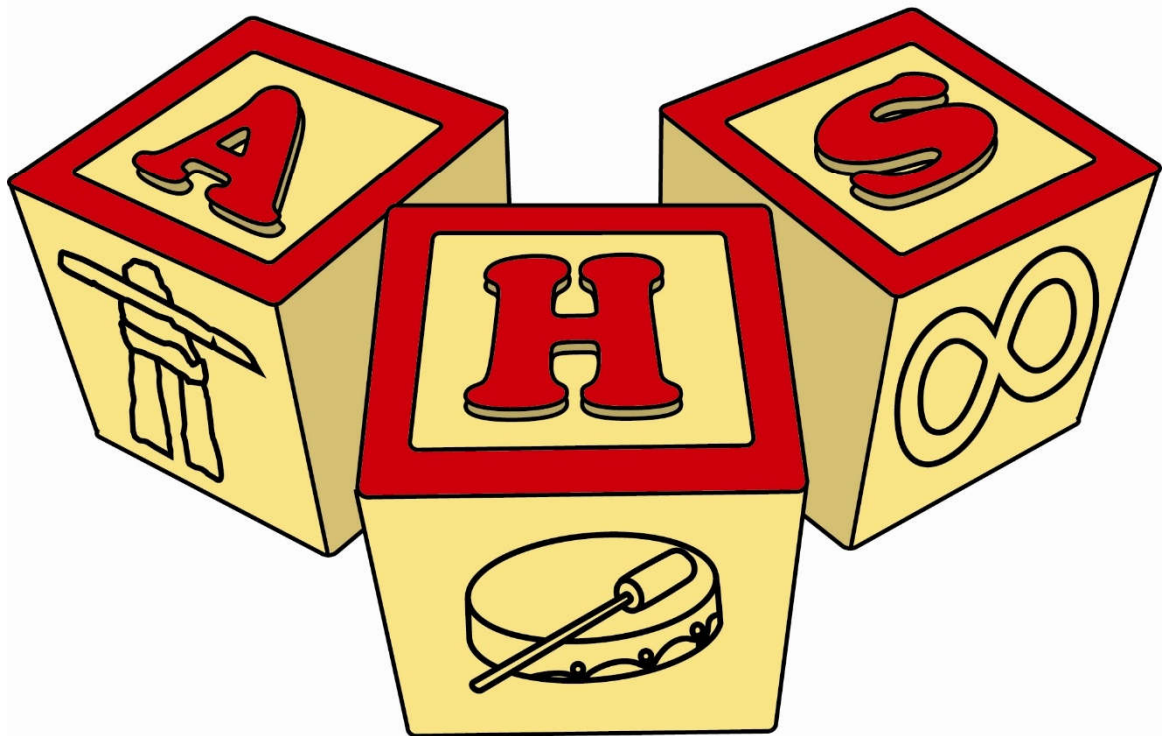
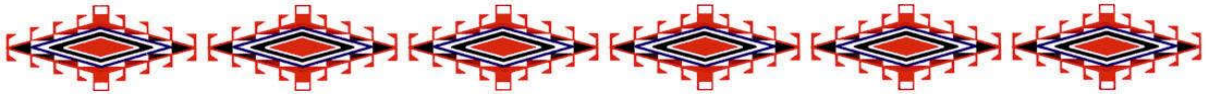


ABORIGINAL HEAD START

Urban & Northern Communities



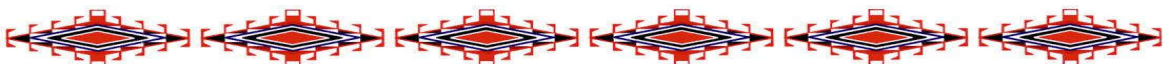
PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURE HANDBOOK



Revised – March 2021

**Guidance provided by Aboriginal Head Start Parents, Staff,
Elder, and Culture & Language Instructor**

**This is a “fluid” document. This means that changes may occur to our
program policies and procedures throughout the year.**



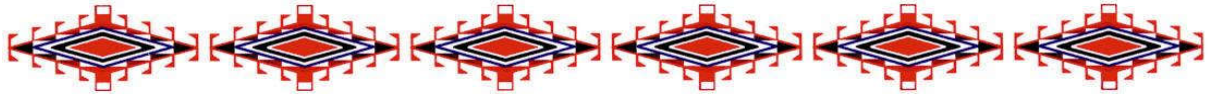
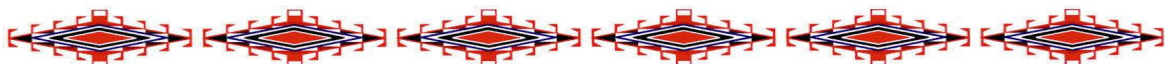
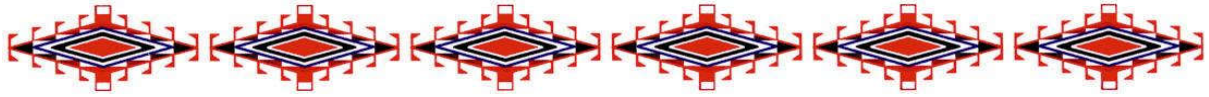


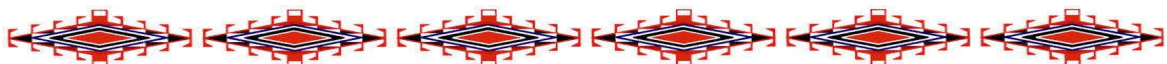
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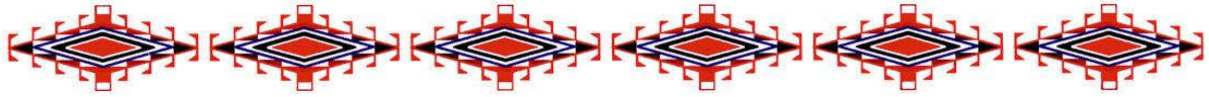
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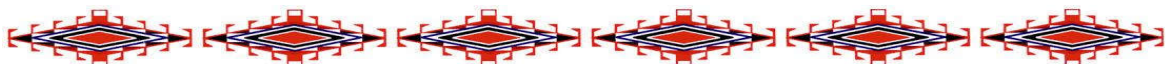


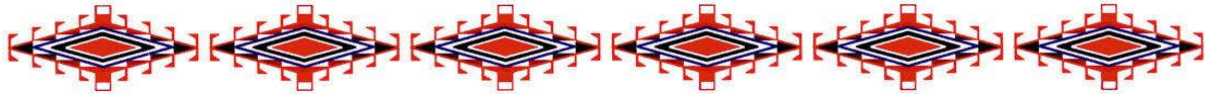


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WELCOME TO ABORIGINAL HEAD START!!

We'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting grounds, gathering place, and travelling route to the Cree, Saulteaux (So-toe), Blackfoot, Métis, Dene (De-nay) and Nakota Sioux (Sue). We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.





ABORIGINAL HEAD START

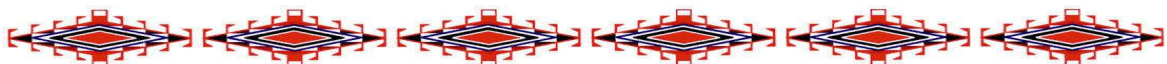
Our Head Start program aims to strengthen and prepare Aboriginal children ages 3yrs 6 months-5 years of age with the necessary school-readiness skills and cultural foundation to enter mainstream schools on an equal basis with all other children in a positive, fun, stimulating, and respectful learning environment. Our main program philosophy is “Learning through Play”.

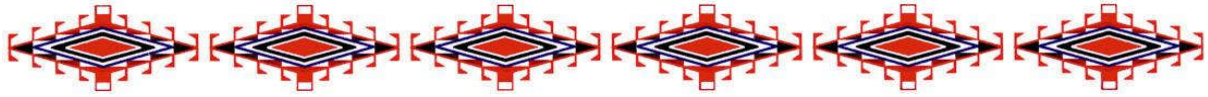
Program Goals

- ◆ Foster the holistic growth of our children guided by **SPICE**.
Social Physical Intellectual Cultural Emotional
- ◆ Ensure high quality program delivery through culturally relevant traditional teachings
- ◆ Employ qualified and caring staff
- ◆ Support parents/caregivers as the primary teachers of their children
- ◆ Engage Parents/Caregivers in program participation
- ◆ Recognize and support extended families in teaching and caring for children
- ◆ Seek community Elders participation and support
- ◆ Involve community partners and/cohorts
- ◆ Build the child’s self-esteem and preserve cultural identity
- ◆ Foster in the child a desire of life-long learning – making learning meaningful
- ◆ Ensure transparent evaluation and accountability frameworks

AMISKWACIY CULTURAL SOCIETY

The Amiskwaciy Cultural Society will assume a broad role in the Aboriginal community, helping children and families not only through the schools but from the larger Edmonton area as well. Services for the society focus primarily on providing Aboriginal students with the necessary academic and cultural supports in order to enter post-secondary institutions as regular students. The society has a further objective to also support Aboriginal children and families with early intervention strategies to assist with a link





into mainstream education. Through these processes, children and students will develop an understanding of Aboriginal values, the respect for the Elders and their teachings along with an awareness of current events that affect Aboriginal People today.

To register or to speak to someone about the program call
780-640-9799 Ext #102

ABORIGINAL HEAD START URBAN AND NORTHERN COMMUNITIES (AHSUNC)

In 1995, the Government of Canada established Aboriginal Head Start Urban & Northern to help enhance child development and school readiness for First Nation, Métis and Inuit children living in urban centres and large northern communities. Health Canada currently funds 131 early childhood development programs for First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and their families across Canada. The primary goal of the initiative is to demonstrate that locally controlled and designed early intervention strategies provide Aboriginal children with a positive self-identity, a desire for learning, and opportunities to develop fully as successful young people. The program is aimed at serving preschool children ages three years 6 months to 5 years of age.

