

CAP THRIVE TO FIVE FAMILY HANDBOOK



Thrive to Five:
Creating Head Starts for the Future



2023/2024 SCHOOL YEAR



Dear Family,

Welcome to Lancaster County Thrive to Five Families:

With 50+ years of experience, CAP's Thrive to Five (formally known as Head Start, CAP Childcare, PreK Counts, and Early Head Start) has worked with families to create positive futures for the children in our communities. At CAP we believe our community is strongest when every individual has the opportunity to live a life where they can meet their goals and grow their well-being. In addition to early education services, CAP has multiple programs in household stability, health, nutrition, safety and empowerment, as well as many community partners who collaborate with CAP so that the Lancaster County community can thrive. The CAP Thrive to Five program implements a whole family, 2Generation model with the goal to support both child and family in reaching their goals and dreams. **By choosing to participate in Thrive to Five you become part of our community where we believe that every person who comes through our doors has a unique story and journey, and together we desire to support you to reach your goals for yourself and your children.**

Engaging our families in the program is an important part of the Thrive to Five experience. We sincerely invite you to volunteer in our classrooms, to attend family engagement and socialization events, to participate in your parent committee and to get involved in Policy Council and other committees alongside our team members.

One of the things you can do to help us provide the best experience for your child is to review the family handbook in the first week of enrolling. Participating in meetings with your family liaison and your child's teachers will help you understand the thinking behind program decisions, ensure we learn about your child's unique needs, and help you access all that Thrive to Five and CAP have to offer. Together, let's help your child's strengths shine, and partner to achieve your dreams.

Sincerely,

Lili Dippner

Vice President, Early Education & Childhood Development

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Who We Are

CAP's Mission

Empowering Community, Driving Action, and Building Partnership to Eliminate Poverty.

CAP's Vision

Our community is a model of Equity, Justice, and Prosperity.

CAP's Values

Respect, Excellence, Integrity, Hope, Diversity, Innovation, Compassion, Collaboration

Thrive to Five Program Goals

Thrive to Five is highly committed to the growth and wellness of our families and maintaining valuable partnerships within our community. We have identified goals for our program to continually work on over the next few years that are based off our family needs and the latest research on child development and best practices. They are as follows:

1. Promote a 21st century curriculum with focuses on STEM learning (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), School Readiness Goals, and the PA Early Learning Standards
2. Provide personalized supports for children and families including dual language learners (DLL), children with IEPs (Individualized Education Plans) and other vulnerable populations and help them achieve their family goals
3. Collaborate with the community to increase family self-sufficiency and children's school readiness capacity through intentional partnerships with the school districts and county databases
4. Expand mental health and wellness services and supports to represent a whole-child 2Generational approach to service coordination for children and families

Statement of Diversity and Inclusion

Our program serves children and families from various cultures and diverse backgrounds. We celebrate the diversity this brings to our classrooms. This means children with varying abilities, behaviors, and experiences can be a part of Thrive to Five. We work with families to provide reasonable accommodations for every child to safely and comfortably participate in our program. Thrive to Five participants are expected to respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family to create a culture of acceptance and unity within the classroom and Thrive to Five as a whole.

Dual Language Support

To best support our families with limited English proficiency, staff will access translation or interpretation services when communicating with them to:

- Serve and effectively communicate with families.
- Encourage trust and respectful, ongoing two-way communication between staff and families.
- Create welcoming program environments that incorporate the unique cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds of families.
- Ensure families can share personal information in an environment in which they feel safe.
- Ensure families have meaningful access to program services.

The development of the home language of dual language learners (DLLs) will be supported in the following ways:

- Staff will become familiar with the ethnic backgrounds and heritages of families in the program.
- Whenever possible, if the majority of children in a class or home-based program speak the same language, at least one classroom staff member or home visitor will speak that language.
- The Coordinator of Personalized Supports will work to identify volunteers that speak children's home languages who can be trained to work in the classroom.
- Classroom staff will utilize culturally and linguistically appropriate strategies and materials.

Attendance, Arrival and Departure

Attendance

To support your child in getting the most out of his/her Thrive to Five experience, parents/guardians need to ensure that their child attends school every day and arrives each day on time. Children who attend our program daily and on time do better in kindergarten than those children who attend only occasionally, arrive late, and/or leave early.

- Child attendance is taken and marked every day.
- It is the family's responsibility to contact the classroom staff or family liaison by phone or email as early as possible if your child will be absent or will come to school late AND provide the reason for the absence. If your child does not arrive at school within 45 minutes of the class start time, you will receive a notification from the team. To ensure the safety of your child, you are expected to let us know why your child is not attending. We will offer support as needed.
- If you are unable to regularly bring your child to school at the set start time and pick them up at the set end time, please reach out to your teacher, family liaison, or Assistant Early Learning Supervisor for assistance. There may also be times when the staff reaches out to you concerning attendance.
- If attendance concerns become chronic and there is no improvement, your child may be dis-enrolled from the program.
 - Once dis-enrolled due to attendance, there is a waiting period of 3 months before you are able to reapply.
 - Your child's spot **will not** be held for him/her during the 3-month waiting period.
 - Following the 3-month waiting period, you will be required to begin the enrollment process from the beginning which includes being on the referral list, then completing an application, being on the waiting list until you are selected for an open spot. This reapplication process may take several months after the 3-month waiting period.

Arrival & Departure

- To ensure your child's safety a parent/guardian/responsible adult must accompany each child to his/her classroom or designated area when dropping off. When picking up the parent/guardian/responsible adult must accompany the child from his/her classroom or designated location to the building's designated exit.
- We ask that when dropping off and when picking up, appropriate supervision is provided to all children and that parent/guardian/responsible adult refrain from:
 - Making or receiving phone calls during this time.
 - Allowing children to run up and down halls.
 - Engaging in loud and excessive noise.
- Children must be signed in at drop off and sign out at pick-up from his/her classroom or designated

drop off/pick-up location. Parent/guardian/responsible adult must stay with the children until he/she is signed in at drop off.

- Only the people listed on each child's emergency sheet will be allowed to pick up and drop off and must have a photo ID with them.
- Pick-up and drop off must be at your child's center's designated place.

