



PARENT HANDBOOK



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Our mission is to build a community of character for all generations to interact and grow as we live, work and play
– a healthy community for all.



PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

We are using High Scope's goals for young children:

- ★ To learn through active involvement with people, materials, events, and ideas.
- ★ To become independent, responsible, and confident – ready for school and ready for life.
- ★ To learn to plan many of their own activities, carry them out, and talk with other children and their teachers about what they have done and what they have learned.
- ★ To learn to express their feelings and get along with others in rewarding relationships.
- ★ To gain knowledge and skills in important content areas including approaches to learning; social and emotional development; physical development and health; language, literacy, and communication; mathematics; creative arts; science and technology; and social studies.

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 para la traducción de este manual por favor llame al 269-660-1606.

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Introductory Information

Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP). The Great Start Readiness Program provides high quality preschool for four year old children (but not five by September 1) who meet qualifying factors. The program is funded by the Michigan Department of Education and overseen by the Calhoun Area Intermediate School District.

Licensing Regulations. Community Unlimited is licensed by the Michigan Department of Human Services: Office of Children and Adult Licensing. Each facility is assigned a Licensing Consultant who ensures the centers follow the "Licensing Rules for Childcare Centers" set forth by the Department of Consumer & Industry Services: Bureau of Regulatory Services. A copy of these rules is available on the parent table along with a licensing notebook where parents can review documentation of the renewal/interim inspection reports, as well as any documentation on special investigations.

Partnerships and Collaborations. CU partners with several organizations in our community to aid in providing appropriate comprehensive services and ensuring high quality care. CU has partnerships with the Great Start Collaborative, Birth to Five, and GSRP Director Committees. CU also works closely with the Calhoun Area Intermediate School District and local school districts. Participation in these organizations allows CU to work for the development of a common community philosophy for early childhood.

Enrollment Information

Admission. Community Unlimited admits children without regard to race, color, nationality, or religious background. There are no application fees charged to parents for GSRP. Age requirements and qualifying factors must be met to be eligible for admittance to the GSRP program. Children must be four years old on or before September 1st of the school year and meet qualifying factors identified by the Michigan Department of Education. These qualifying factors include: • Extremely low income (counts as two factors)

- Low income
- Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay
- Severe or challenging behavior
- Primary home language other than English
- Parent/guardian with low educational attainment
- Abuse/neglect of child or parent
- Environmental risk such as: parental loss, sibling issues, teen parent, homeless or non-stable housing, high risk neighborhood or prenatal or postnatal exposure to toxic substances known to cause learning or developmental delays. All required forms must be completed and signed before a child may attend the program. Parents must agree to keep all information updated as necessary.

Children must not be denied enrollment or excluded from GSRP programming based on challenging behavior, developmental delays or identified disabilities (e.g., toileting needs, speech, motor function, aggressive behaviors, and cognitive delays)

Enrollment. The following forms are required before the child begins the program:

- Health Form / Immunization Record signed by a physician within 30 days of enrollment.
- Child Information Card – updated with any change
- Birth Certification
- Verification of Qualifying Factors
- CACFP HIES and Participant Enrollment Forms

Schedule of Operations. GSRP operates September through May and has a full day program which operates Monday-Thursday. GSRP will follow the local school district calendar and will **not** operate on any days schools are closed due to Holidays, scheduled days off, or snow days.

Attendance Children who attend regularly will learn routines more easily, become more comfortable with school staff and other children, and realize that school is important. It is vital for children to attend school every day, on time, unless they are ill or there is a family emergency. It is our expectation that students attend school 90% of the time. If your child must be absent, please call the classroom and leave the following information: 1) Your Name 2) Your child's name 3) reason for absence 4) expected return date. After two absences, the teacher will reach out to check on the child, reason for the absence, and support the family to support the child's return to school.

Arrival and Pick Up. If parents drop off, the child must be signed in upon arrival. Sign-in sheets are located by the door of the classroom. All children must be signed out when they are picked up. Children will be released only to parents or persons authorized by parents and listed on the Child Information Card. If you intend for someone not listed on the information card to pick up your child, notify the staff in writing. In emergencies, you may call the site. ID will be required at pick up. If a parent, by court order, is not allowed to pick up his or her child, a copy of the Court Order must be provided to CU and the child may be released only according to the court order on file. If the court order is not on file, either parent may pick up the child regardless of what the other parent has communicated.

