

HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc.

Parent Education Handbook

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Introduction to Head Start

A child's early education is extremely important and should be taken seriously.

Education for the young child is a cooperative effort between the school and the home. Given this, HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. adheres to the philosophy that parents are the prime educators of their children. The Education Program provides parents with the opportunity to learn additional parenting skills and an opportunity to learn how to work more effectively with their own children.

The Educational Program of HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. is supported by Scholastic Early Childhood Program, and Language Enrichment Activities Program (LEAP) along with other resources and philosophies of learning.

Growth and development flourish when presented in a sequential manner with current and innovative activities being presented. Children learn best when the following factors regarding the child are considered.

1. Age
2. Stage of development
3. Need
4. Learning style
5. Readiness level

The following goals should be considered when developing activities for the child.

1. Improving the child's health and physical abilities.
2. Increasing the child's conceptual skills.
3. Encouraging self-discipline and self-confidence, which can assist in developing social and emotional skills.
4. Facilitating an atmosphere where children can experience many successes.
5. Creating an atmosphere where others can work cooperatively in the child's educational process.
6. Increasing the child's feeling of self-worth and dignity.

The following items were addressed to acquaint parents with the most frequently asked questions regarding program philosophy. Please visit your child's classroom on a consistent basis. Children enjoy having parents involved. It will increase your knowledge of child growth and development.

Assessment of Children

In accordance with national, regional and state guidelines, children enrolled in HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. (HSGD) participate in an on-going assessment process. The goal of the on-going assessment is two-part. The primary goal is to systematically measure the child's overall growth and development. The secondary goal is to use the assessment information to plan appropriate and individualized classroom activities for each child.

Throughout the year, on-going documentation of the child's observed abilities are collected and used to evaluate the child's progress. This documentation is generally maintained in the form of anecdotal notes, writing samples, art samples and photographs. Weekly lesson plans are developed. Lesson plans address the child's individual skill needs as identified by the on-going assessment process.

The child's on-going assessment is kept in his/her individual portfolio. The portfolio also contains anecdotal notes, writing samples, art samples & photographs to document observations of the child's progress.

Parents/Guardians have access to their child's portfolio. Confidentiality must be maintained; therefore parents are permitted to view only their child's portfolio.

The on-going assessment is divided into several subject areas. Typically, the developmental areas concerning gross/fine motor, cognitive, language, self-help and personal/social skills are addressed.

Screening of children

All children are screened within 45 days of entering HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. The screening tool generally addresses motor, cognitive, language and social/emotional development. It is used to project a picture of the child's current developmental abilities. The information provided by the screen is the beginning point from which HSGD teachers and staff plan for the child.

Parents participate in the process by completing a Parent Questionnaire. This form provides important information about the child's early development and behaviors. The results of the screening are shared with the parent.

Other screenings may be conducted for research. Parents are informed of all such situations.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Children will play outdoors a minimum of one hour each day, 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon. Children need to go outdoors daily even in hot or cold weather. If it is not raining a short trip down the sidewalk will give the children a needed break from the classroom. There are at least two teachers on the playground at all times. Teachers are to interact with the children during their play.

Each classroom schedule is followed to prevent too many children on the playground at one time. During nice weather, it is permissible for indoor activities to be moved outdoors. Water will be available to children at all times when outdoors.

- Parents may apply sunscreen/sun block to their child prior to leaving their child for the day. HEAD START staff may not apply sunscreen/sun block on any child
- Parents may apply insect repellent prior to coming to the HEAD START center. Insect repellent will not be applied to children for outdoor activities by HEAD START staff.
- When a heat advisory has been issued the children will only go outdoors if the temperature is less than 95 degrees.
- In winter months children will only go outdoors when the temperature is above 32 degrees. If the weather is extreme children will not go outdoors. They should experience brief periods of snow or sleet if it should occur.
- Children should dress appropriately to go outdoors each day they come to HEAD START. Closed toe shoes and comfortable clothing will allow them a wonderful experience.

HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc.

Child Discipline Policy

The goal of Head Start is to provide programs that bring about social competence in children of eligible families. This is achieved through “encouragement of self-confidence, spontaneity, curiosity and self-discipline which will assist in the development of a child’s social and emotional health”.

The following Child Discipline Policy supports this goal:

Goals of the Child Discipline Policy:

- To provide structure and consistency for the child.
- To teach the child appropriate behavior for the classroom and school readiness.
- To promote staff consistency in handling disciplinary issues.
- To treat children with respect.