AHSUNC focuses on six program components:



Culture and Language



Education and School Readiness



Health and Safety Promotion



Nutrition (using the Canadian Aboriginal Food Guide)



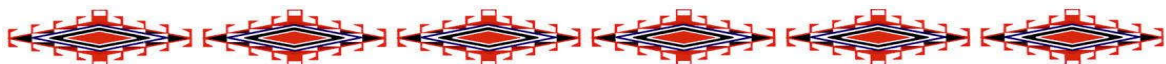
Social Support Networking

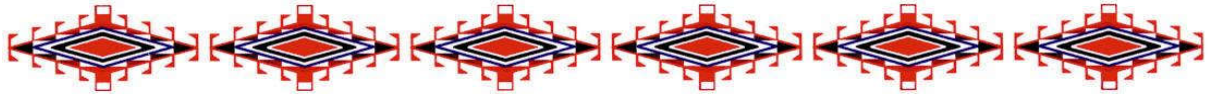


Parental Involvement

PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA (PHAC)

The Public Health Agency of Canada provides the primary funding for the Aboriginal Head Start program. Their overall mission is to help the people





of Canada maintain and improve their overall health outcomes for all people. The mandate focuses on three broad areas:



National Health policy systems, including health care



Health promotion and protection, including disease, illness and injury prevention



First Nation, Métis and Inuit Health

HEAD START MANAGEMENT

Program Executive Director oversees the Head Start program in its entirety providing direction, leadership, guidance and mentorship to all components of the Head Start program by ensuring that program goals, implementation, funding requirements & sponsorship direction are being met through fair, constructive, transparent and accountable processes.

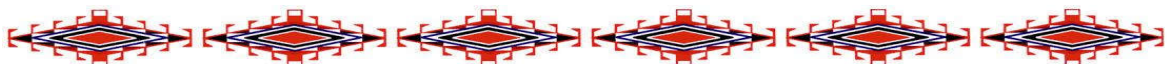
Team Coordinator works closely with the Program Manager, Family Support Worker Coordinator & IPP Coordinator to collaborate and support all components of the program while assisting with the supervision, mentorship and coaching of staff members and is a direct link between the classroom and contracted professionals.

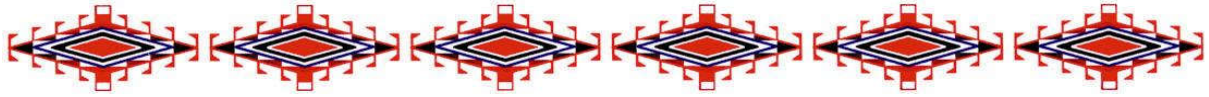
Family Support Worker Coordinator works closely with the Program Manager, Team Coordinator & IPP Coordinator to collaborate and support all components of the program while overseeing the registration process, supervision, mentorship and coaching of the Family Support Workers and is a direct link between the classroom and the Head Start families.

HEAD START STAFF

Classroom Teachers are certified Teachers and/or Early Childhood Educators responsible for developing, planning and delivering the daily programming and cultural curriculum.

Educational Assistants from each site work under the direction of the Classroom Teacher. He / She directly support the classroom teacher and children with classroom preparations, routines, behaviour management, cleanliness and overall classroom maintenance.





Elder & Culture/Language Teacher Participation shares wisdom, knowledge and guidance as well as Culture and Language to support and enhance curriculum through traditional teachings.

Family Support Workers serve as the direct link between the home and Head Start classroom helping to bridge the gap. They also provide parents/caregivers with the necessary social and community supports and resources, as well as participate in Family Programming Sessions and visits.

Bus Drivers ensure safe and efficient transportation services to and from Head Start and support hands on in the classroom when needed.

Inclusive Education Coordinator works closely with the Program Manager, Team Coordinator & Family Support Worker Coordinator to collaborate and support all components of the program while overseeing the accountability of the Alberta Education funding requirements including IPP Development & Implementation, reporting and is a direct link between the classroom and contracted professionals

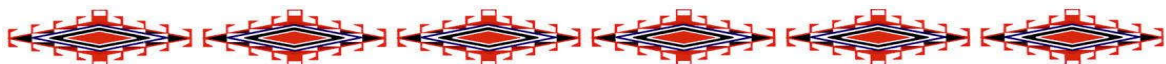
Home Educator works closely with the entire Head Start team to provide additional supports for children experiencing challenges in the classroom as well as collaborating with families providing home visits to assist with home based supports, strategies and suggestions.

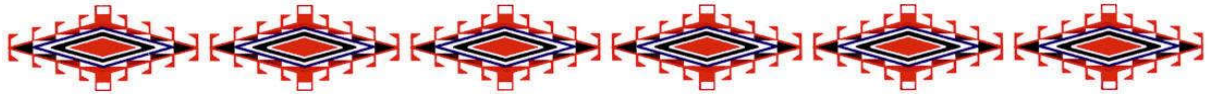
ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM PROFESSIONALS

These professionals, may or may not, work with your child throughout the school year

Alberta Health Services Team in partnership with the Edmonton Head Start programs provide our children with the primary health screenings which include dental, height, weight, vision & hearing. The professional team includes a Health Nurse, Dental Hygienist, and Project Assistants.

Speech and Language Pathologist is a contracted professional who works closely with the Classroom Team and provides speech and language assessments, provides input to child Individualized Program Plan (IPP) development, assists with classroom guidance and support.





Mental Health Therapist is a contracted professional working with the Classroom Team to provide support in the area of mental health, behaviour management and referrals to additional more specialized mental health services.

Occupational Therapist is a contracted professional working along-side the Classroom Team who provides assessments, consultation and treatment services for children experiencing difficulties in sensory and fine motor skills development.

Physical Therapist is a contracted professional working alongside the Classroom Team who provides assessments, consultation and treatment services for children experiencing severe difficulties in gross motor skills development.

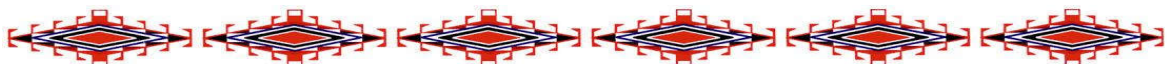
All Head Start staff and program volunteers must provide the program with current criminal record checks and vulnerable sector searches dated no later than 6 months prior to application to work in the program. All searches must be presented to the Amiskwaciy Cultural Society Administration before the individual can enter into the classroom to work with our children. The searches are then renewed each fiscal school year and submitted prior to the first day of school.

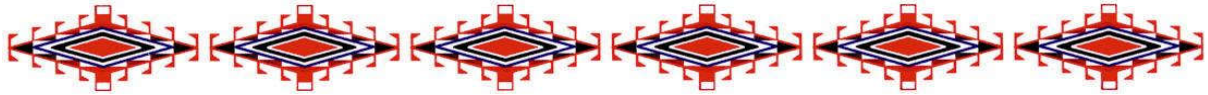
****All individuals (staff, volunteers, contracted supports, etc.) receive initial job orientation at the beginning of their employment with the program. Throughout the school year, continual performance review and job over-view occur. At each Head Start location, copies of the Aboriginal Head Start and Amiskwaciy Cultural Society Policies and Procedures are available to all for reference and guideline purposes as well.****

PROGRAM ADMISSION

Priority for admission will be given to those children who will turn **4 years old by December 31st** of the academic year and reside within the Head Start Transportation boundaries.

- Minimum age: child is 3 years as of their program start date.
- Toilet Trained (**This means your child does NOT wear pull ups, wears underwear on a daily basis, is accident free, and requires little assistance**)
- A registration form and child assessment **must** be completed prior to admission to the program. Our Family Support Workers will complete the intake process in the home, on site or at the Amiskwaciy Cultural Society office (when it is safe to do so) and assist with the registration forms





- A copy of your child's Birth Certificate must be provided at time of registration.
- A copy of your child's Health Care Card must be provided at the time of registration.
- A copy of any legal documents pertaining to the child's access/restrictions must be provided at the time of registration.
- Parents will be notified in writing regarding the status of their child's admission.
- A child may not be registered in two no-fees Head Start programs in Edmonton and/or require shared funding between two organization's programs.

PARENT/CAREGIVER ADVISORY CIRCLE

The primary role of the Parent/Caregiver Advisory Committee (PAC) is to gain knowledge, awareness and understanding of the Head Start program in order to provide community input into program planning and development.

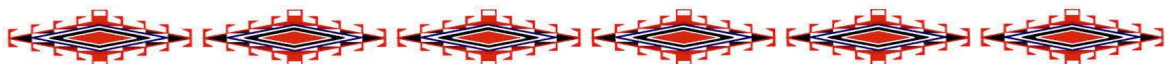
The Parent/Caregiver Advisory Committee Executive is an elected decision making body made up of highly motivated parents and/or caregivers who meet monthly (in person or through a virtual meeting platform) from September to June, as determined by the Head Start management each Academic Year. PAC Executive members are expected to take their elected role seriously and participate fully.

