

*123 Child Development Center
Parent Handbook*



123 CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER PARENT HANDBOOK

Contact Information and Provider Experience

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Thank you for selecting 123 Child Development Center for your childcare needs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Estancias Location

3900 Las Estancias Ct SW Ste 103 ABQ NM 87121

Office: 505-582-2859

Director: Julissa Bustillos

Mobile: 505-410-1573

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NM PreK Supervisor: Joanna Rosales

Mobile: 505-313-2471

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Broadway Location

1701 Broadway Blvd SE ABQ NM 87102

Office: 505-312-8234

Director: Diana Carrasco

Email: 123childcenter.broadway@gmail.com

NM PreK General Administrator: Danna Morales

Mobile: 505-373-6587

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General Administrator: Yadira Armendariz

Mobile: 505-267-8936

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PROVIDER EXPERIENCE

- Licensed by the State of New Mexico ECECD
- Certified in Child CPR and First Aid
- Registered with the State Food Program
- FOCUS
- NM PreK

We appreciate your trust in 123 Child Development Center for your child's early education.

We are dedicated to enriching the lives of every child in our program. Our educators are qualified, experienced, and committed to fostering the success of each child. They are required to possess or be pursuing a degree in Early Childhood Multicultural Education and to stay informed about the latest philosophies in Early Childhood Development. Additionally, all staff members are mandated to maintain current certifications in CPR and First Aid.

Thank you once again for choosing us.

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Mission Statement

At 123 Child Development Center, we are committed to providing a safe, enjoyable, and clean environment where children can thrive. Our center offers nutritious meals and opportunities for growth, learning, and socialization with peers, all while ensuring a fun atmosphere. Our mission is to deliver high-quality early childhood education and care, grounded in the latest research and understanding of child development and health. We also aim to support families by creating a loving and nurturing space, remaining accessible to discuss their children's needs, and offering our services at reasonable prices.

Goals

Our objectives for the children we serve include:

- Ensuring that each child reaches their full potential while exhibiting healthy social, emotional, and physical development.
- Providing families with confidence that their children are receiving exceptional care.
- Fostering natural bonding and friendships among siblings.
- Preparing children emotionally, socially, and academically for life.
- Maintaining open communication between families and staff, ensuring that feedback is welcomed and addressed promptly.
- Guarantee that every child receives a well-balanced diet, with meals provided when they are hungry. We will never force a child to eat if they are not hungry, as this can lead to lifelong unhealthy eating habits.
- Allow children to feel unique and express their emotions freely, whether they are experiencing anger, sadness, joy, or any other feelings.
- Provide comfort and sympathy when children are hurt, affirming their feelings without dismissing their experiences.
- Recognize that each child is a remarkable individual—a miracle—and the most important child in the world to their families. They will be treated with the utmost respect and care.

Objectives

To achieve our goals, we will:

- Conduct thorough screenings of potential employees and provide comprehensive training in child development, health, and safety practices.
- Implement a policy of regular family conferences, newsletters, and other communication methods.
- Encourage teachers to greet family inquiries with warmth and attentiveness, ensuring that each concern is taken seriously and addressed promptly.
- Develop a budget that reflects prudent financial management, with accurate income forecasts and careful expenditure prioritization.
- Ensure that our staff reflects the diversity of the community and is well-educated and compensated.
- Establish an integrated, multidisciplinary system for professional development, training, and technical assistance that supports respectful and responsive practices for every child and family.

Our Motto: "What is given to the children, the children will give to society."

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Curriculum Statement

At 123 Child Development Center, we will adhere to FOCUS criteria and recommendations to effectively organize our learning environment and structure our daily lesson plans. Children will participate in a variety of developmentally appropriate activities designed to enhance their emotional, social, physical, and cultural growth.

Our curriculum philosophy is aligned with the 17 Guiding Principles of the FOCUS criteria and includes the following key components:

- Cultural Appreciation: We foster an understanding and appreciation of various cultures through the respectful introduction of art, music, cuisine, clothing, literature, and customs.
- Diversity Reflection: Our curriculum reflects the pluralistic nature of New Mexican society.
- Community Engagement: Children will participate in learning experiences that involve interaction within the community.
- Individualized Approach: Daily activities are based on continuous observation, guidance, and assessment of each child and their interactions with peers.
- Active Engagement: We encourage children to actively participate in a variety of developmentally appropriate experiences that will:
 - Promote a positive self-concept.
 - Respect cultural diversity in themselves and others.
 - Enhance social skills.
 - Nurture communication and language development.
 - Stimulate creative expression.
 - Extend cognitive abilities such as thinking, reasoning, questioning, and experimenting.
 - Maintain sound health, safety, and nutritional practices.
 - Develop physical competence and coordination.
 - Encourage self-control.
 - Instill respect for the natural environment and promote environmentally sound principles.
- Sensory Experiences: We recognize the significance of sensory experiences in early development.
- Caregiving Relationships: Caregiving moments are utilized to deepen relationships with infants, supporting their development through sensitivity during routine tasks.
- Individual Rhythms: We acknowledge and cater to the individual rhythms of each child.
- Emotional Awareness: We attend to the emotional needs of all participants.
- Predictable Routine: A structured yet flexible daily routine is provided to instill a sense of security while allowing for individual preferences and independent choices. Each day will incorporate a balance of:
 - Indoor and outdoor play.
 - Quiet and active periods.
 - Large group, small group, and individual activities.
 - Engagement of both large and small muscles.

Child-initiated and adult-initiated activities.

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- Activities that provide learning opportunities through:
 - a. Various types of play
 - b. Familiar daily routines
 - c. Social interactions with peers and adults
 - d. Challenges that stimulate both physical and intellectual growth
 - e. Transition times
- Ensures the daily plan is structured to promote positive behaviors.
- Respects and encourages the child's first language as much as possible.
- Showcases children's creations.
- Provides daily opportunities for spontaneous play.
- Encourages children to assert their rights in socially acceptable manners.
- Fosters an understanding and respect for the rights of others.
- Develops and implements policies to guide children's behavior.
- Recognizes that play is the primary mode of learning.

About Our Curriculum

We adhere to the New Mexico Early Learning Guidelines when developing our weekly lesson plans, offering a diverse range of activities. Children will engage daily in art, science, cooking, music, library time, and more.