Objectives for the Children:

- The children will follow staff directions.
- The children will seek appropriate attention.
- The children will show respect for themselves, others and the environment.
- The children will demonstrate self-control to avoid endangering themselves or others.

Guidelines for the HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. Child Discipline Policy

The appropriate responses and modeling from staff will help children to grow and reach their developmental milestones. The following guidelines are to be used by staff when interacting with the children.

Objective #1: Children will follow staff directions.

The staff will:

1. Speak to children at eye level.
2. Speak to children in a calm and respectful voice and check for understanding.
3. Have clear classroom rules.
4. Consistently reinforce to the child to follow the classroom rules.
5. Have age appropriate expectations.

For example: After the child has been given plenty of time, the child still refuses to pick up the blocks or a child refuses to put their coat on to go outside and continues to play.

If the child does not follow directions, check that the above guidelines have been followed. If this is not effective, then...

- a. Repeat the directions. Assure yourself the child heard the directions.
- b. Model the behavior through guidance.
- c. The child will be removed from the situation to stand near an adult for an appropriate amount of time (refer to Guidance section in the Teacher Handbook, pg. 43).
- d. The child will then show or tell the adult the appropriate behavior.

Objective #2

Children will seek appropriate attention.

The staff will:

1. Provide a variety of meaningful activities so that children will seek appropriate attention.
2. Ensure that room arrangement encourages children to engage in classroom activities.
3. Reinforce all occasions when the child is constructively engaged in activities.
4. Ignore inappropriate attention seeking behavior, while giving attention at appropriate times.
5. Redirect the child's behavior.

For example: A child continues to play with a small toy on the shelf while you are having circle time OR on the play yard, a child swears repeatedly to gain the teacher's attention.

If the child does not seek appropriate attention, check that the above guidelines have been followed.

Objective #3

Children will show respect for themselves, others and the environment.

The staff will:

1. Model respectful behaviors for self and others such as sharing, taking turns, and the use of "manners".
2. Model respectful behaviors for the environment such as using materials appropriately and taking responsibility for clean and safe surroundings.
3. Encourage children to communicate, verbally ("use your words"), when expressing their wants and needs.

For example: Two children are arguing about whose going to play with a toy next and one child hits the other OR a young child uses the markers to color on the table.

If the child does not show respectful behaviors, check that the above guidelines have been followed.

Objective #4

Children will demonstrate self-control to avoid endangering themselves or others.

The staff will:

1. Ensure that children are actively supervised at all times.
2. Encourage the children to “use their words” instead of any body parts to communicate their wants or needs.
3. Teach appropriate alternatives to dealing with anger and frustration.

For example: A child throws a block at another child out of anger OR a child is frustrated with the teacher and climbs on a shelf and tries to jump off into a group of children.

If the child does not demonstrate self-control, check that the guidelines above have been followed. If this is not effective then...

- a. Redirect child away from the situation. If this is not effective, then...
- b. Isolate child from situation while in full view of staff for an appropriate amount of time (refer to Guidance section in the Teacher Handbook, pg. 43).
- c. If the behavior persists and is uncontrollable call for assistance.

NOTE: If the child has a Behavior Management Plan (as outlined in the Procedures for Emotional/Behavioral Intervention Guide) the Behavior Management Plan takes the place of this Discipline Policy and should be followed accordingly. For those children who do not have a Behavior Management Plan and continue to have difficulty, document the behaviors and make a referral to your Special Services Specialist, Education Specialist or Site Manager.

***The HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. Child Discipline Policy is posted in each center and in all classrooms.**

Behavior Guidance

The students and teachers establish classroom limits early in the year. Adult authority is established through trust and without threat to the children. The ultimate goal is to give children an opportunity to develop into self-controlled, self-disciplined individuals. The classroom management techniques must be geared toward the age level and individuality of each child.

Teachers give encouragement to children when the child uses appropriate behavior. Encouragement focuses on the process rather than the product. Encouragement helps children to understand their own behaviors and achievements.

Positive redirection is used to guide a child from an inappropriate behavior by providing an alternative action. If a child is hitting, tell the child, "We don't hit our friends at school. You may pound the play dough or punch a pillow."

Time out may be used to defuse a situation in which the child has harmed another child, himself, a teacher or equipment. Time away from the situation gives the child an opportunity to become calm and deal with his/her thoughts and feelings in a safe manner. The time allotted is comparable to the child's age not to exceed five minutes.

*HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. policies do not permit corporal punishment.

