



## **Cortland County Community Action Program, Inc. (CAPCO)**

32 North Main Street ❖ Cortland, NY 13045

Phone: (607) 753-6781 ❖ Fax: (607) 758-3620 ❖ [www.capco.org](http://www.capco.org)

Head Start ❖ Early Head Start ❖ Energy Services ❖ WIC ❖ Consumer Directed Personal Assistance ❖ Family Development

### **HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START PROGRAM OF CORTLAND COUNTY**

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All employees and volunteers shall receive orientation and training concerning confidentiality.

#### **Philosophy:**

All information CAPCO Head Start staff and volunteers learn about families is confidential. It shall NOT be shared outside CAPCO. When approaching issues of confidentiality, you need to apply common logic and respect for the family involved. The simple rule-of-thumb is to ask, "Who needs to know this information to assist this family?"

#### **What Information is Private?**

All information held by the agency, whether gathered informally or formally, is protected. This includes medical history, family status, financial information, and other personal data. As a general rule, all information gathered in the intake process should be strictly confidential.

The CAPCO Head Start Program respects the confidentiality of all families within the program. Our policy is as follows:

1. All family information is handled as a private matter. The information is shared only with Head Start staff for the well-being of the child and the family.
2. Information will only be released to other agencies or identified individuals by written permission of the parent or guardian of the child.
3. Information will be shared with both parents even if one is absent from home unless:
  - a. There is a court order of protection so the parent cannot have contact with the child.
  - b. There is a custody order stating NO visitation with the child.
  - c. There is a custody order stating ONLY supervised visits with the child.
4. Step-parents and Grandparents have NO rights to information about the child without written authorization by the natural parent.
5. Foster parents should have a letter from the Department of Social Services

**The highest standards of confidentiality are maintained by adhering to the guidelines and using common sense.**

Policy Council Approval Date: August 3, 2000

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Staff Signature/Date

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Supervisor Signature/Date