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# FAMILY HANDBOOK

## CONTACT INFORMATION

Little Jungle Safari, LLC  
CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
Serving children infants to toddlers

1606 NW Irvinedale Drive Suite 101

Ankeny, IA 50023

Phone: 515.964.3923

[www.littlejunglesafari.com](http://www.littlejunglesafari.com)

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Asst. Director: Ashley Dorris

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Owner: Rhoda Harris [rharris@littlejunglesafari.com](mailto:rharris@littlejunglesafari.com)

## **Little Jungle Safari, LLC** **MISSION STATEMENT**

*Little Jungle Safari, LLC* Child Development Center exists to provide a safe, nurturing, developmentally appropriate faith-based learning environment for young children in an effort to promote each child's social, emotional, spiritual, physical, and cognitive growth.

### **Equity Statement**

It is the policy of *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, creed, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, religion or disability, in its educational programs, activities, or employment practices. If you believe you have (or your child has) been discriminated against or treated unjustly at Little Jungle Safari, LLC, please contact the Assistant Director, Ashley Dorris @515.964.3923. If the situation has not been resolved after communication with the Director, please contact Owner, Rhoda Harris at rharris@littlejunglesafari.com.

### **Guiding Principles**

- Children build understandings through responsive, positive relationships with caregivers and active engagement with peers, materials, and experiences.
- Learning is sequential in nature, building on prior knowledge and experiences.
- Learners need a broad foundation of developmentally appropriate experiences geared toward meeting unique learning needs.
- Quality programming is based on research-based teaching practices and continuous, multi-dimensional assessment.
- Meaningful learning occurs through learning experiences that enable critical thinking, flexible problem solving, and transfer of skills and use of knowledge in new situations.
- Programs are more effective when families and early childhood caregivers work together to
- support learning.
- Every child has the capability to be successful given appropriate supports and guidance.

### **Program Design**

It is essential to enact developmentally appropriate practices to ensure optimal learning and development in the early childhood setting. The following program points highlight how we intend to draw on research-based principles of child development and learning to create a program that will stretch your child in acquiring new skills, abilities, and knowledge.

Creating a nurturing community of learners through:

- Valuing the unique contributions of each member
- Fostering relationships with others through play, collaboration, and communication
- Working to develop self-regulation through the teaching of pro-social behaviors,

- consistent, clear and reasonable limits on behavior, acknowledgment of feelings and conflict resolution guidance, establishing a learning environment that encourages respect, health, and safety
- Developing a positive social/emotional climate through interactions and experiences
- Teaching that supports well-balanced practices of both adult-guided and child-guided learning experiences through:
  - Developing positive, personal relationships with both the child and the child's family
  - Working knowledge of program goals and curriculum used to achieve those goals across the domains (physical, social, emotional, cognitive) and across the disciplines (language literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical education, and health).
  - Environment, schedule, and daily activities reflect knowledge of each child's learning and development including child choice periods and sustained play and exploration.
  - Knowledgeable about teaching skills and strategies that will provide appropriate levels of challenge to move learning forward for each child.
  - Using scaffolding to plan for each child's individual need for support and assistance and strategic planning for appropriate learning format to reach desired goal.
  - Utilizing appropriate curriculum to achieve critical child development goals through:
    - Curriculum framework that provides clearly defined and articulated learning goals for children
    - Comprehensive, robust curriculum that effectively sets the stage for future learning and integrates learning within and across the domains (physical, social, emotional, cognitive) and across the disciplines (language literacy, mathematics, social studies, science, art, music, physical education, and health).
    - Inclusion of important routines and experiences to enhance the learning of infants and toddlers.
    - Implementing age-appropriate Christian Faith-Based curriculum.
    - Developmentally appropriate assessment used as a tool to monitor goal attainment progress
      - through:
        - Using ongoing, strategic, and purposeful assessment techniques to garner information to inform planning and implementation of appropriate experiences.
        - Assessment collection methods that are appropriate to the developmental status and experiences of young children and allow for multiple measures to paint a picture of growth.
        - Partnering with families if assessment results yield information that indicates a need for follow-up, evaluation, or referral.
        - Establishing reciprocal relationships with families through:
          - Mutual respect, cooperation, shared responsibility, and problem-solving between practitioners and family.
          - Establishing an inviting environment in which families feel comfortable, safe, and welcome with multiple opportunities for involvement.
          - Practitioners work closely with families through two-way communication to share

information about the child. In this way, the program can be better fashioned to meet the child's developmental needs.

