

## **UCHRA Van Buren County Head Start Code of Conduct**

It is the policy of the Van Buren County Head Start that a code of conduct is in place, to which Head Start employees, paid substitutes, parents, volunteers, non-paid substitutes, Policy Council members, Board members, consultants, and contracted services are required to abide by the program's standards of conduct and follow this style of conduct:

1. We strive to create and maintain a safe and healthy setting that foster children's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development and that respects their dignity and their contributions.
2. We support the right of children with special needs to participate, consistent with their ability, in regular early childhood programs.
3. Above all, we shall not participate in practices that are disrespectful, degrading, dangerous, exploitive, intimidating, psychologically damaging, or physically harmful to children.
4. We do not participate in practices that discriminate against children by denying benefits, giving special advantages, or excluding them from programs or activities on the basis of their race, religion, sex, national origin, or the status, behavior, or the beliefs of their parents.
5. We involve all of those with relevant knowledge (including staff and parents) in decisions concerning a child.
6. We are familiar with the symptoms of child abuse and neglect and know and follow community procedures and state laws that protect children against abuse and neglect.
7. When we become aware of a practice or situation that endangers the health or safety of children, but has not been previously known to do so, we inform those who can remedy the situation to keep other children from being similarly endangered.
8. We attempt to develop relationships of mutual trust with families we serve.
9. We respect the dignity of each family and its culture, customs and beliefs.
10. We will inform families of our program's philosophy, policies, and personal qualifications and explain and involve them in our curriculum.
11. We inform the family of accidents involving their child or risk such exposures to contagious disease that may result in infection and of events that might result in psychological damage.
12. We do not permit or participate in research that would in any way hinder the education or development of the children in our program. Families are fully informed of any proposed research projects involving their children and shall have the opportunity to give or withhold consent.
13. We develop and implement written policies for the protection of confidentiality and the disclosure of the children's and the family's records. The policy documents are made available to all program personnel and families. Disclosure of children's and family's records beyond family members, program personnel, and consultants having an obligation of confidentiality require family consent (except in cases of abuse and neglect).
14. We maintain confidentiality, and respect each family's right to privacy, refraining from disclosure of confidential information and intrusion into family life. However, when we are concerned about a child's welfare, it is permissible to reveal confidential information to agencies and individuals that may be able to act in the child's best interest.
15. When family members are in conflict, we work openly, sharing our observations of the child to help all parties involved make informed decisions. We refrain from becoming an advocate for one part.

16. When we have a concern about the professional behavior of a co-worker, we first let that person know of our concern and attempt to resolve the matter cohesively. If this fails, we will then follow our program's chain of command.
17. We assist the program in providing the highest quality of service and maintain loyalty to our program and uphold its reputation.
18. When we do not agree with program policies, we attempt to effect change through constructive action within the organization.
19. We speak or act on behalf of an organization only when authorized. We are careful to know when we are speaking for the organization and when we are expressing a personal judgment.
20. We provide staff members with work conditions that permit them to carry out their responsibilities. We also provide staff members with timely and non-threatening opportunities for continuing professional development advancements.
21. Firearms, weapons, alcohol and drugs are all prohibited on the V.B.C.H.S. property.
22. No employee is authorized to remove property belonging to the V.B.C.H.S. without obtaining prior approval from the Head Start Director.
23. The acceptance of any money, services, or any other thing of value offered by a representative, person or entity which does, or could potentially do, business with UCHRA is prohibited.
24. Any possible conflict of interest shall be fully disclosed to other board members and made a matter of record (has material financial interest, substantial business relationship or is an officer, director or general partner).
25. Participation or involvement in a political campaign or other type of political activity or any contribution to or any other financial support of a political candidate or any other type of political contribution or support shall only be carried on or provided in an individual capacity.

*Parent, Guardian, Primary Caregiver*

*Signature* \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: By signing above, I hereby agree to all codes of conduct and will conduct myself in an appropriate Manner while volunteering or when present at the Van Buren County Head Start. Violation will result in loss of privileges at Van Buren County Head Start.*

*Staff Signature:*

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*Note: By signing, I agree and am fully responsible for the conduct of any persons in my classroom. All parents, guardians, primary caregiver or volunteers must be made aware of these codes and if for any reason these codes are not followed, corrective action shall be taken.*