OOI Food Service staff also receive training from the Special Nutrition Program through the Arkansas Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Education.

For centers that are located within a school setting, we contract with the local school districts to provide meals to our children (depending on age). Our children are served the same meals as the other students in each particular school. This is a component of our School Readiness Plan and is an opportunity for the child to eat the same food as the K-12 students (that meet the federal nutrition requirements.)

All staff and volunteers are required to wear foodservice gloves when helping with the preparation and serving of meals and snacks.

*When visiting the Center, please refrain from eating or drinking anything other than the child’s meal selections.*

**MEDICATION POLICY**

If your child is sick enough to need medication, he/she should not be in the center to expose other children to possible illness. Center staff may request a doctor’s certificate of release if they feel that a child is not sufficiently recovered from a transmittable illness or contagious disease to insure the safety of others.

No medication shall be given to a child without a signed parent/guardian consent form. Also, over-the-counter medication will not be administered in the center unless it is accompanied by a doctor’s note stating the time to be given, reason for medication, date to begin and end, and exact dosage of the medication.

Prescription medications, if they must be given at the center, must be in the original container and have a prescription label that includes the prescription number, drug name, Doctor’s name, child’s name, exact

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dosage, and expiration date. If the medication can be scheduled to be given by the parent/guardian, it will not be given at the center. The Center Director, or assigned staff, shall be responsible for the administration of medication, making sure medication is stored properly in a locked container in the refrigerator or a locked cabinet and out of reach of the children. Staff shall also keep a log of each dose given and be aware of potential reactions to the medicine and what to do if a reaction occurs.

Parents/Guardians are asked to provide written information with as much detail as possible, on a Health Care Plan. Parents/guardians are responsible for administering the initial dose of any medication so that parents/guardians can monitor the child for any adverse reactions. Early Childhood Education staff members cannot administer the initial dose of any medication.

When medication is imperative and other children’s well-being is not jeopardized by a child’s presence, the parent/guardian may come to the center and give medicine. Upon receipt of written permission from the parent/guardian to the Center Staff, another family member (such as a grandparent, aunt, uncle, older brother/sister), or school nurse/official or Early Childhood Education staff may administer medication as in the best interest of the child.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES AND CELEBRATIONS

All Head Start and ABC classrooms have specific guidelines regarding what activities can be done, when they are held and what food and drink items are allowed. Please contact teaching staff for specific details.

SICK CHILD AND SHORT TERM EXCLUSION GUIDELINE POLICY

The short-term exclusion policy has been implemented as a guide to help keep local program staff and children healthy and safe. No staff member of Ozark Opportunities Inc. Early Childhood Education is to diagnose an illness or condition. If symptoms occur, staff is to refer the parent/guardian to their medical doctor or county health department. If the parent chooses not to take their child to a medical professional, the child will be excluded from the program until all symptoms subside. Symptoms could be observed during the Daily Health Check in the morning as well as throughout the day.

No child shall be admitted who has a contagious or infectious disease. Parent/guardians shall be notified to pick up the child if the child exhibits any of the following symptoms.

Symptoms that may exclude a child or staff person from a center include, but are not limited to:

- Fever: any child with a body temperature of 100+ (oral, axillary or tympanic reading)
- Vomiting and/or Diarrhea (2 or more episodes in the previous 24 hours)
- Rash: body rashes not obviously associated with diapering, heat, or allergic reactions to foods or medications.
- Pink eye: Pink or red eye(s) which may be swollen with white or yellow discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Untreated scabies or head lice: may return after treatment and removal of nits.

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Ring worm: A fungal infection of the scalp or skin: May return after evaluation and receiving treatment by a health care provider.
- Impetigo: May return 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Strep Throat: until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun
- Others: Any illness that could be contagious or may affect the health and well-being of child and staff.

If a child shows any of these symptoms throughout the day, the Teacher will separate the child from the rest of the children and call the parent/guardian immediately to pick up their child from the center. If a staff member shows any of these symptoms throughout the day they are expected to obtain permission to leave from their supervisor.