- Linking families with a range of services based on identified resources, priorities, and concerns.

## POLICIES

### Arrival and Departure

Hours are as follows:

Monday-Friday 6:30 a.m.- 6:00 p.m.

For the safety of your child, each day you are responsible for:

- Signing your child in and out of the center using the center-selected security system as well as ensuring that the system is updated with appropriate information regarding those with authorization to pick up your child and other critical contact information.
- **Making sure your child is escorted into her/his classroom by a responsible adult.** Be sure your child is acknowledged by a staff member before you leave the center.
- A daily attendance log will be kept by your child's teacher through utilization of the HiMama App.

### **Consent to Safe Departure of Children from Our Program:**

If we have a concern for a child's safety when departing with an authorized pick up person, we will call another person on the authorized list to pick up the child or the Ankeny Police Department if necessary.

### Attendance

To better meet the needs of children, families, and staff, we request that you provide the center with a permanent schedule for your child. This schedule will be used to determine staff schedules, and classroom schedules. Please notify the center of any changes in your schedule so that we can make appropriate accommodations.

*Little Jungle Safari, LLC* prides itself in providing quality learning experiences for each child in our programs. You are strongly encouraged to ensure your child's consistent attendance. Classrooms have established consistent daily routines and often this routine becomes disrupted when children arrive during ongoing activities.

Establishing a consistent routine is very important for your child's daily schedule so that they do not miss out on important information or activities held at the center. When children do not have a structured routine, it often causes them to be excessively tired and/or cranky during the day and they do not get the full benefit of the preschool program. If your family schedule changes on a particular day, please inform the center at **515.964.3923** or the child's teacher through the HiMama App. so that they can be aware that your child's schedule will be different

on that particular day.

### **How to Report Absence**

If a child is sick or absent for any reason it is necessary that the parent or guardian call the *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* office at 515.964.3923 or the child's teacher through the HiMama App. Please contact the center as soon as possible each day that the child is gone or the first day of an extended absence. If you call before staff have arrived for the day, please leave a message indicating the child's name and reason for absence.

### **Authorizing individuals to pick up**

On the emergency forms, you will name individuals who are authorized to pick up your child from the center at any given time. You may choose to authorize as many individuals as you wish or to not authorize any individuals other than yourself. It is advisable to have multiple trusted individuals that could be contacted in the event of illness or emergency. We will not allow your child to leave with an unauthorized person, and we are sure you will understand that this is completely for the protection and safety of your child. If an unauthorized person requests to pick up your child, we will contact you directly for confirmation that this is acceptable. Please remember to keep this form updated.

### **Child Development and Learning**

Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide care and education in a setting that is safe, healthy, nurturing and responsive for each child. We are committed to supporting children's development and learning; respecting individual differences; and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively. We will recognize and respect the unique qualities, abilities, and potential of each child and advocate for and ensure that all children, including those with special needs, have access to support services needed to be successful. We will also support the right of each child to play and learn in an inclusive environment that meets the needs of children with and without disabilities.

### **Clothing**

Parents are responsible for ensuring that children arrive at the center with clothing. Children will need extra weather appropriate clothing. Children need at least two extra outfits every day. If children do not have appropriate clothing, parents will be responsible for bringing clothes to center immediately. Families must bring at least two clean sets of labeled clothes daily.

Please send winter clothing (hats, socks, mittens, boots, coats, snow pants) each day throughout the winter season. Please have names on all garments children will be wearing for outdoor activities.

Your child has many personal items that are precious to him/her. We suggest jewelry,

accessories, and other valuables stay home for complete safety.

### **Cribs**

All infants have to be placed on their backs to sleep according to DHS regulations. Crib training is encouraged in DHS regulations and it is our goal that all infants sleep in cribs while at the center. No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, or loose bedding shall be allowed in the sleeping area with the infant.

