



**Children's Center**

**Family Handbook**

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Welcome to Azy's Place Children's Center, a family-owned private childcare institution. Thank you for choosing our facility to nurture, teach, and help your child grow.

This handbook is intended to acquaint both family and staff members with current Azy's Place Children's Center policy, practices, and standards. An electronic version (PDF) of the handbook is available on our website at [www.Azysplace.com](http://www.Azysplace.com). A print copy of the handbook is available upon request.

Azy's Place reserves the right to revise its policies, practices, and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Family and Staff members will be **notified 30 days in advance** of updates to the handbook as they occur.

## History

Over 20 years ago, this children's center was just a dream in a teenager's mind. During those many years, there have been trials, errors, hardships, and unexpected life events, but with perseverance, hard work, and dedication, that dream has never died, and now Azy's Place is finally becoming a reality. When my daughter, Azy (Azmynee), was diagnosed with a rare brain condition and learning of all the required care it took to help her progress and the activities needed to help her grow, is what really gave me the fire and adoration in my heart for helping and supporting children. Azy's Place is named in honor of Azmyn'ee and her passion and desire to learn, live, have fun, and most of all how she enjoyed helping others.

## Mission Statement

At Azy's Place, we believe in the value and uniqueness of each child and family we serve. Our center experience is designed to promote each child's own individual social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development.

As caregivers and educators, and as parents we understand the motto "it takes a village to raise a child", so our mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural instinct to explore, discover, create and become a lifelong learner.

## Philosophy

We believe that in the right environment a child's natural curiosity and creativity lead to endless opportunities to grow in knowledge and develop a love of learning. We provide that environment at Azy's Place by making it a safe and nurturing place where your child will be encouraged to build, splash, dash, pretend and create their way to exciting discoveries about the world around them.

Each day with us will be a chance for your child to grow socially, cognitively, emotionally, and physically. As early as infancy to young teenagers, your child will be provided with learning opportunities adapted to fit his or her age, developmental stage, and learning style. Full-day, year-round care and all-day care in

one location make it possible for you to provide your child with the care and education that will help them become happy, healthy lifelong learners.

**Parents will be notified 30 days prior to any modifications via Brightwheel, email or text.**

## California Licensing Department

Licensing will be conducting visits throughout the year; unannounced and announced. This is done to make sure the program is running in a safe environment for the children and staff. Please be advised they may contact staff, children and parents. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office and our website.

## Hours of Operation

Azy's Place Children's Center is open Monday-Friday from 7 am – 6 pm.

## Programs

There are 5 programs offered at Azy's Place.

- **Early Learner:** ages 18 months - 36 months
  - Ratio: 1:6
- **Avid Learner:** ages 3 years- 5 years
  - Ratio 1:8
- **Academic Achievers:** ages 6 years- 10 years
  - Ratio 1:14
- **Junior Scholars:** ages 11 years- 14 years
  - Ratio 1:14
- **Savant Learner:** ages 15- 17 years
  - Ratio 1:14

Azy's Place is a private preschool and daycare program voluntarily licensed to serve 15 school aged children and a total of 15 preschool/toddlers by the California Department of Human Services.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a top priority for Azy's Place Children's Center. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without the prior written consent of the individual. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, the names of the children involved will never be given to families. Brightwheel is an app used to communicate between parents and staff. Please know that staff can read messages sent via Brightwheel.

## Admission Policies and Procedures

Admission and enrollment of a child or children takes place through a personal interview with the director. At that time, the Center's program, philosophy, and policies will be explained. To meet the requirements of the law and the individual needs of your child(ren), it is necessary that we keep the health, attendance, and developmental records of your child(ren). Parents/ guardians will go over Parent Right LIC 995 and Personal Right LIC 613A with the director. These forms/records will be provided at the time of the interview and must be completed and on file prior to enrollment.

Each fall, Azy's Place Children's Center completes an audit of enrollment records. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified if anything needs to be updated. Some forms must be updated every year, including the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form.

Other records must be updated throughout the year, such as physical and immunization records. When visiting your child's physician for a yearly "well-child" appointment, please request a copy of your child's physical and most recent immunization record. You may bring these items yourself.

In addition, any time a family's information changes such as an address, place of employment, or health insurance provider, a new Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form must be completed.

### Admissions Forms:

Item Checklist Needed Before Care Begins
Signed contract
Signed Handbook Agreement
Child Information Card
Health Appraisal
Immunization Record
Food Policy Agreement (for children requiring formula, milk, or baby food)
Food Program Application
Copy of Driver's License
Registry Clearance (for participation in field trips)
Non-Refundable Deposit (one week of care)

In order to reserve your child's place in the program, the first week's tuition plus an enrollment fee of \$25.00 must be made within one week of the child's enrollment date as listed on the Enrollment Acceptance form. Enrollment fee and registration fees are non-refundable and will be forfeited if the child does not come for care. Holding fees may apply if you are requesting a holding period of more than one week.

