



CHAUTAUQUA OPPORTUNITIES, INC.
HELPING PEOPLE...CHANGING LIVES...

Early Care & Education

Parent & Family Handbook



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Early Care & Education Center Based Site Locations

Connections North

Center Director: Hannah Westphal
716-366-8176 ext. 3255
Fax: 716-366-4502
10825 Bennett Road
Dunkirk, NY 14048



ECCC

Center Director: Jenna Einink
716-366-8176 ext. 4208
Fax: 716-366-5944
1020 Central Ave.
Dunkirk, NY 14048



Holy Family

Center Director: Ann Bell
Assistant Center Director:
716-661-9430 ext. 6205
Fax: 484-4821
1135 North Main Street





Jamestown, NY 14701



Clinton V. Bush Elementary School

Center Director: Savannah Nichols
716-661-9477
150 Pardee Street
Jamestown, NY 14701

Brocton Central School District

Center Director: Lindy Stranahan
716-792-2100
138 W. Main St.
Brocton, NY 14716



Early Care & Education Home Based Family Educator Site Locations

Laughlin Community Action Center

716-661-9430 Fax: 716-661-9436
Marisol Beauchamp ext. 2279
Jean Brown ext. 2283



Michael Yerico Administration Building

716-366-8176 Fax: 716-366-7366
Melanie Wielgasz ext. 1240
17 West Courtney Street
Dunkirk, NY 14048



Lake Shore Family Center
Early Head Start Child Care Partnership
Center Director: Virginia Miller
716-934-2353
845 Main Road
Irving, NY 14081



Welcome from the Head Start Director

Dear Parent,

Welcome to the child care services provided by Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. You have placed your trust in us, and the safety and well-being of your child is our first priority! Our goal is to provide a safe and welcoming environment where every child can reach his/her full potential.

Infants and toddlers are served in rooms where children from ages six weeks to 36 months are together. This allows a child to stay with the same teachers for three years and develop a real relationship with the adults and children in the room. No more than eight children cared for by two staff members are in these classrooms. Language development is a major component of our early learning environment – and someone is almost always talking or reading to children in these rooms. Teachers will also provide opportunities through play that help children learn basic skills that include crawling, walking, eating, toileting and sharing.

If your child is 3 or 4 years old, then our Head Start and Pre-Kindergarten staff will be helping your child get ready for kindergarten. We believe that playing is a child's work or job. Through designed play activities, our staff will be teaching language, reading, math, science and social skills.

Our team of professional educators is well trained – each classroom staff member receives over 25 hours of training each year. More than half of our staff has a college degree in early childhood education. The rest of our classroom staff either have or are working towards their Child Development Associate credential. We also have trained Health Care Professionals available at every center to care for sick children.

Revised 2/20/26



Parent involvement is an important part of our program. You can visit your child's classroom anytime! Classrooms will also have special days where parents and guardians are invited to see what children have learned. And, monthly there are family events to help the children celebrate their growth. You can also volunteer in your child's classroom or join our Parent Committee to help plan activities.

Most importantly we want you and your child to be happy with our services. If there is anything we can do to improve the care of your child, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Bill Vogt
Early Care & Education Director



COI

leading the fight against poverty by mobilizing resources and creating partnerships to promote empowerment, economic independence and opportunities.

Early Education

To maximize the development of young children and families through community partnerships resulting in optimal school success.



Like so many organizations across the country, Chautauqua Opportunities, Inc. stands firm in our beliefs that all people desire and should be given opportunities to succeed in life. We believe that all people deserve the same dignity, the same respect, and the same...

Parent and Family Engagement

- COI’s Early Education services offer parents a comprehensive range of opportunities for family support, involvement, and leadership.
- All cultures, goals and circumstances of individual parents are respected, and confidentiality is held to the highest standard.
- COI provides Life Coaches and Family Engagement Specialists to assist all Head Start, Early Head Start, and Early Head Start Child Care Partnership families in reaching personalized goals. These goals include, but are not limited to, housing, education, credit counseling, and home ownership.
- The Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement (PFCE) Framework provides programs with a research-based, organizational guide for implementing Head Start Program Performance Standards for parent, family, and community engagement.