### **Curriculum**

Curriculum is a framework for learning opportunities and experiences. It is a process by which learners obtain knowledge and understanding, while developing life skills. It is continually revised and evaluated to make learning fun and exciting.

It is the policy of this early childhood center that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the cultural and racial diversity present in the United States. The objectives of the selected curriculum and teaching strategies include the reduction of stereotyping and bias elimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum will foster respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of each individual as a member of a multicultural nonsexist society.

*Little Jungle Safari, LLC* is a Christian, Faith-Based facility and shares these beliefs through a Christian curriculum based on the principles in the Bible. Children may also listen to Christian Faith-Based music and participate in prayer throughout the day.

Our Early Childhood Center also provides a thorough program to prepare children for their educational journey by focusing on enhancing growth through social-emotional, cognitive, and physical activities.

### **Diapering Policies**

Toilet learning is an important time in a child's development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

- Parents will provide an adequate supply of diapers/pull-ups and underwear as needed.
- The sink used for handwashing should be labeled and only used for handwashing and not for any food prep. This eliminates cross contamination between the sinks. Sinks should be sanitized throughout the day.
- Changing diapers or pull-ups will be completed in the designated diaper area. Food handling will not be permitted in this diapering area.
- Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth by the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, and the NRC for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

- Clothing that is soiled by urine or feces is immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
- Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least **every 2 hours or as needed.** Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
- Staff change children's diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas and not elsewhere in the facility.
- **At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.**
- Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
- Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
- Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through the use of visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.
- Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.
- All families are asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

### **Discharge**

At any time a family may choose to withdraw from *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* by giving a two week notice to the Director in writing. If a family chooses to withdraw without a two week notice, they will be obligated to pay tuition for those two weeks. When a child is withdrawn, s/he will only be eligible for readmission based upon space availability and all other enrollment criteria.

If for any reason a child or parent becomes a threat to any staff member or enrolled children, an immediate termination will be made. The director will give both verbal and written notice to the family.

In the event the Director feels the center can no longer care for a child due to specific parental behavioral reasons such as failure to obey center policies, use of profanity, rude or disrespectful behavior toward program staff, failure to park and drive carefully in the center parking vicinity, or making payments repeatedly late, the Director has the ability to give a termination notice.

### **Emergency Closing and Inclement Weather Information**

If the weather or some other emergency condition causes the Center to close on a day it would regularly be scheduled to be open, the staff will make best efforts to post the closure information on the business Facebook page, the HiMama App, the website,

[www.littlejunglesafari.com](http://www.littlejunglesafari.com), and to notify local news( KCCI-TV Channel 8) of such closure. Please check the business Facebook page first and often if waiting for news as this is the first site that will contain the latest updates.

Emergency closing and inclement weather closings are factored into the tuition rates, and no pro rata refund or adjustment will be made.

## **Enrollment**

The director/assistant director of *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* will offer tours by appointment or drop-in visitors when Director/Assistant Director is available.

A registration form along with an Enrollment Agreement and other necessary documents must be completed in order to enroll. A non-refundable registration/initial deposit fee is required at the time of registration. Each registering family will receive a Family Handbook along with the Enrollment Agreement containing detailed information that should be read and understood prior to signing enrollment paperwork. It is required by DHS that a doctor and dentist be included on registration paperwork.

The center calendar establishes the school recess periods and holidays for *Little Jungle Safari, LLC*, staff members. Typically the center is open 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Please note special hours and closed dates below.

### Special Hours:

Company Holiday Party: 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve: 6:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

New Years Eve: 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### Closed:

New Years Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Christmas

Thanksgiving

Friday after Thanksgiving

President's Day (to fulfill state training requirements)

If any of the aforementioned holidays falls on a Saturday, the Center will be closed on the immediately preceding Friday. If any of the aforementioned holidays fall on a Sunday, the Center will be closed on the Monday following Sunday. I understand that holiday and vacation closings are factored in to the Tuition rates, and no pro rata refund or adjustment will be made. I agree that I will not receive a refund, credit or any other allowance for holidays.