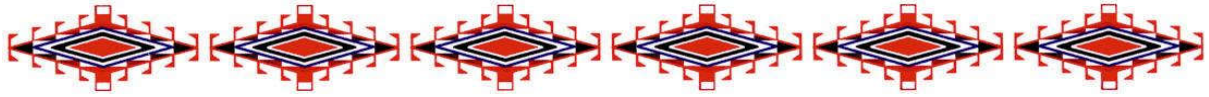
- ▲ **2 Co – Chairs**
- ▲ **Site Representatives**
- ▲ **Secretary/Treasurer**
- ▲ **2 Past PAC member at large**

All parents/caregivers are encouraged to become active participants and attend any/all activities, fundraising initiatives and events, celebrations and large group meetings/sessions, when it is safe to do so.

All parents/caregivers are encouraged to share ideas, thoughts and concerns with their child's PAC site representative to be brought to the PAC Executive.

A meal or snack and childcare for children ages 1yr to 8 years old will be provided for PAC Executive meetings, annual general PAC meetings and approved large group sessions. Please make alternate arrangements for older siblings.





Transportation will also be provided to families living in the bus boundaries and want to attend the in person PAC meetings. It is the responsibility of the family attending PAC to contact the site bus driver/classroom to arrange a pick up and drop off for the meeting. You have up until the day before the meeting to secure your spot on the bus.

A designated Head Start Staff will work closely with the PAC Executive to advise and support the meetings, events and developments of the PAC.

Elder participation is encouraged to be present at all PAC meetings and events.

PARENT/CAREGIVER INVOLVEMENT

Parents/Caregivers are the primary teachers of their children and their participation is an integral part of our Head Start program. Involvement in the program will provide parents/caregivers the opportunity to share in the exciting development of their children. The program will also assist in providing parents/caregivers with the community resources to support and assist parents/caregivers in order to empower them to play a major role in the education of their children. It takes a whole community to raise a child.

Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to communicate with classroom staff regularly to ensure quality programming, ask questions, gain clarity and have an overall awareness of their child's progress.

Each parent/caregiver who has a registered child in the Aboriginal Head Start Program is required to volunteer a minimum of 9 hours within the academic year. Please take this commitment seriously. You must not leave the education of your child totally in the hands of the Head Start staff.

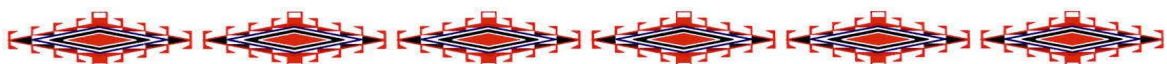


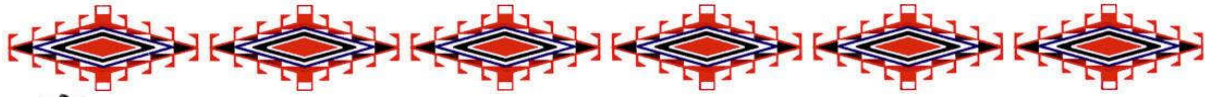
Parents who successfully complete the 9 hour requirement each year will be recognized and rewarded for their participation.



Parents are encouraged to provide feedback to let us know how we are doing with your child or any ideas for what you would like to see happen. Your voice is important!

There are many areas where you can use your talents, creativity and care to participate in your child's program.





- Volunteer in the classroom
- Volunteer to do at home preparations (making play dough, project prep, etc.)
- Participate as a Parent/Caregiver Advisory Executive Committee member
- Participate as a regular Parent/Caregiver Advisory Committee member
- Participate in PAC activities, events, fundraising events, crafts, etc.
- Volunteer on community, cultural and other related outings /field trips or attend special classroom scheduled activities.

****Confidentiality and privacy is respected therefore any of the above data will be collected by sign in sheets or volunteering, or by information shared by the parent / caregiver. All data will be kept confidential on site or at the society's main office.****

HOURS OF OPERATION

September to June, Two full days a week per group

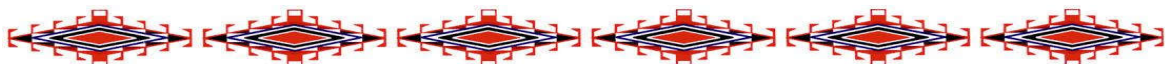
Kihew Class: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Tuesday and Thursday

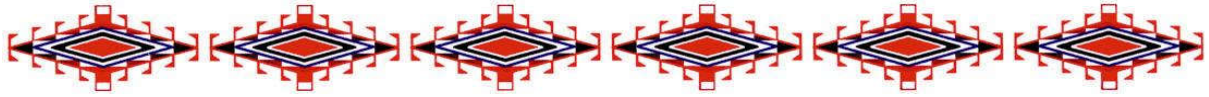
Muskwa Class: 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m., Wednesday and Friday

****Additional programming may be provided one Monday each month for our children requiring additional supports, and working in collaboration with Alberta Education****

ACCEPTANCE

Aboriginal Head Start makes every effort to enrol children into the program in a timely and efficient manner. All applications go through our Family Support Worker Coordinator and scheduled intake meetings are set up to get the enrolment process moving. Pending the completion of our intake procedures, placements will occur and families will be notified which site location, along with class and Family Support Worker your family will be working with throughout the school year. We do our best to maximize the learning potential at each site location, and should your child be enrolled at a site where the numbers are too high, adjustments may be made to balance out the needs in each class. ***The program reserves the right to move children from either class to***





SITE LOCATIONS

ABBOTT – NORTH EAST
12045 – 34 ST NW
Edmonton. AB

ST.FRANCIS SITE-NORTH EAST
6770-129 AVE NW
Edmonton. AB

BELMEAD – WEST
9011-182 ST NW
Edmonton. AB

class (am/pm) or program to program (site to site) to ensure that there is a maximum learning potential for your child. This will be completed by your Family Support Worker and all parents/caregivers will be notified of any changes prior to them occurring.

LATE

Aboriginal Head Start encourages families to have their children at school on time. The late arrival of children disrupts the program routine and may interrupt the learning process. An allowable acceptance of 15 minutes for dire weather conditions will be the exception. **(Therefore, children are not to be dropped off and will not be accepted into class after 8:30 am and 1:00 pm).**

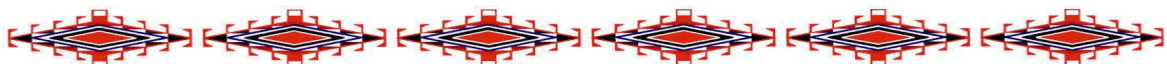
ATTENDANCE

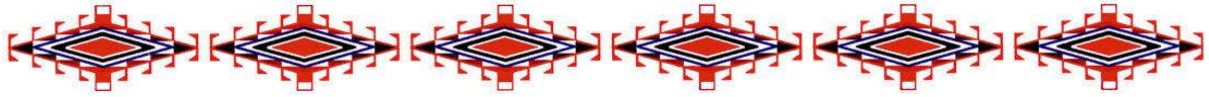
It is very important that children attend class every day. Your child will benefit and gain from attending classes regularly. When the children are absent, they miss valuable learning experiences. Children are excused from school if they are sick or have a medical or dental appointment. Parents are encouraged to schedule such appointments before or after class hours and inform both your classroom Teacher and Bus Driver before class and/or pick up time begins. Unexcused absences occur when the parent/caregiver fails to notify the classroom of their child's absence that day.

If your child(ren) ride the bus and will not be attending school, please notify the Bus Driver prior to your child's pick up time. If you bring your child to Head Start and he/she will not be attending, please notify your Classroom Teacher. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to indicate length of absence and date of return.

If your child misses a week or more of in class programming, please contact your Family Support Worker to complete the Outbreak/Epidemic/Pandemic Re-entry Form before your child returns to class.

Aboriginal Head Start reserves the right to withdrawal a child from the program if the family does not adhere to the program policies and procedures listed in this handbook.





PROGRAM CHANGES

If you are transferring, moving or withdrawing your child from school for any reason, please notify the site Family Support Worker along with the school at least two days in advance, so records can be prepared for your child. If you are moving at the end of the school year, please notify the school as soon as possible so that any necessary documents can be forwarded.

Should someone other than the designated individuals listed on your intake form be added or removed from your approval to pick up your child, the classroom and Family Support Workers for your site must be notified as well.

ARRIVAL & PICK-UP OF CHILDREN

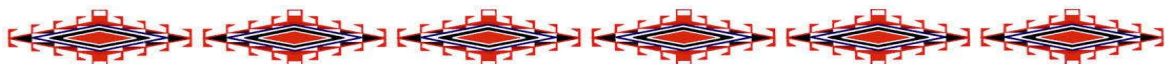
If you are bringing your child to school, you are asked to adhere to the hours of school. Please notify your site by phone upon your arrival where at that time a staff member will come and meet you to sign your child in or out of class.

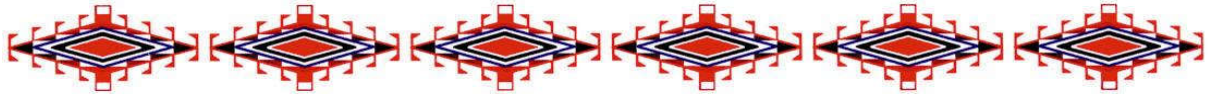
TRANSPORTATION PRIVILEGES

Bus transportation is provided for children living within the Head Start boundaries. Families receiving Bus Transportation will need to adhere to the Program Policies and Procedures for bussing expectations and operations. Parents/Caregivers are expected to understand and abide by the transportation guidelines set out by the program. Bus schedules will be produced and must be adhered to! The bus pick-up and drop-off address must be a consistent address.

Parents / Caregivers are urged to discuss appropriate bus riding behaviour and rules with their child. Should a child persist in disobeying the rules or the bus driver, an Incident Report may be filed and this will be discussed with Parents/Caregivers.

