CARES Act Gives Additional Funding for Head Start Program

SENCA Head Start will receive $132,700 through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. These funds will support Head Start services to low-income children under the age of 5 in Nemaha, Otoe, Pawnee, and Richardson counties.

Nationally, $750 million has been designated for Head Start programs to support preventative, preparedness, and response activities related to the coronavirus through the CARES Act. To support low-income children who have experienced a disruption of services during this time, SENCA Head Start will use these funds to prepare staff, children, and facilities for reopening in late August. This funding will also allow for the program to implement procedures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and prepare for remote learning should another closure be required. Funds will be released directly to all 1,600 local Head Start and Early Head Start programs, including tribal programs, in every state and territory beginning this week.

"President Trump has secured more than $6 billion in funding to help supplement human services during this crisis," said U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar. "This $750 million for Head Start will help ensure that children and families who rely on the program continue receiving services like meals, health screenings, and pre-K education where possible. As we move toward safely reopening, it only grows more important that we support vulnerable families and children whose lives have been disrupted by the virus and its economic effects."

"We know that investing in programs that use a whole family approach to learning and development can be pivotal to the success of children and families," said Lynn Johnson, assistant secretary for the Administration for Children and Families. "During this pandemic, it is important to support programs that enrich and enlighten children, families, and communities as they work towards their goals and make concentrated efforts to improve their future post the pandemic."

The SENCA Head Start program is using the CARES Act funding to resume services. "To safely resume Head Start services, we are having all facilities and vehicles cleaned, disinfected, and sanitized, and purchasing necessary personal protective equipment (PPE) and cleaning supplies. Staff will also return to work well-ahead of the children to ensure everyone is trained on trauma-informed care to better assist children and families in their return to school. Funding will also be utilized to invest in technology upgrades and child learning supplies to prepare for future remoting learning, in the event another closure must take place. We are excited of our children, families, and staff to return to school this fall and we are preparing for this to be a safe and healthy return for all. The health and safety of each child in our care is our highest priority." said Angie Antholz, SENCA Head Start Director.

Learn more about SENCA Head Start at www.senca.org. Follow us on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/Senca1/.

SENCA Head Start is currently recruiting children and families for fall enrollment. Contact us at 402-862-2411 or toll free at 888-313-5608.

Find additional information about Head Start programming specific to this public health crisis on the Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center website: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/coronavirus