Late Pick-Up

It is the program expectation that children be picked up promptly at the end of class. If an emergency occurs, parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Calling the classroom to inform staff of the emergency and providing a time when a parent/guardian or another authorized person listed on the child's emergency sheet will be able to pick up the child.
- If a child is not picked up at the appropriate time and there has been no contact from the parent/guardian, Thrive to Five staff will ensure the safety and well-being of the child while following their procedure on contacting the parent/guardian and emergency sheet contacts.
- **Late Pick-up Fees may apply for children enrolled in full day classrooms that open run from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm.**
- **If after one hour from the end of class time** your child has not been picked up from the center and Thrive to Five staff have been unable to contact a parent/guardian or other authorized person on the emergency sheet, we will contact the local police department and the Children and Youth Agency to make sure your child is returned home safely.
- If a child is being picked up from the program on a consistently late basis (10 minutes after the end of the class time), the parent/guardian will be required to meet with their Family Liaison, Assistant Early Learning Supervisor, or Family Advocate to discuss a plan of action to ensure that the child is picked up on time.

Policy for Releasing Children to Authorized Adults

Thrive to Five is deeply committed to the safety of the children we serve. The following policies have been put into place to keep your child safe:

- Emergency contact information is kept for all children enrolled in Thrive to Five.
- It is recommended that there be at least three people listed on the emergency contact sheet.
- Those listed on the emergency sheet must be at least 16 years old. Staff cannot release children to those younger than 16 years old.
- Parents/guardians must ensure that the emergency contact information is always up to date.
- Changes made to the emergency sheet must be made in person by the parent/guardian. Changes made by phone, text message, or email will **NOT** be accepted.
- If an adult picking up a child is not known by the Thrive to Five staff, the adult must provide picture identification; this includes parents/guardians that are not known to staff. If the person does not have picture identification, please talk to your child's teacher for guidance.
- Children will not be released to adults who are not listed on the emergency sheet and/or do not have the proper identification.
- We follow all Protection from Abuse & Custody orders. If any changes/updates are made, the parent/guardian must provide an updated copy as soon as possible.
- We are required to release your child to all legal parents unless we have a legal document stating otherwise.

Classroom Operations

Orientation

Orientation is required for all children and families and occurs prior to the child starting in the class room. Orientation includes the following:

- A visit to your child's classroom to help him/her feel that it is a safe place and to begin learning the routine of going to school.
- Meeting your child's teachers and classroom support team.
- An overview of the Family Handbook.

For children transferring classrooms within the program, please check with your Family Liaison/Family Advocate/Early Learning Supervisor for details.

Items to Send to School with Your Child

Our program provides formula, breakfast, lunch, snacks, wipes and all age-appropriate toys and school supplies. Diapers are provided for some, and others may pay a fee.

All Classrooms:

Extra Clothing

Children **must always have at least one complete change of clothing** in case of messy play or a bathroom accident. The change of clothing should include underwear, shirt, pants, socks, and shoes. All items should be labeled with the child's name.

*If you need assistance with clothing resources, please contact your Family Liaison.

Personal Belongings

Each child is provided with a cubby to store his/her school related belongings during the school day (e.g., backpack, jacket, school papers, etc.). Personal items (e.g., toys, electronics, etc.) should be left at home.

Transition Support Item

A transition support item may be permitted on an as-needed basis to support your child's social and emotional needs at school. Please check with your child's teachers regarding their classroom policy.

Classroom-Specific Items:

Classrooms with Rest Time:

Depending on the classroom, blankets may be provided by the family or the center. Please check with your child's teachers on details specific to your child's classroom.

Infant & Toddler Classrooms:

Items needed from home may change drastically depending on your child's development. Please check with your child's teachers on details specific to your child's classroom and development.

* Personal items including clothing, glasses, and jewelry may not be replaced by Thrive to Five if damaged or lost.

How to Dress your Child for Active Play

In the Thrive to Five program, children are involved in active play every day, such as outdoor activities, music and movement, painting, water and sensory play etc. Please dress your child in clothing that is suitable for active play. Here are some tips to ensure that your child is dressed appropriately:

- Comfortable clothing that is easy to put on and take off (for easier diapering/toileting).
- An extra layer (e.g., light sweater, etc.) for adjusting to indoor climates.
- Comfortable, **closed toe shoes (no flip flops, slippers, open toed sandals) for safety reasons.**
- Clothing and outerwear that is weather/season appropriate.
- No jewelry to prevent injury.

Outside Experiences

Outside play is a vital part of a child's health and development, and your child will participate in outdoor activities daily, as the weather permits. Children must have appropriate weather attire to play comfortably outside. If children are unable to go out because of weather conditions, teachers have alternate gross motor activities on their weekly lesson plans.

We follow the suggested state guidelines regarding safe weather and air quality conditions, as described below and in more detail in the following link: [Weather Watch](#) & [Air Quality Index](#) :

- Children will have daily outdoor time when the temperatures are between 25 degrees-90 degrees with AQI taken into consideration for any unsafe environments for young children.

Walks & Field Trips

Classes may also take walks along an approved walking path to explore the environment and enhance their learning. Each family grants permission for walking trips along the approved walking paths. Walking paths are site-specific and information regarding the path can be accessed at your child's site.

Walks or trips that go beyond the approved daily walking path are considered a field trip. Families will be notified about field trips and asked to give written permission for participation.

Children may not be dropped off or picked up during a walk or excursion away from the site. Children must be dropped off and picked up from your child's Thrive to Five site.

Rest Time

Rest time is a designated time each afternoon when children are provided with an environment that is quiet and free of excessive activity. Children are encouraged to rest at this time on a cot or mat provided by Thrive to Five. If your child doesn't require a nap, they may be offered appropriate quiet activities during this time to allow other children to sleep.

Depending on the classroom, blankets may be provided by the family or the center. Please check with your child's teachers on details specific to your child's classroom.

All rest time items will be stored individually for health and hygiene purposes and laundered weekly. Cots are individually labeled and sanitized daily.