Children will be restricted from riding on the bus for inappropriate behaviour on the bus or inappropriate behaviors while waiting for the bus to arrive or leaving the bus at drop off.





BUS PICK UP & DROP OFF TIMES

Bus pick up is between the following times:

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.

Bus drop off is between the following times:

3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

HOW & WHEN TO REACH YOUR BUS DRIVER

It is vital that the bus drivers receive prior notification regarding any changes in your child's bus route.

Each site bus driver has a working cell phone with a message system. If you need to reach the bus driver at your site, they will personally be available to answer their phones between the following times:



Mornings: 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. (Drivers are driving children between 8am and 9am)



Afternoons: 4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. (Drivers are driving children between 3pm and 4pm)

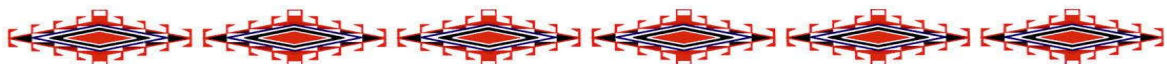
If there is no answer, please leave them a voice mail or text message. The driver's check their phones regularly, so they will get the message. Drivers **WILL NOT** answer calls during the transportation of children as their main focus is the safety of children.

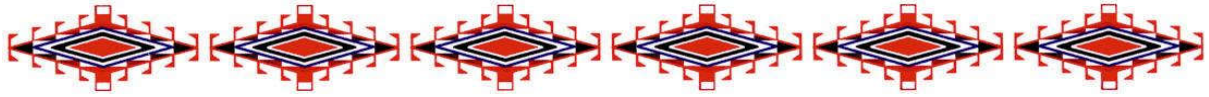
It is imperative that parents contact the drivers before 7:30 a.m. to let the driver know your child will not be attending class that day.

PARENT/CAREGIVER RESPONSIBILITIES

Parents/Caregivers Must:

*Notify the Bus Driver in advance if your child will not be attending school.





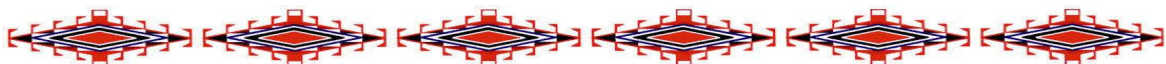
- *Leave a message on the driver's cell phone should you not speak to the driver directly.
- *Notify the driver in advance if your child is to be released to someone other than yourself.
Written permission and photo ID will be required for the release of your child.
- *Walk their child out to the bus upon pick up or drop off.
- *Ensure alternate caregivers helping in the transportation process are aware of these responsibilities.

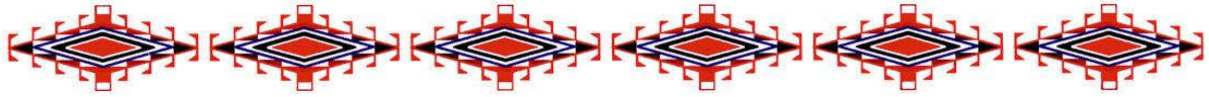
- *Immediately notify your bus driver and your Family Support Worker of any changes in your phone numbers
- *If the Caregiver is not home and the Emergency Contacts cannot be reached, we are bound by program regulations to contact the Children's Services Crisis line and your child will be dropped off at their location.
- *Children are required to wear appropriate seasonal clothing to protect them at all times, especially during cold weather conditions. Children not dressed appropriately during the winter months **WILL NOT** be allowed on the bus. (This includes a winter coat, snow pants, mittens, toque, and winter boots). This is a safety concern and will be enforced by the Bus Driver for the protection of your children. Should you require supports in providing appropriate clothing, please contact your site Family Support Worker

****PLEASE NOTE****

- *Absolutely **NO** Food, Drink, Gum or candy is allowed on the bus at any time.
- *Absolutely **NO** toys are to be brought on to the bus.
- *Absolutely **NO** smoking by Parent/Caregivers accompanying their child on the bus at any time.
- *Absolutely **NO** verbal or physical abuse, swearing or profanity will be tolerated at any time. The Aboriginal Head Start Programs has a **NO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE POLICY**. Should instances occur by any child, Parent or Caregiver, this could be cause for verbal and written warnings and may result in your child being suspended or expelled from the Head Start program.

DAYCARE EXPECTATIONS





Head Start bus drivers transport children from addresses located within the site transportation boundaries which may include daycares for pick up and/or drop off. ***A list of daycares within your site area can be obtained by contacting your site Family Support Worker.*** The expectation of the daycares in which children attending the Aboriginal Head Start program are as follows:

- ❖ Daycare staff will have the child/ren dressed appropriately with their backpacks and ready for bus pick up.
- ❖ Daycare staff will walk the child/ren out to the Head Start bus and sign them in/out on the sheets provided.
- ❖ Bus Drivers are **NOT ALLOWED** to leave the bus at any time.
- ❖ Daycare staff should **NOT** refuse pick up/drop off service by the Aboriginal Head Start staff at any time. The transportation service that is provided has been set up through the Parent/Caregiver and therefore must be handled in the same manner.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

**** Please allow bus drivers a 15 minute window to allow for bad weather conditions, high volumes of traffic on city streets, road construction or a change in bus routes on any given day.****

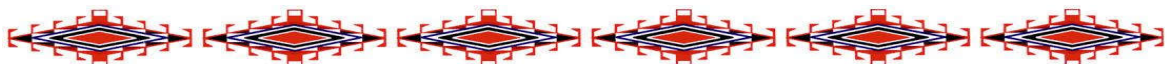
BUS REGULATIONS

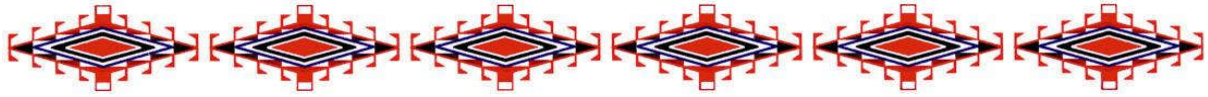
Please have your child ready, dressed appropriately and waiting for the bus.

The bus driver will enforce a waiting period of **three (3) minutes** and then depart. The time starts immediately after the bus driver puts the bus into park and honks the horn.

The bus driver **MAY NOT** leave the bus at any time to go and collect your child to be picked up or dropped off from the bus. This is the responsibility of the Parent/Caregiver.

The bus driver is not obligated to return and pick up your child after the bus has been to your house once already. They need to pick up other children in the program and get them to the Head Start program on time. It will be the Parents/Caregiver's responsibility to ensure their child's transportation to class should they miss initial pick up.





There will be one stop only per child. If you have not notified your site's Family Support Worker in writing of any changes in the child's regular route (pick up/drop off), the bus driver will pick up/drop off at the child's scheduled pick up/drop off point that was initiated upon admittance into the program. This will ensure the efficiency of the bus route.

BUS CANCELLATIONS

Parents/Caregivers will be notified of any cancellations in transportation due to the following...

***Severe Weather Conditions**

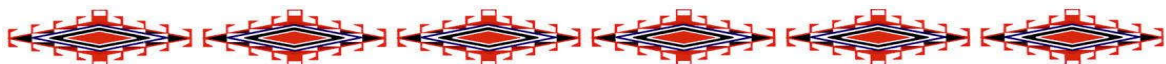
***Severe Road Conditions**

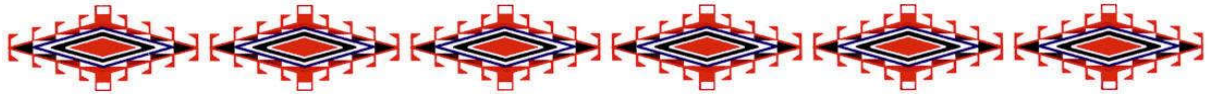
***Staff Illness**

***Bus Maintenance**

***Government or Alberta Health Services regulations**

- ❖ In cases of severe weather conditions, transportation will be cancelled if the temperature is **-32 degrees** with the wind chill. At times, the weather conditions get poorer as the day progresses. A decision not to run the bus or end class early may be made. Once a decision has been made, the Parents/Caregivers will be notified. Although transportation will be cancelled, ***the classroom will remain open and continue to run regular scheduled programming*** should you personally wish to transport your own child to and from class.
- ❖ Please note that Bus Drivers call Environment Canada weather at (780) 468-4968 to confirm temperature, as this is the most accurate source.
- ❖ Parents/Caregivers have the option to keep their child home on days they consider to be too cold. Please be sure to call the Bus Driver in the event your child will remain at home.
- ❖ In cases of severe road conditions, the bus drivers will use their discretion to ensure the safety of the children at all times.
- ❖ In cases of staff illness, the program will attempt to have back up transportation drivers in place. All Parents/Caregivers are asked to please follow the same rules





and regulations laid out in this handbook regardless of the individual driving the Head Start bus.

- ❖ In cases of bus maintenance, the children's safety will be our first concern. Regular scheduled maintenance is completed and updated to ensure safe and manageable daily transport of your children.
- ❖ In all mentioned above, a phone call from your bus driver will be made to all Parent/Caregivers as soon as possible to notify you of changes made to transportation services.

EMERGENCY BUS PROCEDURES

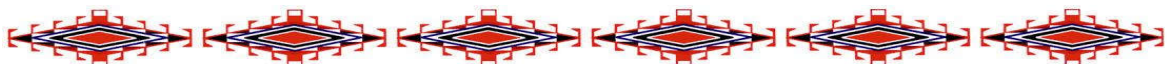
All program Bus Drivers are trained in First Aid/Child CPR. Fire extinguishers are located at the front of each Head Start bus. There are flares and pylons that accompany the emergency items located behind the bus driver's seat, and First Aid kits are hanging above in the front of each bus.