## **Guidance and Discipline**

Teaching staff will equitably use positive guidance, redirection and planning ahead to prevent problems. They will encourage appropriate behavior through the use of consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem-solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. Where the child understands words, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Teaching staff will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property and learn to be responsible for their actions. Teaching staff will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable to the child. They will help children learn to persist when frustrated, play cooperatively with other children, use language to communicate needs, and learn to take turns.

The teaching staff in the center is highly trained, responsive, respectful, and purposeful. The teachers anticipate and take steps to prevent potential challenging behaviors. They evaluate and change their responses based on individual needs. When children have challenging behaviors, teachers promote prosocial behavior by:

- interacting in a respectful manner with all children.
- modeling turn taking and sharing as well as caring behaviors
- helping children negotiate their interactions with one another and with shared materials.
- engaging children in the care of their classroom and ensuring that each child has an opportunity to contribute to the group.
- encouraging children to listen to one another and helping them to provide comfort when others are sad or distressed

## **Biting and Aggression**

For acts of aggression and fighting (biting, scratching, hitting) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve.

In addition, staff may:

- (1) Separate the children involved
- (2) Immediately comfort the individual who was injured
- (3) Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident
- (4) Notify parents or legal guardians of children involved in the incident;
- (5) Review the adequacy of the teaching staff supervision, appropriateness of program activities, and administer corrective action if there is another incident. We will keep the identity of the child who initiated the aggression confidential but will work with that child and his/her family to learn other ways to express feelings.

If a child demonstrates repetitive acts of biting/aggression toward other children or staff, we will first follow the protocol outlined above. In addition to the procedures above, we may also some do the following based on the particular nature of the situation:

- Concentrated teaching of appropriate behavior through reading of age appropriate books pertaining to the topic being addressed and discussion with the child geared to the child's level of understanding regarding the topic.

- Collecting ABC (Antecedent/Behavior/Consequence) information to determine a pattern so that we can isolate the situation or environment that may contribute to the behavior and adjust our response accordingly.
- Substantially increase praise of acceptable behavior in order to encourage the child to exhibit behaviors that are acceptable and safe.
- Meeting with parents of child exhibiting the biting/aggressive behavior to share information and partner in creating similar consequences/rewards between home and the center.
- Enlist the assistance of a Child Care consultant to observe the child in their current setting during various times of the day to ascertain if there are behavioral triggers or changes that can be made on the part of *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* such as environmental changes, staff response changes, or other alternatives to attempt to extinguish the behavior.
- Encourage parents of the child exhibiting the behavior to contact Heartland AEA for a formal evaluation of their child to determine if more specific assistance is needed beyond the scope and training of *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* employees.

The center shall **not** use the following as a form of discipline:

- Corporal punishment such as spanking, shaking, or slapping.
- Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or which causes pain or discomfort to the child. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by both a parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff will receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint.
- Punishment or threat of punishment associated with a child's illness, lack of progress in toilet training, or in connection with food or rest.
- No child will be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.

### **Indoor/Outdoor Activities**

Each classroom establishes and follows a consistent, yet flexible, daily routine based on developmentally appropriate practices and the individual needs of each child in the group. Daily schedules and weekly lesson plans are visibly posted in each classroom. Please become familiar with your child's routines and activities and discuss your child's experiences with him or her daily.

All children will have opportunities to develop and practice gross motor and movement skills appropriate for their age. Children will have access to an indoor activity center. As well, children may go outside. It is vitally important to send the appropriate outerwear for your child each day, including closed toe shoes. Temperature consideration have ended

- Below 65 degrees jacket or long sleeves recommended
- Below 55 degrees coat and long pants recommended
- Below 45 degrees gloves and hats with previously recommended gear necessary

*If your child is too sick to go outside, she/he is considered too sick to be at the center that day*

*unless a physician's note indicates that the child must remain indoors for health reasons.*

### **Injuries and Illness**

If your child gets sick or injured while at the early childhood center, center personnel will help him/her rest in a supervised location by a familiar caregiver. If the illness is serious or contagious or injury is serious, you will be contacted immediately to pick up your child. If your child is ill, a *Symptoms or Suspected Illness* form will be completed and given to you. If your child is injured, you will receive an *Incident Report* form outlining the situation and care provided following the incident. Your child's teacher/caregiver will follow the sick and exclusion guidelines when your child is sick or needs to be excluded from preschool

### **Meals and Bottles**

Menus will be posted on the HiMama App daily and parents are able to look ahead to upcoming menu months through the HiMama App as well. Menus will be posted on the Parent Board in each classroom as well as the bulletin board in the front office. Our meals meet the USDA and CACFP guidelines, which include the type of food served and the quantity of food served to ensure a nutritious and balanced diet.