A transition support item may be permitted on an as-needed basis to support your child's social and emotional needs at school. Please check with your child's teachers regarding their classroom policy.

Non-Program Provided Food

Per Head Start standards, all food consumed by children under the supervision of Thrive to Five must be provided by the program or a licensed food service facility. Due to the possibility of severe food allergies and the need to keep all children healthy, families should not send any food from home (homemade or store-bought) with their child to their classroom building. This includes classrooms, hallways, waiting areas, etc. Please see the "Holidays and Celebrations" section for suggestions on how to celebrate your child's birthday.

Holidays and Celebrations

Thrive to Five is interested in facilitating meaningful experiences for children; therefore, we do not emphasize specific holiday celebrations or themed activities. Children are encouraged to share meaningful experiences from their own family traditions with the class. Conversations about diversity of cultures are encouraged. Children's birthdays are acknowledged in various ways in our classrooms. We want all children to feel special when celebrating birthdays, and therefore do not allow parents/guardians to bring goody bags or gifts for the children in the classroom since this can cause an added hardship on families. We prefer to keep the celebration simple, but special for your child. Parents/guardians are welcome to celebrate by doing a special activity with the children in honor of their child's birthday.

Diapering, Toileting & Toilet Training

- Classroom staff will respond promptly when a child requests to use the toilet.
- Classroom staff will not show disapproval or punish children for any accidents.
- A conference between the teacher and parent/guardian will serve to establish common goals and methods of toilet-training.
- A child's clothing will be changed immediately following a toileting accident. Soiled clothing is placed in a sealed, labeled, moisture-proof bag and sent home with the child. Please send in another set of extra clothing to keep at school.
- Infant and toddler classrooms provide daily written communications outlining details of your child's day surrounding diapering/toileting, meals, and nap times.
- There is no requirement for preschool aged children to be toilet-trained for enrollment into a preschool classroom.
- Teachers encourage child self-help skills during diapering/toileting process and are as minimally involved as developmentally appropriate.
- For health and hygiene purposes, teachers follow an outlined diapering procedure for all children needing their diapers or pull-ups changed.

Program Transitions - Internal & External

Families will be helped as they transition into, within, and out of Thrive to Five. This includes transitions within the Thrive to Five program and the transition into kindergarten.

Transitioning into Thrive to Five

Prior to starting in the classroom, the parent/guardian will complete the enrollment paperwork, participate in the family orientation, and attend a classroom visit with their child to see the classroom and meet the child's teachers. Efforts will be made to collaborate with Early Head Start, the Lancaster-Lebanon IU-13, and any outside agencies where applicable.

Transitioning within Thrive to Five

If a child needs to be transferred to another Thrive to Five location within Lancaster County due to moving or other event, the child's teacher or Family Liaison/Family Advocate/Early Learning Supervisor should be notified. They will discuss possible transfer options with the family. The staff at both classroom sites will communicate any information about the child and family to ensure a smooth transition. Prior to starting in the new location families must participate in an orientation and any health related.

Transitioning to a Pre-School Outside of Lancaster County

If your child needs to be transferred to another preschool location outside of Lancaster County, the child's teacher or Family Liaison should be notified. A Release of Information (ROI) may be signed by the parent/guardian in order for Thrive to Five to communicate with the new program that the child will be attending. When possible, Thrive to Five staff will provide the family with resources at their new residency.

Transitioning to Kindergarten

Thrive to Five staff will work together with families of children that are age-eligible for kindergarten to ensure smooth transitions into school. A Release of Information (ROI) will be signed by the parent/guardian for Thrive to Five to share the child's records with the school district in which the child will be attending. The Family Liaison will work with the family to ensure that the parent/guardian has completed the school district's registration process. Thrive to Five families may be invited by the school district to different events surrounding kindergarten transition. Efforts will be made to collaborate with Lancaster-Lebanon IU-13 and any outside agencies in partnership where applicable.

Curriculum and Individualized Planning

Program Philosophy

- The Thrive to Five Program has adopted a program philosophy based on the research-based *Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework: Ages Birth to Five*, which describes the skills, behaviors, and knowledge that programs must foster in all children.
- The Framework includes five central domains, which include:
 - Approaches to Learning
 - Social & Emotional Development
 - Language & Literacy
 - Cognition
 - Perceptual, Motor & Physical Development.
- The selection of our curriculum and supporting learning materials reinforces and expands upon the five domains in the Early Learning Outcomes Framework.

Curriculum

- Thrive to Five uses the Creative Curriculum® (also known as Teaching Strategies® or Teaching Strategies GOLD®) to promote successful learning in all children. This proven, research-based curriculum is designed to promote project-based, investigative learning through discovery. Using the Creative Curriculum®, teachers develop age-appropriate goals and objectives which span ten areas of development and learning:

- Social-Emotional skills
 - Physical skills, including small motor and skills
 - Language
 - Cognitive skills
 - Literacy
 - Mathematics
 - Science and Technology
 - Social Studies
 - Arts
 - English Language Acquisition skills
- Our curriculum is designed to allow students choice when learning. This means that every classroom is teaching the same set of skills, but they are teaching it within the topics and through activities that are of the highest interest for the children. Providing student choice helps children gain a better understanding of the material and also helps them put these ideas into practice.
 - Creative Curriculum® objectives connect with Pennsylvania Early Learning Standards. The Pennsylvania Standards span throughout all age levels (birth-12th grade) and is what school districts in the state of Pennsylvania use to help guide what they focus on teaching to students.