Restroom Procedures

The program encourages respect of all children in all activities of the classroom.

a. **Restroom procedures are supervised by adults at all times.** Teachers are to allow children to use the restroom individually or in small groups. Boys and girls do not use toilets at the same time. Children should be encouraged to complete their task and return to the classroom as quickly as possible. Groups of children should not line up waiting to use the toilets.

b. The restroom procedures facilitate personal hygiene and independence. Hand washing, zipping and buttoning independently, flushing, and taking turns allows children to develop their self-help skills. Teachers and parents are encouraged to communicate frequently concerning this developmental learning process.

Continued...

c. If a parent or guardian has a concern (All concerns must be written and signed by the complainant) about teacher (s) taking children to the restroom, a conference will be scheduled with the Parent, Teacher, Site Manager and Associate Head Start Director to address the concern. A plan will be devised to address the concern regarding taking child (children) to the restroom that is sensitive to the needs of the child & family, agency policy, licensing standards and developmentally appropriate practice for children.

Learning Centers

The Head Start classroom provides an environment, which encourages a multitude of learning experiences for young children. Through hands-on-learning, these learning experiences are organized in easily identified learning centers. Child sized equipment allows children independent use of their environment. Learning experiences are planned to meet the individual needs of each child in the class. Individual needs are based on each child's on-going assessment.

The learning centers are:

1. Science
2. Math
3. Library
4. Writing
5. Dramatic Play
6. Music
7. Blocks
8. Art
9. Woodworking
10. Sand/Water Play
11. Computer

In the learning centers, children acquire social, physical, emotional and intellectual skills. Each child is encouraged, but not pushed beyond his or her readiness.

The above centers are incorporated into HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. classrooms.

Writing and Pre-Writing Skills

Before formal writing can take place, a child must be introduced to pre-writing activities that will develop fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination. Pre-writing activities are introduced to children beginning in infancy and through five to six years of age, or when the child has shown a complete readiness for this skill to take place.

There are several activities that should be introduced to children prior to writing. Each activity provides the child with an opportunity to master the skills needed for writing. The following activities help develop a child's ability to write.

1. Finger Painting
2. Tracing
3. Cutting
4. Tearing Paper
5. Scribbling
6. Easel Painting
7. Drawing (creatively, geometric shapes, formal)

Basic Daily Schedule

7:00 a.m.	-	8:30 a.m.	Arrival; Morning Activities, Read Aloud
8:30 a.m.	-	9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m.	-	9:15 a.m.	Thematic Circle
9:15 a.m.	-	10:15 a.m.	Learning Center Activities
10:15 a.m.	-	10:30 a.m.	Small Group
10:30 a.m.	-	11:00 a.m.	Outside/Active Play
11:00 a.m.	-	11:10 a.m.	Cool Down, Transitioning
11:10 a.m.	-	11:35 a.m.	Small Group
11:35 a.m.	-	12:00 a.m.	Language Circle
12:00 a.m.	-	12:30 p.m.	Mealtime
12:30 p.m.	-	2:30 p.m.	Relaxation, Nap
2:30 p.m.	-	3:00 p.m.	Thematic Review/Small Group
3:00 p.m.	-	3:30 p.m.	Snack
3:45 p.m.	-	4:00 p.m.	Read Aloud
4:00 p.m.	-	4:30 p.m.	Outside/Active Play Transitioning
4:30 p.m.	-	5:30 p.m.	P.M. Learning Center Activities

This is a sample schedule. Each teacher must adjust this schedule to fit the needs of the children and center.

Transition should be emphasized less as children should toilet on their own routine. Whole groups should not line up to toilet.

Home Visits and Parent Conferences

The home visit is an opportunity for teachers to visit with each parent in his/her familiar environment. The teacher and parent discuss the child's growth and development. Together they develop strategies, which help the child best meet his/her potential. A review of the child's screening results and on-going assessment are discussed. Together the parent and teacher identify two skill goals and choose activities to encourage development of these skills at home and in the classroom.

Home visits are scheduled twice per year at the home.

During the parent/teacher conference, the teacher and parent will review the child's progress from the ongoing assessment. Together the parent and teacher will develop a plan to encourage specific skill development. Parent concerns and comments are considered. Parents also have an opportunity to respond to evaluation questions about HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. Parents are asked to give information about the child's first experience entering an Early Head Start or a Head Start classroom and are also given an opportunity to request information about transitioning into Kindergarten.

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year at the center.