*Please be sure your child's teacher/Director/Food Service Director is informed of any food allergies along with updating health information documents as needed.* Center will not supplement if a child is allergic to certain foods but will ensure to the best of our ability that the child is not served foods that cause a noted allergic reaction. The parent will provide supplemental food for meal components in which an allergic reaction may occur.

If a family follows a special diet consisting of foods prepared differently than those on the menu, families are asked to bring in prepared meals for their child to eat in place of the scheduled meal. These meals should be brought on a daily basis or as necessary. Please note that these foods must comply with USDA and CACFP guidelines.

If a child needs bottles they need to be brought from home daily. All bottles need to be clean, labeled with the child's name, and taken home daily to be cleaned at home. Little Jungle Safari, LLC will not wash any bottles. Any extra milk at Little Jungle Safari, LLC needs to be taken home daily. No milk (fresh or frozen) can remain at the center overnight. Breast milk/Formula needs to be labeled with the child's name and date. Any food that is brought to the center must be labeled with the child's name and date. All bottles, sippy cups, or eating utensils brought from home for use at *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* must be taken home to be washed on a daily basis.

According to DHS guidelines, all children under 12 months of age shall be fed on demand, unless the parent provides other written instructions. Written instructions will need to be signed by the parents.

### **Medication Administration**

In agreement with the policy of *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* in regard to medication administered by center personnel, an Authorization to Give Medicine form must be completed by a parent or legal guardian and updated as necessary. Forms are available at the center upon request. Upon receipt of this form and the medication in the original bottle, a caregiver/teacher will complete a Receiving Medication form to be placed in center records.

Prescribed medication shall be administered at the early childhood center by a caregiver/teacher that has successfully completed an administration of medication course. This individual will also complete a Medication Log to track medication administration for center records. This record of the administration of medication must be kept for each child receiving medication including the date, child's name, the medication and its dosage, the name and signature of the person administering the medication, and the time and method of administration. In the case of medications that are administered on an ongoing, long-term basis, authorization shall be obtained for a period not to exceed the duration of the prescription. Administration of medication records shall be kept confidential.

The following information should be clearly labeled on the original bottle from the pharmacy and that original pharmacy bottle is to be left at the center.

1. Name of medication
2. Strength, dosage and frequency prescribed
3. Name and address of pharmacy
4. Child's name
5. Physician's name
6. Date of prescription

If the dosage is changed at any time, we must have a new signed statement from the parent/guardian and doctor indicating the change. The new prescription bottle is acceptable as a statement from the doctor. Please fill out and sign an authorization for each medication your child is getting. Please do not ask us to give temporary medications, such as antibiotics that are to be given 3 times a day. Such medications can be given at home 1) before drop off, 2) after pick up, 3) at bedtime. Parent/guardians must pick up any leftover medications when discontinued.

Any homemade diaper cream must be labeled with all ingredients.

Over-the counter medications must be labeled with the child's name and must be accompanied by an *Authorization to Give A Medicine* form completed by the parent that states the type of medication, dosage, time of day to administer medicine, potential side effects, and the length of time the child is expected to receive the medication while at the center. A standing order for medication such as acetaminophen should be accompanied by a signed parental statement indicating the circumstances under which the child should receive the medication. When children are administered parent- approved standing order medications, the parent will be notified that day of the time, dosage, and reason for administration.

## **Notification of Communicable Disease/Illness**

Through routine exchange of information between staff members and family, we can fulfill our goal of maintaining a safe and healthy learning environment by limiting exposure to communicable disease. Please share details if your child shows symptoms of or has been exposed to a communicable disease or condition. Classroom postings will notify parents if children have been exposed to a communicable disease while at the early childhood center as well as share signs, symptoms and other important information about the illness.