## Tuition

Upon enrollment and any changes to tuition, families are provided a Financial Contract. This contract should be carefully reviewed and checked for errors. The contract states the days and hours your child may be at Azy's Place as well as the amount due monthly. This contract is binding and can only be changed with approval and signatures from parents and the Center's Director.

**\* Yearly Registration Fee: \$75.00 annual fee to be paid by parents on the 1st day of August**

## Payment Schedule

In order to maintain licensing ratios it is vital that all child care schedules are approved ahead of time. No child may be enrolled for less than one hour a day or in care for more than 10 hours per day. If a contracted child care schedule needs to be changed, a new contract must be completed, signed, and on file before the new child care schedule can go into effect.

Tuition is paid using Brightwheel. Please contact Azysplace@gmail.com to set up payments online via Brightwheel.

Tuition is due weekly every Thursday. There is a \$15.00 late fee per day for payments not initiated by 5:00 pm on Friday.

Two consecutive weeks of unpaid or overdue fees may result in the suspension of child care until full payment is received. Refer to the Payment Policy for complete policies governing the payment of child care tuition fees.

An invoice will be sent via Brightwheel on Tuesdays before tuition is due. If you do not receive an invoice you are responsible for contacting the office and requesting one.

## Subsidized Care- DHS

Azy's Place Children's Center accepts childcare assistance. Parents will be responsible for full payments until authorization has been received and then a weekly copay after a determination amount has been calculated. If at any time assistance is stopped, parents will be responsible for full tuition as of the date the assistance ended.

## Multiple Child Discount

Families with two or more children enrolled full-time at Azy's Place are eligible for a [5%] discount to be applied to the youngest child's weekly tuition fee.

## Refund

No refunds will be made for registration fees or tuition.

## Late Pick-Up Fee

Azy's Place Children's Center closes at 6:00 pm, Monday-Friday. Overtime rates consist of an initial \$10.00 Flat rate for the first minute and \$1.00 for every minute thereafter, a child is present after their contracted pick-up time or for each minute the child is on the premises before 6:45 a.m. or after 6:15 p.m., (if no prior arrangements are made), or for each minute the child is in care over 10 hours.

Staff will record late fees for processing. If there is a late pick-up fee, parents will receive a written notice from the Director or other authorized staff stating the amount of the late pick-up fee. The fee will be added to your payment the following week.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program by 6:15 pm, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact and Medical Consent form. If parents cannot be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Director onsite will be notified and they will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the Yucca Valley Police Department.

## Insufficient Funds

The center needs to maintain an adequate cash flow in order to continue, therefore a fee of \$40.00 will be charged for all payments rejected due to insufficient funds. Missed payments and late fees must be paid within one week. Repeated incidents could result in the termination of childcare services. A payment plan should be discussed with the office if a family is having trouble making tuition payments.

## Delinquent Accounts

Prompt payment of tuition is necessary to ensure that the center can continue to function. Tuition fees that are not paid in full by 5:00 p.m. on Friday are considered past due, and a charge of \$15.00 per day, including weekends, will be assessed to your account until fees are paid in full. If tuition fees are underpaid and/or overdue for two consecutive weeks. without contacting the [Administrative staff or Director] and setting up a payment arrangement may have their child care services suspended or terminated until full payment is received. For information about assistance programs that will help cover the cost of childcare tuition, please speak with the [appropriate center contact]. A payment plan must be agreed upon between the family and Center before an account will be considered "in good standing" and no longer eligible for termination. This requires a signed payment plan contract.

## Holidays and Vacation

Azy's Place Children's Center is closed for the following holidays:

New Year's Day  
New Years' Eve Day  
Martin Luther King Day  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Labor Day  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas Day

Plus 10 Professional Development Days per year

If the holiday falls on a weekend day, Azy's Place will close the previous Friday or the following Monday. For example, if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, Azy's Place may close on Friday. Families will be given 1 week's notice in the event of additional closings.

Paid Holidays and Professional development days are essential to ensuring the highest quality care and education for your child.

### Vacation Days

Each family who attends Azy's Place Children Center full-time for at least 1 Year and are current with payments will receive one week of vacation per calendar year. Please note: vacation days are per family, not per child. Any vacation days not used by December 31 of each year will expire. Vacation days may not be used on a paid holiday. Please provide the Administrative staff or Director onsite with two weeks' notice when you wish to use vacation days. Requests to use vacation days must be provided in writing.

### Extended Absence

In the event that a child needs to take an extended absence, such as summer break, and wishes to return to the program after a period of time When I agree to hold an opening I give up the right to fill that position with another child who would be paying full tuition. For this reason, a non-refundable holding fee is required to hold an opening, beginning on the date that the opening becomes available and due for each week that the opening is to be held. This fee will consist of one week's full tuition and will be due on the Thursday preceding each week that the opening is to be held. If payment is not received by 5:00 p.m. on Friday and no contact with the Administration staff or Director will result in termination of enrollment. If possible, notify the Administration staff or Director at least one week before an extended absence.



# Curriculum

## Daily Schedule and Activities

Each program has a Daily Schedule tailored to each age group. Azy's Place Children's Center uses Montessori Curriculum that is based on self-directed activity, hands-on learning, and collaborative play that touches on the five key areas Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Mathematics and Culture

A Daily Schedule will be provided for your child's program.

