

## Child Safety in Head Start Programs



[blog/child-safety-head-start-programs](#)

**By Katie Hamm**

08/31/2022

I am proud of Head Start programs and the incredible work our staff do with infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and expectant families every day. We know programs continue to navigate the COVID-19 (Coronavirus Disease 2019) pandemic, staffing shortages, and enrollment challenges with strength and resolve. The Office of Head Start (OHS) is approaching this program year as a season of ongoing recovery, response, and renewal.

As we enter the 2022-2023 program year, I am committed to prioritizing child safety in all Head Start programs, centers, and classrooms. The

vigilance and commitment of grant recipients to keep all children safe and secure is foundational to Head Start services. However, every year we see several serious incidents that violate our Head Start Program Performance Standards (HSPPS) [policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-47-safety-practices](#), staff standards of conduct, and put children at risk.

I know that, overall, Head Start programs do a good job keeping children safe in their facilities. Only a minority of programs see adverse child safety incidents each year and most incidents are dealt with swiftly. However, OHS (Office of Head Start)'s review of child safety data shows that adverse child safety incidents can be higher at the beginning of the program year and are more likely to occur when



staff are stressed and classrooms are understaffed. Staff may experience that stress exponentially when they are new and when they do not have appropriate supports for mental health and wellness, including the ability to take regular classroom breaks. I encourage program staff and managers to develop strategies to mitigate the potential for violations of supervision, unauthorized release, or inappropriate discipline.

When child safety incidents do occur, the importance of reporting them to [OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#) cannot be overstated. Grant recipients should report all significant incidents affecting the health and safety of children to the appropriate state licensing or child welfare agencies and their [OHS \(Office of Head Start\) Regional Office](#) immediately. Reporting to [OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#) should be completed within three to seven calendar days from the time the incident occurred (45 CFR §1302.102 [</policy/45-cfr-chap-xiii/1302-102-achieving-program-goals>](#)). This includes any violations of supervision, unauthorized release, or inappropriate discipline. Programs should not wait for state licensing or child welfare agencies to determine if the incidents are founded or unfounded. Head Start grant recipients are held to the [HSPPS \(Head Start Program Performance Standards\)](#), so all incidents must be reported regardless of state findings.

[OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#) has a zero tolerance policy for any situation that harms or endangers a child and for lack of reporting those incidents to [OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#). Grant recipients who do not report to [OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#) situations which endanger the health or safety of children will have monitoring findings as a result. I encourage leaders to make sure every staff person, from the bus drivers to teachers and everyone in between, has learned their responsibilities for active supervision [</safety-practices/article/active-supervision>](#) and mandated reporting [</video/ilookout-child-abuse-mandated-reporter-training-head-start-staff>](#). All staff in Head Start programs are mandated reporters and are legally obligated to report suspected child abuse or neglect to the appropriate child protection agency. Programs must have internal procedures in place when a staff member or volunteer causes an incident or suspected incident. Staff may benefit from completing iLookOut [</safety-practices/article/head-start-faqs-ilookout-child-abuse>](#), a free online professional development course focused on protecting child safety and preventing and identifying child abuse.

One important part of preventing incidents that pose a risk to children is a stable and well-trained workforce. We understand programs are facing particular challenges right now, but I encourage the leadership of every Head Start program to create and foster a program culture that supports staff well-being and maintains high standards of conduct. [OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#) has made available training and technical assistance (TTA) resources on creating a culture of safety [</video/creating-enhancing-culture-safety>](#), building positive learning environments [</video/strategies-create-positive-learning-environments-children-staff>](#), addressing behaviors staff find challenging [</video/preventing-addressing-behaviors-challenge-us>](#), promoting empathy and understanding trauma [</safety-practices/article/promoting-empathy-understanding-trauma>](#), and fostering organizational and staff wellness [</video/promoting-organizational-staff-wellness>](#). Your program specialist or regional [TTA \(Training and Technical Assistance\)](#) staff are available to help you navigate these resources as you continue to do this critical work.

With a strong focus on ensuring all Head Start children are safe, and proper reporting of child incidents to [OHS \(Office of Head Start\)](#) when they do occur, together we can provide our children and families with the highest quality Head Start services.