## **Parent Communication**

Teachers will communicate with parents in several ways. Each classroom will communicate via newsletters and the HiMama App outlining the classroom events, themes, special dates and other important information. Each classroom will have a Parent Board for information that is needed for parents to keep updated on such as daily lesson plans, monthly calendars, health alerts, and so on. Teachers will also make phone calls as needed. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher by phone (515.964.3923) or by HiMama email when questions/concerns arise. Information will also be posted on the center's business Facebook page and/or [www.littlejunglesafari.com](http://www.littlejunglesafari.com).

## **Parent Concerns**

*Little Jungle Safari, LLC* strives to offer the highest quality care to each individual child and family, however situations may arise that cause a parent to be concerned. If this should happen, parents are encouraged to first talk directly to the staff involved in the situation, asking questions to clarify what happened and work collaboratively to find mutually satisfying solutions. If parents are not satisfied with the results or if the concern is serious enough to warrant immediate attention, parents are encouraged to contact the Director or Assistant Director (515.964.3923). Again, with quality as our goal, every effort will be made to work with families to resolve any issues brought to our attention.

## **Parent Resources**

Program staff will provide families with information about programs and services from other organizations in the community based on family needs and assist them in locating, contacting, and using community resources to support children and families' well-being and development. Program staff will also establish relationships with specialized consultants who can provide support for children with disabilities, behavioral challenges, or other special needs.

## **Peanut-Free Facility**

*Little Jungle Safari, LLC* is a peanut-free childcare environment. All food brought to the center or prepared for consumption at the center will be peanut-free in an effort to minimize the risk of a peanut exposure response for those with peanut allergies while at the childcare center. Caution will be taken to purchase food supplies that do not specifically contain peanuts or peanut flour but there is always a risk that food ingredients may have been manufactured in a facility in which they have come into contact with equipment used to produce other products containing peanuts.

## **Pets**

Live animals will be allowed in the early childhood facility for educational purposes.

Permission from the program director/on-site supervisor will be required of anyone wishing to bring an animal into the building and will require appropriate supervision of all interactions between children and

animals. Program staff will have a record of children with animal allergies and will ensure no exposure to that animal.

Pets or visiting animals must have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animals are fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella infection.

## **QRS (Quality Rating System)**

Iowa's Quality Rating System (QRS) is a voluntary child care rating system for DHS Licensed Centers, DHS Licensed Preschools, Department of Education programs and Child Development Homes. QRS was developed to raise the quality of child care in Iowa, raise the number of children in high-quality child care in Iowa and to educate parents about quality of care. QRS uses a rating system geared toward increasing quality. Participating providers are rated with 1 to 5 stars, depending on how many improvements steps they are awarded.

***As we work to become a QRS center, staff are required to maintain QRS standards in the classroom and follow the QRS program to provide high-quality child care setting and learning to all children at My Learning Safari.***

## **Safe Sleep Policy**

Little Jungle Safari, LLC will follow the DHS policies and guidelines for safe sleep. Below are some of the DHS policies:

- Infants will always be placed flat on their backs.
- Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib with no bed-sharing.
- Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a tight fitted sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements.
- No toys, soft objects, studded animals, pillows, bumper pads, boppy pillows, blankets, quilts, sheepskins or loose bedding will be in the sleep environment including nothing draped over or attached to the crib.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used.
- Home monitors or commercial devices marketed to reduce the risk of SIDS/SUID will not be used and are not recommended by the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- To avoid overheating, the temperature of the room where infants sleep will be

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monitored and kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.

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- Infants will be monitored for overheating. Signs of overheating include sweating or feeling warm to the touch.
- Swaddling is not necessary or recommended in the child care setting. The risks of swaddling include overheating, hip dysplasia, and SIDS.
- Infants make use a pacifier during sleep with parent permission. Nothing should be attached to the pacifier including a string, cord, or stuffed toy. Pacifiers may not be attached to the infants clothing.
- If the infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crin the infant will be immediately moved to a crib and placed flat on their back.
- Sleeping infants will be actively observed by sight and sound.
- When infants are able to roll back and forth from front to back, the infant will be placed on their back for sleep and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position.