## Free Choice

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the children's schedules. During free play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

## Outdoor Play

When weather permits, nature walks will be taken 1-2 times a week. Staff will meet the ratio for outdoor at all times. Children will be supervised by staff at all times. Toddlers and Preschool students will have one teacher at all times to comply with regulations for outdoor use. School Aged will have two teachers at all times to comply with regulations for outdoor use.

We have created an indoor play space "Blue Room/GYM" that will be 75 square feet per child of outdoor activity space based on the total licensed capacity. The director will be conducting daily monitoring to ensure compliance. No child will be left without direct supervision at any time and age-appropriate play equipment will be provided to meet the needs of the children and safety. The facility will operate in strict compliance with Title 22 Regulations. There will be a 15-minute transition period for each group rotation to prevent commingling at all times.

Our teachers refer to the Child Care Weather Watch poster from the California Department of Public Health to determine if it is too hot or cold to play outdoors. It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name. Azy's Place has a few extra hats and mittens, but not enough for every child. If a child is not dressed appropriately for the weather, we will contact parents to provide the appropriate attire. Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

## Nap/Rest time

The California Department of Human Services requires that all children must be provided a regularly

scheduled nap or resting time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. There is no hard and fast rule regarding the maximum amount of time a child should have to remain resting. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest.

Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a small blanket or stuffed animal. These items will be stored in your child's backpack or mat bag; there is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding which items to bring. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name, as all class laundry is sent home weekly to be washed.

### Multimedia

The use of multimedia in our program is an extension of the teaching and learning that takes place in our classrooms. Teachers may select movie, television, and computer game titles based on weekly themes. Children are not required to view part or all of a video or television show, or to play computer games. Instead, the activity is offered as an incentive. All multimedia must have a rating of "PG" or "E" and must possess an educational theme. Children are limited to a specified amount of time per week they may use or view multimedia:

- Toddlers: 3-5 hours per week
- Preschool: 4 hours per week
- School Age: 5 hours per week
- Infants: Not suggested any form of multimedia at this time.

## Weapons/Violent Play

There is a strict policy of allowing no weapon play at Azy's Place Children's Center. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type or size or to pretend that other items are weapons, including their fingers, hands, or blocks. Redirection should be used when a child is engaging in weapon or violent play. If a child brings a weapon to Azy's Place, the weapon should be placed out of sight and sent home the same day with a note explaining the policy about weapons.

Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. At Azy's Place, we encourage positive redirection and conflict resolution. Bullying is not acceptable or a tolerated behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

## Pets & Visiting Animals

Staff may introduce a class pet to the classroom. Please make sure you share any pet allergies with your

student's teachers. Pets and visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Azy's Place without first notifying and receiving permission from the Center's Director. Once approved by the Director, pets and visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian or animal shelter to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children.

## Assessments

Azy's Place uses an informal diagnostic assessment strategy to assess students' levels when entering the program and then every four months thereafter to keep track of students' progress. Parents are encouraged to work with their child's teacher to assess and meet their child's needs.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences/ Assessment Portfolios

Parent-teacher conferences will typically be held twice per year, as well as each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into your child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Azy's Place uses these tools Observation, Checklist/Rubrics, Portfolios, and parent assessments to help assess children's development. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

## Field Trips

Azy's Place Children's Center offers a variety of experiences both at and away from the center. Field trips where students will be transported will require a "Field Trip Permission Form." as well as Azy's Place required uniform which consists of Azy's Place Logo T-shirts and Denim bottoms. Parents will be notified at least One Month in advance of all field trips requiring a "Field Trip Permission Form." If you do not wish for your child to attend a particular field trip, please find alternative childcare arrangements for that day, as we will not have staff available to stay behind with children not participating in the field trip.

As a participant in our child care program, your child may participate in short, unannounced field trips including but not limited to: walks as a class around the perimeter of the building and/or nearby neighborhoods; trips to local playgrounds; trips to local businesses. Teacher-child ratios are maintained at all times.

\*A "Parent/Guardian Permissions" form must be completed at the time of enrollment for this type of field trip.

## Rules Related to Transportation

Azy's Place uses the Children's Center's SUV or Rented Minibus, whichever allows adequate space for away field trips. Headcounts will be taken before leaving the center, after entering the vehicle, during a field trip, after taking children to the restroom, after returning to the vehicle, and upon returning to the center. When children leave the vehicle, the vehicle will be inspected to ensure no children are left in the vehicle.

