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# Parent Handbook

## **Introduction**

Welcome to Grow With Me Learning Academy. We are happy to welcome you to our center and look forward to sharing a warm and rewarding relationship with you and your child. Grow With Me is owned and operated by Seth and Jordan Dunlap and has been joyfully serving children and families since June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2015. You will find us to be a fun-loving and friendly place - a place where we take our jobs very seriously and consider ourselves to be an extension of the home, carrying out many of the daily parental responsibilities for your child. We have a well-trained staff whose first priority is the safety and well-being of every child in our program. All employees are certified in first-aid, CPR, and SIDS prevention. They are also required to attend 24 hours of professional development classes in childcare per year. Grow With Me has an "open door" policy, and we welcome you to visit your child at any time. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions or concerns, and we will be glad to visit with you. Our telephone number is (806) 828-5437. We will keep you informed of important information through parent notes, and also through our parent board located in the foyer. Working together, communication, and following through with the policies and procedures presented in this handbook, will help us provide the best atmosphere in which your child can grow and learn.

## **Mission Statement**

Grow With Me Learning Academy exists for the purpose of provide a thoroughly Christ-centered, bible believing, educational program to prepare students academically, physically, socially and spiritually for their best future and service to God. We promise to provide quality care for every child enrolled in our program. We promise to provide opportunities for each child to develop as an individual, and as a member of a group, in a positive nurturing environment. We promise to assist in building each child's self-esteem by creating a safe, healthy, loving atmosphere where each child can learn to socialize with peers and grow at their own pace, both emotionally and physically. We promise to provide educational opportunities for rich learning experiences using high-quality curriculum taught by a well-trained staff. And last but certainly not least, we promise to love others well.

## **Goals**

In order to promote the optimum physical, social, emotional, and intellectual growth of each child in our care, Grow With Me has set the following goals:

- To provide an environment that is safe, nurturing and stimulating.
- To foster in each child a feeling of confidence, self-esteem and independence.
- To help children learn to respect themselves and others
- To help develop in each child a love of learning.
- To expose children to a wide variety of learning experiences.
- To employ people who are caring, intelligent and motivating.
- To enhance a child's awareness of others and help them learn how to become part of a group, knowing how to share and take turns.
- To assist children in developing a sense of responsibility for their own actions and for the well-being of others.
- To furnish children with physical activities that will enhance their physical skills and overall developmental growth.
- To create a successful partnership between home and school based on mutual respect and close communication.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Grow With Me does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, religion, or national or ethnic origin in admittance, education, or other administrative policies. We extend to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to children in our program. However, as a privately-owned operation, Grow With Me does reserve the right to refuse service to or disenroll a child/family at any time, for any reason, without advance notice.

## **Enrollment Requirements**

Grow With Me requires that an information packet containing the following, be completed before your child's first day of attendance: (1) admission form, (2) medical consent, (3) allergy information, (4) updated immunization record, (5) doctor's wellness note, (6) emergency phone numbers, (7) pick-up list. The program enrollment fee must also be paid before a child can be left at the center. A parent handbook will be provided to all parents containing the operational policies and procedures at Grow With Me. In the rare event of a change in policy, parents will be notified in writing at least one week before the policy will begin being enforced. Admission information will be updated annually in August, however, if there are

any changes in your child's personal information (addresses, phone numbers, medical info, emergency contacts, etc.), please let us know as soon as possible so that we may update our records. It is very important that we have current information for your child at all times. A health statement/wellness note signed by a physician licensed to practice medicine is required to certify that the physician has examined your child recently and that your child is physically able to participate in the programs at Grow With Me. A copy of your child's immunization record must also be on file on or before the first day of enrollment. Immunizations must be current based on your child's age. When your child receives immunizations as he/she gets older, please provide us with a copy of the updated immunizations for their file. Copies of immunization records for school-age children are on file at their public schools and are not required to be on file at Grow With Me. Tuberculin testing is not required in Lubbock County at this time. Parents who request that immunizations be waived on religious or other grounds, must provide a completed and signed legal waiver/affidavit. Below is the chart provided and in accordance with DFPS that Grow With Me follows:

Age at which child must have vaccines to be in compliance:	Minimum Number of Doses Required of Each Vaccine							
	DTaP	Polio	HepB	Hib	PCV	MMR	Varicella	HepA
0 through 2 months	None	None	None	None	None	None	None	None
By 3 months	1 Dose	1 Dose	1 Dose	1 Dose	1 Dose	None	None	None
By 5 months	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	None	None	None
By 7 months	3 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses <sup>1</sup>	3 Doses <sup>2</sup>	None	None	None
By 16 months	3 Doses	2 Doses	2 Doses	3 Doses <sup>1</sup>	4 Doses <sup>2</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	None
By 19 months	4 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses <sup>1</sup>	4 Doses <sup>2</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	None
By 25 months	4 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses <sup>1</sup>	4 Doses <sup>2</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>
By 43 months	4 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses	3 Doses <sup>1</sup>	4 Doses <sup>2</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	1 Dose <sup>3</sup>	2 Doses <sup>3</sup>

