



Grin & Grow, LTD

## Parent Handbook

[www.growingmindsearlylearningcenter.org](http://www.growingmindsearlylearningcenter.org)

319-236-2063

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## **Welcome to Growing Minds Early Learning Center!**

As our name implies, we are interested in providing a positive environment where your child can grow socially, intellectually, emotionally and physically. This handbook is designed to acquaint you with Growing Mind's philosophy, policies and procedures.

Growing Minds is a private, non-profit child care center founded in 1943 by the Junior League of Waterloo-Cedar Falls. Originally intended as a nursery for the children of women working in the local plants during World War II, it continued to provide child care services to working parents after the war under the Junior League until incorporating under the name of Grin & Grow Ltd as a self-standing child care agency.

### **Mission, Philosophy and Goals of Growing Minds**

The mission of Growing Minds is to provide a safe, nurturing, quality early childhood education program to a diverse population regardless of income.

By providing high quality, affordable child care services, Growing Minds is able to provide a valuable support service to parents, while at the same time helping your child acquire the developmental skills needed to be successful in school and later in life.

Growing Minds seeks to help in your efforts to raise your child by acting as an extension of the family. Parents are always welcome; feel free to visit any time to see how your child's day is going or to evaluate our services.

At Growing Minds we are committed to the following goals:

- To provide you with affordable infant through preschool-aged child care.
- To provide a safe, nurturing and supportive environment for your child.
- To promote your child's social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth and development.
- To provide your child with an educational environment that is developmentally appropriate to their age, addresses individual needs, and allows your child to develop at his/her own rate.
- To promote the elimination of racism, sexism, and child abuse.
- To provide your child with positive experiences that celebrates diversity.
- To provide opportunities for parents to enhance their individual parenting skills.
- To promote community education and outreach on child care, parenting skills, and other issues in early childhood education that affects both you and your child.

### **Commitment to Diversity**

Tolerance and understanding are fostered by positive exposure to various ages, genders, lifestyles, family structures, races, cultures, religions, and physical abilities. Therefore, we emphasize an environment that welcomes diversity and challenges bias and discrimination.

## I. Program Information

Growing Minds provides early childhood education and child care services at: 608 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Waterloo, Iowa.

### Child Care Services Program

We provide full day, full year services for children between the ages of 6 weeks to Kindergarten. The program can also accommodate part-time and half-day enrollments upon space availability.

Children enrolled under our General Child Care Services Program are enrolled into classrooms based upon their age and developmental abilities. Preschool classrooms are led by teachers with degrees in Early Childhood Education, Child Development or related fields. All classrooms adhere to state regulations regarding the number of staff to children ratios. All classroom teachers are trained in First Aid and CPR, and are screened through the Iowa Department of Humans Services and the FBI for child abuse or other convictions prohibiting their employment in a child care setting.

Classrooms are set up in the following structure:

Infant's Classroom	1 Teacher for 4 Children	Capacity for 5
Toddler's Classroom	1 Teacher for 4 Children	Capacity for 12
2's Classroom	1 Teacher for 6 Children	Capacity for 12
3's Classroom	1 Teacher for 8 Children	Capacity for 16
3/4's Classroom	1 Teacher for 12 Children	Capacity for 24
4/5's Classroom	1 Teacher for 8 Children	Capacity for 23

Tuition fees are based upon the number of "units of care" your child receives in a day. A unit of care is a 5-hour block of time. Children will be charged 1 unit of care for the first 5 hours of service, and 2 units of care for anything over 5 hours.

Parents are expected to notify the center by 9:00 am on any day that your child is scheduled to attend but will be absent. Notification is needed so the center can adjust staffing patterns and food service for the day.

### Child and Adult Food Program

Growing Minds is a participating agency of the USDA's Child and Adult Food Program, which is administered by the Iowa Department of Education. As a participating agency in the Child and Adult Food Program, Growing Minds abides by the following nondiscrimination policies:

- In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of civil rights, 1400 Independence Avenue. S.W., Washington D.C. 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY).
- It is the policy of this CNP provider not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, gender, disability, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code sections 216.7 and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to

compliance with this policy by this CNP Provider, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; web site: [Http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html](http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html).

- For more information about other scholarship opportunities, please visit the center office.

## **II. Enrollment Information**

To enroll a child at Growing Minds, the following materials must be completed at least one day prior to starting:

- Family Information form
- Emergency/Medical forms
- Current physical of child
- Current Immunization record
- Emergency Authorization form
- CACFP application.
- Current Physical of Child
- Current Immunization Record of Child
- Emergency/Medical Forms
- Enrollment Agreement Form
- Face Sheet
- Family Information Form
- Individual Authorized To Receive My Child Form
- Iowa Eligibility Application (for the Food Program)
- Tuition Agreement

This information is required by state Child Care Licensing regulations for all children enrolled in child care.

### **Immunization and Physical Requirements**

State law requires that all children enrolled in child care have current immunization records on file with the center. State regulations also require that all children enrolled have an annual physical on file. Parents are asked to provide proof of immunizations and a current physical at the time of enrollment. Failure to provide the required immunization or physical health data will result in the child's exclusion from child care services. Physical and immunization information are required to be updated annually.

### **Accommodations**

Growing Minds seeks to provide an early childhood environment that promotes every child's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development. If your child has a developmental condition, an assessment will be conducted to determine what program accommodations are required to provide the requested child care services. A parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss the plan for a more official evaluation from the Central Rivers Area Education Agency. In cases where it is determined that such accommodation is beyond the scope and means of the

agency to provide, assistance will be given in referring your child to an alternative early childhood service.

Dietary, religious, or cultural accommodations will be observed as part of your child's experience at Growing Minds. Such requests for accommodations should be submitted in writing at the time of enrollment so appropriate accommodations can be made. Some dietary accommodations may require a physician's statement when in conflict with state requirements.

We also provide accommodations to parents and guardians. If you need assistance reading Growing Minds documents or translation services, please let the office know. Growing Minds is able to access other organizations to assist you with understanding our written and verbal communication.

### **Days and Hours of Operation**

Growing Minds is open Monday through Friday, 6:00 am to 5:30 pm on a year-round basis, but is closed for holidays, winter break, and inclement weather. Children cannot be received for care before 6:00 am due to licensing regulations. Parents must ensure that their child has been picked up from the center by the 5:30 pm closing time. Failure to do so will result in late fees and/or termination of your child's enrollment (please see III. Financial Information for more details).

### **Staff to Child Ratio**

Growing Minds complies with state licensing regulations regarding the number of staff present in each classroom.

- 1 staff person is present for every four infants and toddlers
- 1 staff person is present for every six 2 year-olds
- 1 staff person is present for every eight 3 year-olds
- 1 staff person is present for every twelve 4 or 5 year-olds

### **Snow Days – Severe Weather Closures**

During severe weather, Growing Minds will notify KWWL by 5:30 am about a closure of the centers. In cases of early dismissal, Growing Minds will notify KWWL. Parents are urged to watch KWWL on television for updates or install the KWWL app on their cellular telephone. We will also post this information on the Brightwheel app and on Facebook.

### **Holiday Closure**

Growing Minds is closed on the following holidays:

- Memorial Day
- July 4<sup>th</sup> (Independence Day)
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving (both Thursday and Friday)
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Once or twice a year Growing Minds will be closed for a Teacher In-Service day. Parents will be notified when this is scheduled.