Late Pick-up Policy. Parents are expected to promptly pick-up their child after the GSRP preschool session.

Withdrawal. Two weeks written notice to the Classroom teacher is required if a parent withdraws a child from the program. The Classroom teacher or Executive Director of Community Unlimited may request withdrawal of a child from the program for the following reasons:

- Failure to provide documentation on qualifying factors
- For excessive late pick-ups (more than two in a three month period)
- If a child endangers the health or safety of staff or other children
- If the director, in consultation with the staff, determines Community Unlimited is unable to meet the needs of a child and/or a parent
- If conferences between the director and parents do not satisfactorily resolve inappropriate behavior
- If a parent does not provide the center with required paperwork concerning their child or refuses to abide by other licensing requirements
- If a parent behaves inappropriately in front of other parents, staff, or children

Confidentiality Guidelines. To be confidential is to be entrusted with someone's personal information and not share it with others. GSRP staff must respect families', children's and colleague's privacy. All information and documentation necessary for GSRP enrollment will be only shared with the lead teacher and GSRP administrator for verification of eligibility only. Documentation will then be stored outside the classroom in a locked location. Confidentiality also includes sharing any other information regarding a GSRP child including but not limited to, all child/family information and records, private conversations with a parent, or developmental information. The GSRP lead teacher should discuss confidential information with other GSRP teachers only if they need to know the information to complete their job responsibilities. Employees should never discuss confidential information with anyone other than employees of CU. Confidential information should not be removed by any employee unless approved by the Site or Executive Director. It is also important to note that parents are expected to maintain confidentiality on regard to our program and those involved.

Referral Policy. A referral is a request made by either a teacher, support staff or parent when a child is seemingly delayed in one or more areas. Referrals for children that may need support will always be discussed with the family first. Whether the program staff or the family is bringing the concern, the process of referring will be completed as follows: document concerns, request an observation from Early Childhood Specialist, Early Childhood Staff and program staff will assist with developing various strategies to promote growth. There may be times when staff are asked to complete additional screenings and evaluations, have a meeting with families to report results and make plans for future actions. We recognize that families may sometimes have a need for community resources related to housing, food, and other needs. We are connected to many resources throughout the community. If your family is in need, please let us know so we can refer you to an appropriate community resource. Please be assured that all referrals are kept confidential.

FERPA The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act afford parents and students who are 18 years of age or older ("eligible students") certain rights with respect to the student's education records. These rights are:

1. The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the Community Unlimited receives a request for access.
2. The right to request an amendment of the student's education records that the parent or eligible student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.
3. The right to provide written consent before the school discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by Community Unlimited to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Curriculum, Screening and Assessments

Curriculum. The High Scope approach uses ACTIVE LEARNING where children are involved in direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas and events. ADULT CHILD INTERACTION involves adults observing and interacting with children at their level to discover how each child thinks and reasons. The LEARNING ENVIRONMENT is arranged in several clearly defined interest areas that enable children to find, use, and return the materials they need in order to explore, invent, and learn about their world. Finally, the DAILY ROUTINE includes a plan-do-review process which gives children the opportunity to pursue their own interests, make plans, follow through on them and reflect on their experiences with peers and adults.

Lesson Plans. Lead teachers, with the help of the teaching team, will develop a written lesson plan developed around High Scope Key Developmental Indicators. Teachers will familiarize themselves with High Scope Preschool Curriculum Content including the following 8 areas: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies.

Screening Tool. CU uses Ages Stages Questionnaire (ASQ-3 and ASQSE) for its developmental and social-emotional screening tool for children from one month until they enter Kindergarten. Highly reliable and valid, ASQ-3 indicates differing levels of development, educates parents about developmental milestones and incorporates parents' expert knowledge about their child. Upon acceptance to GSRP, parents will receive an email with the link to both screeners. Results will be confidential and kept in the student's file. Teachers will discuss the results during initial home visits. Any recommendation for additional, individualized support will require parental agreement. At the end of the year, links to the screener will be emailed to parents and discussed at final home visits.

