**Sample Tobacco Free Policy**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Head Start Center

1. PURPOSE AND GOALS

INTENT. All students shall possess the knowledge and skills necessary to avoid all tobacco use, and Head Start center directors, teachers, and other staff shall actively discourage all use of tobacco products by co-workers, parents, and visitors. To achieve these ends, Head Start agency directors shall prepare, adopt, and implement a comprehensive plan to prevent tobacco use that includes:

* establishment and strict enforcement of a completely tobacco-free Head Start environment at all times;
* prohibition of tobacco advertising on Head Start premises;
* appropriate counseling services and/or referrals for Head Start staff and families to help them overcome tobacco addiction;
* cooperation with community-wide efforts to prevent tobacco use; and
* strategies to involve Head Start families in program development and implementation.

RATIONALE. Cigarette smoking is considered the chief preventable cause of premature disease and death in the United States. Head Start centers have a responsibility to help prevent tobacco use for the sake of students' and staff members' health and the well-being of their families. Research conclusively proves that:

* regular use of tobacco is ultimately harmful to every user's health, directly causing cancer, respiratory and cardiovascular diseases, adverse pregnancy outcomes, and premature death;
* second-hand smoke is a threat to the personal health of everyone, especially persons with asthma and other respiratory problems;
* nicotine is a powerfully addictive substance;
* tobacco use most often begins during childhood or adolescence;
* the younger a person starts using tobacco, the more likely he or she will be a heavy user as an adult; and
* many young tobacco users will die an early, preventable death because of their decision to use tobacco.

Additional reasons why schools need to strongly discourage tobacco use are that:

* the purchase and possession of tobacco products is illegal for persons under age 18 in the State of Indiana;
* use of tobacco or exposure to secondhand smoke interferes with students' health, attendance, and learning ability;
* smoking is a fire safety issue for schools; and
* use of spit tobacco is a health and sanitation issue.

DEFINITION. For the purposes of this policy "tobacco" is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product, e-cigarettes and electronic nicotine delivery devices, and spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, and snuff, in any form.

1. TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENTS

TOBACCO USE PROHIBITED. No Head Start student, staff member, or school visitor is permitted to smoke, inhale, dip, or chew tobacco or nicotine at any time, including non-school hours:

* in any building, facility, or vehicle owned, leased, rented, or chartered by the Head Start center/Head Start regional agency;
* on school grounds, parking lots; or
* at any Head Start -sponsored event off campus (ex, field trips).

Further, no student is permitted to possess a tobacco product. The provisions of existing policies that address the use and possession of drugs shall apply to all tobacco products.

TOBACCO PROMOTION. Tobacco promotional items, including clothing, bags, lighters, and other personal articles, are not permitted on Head Start grounds, in Head Start vehicles, or at events related to or organized by Head Start. Tobacco advertising is prohibited in all Head Start publications and at all Head Start events.

NOTICE. The Head Start agency director/other shall notify students, families, education personnel, and school visitors of the tobacco-free policy in handbooks and newsletters, on posted notices or signs at every Head Start center entrance and other appropriate locations, and by other efficient means. To the extent possible, Head Start will make use of local media to publicize the policies and help influence community norms about tobacco use.

ENFORCEMENT.  It is the responsibility of all Head Start employees, parents, and visitors to enforce this policy through verbal admonition. Students and employees also may be subject to germane sanctions as determined by written school policy, including disciplinary action.

1. ASSISTANCE TO OVERCOME TOBACCO ADDICTION

PROGRAM AVAILABILITY. The Head Start health program shall include referrals to community resources and programs to help staff and parents overcome tobacco addiction in addition to utilizing the resources available through “Breathe: Healthy Steps to Living Tobacco Free”, the Indiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-Quit Now) and the EPA.

Adopted and approved by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_.  This policy is effective upon adoption.