### **Winter Break Closure**

Growing Minds is closed for the Winter Break period between Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

### **Illness and Absence Policy:**

If your child is running a fever of 100 degrees or more, is vomiting, has diarrhea, or has an infectious condition you are required to make alternate arrangements for your child's care until they are well. Ill children with these symptoms are highly contagious and can easily infect other children in the classroom. If your child is displaying these symptoms in the classroom, he or she will be sent home to reduce further risk of infection to the other children. Your child is not able to attend the next day if they are sent home. Your child must be symptom-free to return to the center. A certificate of health signed by a doctor may be required before a child may re-enter after any lengthy or serious communicable disease or illness.

If an illness or situation prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities or creates a greater need for care than staff are able to provide without compromising the health and safety of other children, or if a child's condition is suspected to be contagious and requires exclusion as identified by the above symptoms, the child is made comfortable in a quiet location where she or he can be separated from the general classroom activities but remain supervised by a familiar caregiver. If the child is suspected of having a contagious condition you will be notified to arrange alternative care. Parents are expected to pick their child up promptly within one hour if contacted to remove their child.

If your child has been diagnosed as having a contagious condition, please contact the center so that we can notify other parents of the exposure and alert them to watch for similar symptoms in their child. In cases where your child has been exposed to a contagious condition, medical notices will be posted in the center and alerts will be sent home describing the nature of exposure, symptoms to watch for, and action needed for treatment.

Growing Minds maintains regular contact with the Black Hawk County Department of Health and with the Child Care Nurse Consultants for Child Care Resource and Referral Program. Health information regarding seasonal or other health outbreaks or updates in treatment or applicable immunization and health requirements for children will be shared with you.

Growing Minds maintains a "No-Nit" policy with regards to head lice. Children with live head lice or with nit casings in their hair will be excluded from the center until the hair has been treated and is nit free.

### **Client Confidentiality**

All information concerning your child or your family is confidential and will not be released outside of the agency without your signed consent of release.



## Brightwheel App

Upon enrollment, you will receive an invite via email or text to set up your Brightwheel account. Through the app, you can communicate with your child's teacher or administration via messaging, as well as pay tuition and receive your child's daily report.

- Create a free Brightwheel account. When you receive an invitation via email or text, please create a free parent account using either the website or mobile app. Make sure to use the same email address or cell phone number that the invitation was sent to.
- Confirm your child's profile. You will see your child's profile after you create an account - you can confirm information such as birthdays, allergies, and additional contacts. If you do not see your child's profile, please contact us with the email address or phone number you used to sign up. You will not see updates within Brightwheel until we start to use it regularly.
- Set your account preferences. You can adjust your notification preferences within your profile settings on the app.

## III. Financial Information

### Parent Fees/Payment Expectations

Growing Minds will strive to provide a nurturing, educational experience that enables your child to acquire the developmental skills needed to be successful in school. In order to provide this environment, we depend upon regular payments for the care that we provide.

The following is a list of expectations regarding payment on your child's account.

- You will be billed weekly for the previous week's charges. Payment is expected to keep the account current. Payment on your account is expected with each paycheck. When payment on your account is past due you will need to meet with the center office to set up a payment plan. Failure to meet these payment requirements may result in suspension of the child.
- Our daily unit is equal to 5 hours of care. If your child is in attendance for more than 5 hours, you will be charged a second unit. If your child is in attendance for more than 10 hours, you will be charged a third unit. If your child participates in one of our Scholarship Programs or your child receives assistance through the state, the unit of service you are billed for will be determined by the rules of that funding source.
- Parents are expected to notify the center by 9 am on any day that your child is scheduled to attend but will be absent.
- **Your child must attend a minimum of 4 units a week.** Enrollment of a student can be terminated due to non-attendance, inconsistent attendance, or excessive tardiness. If your child does not meet the attendance requirement, you will be charged for the absences.
- If we send your child home due to illness, your child is not able to attend the next day. We will not charge you for the following day's absence.

- To assist you with tuition, parents will have 10 No Charge Days that can be used as sick days or vacation days every year. A year will begin on August 1 and end on July 31.
- Children not attending Growing Minds during the summer will be billed \$75 per child, per month in order to hold the child's spot at the center.
- There will be a \$10 fee on all canceled checks.

### **Receipts and Tax Statements**

Receipts for payment on your child care account will be given during the year as payments are received. An itemized statement of child care payments received during the calendar year is available upon request after January 1. Parents requiring an itemized statement are asked to submit their request at least one week in advance.

### **Late Pick Up Fee**

It is a parent's responsibility to ensure that their child is picked up from the center by closing time. Parents are required to notify the center if they will be late.

In addition, if a child is not picked up by 6:00 pm, you will be charged a late fee.

- A late fee of \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes and \$20 for every 15 minutes after that will be charged to the family for any children remaining after closing time.

When no contact has been received from the parent and we are unable to make contact with any of the alternative or emergency contacts listed in your child's file, we will contact the appropriate authorities for assistance.

### **Fundraising Policy**

Growing Minds strives to keep child care costs at the lowest possible rate that we can offer. To do this, we depend upon periodic fundraising activities to raise additional dollars for the classroom. Through such events we are able to purchase classroom supplies or provide tuition scholarships without passing their costs on to you in the form of higher child care rates. Please help us in our efforts when you receive notices about fundraising events held at the center.

# Classroom Environment

## Supervision

The care and safety of children at Growing Minds Early Learning Center begins with the adequate supervision of children assigned to your care. Staff should position themselves in the classroom, on the playground, or on field trips so as to maintain line-of-sight supervision. When line-of-sight is not directly possible due to the size of the space, obstruction of view by equipment or furnishing, or on the playground for example, staff should position themselves so that the activity area is divided into sections or quadrants that allow line-of-sight supervision of the children by a staff member stationed within that section or quadrant space appropriately. Supervision of children by sound for short periods of time is permissible, when a child is toileting for example, and not directly visible. Children out of sight at these times however should be visually checked frequently to ensure their safety and well-being, as well as to assure that the bathroom is being used appropriately. No child shall be supervised by sound only for more than 5 minutes at any given time.

### 1. Description of active supervision in various situations

(Citation: Head Start, <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/safety-practices/article/active-supervision>)

Active supervision promotes a safe environment and prevents injuries in young children. It requires focused attention and intentional observation at all times. Staff use active supervision strategies to make sure children of all ages explore their environments safely. Each program can keep children safe by teaching all staff how to look, listen, and engage.

All staff and volunteers are responsible for making sure no child is left unsupervised. Active supervision is a strategy that works. It can be used in classrooms, family child care, playgrounds, and buses. It can also be shared with families as a tool to use at home.

### Strategies to Put Active Supervision in Place

The following strategies allow children to explore their environments safely. Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers must be directly supervised at all times ([45 CFR §1302.47](#)). This includes during daily routines such as sleeping, eating, and diapering or bathroom use.

### Set Up the Environment

Staff should set up the environment so they can supervise children and always have access to them. Grouping activities together and making sure furniture is at waist height or shorter allows adults to see and hear children. Small spaces should be free of clutter, and big spaces should have clear play spaces for children that staff can observe.