Child Observation Record (COR). COR Advantage is a birth-to-kindergarten assessment that assists in supporting children at every developmental level. Its purpose is to document and assess children's skills, knowledge, behavior and accomplishments across a wide variety of content areas. Each of the eight content areas are items that address key concepts in early learning. Multiple objective anecdotal notes about each child are recorded throughout the school year by teachers and used to enhance teaching and learning. COR observations will be shared with parents and both Spring and Fall conferences.

Program Evaluation

All GSRP Programs are required to work with the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential to measure the effect of the state-wide GSRP program. Information is sometimes collected about GSRP staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MiLeap might: (A) Ask parents questions about their child and family, (B) Observe children in the classroom, (C) Measure what children know about letters, words, numbers, etc, (D) Ask teachers how children are learning and growing. Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law.

If you have questions please contact Calhoun Intermediate School District 269-660-1606 475 E Roosevelt, Battle Creek MI 49017 and/or Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential 517-241-7004 105 W Allegan St, Lansing MI 48933

Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®) by Teachstone®.

CLASS® is used to measure and improve teacher-child interactions in the areas of emotional support, classroom organization and instructional support. A Certified CLASS® Observer is a person who has attended an in-person CLASS®

Observation Training and who has passed a CLASS® Reliability Test within the past year. All data must be entered into myTeachstone, a separate product **Parent Evaluations**. Parents are given the opportunity to evaluate the program through surveys at the end of parent nights, conferences, and home visits.

Inclusion Policies

Cultural Competence. Great Start Readiness Preschool (GSRP) programs within Calhoun County have culturally diverse environment. GSRP programs strive to provide culturally sensitive environments in which all families and children feel welcomed and accepted. GSRP, in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality, will show respect for the cultural, home language, and family composition for all children.

Encompassed within the GSRP program and Program Quality Assessment are specific measures to ensure cultural awareness within the GSRP classrooms. This includes but is not limited to: materials reflecting the cultures within the classroom and supporting children who speak multiple languages. Every measure will be made to understand and reflectively respond to families and children from all cultures.

Special Needs. GSRP programs within Calhoun County promote inclusion. GSRP strives to provide appropriate developmental learning opportunities for all children in accordance with the Michigan Department of Education Early Childhood Standards of Quality. Encompassed within the GSRP program are developmental assessments through Ages and Stages Questionnaire, which is completed in partnership with parents to ensure all children are achieving appropriate developmental milestones. However, if the child presents with a development delay, the staff will contact the local education agency (i.e. local school district) to initiate protocol for suspecting a developmental delay. All efforts will be made to continue the student in the least restrictive environment.

Classroom Information

Classroom Ratios. CU maintains lower teacher to child ratios than state guidelines whenever possible. The GSRP classroom will maintain a teacher to child ratio of 1:8 and the classroom size shall not exceed 18 children.

Daily Schedule. A typical day may be as follows:

- **Arrival/Greeting Time** Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave. Children have choices about whether to spend time with books or interact with adults and one another. Once the majority of children have arrived, adults share the daily announcements.
- **Large-Group Time/Music and Movement** All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects, and events meaningful to children.
- **Planning Time** Through small group experiences, children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, song) planning individually, in pairs, and in small groups.
- **Work Time** Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use materials. During Work Time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children's problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.
- **Cleanup Time** Children and adults clean up together, keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during clean up time. Adults accept children's level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.
- **Recall Time** Gathered in small group settings, children choose Work Time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow the children's lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones, group games using a hula hoop, ball or spinner, re-enacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting, etc.). Adults are unhurried in their approach and will complete Recall Time with small groups each day.
- **Small Group Time** An adult-initiated learning experience based on children's interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials, and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.
- **Outside Time/Dismissal** Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment much as they do during Work Time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their outdoor play, supporting children's initiatives and problem solving.