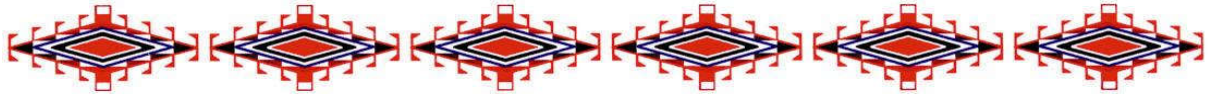
Should an emergency situation require immediate assistance, the bus driver will contact 911.

Minor Accident Procedure:

1. Driver will secure the bus by pulling over to the side of the road, putting the bus into park, applying the emergency break and taking the keys out of the ignition.
2. Driver will check all passengers and administer first aid if necessary. Driver will calm children.
3. Driver will call the ambulance if needed.
4. Driver will exchange with other driver (in case of collision): Name, license plate number, Society phone number and insurance company information.
5. Driver will contact Program Manager or Team Coordinator, inform them of accident, accident location, severity and wait for assistance.
6. Should accident need medical assistance, Driver and assisting staff member will take all children to hospital to have them checked.
7. Classroom Teacher will immediately phone parents/caregivers and follow up by sending home letters describing the accident and what safety procedures were followed.

Major Accident Procedure:



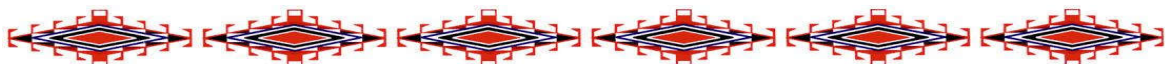


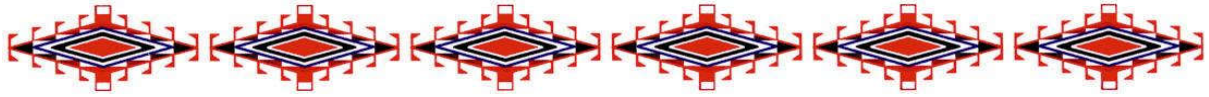
1. Driver will secure the bus by pulling over to the side of the road, putting the bus into park, applying the emergency break and taking the keys out of the ignition.
2. Driver will ensure the safety of the children first and foremost and will not move any children that may be seriously injured.
3. Driver will call 911 immediately and wait for emergency services to arrive on the scene.
4. Driver will contact Amiskwaciy Cultural Society receptionist and notify them of the accident and where they are located. Assistance will be sent immediately.
5. Driver will stay with the children and ensure them that an ambulance is coming.
REMAIN CALM.
6. If children require evacuation, the driver will administer proper first aid procedures during evacuation. If children do not require evacuation, driver will calm the children and apply first aid procedures if necessary.
7. Staff assistance will go with any children needing medical services in the ambulance to the hospital. They will take with them the Emergency Book and Attendance Book (sign in/out sheets).
8. Driver will remain at the scene with children who are not injured, and the staff assistance will also remain if an ambulance is not needed.
9. Driver will exchange information: Name, license plate number and insurance information along with a statement to police.
10. Witnesses of the accident will also be asked to provide a statement.
11. Driver along with assistance will transport children to classroom site and again ensure all children's safety/concerns have been addressed.
12. Classroom Teacher will immediately contact parents/caregivers and follow up by sending home letters to parents describing the accident and what safety procedures were used at the time of the accident.
13. If this was a major accident, debriefing is recommended for the staff members involved in the accident.
14. Family Support Workers will do follow ups to ensure their children and families needs have been met.

****Please Note: Depending on the severity of the accident,
these procedures may vary.****

BUS BOUNDARIES

Bus boundaries are set at the beginning of each school year and may be subject to change without notice pending on the location of pick- ups/drop offs of our families. Please





contact your site Family Support Worker to see where your address falls within our program boundaries.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND/OR TELEPHONE

Please notify the Family Support Worker and Classroom Teacher of any change in address or telephone number (including work, home or emergency numbers). It is very critical that we are able to reach a parent or authorized adult in case of an emergency.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Every household must provide the program with a minimum of 1 (one) **emergency contact persons living within your city limits that have working phone numbers**. Should all contact numbers be out-of-service, Aboriginal Head Start reserves the right, for the safety of your child, **to suspend the child until contact information is in working order**.

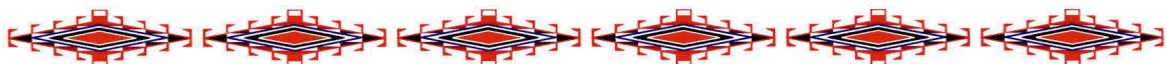
SCHOOL CLOSURES

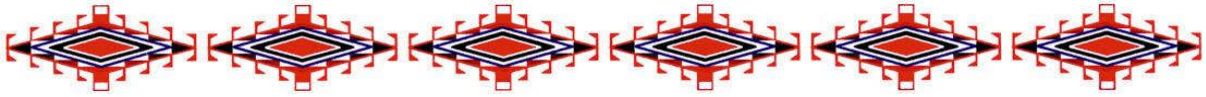
The school may experience some emergency situations that would warrant school closure. If this happens, every effort will be made to give parents/caregivers advance notice.

OUTBREAK/EPIDEMIC/PANDEMIC PROCEDURES

In order to stop the spread of infectious diseases, we have adopted the following policies and procedures:

- *All staff, children, parents/caregivers will be screened before entering the classroom or the school bus (this may include, but not limited to, temperature check and symptom checklist)
- *Strict cleaning practices are in place such as sanitizing all surfaces and supplies throughout the day and between groups
- *Maintaining cohort groups (a group of staff and children who stay together throughout the day)
- *Ensuring each cohort has their own supplies





- *Each child will have their own designated supplies where possible (cubbies, yoga mats, etc.)
- *Ensuring physical distancing when not within our classroom space
- *Restricting the number of people entering the classroom who are not part of the cohort group
- *Using one door for all drop offs and pick ups of children
- *Encouraging one parent/caregiver to be the designated pick up and drop off person for their child
- *No non-essential visitors or volunteers in the classroom or on the bus
- *Ensuring that masks, hand sanitizer and hand washing stations (where possible) are available for use at all times
- *No family style meals/snacks nor will children be self-serving. Staff will serve children at meal/snack times to avoid any cross contamination
- *Non-essential personal items will be discouraged from entering the classroom
- *Encouraging face masks or shields for each child and staff member when entering public places. These will be provided by the program
- *Staff members may put a mask or other personal protective equipment on your child if they are displaying any symptoms
- *Following all regulations that may be set out by the government during these times

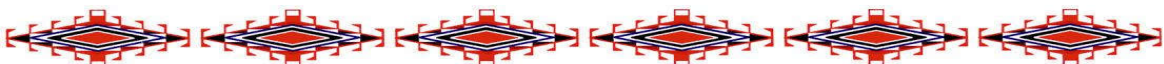
Aboriginal Head Start will always try to maintain an in-class teaching model. When it is not safe to do so, the program will move to an online model. There may be times that both teaching models are used.

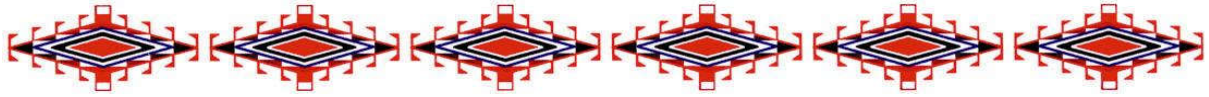
CLASSROOM CLOTHING & FOOTWEAR

One of the program goals of the Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) is to encourage independence in our students. To promote this, parents may want to consider the following suggestions regarding school clothes.

- a) Pants that are fairly loose and without difficult fasteners are easier for young children.
- b) Zippers on coats and jackets are often easier to pull up or down if a zipper pull is attached.
- c) Velcro-fastened shoes and slip on boots are more easily managed by young children.

Please send a spare set of clothing with your child to school. This is required in case of a washroom accident, messy play, etc. These clothes will remain on site for the school year.





It is important that each child have a pair of shoes, which can be worn in the gym (ex. Non-slip soles). Running shoes with Velcro are a good choice. These shoes are to be left at school and clearly **labeled** with your child's name

**** Please Note ****

Please **do not** send your child in JEANS or SKIRTS or any jewelry on gymnastics or yoga days.

Again, each site bus driver has the right to refuse the pick-up of your child if he/she is coming to school not dressed for the weather or activity. Please be mindful of this.

ALL clothing items, bags, shoes etc. MUST to be clearly labeled with your child's full name.

CLOTHING FOR OUTSIDE ACTIVITIES

Our children spend time outdoors throughout the year and are expected to wear appropriate seasonal clothing to protect them, especially during winter months.

Children not dressed appropriately during winter will **NOT** be allowed on the bus. This is a safety concern and will be enforced by the Bus Drivers for the protection of your children.