## **Position Staff**

Staff should carefully plan where they will position themselves to protect children from harm. This includes positioning themselves to see and hear all children in their care. Staff should make sure there are clear paths to where children are playing, sleeping, and eating. This allows staff to react quickly when necessary and stay close to children who may need additional support.

## **Scan and Count**

Staff should always be able to account for the children in their care. They continuously scan the entire environment to know where everyone is and what they are doing. They also count the children frequently. This is especially important during transitions when children are moving from one location to another.

## **Listen**

Specific sounds or the absence of them may be cause for concern. Staff who listen closely to children can quickly identify signs of potential danger. Programs that plan systemically are better able to implement additional strategies to safeguard children. For example, adding bells to doors help alert staff when a child leaves or enters the room.

## **Anticipate Children's Behavior**

Staff should use what they know about each child's interests and skills to predict what the child will do next. They can create challenges that children are ready for and support them in succeeding. Staff should also be aware of changes in a child's mood and anticipate when a child may wander off, get upset, or take a dangerous risk. Information from the daily health check (e.g., illness, allergies, lack of sleep or food) can inform staff observations and help predict children's behavior. Staff who know what to expect are better able to protect children from harm.

## **Engage and Redirect**

Staff should offer support by using what they know about each child's individual needs and development. Staff can encourage children to solve problems on their own and help them develop solutions if needed. They can also offer different levels of assistance or redirection depending on each child's needs.

### **A. Play/Classroom**

Staff assigned to rooms caring for infants and toddlers/twos shall position themselves so that they can hear and see sleeping children for whom they are responsible for, especially when actively engaged with other children who are awake.

When children are identified with specific behavioral issues (e.g., biting), staff should position themselves in a manner to keep themselves within arms reach of the child (the

biter) in order to supervise the children at play and to be able to intervene quickly should the child attempt to bite another child.

Adequate staff-to-child ratios shall be maintained at all times.

All classrooms monitor attendance by updating their attendance records throughout the day and counting and matching the numbers of children present with names on attendance records. "Name to Face" headcounts occur throughout the day, particularly when moving about the center at every threshold.

During Indoor and Outdoor Water play staff will use Touch Supervision. Meaning they are next to the children at all times. Ratio for water play will be no more than 4:1 at the water table and for outdoor water play staff will meet the appropriate ratio for each classroom and spaced appropriately for the safety of children.

## **B. Outdoor time Supervision**

Because outdoor play is active, children will usually need more supervision outdoors. Adult-child ratios must be followed at all times. You should also be able to contact another adult for help if needed without leaving the children. A walkie-talkie or approved cell phone (used only in emergencies) is an excellent tool for such a situation.

Playground design is an important part of supervision. The playground equipment should be organized so adults can see all children at all times. There should be no blind spots, such as tunnels around corners, large stones children can hide behind, or enclosed structures.

Playground equipment often cannot be easily changed. Adults still have a tool at their disposal: location. Teams should work together to identify "hot spots" where children usually need assistance or where adults have a hard time seeing children. Adults should stand strategically so they can supervise all areas. This means adults will not stand or sit together on the playground. Adults should be spread out, watching, listening, and interacting positively with children. Be wary, however, of having long discussions or intense play with a child or small group of children while supervising a zone. It is difficult to supervise all children while engaged with a group. Consider assigning certain adults to supervision and other adults to play and conversation.

## **C. Basic Care Routines- Under direct supervision of staff:**

- Children wash hands upon entering rooms, before and after meals and after diapering/potty.
- Children wash hands after sand/water table and after outside/large motor activities

- Children are either taken to the restroom and/or diaper change every 2 hours per HHS regulations.
- During all transitions both in classrooms and outside, staff will conduct a head count of each child.
- Staff will conduct head counts before, during, and after fire & tornado drills.
- Staff will conduct head counts before, during, and after field trips.
- Under direct supervision of the Center Director, Program Coordinator, or Classroom staff children are given 1 on 1 time when a child needs more attention during behavioral concerns where a child is needing safe re-direction.

#### **D. Transitions**

In well-organized classrooms, children and adults move efficiently from one activity or routine to another. Children make many transitions every day in their early childhood classrooms. Every classroom has its own schedule of activities. Regardless, the children move from activity to activity; from circle time to the interest areas to the playground and back inside to use the bathroom, wash hands, then eat at the snack table, and regroup again for story time or music, and on and on. Transitions can be stressful. Children may spend too much time waiting. And problem behaviors often occur during transitions. But there are ways to make transitions go more smoothly, and even ways to make them learning opportunities.

To help plan for better transitions, it can be helpful to think about what to do before the transition, during the transition, and following the transition. Here are a few things to think about before the transition.

Lead Teachers are to:

- Plan a daily schedule of activities that minimizes the number of transitions the children need to make, particularly the number of transitions in which all of the children have to do the same thing at the same time. And include the transition plan in classroom schedule.
- Plan ahead so that the adults in the room know their role during the transitions.
- Plan and prepare cues, including visual supports, that help children understand what's expected during the transition.

**E. Time away from program** (Citation: [www.virtuallabschool.org/tpd/understanding-your-role-active-supervision#](http://www.virtuallabschool.org/tpd/understanding-your-role-active-supervision#))

- **Do your research.** All trips should be planned as part of your overall curriculum. However, you should ensure a field trip is necessary: is it possible or more appropriate to bring the experiences to the center? Once you decide on a field trip, visit the location first. Make sure the location is safe and age appropriate. Decide on your route and mode of transportation (walking, buses, etc.). Identify emergency resources at the destination.
- **Know your ratios.** Always maintain the appropriate adult-to-child ratios. When on a field trip, it is best practice to have additional adults along for safety and security. Be sure to make group assignments, so all adults know who they are responsible for, and children have a consistent adult for guidance.
- **Stand out.** Make sure you will be able to identify the children in your group quickly. Use a sticker with the program name and contact information of your program. The child's name should never be used. Provide children and staff with matching T-shirts or hats to wear on the field trip.
- **Review safety rules.** Program professionals and volunteers should meet to review the safety rules, regulations, and procedures. Make sure children know and understand how to be safe on trips outside the building. Review the rules and practice them. Tell children exactly what to do and where to go if they get separated from the group.
- **Use your roster.** Always have an accurate roster with you. Use it to conduct a name-to-face check before you leave the center, in the vehicle (if utilized), as children exit the vehicle, and when you get to the destination.
- **Match names to faces.** Count children frequently by matching names to faces. Double count children at strategic times and throughout the trip. Make sure all children are accounted for at all times.
- **Take a head count.** Count the total number of children before you leave the center, in the vehicle, and when you get to the destination, and match your count to the total number of children. If your count is off, first ask another professional to count again, then conduct a name-to-face check to identify the child that is not present.
- **Check the vehicle.** After arriving at the field trip destination, conduct a visual sweep of the vehicle to ensure that no child is left behind on the vehicle.
- Required staffing for field trips must meet ratio plus one additional teacher.

## **2. Active Supervision Training**

Active supervision training will be implemented in the on-boarding/hiring process. This will constitute the initial and possibly the first time a teacher has been introduced to this practice. Regular review at monthly staff meetings will reinforce the regular use of active supervision.