Tips to Strengthen Child's Skills

Learning should be fun! Children can learn spontaneously if given the freedom to progress at their own pace. Children can easily move from simple to more complex activities. Children's work is their play, the varied experiences of their classroom allow for skill challenge and mastery.

Learning in the home can be implemented by using common household items, homemade items and simple strategies. Listed below are activities you will enjoy with your child to encourage development of the whole child.

Ways That You Can Help!

1. Read to your child daily. Choose from colorful books, homemade books, comic strips or magazines. Check out books from the Library.
2. Make simple puzzles from pictures cut from magazines.
3. Encourage your child to identify geometric shapes.
4. Take time to talk with your child about feelings (sad, happy, angry, etc.).
5. Encourage your child to recognize logos, such as K-Mart, Coca Cola, Burger King, McDonalds, Jack-in-the-Box and other familiar logos.
6. Scribble, color and draw with crayons and pencils on newspaper or brown paper grocery bags or sheets of paper.
7. Allow your child opportunities to tear paper and cut with scissors.
8. Guide your child into understanding the differences in people: those with handicaps; and those whose languages and cultures are different from your own.
9. Take time to visit museums, zoos, parks, shopping malls and libraries.
10. Take nature walks, go on picnics, and tell stories.
11. Count while drying silverware (dishes) or buttoning clothes.

Easing Your Child Into School

Entering a new school or childcare setting may be a time of major change in your child's life. If he/she has been at home or with only one caregiver, a group situation may be very overwhelming at first. Some children make the move with no problems. Some children may need a more gradual start with lots of encouragement at home. There are many things you can do to make the move easier and avoid any anxiety your child may be feeling. Here are a few ideas:

- ◆ -Talk about school each day with your child. Begin this discussion a week or so before he/she is scheduled to start.
- ◆ -Talk briefly to the teacher each morning or afternoon to see how your child is adjusting, and get ideas of what is going on at school. Discuss school activities and routines with your child at home.

MORNING DROP OFF

- ✓ -Leave your child on a happy note each morning. Try to solve any arguments before leaving home.
- ✓ -Plan to spend at least five minutes in the room. Help your child put his/her things in the cubby. Walk him/her to the breakfast area or help him/her get started playing with something.
- ✓ -Give them a big hug, kiss, & a smile as you say goodbye. If you appear nervous, anxious, or tearful children WILL pick this up from your body language and begin to feel nervous themselves.
- ✓ -Always reassure your child that you will be back to pick them up. Young children do not understand time concepts. You will need to relate pick up time to an activity. Check the schedule hanging in the room and tell your child "I will be back to pick you up right after your nap." Or "I will be here to pick you up during afternoon story time."
- ✓ -Always tell your child if someone else will pick them up "Aunt Betty will pick you up today remember. She'll be here during afternoon story. I'll see you at home."
- ✓ -If your child is crying, follow the same routine. You may need to have the teacher come and stay with your child and offer more reassurance as you leave. They are well trained and more than willing to help you with the morning drop off!

Transitions to Kindergarten

Parents frequently ask about the graduation process for children transitioning out of Head Start. At HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc., there are no graduation ceremonies for children leaving the program.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), a strong proponent of developmentally appropriate programs, defines developmental appropriateness as having two dimensions: age and individuality. Programs involving children need to be geared to children's ages and developmental levels as well as to individual differences.

If we, as early childhood educators, have helped your children to feel good about themselves, to feel competent and confident, and to be motivated, then these children will have a better chance of wearing a cap and gown in the future and truly graduating.

Just as your child was allowed to experience a transition into the Head Start program he/she is given opportunity for a gradual transition into Kindergarten. Many activities and some routines change in the later months of the Head Start school year to help the child adjust to elementary school differences. Visits to Kindergarten classrooms are arranged, providing the children with the experience of being inside a school building and a Kindergarten classroom environment. A Transition Coordinator is assigned to each center. This person will assist you in planning for your child's transition to school upon your request.

Classroom Field Trips

Classroom field trips are planned by the classroom teachers providing children opportunities to experience different locations and environments. Some field trips are selected to enhance the thematic topics in the curriculum and others are to have a fun experience as a group including a ride on the bus!

Notice is given to the classroom parents as to where, when, and what time the trip will occur. Parents must give their permission for their child to participate. If permission is not obtained from the parent the child will remain at the center in another classroom. A reminder notice is posted 48 hours prior to the actual trip to remind parents of the away activity.

