

KEEPING YOUR CHILD HEALTHY THROUGH PREVENTION

IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTION

When it comes to protecting your child's health, **PREVENTION** is the key. Head Start children are going through periods of rapid growth and development and may appear healthy on the outside, but without routine physical exams, lab work, and dental check-ups the true state of your child's health cannot be determined. Being proactive with regards to your child's physical and dental health can give them a "head start" on the road to lifelong wellness.

MEDICAL INSURANCE

- Having medical insurance is extremely important for you and your family. Accidents or unexpected health issues can occur at any time leaving your family with large medical expenses if you do not have insurance.
- If you do not currently have insurance (Medicaid, ALL Kids, or Private Insurance through your work) for yourself or your children, you can learn more about the different benefit programs available as well as apply at the following link: www.medicaid.alabama.gov/content/3.0_Apply/3.2.../3.2.2_Medicaid_Pregnant.aspx
- You may also mail your application. For a paper application, call 1-800-362-1504 or visit Medicaid's website at www.medicaid.alabama.gov. If you cannot apply online or by mail, you can apply in person at your local county health department, federally qualified health care center or some local hospitals. The telephone number for Lowndes County Health Department is 334-548-2564.

ESTABLISHING A MEDICAL AND DENTAL HOME

- A medical home is a model for providing healthcare that focuses on ensuring children receive continuous, accessible, and comprehensive medical care. This is a family-centered approach focused on the child and the development of a relationship between the physician and the family.
- The focus of a medical home is preventing illness and detecting health concerns early on.
- Similar to the concept of finding a medical home for your child's healthcare needs, it is important to establish a dental home to care for your child's teeth.
- If you do not have a medical or dental home for your child, ask the Head Start staff for a referral to providers within your community, or follow the links: for a medical home: https://medicaid.alabama.gov/content/5.0.../5.../5.3.2_Patient_1st_PMP_List.aspx
For a dental home: www.medicaid.alabama.gov/content/4.0.../4...Dental/4.2.2.1_Find_Dentist.aspx

MEDICAL AND DENTAL CHECK-UPS

The Yearly Medical Check-up Will Include:

- A review of your child's medical and developmental history, a physical exam, and age-appropriate screenings, immunizations, and laboratory tests. This is the time to have your Head Start physical form completed.
- During the appointment the physician will also provide you with information for the health and safety of your growing child.
- The medical check-up is the ideal time to ask questions regarding your child's growth, development, and overall well-being.

The Dental Check-up (every 6 months) Will Include:

- Examination of the teeth, jaw and gums for cavities, signs of tooth decay, and any oral concerns. Teeth will be cleaned and polished and a fluoride varnish will be applied. This is the time to have your Head Start dental form completed.
- During the appointment parents will be taught proper oral hygiene for preschool children, and receive guidance on how to prevent tooth decay and cavities.

After the medical and dental check-ups are complete, make sure to follow-up on any concerns addressed during the visit, including referrals to specialists. Make sure you turn in all required forms and documents to Head Start, the staff can help you identify and connect with possible community resources.