## **Tuition and Fees**

Enrollment fees and tuition rates at Grow With Me are as follows:

- Non-Refundable **Annual** Enrollment Fee -August \$100.00/child
- 0-18 Months \$125.00/week
- 18-36 Months \$110/week
- 3 Years and Up (must be fully potty trained) \$110/week
- Materials fee (February) \$75/family
- Youngest child in family: 10% discount
- 10% Discount will be given for one child per family for all ACTIVE military and first responder families

Tuition at Grow With Me is collected through the "Tuition Express" program, which drafts the specified tuition amount directly from your bank account or credit card. You will be required to complete a Tuition Express agreement form and return it to the office before your child will be

permitted to attend the program. Parents who do not have a bank account will be required to pay your child's tuition on Monday of each week. If payment is not made by Wednesday of the current week, a late charge of \$15.00 will be added to your account. If the account is not paid in full by Friday of that week, your child will not be permitted to return unless the account is paid in full or payment arrangements are made with a Grow With Me office manager. Any unpaid accounts will be turned over to an outside collection agency and an additional service fee will be charged. Upon enrolling your child, you are committing to pay for a full-time slot, which means weekly tuition amounts remain the same throughout the year, regardless of your child's attendance. So, please keep in mind, if your child is sick or misses class due to personal reasons, their weekly tuition still remains the same amount as if they were in attendance. A non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of enrollment for each family, and then each August, thereafter. A non-prorated material fee will be due at the beginning of February of each year. During summer months and holiday times, an activity fee may be charged. Activity fees are for additional activities outside our normal planned curriculum, such as field trips, and/or other special activities. Parents will be notified 14 days in advance of activity fee options. All stated tuition, fees, and other charges are subject to change at any time, notices will be posted in the event of change.

### **Hours of Operation**

Grow With Me operates year round (January-December). Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 6:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Grow With Me will be closed the following days: New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the day after, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day. Grow With Me does follow Lubbock ISD weather policy for weather closure.

Please remember that tuition amounts remain the same on holiday weeks. Full-time care will be provided at our center for school-age children during Spring Break, Summer Break and the Christmas holidays at the rate of \$100.00 per week or \$25.00 per day. Parents will be allowed one week of free tuition for vacations after your child has been enrolled Grow With Me for one year. Vacation notice must be given in writing to the center director/manager two weeks in advance.

### **Drop off/Pick up Policy**

All children must be accompanied into the center by the adult who brings them. The adult must escort the child to their classroom and release them to a Grow With Me staff member only. The parent/guardian/adult must sign the child in and out each day, as required by the state. Our fingerprint system serves as your child's sign-in and out, so please be sure to scan your fingerprint as you bring them and pick them up each day. After you scan your fingerprint, you will be given a "ticket" from the ticket machine. This must be given to the child's teacher at drop off. You will obtain a new ticket at pick-up. Teachers will not release the child to an adult without a ticket. If for some reason, an authorized pick up adult is not yet in the fingerprint

system, the teacher will ask for the adults photo ID to cross check the child's pick up list. Children will be released only to the parent or to those named on their pick up list. For safety and liability reasons, Grow With Me will ask for picture identification for anyone picking up your child, and a photograph of this person may be taken to be posted in the child's classroom or placed in their individual file. Please inform anyone picking up your child of this requirement. A late-pick-up fee of \$25.00 will be charged for the first five minutes a child is late being picked up from the daycare center, and an additional \$1.00 for every minute thereafter. This late fee must be paid in cash at the time of pickup to the employee in charge of your child, or it will be charged to your account, and must be paid before your child may return to care. If late pick-ups continue to be a problem, your child may be disenrolled from our program. Our cut off time to drop your child off is 10:00am. If they are late due to an appointment, please bring a doctor's note. A late drop off fee of \$10.00 will be charged for the first five minutes a child is late being dropped off to the daycare center and an additional \$1 for every minute thereafter, without a doctor's note.

### **Absences**

We at Grow With Me genuinely care about your child and we ask that you please give us a call if your child will be absent or any reason. This is also true for children who ride the bus to the center after-school. You must call us at least one hour prior to dismissal time if your child will not be riding the bus after school. This saves us time, confusion and worry wondering where your child is and spending needless time attempting to track them down. Please keep in mind that tuition amounts stay the same regardless of your child's absences. You are paying for a full-time position in our program, which is not based on attendance.