Parent and Family Engagement Expectations

- Participate in 2 Home Visits and 2 Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Complete and return weekly take-home activities and monthly curriculum calendars
- Engage in monthly classroom or building events/socializations
- Send your child to school daily unless they are sick
- Call the school when your child will not be in program



Our Child Care Centers have 24-hour audio and video surveillance. By entering you agree to be audio and video recorded. Audio and video recordings are used to ensure the protection of children. Camera recordings may also be used for employee training and supervision purposes. Recordings are kept for a limited time. Parents may request to review recordings of their child with the Center Director.

**Program Services & Options**

Site	Option	Age	Time
Brocton Central	3PK	3 Year Olds	8:45-2:15
Bush Elementary	Jamestown UPK	4 Year Olds	8:20-3:00
Connections North	Early Head Start	6 Weeks-3 Years	8:30-3:00
ECCC	Head Start/3PK	3 & 4 Year Olds	8:00-2:30
Holy Family	Early Head Start	6 Weeks-3 Years	8:30-3:00
Holy Family	Head Start/Jamestown 3PK & UPK	3- & 4-Year Olds	8:20-3:00
Holy Family	Jamestown 3PK	3 Year Olds	8:15-1:15
Lake Shore Family Center	Early Head Start Child Care Partnership	6 Weeks-3 Years	6:00-5:30
Home Based Services	Head Start	Birth-5 Years	Around Families Availability
Someplace Special Wrap-Around Child Care (Fee for Service) Brocton/Connections North/ ECCC/Holy Family	Openings based on slot availability	6 weeks to 4 Year Olds	7:00-5:00

Need Help Paying for Child Care?

Click on this link from the Department of Health & Human Services to see if you are eligible for assistance in paying for your childcare. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/main/>

- In the search bar type: 6025.docx
- If you are eligible, please complete the application
- Screenshot and save or print to scan and save
- Email completed app to childcare@co.chautauqua.ny.us
 - If you need assistance, please contact our Early Education Support Specialist:
Dunkirk 716-366-81756 ext. 3250 or Jamestown 716-661-9430 ext.6299



Curriculum & Instruction

Curriculum & Instruction

- COI's Early Education services use The Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers, and Two's and The Creative Curriculum for Preschool.

- The evidence based social-emotional curriculum, PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies), is also used to help children develop positive social interaction skills, positive self-esteem, and how to handle conflicts.

- Ongoing child assessments are conducted to identify children's areas of strength and need. The information from assessments and parent input guides center and home-based staff in creating individual goals and plans for children. Parents receive detailed report cards and their child's academics, health, and family engagement three times per year.

Classroom & Behavior Management:

We believe that behavior management should teach, not punish, regardless of the age of the child.

Classroom Management:

- Classroom rules are based on the developmental level of the children involved.
- Classroom rules must be clear, reasonable, consistent and developmentally appropriate.
- The environment must be developmentally appropriate and encourage child choice and individual responsibility.

Behavior Management:

Revised 2/20/26



The positive guidance techniques that must be used (employee's tone and temperament must always remain supportive):

- Model appropriate social skills
- Reminder-asking or telling a child an appropriate way to complete a task or action
- Correction-helping or showing the child an appropriate way to complete a task or action or activity
- Redirection-by offering alternative actions/activities to the child
- Acknowledge the feelings of the child
- Encourage the child to "use their words."
- Use the Turtle Techniques PATHS
- Use of the self-calming techniques from Second STEP
- Acknowledge when children are demonstrating empathy and negotiation skills

At no time shall a staff person use corporal punishment.

Only in extreme circumstances and after conferring with the Center Director or another division manager may a child be excluded from the group. A staff person must remain with the child to provide support. The child must be returned to the group when he/she has regained self-control.

If a child is injured by another child, confidentiality will be strictly adhered to when communicating with parents and guardians.



Health & Nutrition Services

Physical, mental, emotional, and social health are all equally important and contribute to our overall well being. It is important that parents, educators, and caregivers foster all four in children from an early age. Our Early Care and Education department, including the health care center staff consisting of Nurses and EMTs are here to help!