- Infants: An infant's day will include activities such as music, reading, bubbles, tummy time, and other experiences to support physical and intellectual development.
- Toddlers: The toddler curriculum is designed to introduce a wide variety of concepts.
- New Mexico Pre-K: This program will follow the Creative Curriculum. For further details, please refer to the New Mexico Pre-K Parent Manual.

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Our Philosophy

We firmly believe that every child has the potential to achieve anything that any other human has accomplished. Our goal is to equip children with the knowledge and social skills necessary to reach their aspirations. Through play and collaborative activities, children will develop essential social, emotional, and cognitive skills. We offer a variety of choices throughout the day, allowing children to engage in activities that align with their individual needs and interests.

Our teaching approach employs the shadowing method, guiding children in their decision-making rather than imposing choices upon them. Our classrooms are organized into various centers, including a library, home living area, art center, block center, and circle time. We also feature areas for dramatic play and science exploration. These diverse environments foster a wide array of interests, encouraging children to make choices that support their social and emotional development, cognitive learning, and both gross and fine motor skills.

At 123 Child Development Center, we are committed to educating the whole child. We recognize each child as a unique individual, considering their social, emotional, cultural, physical, and intellectual dimensions. Each teacher is responsible for tailoring their lesson plans to promote the distinctive growth of every child.

- Children will be exposed to lesson plans designed to enhance their developmental skills, encouraging an appreciation for family cultures and traditions. Our lesson plans include a dual language program in English and Spanish, as well as instruction in well-being and hygiene practices. We also emphasize the importance of family participation in our program.

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Family Engagement Plan

We recognize that families often lead busy lives, making free time a precious commodity. However, the time spent at our center with your child is invaluable. Such experiences foster joy and create opportunities for the significant individuals in their lives to collaborate, enhancing your child's sense of security and enabling us to build closer relationships. Supportive relationships are essential for achieving positive outcomes in your child's academic journey.

At 123 Child Development Center, we offer various opportunities for families to engage in their child's education. Welcome Interviews are a requirement for New Mexico PreK and serve as a crucial aspect of the enrollment process. During these interviews, we gather valuable information regarding your child's needs and preferences, allowing us to develop a tailored lesson plan that sparks their interest in learning. Typically, these interviews are conducted in environments where your child feels most comfortable. By allowing children to interact with their teachers in familiar settings, we establish trust, facilitating a smoother transition from home to school on their first day.

- **Family-Teacher Conferences:** We will hold three conferences each year for infants, toddlers, and PreK classrooms. These conferences provide insights into your child's classroom experiences and offer an opportunity to celebrate their achievements. Your commitment to attend each conference is essential for New Mexico PreK and contributes significantly to your child's success throughout their academic career. Dates will be communicated in classrooms, on our Facebook page, and provided at enrollment through our monthly calendar and newsletter.
- **Volunteering in the Classroom:** Volunteering provides a unique opportunity for you and your child to bond within an educational setting. Your role as a parent is just as vital to your child's education as that of their teacher. We encourage families to share their cultural and family traditions with the class. If you possess special talents you would like to share, please let us know! Opportunities for participation include Career Day, field trips, holiday events, family nights, and various classroom activities. Additionally, you are welcome to stay at the center and engage with your child by reading a book or participating during mealtime.
- **Materials and Services:** If your schedule does not permit volunteering your time, consider contributing services or donating recyclable materials to your child's class. Examples of materials include small plastic food containers (such as those for butter or cream cheese) for home living, empty paper towel or toilet paper rolls for art projects, and pinecones or other natural items for science activities. Children derive a sense of pride and purpose when their contributions become part of class projects. We also welcome volunteers for specific services, such as Book Doctor, Weekend Pet Parent, or Naptime Laundry Fairy. Please sign up with your child's teacher for any opportunities you'd like to pursue.

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Inclusive Practices Policy and Procedures:

We believe that every child can accomplish anything that any other human has ever accomplished. We aspire to provide children with the knowledge and social skills that will help them achieve their goals in life. Our children will learn through play and group activities. Our preschool rooms are divided into defined interest areas or 'centers'. The centers promote social and emotional development, cognitive learning skills, and gross and fine motor skills development. Children will have many choices during the day to do activities that best fit their needs and interests on an individual basis.

At 123 Child Development Center we educate the whole child. That means that we will consider every child a unique individual; socially, emotionally, culturally, physically, and intellectually. Each teacher is responsible for individualizing their planning in order to promote the unique growth of each child. When a child enters our program who has special needs, we will work with the family to ensure a successful educational path. The staff at our centers will be available to provide valuable information, support, and encouragement. Teachers may ask for parental permission to enlist outside resources. This is sometimes necessary to develop a meaningful and beneficial plan that meets each student's unique needs and requirements.

Our goals and expectations throughout the academic year for each child are:

- Identify specific goals for each child
- Demonstrate each child's progress toward achieving their goals throughout the year
- Allow each child to learn and grow with their peers
- Make each child's transition into kindergarten as seamless as possible.

Procedures for Referral:

Prior to and during the school year, we provide-request many different developmental and health screenings for your child. These include:

- Ages and Stages Questionnaire
- Vision screening
- Hearing Screening
- Well child checkup form.

When needed, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) will be developed collaboratively - with you, the specialist, and your child's teacher.

The IEP is:

- A legal document for students with disabilities
- A valuable communication tool for families, teachers, therapists, etc.
- An opportunity for parents, teachers, and therapists to work together to ensure your child achieves the best possible outcomes.

123 Child Development Center will provide the proper support for each child who requires an IEP, as well as their family. Therapists, occupational workers, or other specialists will always be welcome to work with children in our centers.

Parents and guardians must sign the Family Consent for Educators and Program Participation in the Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Program (IEP) process. This consent indicates their acceptance of our participation in the process. Alternatively, if parents or guardians do not wish to proceed with the referral or prefer that the staff center not participate, they should sign the refusal form.