### **Meals**

Grow With Me will serve breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack at the following scheduled times:

- Breakfast: 8:00am-8:30am (Children must arrive by 8:15 to eat breakfast)
  - Lunch 11:00am-11:30am
  - Snack 2:30pm-3:00pm
- (afterschool snack is served upon their arrival)

According to the state health requirements for food preparation and service, your child must be present at the scheduled meal times in order to receive these meals and snacks. If your child cannot arrive during the scheduled meal times, you will need to feed them prior to arriving at the center. We offer nutritious and tasteful meals/ snacks which meet the requirements of the state of

Texas guidelines. Menus will be provided and are also posted on the parent board. Children are NOT allowed to bring their own meals/snacks from home, due to safety of others in the center who may have allergies. Parents are welcome to bring snacks to celebrate birthdays, as long as they are store-bought and not prepared in private homes. Please alert your director before bringing in celebratory snacks so we can ensure our children with allergies are safe.

## **Peanut Free Policy**

Our top priority is to provide a safe environment for all of the children at Grow With Me. Due to the danger of serious reactions caused by food allergies, Grow With Me is a PEANUT-FREE facility. All parents and staff members should refrain from bringing any food products that contain peanuts, peanut oil or peanut butter into the building. While this may cause an inconvenience to some, it is necessary to implement in order to protect the health of those children that have severe allergies to peanut products.

## **Breastfeeding**

Grow With Me fully supports the rights of parents who wish to breastfeed their child at the daycare center. The nursing mothers room is provided for mothers to come in and breastfeed their child at any time, it is located across the hall from the infant classroom. Parents are also welcome to provide fresh or frozen breast milk for their child while in care. We ask that it be clearly marked with the children's name and a use by date, and that any specific instructions be listed on the feeding sheet.

## **Separation Anxiety**

If your child experiences episodes of separation anxiety when being dropped off at our center, it is very helpful to develop a set routine for saying "good-bye". We suggest that you smile confidently at your child and say, "Mommy (or Daddy) will be back." Give them a reassuring hug and then leave promptly. Please do not sneak away, that only heightens anxiety. There may be tears for the first week or so, but as you continue to follow this set routine, your child will grow more confident and at ease with being left at the center. Be assured that your child will be nurtured and comforted until they become comfortable being at our center. Moms and Dads who are experiencing separation anxiety are encouraged to call and check on your child at any time.

## **Biting Anxiety**

While it can be distressing to learn your infant or toddler has been involved in a biting incident (both as the biter or one bitten), this behavior is, unfortunately, commonplace for children ages 9 months to 3 years. Some common reason for biting include: a need for autonomy and control, exploration, teething, attention getting, frustration (frequently due to lack of language or unmet needs), anxiety, mimicking, self-defense and lack of experience interacting with children in a group. At the first sign of biting, we evaluate the environment and activities. If warranted, adjustments in the environment or activities may be made. If a bite occurs, the teacher will first attend to the bitten child by comforting the child and gently cleaning the bitten area with soap and water. Staff will complete an incident report for the bitten child. The biter will be removed from the immediate area and staff will explain to them (as much as possible) that the behavior is not acceptable. We will also complete an incident report on the biting child and discuss the incident with the child's parents to determine ways to redirect the behavior. The biting child will be closely supervised, and the child's identity will be kept confidential. Staff cannot discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident, nor can staff discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other parent. Most children stop biting soon after these actions are taken. For children who continue to bite, it may be necessary to remove them from

the center, either for a short period or perhaps permanently. Each case will be assessed on an individual basis.

## **Activities**

Depending on their age group, your child will be involved in the following activities at Grow With Me:

- Music Computer Lab • Field Trips • Sign Language • Spanish • Story Time
- Dramatic Play • Arts & Crafts • Library Time • Science Lab • Educational Curriculum
- Water Play • Classroom Parties • Outdoor Play

We encourage parents to share and participate in all activities and parties, as well as the daily routine of children at our center. Parents are always welcome to come and speak to our classes about a special hobby you may have or a job you may perform, such as policeman, nurse, fireman, etc. Please inform your child's teacher ahead of time if you would like to come and do a special presentation for their class. If you would like to do a presentation for several of our daycare classes, please visit with the director, Jordan Dunlap and she will be glad to make those arrangements. From time to time children may be asked to bring items from home for a special activity that is planned. On those occasions, we will give parents a 48-hour notice before the activity takes place. In the event that the activity may be messy, we will notify parents to dress children appropriately.

## **Field Trips**

In addition to our regular program, field trips will be offered to our pre-k students who are 4 years of age or older. You will be informed ahead of time regarding these activities. A field trip notice showing the date, time, and location of the field trip will be posted by your child's classroom door and a note will be sent home at least 48 hours prior to the trip. Parent volunteers are welcome to attend all field trips. If you are interested in volunteering for a field trip, please let the office staff or your child's teacher know in advance. Please remember that children cannot be dropped off or picked up during a field trip. They must ride the Grow With Me vans to and from the field trip. It is important that children arrive at school at least 30 minutes prior to the scheduled departure time on the day of a field trip. They can be picked up at Grow With Me following a classroom check-in upon returning to the center. Children must also be appropriately attired wearing the proper footwear, the required Grow With Me t-shirt.