Daily Structures

- Thrive to Five uses daily structures as a guiding framework to ensure that all children are routinely exposed to all opportunities for learning.
- The daily schedule provides for a balance of child-directed and adult-initiated activities, group learning and independent learning, restful periods and active periods, and significant time periods for meaningful engagement with concrete learning materials. The teaching team will make use of small group and large group instruction, independent repeated practice, and self-guided exploration strategies for introducing, developing, and mastering skills and concepts.
- The duration, combination, and frequency of each structure depends on your child’s age group and specific classroom model. Additionally, developmentally appropriate practices are prioritized for each age group. Please reach out to your child’s teaching team for more information specific to your child’s classroom model.
- Below are some daily structures that may be included in your child’s classroom and the format and focus for each:
-

Structure	Format	Focus
Morning Meeting	Teacher initiated; large group.	Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports (PBIS) / social emotional learning
Read Aloud	Teacher initiated; large group.	Development of literacy skills
Small Groups	Teacher initiated; small group.	Based on children’s developmental needs and chosen by the teacher around the focus areas of math, literacy, language, STEM, or social emotional learning

Choice Time	Child initiated open-ended play; individual or small group.	Exploration of skills and concepts through independent repeated practice and self-guided exploration strategies
Guided Play	Teacher initiated; individual or small group.	Teacher-chosen learning goals (around the focus areas of math, literacy, language, STEM, or social emotional learning) gently presented and steered during play and center time to introduce, develop, and master skills and concepts
Gross Motor	Teacher or child initiated; individual, small, or large group.	Development of movement skills
Mealtimes	Individually served or family style, depending on age group and classroom model.	Development of self-help skills, social emotional learning, language, health concepts, and healthy decision-making
Toothbrushing	Teacher initiated; individual, small or large group.	Development of health concepts and healthy decision-making
Rest Time (infant & toddler classrooms and preschool WRAP classrooms only)	Depends on age group and classroom model.	Encouraging children to rest, relax, and decompress so that children can better process what they've learned that day

- The following activities are embedded into other structures as age appropriate:

Activity	Details
Sign In	Child responses to the daily question (using student-written name) used and reviewed as intentional math activity during group time. Results are made available for children to interact with at any part of the day.
PBIS/Social Emotional Learning	Self-regulation strategies and social and emotional problem-solving skills taught through various parts of day through modeling, storytelling, role-playing, writing experiences, day-to-day practice, etc.
Shared Reading & Writing	Literacy skills taught through shared group reading and writing experiences, in which children are actively involved in recognizing and responding to various features of print and "sharing the pen" in the writing process. Strategies in use include interactive Read-Aloud, Shared Writing, David Matteson's Foundations in Literacy, and Message Time Plus (MTP).

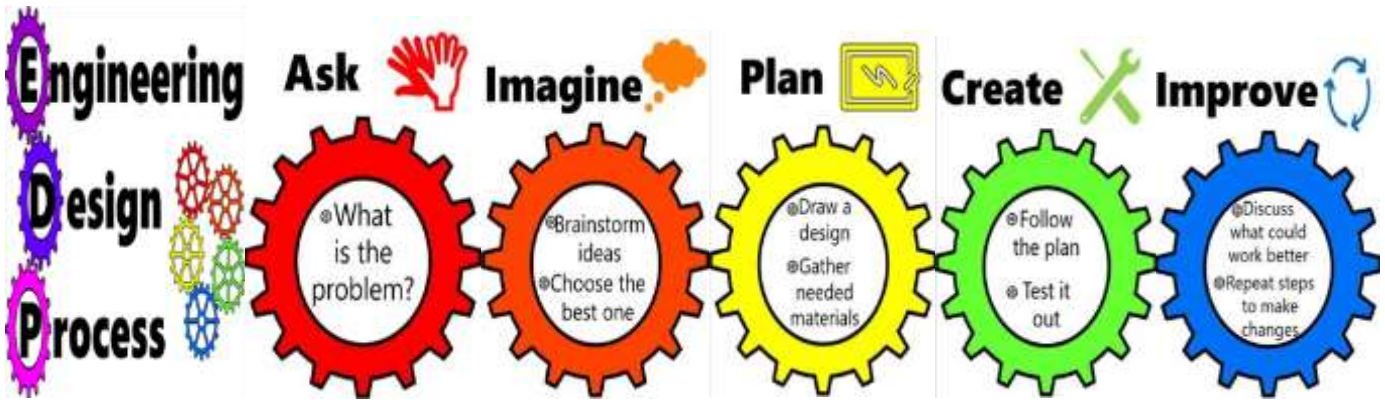
Music & Movement	A variety of movement opportunities (e.g., rhythm, singing, dancing, following directions, enjoyment, etc.) explored through music.
Math	Various math skills (number and operations, geometry and spatial sense, measurement, patterns, and data analysis) integrated into various parts of day such as small or large group instruction, individual exploration, transitions, etc.
STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)	Scientific processes (Scientific Method; Engineering Design Process) and use of technology embedded throughout various structures of the day to support the development of 21 st century thinking skills. See the STEM section below for more information.
Ignite by Hatch™	Ignite by Hatch™ is a comprehensive software program designed to help prepare preschool children for kindergarten across all skill areas. Access and use of the program is integrated into small group instruction, choice time, etc.

- For children whose needs require special expertise, our team of behavioral specialists and mental health consultants provide added layers of support within the classroom environment to assist the teaching team in meeting each child’s needs to the best of the program’s ability. Further, our team works collaboratively with varied professionals from other agencies to provide comprehensive services to children with suspected delays or confirmed individualized education plans.

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Math)

- You may hear some people call it STEAM, which includes Art or STREAM which includes Art and Reading.
 - STEM is intentionally designed to help develop 21st century thinking skills through the Scientific Method and Engineering Design Process.
 - 21st century thinking skills are:

Learning Skills	Literacy Skills	Life Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Critical Thinking •Creative Thinking •Collaborating •Communicating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Information Literacy •Media Literacy •Technology Literacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Flexibility •Initiative •Social Skills •Productivity •Leadership



- The Scientific Method and Engineering Design Process will be used throughout the day for children to explore science concepts. See images above outlining the process.
- Children will have access to explore various technologies throughout the program day. This includes classroom iPads with access to educational programs such as Ignite by Hatch™.
 - For more information on Ignite by Hatch™, refer to second chart under the Section: Daily Structures, or go to: [ignite by Hatch \(hatchearlylearning.com\)](http://ignitebyhatch(hatchearlylearning.com))
- All Thrive to Five classrooms incorporate STEM learning into their everyday lessons to support all students' development of 21st century thinking skills.