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Our objective in providing quality childcare for your child encompasses several key elements

- A Safe Environment: Ensuring the safety and security of all children in our care.
- A Nurturing Environment: Creating a supportive atmosphere that fosters emotional and social development.
- A Learning Environment: Education extends beyond the basics of reading and arithmetic; it also includes instilling essential values such as honesty, respect, self-reliance, potential, self-discipline, moderation, dependability, love, sensitivity to others, kindness, friendliness, and fairness. We also emphasize the importance of understanding and appreciating the diversity of race and culture.

Effective communication is fundamental to a successful childcare relationship. A strong partnership between parents and providers enables us to collaborate effectively. It is essential for both parties to share pertinent information regarding the child's life, including changes in routine, special events, and significant life alterations such as divorce, separation, moving, or the arrival of visitors. This information plays a vital role in understanding the child's feelings, behaviors, and overall well-being.

We encourage you to communicate your concerns—whether in writing, via telephone, or through scheduled appointments—regarding any area where you feel we may be falling short. We are committed to addressing your feedback and improving our services.

Typical Activities May Include:

- Circle Time: Engaging in singing, dancing, role-playing, games, reading, and listening to stories and music.
- Activity Areas: Children can choose from a variety of stations, including blocks, dramatic play, manipulative toys, science, art, math, a calm corner, sensory exploration, library, and music.
- Outdoor Play: Weather permitting, children can enjoy activities such as rock climbing, riding toys, running, slides, hand ring climbers, spinners, chimes, and a playhouse. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather; layering or bringing extra clothing is advisable.
- Special Days: Celebrations for birthdays and holidays will be included.

Typical Daily Routines May Include:

- Arrival and greeting
- Breakfast and cleanup
- Bathroom and/or diaper changes, along with handwashing
- Infants typically nap in both the morning and afternoon
- Arts and crafts or other educational activities
- Bathroom and/or diaper changes, followed by handwashing
- Outdoor play (weather permitting) or other large muscle activities
- Handwashing, lunch, and cleanup
- Nap time
- Bathroom and/or diaper changes, along with handwashing
- Snack and cleanup
- Free play

Please note that diaper change times will vary based on the child's individual needs. This schedule is a general guideline, suggesting diaper changes every 2.5 hours for infants and toddlers. Your child is fully in our care once you leave the premises in the morning, and they will be returned to you as soon as you arrive for pickup.

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Transitioning to Our Center

We recognize that transitions require time, preparation, planning, and patience. Adults play a crucial role in supporting children before, during, and after these transitions, which may occur when starting in a new environment, moving from home to daycare, or advancing to a new age group and classroom.

Our commitment is to assist families and children in making these transitions as seamless and comfortable as possible. Collaboration between parents and educators is essential; sharing information about the child and identifying necessary support will facilitate a smoother transition to new care. This process includes acclimating the child to the environment and introducing them to their caregivers and peers.

We recommend that initial days may be shorter to ensure a positive experience and minimize stress for the child, although shorter days are not mandatory. Our objective is to provide services tailored to your needs, and we encourage parents to maintain some flexibility during the initial days of transition.

Please feel free to contact the center as often as necessary to inquire about your child, and you may also send a text if that is more convenient.

The adaptation period typically lasts between two to four weeks, though some toddlers may require up to two months to adjust fully to their new environment and feel secure with the educators. If, by the end of this period, we have not achieved a positive transition from home to center, we may suggest exploring alternative childcare options.

Policies and Procedures

For your convenience, we will post a schedule of childcare closings for holidays during the first two weeks of the new year. This schedule will also be displayed on the information wall and at the entrance, and we will strive to minimize changes to this schedule. In the event of any changes to the closing dates, the center will provide a minimum of two weeks' notice.

- **Holiday Closings:** New Year's Day, Presidents Day, Vernal Holiday (Friday before Easter), Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veterans Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Eve.
- **Celebrating Holidays, Birthdays, and Parties:** 123 Child Development Center will celebrate Valentine's Day, Easter, Mother's Day as the person we love us the most, Father's Day as our super hero day, Independence Day (USA and Mexico), Indigenous day known as Columbus day for some families, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, and the anniversary of the center. If there is a specific date you would like to have recognized or celebrated, please reach out to our office staff.
- Birthday celebrations will be managed at the discretion of each family, respecting their preferences, religious beliefs, and cultural practices. Families wishing to celebrate their child's birthday at the center should contact the office to discuss the details of the celebration.

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Observations and Evaluations

At 123 Child Development Center, all staff members adhere to the ethical standards of the educator profession in every aspect of their work. Observing young children serves as an effective method for professionals to assess developmental progress, allowing parents to celebrate their child's milestones.

Periodic evaluations offer a comprehensive overview of a child's progress in key areas such as communication, social skills, motor skills, and problem-solving abilities. These evaluations not only identify strengths and new milestones to celebrate but also highlight areas where additional support may be needed. This understanding aids parents in monitoring their child's development and informs educators in planning subsequent lessons during the critical early years of development.

The Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ®) are particularly effective in tracking each child's progress and will be incorporated into our evaluation process. All staff members at the Center are trained in maintaining the confidentiality of each family. If necessary, we can refer families to early intervention services, such as Inspirations Early Intervention Inc., which specializes in exceptional infant development expertise, while always respecting family decisions.

Handling of Complaints

Complaints regarding our Child Care Services, including NM PreK, are documented by the director and/or the administrator on an intake form and recorded in a complaint log. This log captures both provider and staff complaints, with staff-related issues being addressed by the director.

Non-compliance by staff may result in various actions, including an action plan, a warning letter, mandatory training, or termination of employment.

Parents, families, and visitors are expected to show respect toward our educators. Should any parent, guardian, or family member have a complaint, they are encouraged to contact the staff office to initiate the complaint process, with the expectation of mutual respect between staff and the community.

How to report concerns about care in a childcare facility and suspected child abuse

If you have a concern regarding the care that is being provided within a childcare facility or home, please report your concerns to the ECECD Intake Hotline at 1-888-351-0037 or email them at:

ChildCare.Complaint@ececd.nm.gov

Child Abuse and Neglect

123 Child Development Center mandates that any suspected incidents of abuse and/or neglect be reported to child protective services, state licensing authorities, and law enforcement. All staff receive annual training on recognizing indicators of abuse and the reporting procedures involved. All staff members are considered mandatory reporters.