- **Bathroom/Wash Hands/Prepare for Lunch** Children assist in preparation and set up. Children choose where they would like to sit and are encouraged to serve themselves.
Lunch Family-Style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, and wipe up spills). Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.
- **Quiet/Resting Time** Resting is a time for sleeping or quiet, solitary, on-your-own-cot play. Rest Time plans should be individualized to meet the needs of each child. Quiet play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor manipulatives.
- **Wake/Bathroom** Children wake up, adults and children work together to put away cots.
- **Snack** Children are encouraged to clean their own snack space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.
- **See Class Schedule**
- **Outside Time/Dismissal** (refer to AM descriptions)

Clothing. Children should wear clothes which are comfortable and easy to fasten. Rubber-soled shoes are recommended. An extra set of clothing may be placed in the child's cubby for spills or accidents which may occur. Please label all clothing, including coats, with your child's name. Warm outerwear including boots, caps, snow pants, and mittens are needed on cold days. All belongings should be kept in a labeled bag.

Food. All meals served will be in accordance with CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) guidelines. Menus with noted food substitutions will be posted in a place visible to parents. All meal components are required to be served. If your child has any food allergies, we are required to have a physician signed form on file in the office. Meal-time can be a social learning time where children are encouraged to try new foods. Good table manners and eating habits are encouraged. Food from home is discouraged unless prior arrangements have been made due to food allergies.

Non-Discrimination Statement In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender identity (including gender expression), sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the responsible Agency or USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TTY) or contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, AD-3027, found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; (2) fax: (202) 6907442; or (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

Use of Photos. CU uses photos of children for many purposes. They may be used for a special project/craft, identification of personal belongings, classroom/hallway decorations or CU publicity. Parents may request in writing to their Classroom teacher that their child not be photographed for one or all of the mentioned purposes.

Field Trips. Occasionally classroom teachers plan class trips. Field trips are meant to be fun, learning experiences. When taking children off-site on field trips or walks, the book containing classroom Child Information Record (emergency cards), cell phones, and First Aid kit are taken. Parents will receive written notice of all field trips and written permission must be given before a child is allowed to attend a field trip. If transportation is required, the school district buses will be used.

Child/Staff Health and Safety

***Additional information on Covid-19 and policies for preparedness will be provided and posted on the CU website.**

Child/Staff Health Policy. Children's health is observed daily during our program by CU staff. It is the policy of CU to notify the parents, as soon as possible, when changes in the child's health are observed. This will allow parents to give additional input on a child's condition and be involved in decision making regarding the child's care. Indicators of changes in a child's health are:

- Fever of 100.0 (or more) degrees
- Diarrhea - two or more loose/watery stools **Exception:** Medication or new food reaction (call parents to confirm)
- Vomiting - any vomiting
- Unknown skin rash as these are often symptoms of communicable disease (Note: To return, we must receive a doctor's note stating that the child's illness is NOT contagious)
- Irritability, lethargy, persistent crying that is not typical for the child
- Difficulty breathing
- Persistent Cough

If a child becomes too ill to participate comfortably in activities or they need more care than the staff can provide, the child will be temporarily separated from other children and sent home as soon as possible. Parents are expected to pick up ill children within an hour of notification. Parents/staff should notify the Classroom teacher if a child in care has been diagnosed with a communicable and infectious disease. The Classroom teacher will then post a Health Alert visible to all parents and report to the County Health Department, if necessary.

Return after Illness. If a child/staff/volunteer is too ill to participate in the regular activities of the classroom they should not return. Antibiotics must be administered for a 24-hour period and the child must be fever free, without the aid of fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours prior to the child returning. A child must be symptom free from their illness for 24 hours before returning to school. This includes diarrhea, vomiting, fever, or a persistent cough. An exception to this is if a doctor's note is provided stating they can return and that the child is not contagious. If a child has a communicable illness, the guidelines set in place by the Calhoun County Health Department will be followed regarding how long a child should be excluded from care. CU reserves the right to request a doctor's note before allowing a child to return.

Accidents and Incidents. In the event that your child receives a minor, non-life threatening, accident, injury, or illness during their time at preschool, our teacher will assess the situation and apply first aid as needed.