Fall/Winter

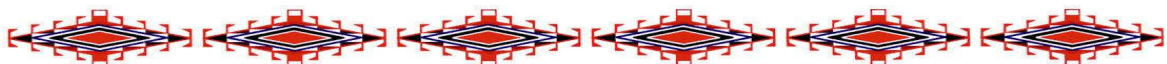
**Snow pants, coats, boots,
Sweaters, neck warmer or scarf,
Toques and mittens.**

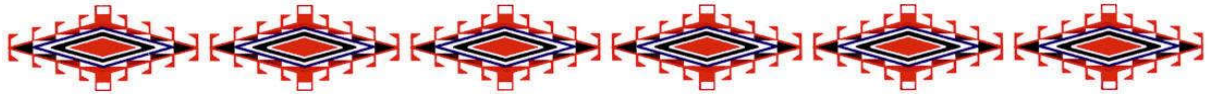
Spring/Summer

**Sun hat, light jacket,
Close toed shoes/rubber boots
(Sunscreen & Bug spray should be
applied at home)**

CHILDREN'S "Celebrating My Learning" FOLDERS

Each child will receive a "Celebrating My Learning" folder at the end of the school year that details the various work they have completed throughout the year. Items may include but are not limited to writing samples, craft samples, drawing samples, cultural activity samples, coloring samples as well as classroom and field trip pictures. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to go through their child's folder when visiting the classroom and as a way to celebrate the accomplishments made throughout the school year.





OPEN HOUSE

Parents/Caregivers will be invited to meet the classroom staff in the fall to simply check in and see how your child is settling in to the program and provide the opportunity to ask questions and/or gain clarity. Families are also encouraged to contact the Classroom Teacher at any time to discuss any concerns and/or positive feedback they may have about their child and/or program.

ASSESSMENTS - What are they?

Assessment is the process of gathering important information about your child. This provides the classroom staff with your child's current skills level, abilities and/or challenges. Head Start staff use a variety of formal and informal assessment

tools as part of the ongoing process to measure your child's progress and develop individual goals for your child. Early identification and intervention for young children with learning delays and/or disabilities is the first step leading to better school performance and long-term gains.

Parents are asked to provide the Head Start with all reports from doctors and/or other professionals prior to admission as well as updated reports as they become available.

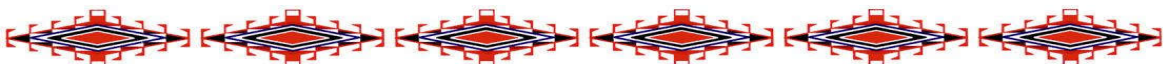
INDIVIDUAL PROGRAM PLAN (IPP)

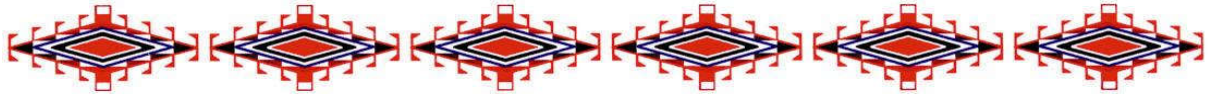
(Only occurs for your child if Alberta Education funding is in place)

Should your child require modified programming and be working along-side Alberta Education, your child will receive an Individual Program Plan (IPP) in the identified area of need. The IPP details short term and long term goals and objectives for the child. Our AHS professional team is responsible for creating and updating your child's IPP. Your child may receive direct 1-1 or small group therapy from the Speech and Language Pathologist, Occupational Therapist and/or Educational Assistant in order to assist the child in reaching his/her goals.

The IPP requires:

- Parents/Caregivers input and signature
- Parents/Caregivers to attend a minimum of 3 IPP conference during the academic year. These can be completed through a face-to-face, online or phone call meeting.





Children receiving IPP's will also attend classes the scheduled one Monday of every month for intensified programming focused on the IPP goals. Parents/Caregivers are expected to support these extra learning days.

The IPP is a working document and is updated during the course of the academic year. Parents/caregivers will receive a copy of the IPP and a copy of the IPP will be made available on request to follow the child into Kindergarten.

FAMILY ORIENTATED PROGRAMMING SESSIONS (FOPS)

(Only occurs for your child if Alberta Education funding is in place and it is safe to do so)

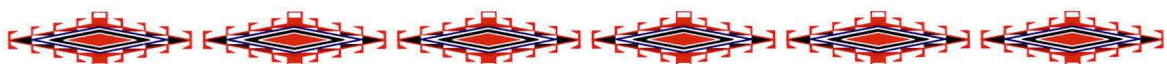
Family Orientated Programming Sessions are an extension of the Head Start program. The goal of the session is to work with the child and parent/caregiver on an identified IPP goal to offer ideas and strategies and model ways for parents to support their child's development. The Family Orientated Programming Session must include at least one parent/caregiver, the Head Start child and a classroom staff member (i.e.: classroom teacher, educational assistant, Family Support Worker, consultants and professionals).

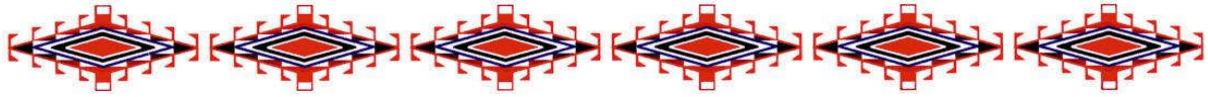
Family Orientated Programming Sessions will be completed by a Head Start employee that works directly with the child and are required by Alberta Education as part of the Early Education program.

Each child who has an IPP requires Family Orientated Programming Sessions in the academic year. Sessions are usually 1.5 hours each. Head Start Staff will schedule these visits with parents/caregivers directly.

SOCIAL SUPPORT HOME VISITS

During the first visit, parents and staff will review the Parent/Caregiver Handbook in its entirety.





Social support home visits provide opportunities for Parent's/Caregivers to identify needs, set personal and family goals and are intended to assist families to develop a positive learning environment for their child at home.

Each family can expect a minimum of 2 visits per school year. Parents/Caregivers and/or Program Staff can request additional visits when necessary.

Home visits will/may provide for the following:

- ❖ **Respect for values and culture.**
- ❖ **A Family Action Plan to help work toward the identified goals.**
- ❖ **Family Support Workers are able to provide families with meaningful information on child development, parenting, health and nutrition, cultural awareness, life skills and other community resources.**

Parents/Caregivers will be given advance notice (when possible) of each visit, either by telephone and/or a note delivered by your child.

SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR & DAILY SCHEDULE

A monthly calendar will be given to you at the beginning of each month clearly identifying field trips, statutory holidays, school breaks, and days off.

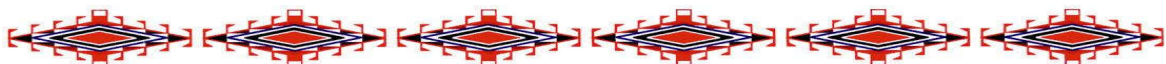
The daily schedule of activities is posted at each site and on our social media platforms by your classroom teacher.

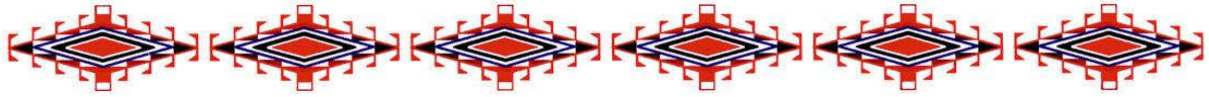
NUTRITION

A nutritious snack and or meal is provided to the Head Start children, the menu is prepared using the Aboriginal Canada Food Guide and meals include foods from at least three food groups. The serving, eating and clean-up of meals is conducted so that all children experience positive socialization and individual responsibility.

FOOD ALLERGY

Please indicate if your child has any food allergies on the admission form as well as notifying your child's teacher upon the start of your child in the program. A note from the doctor may also be required to explain the severity of the allergy and treatment procedures if necessary.





RELEASE OF INFORMATION

There is a possibility that pictures will be displayed amongst classroom activities, field trips, outings, culture camp, events and celebrations be published and/or printed in Head Start material and/or local radio or television media. A release form permitting Aboriginal Head Start (AHS) to use these pictures and/or videos is signed at time of registration and kept on file.

Any parent/caregiver who objects to having their child's photo, picture, voice, drawings or dancing published for public display should not sign these permission forms. If you have signed this permission form and want to withdrawal your permission, you can do so in writing to your Family Support Worker.

FIELD TRIPS – OUTINGS

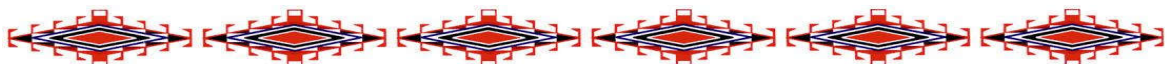
Field trips and outings are an important part of your child's learning process and occur often throughout the year. A general field trip permission form allowing Head Start children to attend all field trips is signed by the parent/caregiver in the registration package.

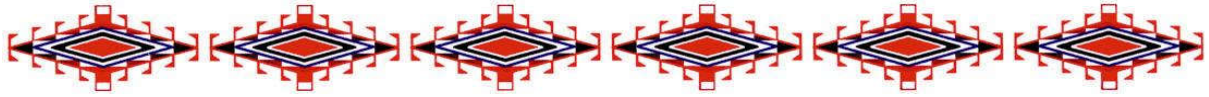
Parents will be notified in writing prior to each event to remind them of the activity and provide opportunities to volunteering. Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to volunteer and assist with all scheduled outings, when it is safe to do so. **Please make alternate arrangements for younger siblings unless otherwise stated.** Spending focused time with your Head Start child is important and will create memories that last a lifetime.

There is no wiggle room waiting for children on special field trip days. Sites must leave their sites on time; therefore, no child will be accepted after 9:00 a.m. on these days.

Please Note

When regular, in class programming occurs smoking **IS NOT** permitted by any staff member, volunteer or parent/caregiver while attending any fieldtrips or child outings.