For immediate assistance, the NM SCI Line (Child Abuse and Neglect) is available 24 hours at 1-855-333-SAFE (7233) or via cell at #SAFE

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Enrollment Procedures

To ensure a smooth start for every child at 123 Child Development Center, the following forms and requirements must be completed and submitted prior to the child's first day of attendance. All information provided in these forms will remain confidential and will be shared with other caregivers only as necessary to meet the child's needs. New Mexico PreK students are required to complete the New Mexico PreK documentation in accordance with state standards, in addition to the center forms listed below, if the child will be attending both before and after care.

1. Family Registration Package, completed and signed by a parent or guardian.
2. Observation Permit.
3. Well-Being Child Form.
4. Identification for parents or guardians.
5. A copy of the vaccination record must be submitted on or before the start date; no exceptions will be made. Homeless families will receive a grace period of 30 days for the vaccination proof requirement.
6. IEA Income Eligibility Application Form for the nutrition program.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, 123 Child Development Center will strive to operate as usual. However, to ensure the safety of our staff and children, we may close if conditions warrant. The decision to close early or open later due to natural disasters (snow, ice, etc.) is at the discretion of the Center's Administration. Families will be notified of any such decisions around 6:00 AM through the following channels:

- Text message and/or email
- Remind App
- We will align our decisions with those of APS regarding the schools in the southwest; please check local weather updates in most cases.

If the Center remains open but severe weather or road conditions necessitate an early closure, families will be informed by phone, email or Remind App. While we aim to accommodate working parents, if a closure is necessary, tuition fees will not be credited or discounted.

Absences

There will be no refunds or adjustments to childcare fees for absences due to illness, holidays, or personal days. A place is reserved for each child that cannot be filled on a short-term basis. If your child will be absent for two or more days, please inform us of the reason and duration of the absence.

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Guidance and Discipline

In our approach to discipline, we express disapproval without linking it to the child's character. We clearly communicate our expectations and guide the child in making amends. Choices are provided, and we do not utilize time-outs or corner time. Instead, we encourage reflection in our calming area, where children are never forced to remain.

Gross Misconduct: We will promptly communicate with you if your child frequently and deliberately causes harm to others or engages in destructive behavior. Such actions are unsafe and will not be tolerated; persistent misconduct will result in immediate termination. We will invite you to meet with us to identify your child's strengths and areas needing support to create a goals and support plan. We will outline the next steps during this unofficial meeting.

The program's objectives are to promote independence, autonomy, self-esteem, and care for others and the physical environment. We prefer the "time in" approach to discipline, which involves redirecting inappropriate behavior toward acceptable alternatives. For instance, if a child is throwing blocks, we might introduce a ball and demonstrate the appropriate manner and location for throwing it. When "time-in" proves ineffective, we implement "time to reflect" — a quiet, neutral break that allows the child to regain self-control. This technique is only used when a child is losing control and refuses redirection, such as during aggressive outbursts, tantrums, or complete defiance.

Simple redirection is the sole form of discipline employed for infants. No one is permitted to spank, hit, bite, shake, yell at, grab, threaten, ridicule, or cause any physical or emotional harm to any child while on the Center's property, including staff, other children, and parents. Children shall not be deprived of any services, such as transportation, field trips, or food.

The following methods should be employed daily:

For Infants and Toddlers:

1. Meet infants' needs for love and care to build trusting relationships.
2. Thoughtfully prepare the play space to ensure it is childproof.
3. Acknowledge children's feelings and provide appropriate outlets, such as discussing their emotions or utilizing a quiet space for relaxation before rejoining the group.
4. Redirect toddlers' attention before inappropriate behavior occurs.
5. State directions clearly and simply.
6. Maintain a calm and consistent demeanor.
7. Allow children ample time to adjust to transitions.

For Preschool Children:

1. Arrange classrooms to be comfortable, engaging, and conducive to self-direction.
2. Assist children in expressing their emotions verbally and through play.
3. Encourage children to resolve their own conflicts when possible.
4. Model and teach strategies for resolving interpersonal conflicts, including negotiation, compromise, and empathy.
5. Help children anticipate the logical consequences of their behaviors.
6. Involve children in cooperative projects.

Assist children in establishing clear, consistent, and fair behavior limits within the classroom.

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Lost or Missing Children Policy

Despite implementing all necessary precautions, emergencies may still occur. Consequently, practitioners will conduct periodic headcounts, particularly during transitional phases between sessions. If a staff member is unable to account for a child's whereabouts during a session, the following procedure will be activated:

- The Director, Owner, or Person in Charge must be informed that a child is missing.
- A comprehensive search of the entire premises will commence immediately.
- Staff members will remain composed to avoid creating a sense of panic, ensuring that other children are safe and adequately supervised.
- The Director, Owner, or Person in Charge will designate as many staff members as possible to search the area surrounding the premises.
- All staff will be vigilant for any suspicious behavior or individuals in and around the nursery grounds.
- If the child remains missing after ten minutes of thorough searching, the Director, Owner, or Person in Charge will notify the police and subsequently inform the child's parent or guardian.
- While awaiting the arrival of law enforcement and the parent or guardian, searches for the child will continue. During this time, other staff members will strive to maintain a normal routine for the remaining children in the setting.

The Director, Owner, or Person in Charge will be responsible for meeting the police and the missing child's parent or guardian. They will coordinate any actions directed by the police and do everything possible to comfort and reassure the parent or guardian.

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Health Guidelines

Parents or guardians are required to update the medical conditions and allergies sections as necessary. According to New Mexico State licensing policy, a child exhibiting any of the symptoms listed below cannot be admitted to daycare unless accompanied by written documentation from a licensed physician, or verbal confirmation (followed by written documentation) indicating the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to themselves or to other children.

If your child displays signs or symptoms requiring exclusion from the childcare facility, they will be isolated immediately, and the parent, guardian, or an authorized individual will be notified to pick up the child without delay. This policy is strictly enforced to prevent the rapid spread of illness among children.

Please make alternative arrangements for your child if they are unwell and understand that we reserve the right to determine if your child is too sick to remain in childcare.