Use of a Healthcare Consultant

COI employs a healthcare consultant who in collaboration with the Child Health Services Manager, healthcare staff and Quality Assurance Monitor reviews applicable state and federal regulations, internal health related policies and procedures and provides training to all staff when needed.

Insurance

Adequate health, dental and vision insurance are essential to a child's overall health, wellness and development.

If you do not have insurance, please talk to our healthcare center staff.

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If your child does not have a doctor, dentist or eye doctor, please talk to our healthcare center staff.

We are committed to and happy to assist you with obtaining insurance and establishing a medical home.

Child Health Assessment

COI requires all parents to obtain required medical documentation including immunization records and periodic health assessments (well child check up/physical). Documentation of an age-appropriate health assessment that includes an update of immunizations and screenings shall be filed in a child's record at the facility within 60 days of admission and following each subsequent report of the child's health assessment (well child check up/physical) that occurs while the child's enrolled at the facility.

Children must have a physical examination within the 12 months prior to their enrollment date and annually thereafter.

Children must have up-to-date immunizations or be working toward becoming up-to-date. COI, as mandated by federal and state regulations, cannot allow exceptions to immunizations.

Daily Health and Attendance Check

Your child's classroom staff will conduct a daily health check of your child. They will monitor and discuss with you how your child has been sleeping, eating and behaving since their last day in care. They monitor for new illness and injury as well. Attendance and the health check findings are documented and kept on file.



When Should My Child Stay Home From School or Daycare?
Protecting the health and safety of all children in our care

To help keep everyone healthy, please keep your child home if they have any of the following:

 **Too Sick to Participate**

- Your child is too tired, cranky, or uncomfortable to take part in regular activities—even with extra rest.

 **Fever**

- Temperature over 101°F (oral) or 100°F (armpit) with other symptoms like cough, sore throat, rash, vomiting, or diarrhea.
- **Under 6 months:** Temperature over 100°F (armpit) or 101°F (rectal) needs medical attention.
- **Under 2 months:** Any fever requires urgent medical care.

 **Diarrhea**

- Diaper leaks or more than two extra bowel movements than usual.
- Accidents in toilet-trained children.
- Blood or mucus in stool.
- Diagnosed with E. coli, Salmonella, or Shigella (must be cleared by doctor before returning).

 **Vomiting**

- More than 2 times in 24 hours

 **Other Illnesses That Require Staying Home**

- **Mouth sores with drooling**, unless the doctor confirms it's not contagious.
- **Strep throat:** Stay home until 24 hours after antibiotics begin.
- **Head lice:** May return after first treatment.
- **Scabies:** May return after treatment.
- **All other rashes diagnosed by a Doctor:** Please call our program staff for instruction.

 **Questions?** Contact your child's healthcare provider or our program staff.
Let's work together to keep our school community healthy!



Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us of a child's allergy. The family, COI and the child's health care provider will work together to complete an Individualized Allergy and Anaphylaxis plan that will detail the allergen, type of exposure, symptoms and treatment. Our staff are trained at hire and regularly on allergy awareness and Elijah's Law. Allergies and treatment plans are kept on file in the health office, classroom and kitchen areas for staff awareness. For food allergies, we have a comprehensive allergy sign off procedure that is completed at each meal and snack to ensure safety and compliance with substitute foods.

Medications

If your child is in need of medications, prescription or over-the-counter, this should be discussed in advance with our healthcare staff. There are always forms for signatures required to be completed prior to administering medications, including creams, lotions etc. Medications should always be brought to the healthcare office and never left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Only staff trained in medication administration, first aid and CPR or are otherwise licensed to administer medications will do so. Detailed records are kept on file in accordance with our healthcare plan, state and federal regulations.

