

BEAR RIVER HEAD START CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT POLICY

June 2023

Bear River Head Start is a private non-profit grantee with the following program options within the grantee: Head Start and Early Head Start. The following policy applies to all program options within Bear River Head Start. The grantee as a whole will be referred to as Bear River Head Start, the legal title of the grant, even though all program options are held to this policy.

Addendum: Added 1/12/22

All volunteers, parents, and parents who are employees are expected to disclose any pending criminal arrests or charges; or any convictions related to child sexual abuse and their disposition under this Sex Offender Policy. In addition, parents who are employees will fall under the employee background check requirements and any findings therein related to child sexual abuse or other child crimes, or from any other legal entity that provides such information will prohibit said person from being present in “protected areas” per state law, that have children in attendance under the age of 18 years old.

Section I. Statement of Policy

Head Start agencies must report child abuse and neglect in accordance with the state law, each Head Start agency shall develop a policy and procedure for the reporting of abuse and neglect.

Bear River Head Start in accordance with the laws of the state will check all newly enrolled parents/guardians names and addresses on the state-wide Child Abuse Offender Registry. A letter will be sent to any family that has a member of their household that has been identified on that registry and the registered child offender will not be allowed to be in any “protected areas”, per state law, that have children in attendance under the age of 18 years old.

This letter states that the offender will not be able to participate in classroom activities or family activities. While Bear River Head Start is committed to providing parents with opportunities to support their child’s education, we must also consider the other families enrolled in our program. As a parent you are welcome to attend any parent committee meetings (parent only meetings) at which children will not be present.”

We do this with the following purposes in mind:

- To protect the child
- To initiate prompt investigation by the Division of Child & Family Services (**Utah**) or Department of Health and Welfare (**Idaho**).
- To establish and maintain relationships with community agencies which are also involved with abuse and neglect cases.
- To inform parents and staff of the laws and legal requirements regarding the reporting and identification of suspected abuse and neglect.
- To ensure that staff is informed about the agency’s procedures for identifying and reporting suspected child abuse and neglect within the Head Start program.

This policy is consistent with the overall goal of Head Start, which is to provide comprehensive developmental services to meet the basic needs of each child and to involve parents in this process as much as possible.

Section II. Methods to Meet Policy

- Bear River Head Start and all program options will cooperate fully with the Division of Child & Family Services or Department of Health & Welfare and will not undertake treatment on our own or become a treatment program.
- Bear River Head Start and all program options will make every effort to retain allegedly abused or neglected children or enroll such children who are referred by child protective service agencies if the families are eligible for Head Start.
- The Family Services Coordinator shall be the staff member to coordinate child abuse and neglect procedures. The Coordinator will perform (or assure the performance) of the following responsibilities.
 1. Establish and maintain relationships with community agencies, which are also involved with abuse and neglect.
 2. Inform parent/guardian(s) and staff of legal requirements regarding the reporting of abuse and neglect.
 3. Know what medical and social services are available within the community for abuse and neglected children and their parents.
 4. Ensure that all suspected abuse and neglect is reported to the appropriate agency according to State law.

Training of Parents

Bear River Head Start and all program options will take the Child Abuse & Neglect information to each family, on a home visit. In addition, program options will offer a parent training(s) on child abuse and neglect. At which time parents will be made aware of (1) Utah and/or Idaho State Law and also (2) the identification and reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect.

Training of Staff

All staff members will be trained on the Utah and/or Idaho State Laws (mandatory reporting) regarding child abuse and neglect.

All staff will be required to attend child abuse training offered by the program and will be required to attend follow-up training as offered.

All staff will be required to know the agency's procedure for reporting suspected abuse and neglect.

All reports will be documented including:

1. Date and Time.
2. Persons involved in the suspected abuse
3. Name of : Division of Child & Family Services (DCFS) or Department of Health & Welfare (DHW) employee

4. Detailed information regarding suspected abuse situation
5. Head Start employee who suspects abuse
6. What was seen and heard
7. Any directions given by DCFS or DHW
8. Follow up information from DCFS or DHW

Section III. Reporting Procedures

If any staff member suspects abuse or neglect, they must **immediately** notify their supervisor and the supervisor will **immediately** notify their program Coordinator.

ALL REPORTS WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO THE FAMILY SERVICES COORDINATOR (UPON AVAILABILITY). THE DIRECTOR WILL BE INFORMED THAT A CALL WAS MADE.

The Supervisor of the staff person will review the information with the staff person who suspects the abuse. Once a decision is made to contact DCFS or DHW, a call will be made by the staff person who suspects the abuse. The staff person that suspects abuse will complete the "Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect Form" before calling DCFS or DHW as well as fill out information during the call. The original will be sent to the Family Services Coordinator and a copy given to the staff member's supervisor.

Report to the Division of Child & Family Service (DCFS) or Department of Health & Welfare (DHW) will include the following:

1. Date and Time
2. Persons involved in the suspected abuse
3. Name of the DCFS or DHW employee
4. Detailed information regarding suspected abuse situation
5. Head Start employee who suspects abuse
6. What was seen and heard
7. And directions given by DCFS or DHW
8. Follow up information from DCFS or DHW

(NOTE: If you are not sure whether it is a reportable case, first discuss it with your Supervisor, but do not wait to contact them, do it immediately.)

If BRHS feels that to return the child to his/her home situation would place the child in immediate danger, we will contact the Police Department in the area and state our reasons for concern.

REMEMBER: WE ARE A MANDATORY REPORTING AGENCY.

AS THE PERSON WHO SUSPECTS ABUSE, YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR SEEING THAT A REPORT IS MADE IMMEDIATELY! FAILURE TO DO SO MAY RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION AND/OR TERMINATION.

UTAH

Cache/Rich 1(435) 787-3400

Box Elder 1(435) 734-4075

24 hour Central Intake # for Utah 1(855) 323-3237

IDAHO

1(855) 552-5437