## Meals and Snacks

	<b>Breakfast</b>	<b>Lunch</b>	<b>Snack</b>
Infants	As Needed	As Needed	As Needed
Early Learners	7:30 am	11:30 am	9:30 am, 2:00 pm
Avid Learners	7:30 am	11:30 am	9:30 am, 2:00 pm
Academic Achievers	N/A	N/A	2:30 pm
Junior Scholars	N/A	N/A	3:30 pm
Savant Learners	N/A	N/A	4:30 pm

## Food Service Policy

At Azy's Place, children are prepared nutritious meals and snacks. Azy's Place Children Center follows the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Food Program. Menus will be posted in the Welcome Area of the Children Center. You may request a copy to take home if you would like you may also find it in your brightwheel app and our website. Children will be encouraged to sample all foods that are offered, but will never be forced to eat. Please inform your child's teacher if your child cannot eat a certain food or has different dietary needs (e.g. vegetarian, vegan, lactose intolerant) so a substitution can be made. For certain dietary

restrictions, you may be asked to provide food from home for your child.

For special dietary restrictions, food from home must be labeled with the child's name and date to assure no risk of cross-contamination, spread of germs, or accidental food allergy outbreaks. For Community Care Licensing (CCL) is required fully authorized inspections to secure the health and safety of all children and staff at the center.

## Water

We are a water bottle only facility. Please be sure your child brings in a clean, easy to open water bottle daily. We will provide disposable cups for those who forget their water bottles.

We have signs in all restrooms stating that sinks will be used for only Hand Washing at all times. Sinks will not be used for drinking or food preparation purposes at all times.

## Food From Home

To lower the risk of spreading germs or any illness, Azy's place does not allow food from home . Please complete all documents for food allergies and special diets. For special treats to celebrate a birthday or holiday: Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions in our classrooms, we recommend supplying store-bought snacks still in the original packaging. Please do not bring any homemade snacks. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA and California Department of Education is available from the Administration Staff.

## Food Allergies/ Action Plans

If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form. This form will be posted in your child's room, as well as in food preparation areas. If medication for an allergic reaction is provided, please have your physician sign the Food Allergy Action Plan as well.

## Infant, Toddler, and Two-Year-Old Programs

The following information is specific to the infant, toddler, and two-year-old program rooms: Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper creams, bottles, formula, baby food, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. Please label all items with the child's name. Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day. If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breast milk, and when you would like to come in and feed your child.

\*Breast milk must be brought in ready-to-use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk for extended periods of time.

We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Please inform your child's teachers on the daily charts of any new foods your child has tried.

## SIDS

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected, sudden death of a child under age 1 for which a cause of death cannot be identified. It is not known what causes SIDS; however, several sleeping practices have been linked to an increased risk for SIDS. Therefore, Azy's Place Children's Center has a strict policy for infant sleep placement.

\*All infants less than one year will be placed on their backs to sleep. Infants shall not be allowed to sleep

in a car seat or swing at Azy's Place.

Once a child has been placed in his or her crib for a nap, if the infant rolls from back to front - and is also able to roll from front to back - it is acceptable to leave the infant sleeping on his or her stomach. NO heavy blankets, stuffed toys or pillows should ever be placed in a crib. A request for alternative sleeping positions must be accompanied by a signed and dated physician's note stating the reason for the request.

## What to Provide

### Clothing and Items from Home

Extra clothes, water bottle, sippy cup, diapers, diaper cream, pull-ups, sunscreen, small blanket for rest, travel-size pillow, and weather-appropriate clothes.

### Play Clothes

Please send your child to Azy's Place in comfortable play clothes and shoes. Play is usually active and often messy; comfortable, washable clothes are important if your child is to participate fully in the program. Outdoor play is scheduled every day as an essential part of our planned curriculum.

Children should be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities. All children occasionally get their clothes wet and have toileting accidents. Whenever this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing provided by the family. Your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothing, including underwear, to be kept at school and replenished as needed. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing. Let the teacher know whenever your child's clothing or other items cannot be located.

### Items from Home

Azy's Place allows one stuffed animal or comfort item to be brought to school for nap/rest time. We ask that all items brought to Azy's Place from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival by a parent. Please clearly label all belongings brought from home. Due to the risk of damage or theft, it is recommended that items of value, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems be left at home. Azy's Place Children's Center is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged items.

## Arrival and Departure

### Arrival

Parents are required to accompany their child into the center and into their child's classroom. Parents should also speak with the teacher in the classroom, if only briefly. We encourage parents to communicate with their child's teacher about their child's temperament that particular day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten that morning, etc. Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parents

This is common and developmentally appropriate.

Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- Establish a regular, predictable routine. Whether you have a kiss and a hug and go, or help your child put his things in his cubby first, do it the same way every day. What often makes separating stressful for children is uncertainty. If your child can predict what will happen, the separation won't be as difficult.
- Separate once. If you come back into the classroom again and again, it will increase your child's stress. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child, so doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child
- Be reliable. Return when promised. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Phrase time in terms your child will understand. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

### Departure

Azy's Place Children' Center closes at 6:00 pm Monday - Friday. If you will be late picking up your child, please provide us with as much notice as possible. Please note that there is a late fee for arriving after 6:15 pm. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick up your child, it is essential that you inform your child's teacher in advance of the pick-up. This person must be listed as an authorized person on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person that they may be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked up before, he or she may still need identification if the teacher in charge has never met him or her.

Say goodbye to your child's teachers so they know you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, Azy's Place Children's Center is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside of the building.