- Minor cuts and scrapes will be treated with soap and water and a band aid, and bumps will be treated by applying ice to the injured area. We will notify you face to face when child is picked up or will pin a note on your child to notify you.
- Major accidents will be tended to with ice packs, bandages and/or other first aid administration necessary by staff. In case of a life threatening emergency, staff will call 911 to seek medical treatment. Parent notification will be attempted immediately following the occurrence. If a parent is unable to be reached within an hour, child's emergency contact will attempt to be notified. If parents notify CU that a child received medical treatment or was hospitalized for an injury, accident, or medical condition that occurred while the child was in care, CU will notify the licensing consultant within 24 hours.
- In the case of an incident (including but not limited to, the following: child is lost or left unsupervised, alleged sexual contact between children or a child and a staff member or volunteer, physical discipline of a child by a staff member or volunteer, center evacuation) parents will be notified immediately following the occurrence. If a parent is unable to be reached within an hour, we will attempt to notify child's emergency contact to be notified. An incident report will be filled out and reported to the licensing consultant within 24 hours.

Medication If a child needs to take medication during the program hours, a medicine-dispensing authorization form must be appropriately filled out by a parent/guardian the day the prescription is being brought to the site. Medication will **ONLY** be dispensed with appropriate, complete authorization forms. Non-prescription medicine cannot be dispensed unless a doctor's note is attached.

The staff may dispense only prescribed drugs in the original container, which bears the original label, displaying legible information, stating the following:

1. Prescription number
2. Name of medicine
3. Strength and quantity of medicine
4. Expiration date of any time-dated drug
5. Directions for use
6. Child's full name
7. Physician's name
8. Date of original issue or with refill, most recent date of issue
9. Name and address of licensed pharmacy issuing the medication.

Emergency Procedures. CU has written procedures for emergency situations including fire, tornado, serious accident/injury and man-made disasters, as well as, a crisis management plan. Emergency procedures and evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. Community Unlimited complies with all fire safety laws and conducts fire/tornado drills in accordance with State law.

Outdoor Play. Cold weather does not make children ill. Studies have indicated that children who are taken outdoors, even during cold weather for short periods of time, have fewer incidences of respiratory illnesses. Infectious disease organisms are less concentrated in outdoor air than indoor air. Exposing the skin to sunlight promotes the production of the vitamin D that growing children require. Being outdoors in the fresh air helps children to stay healthy. When outdoors, children breathe fresh air, develop their muscles, learn and practice increasingly difficult skills, share and cooperate with other children, and get hands-on experiences with some basic scientific principles. Outdoor play affords an opportunity for learning in a different environment and also provides many health benefits. Open spaces in outdoor areas encourage children to develop gross motor skills and fine motor play in ways that may be difficult to duplicate indoors.

Children will not be permitted to go outside when the "Feels Like" temperature is under 10 °F or above 100 °F. The "Feels Like" temperature takes into consideration the wind chill or heat index and is a better measure of the weather conditions for outdoor play. It is recommended that children are dressed appropriately for activities: long-sleeved and long-legged items protect from sunburn; full jacket, snowsuit, mittens, scarf, hat, boots for snow play; etc...

Cleaning and Sanitization The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately. Toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys and surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution of one tablespoon household bleach to one quart of tap water made fresh daily. To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The bleach solution will be left on for the minimum required time before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.

Hand Washing Practices Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others. Teachers instruct and assist children with effective hand washing. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink.

Non-Smoking Policy. According to law, smoking and or vaping are prohibited in the building or on the adjoining grounds of CU.

Pest Management Community Unlimited uses the School District's Pest Management program. You will receive 48 hour advanced notice of the application of a pesticide, other than bait or gel formulation at your child's school. This advance notice of the application will contain information about the pesticide, including the target pest or purpose, approximate location, date of the application, contact information at the center and a toll-free number (800-292-3939) for a national pesticide information center recognized by the Michigan department of agriculture. The law requires us to use two methods of notification. The first method required by the law is the posting at entrances to your child's school in September. We will

also post notice on the Community Unlimited Website. Parents are also entitled to receive this notice by first-class United States mail postmarked at least 3 days before the application. If you would like to be notified by mail please fill out the Pesticide Prior Notification Request Form you receive with your handbook.

Child Abuse/Neglect. To assure compliance with section 3 of the child protection law, 1975 PA 238, MCL 722.623, GRSP staff is required to report to the Branch or Calhoun County Child Protective Services any suspected indication of child abuse. We take this very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities immediately and follow up with a written notice within 72 hours. As mandated reporters, the staff cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was filed in good faith. The law further requires that we allow CPS case workers to interview any child who is referred to them, whether by a member of the staff or by any other individual.