- **Prescription and non-prescription medications** by all routes covered in Medication Administration Training (MAT) may be administered. A medication consent and individualized health care plan must be completed by our health staff, the family and the child's health care provider in advance.
- **Epinephrine Auto-Injector (Epi-Pen), Diphenhydramine (Benadryl) and Asthma Inhalers** will be administered in accordance with the programs healthcare plan and in conjunction with an approved individualized health care plan and written order signed by the child's parent and healthcare provider.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments, lotions and creams** (diaper cream, sunscreen, bug spray etc.) may be administered with parent permission.

Sanitation and Hygiene

Many communicable diseases can be prevented through appropriate personal hygiene and environmental cleaning practices. Our thorough and routine cleaning of toys and play activity equipment, napping spaces, eating materials and utensils and center rooms and common spaces aides in preventing transmission of germs that could cause disease and infection. Equipment used for handwashing, toilet use, and toilet training shall be disinfected and sanitized after every use. Toys are disinfected and sanitized daily and more frequently as needed. Diaper changing areas are also disinfected and sanitized after each use. COI uses appropriate and approved bleach to water solutions for most sanitization processes. Also, proper hand washing technique reminders are posted at each sink.

Nutritious Meals and Snacks



The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federal program that provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children who are enrolled for care at participating child care centers. COI participates in this program and follows all nutrition guidelines set forth by their governance. If you would like more information on this program please contact your center's director. Meal plans are carefully and thoughtfully designed by our Kitchen Manager and reviewed by the Child Health Services Manager to ensure compliance with CACFP standards. Our meals are prepared and served from our kitchens and FREE for your child. However, if your child's classroom is within a school building, meals are prepared and provided according to their menu and schedule. With the exception of infants, approximate meal and snack times are provided below. We also provide formula and all sites are breastfeeding friendly.

If your child has special or specific dietary needs please speak with our staff.

Site	Breakfast Time	Lunch Time	Snack Time
Connections North	8:30 am - 9:00 am	11:00 am -11:30 am	2:30 pm - 3:00 pm
Lakeshore Family Center	8:00 am - 8:30 am	11:30 am - 12:00 pm	3:00 pm - 3:15 pm
ECCC	8:30 am	11:00 am	2:00 pm
Holy Family	8:15 am	11:00 am	2:00 pm
Brocton	9:00 am	11:00 am	N/A
Bush	8:20 am	10:55 am	N/A

WIC

If you qualify for Head Start or Early Head Start, you qualify for WIC! WIC is a special supplemental food program designed to assist families, including single pregnant women, in obtaining nutrition foods from pregnancy through age 5. It is very easy to apply for WIC - please ask our healthcare staff for more information. Attendance is almost always virtual making it even easier for those who are working or those who lack transportation or childcare.

Physical Activity

Regular physical activity can help children to improve cardiopulmonary fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight and help to regulate emotions. Your child will participate in physical activity by way of play and other activities indoors and outdoors every day. Please prepare your child for the weather by sending indoor and outdoor weather appropriate every day.

**Emergency Evacuation Plan**

Site	Primary Relocation Site	Phone Number	Secondary Relocation Site	Phone Number
Brocton	Bus Garage 138 W. Main St. Brocton, NY 14716	716-792-2105	American Legion 110 East Main St. Brocton, NY 14716	716-792-2105
Bush Elementary	Camp Street- United Methodist Church 110 Sanford Drive Jamestown, NY 14701	716-488-4085	Holy Family 1135 N. Main Jamestown, NY 14701	716-484-4167
Connections North	JCC North Campus 10807 Bennett Road Dunkirk, NY 14048	716-363-6510	ECCC (Holy Trinity) 1020 Central Ave Dunkirk, NY 14048	716-366-8176
ECCC (Holy Trinity)	Connections North 10825 Bennett Road, Dunkirk, NY 14048	716-366-8176	Harvest Chapel 39 Matteson Ave Fredonia, NY 14063	716-680-0985
Holy Family	Tops Market Conference Room 2000 Washington Street Jamestown, NY 14701	716-665-1100	Christ 1 st Methodist Church 633 Lakeview Ave Jamestown, NY 14701	716-664-5803
Lake Shore Family Center	TLC Health Center Parking Lot		Irving Fire Department: Bussing provided by Silver Creek Central School	716-934-4639