## **Outdoor Play**

Sunshine and fresh air are vital to the healthy development of young children. Getting 10-15 minutes of sun exposure (UV rays) every day is the most efficient way for the body to make vitamin D. Vitamin D is essential in aiding the body's absorption of calcium for strong healthy bones, preventing disease, supporting the immune system and healthy cell production. At Grow With Me the children play outside every morning and every afternoon if the temperature is between 50 and 95 degrees. We do take the wind chill factor and/ or heat index into account as

appropriate, and the length of time spent outdoors varies according to the weather, as well. Please dress your child accordingly and include a jacket with a hood for cold weather.

### **Water Play**

On occasion, during the warmer months, Grow With Me may offer outdoor water play activities at the center, such as "Splash Days". Parents will be notified in writing in advance of the activity and asked to provide certain supplies like swim suits, sunscreen, towels and a change of clothes.

### **Rest Period**

After our lunch time at Grow With Me, a rest period is required by DFPS Licensing for all children up to age 5. Durations of the rest periods are provided by licensing guidelines. Parents must provide a washable mat for each child 1 years of age and older. Parents may provide a small blanket for your child to use during rest time. A small pillow is optional, however, all

items must fit within your child's backpack. For the safety of the children, shoes must be worn all day, including during rest time. This will allow the children to evacuate the building safely and quickly in the event it becomes necessary at any point during the day. Please avoid dropping off or picking up your child during naptime, as it can be disruptive to the children who are sleeping. If you need to pick your child up during naptime, a courtesy call to the front office prior to naptime is appreciated so that we may notify your child's teacher to have your child ready when you arrive.

### **Hearing/Vision**

First time enrollees who are four years old or older, and all children enrolled who are four years old by September 1 of each year, must undergo hearing and vision screening. Results of the screenings must be in your child's file. Testing can be obtained through your child's pediatrician and is a responsibility of the parent to get this testing performed and on file with Grow With Me administration.

### **Illness Policy**

Your child's health is important to us. Please notify the office staff if your child is ill and will not be attending class. If you become aware that your child has developed an illness that is contagious, please notify the office as quickly as possible so that we may notify the families of other children who may have been exposed. If your child becomes ill while at Grow With Me, we will notify you to come and pick them up. As a general rule, children who are ill must be picked up within 1 hour of the parent being notified. Late pick up fee does apply to illness notification time if not picked up within one hour. According to state standards, children with the following symptoms must be sent home:

- The illness prevents the child from comfortably participating in Grow With Me activities

- The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of other children
- The child has a tympanic temperature 100.0 degrees or higher
- The child has diarrhea 3 or more times in a 24-hour period
- The child has vomiting 2 or more times in a 24-hour period
- The child has symptoms and signs of possible severe illness including, but not limited to lethargy, uncontrolled breathing, rash with or without fever, mouth sores with drooling, wheezing, behavior changes or other unusual signs.

If your child is sent home ill, they may not return to Grow With Me until they are free of all symptoms without medication for 24 hours, or are seen by a licensed physician who issues a written release permitting them to return.

### **Medication Guidelines**

Grow With Me will administer medications to your child during the day provided we have the required information. Medication guidelines are as follows:

- Parents must sign the daily authorization form which includes the time and amount for each medication given;
- The medication must be in the original container labeled with the child's name and the amount of medication to administer is on the label or an amended note by a physician; The child has a communicable disease but does not have a doctor's note indicating the child is no longer
- We will only administer the medicine to the child whose name appears on the medication and has the designated amount for that child's age on the label.

Please give the medication directly to your center director and do not leave it in your child's backpack, diaper bag, or in the classroom. No medications can be measured in advance or put into your baby's bottle. All medication will be kept in a secure place and administered by the center director or manager.

### **Sunscreen/Insect Repellant**

Teachers are happy to apply Sunscreen and or Insect repellant to your child upon your request. If you would like your child to receive Sunscreen or Insect Repellant, you must send a bottle labeled with the child's full name. Please advise the teacher that you have sent this with you child, and they will begin to use it.

### **Wellness Checks**

Every morning upon arrival, your child will have a wellness check completed by their teacher. This check ensures the child is healthy, free of illness and or injury that may prevent the child from participating in their normal daily activities.