## **3. Name to Face Recognition**

Using active supervision, staff position themselves so that they can always observe all children – watching, counting, and listening. During transitions, they account for all children with name-to-face recognition by visually identifying each child. Staff also use their knowledge of each child's development and abilities to anticipate what they will do, then get involved and redirect them when necessary. This constant vigilance helps children learn safely.

## **4. Water Play**

The only time children are allowed to engage in a water activity is through the sensory water table. Children gather around the table and use objects to manipulate the water. The children wear waterproof aprons and are closely supervised. Teachers are never more than an arms length away.

## **5. Bodies of Water**

Children are strictly forbidden from approaching any bodies of water. This includes pools, ponds, lakes, rivers, tubs, mop buckets, or any other body of water. This should be taken into consideration when planning field trips and during the field trip site pre-visit. If water is unexpectedly encountered, the teachers are to coordinate together to remove the children from the site.

# **Safe Sleep**

1. All infants 12 months old or younger are to be placed down for sleep on their backs
2. infants may then be allowed to assume any comfortable sleep position when they can easily turn themselves from the back position.
3. Safe Sleep Environment
  - A. Infants are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infants 12 months and younger, with a tight fitting sheet. One infant per crib. No swaddling, no blankets, however, a sleep sack can be used. Pacifiers can be used but are free of any hanging ornaments, or clips. Parents must provide the pacifiers if they are wanting their child to use one. Only sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission is used. Nothing can be in, or



hanging on, the crib. Staff remove hanging strings from any object that is in the classroom. Parents are informed that clothing with strings is prohibited in the center, this is told during tours, as well as in our handbook.

B. Bedding is changed and laundered once per week. Cribs and mattresses are cleaned and sanitized every day or directly after being soiled.

C. Cribs are to be labeled with the infants name and also any important information such as the child's ability.

D. Information about cribs such as manufacturer owners manual and safety manuals will be kept in the Directors office.

#### 4. Safety Requirements

A. Sleep is only to be on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infants 12 months and younger. Only use sleeping equipment that meets the standards of the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission.

B. Only one infant per crib.

C. No swaddling, no blankets

D. Tight fitting sheets only

E. Nothing can be in, or hanging on, the crib. This included toys, stuffed animals, mobiles, burp rags etc.

F. The room will be kept at a comfortable temperature.

5. Infant Supervision. Staff will be able to hear all infants and toddlers at all times. All infants and toddlers should be easily seen by direct sight at least by one member of the classroom staff. Staff do not need to be directly looking at each child at all times.

6. Pacifiers. Pacifiers can be used with parental permission but must be free of any hanging ornaments. or clips. Parents must provide the pacifiers if they are wanting their child to use one. See Parental Enrollment Form (Appendix 1).

7. If a child falls asleep during tummy time or floor play, the child will be gently picked up and placed in their assigned crib.

8. If an infant arrives at our center asleep, staff will assist the parent in removing any outer garments ie; jackets, sweaters, coats or snow gear, and place the child in their assigned crib.

9. Infants are placed on their backs to sleep on a firm surface manufactured for sale as infants 12 months and younger, with a tight fitting sheet unless:

A. A waiver by the infants primary care physician is presented.

B. The waiver is signed, dated and have an expiration date.

10. Removing Hazards. Staff will remove hanging strings from any object that is in the classroom. Parents are informed that clothing with strings is prohibited in the center, this is told during tours, as well as in our handbook.

11. Parents are informed of these policies during tours, as well as in our handbook. Parents always have access to the parent handbook through the Growing Minds website.

12. All staff members will take the Essentials training along with the passports training before joining any classroom, additional infant training will be provided through CCR&R.

13. Infants are required to be checked every 10 minutes while they are napping.

\_\_\_\_\_(Initial) I understand and have read and have reviewed in new parent orientation, the safe sleep policies.

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

An electronic copy of this document is available at our website and at our front desk.

## **Playground Safety**

1. Staff Training- Staff is trained on playground procedure at hire and random checks are preformed by the training coordinator. Further training is offered when available through CCR&R

2. Playground Equipment Installation- The Playground Equipment Change Reports will contain a record of repairs, removal and installation of equipment according to manufacturer's directions. This is to include the date of the change, a description of the change, and documentation from the company providing the equipment. All equipment is safely anchored and installed to the manufacturer's directions.

3. Fall Surfacing- Wood chips are the primary fall surfacing material. These wood chips are certified as child care safe by the manufacturer.

4. Fall Surfacing Maintenance- To ensure the on-going safety of the children, Growing Minds undertakes regular inspections of the outdoor play area. Growing Minds also undertakes regular maintenance of protective surfaces within the fenced play area to provide acceptable shock-absorbing performance through raking, lifting and redistributing wood chips. Documentation of the regular inspections is to be maintained within the Playground Safety Log.

5. Playground Hazards. Hazards are identified through the inspection process. Any hazards that are identified are immediately presented to supervising staff. Date and time are recorded. Hazards are to be either immediately repaired or if not possible, Such actions may include:

removal of hazardous debris, litter, strings or ropes of any kind. If the situation in the playground makes play unsafe, the affected area will be set off limits or outdoor play will be canceled until the safety concern is resolved. Manufactures paperwork is kept on file and adhered to. Refer to Caring For Our Children (CFOC) Appendix Z: Depth Required for Shock-Absorbing Surfacing Materials for Use Under Play Equipment

6. Playground Inspections. To ensure the on-going safety of the children, Growing Minds undertakes regular inspections of the outdoor play area. Growing Minds also undertakes regular maintenance of protective surfaces within the fenced play area to provide acceptable shock-absorbing performance through raking, lifting and redistributing wood chips. Documentation of the regular inspections is to be maintained within the Playground Safety Log. The Playground Safety Log will include the following elements:

**A. Playground Equipment Change Reports** The Playground Equipment Change Reports will contain a record of repairs, removal and installation of equipment according to manufacturer's directions. This is to include the date of the change, a description of the change, and documentation from the company providing the equipment.

**B. Daily Visual Inspections** On each day children are scheduled to use the outdoor playground, the teacher/designate responsible on that day will conduct a visual inspection of the outdoor playground prior to use by the children per the daily inspection checklist. The completed checklist is dated and filed in the Playground Safety Log. Any actions arising from the inspection are to be dealt with according to procedures. This inspection should include at a minimum:

- (a) Missing or broken parts,
- (b) protrusion of nuts and bolts,
- (c) Rust and chipping or peeling paint,
- (d) Sharp edges, splinters and rough surfaces,
- (e) stability of handholds,
- (f) visible cracks,
- (g) Stability of non-anchored large play equipment,
- (h) wear and deterioration,
- (i) Safety hazards such as broken bottles and toys, discarded cigarettes, stinging insects nests and packed surfacing under frequently used equipment like swings and slides
- (j) Fall surfacing is at the required depth in all use zones.

**C. Monthly Inspections** Once per month, a staff person/designate from Growing Minds CLASSROOMS shall inspect the playground in accordance with the comprehensive Monthly Inspection Checklist, which a Supervisor will train the staff member chosen on how to do the inspection and how to fill out the form. This will be done in a face to face meeting prior to an inspection. A copy of the monthly inspection report will be filed in the Playground Safety Log with clear indication of actions taken and actions outstanding. It is the responsibility of the Supervisor/designate to ensure these inspections are

carried out promptly and the reports filed in the Playground Safety Log. Any actions arising from the inspection are to be dealt with according to the policy procedures.