Children must follow regular dress expectation for the field trip including tennis shoes. Parents may attend field trips and may need to provide their own transportation as determined by each individual situation.

Celebrations & Multicultural Applications

Celebrations

Celebrating holidays is a great way to share with children the different customs and traditions, which people have throughout the classroom, community and the world. We are fortunate at HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. to have the opportunity to work in an environment rich with diverse cultures and traditions. However, sometimes we, as a society, tend to place too much focus on the common and commercial aspects of holidays. Most often this limited focus causes us to celebrate/explore only those holidays the children are most familiar with.

Head Start staff and teachers are encouraged to incorporate NEW learning experiences during holiday and celebration times. As parents, we look to you for any additional information you may offer about your cultural background and customs.

Please note **holiday inclusion** (i.e., Valentine's Day, Easter, Halloween, etc.) in classroom activities is **limited to one day**. Thanksgiving holiday activities will be **limited to the three days prior to the Thanksgiving Day**. For the month of December, holiday celebrations are **limited to the week prior to December vacation**.

Multicultural Applications

The cultural diversity represented among the students and families of HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. should be acknowledged and respected in all aspects of the classroom. All teaching materials (i.e., books, pictures, props, dress-up clothes, etc.) should reflect the actual cultures represented in the classroom and community.

It is important to remember that multicultural concepts should be incorporated into the classroom's learning environment throughout the school year. Multicultural concepts should be practiced everyday in the classroom.

NAEYC-Accreditation

HEAD START of Greater Dallas, Inc. has a goal of having all centers accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The accreditation process is a self-study of the existing program. Improvement of the Head Start program directly involves input and reflection by the center staff and parents. During this process, the program demonstrates its commitment to providing high quality early childhood education. Head Start centers will participate in a self-study to renew its accreditation as required.

Pet Procedures

These procedures are designed to provide specific guidelines for enjoying animals in our classrooms & on field trips. Please follow ALL of these procedures which are based on *Minimum Standards for Licensed Child Care Centers #746.3901, #746.3903 & #746.3905(TX DPRS)*.

Children should wash their hands before and after touching an animal or handling any items used by the animals such as water bowls, food bowls, toys and cages

Animals providing ADA accommodations for a person with disabilities are welcome in all Head Start centers.

Post information about any animal's visit 48 hours before the animal comes to the center where all parents will be aware. Some children may be allergic to animals. Written permission is to be obtained from the parent/guardian of each child in the class before the animal comes to the center.

Any type of domestic animal such as birds, cats, dogs will be required to be fully immunized to have any contact with children. Animals visiting should bring proof of rabies immunization to be displayed for parent information the entire day of the visit. All centers should keep documentation of vaccinations for animals on the center premises.

Any small animals such as fish, crabs or rodents require no immunization documentation

Children may not have contact with any kind of reptiles in classroom settings due to the risk for salmonella infections. Reptiles (snakes, turtles, lizards, iguanas, and amphibians, such as frogs & toads) may visit the classroom for a defined period of time, if the reptile remains in an enclosure that is inaccessible to the children and the children have no physical contact at any time with the reptile.

Petting farms may be allowed at Head Start of Greater Dallas facilities/ and or field trips to petting farms will be allowed with the exception that children will not have physical contact with chickens, ducks, geese, or other farm fowl in an effort to limit exposure to serious infectious diseases that may be carried by these birds. Written permission should be obtained from each child's parent/guardian before the child may participate in this activity. Children should wash their hands before and after petting any farm animal.



Parent and Community Suggestions for Curriculum Development

To the Parent or Community Member:

Parents and community members are an important part of the educational process, including curriculum development. Classroom activities such as lesson plans, Thematic Guide, circle time activities and daily schedule are an important part of our ongoing curriculum. If you wish to offer ideas or suggestions for improvement in these areas please complete this form and send it to the Education Services Director, Head Start of Greater Dallas, Inc., 3954 Gannon Lane, Dallas, Texas 75237-2919. Your suggestions will be considered during curriculum development and revision. You may also discuss your concerns with the Head Start Center staff at any time. Your interest and contributions are appreciated.

Subject Area _____ Center _____

What curriculum change do you suggest?

What do you think should be taken out of the curriculum?

What do you think should be added to the curriculum?

Add any other information or comments.

Name (Optional) _____

Phone _____

Address _____

City _____

Zip

Code _____

*You may e-mail to kmccartney@hsgd.org or give to your center Education Specialist.