## **Allergies/Health Conditions**

In order to keep your child safe from allergic reactions to food and/or other substances, please be sure to alert us about any type of serious allergies your child may have. If your child is allergic to any type of food or drink, please let us know. If your child has asthma and uses an inhaler or nebulizer, please discuss this with our director and you're your child's teacher. If your child has diabetes or any other health condition requiring extra attention, please make us aware of how we can assist you in caring for them while they are at Grow With Me. We are responsible for your child's safety and well-being while they are in our care, and this is a responsibility we take very seriously. Communication plays an important role in helping us keep your child safe and well, in your absence.

## **Vaccine-Preventable Diseases**

- 1) Influenza - Annually
- 2) TDAP (tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis) - Every 10 years

## **Accidents/Injury/Medical Emergencies**

Grow With Me will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child while in our care. Unfortunately, accidents may occur. In the event of a minor injury, first-aid will be administered and our staff will complete an accident report. The situation will be discussed with the person who picks up your child at the end of the day. You will be asked to sign the report so that it can be placed in your child's file. In the event your child's injury requires that they be seen by their physician or emergency clinic, please notify the office as we are required to report this to child care licensing. In case of a serious accident, injury, or medical emergency, we will make every effort to contact you immediately. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contact person you have indicated on your child's enrollment form. If necessary, we will contact emergency assistance (911) and have your child transported to the medical facility listed on your child's enrollment form or the one nearest our center. A Grow With Me representative will remain with your child at all times. Parents are responsible for all medical bills that may arise from any accident.

## **Child's Safety**

Your place of mind regarding your child's safety is important to us. Your child's safety at Grow With Me is ensured through detailed security measures affecting every aspect of your child's day. Beginning at the front office where authorize entering the facility is required to use a specialized code to enter and check in with the front desk, safety is at the heart of our detailed procedures throughout the course of the day until your child leaves with you or an authorized adult in the evening. Our teachers and staff members undergo criminal background checks including fingerprinting, pre-screening and ongoing training in child development. Training and certification in CPR, First- Aid, and SIDS prevention are also required on a recurring basis. If you, as a parent, ever have questions or concerns regarding your child's safety, please let us know.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of a fire, bomb threat, electrical, chemical or other emergency that would require the evacuation of our building, Grow With Me staff will adhere to the following procedures:

#### Evacuation Procedures:

1. The area of emergency will be evacuated as quickly and carefully as possible.
2. The fire alarm will be activated (if not already activated) which automatically contacts the fire department when activated. A call to 911 will be placed for confirmation. If fire causes damage to the phone system, rendering contact impossible, a cell phone will be used to call 911.
3. The facility manager/director or designee will assist teachers in the evacuation of all children to the nearest safe exit.
4. All staff and children will meet at the building east of the GWM facility.
5. All teachers will have their classroom notebooks with them containing the following information:

- (1) Enrollment form for each child
- (2) Daily attendance sheet
- (3) Emergency contact information for each child
- (4) Emergency care consent form for each child

6. The director and management staff will make certain that all children and staff members are accounted for and safe. A head count will be done as children and staff leave their classroom and a second head count will be immediately conducted upon arriving to an area of safety.
7. If the fire is small and there is no imminent danger, the facility's fire extinguishers will be used to put it out. Fire extinguishers are located as follows:

- (1) In the hallway by the 3/4-year-old classes
- (2) 5) In the hallway by the kitchen

All staff members will be oriented on the proper use of a fire extinguisher.

8. Staff and children will not re-enter the building until authorized by the fire department, if applicable.

#### Tornado/Severe Weather Procedures:

1. All children will be moved to the designated location provided on the room evacuation map.
2. Staff members will maintain flashlight and voice contact at all times.
3. Children will be directed to kneel down with their head between their legs covering their head with their hands or a mat.
4. Children will be advised to wear their shoes at all times.
5. Staff members will provide any necessary first-aid and call 911 for more serious injuries.
6. A head count will be conducted before movement to a safe place, after arriving to a safe place, and after leaving the designated area to return to the classroom.
7. The director will notify staff when the storm has passed and it is safe to return back into the classroom.
8. Staff members will do a final head count when all children have arrived back into the classroom.
9. The director or emergency crew will check the building for any damages, such as fire, water, or structural damage, before staff and children will be allowed back into their classrooms, if applicable

## Emergency Drills

Grow With Me holds emergency drills to acquaint your child with evacuation procedures and other emergency events. This practice may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is conducted, but they will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do in the event of an emergency. At the request of our licensing office, fire drills are practiced monthly, and severe weather and lock down drills are practiced at least four times per year, each.

## Weather/Emergency Closings

We will make every effort to be open during inclement weather or other emergency situations; however, our first priority is always the safety of your children and our staff. When necessary, the Grow With Me management team will make the decision regarding closing the center. Please check local TV stations and websites for updated weather-related closings and announcements. Should bad weather begin mid-day, please make arrangements to pick your child up as soon as possible so that your family, your child's teachers and their families and everyone at Grow With Me can get home quickly and safely before traveling becomes hazardous. We do not provide transportation from public schools during icy road conditions, so parents of public-school children will need to make other transportation arrangements for their children during icy weather. In the event that Grow With Me is closed due to weather or other emergency closings, tuition amounts remain the same, as you are paying for a full - time position which is not based on attendance.