**D. Annual Comprehensive Inspection and Written Report** Each year, a Registered Playground Practitioner (certified playground inspector) will complete a comprehensive inspection and written report of fixed playground structure(s) (If any). A copy of the report will be provided to the SUPERVISOR and included in the Playground Safety Log. The Playground Inspection Form includes surfacing materials, general hazards, play structures, swings, slides and freestanding climbers/monkey bars if available.

**E. Implementation of Actions to ensure Playground Safety**

It is the responsibility of the staff performing the daily visual inspection to take actions that can be accomplished immediately to correct safety issues within the playground without interfering with their teaching duties. Such actions may include: removal of hazardous debris, litter, strings or ropes of any kind. If the situation in the playground makes play unsafe, the affected area will be set off limits or outdoor play will be canceled until the safety concern is resolved.

**F. Responsibilities of the Supervisor/designate include:**

- To review the status of all inspection reports and to ensure all defects and problems are documented in the Playground Safety Log.
- To bring defects to the attention of the supervisor (when necessary).
- To ensure that all reasonable steps shall be taken to bar access to the defective equipment until it is repaired. A) Cordoning off the defective area must be done in a safe manner. B) Ropes and plastic tape cannot be used. C) If some areas of the playground remain in use by the children of the center, the entire playground must be supervised at all times.
- To document a plan of action in the Playground Safety Log and ensure execution of that plan in a timely manner.
- This information shall be reviewed to ensure all issues are being resolved satisfactorily and in a timely manner.

## Missing Child

1. Prevention. Parents/Guardians who bring their child directly to the school are asked to deliver their child in person to a classroom teacher upon arrival. This is for your child's safety and helps transition from home to school. As an illness precaution, please make sure both you and your child wash your hands upon arrival. Anyone picking up a child from school must be prepared to show picture identification and either be on the child's "release to" list or (in special circumstances) have other written permission from the parent/guardian. Please update all information as needed. A non-custodial parent may have access to their child unless a court order in our files prohibits such contact

2. Observation. Staff should always be able to account for the children in their care. They continuously scan the entire environment to know where everyone is and what they are doing. They also count the children frequently. This is especially important during transitions when children are moving from one location to another.

3. In the event of a missing child-

A. Policy/Procedure

- Conduct a complete search of the building and surrounding grounds.
- Contact the Director of Education or Program Coordinator for assistance.
- Check with everyone to determine time and place child was last seen.
- If the child is not found, call 911.
- Give a detailed description of the child including what they were wearing, where last seen.
- Notify the parent.

B. Contact authorities- Call 911-Give a detailed description of the child including what they were wearing, where last seen.

C. Contact HHS (319-291-2441) and The Child Abuse Hot-line (1-800-362-2187). Give a detailed description of the child including what they were wearing, where last seen.

D. An incident report must be completed within 24 hours of incident. The report must contain as much detail as possible. This report is to be turned in to the front office. This report will be filed and potentially turned into HHS.

## Strangulation Prevention

1. String and Cord Safety. Strings and cords long enough to encircle a child's neck, such as those on toys, clothing, and window coverings, should not be accessible to children in early care and education programs. Any child that arrives with a toy or other object that violates this policy will have the object removed by staff and placed in the main office where, if the parent has already left, the object will be stored and returned to the parent with a gentle reminder that the object is a hazard to children.

2. Widows and drapes. Looped cords are not permitted. Tie downs will be used to hold cords if necessary.

Infant's Classroom: Cloth eyelet drapes. No cords.

Toddler's Classroom: Vinyl roller drapes with pull cord cut short

2's Classroom: Vinyl roller drapes with pull cord cut short

3's Classroom: Pull down cellular black-out shades. No cords.

3/4's Classroom: Custom aluminum mini-blinds with pull cord cut short

4/5's Classroom: Pull down cellular black-out shades. No cords.

3. Hazard Monitoring. Strangulation hazards are monitored by ensuring there are no blind cords accessible, handles/scarves/necklaces in the play area, strings on hoods, and not allowing strings or ribbons on pacifiers.

A. Play Items. Items with handles or straps are to be removed.

B. Play items such as scarves, necklaces, boas etc. are not to be used by children under the age of three.

4. Pacifiers. Pacifiers can be used but are free of any hanging ornaments. or clips. Parents must provide the pacifiers if they are wanting their child to use one.

5. Lanyards. Staff with lanyards will be using the breakaway type.

6. Lanyards are not to be used by children.

## Sign-in/Sign-out

1. Recording Daily Attendance/ Sign-in Sign-out Procedures- Parents are asked to deliver their child to the classroom teacher when arriving and to sign in their child on the daily attendance roster. **This is necessary to protect your child's safety and prevent unattended children from wandering off into the building or parking lot.** This procedure is used to accurately reflect the days and hours that a child is in our care.

A. At the entrance to each classroom is a Sign-in Sign-out form. Parents are to record what time the child arrived by writing the time on the form.

B. At the entrance to each classroom is a Sign-in Sign-out form. Parents are to record who dropped the child off by writing their name on the form.

C. At the entrance to each classroom is a Sign-in Sign-out form. Parents are to record what time they picked up the child by writing the time on the form.

D. At the entrance to each classroom is a Sign-in Sign-out form. Parents are to record who picked up the child by writing their name on the form.

2. Visitor Sign-in Sign-out Process. A visitor binder is maintained at the front entrance that all visitors to the center must sign. The visitor binder will include:

A. Visitors name and signature

B. Date and time arrived, date and time left

C. Reason for Visit

D. Contact information

3. Schedule Changes-Parents are expected to notify the center by 9:00 am on any day that your child is scheduled to attend but will be absent. Notification is needed so the center can adjust staffing patterns and food service for the day.

A. We will contact parents through the Brightwheel app if we are expecting a child that has not arrived within one hour of the expected arrival time.

B. If we do not hear back within the hour we will try calling.

C. If that fails we will leave a voice mail that the child will be unable to attend for that day because we will be adjusting staff accordingly.

4. Parents (or other adults picking up children) will be asked to show picture identification if not known to the staff person on duty. Other individuals picking up the child must be on the form in the child's folder, must show a picture ID, and be over the age of 18. No child will be released to an individual that is not listed on the child's authorization form

## Discipline/ Behavior

1. Discipline-Discipline strategies **not permitted** at Growing Minds include: corporal punishment, punishment causing humiliation, fear, pain or physical discomfort, locking children alone in an area, leaving children alone, using mechanical restraints, associating punishment with concerns regarding illness, food or rest, or the use of verbal abuse, threats or disrespectful remarks about a child or her/his family.

2. Developmentally Appropriate Guidance- Where there are children together in a classroom, conflict is inevitable. When possible, classroom teachers will use redirection to avoid conflicts from occurring. When conflicts arise within the classrooms, teachers will facilitate conflict resolution between the parties involved. Instead of employing physical aggression, children will learn to use words to resolve their quarrels. When children can share their concerns with others involved, they are better able to solve their own problems.