The symptoms warranting possible exclusion include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. The illness prevents your child from comfortably participating in the daycare environment.
2. The illness necessitates a level of care that compromises the health and safety of other children in our care.
3. Your child appears visibly tired, resting, or lying down, is unable to eat, or does not feel well enough to participate in daily activities, requiring one educator's constant supervision of the symptoms.
4. The child exhibits any of the following conditions:
 - Temperature: An axillary (armpit) temperature of 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit or greater, accompanied by behavioral changes or other signs of illness—until a medical evaluation permits inclusion (temperature checked with a digital thermometer).
 - Signs of Severe Illness: Unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other atypical signs—until a medical evaluation permits inclusion.
 - Diarrhea: Increased frequency of stools, increased stool fluidity, or decreased form that is not contained by a diaper—until diarrhea resolves.
 - Vomiting Illness: Two or more episodes of vomiting within the previous 24 hours—until vomiting subsides or a healthcare provider deems the illness non-communicable, ensuring the child is not at risk of dehydration.
 - Mouth Sores with Drooling: Unless a healthcare provider determines the condition is noninfectious.
 - Rash with Fever or Behavior Change: Until a healthcare provider confirms that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
 - Purulent Conjunctivitis: Defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge—until 24 hours after treatment has commenced.
 - Scabies, Head Lice, or Other Infestations: Until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
 - Tuberculosis: Until a healthcare provider confirms the child may return to daycare.
 - Impetigo: Until 24 hours after treatment has started.
 - Strep Throat or Other Streptococcal Infections**: Until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and the cessation of fever.
 - Chicken Pox: Until at least six days after the onset of the rash or until all sores have dried and crusted.

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Continuation of Health Guidelines

- Chicken Pox: Exclusion is required until at least six days after the onset of the rash or until all sores have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis: Children may return after completing five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment (currently erythromycin) and obtaining written clearance from a licensed physician.
- Mumps: Exclusion is necessary until nine days following the onset of parotid gland swelling, with written clearance from a licensed physician.
- Hepatitis A Virus: Children may return one week after the onset of illness or as directed by the health department, following the administration of passive immunoprophylaxis (currently immune serum globulin) and with written clearance from a licensed physician.
- Measles: Exclusion is required until six days after the onset of the rash, with written clearance from a licensed physician.
- Rubella: Children may return six days after the onset of the rash, with written clearance from a licensed physician.
- Unspecified Respiratory Illness: If the illness limits the child's comfortable participation in activities or requires care that may compromise the health and safety of other children, exclusion is warranted.

It is essential to inform your healthcare provider during each sick visit that your child is enrolled in daycare, enabling them to provide written approval for your child's return to the facility.

If your child has received an immunization update, please ensure that you provide a record of the immunization. This documentation must be attached to your child's health appraisal, as maintaining vaccination records is required by ECECD regulations.

Additionally, please remember that if we contact you to pick up your child due to a medical condition, you will receive a note detailing when your child can return to our care based on the guidelines provided above or upon receipt of your doctor's approval.

Your cooperation helps ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our care while preventing the spread of illnesses.

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Child's Medication

1. A "Medication Log" must accompany all over-the-counter medications. These medications are generally intended for short-term health conditions, typically administered for an average duration of 10 days.
2. Prescription medications must adhere to the following criteria:
 - a. Be dated within the past 30 days.
 - b. Clearly display the child's name on the label.
 - c. Include the dosage amount and times for administration.
3. The "Medication Log" should include the following information:
 - a. Date
 - b. Child's name
 - c. Name of the medication
 - d. Dosage amounts and scheduled times for administration
 - e. Route of administration (oral, eye, etc.)
 - f. Date when the medication should conclude
 - g. Parent's signature

Days and Hours of Operation

Childcare services are available Monday through Friday from 6:00 AM to 7:00 PM, excluding closures as specified in this handbook. Actual days and hours of operation will be tailored to meet the individual needs of parents or guardians.

Please note that the contracted drop-off time is essential, as we structure our day around the collective schedule of each child, alongside the various phases of our morning routine. If you anticipate that your child will arrive after 9:00 AM, please notify us in advance. Attendance must be recorded by 11:00 AM. If your child requires late arrival after this time, you must inform the office to facilitate planning for educators and ensure accurate meal counts.

The contracted pick-up time is equally critical, as several activities must be completed before the children depart.

Late Drop-Off and Pick-Up

If you expect to arrive late for drop-off, particularly after 11:00 AM, please inform us. It is vital for both our scheduling (including breakfast, activities, and ratios) and for the continuity of our programming. We appreciate your understanding that personal time is valuable; therefore, consistent adherence to agreed-upon pick-up times is essential to avoid complications with appointments or other plans. We recognize that unforeseen circumstances, such as heavy traffic or inclement weather, may cause delays. If you have a cellular phone, please call us to discuss possible contingency plans. Frequent tardiness may lead to termination of services, and a late fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each minute past the agreed-upon pick-up time.

In cases of shared custody and drop-off/pick-up arrangements, both parties must mutually agree to any additions to the pick-up list. If there is a disagreement regarding an individual's inclusion, it will be necessary to file a report and contact law enforcement to document the dispute.

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Nutrition:

Children receive a balanced diet daily, which includes breakfast, a morning snack, lunch, an afternoon snack, and dinner, as determined by enrollment agreements with families and the food program. It is essential that the IEA form is completed as part of your child's enrollment package. While cakes, cookies, and other less nutritious foods may be offered during special occasions such as birthday celebrations and holidays, formula must be supplied by parents or guardians. All other foods and beverages will be provided by the center.

Potty Training

Potty training should not be rushed; it is vital that your child is both psychologically and physically prepared for this process. During this transitional period, parents or guardians must provide Pull-Ups; regular training pants or underwear will not be utilized until the child demonstrates two consecutive weeks of bladder and bowel control. Should regression occur after this two-week period, we will reassess the situation. The lead teacher in your child's classroom will guide and support you throughout this process, ensuring collaboration between parents or guardians and the daycare staff to facilitate a respectful and effective potty-training experience.

It is essential for parents or guardians to collaborate in the potty-training process. By adhering to the plan established with the lead teacher, we can collectively support the child's needs effectively. It is not advisable for potty training support to be limited to the center; rather, consistent reinforcement should also occur at home and in other environments after the child leaves the center for the day.