## Discipline/Guidance Policy

Grow With Me believes in a positive approach to discipline. Teaching children what to do more often than what not to do develops problem solving skills, self-esteem, self-control, self-direction, and a generous and kind attitude, gently guiding children toward acceptable behavior. Our trained and caring staff will remind children of behavior expectations daily by using clear, positive statements; redirecting behavior in positive tones; and offering appropriate choices to replace inappropriate choices and behavior. We believe that discipline should be individualized and consistent for each child and appropriate for the child's understanding. Realizing that young children are developing social and emotional skills along with intellectual and physical abilities, corporal punishment, embarrassment, and shaming will never be used. In the event that a child is misbehaving, the child may be asked to take a break from class activities for a time that is appropriate for their age. This would be a "time out" lasting no more than 1 minute per year of the child's age (3 years old = no more than 3 minutes, 4 years old no more than 4 minutes, etc.). If a classroom time out isn't helpful, the child may be taken to the director's office for a reasonable amount of time appropriate for their age. If the misbehavior continues to be a problem, a parent conference may be scheduled with the director or manager, the classroom teacher, and the child's parent. It is important for you to notify the office staff if your child is experiencing a change in the home environment that may result in a change of behavior at Grow With Me. We are always willing to work with parents to serve the needs of each child as an individual. That being said, we are responsible for the safety and well-being of all the children in our center. If a child has habitual behavior problems that put other children and/or our staff members at risk, and we are not able to resolve the problem satisfactorily, we will pursue the disenrollment process for that child. **\*Grow With Me has a ZERO TOLERANCE for bullying\***

## Personal Belongings

Each child must have at least one extra set of clothing, (Infants must have three) with his/her name on it, left at the facility in case of an accident. Please dress children appropriately for playtime activities since

PLAY is what we do!! We use washable crayons, markers and paint during art time and will make every effort to keep everything clean; however, children will be children and there is always the possibility of spills. Please label all of your child's belongings with their first and last name. Grow With Me will provide toys, books, educational activities, and playground equipment for all Children, so they should not bring toys from home. We are not responsible for lost or broken personal items.

## **Transportation**

Grow With Me offers transportation from local schools every day. Please visit the office for a list of the schools we service our transportation staff take all proper precautions in transporting children. All children riding in our vehicle must wear a seat belt at all times. If your child is 8 years old or younger, they must sit in a booster seat. Children who disobey this rule will be suspended from riding the vans. If your child has behavior problems while riding in one of our vans, you will be notified. If your child's behavior continues to be a problem, they will be suspended from riding the vans.

## **Animals**

From time to time, Grow With Me may have classroom pets that meet the requirements set by Texas Child Care Licensing. A notice to parents will be posted outside any classroom door when a pet is present. Parents should always take prior arrangements with the classroom teacher before allowing children to bring their pet to school for show and tell. Please be sure to inform us if your child is allergic to any type of animal.

## **School Pictures**

School pictures will be offered periodically throughout the year at Grow With Me. Usually, pictures will be done once with a Christmas background and once with a spring background. You will be notified well in advance of when picture day is, what the background looks like, and who the photographer will be. On picture day, please be sure to bring your child dressed for pictures and provide a change of clothes, and we will be glad to change the children's clothes after pictures are taken. There is no charge at the time of the session and purchase of these pictures is always optional.

## **Classroom Parties**

Throughout the year, Grow With Me will have various classroom parties. Parents will be notified ahead of time regarding the party and any items that may be needed. Due to the danger of food allergies, treats from home, such as cookies or cupcakes, must be store bought. Please remember that Grow With Me is a PEANUT•FREE center and we do not allow any peanut products in our facility. Because of safety and ratio purposes, siblings are not allowed to attend classroom parties.

## **Withdraw Policy**

Should it become necessary for your child to withdraw from Grow With Me, please speak to the director or the office management right away. A **two-week written notice** is required before withdrawing. In the event that your account is not paid in full at the time you leave, it will be referred to an outside collection agency and an additional service fee of 35% will be charged. Your account may be placed with the District Attorney's office if necessary.

## **Disenrollment Policy**

Grow With Me reserves the right to dismiss any child or parent whose behavior or language is inappropriate or endangers the safety of himself/herself or others. Grow With Me also reserves the right to suspend any child or parent on the basis above. Each disenrollment and suspension is on a case to case basis and only after attempts at resolution without progress.

