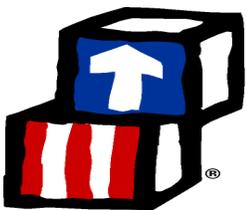
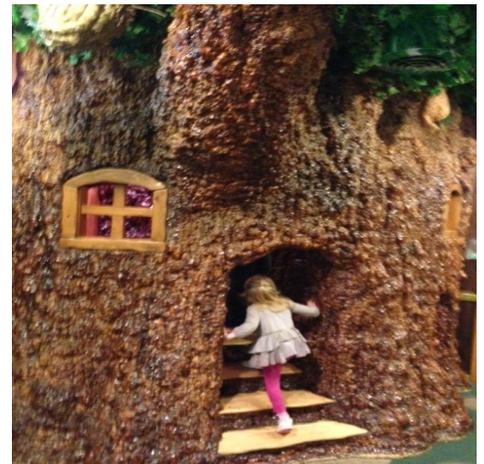




**Lac du Flambeau Tribal Early Childhood Education Program  
for Expectant Families, Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers**

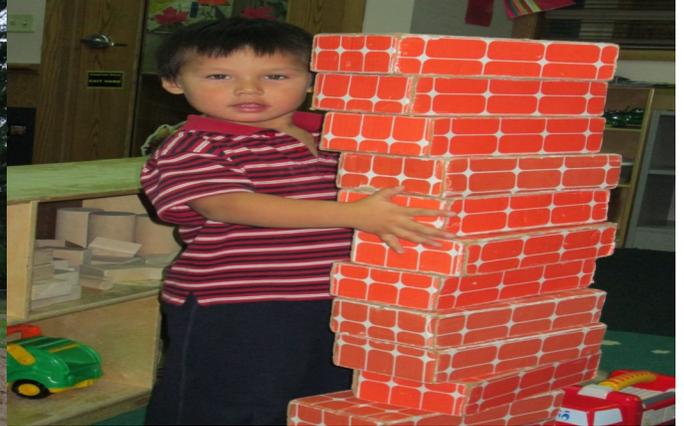
**"Each One, Honor One"**



**P.O. Box 67 \* 2899 Hwy. 47 S.  
Lac du Flambeau, WI 54538  
(715) 588-9291 phone \* (715) 588-9576 fax**

**[www.ldftribe.com/headstart](http://www.ldftribe.com/headstart)**

**Friend us on Facebook! Zaasjiwan Tribal Head Start**



**Zaasijiwan Head Start** is a Tribal program administered by the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians.

Our mission is to demonstrate a commitment to children and families to assure they have resources and opportunities to succeed. This is accomplished through direct services in the home and the center, the educational and empowerment process, and through working in partnership with existing community agencies.

The program is housed in the Lac du Flambeau Public School. ZHS collaborates with the school to ensure our facilities meet the needs of students and staff alike. We also work closely with school professionals to access services for our students.

In addition to working with school staff, ZHS also works with agencies in the community to ensure services are accessible for ZHS parents and students and that training and educational opportunities are made available for staff, parents and interested members of the community. We provide information on many other programs and in some cases, we make referrals to them for services.

**Office hours are from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM.**

## **Philosophy for Early Childhood Education**

Our program is designed to provide all children participating with a safe, nurturing, engaging, enjoyable, and secure learning environment. We believe this will help them gain the awareness, skills and confidence necessary to succeed in their present environment and deal with later responsibilities in school and in life. Each child is treated as a unique individual in an inclusive community that values, respects, and responds to diversity. A variety of experiences supports the continuum of children's growth and development from infancy to preschool and includes the biological, cognitive and psychosocial.

### **Developmental-Interaction Approach**

We believe Early Childhood curriculum should be based on how children grow and learn, rather than on a format based on pre-determined lesson plans. The Teachers' and Home Visitors' responsibility to carry out this approach is based on the following:

- ◇ Knowledge and understanding of child development (whole-child principles).
- ◇ Individualized planning based on interactions with parents, observations and records, and knowledge from others associated with the child.
- ◇ Creation of a learning environment that supports and respects gender, culture, language, ethnicity and the child's family composition.
- ◇ Skill in planning and facilitating activities that are developmentally appropriate for individual and groups of children.

The Zaasijiwan Head Start 0 to 5 program is also based on the premise that all children share certain needs. Children from low-income homes and those with special needs can benefit from an all-inclusive developmental program designed to meet individual needs. Our curriculum is based on sound whole-child development principles and creating a social, emotional, and intellectual climate that supports child-initiated and child-pursued learning.