If parents do not arrive to pick up their child from the program, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Emergency Contact. If parents cannot be reached, staff members will try to contact all emergency contact persons. If staff members are unable to contact emergency contact persons, the Director will be notified and she will then notify the Department of Human Services and/or the Yucca Valley Police Department.

### **Afterschool and Before School Dropoff and Pickup**

Azy's Place Children's Center offers an additional service of before school drop off and afterschool pickup. Your child must be at the center one hour before school starts to assure safe and ontime arrival. There will be an additional fee for the

## Attendance

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom as a whole. If your child will be absent, please call the center one hour before your child's scheduled arrival time so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan.

If your child will be absent for an extended period of time (more than two days), the center should be notified in writing of the date the absence begins and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of one week or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

## Sign In/Out

Parents/guardians must sign in/out children when they are being dropped off and picked up with a clear signature and time. This must be done daily when the child is present. Only adults in your child's file will be able to pick up children. Please have an ID ready for pick up, if the staff doesn't recognize who is picking up.

## Health and Safety Policies

To ensure the health and welfare of the child and the safe and accurate administration of such services Azy's Place has prepared and implemented this Incidental Medical Services policy and plan of operation.

currently administers and monitors the following types of Incidental Medical Services:

- Medication Administration (Prescription and Over-the-counter) Albuterol Inhaler (Asthma)

The following procedures will be followed to provide Incidental Medical Services to children for prescription medications (temporary and long-term) and non-prescription medications, as well as administering inhaled medication, EpiPen and EpiPen Jr. injections, and carrying or complying with medical orders:

- Medication Administration form will be given and filled out by the parent/guardian. This form must be completed by both the parent/guardian and the prescribing medical provider. The Medication Administration form will remain current until the parent/guardian identifies a new/different medication or states medication is no longer needed. Note: If any changes are needed, a new Medication Administration Form will be signed and updated.
- All medication administrations must be documented on the Medication Administration log. It will be signed with the date, time, and amount of dosage.
- A parent/guardian may elect to administer medications to a child during the school day.
- Expiration dates on medication will be checked every two months



- All medicines and medical equipment including EpiPens will be located in the classroom under adult supervision and inaccessible to children.
- Universal precautions shall be followed in the administration of all medications, intermittent healthcare, and first aid.
- Plan for ensuring proper safety precautions are in place, such as wearing gloves during any procedure that involves potential exposure to blood or body fluids, performing hand hygiene immediately after removal and disposal of gloves, and disposal of used instruments in approved containers.

### Illness

Our first priority at Azy's Place is to provide a healthy, safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following is experienced: an illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities (as determined by the staff); an illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom; or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- Fever of 101 (under the arm) or greater, until 24 hours symptom-free without fever-reducing medication
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications) (Two instances) until diarrhea stops for 24 hours or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed healthcare professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting (One instance) the child can return after vomiting has been resolved for 12 hours or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chickenpox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Hand Foot and Mouth sores have dried and crusted and no fever
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed

- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at Azy's Place will be isolated in their classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be isolated to wait for his/her parent to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible.

Azy's Place reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed healthcare professional stating that the child is not contagious.

\*Parents will be notified by telephone and Brightwheel. Please contact Azy's Place via phone or Brightwheel within 20 minutes of notification whenever your child is ill.

#### Notice of Exposure & Reporting Disease

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be shared by [Azysplace@gmail.com](mailto:Azysplace@gmail.com). Additionally, families who are signed up for Brightwheel will receive email notification of the illness. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the Director, Saleena Smith immediately.

In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director, Saleena Smith will notify the health department.

#### Hand Washing

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm, running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in childcare such as the flu, diarrhea, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their children in the hand-washing process upon arrival.

Other times your child (and staff members) will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After each diaper change or using the toilet
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after administering medication
- After handling bodily fluids (mucus, blood vomit)

- Before and after using the sensory table
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After handling pets and other animals
- After cleaning or handling garbage

Warm, running water (no colder than 60 degrees F) and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off the faucet. Help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well.

### Medications

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. Azy's Place Children's Center staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the Director.

Azy's Place Children's Center will not administer Tylenol for Fever. To administer Tylenol to a child under 2 years old, Azy's Place Children's Center will need a doctor's note with dosage and times.

Medications are stored in a locked box (refrigerated medications) or in a high cabinet (non-refrigerated medications) while in use at Azy's Place Children's Center. The Medication Authorization Form must remain with the medication at all times. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Azy's Place Children's Center.

Medications are administered only by Director Saleena Smith. When a medication is given, the teacher will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given.

### Physicals and Immunizations

Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at Azy's Place Children's Center to attend. The physical on file must be updated at least annually; immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received.

### Change in Information

Whenever there is a change in address, phone, emergency contacts, health providers, health conditions, work/school schedule, family situation, or other pertinent information, we ask that this information be submitted, in writing, as soon as the change occurs. It is essential that we are able to reach you or a designated adult at all times, in case of an emergency situation, so please keep your addresses and phone numbers up to date

with us. It is also important for staff to be aware of any household changes or transitions your child may be experiencing. This will enable staff to be supportive, empathetic, and understanding of your child's individual needs.

