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### **What is Head Start?**

Head Start is a free, federally-funded comprehensive early childhood program for children, ages three to five, and their families. Head Start serves children within the context of their families and communities. Head Start provides group and individual activities for young children that will help them learn, grow and succeed. BBNA Head Start Center based programs operate four days a week, for four hours a day in the communities of Dillingham, New Stuyahok, Manokotak and Togiak.

### **Who can go to Head Start?**

Children who are at least three years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year and are not yet old enough for kindergarten and whose family income is at or below the Alaska poverty income guideline are eligible. Children in foster care and homeless children are also eligible, regardless of family income. BBNA Head Start can accept up to 49 percent of its total enrollment of children whose family income exceeds the Alaska poverty income guidelines. Even if you know you are over income guidelines please submit your application. Head Start collaborates with local school districts to provide specialized services for children with disabilities.

### **What does Head Start offer?**

We provide quality early childhood education, health and family support services for all families enrolled. Our classes offer activities and play opportunities for children that will help them develop mentally, socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. We acknowledge parents as their child's first teacher and encourage their involvement in all aspects of our program. Parents have regular opportunities to meet with staff as well as other parents. Our family services component offers opportunities for families to develop social support networks.

### **What do I do first?**

An application and income guidelines are enclosed in this packet. Please fill out the application completely and turn it in to your local family liaison or Head Start Center, or fax it to the central office along with proof of your family income (this can be the current year's taxes or a recent pay stub) and your child's current immunizations.

### **What happens after I turn in my application?**

Once we receive your completed application, proof of income and a copy of your child's immunizations, applications are reviewed for eligibility based on criteria established by the Policy Council. We will contact you when your child has been accepted. If your child is not selected his/her application will remain on the list for any future openings.