Child Discipline Policy. Staff will use positive methods of discipline that encourage self-control, self-direction, self-esteem and cooperation. Discipline is most effective when it is consistent, reinforces desired behavior and offers natural and logical consequences. Discipline helps children gain control over their behavior. Children act best when they know the rules and know they are expected to follow them. Positive methods of discipline create a constructive and supportive social group and reduce incidents of aggression. Positive discipline methods will help guide a child toward self-discipline and independence. **All physical punishment shall be prohibited.**

This is encouraged by the following methods:

- Planning ahead to prevent problems
- Setting consistent/clear rules
- Encouraging appropriate behavior
- Relating the discipline method to the behavior
- Talking to the child about the feelings he/she is having
- Redirection or distracting a child
- Removing the child from the source of conflict
- Tailoring the method of discipline to the individual child
- Suggesting appropriate solutions
- Involving the child in problem solving

Employee and Volunteer Requirements

Employee Screening Policy. A comprehensive background check is completed on all staff members and unsupervised volunteers using the Child Care Background Check System before contact with students. A staff member shall not be present in the center if he or she has been convicted of any of the following: (a) A listed offense, as defined in section 2 of the sex offenders registration act, 1994 PA 295, MCL 28.722. (b) Child abuse or child neglect. (c) A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual within the 10 years immediately preceding the date of hire.

Volunteer Policy. Volunteers provide a wonderful service in the classroom as they lend their time, energy and compassion toward the children. It is important to keep in mind that ultimately the children are the responsibility of the employees. Staff members will ALWAYS have a "line-of-sight" observation of the volunteer. All supervised volunteers must have a public sex offender registry clearance before having contact with a child in care. Any individual who is registered on the public sex offender registry is prohibited from having any contact with any child in care.

Furthermore, it is agreed that a volunteer at Community Unlimited **WILL NOT:**

- Be left alone in a classroom with children or accompany children to the bathroom
- Have access to receipt books or payment boxes
- Have access to staff personnel or child records
- Be counted in determining staffing to child ratios

Parent Involvement and Partnership

Procedures Related to Concerns. Community Unlimited strives to provide a positive environment for all, however at times concerns may arise. If you have any concerns, please bring them to the attention of the classroom teacher. If you are unable to resolve your concerns through the classroom teacher, the Executive Director may be contacted. During conflicts CU staff will adhere to the following conflict resolution steps: 1) Approach calmly, stopping any hurtful actions. 2) Acknowledge feelings. 3) Gather information. 4) Restate the problem. 5) Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together. 6) Be prepared to give follow-up support. Unresolved issues with the program should be directed to the Calhoun ISD. If the concern is related to a licensing regulation, reports may be made to the Department of Human Services: Office of Children and Adult Licensing. A copy of the regulations is available on the parent table.

Parent Involvement. Community Unlimited welcomes your family into our community and invites you to become active partners with us as we teach and care for your child. When parents and teachers join in partnership an optimum learning environment can be created. CU has an open door policy with all parents and we invite you to drop in anytime. It is an expectation that parents will maintain confidentiality when learning about enrolled children and families in the classroom. We seek to encourage parents to participate in the education of their child inside and outside the classroom. Here are some ways you can get involved:

- Having informal day-to-day conversations with teachers
- Communicating with your child's teacher through email, phone and notes
- Attending formal parent teacher conferences
- Participating in developmental discussions regarding your child by request or invitation • Volunteering within the classroom
- Reading your child's newsletters and Parent Board information
- Participating in special events for parents and families
- Reinforcing lesson plan activities at home
- Participating in advisory committee meetings
- Participating in program evaluations and giving input on policy and procedure
- Sharing ideas or items related to your culture that can be shared in the classroom

Family Contacts. This program requires a minimum of four family contacts per year: two home visits and two parent/teacher conferences. The purpose of home visits and parent/teacher conferences are to engage families in the child's education and to help them provide educational experiences for the children. This process requires staff and parents to interact frequently to update each other about a child's experiences at home and at school. We understand families have unique dynamics and we accommodate multiple household families. For example: multiple copies of newsletters, family gifts, conference times, home visits, etc. Staff will also work together with families to write and follow up on referrals for needed family services. For example, staff can provide documentation for families to share with providers, staff can make an initial phone call to help arrange an appointment, staff can help families find child care or transportation so they can use community resources such as medical, mental health, food, clothing or housing assistance.