Assessment

- GOLD® is the online assessment (grading) system that accompanies the Creative Curriculum®.
- We do not formally “test” students at the end of units, as testing is not developmentally appropriate for children in this age group. Instead, we collect observations of children over the course of the unit, and then those observations are entered into the GOLD® database.
- Teachers collect observations over the course of time and then choose the level a student is at based upon those observations.
- After each assessment period, teachers share report cards generated through GOLD® to communicate with families about how a student is doing in the classroom.

Approach to Positive Discipline & Guidance

- Thrive to Five uses an approach to discipline and guidance that emphasizes respect for each child; developmentally appropriate expectations of children’s behavior; and the use of positive discipline and guidance strategies.
- Thrive to Five uses the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) framework to support children in their social and emotional development. This is an evidence-based approach aimed to strengthen social emotional skills that support future academic success.
- Through positive guidance strategies and modeling social skills, staff members help children learn pro-social behaviors, build confidence and self-esteem, and develop greater respect for others’ rights and feelings, as well as a sense that they are themselves respected.
- Discipline concerns are handled by staff in a way that encourages children to solve problems and develop a sense of inner self-control. Children are given authentic choices and the opportunity to be an active part of decision-making in their environment, thus fostering a sense of personal responsibility. Staff help children to understand the reasons for rules and limits and to feel good about the choices they make.

- All staff will use a variety of strategies for positive discipline and guidance in the classroom. These strategies are the same among all students and classrooms. The ideas used in the classroom can be used at home as well to create a consistent approach to learning. We set a few simple, clear rules, that the children help to create, that remind and reinforce our expectations of *We are Safe, *We are Friends, and *We Work Together.
- Throughout the school year, we work together on developing social and emotional skills at school and at home that help your child to be successful in school and life!
- We refrain from discussing a child's challenging behavior in front of the child whenever possible and never do so in front of other children or families.

Special Education Services Referral Process

Thrive to Five is committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children to ensure their academic and developmental success. To best assess your child's personalized needs, developmental and social emotional screenings will be completed in partnership with families within the first 45 calendar days of your child's enrollment into the program. These screenings, paired with classroom observations, will be used for staff and families to determine if further developmental evaluation is needed for any special education services. Screening will be completed in the child's preferred language whenever possible, and the teacher will share the results with families.

More information on the screenings can be found at: [Ages & Stages Questionnaires](#)

If you have any concerns about your child's development, you can share them with your child's teaching team or contact [Lancaster-Lebanon IU-13](#) for children ages 3-5 or [Early Intervention](#) for children birth through age 3 below:

Lancaster-Lebanon IU-13

1020 New Holland Ave.
Lancaster, PA 17601
(717) 606-1600

Lancaster County Government Center

Early Intervention Program - Suite 517
150 North Queen Street
Lancaster, PA 17603
Phone: [717-399-7323](tel:717-399-7323)
Fax: 717-399-7396

Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) Policy

After further evaluation and determination of eligibility, a specially designed instructional plan will be developed by Lancaster-Lebanon IU 13 ("IU13") for any child that is determined eligible for special education services. The written plan is referred to as an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for children younger than 3 or Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for children 3 and above.

Children who enter the program with an IFSP/IEP or who have one developed during their time enrolled in the program are fully included in all program services and activities. The IFSP/IEP outlines educational and/or social-emotional goals and special education services that will be provided to the child within his or her day in the classroom. Our program staff and IU13 special education teachers work together to include strategies, practices, and any needed accommodations to best support the child in meeting his or her goals within the everyday structures and functioning of the classroom day.

Suspension and Expulsion Policy

To ensure that children are actively, appropriately, and safely engaged in their learning, the program has developed systems and procedures to support children’s social-emotional and behavioral needs. In doing so, the program will prohibit expelling a child from the program due to the child’s behavior and will severely limit the need to suspend a child’s participation in classroom and program operations.

If a temporary suspension of a child’s participation in classroom and program operations is deemed necessary, Thrive to Five will support the child’s return to full services as quickly as possible while ensuring all children’s and staff’s safety by continuing to engage with parents and the mental health consultant, continuing to utilize identified community resources, providing home visits and making a determination for a referral for further evaluation for disability or behavioral health services. A written plan will be developed to document the action steps and supports needed to promote the child’s successful return to full services.

Health

Health Requirements

Thrive to Five works with families to ensure that each child is up to date on all preventive medical procedures, including doctor’s visits, immunizations, and screenings. Please see the following pages for specific health requirements, per regulations. The following chart shows the health requirements for children before and after their enrollment in the Thrive to Five program. These requirements are based upon the Federal Early Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Testing (EPSDT) guidelines.

	Head Start & Pre-K Counts Requirements	DHS Requirements for those in full day care.	Follow up Requirements
Well Child Check (WCC)	Upon enrollment	Within 60 days of enrollment, your child may not continue care if we don’t receive it.	Annually thereafter; children in full day care may not continue to attend if we do not have an updated WCC.
Immunizations/Exemptions	Upon application	Upon application	Updated as appropriate for child’s age and health history.
Lead	24 months or older		As medically indicated for abnormal results
Hemoglobin	12 months or older		As medically indicated for abnormal results
Dental	Upon enrollment		One dental exam and two cleaning/fluoride annually
Vision/Hearing	Completed by the child’s physician with updated physical, or by Thrive to Five after enrollment		Completed by the child’s physician with updated physical

Following Up with Families

Our staff will communicate and follow up with your family to ensure that their health requirements are met, including the following steps as needed:

- We notify families one month prior to a health requirement coming due and assist families as needed.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to provide copies of health documentation to the Family Liaison, Teacher, Assistant teacher, Early Learning Supervisor, or Assistant Early Learning Supervisor.

Immunizations - Special Cases

If your child's healthcare provider recommends a change in their immunization schedule due to medical reasons, a written statement from the healthcare provider attesting to the reason and the specific time period in which the immunization is not recommended must be submitted

In the case where the parent/guardian has chosen not to have their child immunized, the parent/guardian must submit a signed written statement to Thrive to Five explaining their reasons for not having their child immunized.

Nutrition Screenings

Each Thrive to Five parent completes a nutrition screening for their child at registration. The staff complete height and weight screenings annually to determine a child's BMI and weight status. We strive to support our families in making healthy choices through nutrition and exercise.