**If your child is too ill to go outside or unable to participate in the daily classroom activities, please do not send him/her to school.** The center is not licensed to care for sick children and there are neither facilities nor staff to provide care for them. Also, a sick child’s resistance is low, so it is for the child’s protection as well as for the protection of other children.

Any enrolled child who has been injured may be excluded on a short-term basis, depending on the injury and the seriousness of the injury. A physician’s statement of care may be required before the child will be permitted back into the center for the following injuries:

- Head injury
- Back injury
- Broken bones
- Exposed stitches that may only be covered with a band aid
- Other serious injuries requiring a physician’s direction

If any enrolled child is hospitalized for any reason, the parent/guardian will be required to obtain a physician’s statement of care before the child will be admitted back into the program.

Parents and guardians must inform staff of any health or safety needs of the enrolled child. If the child is on medication, the parent will be required to complete medication permission forms as outlined in the Medication Procedure.

**Child Abuse/Child Maltreatment**

The State of Arkansas requires all childcare providers to report suspected child maltreatment. Our employees have been trained to recognize the signs of abuse and will report any concerns that they may have to the Child Abuse Hotline. The Child Abuse Hotline phone number – 1-800-482-5964 – is posted in each classroom in each of our centers.

The state of Arkansas requires us to inform parents and guardians in writing that their child may be interviewed by licensing staff, child maltreatment investigators, and law enforcement officials to determine if OOI has complied with licensing requirements or for investigative purposes. Child interviews do not

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require parental notice or consent. When conducting an investigation, DHS personnel have the authority to question Early Childhood Education staff and children on the Early Childhood Education premises without providing either OOI or the child’s parent/guardian with notice. It is OOI’s policy to take no position on an investigation until the DHS has completed its investigation. OOI is not responsible for nor is it obligated to notify parents or guardians of visits by DHS personnel.

"The State of Arkansas also requires that the Licensing compliance forms (DCC-521) be maintained at each site and are available for review upon request".

**CPR TRAINING**

At least one staff member in each classroom is trained in First Aid/CPR procedures, and trainings are offered annually for staff to keep their certification current.

**Rest Period**

Arkansas Child Care Licensing requires every child in the program to rest for one hour each day. Children do not have to go to sleep but are encouraged to remain on their cots so that the children who do sleep will not be disturbed. *It is best if you do not interrupt at rest time when picking up your child from the center.*

**DISASTER/EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

Each center will have a Disaster/ Emergency Preparedness Plan. In locations where Early Childhood Education resides on a public school campus, Early Childhood Education will honor the school policy regarding emergency and disaster procedures unless it contradicts Early Childhood Education Performance Standards/Early Childhood Education Act.

**PICTURES**

It is OOI’s policy to allow the media to take photographs and video to include in positive news reports about the Early Childhood Education program. In addition, OOI encourages Early Childhood Education staff members to take classroom photos that can be used in classroom projects, as part of the unit of study, or in promotional materials such as brochures, handbooks, and social media webpages. We must have a signed permission slip before we use your child’s image. You MUST let staff know if you do not want your child’s picture taken. For the safety of the children and staff, your child’s classroom may be electronically monitored or videotaped.

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TRANSPORTATION SAFETY

Arkansas Law states the following:

- Every person riding in the front seat of a motor vehicle must wear a proper restraint. Drivers/passengers can be ticketed and fined a substantial penalty for not using the proper safety restraints.
- A child who is less than 8 years old and weighs less than 80 pounds must be properly secured in a child safety seat.
- An officer can stop and ticket a driver for the sole reason that a driver/passenger is not properly restrained.

NEVER LEAVE YOUR CHILD UNATTENDED IN A VEHICLE.

TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

- Arkansas Minimum Licensing Requirements:  
- Creative Curriculum Gold  
  http://childrensoutreachproject.org/prospective-parents/curriculum/creative-curriculum_gold.html
- Early Childhood Education Act  
  http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Act
- Early Childhood Education Performance Standards  
  http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/standards/Head%20Start%20Requirements

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