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Field Trip Policy:

Occasionally, we will have the opportunity to take field trips. All children will be secured in safety-approved car seats as mandated by state law. You may be asked to provide a car seat for the day and/or cover any associated fees. A permission slip will need to be signed, which we will carry with us, along with copies of emergency forms that include a picture of each child. In case of an emergency away from the center, your child will receive care, and you will be notified. Participation in field trips is not mandatory; if your child does not attend, they will remain at the center under the care of another caregiver.

Importance of this Policy

While our childcare facility is designed to provide a safe environment for exploration, off-site locations may not always be as child-friendly or secure. It is crucial to ensure that outings are as safe as possible, allowing children to learn through diverse experiences.

Procedures and Practices:

- 123 Child Development Center will notify families in advance of all field trips requiring transportation and any special arrangements necessary.
- A parent or legal guardian must sign an informed consent form for all field trips requiring transportation and will be responsible for any associated fees.
- A well-stocked first aid kit, along with emergency contact numbers for the children, will accompany off-site activities.
- At least one staff member with current First Aid and CPR certification will be present during all off-site activities.
- Field trips will be integrated into the overall curriculum and tailored to the interests of the children, providing hands-on learning opportunities.
- Whenever feasible, the caregiver will conduct a pre-visit to assess the safety of the location, potential learning experiences, age appropriateness, and plan the transportation route.
- Children will be counted prior to departure from the childcare facility, during the trip, and again upon return to ensure that all children are accounted for.
- At least one staff member will carry a cell phone for emergencies during all off-site activities.
- A specific caregiver will be assigned to each group of children, and a staff member will accompany children to public restrooms.
- All children will wear identifying information that includes the facility's name and phone number.
- During walking trips, caregivers will model pedestrian safety, instructing children to cross only at corners, when traffic signals indicate it is safe, and only after checking for oncoming traffic.
- Caregivers will keep younger children together using a travel rope (a knotted rope) that children hold onto, ensuring they remain connected to an adult.
- If a child requires medication, the caregiver in charge will be responsible for carrying and administering it as needed.

Applicability of this Policy

This policy is in effect whenever children are away from the childcare program's premises.

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Release of Children:

To ensure the safety of your child, it is essential that they do not leave with anyone not authorized on your "Child Information" form. Please inform us in advance when someone else, whom you have authorized, will be picking up your child. Even in emergencies, we require your permission to release your child to anyone other than yourself. We will need the individual's name and a description of their appearance. The person designated to pick up your child must present a valid photo ID. Additionally, they must be at least 18 years old; we cannot release your child to anyone younger. If you are present in the vehicle but send a family member under 18 to pick up your child, we will not release your child to them. Please contact us so we can assist in bringing your child to your vehicle if possible.

We assume that both parents have the right to pick up your child unless you provide a copy of a court order indicating otherwise. In such cases, we must discuss how to handle the non-custodial parent's attempts to pick up your child. Without a court order, we cannot deny access to a parent. If a non-custodial parent attempts to pick up the child and we have a court order, we will immediately contact the custodial parent. Should the non-custodial parent leave with the child, we will alert the authorities without hesitation, prioritizing the safety of all children involved.

It is of utmost importance to us that your child arrives home safely. If the individual arriving to pick up your child appears intoxicated or otherwise incapable of ensuring your child's safe return, we will contact the parent or emergency contact listed on the "Child Information" form for assistance.

All children under the age of 6 years or weighing less than 60 pounds must be transported in an appropriate car seat or child restraint. Please refer to New Mexico law regarding child safety and seat belt regulations for further clarification. We will not release your child unless the person picking them up has a suitable car seat if your child falls within this age and weight requirement.

Supplies:

Parents or guardians are required to provide diapers, wipes, powder, any rash ointments, a pacifier, and three baby bottles to remain at our center. To simplify daily logistics, you may bring a package of each item to leave at daycare. Please note that backpacks or diaper bags are not permitted in our facility to avoid confusion regarding the items we are using. We will keep diapers, wipes, bottles, pacifiers, and an extra change of clothes on-site, and we will notify you if supplies are running low. All items will be counted and labeled with your child's name.

Additionally, parents or guardians should provide a change of clothes on a daily basis or keep a change at daycare until needed, replacing items as necessary. Infants may require more than one change of clothing daily; therefore, please provide a few changes based on your experience with your child.

Parents are also encouraged to bring a blanket and a pillowcase to cover the nap mat for your child's use during rest time. We will send blankets and pillowcases home every Wednesday and Friday for washing, and they must be returned the following day of attendance.

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ESTANCIAS LOCATON

Emergency Evacuation Plan and Disaster Preparedness

In the event of an emergency that necessitates the evacuation of the 123 Child Development Center, the following protocols will be implemented. The caregiver in charge during the evacuation shall:

- Account for all children and staff as they depart.
- Take a cellular phone, if available, to facilitate emergency communications.

If the emergency is confined to the immediate vicinity of the childcare facility, such as in the case of a fire or toxic fumes, and the children cannot remain on the premises, they will be transported to Dion's at Las Estancias, located at 3810 Coors Blvd SW, Albuquerque, NM 87121. At this location, children will be supervised by caregivers while families, guardians, and emergency contacts are notified of the situation, and arrangements are made for either their transportation home or continued care for the remainder of the day.

If the emergency extends beyond the immediate area, affecting a neighborhood or multiple homes due to a broader environmental threat, and the children cannot remain in the vicinity, they will be evacuated to the Walmart Supercenter at 3500 Coors Blvd SW, Albuquerque, NM 87121.

Special accommodations will be provided for children with special needs. Staff members will remain with and care for the children at all times throughout the event, and attendance will be recorded whenever children are relocated.

BROADWAY LOCATON

Emergency Evacuation Plan and Disaster Preparedness

In the event of an emergency that necessitates the evacuation of the 123 Child Development Center, the following protocols will be implemented. The caregiver in charge during the evacuation shall:

- Account for all children and staff as they depart.
- Take a cellular phone, if available, to facilitate emergency communications.

If the emergency is confined to the immediate vicinity of the childcare facility, such as in the case of a fire or toxic fumes, and the children cannot remain on the premises, they will be transported to Albuquerque Police Department at 1501 Broadway Blvd SE, Albuquerque, NM 87102. At this location, children will be supervised by caregivers while families, guardians, and emergency contacts are notified of the situation, and arrangements are made for either their transportation home or continued care for the remainder of the day.

