



Early Head Start

Laying the groundwork for building self-confidence and success in learning for children up to age 3

Early Learning Center

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The Early Learning Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. with limited availability for 7:30 a.m.–8:00 a.m. care

Getting Started

For more information about Early Head Start, to apply for services, or to schedule a tour of the Early Learning Center, please contact Sharon Hutchinson-Jones at the phone number above.

Early Head Start is a federally funded program for families who are pregnant or have children up to age 3. The program has both a home visiting component and a center-based (day care) component. Program staff help parents with the changing needs of their family a small child brings. Parents learn ways to help their child meet all milestones, including helping ensure the child is healthy, developmentally on target, and ready for the world. School readiness, including literacy, is a major component of the Early Head Start program.

The Early Head Start program, located at Northern Rivers' Early Learning Center in Schenectady, is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The center has 9 classrooms for 72 infants and toddlers in the center-based program. Each classroom is staffed with 2 highly trained and skilled teachers. In addition, 22 children are served with weekly visits by highly trained and skilled staff in the home visiting program. Staff follow a developmentally appropriate curriculum both in the home and in the center to ensure quality care and learning is achieved.

Services

Families benefit through direct staff-provided services, as well as through partnerships with other area services providers. Early Head Start provides the following services:

- Mentoring and education around maternal and child health care including prenatal, breast-feeding, immunizations, and lead screening
- Screenings and educational activities to evaluate children's developmental needs with referrals when necessary for professional evaluation and, if deemed appropriate, intervention
- Assistance in acquiring adequate health services for the family including physical, mental, dental, nutritional, visual, and auditory health services as needed
- Mentoring for parents regarding vocational direction
- Home-based families are encouraged to attend "socializations" each month so the parents and children can meet parents and children of similar age
- Free center-based care 9:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. weekdays

Benefits

- Increased school readiness and early literacy skills
- Increased positive interaction between parents and children
- Improved parental and child wellness and social connectedness
- Increased families' economic self-sufficiency
- Fewer incidents of child abuse and neglect

Getting Started

Pregnant women or families with children younger than age 3 whose parent(s) are living at or below poverty level in Schenectady County are eligible for services.

These services are provided by Northern Rivers Family of Services and member agencies.

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