SAFETY TIPS FOR CHILDREN

Head Start of Greater Dallas provides transportation for field trips. Parents should help their children become aware of some basic safety procedures to help reinforce practices the children learn at school. Please go over this information with your children as early in the school year as possible.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR BOARDING THE BUS:

Wait for the bus to stop. Line up single file and wait for the driver to signal you to approach the bus. Don't push or shove. Wait your turn. Always use the handrail. This could save you from falling off the steps and into the street. Make sure you watch where you are stepping.

Once you are on the bus, sit down immediately. If you are standing in the aisle when the bus starts, you could lose your balance and fall, hurting yourself and others.

SAFE RIDING PRACTICES:

Passengers should be secured in the child restraint seats when they get on the bus and remain seated while the bus is in motion.

All books, bags and other student items should be kept out of the bus aisles.

Students should treat their fellow passengers and the bus driver with respect.

When you are traveling on the bus, be quiet. Noisy children may distract the bus driver. You may talk quietly with the people near you, but do not yell.

If the bus driver lets you open the windows, do not throw anything out. Keep your head and arms inside. Anything close to the road could easily hurt someone who is leaning out of the bus.

The bus driver knows the safety rules and is there to help you. Always obey the bus driver.

SAFETY PROCEDURES FOR EXITING THE VEHICLE:

Don't push or shove while getting off. When you stop at school, let your classmates in the front of the bus exit first.

A driver cannot see near the back tires on either side of the bus, right in front of the bus or close to the sides. **Move away from the bus where the driver can see you.**

DANGER ZONES AROUND THE VEHICLE:

- The DANGER ZONE is 10 feet in front of, behind, and on each side of the school bus. This is five "GIANT STEPS" for your young passengers.
- IN FRONT OF THE BUS: children should always cross at least 10 feet in front of the bus. Tell your children that they should be far enough away from the bus that they can see the drivers face—they need to see the driver so the driver can see them.
- BEHIND THE BUS: Children should NEVER cross behind a bus because the driver will not be able to see them. This is one of the reasons drivers should never back your bus unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Children should not stand "HANG OUT" near the bus when it is parked—they should always be at least 10 feet away when they are not immediately entering or exiting the bus.

Help keep your children safe by making sure they know how to behave on the bus and by fostering respect for bus drivers. **Go over the safety rules** with them. If you begin safety education at home, your children will have a better chance at being safe when they're away from you.

Teach Kids to be Wise Walkers

Find ways to practice pedestrian safety with your children during your day-to-day activities - while playing, on walks to school, in parking lots, etc. Ask your children to be on the lookout for unsafe behaviors by other children, or even grown-ups (riding without a helmet, jaywalking, etc.). Remember to make it fun. Here are some basic street-crossing rules:

- **Children under age 10 should never cross a street without a grown-up.**
- When crossing the street, stop at the curb or edge of the road.
- Look left, then right, then left again for moving cars before crossing.
- Keep looking left and right until you are safely across the street.



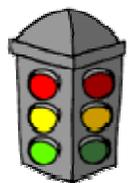
Now that you have the basics, practice stopping at the curb or edge of the road with your children. Draw a line on the sidewalk about 4" from the curb with chalk. Explain to children that the line is where they have to put on their "brakes" and STOP. Practice walking up to the line and saying "STOP" together. After practicing a couple of times, remove the chalk line and repeat the activity. While practicing, make sure your children become familiar with the sound of moving cars.

To make sure your children understand this activity, try throwing a ball into the street when there is **no traffic nearby**; see if your children stop at the curb. **Children should be supervised at all times during this exercise.** If they don't stop at the curb, repeat the activity.



If you live in an area with traffic signals, have your children push the button to stop traffic before crossing the street, using the crosswalk. Have your child watch the traffic signal and tell you when the "walk" sign is illuminated. Together, look left, right and left again to make sure traffic has stopped and cross the street together holding hands. Ask your children to read the letters in the "DON'T WALK" and "WALK" signs. Explain that "WALK" means that you can start out into the street. A flashing "DON'T WALK" sign means you can finish crossing the street if you're already in the road - but not to start crossing if you're still at the curb.

When the light turns green in the direction you're crossing, it **MAY** be time for you to cross the street. However, often there is a left green arrow in the lanes facing you, which means those cars have the right-of-way. If you're not careful, they'll left-turn into you. Usually, the "WALK" light is delayed until that left arrow turns red.



When you're in a crosswalk approaching the other side of the street, watch out for cars turning right on red. Often they're looking to the right, and you'll be coming from their left side - they may not see you.