- ◇ A child will benefit most from a comprehensive, interdisciplinary program, which provides a broad range of services to support development and remedy problems as expressed.
- ◇ The child's entire family and the community must be involved. Through modeling, guidance, nurturing and diversity, we hope to provide our community with children who will take the skills they learned along with them on their journey through life.

# Head Start Program Overview

Source: Office of Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC)

Head Start is a federal program that promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to five from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development.

The LDF Zaasijiwan Head Start 0 to 5 is a comprehensive child development and family support program administered by the Lac du Flambeau Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and overseen by the Gikendaasowin Education Department.

Head Start is geared toward children between 3 and 5 years of age. Services are typically provided in the center. Classroom Hours are Monday thru Friday from 7:30 AM to 1:30 PM. Bus transportation is available for most residents of Lac du Flambeau.

Head Start programs provide a learning environment that supports children's growth in the following domains:

- language and literacy;
- cognition and general knowledge;
- physical development and health;
- social and emotional development; and
- approaches to learning.

Head Start programs provide comprehensive services to enrolled children and their families, which include health, nutrition, social, and other services as determined to be necessary by family needs assessments, in addition to education and cognitive development services. Head Start services are designed to be responsive to each child and family's ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage.

Head Start emphasizes the role of parents as their child's first and most important teacher. Head Start programs strive to build relationships with families that support:

- family well-being and positive parent-child relationships;
- families as learners and lifelong educators;
- family engagement in transitions;
- family connections to peers and community; and
- families as advocates and leaders.

# Early Head Start Program Overview: Center-Based Option

Source: Office of Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC)]

Early Head Start is a comprehensive, two-generation federal initiative aimed at enhancing the development of infants and toddlers while strengthening families.

In Lac du Flambeau, we have 24 slots available for our center-based program options where we are building upon the federal initiative to include Ojibwe culture and language revitalization components in the classroom. The goal is to strengthen cultural knowledge and incorporate our native language. In addition cultural and linguistic goals, these classrooms continue to maintain standards that are compliant with the goals of typical Early Head Start classrooms which include:

- **Parent involvement** activities that offer parents a meaningful and strategic role in the program's vision, services, and governance.
- **Inclusion** strategies that respect the unique developmental trajectories of young children in the context of a typical setting, including children with disabilities.
- **Cultural competence** which acknowledges the profound role that culture plays in early development. Programs also recognize the influence of cultural values and beliefs on both staff and families' approaches to child development. **Comprehensiveness, flexibility and responsiveness** of services which allow children and families to move across various program options over time, as their life situation demands.
- **Transition planning** respects families' need for thought and attention paid to movements across program options and into—and out of—Early Head Start programs.
- **Collaboration** is, simply put, central to an Early Head Start program's ability to meet the comprehensive needs of families. Strong partnerships allow expansion of services to families with infants and toddlers beyond the door of the program and into the larger community. We currently work with several other agencies to ensure community needs are addressed in a satisfactory manner.
- **An emphasis on high quality** which recognizes the critical opportunity of EHS programs to positively impact children and families in the early years and beyond.
- **Prevention and promotion activities** that promote healthy development and recognize and address atypical development at the earliest stage possible.
- **Positive relationships and continuity** which honor the critical importance of early attachments on healthy development in early childhood and beyond. The parents are viewed as a child's first, and most important, relationship.

# Early Head Start Program Overview: Home-Based Option

Source: Office of Administration for Children and Families Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center (ECLKC)]

The second program option we offer for Early Head Start also has 24 slots and is known as the **Home-Based Model**. This model is designed to provide high-quality, culturally competent child development and parent support services with an emphasis on the role of the parent as the child's first, and most important relationship. The home-based option is designed for families in which the home is the child's primary learning environment. Participants in the EHS home-based model are scheduled to receive a combination of weekly home visits and twice monthly group socializations. The scope of services in the home-based program option is comprehensive and includes Developmental screening, ongoing observation and assessment, and curriculum planning; Medical, dental, and mental health; Child development and education; Family partnerships and goal setting; Community collaborations to meet additional family needs

## Home Visits

Home visits are conducted with the child's parent(s) or the primary caregiver for 90 minutes once a week, on a year-round basis. The purpose of the home visit is to support parents in their roles as primary caregivers and facilitate the child's optimal development within their home environments.