- **Home visits.** The main purpose of the initial visit is to create a foundation for the beginning of a positive partnership between home and school. It is designed to ease the transition into GSRP for the child and family. The lead teacher will discuss any required enrollment paperwork, implementing the ASQ with parents and family, sharing curriculum and program information, and discussing the goals parents have for their child and are planned to last at least 60 minutes. The second visit is designed around the individual child and parent needs. The child's assessment will be reviewed highlighting areas of achievement and areas that need improvement. Teachers and parents will discuss the process of transitioning into Kindergarten and summer activity packs will be given to the students and are planned to last at least 60 minutes. .
- **Conferences.** Parent/teacher conferences are held in the fall and spring and are planned to last a minimum of 45 minutes. Conferences are designed to provide information concerning the progress of the child, goals and any additional support that may be necessary. Samples of the child's work may be given and teachers will give ideas on how parents can support learning at home.

Advisory Committee. Each Semester, parents will be asked to participate in an advisory committee meeting. This meeting is held with GSRP teachers and administrative staff and designed to get valuable information from parents on program function. Topics of discussion may include: Curriculum, nutrition and other health related topics, program outcomes and goals, Kindergarten transitioning and program evaluation.

Parenting Education Opportunities. Opportunities for parenting education will be highlighted in the Classroom's newsletters, displayed on the parent boards or distributed through your child's Thursday folders. Education opportunities may include: speakers, playgroups, parenting articles, seminars and special community events.

Grievance Policy. Community Unlimited GSRP strives to provide a positive environment for all. However, at times, concerns may arise. Families that have grievances with some part of the GSRP should follow these steps:

- Bring concerns to the attention of the lead teacher
- Follow up with the director/administrator that oversees the program. Our Implementation Director is Staci Minix and can be reached at sminix@communityunlimited.org. You can also contact the Executive Director, Jennifer Westra, at director@communityunlimited.org.
- If the concern is not resolved through these channels, the next person in line to contact is the Assistant Superintendent of Early Childhood Services and can be contacted at (269) 660-1606.

If the concern relates to a licensing regulation, reports may be made to the Department of Human Services, Office of Children and Adult Licensing, at (866)685-0006 or www.michigan.gov/michildcare

Field Trip, Topical Non-Prescription Medication, & Media Permission

I _____, parent of _____,

- ☐ **give** ☐ do not give CU GSRP permission to take my child on field trips. For planned field trips, parents will be given permission forms with written notice of date, time, location and mode of transportation. However, I understand that occasionally classrooms leave the premises for unplanned excursions, such as walks for exercise or educational activities, and can use various methods of notification to parents, including, but not limited to the following: email, posting a notice on parent board/classroom door, and/or "remind" text notification.
- ☐ **give** ☐ do not give CU GSRP permission to apply topical, non-prescription medication, including but not limited to: sunscreen, insect repellent, antibiotic ointment, rubbing alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide.
- ☐ **give** ☐ do not give CU GSRP permission to photograph my child for display in the classroom.
- ☐ **give** ☐ do not give CU GSRP permission to photograph my child for display on CU website or private CU GSRP Staff FB Group.

I understand it is my responsibility to update this form in the event that I no longer wish to authorize one or more of the above uses. I agree that this form will remain in effect during the term of my child's enrollment.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Parent Screening Policy

I understand I must abide by the center's written plan of supervision of volunteer parents: volunteers, including parents of a child in our care, will be supervised by the Community Unlimited staff and NOT left alone with children.

