

Daily Health Check

Head Start Performance Standards

§ 1302.42 (c) (2)

Policy

Head Start promotes the health of children, staff, and families. Our staff will make every effort to identify health concerns early to prevent transmission of communicable disease and to ensure that the children receive appropriate treatment and/or intervention services. Every Head Start staff member shares responsibility for observing each child's physical and mental health and for reporting concerns to the child's teacher. Staff members use their senses (sight, hearing, touch, smell) to identify potential health issues. This includes looking for signs of illness, injury, or changes in behavior.

Use the **Daily Health Check** form to document absences, signs of illness, injury, or unusual behavior. When possible, document the cause of the absence on the form. Daily Health Checks are sent weekly to Health Services at Casa Blanca.

Procedure

1. Classroom staff must perform a daily health check each school day. Head checks for head lice is performed weekly, per the program's **Communicable Disease** Policy. Staff must wash their hands before and after the health check.
2. Perform the health check at the child's level in a manner that is comfortable for the child and respects their body and feelings. Record observations on the **Daily Health Check** form.

Notice how the child looks and acts.

- Is the child's behavior normal for this time of day?
 - Does the child look pale or flushed? Are there dark circles under the eyes?
 - Do the child's eyes look teary, red or have a discharge?
 - Is the child's nose running?
 - Is the child coughing or do they seem congested?
 - Does the child seem itchy? Do you see a rash?
 - Do you observe bruises, burns or scratches?
 - For infants and toddlers, are there any changes in feeding, bathroom habits or sleep schedule?
3. If the child looks and acts as usual, record a check ("OK") on the log. If there are concerns, proceed to steps 4-8.
 4. Listen to the child.
 - If verbal, what does the child tell you about how they feel? Does the child's voice or cry sound hoarse or different than usual?
 - If verbal, what does the child tell you about how injuries occurred?
 5. Touch the child's skin.

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- Gently run the back of your hand over the child's cheek, forehead, and the back of the child's neck. Notice if the child feels unusually warm to the touch or if their skin feels different and should be looked at more closely.
 - Take the child's temperature if appropriate. Record the results on the **Daily Health Check** form. If the child has a temperature greater than 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit, contact the child's parent/guardian and ask them to pick up the child.
6. Smell for unusual odors.
- Children who have not eaten for many hours may have a fruity mouth odor.
 - Some children may have soiled their pants and need changing.
 - Parents may have given the child medication with a distinctive odor that you will want to know about.
7. Follow up on health concerns in accordance with the **Communicable Disease** Policy or **Child Abuse Reporting** Policy.
8. Refer any health concerns that have been present for over three days or seem to indicate something more serious to the Program Area Supervisor and Health Services Supervisor.

Home-Based

Home Visitors are expected to complete health checks at each home visit. The **Daily Health Check** form is not required for Home-Based, but documentation of any concerning observations should be entered in to ChildPlus under Family Services Check-in events. Inform the Health Services Supervisor of any concerns.