****ON ALL OFF-SITE FIELD TRIPS, THE SITE'S PORTABLE CHILDREN'S FILE INFORMATION IS TAKEN WITH THE CLASS ALONG WITH ANY IMPORTANT MEDICATION, FORMS, AND PROGRAM CELL PHONE. IN CASES OF EMERGENCY, PARENTS/CAREGIVERS WILL BE CONTACTED FIRST AT THE NUMBERS GIVEN TO THE PROGRAM, AND IF YOU CANNOT BE REACHED, THE EMERGENCY CONTACTS LISTED WILL BE CALLED.****

ILLNESS

An obviously ill child is not expected to come to school and will not be accepted. Parents are asked to exercise their best judgment in determining when their child is too sick to attend Head Start. Please **do not send a sick child to Head Start if any of the following symptoms are present within a 24 hour period:**

***a fever of any kind**

For reference, normal temperatures are:

Mouth: 35.5 – 37.5°C

Underarm: 36.5 – 37.5°C

Ear: 35.8 – 38.0°C

*** coloured or heavy nasal discharges**

***an upset stomach**

***pink eye**

***vomited**

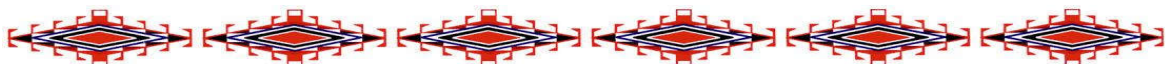
***diarrhea**

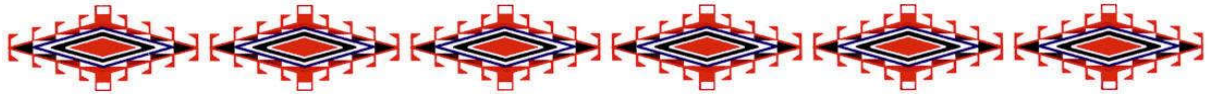
***productive coughing**

*** rashes, hives**

If a teacher or other staff member observes any of these symptoms and this appears to be a chronic condition, at the discretion of the staff member, the child will be taken home.

In the case of an outbreak, epidemic or pandemic, the program will adhere to all government and Alberta Health Services policies concerning screenings for signs of sickness as well as when to close program doors for in class programming.





MEDICATION

Only medications prescribed by a doctor will be administered. The label on the prescribed medication must have the Head Start child's name on it. The date on the prescription must be current and the medication must not be expired. Medication will only be administered by certified staff. It is encouraged, whenever possible, for your child to be administered any medication at home before coming to class.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Children who have an identified communicable disease will be sent home immediately when recognized. Parents/Caregivers must provide a medical clearance from doctor or public health nurse upon their child's return to the program. The program will notify the Health Center when a communicable disease is present in the site. The Family Support Worker will support and ensure follow-up with families.

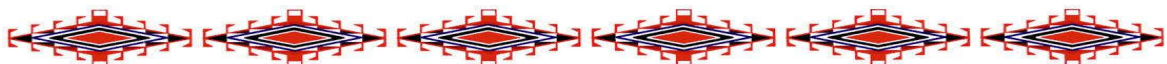
VIOLENCE

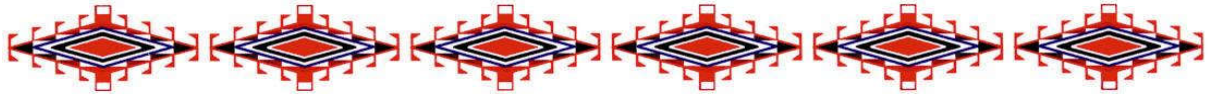
The Aboriginal Head Start Programs have a **ZERO TOLERANCE FOR VIOLENCE POLICY**. Children found biting, hitting, swearing, kicking etc. may be immediately removed from the activity and parents will be notified of child's behavior. The incident will be discussed with the child's parent/caregiver and an Incident Report will be filled out each time and kept on file. Every effort will be made to address this behaviour. Continuous violent behaviour will not be tolerated and could result in an indefinite suspension from the Head Start program.

Verbal and physical abuse by any parent/caregiver to ANY program staff will not be tolerated at any time and could be cause for verbal and written warnings and/or may result in the child being withdrawn from the Head Start program.

If any member of the Head Start team receives abuse of any kind at any time throughout the school year, the program reserves the right to suspend the child from both the program and transportation until management has made the appropriate decisions pertaining to the specific conduct.

CHILD SAFETY CONCERNING ABUSE





Aboriginal Head Start and its partners make every effort to support families and their children. They understand that removing children from the care of their parents, extended family and communities is painful for everyone.

We understand that many families are under pressure, need assistance in dealing with addictions, need some form of respite care or are in need of support to deal with other concerns or issues that may result in abuse.

As citizens we have a legal obligation required by law to report all forms of abuse.

Should parents/caregivers require additional supports during times of crisis, you are encouraged to request assistance from your Family Support Worker. They will be sure to assist where needed and refer you on to the appropriate community resources as needed. They will be sensitive to maintain cultural relevance and community support while healing occurs. Please call 780-640-9799 Ext #102 and ask to speak to the Family Support Program Coordinator.

TOYS

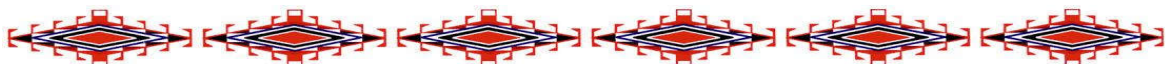
We discourage children from bringing toys from home, as often this causes disruption on the bus and in the classroom. As well, when bringing items from one location to another, there is the risk of cross contamination of bacteria and viruses between locations. Please have your child leave their toys at home or in the car.

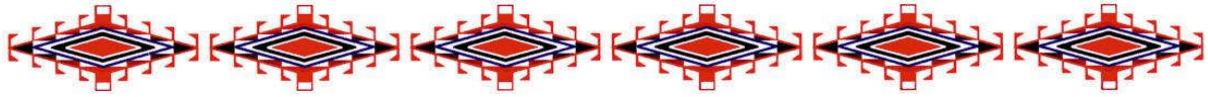
The program provides toys for the children within the classroom, which are not for borrowing or lending. If you find your child has accidentally taken any toys home, please return them as soon as possible.

CLASSROOM & BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

The use of any form of physical punishment as a form of behaviour management is strictly prohibited. Staff will implement positive strategies and follow these criteria:

- Respect for the children. - Each child deserves respect and dignity as a human being.
- Knowledge of individual children. - Discipline cannot be applied fairly if it is applied without knowledge of the individual child.
- Knowledge of age appropriate/typical child growth, development and behaviour. - Children who are behaving in ways that are not typical or age





appropriate may be helped to learn more acceptable responses to be used in a classroom environment.

- Willingness to accept discipline as an opportunity for teaching. - Staff will help the children control their behaviour in ways that will teach them new strategies for interacting successfully in groups or with individuals.
- Avoidance of judgmental words. - Each child will receive consistent, positive reinforcement of desirable behaviour.
- Inform children. - Children should be told what behaviours are expected of them and why rules are in effect.

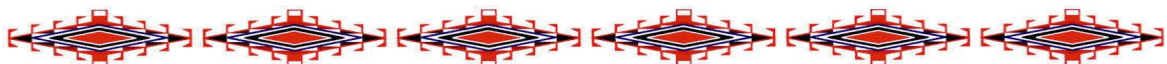
The following strategies will be used for misbehaviour:

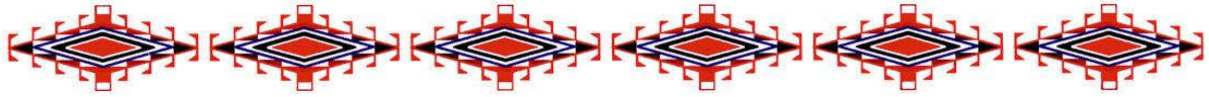
- a) Help the child state the problem.
- b) Help the child become aware of their own and other's feelings.
- c) Demonstrate to the child why the behaviour is both inappropriate for the situation and ineffective to achieve desired results. Teach the child that all behaviour produces a natural and logical consequence.
- d) Defiance. If a child is defiant in following simple classroom rules, the staff will take the time and privately find out what makes the child defiant. Parents/caregivers will be informed of the child's behaviour and request for their in-put to help and/or the child may be removed from class should his/her behaviour cause harm to self and/or others.
- e) Should behaviours be extreme, parents/caregivers will be asked to accompany their child to class and/or on outings until the child's behaviour has improved.

ACCIDENT/INCIDENT/DISCLOSURE PROCEDURES

Every effort is and will be made to ensure your child's safety; it is of the utmost concern for all program staff. However, accidents, incidents or disclosures may happen. In the event that your child is involved in any way, the following procedures will be followed:

- ✱ All Head Start staff have First Aid Certification
- ✱ The staff will immediately apply first aide treatment if needed.
- ✱ If necessary, the child will be immediately transported to either the closest Medical Centre or Hospital, and contact will be made immediately with Parents/Caregivers or your Emergency Contacts listed in your child's intake form.





- ✦ Parents and primary caregivers will be contacted by program staff regarding any accident/incident.
- ✦ The accident/incident/disclosure will be documented immediately and be put on your child's file, as well as a copy submitted to the main office.
- ✦ If needed, a call will be placed to the appropriate regional child care office if a incident/disclosure has been shared with a Head Start staff member.
- ✦ Follow-up will be done to ensure all procedures have been followed.
- ✦ An evaluation will be completed to determine that any additional preventative measures are in place.
- ✦ If any recommendations are determined as a result of this, these will be implemented immediately.