If the emergency extends beyond the immediate area, affecting a neighborhood or multiple homes due to a broader environmental threat, and the children cannot remain in the vicinity, they will be evacuated to the First Choice Community Healthcare - South Broadway Medical Center 1401 William St SE, Albuquerque, NM 87102

Special accommodations will be provided for children with special needs. Staff members will remain with and care for the children at all times throughout the event, and attendance will be recorded whenever children are relocated.

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Emergency/Safety Plan

Evacuation procedures must be established, and safety drills should be conducted regularly. The current evacuation plan should be easily accessible and prominently displayed.

In the event of an evacuation, please adhere to the following general guidelines:

1. Calmly but promptly assist children to a designated safe area.
2. Account for all children and staff members.
3. Always leave a note indicating your location if an area evacuation is necessary.
4. Ensure that emergency information is taken with you during evacuation.

Actions to be Taken in the Event of Accidents or Emergencies Involving a Child

If a child is injured at the center, staff will administer first aid as needed and will promptly contact the parent or designated emergency contact listed on the emergency form. Parents are encouraged to indicate their preferred hospital on this form.

In the event of a serious accident or emergency, emergency medical services (911) will be contacted immediately. The parent will be notified after the call to emergency services. Parents are required to sign and receive a copy of the accident/incident report as soon as possible following the occurrence.

For any accidents involving the head, we must notify the parent or guardian in accordance with ECECD regulations to inform them of the incident.

An accident report form will be completed, and both the parent and guardian must sign it as acknowledgment that we have informed them about the incident that occurred while the child was in our care. Please note that signing the form does not imply acceptance of responsibility by the parent or guardian; it serves as evidence that we provided information about the situation. Feel free to contact the administration to discuss any concerns regarding the accident or prevention measures to avoid future incidents.

Injuries

We will closely supervise your child to minimize the risk of injuries; however, accidents can still occur. Our staff is trained in first aid and CPR and will adhere to these protocols when necessary.

For minor injuries that require only a band-aid or ice, we will inform you upon your child's pickup. In the event of a more serious injury, we will contact you immediately and may recommend that you take your child to a doctor or the emergency room. For critical injuries, we will call 911 for assistance prior to reaching out to you. If we are unable to contact you, we will notify the emergency contacts listed on your "Child Information" form. Please ensure this information is kept up to date.

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Confidentiality

At 123 Child Development Center, we are committed to upholding the confidentiality rights of every child enrolled in our childcare facility. We recognize the importance of safeguarding each child's information to protect the privacy rights of both parents and children. Therefore, we will not discuss or disclose any information regarding the care or condition of any child to unauthorized individuals.

Insurance

We reserve the right to provide information regarding our Liability Insurance.

Termination

Parents or guardians are required to provide two weeks' written notice prior to termination. If such notice is not given, we will adhere to the regulations set forth by the Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD) regarding the conclusion of the contract.

Expulsion Policy

- Staff will document instances of challenging behaviors in Children's Journals (daily notebooks used by educators) as they become excessive. Examples of these behaviors include significant aggression towards peers or educators, as well as self-harm. These observations, along with relevant teaching strategies, will be submitted for review and collaboration with the Director-Supervisor.
- Should challenging behaviors persist, a meeting will be scheduled involving the staff member and the parent(s) during conferences, or through prearranged meetings or phone calls.
- During the initial meeting, concerns will be clearly articulated, and collaborative goals will be established with the parents to address and rectify the child's undesirable behaviors. Referral information will be provided if applicable.
- Staff will implement the agreed-upon goals from the collaborative meeting.
- A follow-up meeting will take place as minimum of one to two weeks later to evaluate the progress of the behavior plan or referral process. During this meeting, we will ascertain whether the family has accepted a referral, review documentation and incidents, and discuss subsequent steps. If the child's behavior poses a risk to peers or educators during this period, we will contact the parents to arrange for the child's immediate pickup.
- If no service provider is available, we will explore external resources and programs at that time. Conversely, if a service provider is engaged, we will work together to establish acceptable timelines and goals.
- After a designated period, as determined in the second meeting, we will reassess the effectiveness of external services and the reduction of undesirable behaviors. If adequate progress has not been made despite all efforts, the family may be advised to seek alternative providers.
- In most cases, parents will receive a two-week notice to facilitate the arrangement of alternate childcare. However, in instances of excessive behaviors, this notice may be shortened.
- Meetings will be conducted in person, via Zoom, or through phone calls to facilitate meaningful discussions regarding these matters.

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Suspension Policy – 3 Days

For Severe Aggressive Incidents Impacting Safety

Purpose

To ensure a safe, stable, and supportive environment for all children and staff, and to provide the necessary time to gather evidence, analyze the situation, and determine next steps to support the child involved.

1. Behaviors That Trigger a 3-Day Suspension

A 3-day suspension may be implemented when a child engages in severe aggressive behaviors, including:

- Throwing furniture, toys, or classroom materials in a way that puts others at risk.
- Physically attacking or hitting a teacher or another child, especially when the other person is unable to defend themselves.
- Any action that significantly disrupts the safety and functioning of the classroom environment.

These behaviors must be intentional, unsafe, and beyond typical developmental dysregulation.

2. Immediate Response

- Staff will ensure immediate safety for all children and adults.
- The child will be removed from the environment if necessary to prevent further harm.
- Families will be notified the same day of the incident and the suspension.

3. Suspension Period (3 Days)

During the 3-day suspension:

- The center will collect and review evidence, including incident reports, staff observations, and any relevant documentation.
- The leadership team will analyze patterns, triggers, and environmental factors contributing to the behavior.
- The center will determine next steps to support the child, which may include:
 - A behavior support plan
 - Increased supervision
 - Environmental adjustments
 - Referral for evaluation or outside services
 - Family meeting to discuss strategies and collaboration
 - Termination

The goal is not punishment, but safety and intentional planning.

4. Return to the Center

Before the child returns:

- A brief re-entry meeting with the family may be required.
- The center will share the support plan and expectations for safety.
- Staff will implement consistent strategies to help the child succeed.