## **School-Age Program**

Whether you are looking for after-school care or care for your school-ager during school breaks, we know you will find out school-age program at Grow With Me to be what you and your child are looking for. We offer a program designed to give your child safe and engaging care. In addition to healthy snacks, and a quiet area for homework or reading, children also have plenty of time for fun. We offer after-school pick-up from local schools on a daily basis. Please see the office for a list of schools we service. We also offer care for early-out days, and most school holidays. Our summer camp program offers non-stop fun-filled care for children age's kindergarten through 5th grade during the summer months of June, July, and August.

## **Privacy/Confidentiality**

In the interest of privacy and confidentiality, any concerns you may have regarding children other than your own must be addressed to the director rather than the classroom teacher. Grow With Me does not allow photographing or videotaping of children via any means (this includes phone cameras) except in the cases of school pictures and school events which will be photographed or videotaped by a Grow With Me representative and distributed and/or displayed at Grow With Me's discretion. Grow With Me reserves the right, without parental notification or consent, to photograph, videotape, or perform necessary evaluations/developmental assessments of children in our program.

## **Custody Situations**

Grow With Me prefers to remain neutral and NOT get involved with divorce/custody disputes. We will assume that both parents have equal rights to their children unless provided with a copy of a court order. We will follow a court order exactly as it is written. If you have a court order on file, please provide us with the most recent copy. PLEASE NOTE: PER STATE LAW, IN THE ABSENCE OF A COURT ORDER, BOTH PARENTS HAVE EQUAL RIGHTS. With this being said, it is imperative that all enrollment forms are completed with both parents' information. If either parent requests a copy of a child's birth certificate from their file, it will be given at the director's discretion. In the event that a custody dispute takes place on our property, the Lubbock police will be called and asked to handle

the dispute. Our staff will not be placed in the middle of such disputes. If a custody issue creates a risk for the safety of the children or staff in our facility, Grow With Me has the right to terminate care.

## **Parent Code of Conduct**

Please be aware that young children are present in our building. Some adult language is not appropriate for young children. Grow With me prohibits swearing or cursing on our property. Threatening staff members, children, or other parents will not be tolerated. Our facility is required to follow particular rules on discipline and guidance as outlined in the Texas Minimum Standards for Child Care Centers. All

adults, including parents, must follow these rules while on our property. Grow With Me has the right to terminate care in the event of disruptive behavior from a parent or guardian.

## **Parent/Staff Relationships**

Employees of Grow With Me are prohibited from outside employment with parents of Grow With Me. This includes, but is not limited to babysitting and/or nanny-type jobs. It is also against Grow With Me policies for our employees to become romantically involved with parents who have children enrolled in our center. We ask that parents please help our employees stay in compliance with this policy by keeping your relationship with staff members on a professional level. Please inform us if you ever feel that one of our employees is overstepping appropriate boundaries and in breach of this policy.

## **Cell Phones**

We realize that cell phone usage is the normal mode of communication, however, the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services prohibits the personal use of cell phones in daycare classrooms. Please help us stay in compliance with this standard by contacting your child's teacher through our office telephone at (806)828-5437.

## **Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco**

Grow With Me does not allow the usage or presence of Alcohol/Drugs/Tobacco on our grounds, including in the parking lot. If you are noted to be using any of the above, you will be asked to leave the property.

## **Gang Free Zone**

Under the Texas Penal Code, any area within 1000 feet of a child-care center is a gang free zone, where criminal offense related to organized criminal activity are subject to harsher penalties. Grow With Me is a GANG-FREE ZONE. If at any time, a problem arises regarding gangs in the vicinity of the daycare, law enforcement, as well as parents will be immediately notified.

## **Child Abuse**

It's hard to talk or even think about child abuse - but child abuse and neglect are simply too destructive to be ignored. Every day, at least five children die in the U.S. because of abuse or neglect. As child-care providers, we are often a child's first line of defense and play a large role in the lives of the children we serve. Grow With Me is committed to doing all that we can to not only respond to the abuse and/or neglect of a child, but to also promote awareness and prevention of child abuse and neglect. All of our staff members are required to attend 1 hour of training in child abuse recognition, reporting, and prevention annually. Child abuse is any mistreatment of a child that results in harm or injury. There are four basic types of child abuse, though children often experience more than one kind of abuse. These are: 1) Physical abuse, which includes actions such as beating, burning, kicking, or punching a child. 2) Emotional abuse, which may involve criticizing, insulting, rejecting, or withholding love from a child. 3) Sexual abuse, which includes rape, touching or fondling, or involving a child in pornography. 4) Neglect, which includes failure to provide for a child's basic physical, medical, or emotional needs. Leaving a young child home alone or failing to provide needed medical care may also be considered neglect. Abuse and neglect affect people of every age, race, and family income level. The majority of parents who abuse

their children love their children, but many factors can lead them to do things they regret. These could include:

- Trouble managing stress. Problems with work, money or relationships put a strain on family life. If a parent or caretaker has trouble managing stress, it can lead to abuse.
- A lack of parenting skills. Some parents might not understand how to care for a child's basic needs or they might have unrealistic ideas about a child's abilities and behavior.
- A history of abuse. Many child abusers were abused or witnessed abuse as children.
- A problem with alcohol or drugs. Alcohol or other drugs impair a person's ability to act as a responsible, caring parent. They can also make it harder to control emotions - especially anger

These factors can be overcome, and abuse and neglect can be prevented. Don't lash out when you are angry with your child - instead:

- Take a deep breath.
- Call someone or ask a friend to watch your kids while you calm down.
- Call one of the hotlines listed below and find someone to talk to.
- Find a parenting class in your community to learn about ways to handle the stresses of dealing with kids. • Find programs in your area to help you resolve any underlying issues, such as alcohol or drug abuse.

It's not easy being a parent, and every parent needs help from time to time. Recognizing that you have room for improvement is the first step toward becoming a better parent. Here are some resources where you can find the help you need to begin your journey:

National Parent Helpline 1-855-427-2736

[nationalparenthelpline.org](http://nationalparenthelpline.org)

The Salvation Army of Lubbock 806-761-9434

[SalvationArmyTexas.org](http://SalvationArmyTexas.org)

Texas Substance Abuse Hotline 1-877-966-3784

[drugfreetexas.org](http://drugfreetexas.org)

Catholic Charities of Lubbock 806-765-8475

Texas Family Help Hotline 1-800-989-6884

[dfps.state.tx.us](http://dfps.state.tx.us)

Texas Council on Family Violence 1-800-799-7233

[tcfv.org](http://tcfv.org)

**National Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400**

## **Child Care Service Assistance**

All parents enrolled in the CCS assistance program are required to do the following:

- (1) Swipe your child/children in and out of the center ON A DAILY BASIS.
- (2) Keep your account CURRENT. All parent co-pay fees must be paid before the FIRST day of the month to receive care for that month.
- (3) Renew your care BEFORE the ending date.
- (4) Pay the weekly curriculum fee of \$25.00. (this is not covered by CCS, and all parents are required to pay this weekly fee.

Grow With me only receives payment from CCS for the days you swipe your child present in our center. Therefore, failure to swipe your child present each day will result in private pay charges being added to your account and/or loss of our funding. The contract agreement between Grow With Me and CCS states that all CCS-funded accounts.

**MUST STAY CURRENT:** We are required to report all past due accounts to CCS, which means you risk losing your care if you do not swipe your children present each day and you do not keep your account current. Also, when you signed up to receive CCS tuition assistance, you were given an end-of-care date, at which time your funding assistance ends, and you must renew your care. Please remain aware of this end date and renew it BEFORE your current care date ends. If you allow it to expire, you will be charged a regular private pay tuition rate until you renew with CCS. We never want to see these things happen to our CCS parents and children, so we ask that you please abide by the requirements that CCS has in place. If you are a single or low-income parent and wish to find out about the CCS assistance program, you may contact them at one of the following:

Workforce Solutions

2002 W Loop 289 #117

Lubbock TX 79407

806-765-5038

## **Parent Rights**

You, as a parent, are entitled to see the following information. You may ask the director to show you the most recent copy of:

- Minimum Standards for this Licensed Child-Care Center (also available on the web at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us) or at your local Licensing office at 5121 69th Street Suite A4 or phone 806-698- 5510);
- The most recent Department of Protective and Regulatory Services Inspection/Investigation Report (also available on the web at [www.dfps.state.tx.us](http://www.dfps.state.tx.us) or at your local Licensing office at 5121 69th Street Suite A-4 Lubbock, Texas 79424 or phone 698-5510);
- Documentation of liability insurance that complies with Human Resources Code, Section 42.0491;
- The most recent Fire Marshal's Inspection Report (on file with the school);

- The most recent Health Department's Sanitation Inspection Report (on file with the school);
- The most recent Gas Pipe Inspection Report (on file with the school);
- The Child-Care Center's operational policies.

### **Compliments/Questions/Concerns**

Grow With Me wants to know about your level of satisfaction, questions, or concerns regarding any issue about our program, including policies and procedure. Our doors are always open and parents can stop by the office any time. A member of our management team is always available to speak with you. If you have a question or concern that you would like to discuss with your child's teacher, please remember that the teachers must focus their attention on the children at all times and the classroom is not the best place for even a brief conference. Please speak with management and we will be glad to make arrangements for someone to cover the teacher's classes so that you may have the opportunity to sit down in a quiet place and visit with your child's teacher about any issues you are concerned about. If you have a concern that arises after the center closes, please stop by the office first thing in the morning to discuss your concern with the management team.