Nutrition Policy

Nutritionally balanced meals, including breakfast, lunch, and snack will be provided on a daily basis for children enrolled in the program. Food for Thrive to Five classrooms and sponsored functions will be provided by the program or other licensed food service kitchens. The food and beverages served will demonstrate optimal nutritional practices in accordance with the USDA/CACFP and ServSafe standards. Food will only be used for activities when the product can be eaten as a nutritional snack or meal.

Medically Necessary Diets

Parents/guardians must notify the center staff of any food allergies, diet restrictions or menu modifications needed. Any special diet requiring food substitutions at the center must be documented on program forms according to procedure by a medical provider. Any changes to the current plan or newly identified diet restrictions may require the child to sit out of class until a special diet is in place. The health manager is available to work with the parent of any child who has special dietary requirements. We strive to ensure that all children in the program are well nourished. Necessary adaptations will be made for any children with special needs. Children requiring these adaptations may not attend in a classroom until all necessary documentation is received from the doctor; a health meeting is conducted with the teacher, health manager, and parent; and any medications needed are present in the classroom.

Cultural/Religious Diets

Parents/guardians must notify the center staff of any foods avoided for cultural or religious reasons. Equivalent substitution will be made following our program policy.

Illness Policy

Thrive to Five programs are committed to ensuring the health and safety of each child and family we serve. For this reason and in compliance with regulations, this Illness Policy clearly defines our procedures for short-term exclusion due to illness.

****The Medical providers note should state that the child is cleared to return to school or on what date the child would be cleared to return to school.**

If the medical provider determines that the illness of a child is state reportable, we will inform all parents within 24 hours that a child has a state reportable illness, specifying its nature and any instructions you may need to follow.

Conditions	Criteria for Exclusion	Parent/ Guardian Notified to Pick up if exclusion criteria are met?	Child May Return When
Fever	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fever of 100.4 or above with behavior change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes 	Fever is gone for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication
Vomiting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vomiting 2 or more times in 24 hours unless vomiting is due to a non-contagious/ non-infectious cause, and the child can stay hydrated and take part in activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, if vomiting is due to a contagious/ infectious cause No, if vomiting is due to a non-contagious/ non-infectious cause (i.e. excessive coughing that results in vomiting of mucous, etc.) 	No vomiting in 24 hours without the use of medication
Diarrhea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If diarrhea is not contained within the diaper If toilet trained children have diarrhea “accidents” If children have 2 or more stools above what is usual for the child If stool contains blood or mucous 	Yes	No diarrhea for 24 hours without the use of medication
Abdominal Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent or intermittent pain with fever, dehydration, or other signs and symptoms 	Yes	Symptoms improve and no fever for 24 hours without the use of medication

Earache or Draining Ears with Pain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If earache and/or drainage are accompanied by fever, and child is unable to participate in usual activities 	Yes	<p>Child has been seen by a doctor and doctor has cleared the child to return.</p> <p>MEDICAL PROVIDER'S NOTE REQUIRED</p>
<p>Unexplained Rash that may be diagnosed as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ringworm Scabies Chicken Pox Active TB Measles Fifth Disease Impetigo Strep Infection Scarlet Fever Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any new, unexplained rash 	Yes	<p>Child has been seen by a doctor and doctor has cleared the child to return.</p> <p>DOCTOR'S NOTE REQUIRED</p>
<p>Mouth and Skin Sores that may be diagnosed as</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hand, Foot, and Mouth Cold Sores Skin Infections Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mouth sores accompanied by excessive drooling Skin sores on an exposed body surface that are leaking fluid 	Yes	<p>Child has been seen by a doctor and doctor has cleared the child to return.</p> <p>MEDICAL PROVIDER'S NOTE REQUIRED</p>
Pink Eye	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eye redness accompanied by any <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Fever -Yellow or white discharge -Eyelid redness -Behavior change 	Yes	<p>Child has been seen by a doctor and doctor has cleared the child to return.</p> <p>MEDICAL PROVIDER'S NOTE REQUIRED</p>
Head Lice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No immediate exclusion necessary 	No, Parent/Guardian should be notified of discovery	Once treated and no longer have live lice present upon staff inspection. No exclusion for the discovery of nits only.
Bed Bugs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No immediate exclusion necessary 	No, Parent/Guardian should be notified of discovery	Immediately
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If being tested OR has a positive test result OR has been exposed and has symptoms 	Yes	<p>Child has been seen by a doctor and doctor has cleared the child to return.</p> <p>MEDICAL PROVIDER'S NOTE REQUIRED</p>

Expectations for parents with an ill child

1. If the child is brought to the center and staff observes symptoms of illness the child will not be accepted into the classroom
2. If the child becomes ill during school hours, it is the parent's responsibility to have their child picked up within one (1) hour after notification.
3. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts from the "Emergency Contact
4. Information" sheet will be called. People coming to pick up the child must have proper identification.

Surgery/Sutures/Broken Bones: When a child has had surgery, sutures, any type of major injury, or an injury requiring a cast, she/he must stay home and the family must:

1. Provide a medical provider note regarding any restriction of activities, which will be reviewed by the Early Learning Supervisor/Assistant Early Learning Supervisor in consultation with the health team as needed.
2. Meet with the staff as needed to determine when the child can safely return to school.

Medication Policy

1. The program prefers medication to be administered at home whenever possible. For non-rescue medications, the parent/guardian must confirm that the child has taken at least one dose of the medication and has not had an adverse reaction.
 2. If medication is given prior to the start of the school day, the family should inform the teacher what medication was given and when.
 3. If medication is needed during the school day, parent/guardians must obtain, from the family liaison or child's teacher, the appropriate form which is then signed by the medical provider.
 4. Once the form is complete with the medical provider's signature, someone from the health team will review the form and procedure with the teacher.
 5. The parent must then provide Thrive to Five staff with the medication in its original container with the prescription label.
 6. Depending on the circumstances, it may be necessary that the child does not attend class until more information about the needed medication is obtained to ensure the appropriate care. In these cases, all efforts will be made to provide modified education services to the child and family in the home.
- The full procedure surrounding medication administration will be available and explained to families as necessary.