Directory

Name	Title	Phone Number	Extension
Lindy Stranahan	Brocton 3pk Center Director	716-792-2105	
Savannah Nichols	Bush Teacher/Center Director	716- 661-9477	
Karen Oldenburg (Interim)	ECCC and Dunkirk School #3 Holy Trinity Center Director	716-366-5661	4208
Hannah Westphal	Connections North Center Director	716-366-8176	3255
Ann Bell	Holy Family Center Director	716-661-9430	6205
Karen Oldenburg	Child Care Center Administrator	716-366-8176	4222
Bill Vogt	Head Start Director	716-366-8176	1203
Isa Mercado	Enrollment Manager	716-366-8176	1204
Sandra Sheridan	Family Services/Home Visitor Manager	716-366-8176	1222
Emily Faust	Child Health Services Manager	716-661-9430	
Heidi Couchenour	UPK Site Supervisor	716-661-9430	
Virginia Miller	Lake Shore Family Center Director	716-934-2353	





Transportation Information



- **Western NY Bus Co:** 716-743-7077
 - ECCC Head Start Children 3 & 4

- **First Student, Inc.:** 716-608-3861
 - Children must be 4 years old to ride school district bus and enrolled in Dunkirk UPK class

- **Corvus Bus and Charter:** 716-488-7099
 - Holy Family Head Start Children 3 & 4 Year Olds

- **Jamestown Public School District:** 716-483-4388
 - Children must be 4 years old to ride district bus and enrolled in Jamestown UPK class

****Transportation is provided based on program option, location, and upon availability***



Bus & Pedestrian Safety

Rules for getting on and off the school bus

- **Getting on the school bus**
 - When waiting for the bus, stay away from traffic and avoid roughhousing or other behavior that can lead to carelessness. Do not stray onto streets, alleys or private property.
 - Line up away from the street or road as the school bus approaches.
 - Wait until the bus has stopped and the door opens before stepping onto the roadway.
 - Use the handrail when stepping onto the bus.
 -
- **Behavior on the bus**
 - When on the bus, find a seat and sit down. Loud talking or other noise can distract the bus driver and is not allowed.
 - Never put your head, arms or hands out of the window.
 - Keep aisles clear -- books or bags are tripping hazards and can block the way in an emergency.
 - Before you reach your stop, get ready to leave by getting your books and belongings together.
 - At your stop, wait for the bus to stop completely before getting up from your seat. Then, walk to the front door and exit, using the handrail.
- **Getting off the school bus**
 - If you have to cross the street in front of the bus, walk at least ten feet ahead of the bus along the side of the road, until you can turn around and see the driver.
 - Make sure that the driver can see you.
 - Wait for a signal from the driver before beginning to cross.
 - When the driver signals, walk across the road, keeping an eye out for sudden traffic changes.
 - Do not cross the centerline of the road until the driver has signaled that it is safe for you to begin walking.
 - Stay away from the bus's rear wheels at all times.
- **Correct way to cross the street**
 - Children should always stop at the curb or the edge of the road and look left, then right, and then left again before crossing.
 - They should continue looking in this manner until they are safely across.
 - If students' vision is blocked by a parked car or other obstacle, they should move out to where drivers can see them, and they can see other vehicles -- then stop and look left-right-left again.



Cancellation & Building Closing



Preschool classrooms follow the local school district closings – if the school district is closed due to weather, our preschool classroom will also be closed. Families with wrap-around care contracts and infant/toddler classrooms will remain open to support working families as long as COI remains open as an agency.

Families will also receive an electronic message regarding closings through one of our messaging apps:

- Class Dojo
- Tadpoles

When the weather is bad, it is important for you to listen closely to your local county AM & FM radio stations for details before coming to a planned service or event. Some radio stations include but are not limited to:

- WGRZ 55 AM
- WBEN 930 AM
- WJL 1440 AM
- WDOE 1410 AM
- WBEE 92.5 FM
- WWSE 93.3 FM
- WJYE 96.1 FM
- WGRF 96.9 FM
- WHUG 101.9 FM