A. We do not use time-out's as a punishment

B. We will use logical consequences when a child behaves in a manner disruptive to the Classroom. For example, if a child made a mess while engaging in inappropriate behavior, they will be required to help clean up the mess. It is important that children learn that there are consequences to their actions so that they are able to acquire internal controls and learn problem solving skills that produce positive results.

C. Frequent communication between parents and the classroom teacher is essential to building a trusting relationship and for keeping you informed about the daily happenings in your child's life at the center. To this end, Growing Minds will seek to keep you informed through classroom "happy notes", bulletin board displays, newsletters, the Brightwheel app and progress reports. Classroom teachers are available to you throughout the week. A good time to reach them by phone is between 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm. Face-to-face meetings are also available upon request.

3. Positive Relationships- socially-emotionally healthy children are better able to establish and maintain positive relationships with adults and peers. To support our students in developing these skills, we take a proactive and preventive approach to guidance that reinforces appropriate behaviors rather than focusing on inappropriate behaviors.

- **Our Environment:** We provide children with exciting materials and engage them in activities that are appropriate for their age to keep them focused and attentive. We develop schedules that meet the needs of young children by avoiding long periods of wait time without activity. Yet, our schedule is flexible enough to follow the children's interests as well as their cognitive, physical, and biological needs.
- **Our Teachers:** We work to develop a strong rapport with each child speaking to children calmly, especially during redirections. We help children put words to their emotions. We use social stories to help teach our students healthy social skills. We strive to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of young children.
- **Our Families:** We communicate regularly with families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school. We partner with families to offer support, guidance and, if necessary, connect them with experts to help give their children the best foundation for academic and life success.

4. Staff Training-Staff training in early childhood techniques and early childhood behavioral science is an evolving field. Therefore, staff is trained using the most updated, generally accepted principals and best practices. Staff is initially trained through the Essentials and the Passport training provided by Iowa State University via the i-power professional workforce registry.

A. Policy Review training- Regular training and review sessions are held at the monthly staff meetings. Staff reviews real world scenarios and discuss solutions. Staff is encouraged to receive on-going training as they are made available.

B. Specific Training- Staff are trained in positive discipline /behavior interactions and this training is revisited quarterly at staff meetings. All staff are required to obtain the certificate for the Passport to Early Childhood Education module 6: Guiding Behavior.

5. Conflicts and Challenging Behaviors-Our foundational goal at Growing Minds is to help our students develop strong social and emotional skills. Instead of discipline, we use guidance. Guidance is about building an encouraging setting for every person in the group. It means helping young children understand they can learn from their mistakes, and it starts with showing them how (NAEYC). Research indicates that children with strong social-emotional skills tend to be happier, show greater motivation to learn, have a more positive attitude toward school, more eagerly participate in class activities, and demonstrate higher academic performance than students who exhibit social and emotional difficulties (Hyson 2004; Kostelnik et al. 2015).



A. Staff Process-When a child presents an on-going behavior problem within the classroom, the teacher will notify the Director of Education or Program Coordinator. A written behavior plan will be developed in consultation with the Director of Education, the child's parents, direct child care staff and other individuals as deemed appropriate. If a child's behavior is not controllable within the limits and structure of the program, or if the behavior poses a threat to themselves or to others, the parent(s) can be requested to remove the child for the day or services to the child can be terminated.

B. Reporting- When a child presents an on-going behavior problem within the classroom, the teacher will notify the Director of Education or Program Coordinator. A written behavior plan will be developed in consultation with the Director of Education, the child's parents, direct child care staff and other individuals as deemed appropriate.

C. Parental Notification- Parents may be notified via Brightwheel app but also in-person as they meet with teachers and administrators. If an incident report is made, parents will receive a copy.

D. Caregiver expectations- As noted previously, We work to develop a strong rapport with each child speaking to children calmly, especially during redirections. We help children put words to their emotions. We use social stories to help teach our students healthy social skills. We strive to serve the individual needs of each child while ensuring the safety of young children.

E. Parental Expectations- As noted previously, We communicate regularly with families to ensure consistency in guidance between home and school. We partner with families to offer support, guidance and, if necessary, connect them with experts to help give their children the best foundation for academic and life success.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Despite these efforts, some children may continue to exhibit significant, challenging behaviors. The following steps will be completed if a child must be removed for challenging behaviors that constitute an imminent danger to the child or others:

1. Make a referral to an early childhood mental health specialist or Healthy Social Behavioral Initiative specialist through the Child Care Resource & Referral and refer to the agency responsible for early childhood special education services. If a child's behavior is such that it necessitates temporary removal on a repeated basis, there should be sufficient documentation for consideration of special education services.
2. Maintain documentation on file of the incident's outcomes, subsequent parent conference, and the plan developed that includes appropriate intervention strategies. The parent conference's purpose is to create a plan jointly with the family and available resources to address the specific behaviors that constitute an imminent danger (recurring violence, behavior, or aggression)

3. If a child continues to exhibit persistent, severe challenging behavior that is unsafe to themselves, other children, or the teachers, Growing Minds may recommend and/or require alternative placement.
4. Suppose a child with an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or an Individualized Education Program (IEP) exhibits persistent challenging behaviors. In that case, special considerations are enacted due to procedural safeguards and due process rights ensured under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Parts C and B. Growing Minds will follow all state special education rules and regulations governing suspension/expulsion.

### **Suspension or Termination of Services Due to Behavior or Special Developmental Needs**

Child care services may be suspended or terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. Physical, verbal or emotional abuse or injury inflicted on another child or staff member by the child.
2. Failure of a parent to cooperate in establishing or implementing an individualized educational or behavior plan for identified developmental or behavioral needs of their child.
3. Physical, verbal or emotional abuse or injury inflicted on another child or staff member by the parent(s).
4. Behavioral plan fails to modify assaultive or problem behaviors.
5. Educational Service Plan fails to meet child's special developmental needs.

### **Suspension or Termination of Services Due to Administrative Reasons**

Child care services may be suspended or terminated for any of the following reasons:

1. Failure of the parent to provide and maintain enrollment information required by agency, state child care licensing or county health department regulations.
2. Failure to make timely financial payment for services provided by Growing Minds Early Learning Center.
3. Failure to pick up a child from the center within the established time frames of operations.
4. Failure of a parent/guardian to quarantine a child suffering from a communicable illness, or to seek/provide medical treatment when requested to do so.

When suspension or termination of enrollment occurs, notice will be given to the parent in writing. When Growing Minds Early Learning Center is unable to provide services to a child for developmental, behavioral or administrative reasons, assistance will be offered in referral to an appropriate resource within the community.

- We would refer parents to AEA for speech and language delays, behavioral, and cognitive delays.
- Growing Minds Administrative will contact CCNC with questions regarding missing immunizations.
- Growing Minds Administrative will refer potential families to CCR&R when they are in need of child care services and we are unable to accommodate.

## **Biting Policy**

Even in the best child care center, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants, toddlers and sometimes preschoolers and occasionally older children. This is an unavoidable consequence of grouping young children together. When it happens, it can be scary and very frustrating for children, parents and teachers. Understanding the reason for biting is the first step to changing a child's behavior. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, simple sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Child care group situations are difficult: dealing with others constantly around, sharing attention and toys, and too much or too little stimulation are all very difficult for children. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. When biting breaks out, a high quality childcare program immediately takes action, not to blame the biters but to change the environment and help children change their behavior.