Safety

Fire & Severe Weather Drills

As required by the Federal Performance Standards, each classroom will hold monthly fire and severe weather drills. Evacuation plans are posted in all classrooms. During fire drills, staff will lead the children to a safe area outside of the building. During severe weather drills, classrooms staff will follow the severe weather plan based on the location of the classroom. Please ask your child's teacher or your classroom's Family and Community Engagement Liaison for the specific plan for your child's classroom. If a fire drill occurs while you are at a Head Start location, please do not be alarmed; simply follow the direction of the staff.

Intruder & Evacuation Drills

Each classroom will follow the intruder drill plan based on the location of the classroom. Please ask your child's teacher or your classroom's Family Liaison/Family Advocate/Early Learning Supervisor for the specific intruder plan for your child's classroom. If your child's classroom needs to be evacuated, all children will be relocated to another nearby location. Please ask your child's teacher or your classroom's Family Liaison where your child will be relocated to in the event of an evacuation. Each center has specific plans that are shared with the families.

Authorization for Emergency Medical or Dental Treatment

At enrollment consent for emergency medical treatment is obtained on the Health History Consent form. This form is kept in your child's file.

Emergency Injury Procedure

In the case of a severe accident or illness to a child, Thrive to Five will do the following:

1. A staff member will stay with the child at all times.
2. A staff member will call 911.
3. A staff member will notify the parent/guardian by phone.
4. When possible, a Thrive to Five staff member will accompany the child in the ambulance and will take the child's Emergency Contact Sheet and the Emergency Consent Authorization for Medical Care for a Minor Child form.
5. The classroom's Early Learning Supervisor and Coordinator of Early Learning will be notified

Non-Emergency Injury Procedure

If a child sustains any type of injury not requiring medical attention, the child's parent/guardian will be notified by a staff member. All accidents will be documented on an Incident Report Form. An accident report will be prepared by your child's teacher immediately after the child is treated. One copy of the report will be given to the parent/guardian. First aid will be administered in the classroom as needed.

Parent Engagement & Family Support

Policy Council

Policy Council is a group of parent/guardians and community members that provide guidance for quality services for Thrive to Five children and families. Additionally, they assist in making decisions that are related to program design and operations.

- Parents/guardians will have the opportunity to express their interest in joining this group during the Family Committee meeting early in the program year.
- The Family Committee will then vote to determine who will become members of the council.
- Each center is encouraged to have at least one member participate in the council.

Family Committee

All parent/guardians are invited to be part of the Family Committee, which meets monthly to assist the program in determining the best way to engage families. Discussions will focus on:

- Attendance
- Volunteer hours & opportunities
- Topics identified by committee members

Parenting Curriculum

All parent/guardians are invited to attend the parenting curriculum workshops which build on existing knowledge and offers opportunities to practice parenting skills that promote children's learning and development.

Volunteering / Classroom Involvement Opportunities

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to visit their child in the classroom and participate in classroom experiences. This is a great way to show your child how important he/she is to you. Volunteers may be asked to perform the following tasks:

- Setting up lunches
- Assisting with clean-up in the classroom-
- Leading an activity with the children-
- Supporting office work (shredding, cutting, organizing, etc.)

If you are interested in volunteering, you will need to attend an orientation and may need to get clearances. Please speak to your child's teacher or Family Liaison for more details.

Family Support

In today's complicated and rapidly changing world, families often face various challenges, from financial hardships to lack of affordable housing and everything in between. Fortunately, social service professionals are here to provide essential support and guidance to help families navigate these difficult times. Some of the services available are:

1. Resource Navigation such as food assistance, housing support, counseling services, transportation assistance, clothing assistance, furniture assistance are only a few ways we can help.
2. Customized Support Plans developed with the family surrounding the goals of each family. These plans are created in collaboration with the family and can be changed at any time.

These services are provided by your family liaison (Head Start, PreK Counts), family service worker (Early Head Start), or assistant early learning supervisor (Private Pay), please reach out to your teacher if you aren't sure who to contact and they can help you access them.

General Policies and Procedures

Statement of Confidentiality

The information about your family and your child is regarded as private and confidential. Records for your family and child are kept in locked cabinets and may only be accessed by staff members and consultants and professionals auditing the program. Records will only be transferred with a signed release form from a parent or guardian and will be kept in a sealed envelope during the transfer. Teachers may not discuss child and family information with other children or families in the program.

Social Media Statement

Thrive to Five wants to ensure that the use of all social media platforms does not pose any problems for families or staff. It is prohibited of the participants of the Thrive to Five program from taking pictures of other families and/or children, as well as using these images for personal purposes including but not limited to posting images of other children, families and/or staff on Facebook, Instagram, or other forms of social media. Thrive to Five works to honor its participants preferences indicated above and expects participants to do the same.

Inclement Weather/Emergency Closing and Delay Notification Procedure

From time to time, we may need to delay or close Thrive to Five sites due to inclement weather and/or emergency situations. All centers will close or delay at the discretion of the director. In the event of such an event, families will be notified using the following methods:

- CAP Website: www.caplanc.org
- Communicate App: Automated phone call, text, and/or email to all Thrive to Five families
- CAP Facebook Page

Parent/Guardian and Community Concern/Grievance Procedure

When a parent/guardian or community member is dissatisfied with any aspect of the Thrive to Five Program, he/she should present this concern orally or in writing.

If the concern is about a specific classroom/center, it should be addressed to the classroom's Lead Teacher.

- The Lead Teacher must act on the concern within 3 working days.
- If the concern can't be resolved by the Lead Teacher, the concern will be taken to the Early Learning Supervisor or Assistant Early Learning Supervisor for that site.
- If the concern cannot be resolved at this level, it will be referred to the Coordinator of Early Learning Services for that site, who will then recommend appropriate action to resolve the concern.
- The Coordinator of Early Learning Services may decide to involve the appropriate Thrive to Five Cabinet Director.
- The Cabinet Director will then contact the parent/guardian or community members to resolve the issue when necessary.

If the concern is about the program in general, it should be directed to the classroom's Family Liaison/Home Visitor.