#### Documentation of Accidents/Incidents

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Azy's Place Children's Center using an Accident/ Incident Report and Incident Report on Brightwheel. The parent shall sign the report on the same day as the incident. A copy may be given to the parent. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the director to be placed in the child's permanent file.

#### Documents of Health Incidents

Each time a parent is contacted regarding an ill child or symptoms of illness, a Health Check will be completed on Brightwheel. All parents will be notified of any communicable illnesses present in the center via a sign posted on the main entrance to the center explaining the illness as well as Brightwheel. In addition, parents with children in the classroom of the infected child will receive an email regarding the illness.

#### Documents of Allergies

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan posted in a visible location in the classroom. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff working in the classroom of a child with allergies must review the Allergy Action Plan to ensure an understanding of emergency procedures should the child have an allergic reaction. All allergic reactions must be documented with a Health Incident Form.

#### Documents of Special Health Care Needs

An Emergency Care Plan will be on file for any child with special health care needs (seizures, etc). A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this plan, should an emergency arise. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific healthcare needs.

#### Emergency Medical/Dental Procedure

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Azy's Place Children's Center staff members to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of serious injury. It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, the Director, Saleena Smith will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Contact & Parental Consent form will be called.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the administration staff, nurse, or Director until a parent arrives.
- If the child requires immediate medical attention: The staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will remain with the injured child and instruct someone else to call 911. If no one is available, first ensure the child is stable and if possible, bring the child with you to call 911.
- A staff member who witnessed the emergency situation will accompany the child to the hospital, bringing the child's physical exam, immunization records, and Emergency Contact & Parental Consent Form.
- The Director or available administrative staff will contact the parent(s).

#### Sunscreen & Insect Repellent

All families will be required to supply sunscreen for their child/ren for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen will be applied to a child. Sunscreen must be SPF30 or above, and will be applied by classroom teachers regularly throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at Azy's Place Children's Center for the day, as Azy's Place Children's Center staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent.

#### Mandatory Child Abuse Reporters

As childcare professionals who interact with children on a daily basis, each staff member of Azy's Place Children's Center is a mandatory child abuse and neglect reporter and must contact the California Department of Human Services whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

#### Tobacco Use

Cigarettes/ Vapes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

#### Access Policy

Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care will have restricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.

Persons who have restricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any childcare responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher or staff member assigned to the class unless he/she delegates it to the Director or administrative staff due to a conflict of interest

with the person. Azy's Place Children's Center buildings are locked at all times and only staff may open doors for visitors. If staff don't know the visitor they shall ask for ID or get the Director. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is.

If a staff member is unsure about the reason, the administration staff is to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the "Dangerous Adult" procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member and will not be allowed to interact with children on the premises.

A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the California sex offender registry:

- Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.
- Shall not be on the property of the child care center without written permission from the Director, except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own minor child to and from the center. The Director is not obligated to provide permission and must consult with their licensing agent first.

### Affidavit Policy

At times families may be dealing with difficult situations at home. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits for their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Azy's Place Children's Center staff member to provide such a statement. Our program's priority is providing the best possible care when children are away from home and our focus will remain on the child, making sure all their needs are met during what could be a difficult time at home. Azy's Place Children's Center staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature to families.

## **Discipline Policies**

We work to prevent behavior problems by arranging each classroom so that children work in small groups and have a choice of activities. Children are encouraged to verbalize their feelings to learn to positively work through strong emotions. Teachers act as role models and encourage children's appropriate behaviors.

Positive methods of discipline include:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only on unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements.
- Using brief supervised separation from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the age of the child.

- Be individualized and consistent for each child.
- Be appropriate to the child's level of understanding.

In extreme situations and as a last resort, a child may be guided to an alternate activity away from the group for the benefit of the child and the rest of the children. Teachers use this strategy not as a punishment, but to help redirect the child when he or she returns to group activities. The child is allowed to return to the group activity when he or she feels ready to do so. Parents/guardians will be called and a meeting with the director will be held to discuss options. The director, teacher, and parents will work closely to develop a behavior plan for the child. Should the child's continued negative behavior put themselves, their peers, or their teachers at risk for physical harm or, if the child damages Center property, we reserve the right to ask the parent to withdraw the child from the Center.

**Under no circumstances is physical/corporal punishment permitted. Discipline will not be associated with food, rest, or toileting.**

**\*\*Any staff member who witnesses any form of physical or corporal punishment, even if administered by a family member, is required by law to report his or her observations to the appropriate local authorities.**

#### Understanding Misbehavior

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems.

Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave:

- Test whether caregivers will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
- A child does not understand the rules, or are held to expectations that are beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" for their misbehavior with adult attention.

#### Preventing Misbehavior

Intervention strategies include but are not limited to the following:

1. One-on-one relationships building activities such as the I Love You Rituals
2. Utilize mental health, social workers, and psychologists in service of the child and family. Refer to special needs programs if available.
3. Class-made books individualized for the student. Individual picture cards to support behavioral expectations.