It is important that the caregivers remain calm and in control of their emotions when biting occurs. Staff should not show anger or frustration towards the child. The caregiver should calmly respond to the child, letting them know that biting is not ok. In addition the following steps will be taken.

1. The teacher will remove the child from the situation and focus caring attention on the child who was bitten.
2. Encourage the biter to help take care of the child that was bitten (hold ice pack, comfort the child).
3. The caregiver should talk to the child who bit (if able to communicate) and talk about different strategies that the child can use next time (give them appropriate words-if able) instead of biting. This should be done in a short, simple way.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Staff need to work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of some triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are some examples of how the teacher will begin this assessment.

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The teacher will use the Center Action Plan for documentation and ask the following questions:
  - Was the space too crowded
  - Were there too few toys
  - Was there too little to do or too much waiting
  - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times, other than when he/she was biting
2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate manners, including using words, if they are capable of them.

4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent and administration will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and to measure the outcome of these changes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

#### First Aid in response to biting (both child and adult)

1. Wear gloves, clean the wound with soap and water. Run water over wound for 5 minutes.
2. Apply ice or cool compress to help reduce the pain or swelling.
3. Bandage the wound as necessary.
4. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.

#### First Aid if bite breaks the skin. (both child and adult)

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over the wound for 5 minutes.
2. Control the bleeding.
3. Cover the wound with sterile dressing and bandage.
4. Contact the parents of BOTH children involved and encourage them to contact their healthcare provider to determine if they need to be seen.
5. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.

When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day. All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on our standard incident form which is completed and signed by teacher, parents and an administrator is notified. One copy is given to the parent and one copy is kept in a locked file cabinet in the office.

When biting occurs, here's what you can expect from us:

- We will put the child's safety first and provide first aid as well as comfort, support and advice to any child who is bitten.
- We will provide appropriate programming for children to help prevent biting.
- We will make current information and resources on biting available to you.
- We will provide teachers with adequate knowledge and training to deal properly and effectively with biting.
- We will take your concerns seriously and treat them with understanding and respect.
- We will tell you what specific steps we are taking to address biting and explain the reasoning behind those steps.
- We will respond to your questions, concerns and suggestions—even when our response to some suggestions is no.
- We will work to schedule conferences about biting with you, at a time you can attend.
- We will keep your child's identity confidential if he or she bites. This helps avoid labeling or confrontations that may prolong the behavior.

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen in our program, but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so it will end as quickly as possible. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have questions or concerns, please let us know-we are here to help you and your child on their journey to independence!

### **Bullying Policy**

**PURPOSE:** To create a safe and healthy environment for children where bullying behaviors are not tolerated. Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers.

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to educators, staff, and management.

**IMPLEMENTATION:** Our Center does not tolerate bullying of any kind. Our priority is to ensure the safety and well-being of the child being bullied. Although there may be underlying reasons causing a child to bully others, it is essential that the child being bullied receives adult attention and support in the first instance. It is important that the needs of the child who bullies does not overshadow the needs of the child being bullied.

**TYPES OF BULLYING IN EARLY CHILDHOOD:** The most common types of bullying in the early childhood setting are physical and verbal. Some children may also bully others by social isolation/exclusion.

- Physical includes: hitting, punching, kicking, pinching- directed at the same child/ren over an extended period of time.
- Verbal includes: calling children names, taunting them, making sexist/racist statements, making cruel statements about personal attributes, clothing etc.
- Social isolation: Excluding individual children or groups of children from play or social situations

**SIGNS OF BULLYING:** In many cases, bullying occurs without adults being aware of it. Bullying can include physical violence (hitting, shoving), teasing or name-calling, social exclusion, or intimidation. It often occurs over a period of time. Possible signs a child is being bullied might include:

- unexplained cuts, bruises, scratches
- changes in behavior, such as becoming moody, teary, depressed
- bedwetting
- complaints of physical ailments such as headaches or stomach-aches
- having few friends, or a breakdown in a previous friendship (if age appropriate)
- does not want to attend care
- does not want to attend parties, visit other children.

Children may also disclose to a trusted adult that they are being bullied.

**EFFECTS OF BULLYING:** Children who are bullied are more likely to be depressed, lonely, and anxious and have low self-esteem. They may frequently feel sick and avoid interactions with others.

**PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES:** Bullying thrives where there is not enough supervision. If required, and where possible, we will increase our staff: child ratios above those set out in the National Regulations. Our daily program is designed to meet the needs and interests of all children in attendance to prevent periods of boredom. Educators model appropriate behaviors towards other staff and children, including refraining from teasing, humiliating, or talking 'behind another's back'. This also includes educators using appropriate language when dealing with behavior management issues and assisting children to use the same. Children are encouraged to verbalize their emotions and to develop empathy and compassion.

**TALKING ABOUT BULLYING:** Educators play an important role in helping children understand and guide their own behavior as they learn about positive and healthy relationships with others. Behaviors in early childhood may be precursors to bullying rather than true bullying. This could include making faces, refusing to play together, telling lies or stories about another child, grabbing objects, pushing, pinching or shoving another child. Without intervention, these behaviors could turn into a pattern of bullying. Early childhood educators assist children recognize bullying behavior and assist children in developing strategies to develop positive relationships and prevent bullying. Skills to develop to assist in preventing bullying include:

- empathy- understanding and responding to the what others feel
- problem solving- how to resolve problems constructively without using aggression
- language- understanding what to say when the child is feeling targeted by another child- 'stop it!'

Educators will teach social skills through role-plays, stories, puppets and games. Educators will guide children to practice how to interact with others positively and respectfully when talking about bullying.

\_\_\_\_\_ (Initial) I have read and understand and have reviewed in new parent orientation, the disciplinary and behavior policies.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

An electronic copy of this document is available at our website and at our front desk.

### **Dental Emergency Policy**

Knowing how to handle a dental emergency can mean the difference between saving and losing your child's permanent tooth.

- For all dental emergencies, it is important to take your child to the dentist or an emergency room as soon as possible.

- Make sure your child does not have a more serious injury. Remember to call 911 for help if necessary. For a knocked-out permanent or "adult" tooth, keep it moist at all times by placing it in a container or in milk, or use a tooth preservation product that has the American Dental Association (ADA) Seal of Acceptance. Then, get to your dentist's office right away. A primary (baby tooth) does not need to be moistened but, if possible, it should be found to bring to the dentist. See First Aid for a Knocked-Out Permanent Tooth for more information.
- For a cracked tooth, immediately rinse the mouth with warm water to clean the area. Put cold compresses on the face to keep any swelling down. See your child's dentist as soon as possible.
- If your child bites his tongue or lip, clean the area gently with water and apply a cold compress. See your child's dentist or go to the emergency room as soon as possible.
- For toothaches, rinse the mouth with warm water to clean it out. Gently use dental floss to remove any food caught between the teeth. Do not put aspirin on your child's aching tooth or gums; it may burn the gum tissue. If the pain persists, contact your child's dentist.
- If you think your child's jaw is broken, apply cold compresses to control the swelling. Go to your child's dentist or a hospital emergency department immediately.
- For objects stuck in the mouth, try to gently remove with floss but do not try to remove it with a sharp or pointed instrument. See your child's dentist or go to the emergency room as soon as possible.