Parent/Guardian #1 Name _____

Have you ever been convicted of an offense other than a minor traffic violation? Yes No

Do you have a history of substantiated abuse or neglect of children or adults? Yes No

Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent/Guardian #2 Name _____

Have you ever been convicted of an offense other than a minor traffic violation? Yes No

Do you have a history of substantiated abuse or neglect of children or adults? Yes No

Signature _____ **Date** _____

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WRITTEN INFORMATION PACKET DOCUMENTATION

Michigan Department of Human Services Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing

Child(ren)'s Name(s) (Last, First)	Center Name COMMUNITY UNLIMITED GSRP @
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A written information packet has been provided at the time of enrollment. The packet included all the following information:

- Criteria for admission and withdrawal.
- Schedule of operation, denoting hours, days, and holidays during which the center is open and services are provided.
- Fee policy.
- Discipline policy.
- Food service program.
- Program philosophy.
- Typical daily routine.
- Parent notification plan for accidents, injuries, incidents, illnesses.
- Exclusion policy for child illnesses.
- Notice of the availability of the center's licensing notebook. **(CENTER MUST CHECK ONE)**
 - ☐ The Center keeps a licensing notebook containing a summary sheet of all licensing inspections and special investigation reports, and related corrective action plans for the last 5 years. The licensing notebook is available to parents/guardians during regular business hours. Reports from at least the past three years are available at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.
 - ☐ The center does not keep a licensing notebook, but internet is available onsite. Reports from at least the last three years are available at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.
- **Community Unlimited GSRP Handbook is available online at www.communityunlimited.org**
- Other: Pest Management, CACFP Parent Information Sheet, CU COVID-19 Preparedness & Response Plan

I certify that I received all of the above items.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Note: A single BCAL-4340 form may be used for all children in the same family.

Department of Human Services (DHS) will not discriminate against any individual or group because of race, religion, age, national origin, color, height, weight, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, political beliefs or disability. If you need help with reading, writing, hearing, etc., under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are invited to make your needs known to a DHS office in your area.

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Facts About WIC

What is WIC?

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)** is a federal assistance program of the Food and Nutrition Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and is administered by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.

The Michigan WIC Program operates through local health departments and non-profit organizations in all 83 Michigan counties, to serve low- and moderate-income women, infants, and children at nutritional risk.

WIC Provides

WIC Foods may be purchased using electronic benefits at many stores.

- ♦ **Women and children** may receive milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, soy beverages, juices, hot and cold cereals, peanut butter, fresh fruits and vegetables, brown rice, whole wheat/whole grain breads, buns, pasta, soft corn and whole wheat tortillas, canned or dry beans, peas and lentils. Breastfeeding women may also receive canned fish.
- ♦ **Infants** partially breastfed or non-breastfed may receive infant formula.
- ♦ **Infants 6 months old** may receive cereals, fruits, vegetables and meats.
- ♦ **Women, infants and children** with qualifying medical conditions may receive special formulas.

Stores that stock WIC foods make nutritious foods accessible to the community.

Nutrition Education: All WIC clients, parents or their caregivers are offered nutrition education. Clients with high-risk nutrition issues are offered nutrition counseling services by a registered dietitian (RD/RDN). Topics may include infant feeding, food shopping, meal planning, making healthy food choices and weight management.

Breastfeeding Support: WIC recognizes breastfeeding as the optimal way to nourish infants. WIC provides breastfeeding support for mothers through classes, peer counseling, support groups and supplies.

Referrals: WIC clients are referred to appropriate **health and social services**, such as Medicaid, MI-Child, Healthy Kids, SNAP, immunizations, child health screening, family planning and Project FRESH.



Who Can Get WIC?

Women:

Pregnant (and up to six weeks after infant's birth or end of pregnancy)

Breastfeeding (up to infant's first birthday)

Post-partum (up to six months after infant's birth or end of pregnancy)

Infants: Birth to their first birthday

Children: One year of age to their fifth birthday



Benefits of WIC

Reduces fetal deaths and infant mortality.

Reduces low birthweight rates and increases the duration of pregnancy.

Improves growth of nutritionally at-risk infants and children and intellectual development of children.

Decreases incidence of iron deficiency anemia in children.

Improves dietary intake in pregnant and post-partum women and appropriate weight gain in pregnant women.

Helps pregnant women receive prenatal care earlier.

Helps children have more up to date immunizations.

Find Out More About WIC

Call your local WIC agency for more information
OR

Call 211 to find your nearest WIC clinic.

Visit Michigan WIC: www.Michigan.gov/WIC

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