4. Ways for the student to be of service to the school, others or his or her community.
5. Noticing and describing the child's body, face and actions, labeling of feelings, and acknowledging or true intent.
6. I Am: Feeling Chart, I Choose: Self-Control Board, and intense work with the Feeling Buddies.
7. Assessing, teaching, or scaffolding missing executive skills.

### Biting Program

Before age three, biting is somewhat common. When a child repeatedly bites:

1. Identify stressors—not enough structure, too much structure, not enough rest, eating, bowel habits, connection, attunement, etc.
2. Start a stress reduction program at home and school.
  - More touching (skin to skin), massage games (I'm saying goodnight to your legs, arms, hands, fingers, head, etc.)
  - I Love You Rituals with attuned interactions
  - Chest and lap time
  - More schedules and routines
3. Shadow the child and use a teething necklace. There is nothing you can do to help a child learn other ways of getting needs met after the bite has occurred. You must catch the child before the bite. Most bites occur during transitions and unstructured time. Have a person shadow the child who is biting. When the child begins to bite:
  - Toss the teething cloth into the child's open mouth. The mouth will close.
  - Firmly say, "STOP. No bite! Ouch! (make a pained face) Biting hurts."
  - Say, "You wanted \_\_\_\_\_ (take an educated guess as to what the child wanted). Say \_\_\_\_\_ (acceptable words) or do \_\_\_\_\_ (acceptable action)!"
  - Make visuals of alternatives to biting: Say, "My turn," put up a STOP hand, play with a different toy, move away, etc.

While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment.

### Severe Biting Policy

The following process will be followed if a child's behavior continuously takes away from the care or safety of others.

- Meeting with parents, teachers, and administration to discuss a plan of action to increase positive behavior at school and home. If necessary, an evaluation will be recommended for the child and the parent will be supplied contact information for the evaluation. If an evaluation is recommended, the parent will have two days to make the appropriate connection and one week for the evaluation to take place/be scheduled. All documentation must be provided to the office. Failure to respond in a



timely manner may result in the child's expulsion from the program.

- Logs must be kept to seek out triggers and patterns for repeated undesired behavior. Upon written request, these logs will be made available to the parents and/or evaluator.
- If aggressive behavior/ biting occurs two times in the same day the child must be picked up from the center immediately. The child will be removed from the classroom while waiting to be picked up. If the behavior occurs a third time in the same week, the child must be picked up immediately and taken the following day off.

## Home and School Partnership

### Brightwheel

Brightwheel is an app to help parents stay connected with their child and teacher during school hours. This is where you can communicate directly with your child's teachers throughout the day. It can also be used to pay your bill with Azy's Place Children's Center.

Talk to administration staff to get set up.

### New Family Orientation

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the director to complete a "New Family Orientation." This orientation is a great time for parents to drop off routine care items (diapers, bottles, etc.) as well as an opportunity to participate in a portion of classroom activities with their child, familiarizing themselves with their child's routines at [Azy's Place Children's Center. Important policies and procedures are also reviewed with the Director at this time, as well as the paperwork required for enrollment completed. Typically, "New Family Orientation" is scheduled one week prior to the start date.

### Daily Communication

Azy's Place Children's Center uses Brightwheel to communicate, share photos, notes and incidents.

### Newsletters

A weekly newsletter will be posted on the bulletin board in your child's class. If you sign up for Brightwheel a copy will be sent to you. This newsletter provides you with general information and announcements about the center and detailed weekly themes and announcements.

### Cultural Competence

Azy's Place Children's Center is committed to respecting each child's and family's culture and diverse needs. We recognize that culture influences every aspect of a child's development and is reflected in childrearing beliefs and practices. We believe it is important to support and preserve the child's home language usage, faith and beliefs, and cultural traditions. We recognize that children can and will acquire the use of English even when their home language is used and respected.

Azy's Place Children's Center carries out this philosophy of cultural competence in the following ways:

- Families are treated with respect and sensitivity from our first meeting.
- Families' financial limitations are respected when planning for activities that could potentially result in additional costs, through the acceptance of DHS payments, and a clear understanding of payment expectations from the time of enrollment.
- We attempt to learn accurate information about each family, their culture, faith and beliefs, and cultural traditions (we encourage each family if they feel comfortable, to share this information with us at the time of enrollment). This information is part of the child's daily plan as it relates to meals and snacks, holiday recognition, etc.
- Families are encouraged to be actively involved in what their child is doing in our program through the family "homework", dress-up days, holiday parties, and volunteer opportunities such as chaperoning field trips.
- Families are asked to inform us of the best way for them to receive communication (i.e. verbal, written, text, email, etc.)
- Families, where English is their second language, are encouraged and assisted in becoming knowledgeable about the cognitive value for children of knowing more than one language and providing them with strategies to support, maintain, and preserve their home language. Azy's Place Children's Center will continue to acquire training annually to further our knowledge of culture, language, and diversity.