## Group Socializations

Group socializations are offered twice a month and are designed to support child development by strengthening the parent-child relationship. In the context of a group of families, socialization experiences address child growth and development, parenting, and the parent-child relationship.

## Family Partnership Agreement

In order to meet the needs of children and families, a Family Partnership Agreement is created that defines the individualized focus for each enrolled child and family. Through this process, parents are integrally involved in determining the goals and experiences that comprise their child's curriculum, as well as identifying goals that best support their healthy development and self-sufficiency.

## Home Visiting Staff

In the EHS Home-Based Model, the relationship of the home visitor with parents and expectant parents is central to effective service delivery. Through ongoing interactions in home visits and socializations, this continuity of the relationship becomes the vehicle through which home visitors support and strengthen parents' and/or expectant parents' abilities to nurture the healthy development of their children.

## Eligibility for EHS Home Visiting Participants

The EHS Home-Based Model targets low-income pregnant women and families with children from ages birth to three. To be eligible, most families must be at or below the federal poverty level. However, EHS Home-Based Models must make at least 10 percent of their enrollment opportunities available to children with disabilities who are eligible for Part C services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in their state. Each individual EHS Home-Based Model is allowed to create specific program eligibility criteria.

## Curriculum/Activities

# Early Head Start & Head Start Center- Based 0 - 5 Curriculum

## Creative Curriculum for Early Childhood:

The philosophy behind *The Creative Curriculum* is that young children learn best by doing. Learning isn't just repeating what someone else says, it requires active thinking and experimenting to find out how things work and to learn firsthand about the world we live in. In their early years, children explore the world around them by using all their senses (touching, tasting, listening, smelling, and looking). In using real materials such as blocks and trying out their new ideas, children learn about sizes, shapes, and colors, and they notice relationships between things. In time, they learn to use one object to stand for another. This is the beginning of symbolic thinking. Children begin with concrete symbols and become more and more able to use abstract symbols like words to describe their thoughts and feelings. They learn to "read" pictures, which are symbols of real people, places, and things. This exciting development in symbolic thinking takes place during the pre-school years as children "play". Play enables us to achieve the key goals of our early childhood curriculum. Play is the work of young children.

## Program Curriculum Goals:

Based on the current theories of Early Childhood Education, the following curriculum goals have been established. The activities we plan for all children, the way we organize the environment, select toys and materials, plan the daily schedule, and interact with children are all directed and designed toward meeting these goals.

1. To provide children with opportunities for social interaction with same age peers;
2. To assure that children have good starts in the development of a positive self-concept;
3. To assist children in the formation of positive attitudes toward school and learning;
4. To assist parents by collaborating in order to increase their knowledge about child development and education, thereby enhancing their ability to serve as their children's primary teacher and to assist staff in developing curriculum meaningful to their children;
5. To provide children with a variety of activities and experiences which will build firm foundations for later academic learning:
  - o Concept Understandings
  - o Emergent Literacy and Numeracy development
  - o Listening and Following directions
  - o Thinking and Decision making
  - o Independence and responsibility
  - o To provide children with opportunities to practice large and small motor skills;
  - o To encourage development of creativity;
  - o To provide a responsive, inclusive environment which supports the needs of all children, and provides ways for each child to participate in all program activities;

To honor the individuality of each enrolled child; and when available following the child's IEP to ensure that each child receives the specialized education and support he or she requires.

## Thematic Learning:

Our curriculum is developed through teacher observation and evaluation of each individual child. Concepts and skills are introduced through carefully planned activities that focus on a particular theme, which is appropriate to each child's developmental level and which reinforce social, emotional, physical, and intellectual growth. Concrete, hands-on activities and experiences are planned according to a calendar of themes, which are relevant, and of interest to the children, providing meaningful learning. We use music, games, stories, large muscle equipment, art materials, and a variety of learning centers to help each child feel a sense of accomplishment and belonging through successful child-initiated activity as well as adult-child interactions. The equipment and materials will be chosen to compliment the theme and will be rotated approximately every other week. It is our goal to keep the learning progressing steadily and the child's interest and involvement high with ongoing assessment.

## **Parent Involvement**

The Lac du Flambeau Zaasijiwan Head Start program welcomes parent involvement in all aspects of our program.

We encourage parents to utilize our program to assist them with meeting their own needs as well as the needs of their children.

We strive to maintain an environment in which all family members feel welcome at all times—men as well as women, and members of extended and non-traditional families.