*Katie Hamm is the acting director of the Office of Head Start and deputy assistant secretary for the Office of Early Childhood Development.*

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 5278

Program Account PA 20 (Training)  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal				
B. Fringe Benefits				
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel	5,564.00	0.00	0.00	5,564.00
E. Equipment				0.00
F. Supplies				0.00
G. Contractual	0.00	0.00	76,500.00	-76,500.00
H. Renovations				0.00
I. Other	61,370.00	0.00	0.00	61,370.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>66,934.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>76,500.00</b>	<b>-9,566.00</b>

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 5279

Program Account PA 22 (Basic)  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	3,786,604.00	77,190.78	0.00	3,709,413.22
B. Fringe Benefits	1,676,654.00	27,158.45	0.00	1,649,495.55
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>5,463,258.00</b>	<b>104,349.23</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>5,358,908.77</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
E. Equipment	0.00			0.00
F. Supplies	32,000.00	0.00	0.00	32,000.00
G. Contractual	183,445.00	52,502.79	9,840.75	121,101.46
H. Renovations	0.00			0.00
I. Transportation	320,000.00	0.00	0.00	320,000.00
J. Other				
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>6,003,703.00</b>	<b>156,852.02</b>	<b>9,840.75</b>	<b>5,837,010.23</b>

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 6326

Program Account Basic Carryover  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	174,000.00	0.00	0.00	174,000.00
B. Fringe Benefits	14,494.00	0.00	0.00	14,494.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>188,494.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>188,494.00</b>
C. Mileage	5,000.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
D. Travel	20,000.00	0.00	0.00	20,000.00
E. Equipment	386,000.00	0.00	295,878.10	90,121.90
F. Supplies	90,000.00	0.00	12,614.09	77,385.91
G. Contractual	412,402.00	0.00	1,857.15	410,544.85
H. Renovations	0.00			0.00
I. Other (Field Trips and Parent Activities)	62,000.00	0.00	0.00	62,000.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1,163,896.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>310,349.34</b>	<b>853,546.66</b>

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 6327

Program Account Training Carryover  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B. Fringe Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel	5,934.00	0.00	0.00	5,934.00
E. Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F. Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
G. Contractual	50,000.00	0.00	0.00	50,000.00
H. Renovations	0.00			0.00
I. Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Grand Total	55,934.00	0.00	0.00	55,934.00
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Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 6410

Program Account ARP carryover  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	136,080.00	114,224.85	0.00	21,855.15
B. Fringe Benefits	11,335.00	8,979.14	0.00	2,355.86
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>147,415.00</b>	<b>123,203.99</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>24,211.01</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E. Equipment	11,170.00	5,994.00	0.00	5,176.00
F. Supplies	3,500.00	0.00	0.00	3,500.00
G. Contractual	33,358.00	1,915.00	540.00	30,903.00
H. Renovations	0.00			0.00
I. Other	159,272.00	0.00	2,300.80	156,971.20
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>354,715.00</b>	<b>131,112.99</b>	<b>2,840.80</b>	<b>220,761.21</b>

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 6415

Program Account Head Start CARES Act  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
B. Fringe Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
E. Equipment	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
F. Supplies	4,162.00	0.00	0.00	4,162.00
G. Contractual	150,000.00	0.00	0.00	150,000.00
H. Renovations	0.00			0.00
I. Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>154,162.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>154,162.00</b>

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2532 6422

Program Account H/S CERRSA  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	34,957.00	0.00		34,957.00
B. Fringe Benefits	3,019.00	0.00		3,019.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>37,976.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>37,976.00</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel			0.00	0.00
E. Equipment	1,436.00			1,436.00
F. Supplies	32,845.00	0.00	0.00	32,845.00
G. Contractual	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
H. Renovations	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
I. Other	27,824.00	0.00	0.00	27,824.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100,081.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>100,081.00</b>

Name of Program NHPS Head Start  
 For Period Beginning 7/1/2022 2568 5317

Program Account H/S Expansion  
 Ending 8/31/2022

Item	Annual Budget	YTD Expenses	Encumbrances	Available Budget
A. Personal	0.00	0.00		0.00
B. Fringe Benefits	0.00	0.00		0.00
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
C. Mileage				
D. Travel			0.00	0.00
E. Equipment				0.00
F. Supplies	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
G. Contractual	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
H. Renovations	0.00		0.00	0.00
I. Other (parent Activity & Field trips)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Grand Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
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