## **V. Parent Involvement Policies and Procedures**

At Growing Minds we value parent involvement. Parents are always welcome and have unlimited access to their child and the classroom.

### **Parent Involvement**

Parental involvement is a major factor in determining the quality of services provided. As Growing Minds seeks to provide the best possible environment for your child, your participation is crucial to the success of our mission. Parents are invited to become active participants both within their child's classroom and in the decision making of the agency.

Parents may participate on the Program Review or Marketing and Fundraising Committees and are also welcome to serve on the Board of Directors.

- **Program Review Committee:** The mission of this committee is to ensure quality early childhood education by monitoring children via assessments, providing support to parents and staff through parent and staff surveys and education, and keeping the Board of Directors updated on Program Review.
- **Fundraising/Marketing Committee:** This committee promotes Growing Minds and develops and implements fundraising events designed to raise funds for special classroom projects or equipment needs.
- **Board of Directors:** The board is the legal governing body of the agency, overseeing the general policies and fiscal operations of all agency services and programs.

### **Program Evaluation**

Growing Minds values parent involvement in the evaluation of our agency and program services. To this end, parents are asked to complete parent surveys distributed twice a year. Results of this survey will be tabulated and shared at both sites as to how parents in general view our services. We will also share with you plans being put in place to improve program services based upon the results of these annual parent evaluations. Please fill out and return your survey when you receive it in the fall and spring semesters.



## **VI. Legal Requirements and Grievance Procedures**

### **Parent Grievance Procedure**

Strong working relationships between the family and classroom teachers are key to a successful learning experience of the child. At times concerns or disagreements may arise between the family and the teachers regarding the care provided to the child, cultural or religious practices or other reasons. If this occurs, parents are encouraged to discuss the issue with the teachers and resolve the matter together. If a resolution is not reached, parents and/or teachers should contact the Program Coordinator to resolve the matter. If a resolution is still needed, the Director of Education should be contacted for additional assistance. If the Director of Education is unable to resolve the issue, parents may request that the grievance be forwarded to Growing Minds's Board of Directors for review.

Parents are welcome to visit the child's classroom at any time to observe classroom practices and experiences provided to their child.

### **Center Responsibility in Mandatory Reporting**

Chapter 232 of the Iowa Code requires us to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. For more information, please visit the center office.

### **Parent Appeals and Complaints**

Any parent who feels that they have been denied services, or who believes that they have suffered an adverse action with regards to services being delivered by Growing Minds, as the result of an unjust act, or as the result of discrimination based upon the individual's race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, creed, physical or mental disabilities may file a complaint of appeal of such action by contacting:

Day Care Licensing Consultant  
Iowa Department of Human Services  
1407 Independence Ave.  
Waterloo, Iowa 50703  
319-291-2441

State licensing regulations require that a copy of the Iowa Department of Human Services' "Child Day Care Centers and Preschools Licensing Standards and Procedures" be made available to any parent.

## **VII. Orientation Process for Parents**

When a prospective parent calls the center asking to enroll their child(ren), the Director of Education or the Program Coordinator will give a brief overview of our program, answer questions, then schedule a time for the prospective parent to tour the center, with a focus on the classroom their child will be placed in.

The tour of the center will consist of the following:

- Parents will initial each area on the enrollment form, which includes understanding/reading the parent handbook.
- Explanations of postings in the entryway; DHS statement, etc.
- Visit to the office, explaining what to do if the Program Coordinator or Director of Education is not present and explaining what the assigned roles are.
- Discussion of all classrooms and age groups while walking to the assigned classroom for their child.
- Sharing Information about Sick Policy, Medication Policy, meal Program, Attendance Policy, Billing Policy, what parents need to provide, etc.
- Introducing teachers when entering the assigned classroom, sharing the teachers experience and strengths, then describing the daily schedule, room arrangement, and any additional environment information.
- While walking back to the office, the parent will be asked more specific details, dietary needs, drop off/pick up time, funding source, etc. Parents will be informed about the times meals are served and what meals their child will be in attendance for.
- Back at the entry, the parent will be thanked for considering Growing Minds Child Care then asked if they would like to take some time to consider if we are the place for their family, if they want time to think it over, they will be thanked again. If they want to enroll, they will be given an enrollment packet, some informational pamphlets from area organizations, and then told their child can start 24 hours after they drop off the completed enrollment packet.

## **VIII. Thank You**

By offering high quality, affordable child care services, Growing Minds is able to provide a valuable support service to parents, while at the same time, helping your child to acquire the developmental skills needed to be successful in school, and later in life.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child.

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## Enrollment Agreement Form

Name of Child \_\_\_\_\_ Birth-date \_\_\_\_\_

### Agree (Please Initial)

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for my child to use all center play equipment and to participate in all activities of the child care center.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for my child to leave the center premises under the supervision of a staff member(s) for walks, or for field trips in an authorized vehicle or public transportation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for my child to be included in video or photographs related to the program evaluation of Growing Minds.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for my child to be included in video or photographs related to training purposes of Growing Minds.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for my child to be included in media coverage, video or photographs related to the promotion of Growing Minds or its related program services.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for my child to be referred to AEA 267 for the following services if requested by the center. Speech, Hearing, Developmental and/or Behavioral concerns.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for emergency transportation of my child by the center to my physician or hospital in the event of a medical emergency or illness and I am unable to transport my child to the necessary medical facility.

\_\_\_\_\_ I hereby give permission for Growing Minds to coordinate services with my family physician, dentist or health related agency or clinic in order to maintain my child's health records in accordance with State licensing requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to maintain current physical and immunization records of my child on file at the center in compliance with State licensing requirements.

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to pick up or arrange alternate care for my child on day(s) that he or she is excluded due to illness.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that transportation of my child to and from the center is my responsibility.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that it is my responsibility to deliver my child to a center staff person, and that Growing Minds will not be held responsible for the acts of or injuries to my child if not left under staff supervision at the time of their arrival.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that the center's responsibility for my child ends upon his or her delivery to me, or to an individual authorized by me when my child leaves the center each day.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and agree that Growing Minds will not be held responsible for anything that may happen to my child as a result of false or incomplete information given at the time of enrollment.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and have read the Parent Handbook including the disciplinary, safe sleep, and behavior policies (pg18 & 31)

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission to use a pacifier and have read the Safe Sleep #6 pacifier requirements in the Parent Handbook.

I have read the above conditions of enrollment, understand their intent and meaning, and agree to abide by their terms for as long as my child is enrolled at Growing Minds.

Name of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Contact Information

- CCR&R - Iowa Child Care Resource & Referral provides resources, education and advocacy to support quality child care. CCR&R is committed to ensure that Iowa's vision is met. 319-244-5301
- Child Care Assistance-Child Care Assistance (CCA) is available to the children of income-eligible parents who are gone for a portion of the day due to employment or participation in academic or vocational training or PROMISE JOBS activities. Assistance may also be available for a limited period of time to the children of a parent looking for employment.
  - CCA Application
  - Eligibility Calculator
- Child Health Centers - (800) 369-2229
- Child Health Specialty Clinics - (319) 384-6865
- Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)
- Child Care News and Initiatives from HHS
- HHS Provider Portal
- IQ4K-rated Programs
- Safe Infant Sleep
- Maternal Health Centers -(800) 369-2229