### Room Transitions

Your child will transition to a new classroom when he/she has reached the developmental milestones for a particular classroom. As the time for a transition to a new room approaches, you will receive a letter containing information about your child's transition into his/her new classroom. Both your child's current and future teacher is available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher in order to familiarize themselves with the new classroom, children, and curriculum.

### Parent Participation

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our program. Some possible opportunities to participate and contribute to your child's Azy's Place Children's Center experience:

- Field trip transportation and supervision
- Leading or assisting special projects (sewing, carpentry, cooking, etc.)
- Construction or collection of raw materials for art projects, dramatic play props, etc.
- Eating lunch or snack with your child – please inform the teachers one day in advance
- Volunteering in your child's classroom

### Program Evaluations

Azy's Place Children's Center asks parents to complete a program evaluation annually. The information gathered from these anonymous surveys is used by the staff to develop goals for our center and to improve the overall quality of care at our center. A parent's point of view is different from a teacher's point of view. Therefore, parent feedback on the program evaluations is very important to the success of our program and satisfaction of our families.

### Questions/Concerns

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved.

If the concern is not resolved, the Director Saleena can be reached at 760-228-9068 or [Azysplace@gmail.com](mailto:Azysplace@gmail.com)

The Director Saleena is always available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.

## Emergency Procedures

### Fire, Earthquake, Bomb, or other Emergency Situations

Fire regulations and tornado warning procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom. Fire and tornado drills are conducted every three months; all classrooms are required to participate. In the event of a fire, bomb threat, or other evacuation emergencies, the children and teachers will immediately leave the building and go to each class' designated spot. Once all children are accounted for all classes will meet at the play yard

In case of an earthquake, each classroom has a designated area to seek shelter until the emergency is over. Parents will be called as soon as safely possible following an emergency situation. For the safety of children, parents, and staff, we ask that parents do not attempt to pick up their child during an emergency situation.

### Blizzard/ Severe Winter Weather

The Director will monitor the weather and local news stations throughout the day to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. The Director will post on Brightwheel to inform parents of the situation. Routine classroom activities will continue until parents arrive.

### Missing or Abducted Child

In the event of a missing child, the administrative staff will search for the child in the immediate area, while another staff member calls the Director to help with the search.

- If the child cannot be located in a reasonable amount of time, the Director will notify the Yucca Valley Police Department and the child's parents.
- In the event of an abducted child, the teacher or administrative staff must immediately contact the director and the Yucca Valley Police Department, and the child's parents.

### Power Failure

Staff members and children should remain in the classroom and if possible, proceed with activities as usual, or may go to the outdoor playground until power resumes.

- If power cannot be restored within a reasonable amount of time, the center will close and parents will be contacted.
- Director and administration staff are responsible for contacting parents to inform them of the closing and of the need to immediately pick up their child.
- Activities will resume as soon as possible until parents arrive.

### Special Needs Care Policy

Azy's Place Children's Center is committed to the principle of inclusion and complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We are committed to every child equally, regardless of their special needs, and will commit to learning more about each child's specific needs and finding the best resources necessary to accomplish our common goal of finding the best care for each child. We believe that including children with special needs can enrich the experience of learning for all children and Azy's Place Children's Center will make accommodations for children with special needs within the guidelines of ADA.

To assure that we are meeting the individual needs of each child enrolled with an identified special need, the following procedures and programs are followed:

- Staff receive ongoing training on inclusion and special needs as related to the specific needs of enrolled children.
- Confidentiality of children and families is respected and maintained at all times.
- Children with special needs will be included and encouraged to participate to the fullest extent of their abilities.
- Staff and families collaborate to meet the individual needs of the child.
- Communication with families is ongoing and is responsive to the needs of families.
- Physical environment is free of barriers.
- A variety of teaching strategies are used to meet the individual needs of each child.
- An individualized special needs care plan will be created with help of the parent/guardian, doctor, and Azy's Place Children's Center to ensure that all parties are aware of the care practices which need to be in place.
- The special needs care plan will be completed annually or more frequently at the request of the parent/guardian or child's doctor.

## Termination from the Program

Services may be terminated at any time for the following reasons:

- Excessive unexcused absences – 10 per school year
- Excessive late pick ups of child – 5 per year
- Harm or injury to another child or adult in the program
- Continuous disruptive behavior
- Failure to submit physician's report within 30 days of enrollment
- Failure to update child's immunizations as required by law
- Failure to pay for the program by the end of the month of service.

Our goal is to provide a safe, nurturing environment for all children with programs designed to suit each developmental level. Fees **will not be refunded** if services are terminated for failure to abide by these procedures.

## Covid-19 Closing Billing Protocol

If your child's building closes due to a Covid case or state-mandated government shutdown, tuition will be reduced to 75% the cost during the shutdown unless state grants are in place to cover the loss.

## Azy's Place Children's Center Handbook Agreement

You can find the Azy's Place Children's Center Handbook agreement at our center or you may request a copy to be sent via Brightwheel. A handbook agreement must be signed and initialed before your child starts their first day.

## Weather-Related Closings

Azy's Place will remain open during most severe weather. The Director onsite, Saleena Smith will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. In the event that Azy's Place closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation via Brightwheel.

Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.