We want parents to be informed about the different volunteer roles and parental involvement opportunities that are available.

Parents are encouraged to participate in classrooms, on field trips, in community events, in supporting program operations, and by preparing materials at home.

ZHS also provides many training and educational opportunities throughout the year where interested parents/families are always more than welcome.

We try to take into account parental work, education, training schedules and family obligations when designing activities for families.

## Service Area

Head Start Program Performance Standards and Other Regulations define *Service Area* as the geographic area identified in an approved grant application within which a grantee may provide Head Start services.

- The primary service area of the Lac du Flambeau Zaasijiwan Head Start is the Lac du Flambeau Indian Reservation and Tribe. Our primary goal is to provide early childhood services for the tribal community. *Indian Tribe* means any Tribe, band, nation, pueblo, or other organized group or community of Indians, including any Native village described in section 3[c] of the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (43 U.S.C. 1602 [c]) or established pursuant to such Act (43 U.S.C. 1601 et seq.), that is recognized as eligible for special programs and services provided by the United States to Indians because of their status as Indians.
- The Lac du Flambeau Zaasijiwan Head Start may also from time to time serve low-income families residing in surrounding counties and communities that do not have access to Head Start services. Counties that may be included as part of the service area include: Vilas, Price and Iron counties. In some cases, we can also provide services to tribal members living in Oneida county provided that other eligibility requirements are met.

The Zaasijiwan Head Start Program is located within the Lac du Flambeau Public School building in the 700 wing with pre-Kindergarten classrooms and the Ojibwe Language & Culture classrooms. The program has access to its own kitchen, and playground as well as use of the small gymnasium.

## Demographics

The Lac du Flambeau Zaasijiwan Head Start is an American Indian/Alaska Native Head Start Program designed to serve a population consisting largely of American Indian / Alaska Native students and families. In Lac du Flambeau the population we serve is approximately 90% American Indian. The remaining 10% consists of community members of various racial/ethnic backgrounds.

## Eligibility

Lac du Flambeau Zaasijiwan Head Start utilizes a multi-pronged approach to determine eligibility, recruitment, selection, enrollment and attendance guidelines and procedures. Eligibility is based on a number of criteria including but not limited to age, income, level of need and tribal citizenship. To be eligible for Head Start services, a child must be at least three years old by the cutoff date used to determine eligibility for the community's public school. The Zaasijiwan Head Start program also offers Early Head Start services which are designed to serve children in the community who are under the age of three and meet all other eligibility requirements. ZHS strives to serve income-eligible families first but in cases where available slots cannot be filled with children from families that are within the income guidelines set forth, ZHS may enroll children from families that exceed the income guidelines. Income verification is always required.

## FAQs

**Q:** How old does my child have to be to get into Head Start?

**A:** We take children from 0 to 3 years of age for Early Head Start which has a total of 24 Home-Based slots and 24 Center-Based slots. Children 3 to 5 years are able to enroll for Center-Based Head Start which currently has 64 slots available.

**Q:** How are children selected by Head Start?

**A:** First, you must have a complete application and verification of income on file. Once complete, we select children based on age & level of need. Level of need is determined by a number of factors including: income, tribal status & residency, diagnosed disabilities, housing situation, foster status, documented health concern(s), disabilities of parent(s), domestic issues/AODA, parent level of education, pregnancy, single parent, employment/education/childcare needs & transportation.

**Q:** How many children does Head Start serve?

**A:** We are funded to serve up to 120 children. This number varies and may change from time to time based on current demographics and needs assessments.

**Q:** Why do Head Start hours, days off, closings etc., sometimes differ from those of the public school?

**A:** We share the bus company so we try to work around the bussing schedule of the public school. We are also a year-round program, so our days off are typically centered on fitting in required professional development/ training events for our staff and for our families.

**Q:** What time do they start?

**A:** Classroom hours are from 7:30 AM—1:30 PM. We do make an effort to accommodate families as necessary.

**Q:** Why aren't the times for Head Start in line with the times for the Public School?

**A:** We have an 8 hour workday and our teachers stay with the children throughout. They use the time after the children are on the bus to work on other tasks such as lesson/activity planning and following up with families.

**Q:** If my children are late, can I still bring them in?

**A:** Although we do maintain an acute focus on attendance for a number of reasons, we encourage you to bring your child into school whether or not they are late. Daily attendance helps establish an important routine and is supportive of our program goal of school readiness.