- The Family Liaison will refer the concern to the appropriate Thrive to Five Coordinator.
- The Coordinator will act on the concern within 3 working days.
- If the concern can't be resolved, it will be referred to the appropriated Thrive to Five Cabinet Director.
- The Cabinet Director will act on the concern within 3 working days.
- If the concern can't be resolved, it will be referred to the Thrive to Five Vice President.
- Should the Vice President not present a resolution that satisfies the parent/guardian or community member, he/she has the right to present the concern to the Executive Committee of the Policy Council within 5 working days.
- Appropriate documentation of the grievance will be provided on a case-by-case basis.

Appendix A - Contact Information for Program Locations

CONTACT INFORMATION		
LOCATION	ADDRESS	PHONE NUMBER
CAP Early Learning Center	601 S. Queen St Lancaster, PA 17603	<p>Contact: Dr. Franny Moyer- Early Learning Supervisor Katy Fischer – Asst. Early Learning Supervisor Ph: 717-299-7301 ext. 3038 Cell: 717-333-1912</p> <p>Angelica Ramos – Family Liaison: 717-475-5629 Valerie Heslop – Family Liaison: 717-419-6270 Miranda Eorio – Family Liaison: 717-475-0529</p>
Grace Early Learning Center	517 N. Queen St Lancaster, PA 17603	<p>Contact: Natashia Ramos- Early Learning Supervisor Cindy Hogg – Asst. Early Learning Supervisor Ph: 717-291-0275 ext. 3219 Cell: 717-333-1937</p> <p>Emily Keener – Family Liaison: 717-333-1953</p>
Pequea Valley Early Learning Center	166 S. New Holland Rd. Kinzers, PA 17535	<p>Contact: Tracy Uhland- Early Learning Supervisor Kathy McGinley – Asst. Early Learning Supervisor Ph: 717-768-5604 Cell: 717-799-9712</p> <p>Lauren Petersheim – Family Liaison: 717-333-1989 Rebecca Weiser – Family Liaison: 717-419-9246</p>
Columbia Early Learning Center	815 Wright St. Columbia, PA 17512	<p>Contact: Karen McLellan- Early Learning Supervisor Ph: 717-684-2706 Ext 3138 Cell: 717-490-2363</p> <p>Sierra Mesaric – Family Support Specialist: 717-481-0639 Allison Schwartz – Family Liaison: 717-419-5012 Miranda Eioro – Family Liaison: 717-475-0529</p>
Cocalico- Adamstown	256 W. Main St Adamstown, PA 19501	<p>Contact: Melissa Richwine – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-468-1268</p> <p>Jessica Weinhold – Family Support Supervisor: 717-419-7814</p>

Cocalico- Denver	700 S. 4 th St. Denver, PA 17517	Contact: Melissa Richwine – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-468-1268 Rachel Cox – Family Liaison: 717-468-4976
Ephrata- Fulton Elementary	51 E. Fulton Street Ephrata, PA 17522	Contact: Melissa Richwine – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-468-1268 Rachel Cox – Family Liaison: 717-468-4976
Hempfield- East Pete Elementary	5700 Lemon Street East Petersburg, PA 17520	Contact: Melissa Richwine – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-468-1268 Meagan Evans – Family Liaison: 717-333-1926
Elizabethtown- East High Elementary	600 E. High St. Elizabethtown, PA 17022	Contact: Karen McLellan – Early Learning Supervisor Ph: 717-684-2706 ext. 3138 Cell: 717-333-4153 Meagan Evans – Family Liaison: 717-333-1926
Donegal- Donegal Primary School	1055 Koser Rd. Mt Joy, PA 17552	Contact: Melissa Richwine – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-468-1268 Carrie Rabe – Family Liaison: 717-435-2794
Solanco- Quarryville Elementary School	211 S. Hess St. Quarryville, PA 17516	Contact: Melissa Richwine – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-468-1268 Marisa Sherts – Family Liaison: 717-481-0372
Penn Manor- Martic Elementary School	266 Martic Heights Dr. Holtwood, PA 17532	Contact: Tina Miller – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-490-2115 Marisa Sherts – Family Liaison: 717-481-0372
Penn Manor- Millersville University Campus	60 Brooks Drive Millersville, PA 17551	Contact: Tina Miller – Early Learning Supervisor Cell: 717-490-2115 Carrie Rabe – Family Liaison: 717-435-2794
SW Homebase	40 W. Main St Strasburg, PA 17579	Contact: Rose DeJesus – Early Learning Supervisor

		Ph: 717.299.7388 Ext. 3205 Cell: 717.538.1720
NW Home Base		Contact: Rose DeJesus – Early Learning Supervisor Ph: 717.299.7388 Ext. 3205 Cell: 717.538.1720

Appendix B – Non-Discrimination Letter

Dear Families & Staff,

Our programs are open to all children and families regardless of race, color, religion/creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, disability, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, genetic information, and possession of a General Education Development Certificate/Diploma as compared to high school diploma, veterans status, or any other characteristic protected by a applicable federal and state laws. As a program participating in both state and federally funded grants, CAP does not discriminate against students or employees of Head Start, and our agency is an equal opportunity service-provider.

In accordance with both State and Federal civil rights law, as well as USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs and other state, or federal programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity.

Individuals with disabilities will be provided reasonable accommodations to access services or employment. Persons with disabilities who require alternate means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (state or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in language other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

Mail: U. S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights 1400 Independence Ave, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410	Fax: (202) 690-7442	Email: program. intake@usda.gov
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Any individual, whether client or employee, who believes they have been discriminated against, may file a complaint of discrimination with any of the following:

Commonwealth of PA Dept of Human Services Bureau of Equal Opportunity Room 225, Health & Welfare Bldg P.O.Box 2675 Hbg, PA 17105	PA Human Relations Commission Harrisburg Regional Office 333 Market St, 8 th floor Hbg, PA 17101	US Dept of Health & Human Services Office of Civil Rights Suite 372, Public Ledger Building 150 S. Independence Mall West Philadelphia, PA 19106-9111
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Lili Dippner
VP of Education, Thrive to Five