5. Commitment to Support and Safety

The center is committed to:

- Providing a safe environment for all children and staff.
- Supporting children with developmentally appropriate guidance.
- Collaborating with families to ensure continuity and consistency.
- Using suspension only when necessary to protect the community and plan for effective support

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Open Door Policy

We are pleased to welcome family members to participate in our program. Parents and guardians are encouraged to visit at any time during regular program hours. The infant room is particularly open to parents and guardians who wish to nurse or feed their infants as needed.

It is important to note that the Open Door Policy does not imply that external doors will remain unlocked. For the safety and protection of all children, these doors will be kept locked at all times. However, every family is invited to visit, stay, and participate in our program by scheduling a prior appointment. We warmly welcome families to join us, especially during breakfast, to share in our family-style meal. Our team strives to maintain open communication with families. Given that staff members are focused on caring for the children during program hours, lengthy discussions may not be feasible. If a situation requires a more in-depth conversation, please arrange for an appointment.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is essential for all children, as it fosters social goals and promotes respect for all individuals and the environment we share. We utilize books, music, games, and a variety of activities to teach children respect for the diversity of life. We celebrate the diversity among our families and welcome everyone.

Television Time

Our daily routine typically does not include television viewing; however, on occasion, we may record an advertisement-free television show as a teaching aid and discussion starter. Television consumption will not exceed four hours per month, and all programs will be screened in advance. We will focus on non-violent, high-quality educational material to provide your child with a positive experience that enhances their understanding of the world. Parents will be informed prior to any show being aired.

Lice Policy

When staff members detect or suspect the presence of lice, they are required to notify their supervisors immediately. While lice are not life-threatening, they can threaten the overall well-being of the center and must be addressed with utmost seriousness. On the day of detection, we will contact you to pick up your child. The affected child will not be permitted to return until they have begun treatment and no active lice are detected during the daily health check.

All items that the child may have shared, such as hats, blankets, dress-up clothes, and pillows, will be removed from the classroom and play area immediately and sealed in plastic bags until they can be laundered at home. The affected area will be thoroughly cleaned, including vacuuming all soft surfaces, carpets, and furniture the same evening.

Parents of the affected child will be: 1. notified in a private conversation, 2. provided with written notification of the issue and our policy, and 3. given guidance on how to resolve the problem. Parents must take home the child's blanket, and clothing, laundering them at high temperatures (130°F) before bringing them back to the program.

The identity of the affected child will be shared only on a "need-to-know" basis to address the issue effectively. If cases are isolated, letters will not be sent to all parents; however, communication will occur with all parents when necessary.

This policy applies to all staff members, and it is the responsibility of the Executive Director to communicate and enforce it.

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Subject: Guidelines for Valuables at 123 Child Development Center

We understand that as a parent or guardian, you may choose for your child to wear items such as gold chains or bracelets. However, our primary concern is the safety of all children in our care, and we aim to prevent any incidents from occurring. Despite our best efforts, children often engage in active play at the playground—jumping, running, and interacting with their peers—which can expose valuable items to risk, resulting in loss or damage. Therefore, we strongly recommend leaving these items at home.

If you decide to allow your child to wear such items, please inform us if you believe something may have been lost within our facility. This will enable us to search promptly before any items are inadvertently moved. Please note that educators will not be responsible for the safekeeping of personal belongings.

Additionally, we advise against having your child wear items of sentimental or emotional value, such as a special jacket or hat that carries significance for your family. For instance, if a jacket was a special gift from great grandparents, please consider that these items can sometimes be mistaken for others and inadvertently taken by another child. While we strive to keep personal belongings organized, mix-ups can occur, and replacing a treasured item may be difficult.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Fee Payment Guidelines

Under the new universal care initiative in the state of New Mexico, all families qualify for free services. We can enroll your child once you provide evidence of your application submission.

No charges will be added to any family accounts. If you are unable to provide proof of your application or if you have not completed the application process until approval and contract activation, the center may suspend services until you can demonstrate that you have submitted the required documentation for your application.

Please reach out to the administration office staff to discuss your application process.

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Marijuana-Free Facility Policy

Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham signed the Cannabis Regulation Act on April 12, 2021, legalizing the cultivation, manufacturing, purchasing, possession, and consumption of recreational cannabis for adults aged 21 and older. As of June 29, 2021, adults can legally possess up to 2 ounces of marijuana for recreational use in New Mexico. Furthermore, the purchase of recreational marijuana became legal on April 1, 2022.

At 123 Child Development Center, we are committed to maintaining a marijuana-free workplace. We have implemented a strict policy prohibiting the use, possession, or presence of individuals under the influence of marijuana while on our premises. The odor of marijuana can linger in our environment, making it challenging to maintain a safe and healthy space for our children. If you are detected with the smell of marijuana, you will be asked to remain outside until your child is released, as we strive to protect the integrity of our indoor environment. We appreciate your cooperation in helping us ensure a marijuana-free atmosphere for the children.

Signed Reports by a Parent or Guardian

A parent or guardian must sign a childcare incident report to acknowledge they have been informed of an incident, injury, or illness involving their child. It acts as legal documentation confirming the center met its obligation to report the event, ensures transparent communication, and helps track child safety.

Key reasons for signing the incident report form:

Acknowledgement of Notification: The signature confirms the parent was informed about the incident and understands what occurred.

Legal Compliance and Documentation: 123 Child Development Center is required by licensing agencies such as ECECD, to keep detailed records of accidents, injuries, or illnesses to meet safety standards.

Transparency and Trust: It ensures open communication between staff and parents regarding a child's safety and well-being.

Tracking Patterns: Signed reports help centers monitor recurring accidents or behavioral patterns to improve safety measures.

It is important to note that signing the report usually signifies that the parent has received the information, not necessarily that they agree with the details of the incident

A Few Final Thoughts:

As a parent at 123 Child Development Center, we encourage you to:

- Engage actively in your child's activities and development within our childcare setting, sharing any habits, fears, or concerns with us.
- Carefully read all correspondence provided to you, including posted notices, and promptly sign and return any required forms.
- Remember that you are responsible for your child while on our premises, so please maintain close supervision during this time.
- We welcome your calls! Your concerns and feedback are invaluable to us.
- Thank you for your continued support.