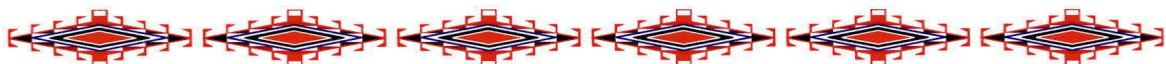
**Parents will be encouraged to provide feedback
and participate in the above process.**

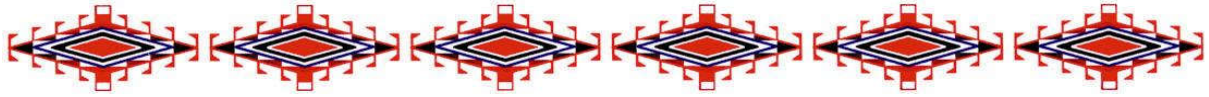
LICE – Our aim is prevention!

Our program 's policy on head lice is as follows, and due to the highly transferable nature of head lice there will be no exceptions to this policy:

- ◆ All children attending the Head Start will be checked thoroughly every week for head lice.
- ◆ Children found to have live lice will be sent back to their home, daycare, day home or babysitters immediately upon discovery.
- ◆ Children found with nits will be sent home at the end of the day.
- ◆ Parents/Caregivers will receive a note stating their child has head lice.
- ◆ Notes will also be sent home to all families to inform parents/caregivers that the Head Start class has been exposed to a case of head lice.

Treatment





- ◆ Children need to be treated with an appropriate medicated shampoo or ‘vinegar and mineral oil’, to kill the adult lice.
- ◆ Hair needs to be combed and all nits need to be removed from the hair.
- ◆ Your Family Support Worker will provide follow-up to ensure the parents/caregivers have treated the lice condition and the child is nit free prior to returning to Head Start.
- ◆ www.headlice.org is a great website to gather additional information and resources

PARENT/CAREGIVER GRIEVANCE & PROCEDURE

Amiskwaciy Cultural Society is committed to the fair, equitable, accessible and structured process to receive, investigate, respond to and document the outcomes of client grievances. A grievance is a written complaint filed by a Client expressing dissatisfaction with service or conditions. Any client who has a complaint and has been unable to resolve the matter through regular channels of communication may use the grievance process to be heard and to find resolution.

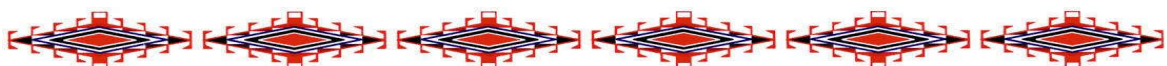
All clients are informed of their right to appeal decisions that relate to them. A copy of the client grievance procedure will be given to them upon intake.

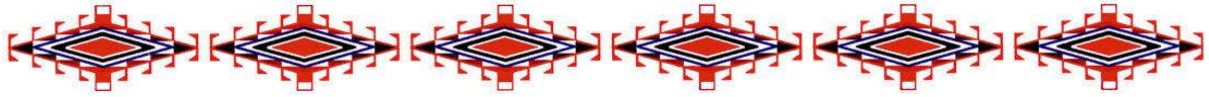
An additional avenue of dispute resolution for youth/children is the Office of the Children's Advocate. All youth/children with Children's Services involvement are informed of the Office upon intake, and provided with telephone access to the office when they request it.

Clients wishing to make an appeal must do so in writing within **30** days of the problem or incident occurring.

The procedure for filing a grievance must be followed.

Persons responsible for reviewing the grievance must maintain confidentiality as necessary to effectively investigate the grievance.





Parents/Caregivers are encouraged to address and attempt resolution of any issue or concern they may have with a Head Start staff, Society staff or any other parent. In the event you feel your problem solving attempts have been unsuccessful, the Amiskwaciy Cultural Society's grievance procedure is as follows:

A grievance is a written complaint filed by a client to express dissatisfaction with the service or staff at the Aboriginal Head Start program.

Any client who has a complaint and who has been unable or unsuccessful at resolving it verbally may use the grievance process to be heard and to attempt resolution.

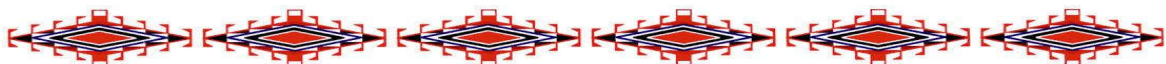
Within **30** days of the problem or incident occurring, the client must complete a written grievance to the Program Executive Director indicating;

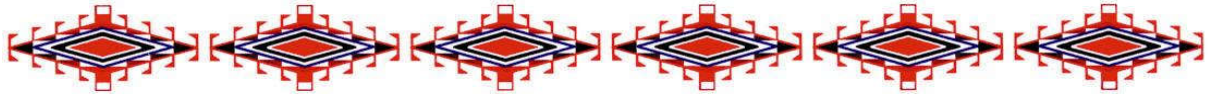
- The allegation being made;
- Specifics of the allegation, including names, dates, time;
- Prior attempts to resolve the issue; and
- accepted outcomes for the client.

The Program Executive Director will investigate the allegations by speaking with the client, reviewing file documents, interviewing staff and or other means aimed at seeking resolution. A written response to the grievance will be prepared and forwarded to the client within ten **10** working days of receiving the grievance.

If this is not satisfactory the client may submit a written appeal to the Board of Directors of the Amiskwaciy Cultural Society within five **5** working days of receipt of the Program Executive Director's response.

The Board of Directors will investigate the allegations by speaking with the client, reviewing file documents, interviewing staff, case workers and the Program Executive Director, or other means aimed at seeking resolution. A written response to the grievance will be prepared and forwarded to the client within ten **10** working days of receiving the grievance. If this response is not satisfactory the client may submit a request for final appeal to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. The Executive Committee will review all of the written documentation submitted and written responses of the program staff. A written response to the request for final appeal will be prepared and forwarded to the client within **10** working days of receiving the grievance.





If this response is not satisfactory the client may submit a request for final appeal to the Board of Directors Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will review all of the written documentation from both parties. A written response to the request for final appeal will be prepared and forwarded to the client within **10** working days of receiving the final appeal.

HEAD START PHONE NUMBERS

In the event that you want to discuss your child's needs, progress or clarify any information, please feel free to call the Aboriginal Head Start Program Staff at any time.

HEAD START MANAGEMENT

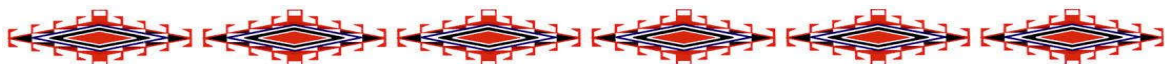
Program Executive Director	780-640-9799 Ext #100
Team Coordinator	780-640-9799 Ext #101
Family Support Services Coordinator	780-640-9799 Ext #102
Inclusive Education Coordinator	780-640-9799 Ext #108
Transportation Coordinator	780-640-9799 Ext #113

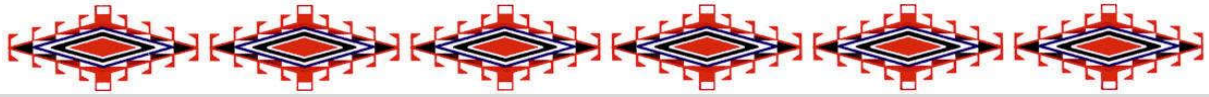
FAMILY SUPPORT WORKERS

Abbott Site	780-640-9799 Ext #104
Belmead Site	780-640-9799 Ext #112
St. Francis Site	780-640-9799 Ext #103

HOME EDUCATORS

All Sites	780-640-9799 Ext #110
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All Sites

780-640-9799 Ext #115

ABBOTT SITE: 12045 – 34 street

Classroom

780-477-1596

Bus Driver

780-604-3633

BELMEAD SITE: 9011 – 182 street

Classroom

780-930-4215

Bus Driver

780-604-5408

ST. FRANCIS SITE: - 6770 – 129 avenue

Classroom

780-448-9632

Bus Driver

West 780-604-3634

/ East 780-604-5204

CLASSROOM PRAYER

Poem created by: Kokum Lorette

Creator,

We thank you for this day.

We thank you for everything you put on Mother Earth for us to enjoy...the air we breathe, the water we drink and the food we eat. We also thank you for all the good people in our lives.

Hiy Hiy

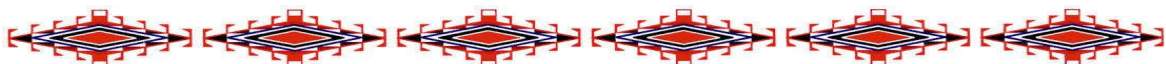
AWARDS

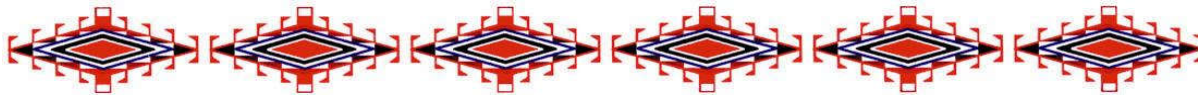
BUS READY AND WAITING AWARD

This award is presented to a parent/caregiver from each morning and afternoon class from each site for the parent/caregiver who had their child dressed and ready to go for the bus on the most regular occasions.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR AWARD

This award is presented to the parent/caregiver from each site who have met their 9 hours of volunteering throughout the academic school year.





15 horizontal lines for writing.

Amiskwaciy Cultural Society
204, 13245-146th Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5L 4S8
Phone 780-640-9799
Fax 780-452-3072