### Sick and Exclusion

Staff members who are familiar with children enrolled at the center will assess children's health status upon arrival as well as exchange pertinent health information with families.

The following three criteria will be followed in determining exclusion of children who are ill:

1. The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities
2. The illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
3. The illness poses a risk of spread of harmful disease to others, unless a health professional determines the child's condition does not require exclusion. The following conditions fall into this category:
  - Appears to be severely ill which could include lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or a quickly spreading rash
  - **Fever** (temperature at or above 100.4°F) She/he may return when fever-free (less than 100.4°F) for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication.
  - **Diarrhea**-defined by frequent stools. This includes children whose stool frequency exceeds 2 or more stools above normal for that child or whose stool contains more than a drop of blood or mucus. For diapered children the increased frequency of stool in their diapers may cause too much work for the teacher/caregiver and thereby challenge the teacher/caregiver's ability to maintain sanitary diaper-changing techniques. For toilet- trained children, this greater frequency of having bowel movements poses a significant risk for accidents and contamination of toilet facilities. Readmission can occur when the child is diarrhea free for 24 hours and stools have returned to normal consistency.
  - **Vomiting** two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined by a health professional to be caused by a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration. The child may return if there has been no vomiting for 24 hours and he/she is tolerating bland foods or ½ strength formula.
  - **Abdominal pain** that continues for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms. He/she may return when symptoms have resolved.
  - **Mouth sores** with drooling that the child cannot control until sores are scabbed and

healed or health care provider determines they are non-infectious.

- **Skin sores** that are weeping fluid and are on an exposed surface that cannot be covered with a waterproof dressing until exposed skin sores are no longer weeping.
- **Skin outbreak** such as a rash, including ringworm, impetigo, hives, severe diaper rash, or any other undiagnosed rash. He/she may return after 24 hours of medication or written clearance from a physician that states the child does not have a communicable disease.
- **Pinkeye (infectious conjunctivitis)** which presents with white or yellow eye mucus drainage, often with matted eyelids after sleep, requires that child be sent home with recommendations to see a physician. She/he may return after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy or sooner if we receive a written statement from the physician that the child does not have a communicable disease.
- **Head Lice**-A child with head lice may return when hair has been properly treated and all nits have been removed.
- **Other conditions with specific diagnoses such as:**
  - Streptococcal pharyngitis (ie, strep throat or other streptococcal infection), until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
  - Chickenpox (varicella) until all lesions have dried or crustedThe preceding list/information is not all-inclusive and there may be other conditions in which it is necessary to exclude a child from an early childhood learning center due to the possibility of communicable illness.

**Your child should not attend *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* if he/she is ill.** Please keep him/her home if there is a fever, vomiting or diarrhea, a skin rash, continuous headache, bad cold with very runny nose or frequent cough, or any contagious disease. Your child will be more comfortable recuperating in the home setting and this reduces the likelihood of others contracting the illness as well. Please call the center to report any illness so that we post a notice of exposure if needed, for other families.

If your child becomes ill while at the early childhood center, we will complete a “Symptoms or Suspected Illness” informational sheet so you will have the necessary information to make appropriate health care decisions for your child.

We understand that young children get bumps, bruises, and scrapes as part of growing up. It is important, however, that you tell your child’s teacher about any unusual injuries or conditions, as staff members are required by law as mandatory reporters to report any suspicion that someone may have purposely hurt your child to the Department of Human Services (DHS).

### **Shared custody parental policy:**

Under the laws of the State of Iowa, both biological parents may have the right to pick up their child, unless a court document restricts that right. The enrolling parent who chooses not to include the other parent’s name on the authorized list for pickup must provide the center with a current official court document (e.g., current restraining order, sole custody decree, divorce decree stating sole custody, judgment of adoption). Absent that document, the center

may release the child to either parent, provided that parent documents the biological or adoptive parenthood of that child.

### **Shared custody parental agreement:**

For parents that share custody/child pickup responsibilities, the center requests that both parents complete a Shared Custody Parental Agreement form that outlines the days that each parent is responsible for picking up the child. If parents desire to change this arrangement, a new form should be completed by both individuals right away. If an emergency means an unexpected change in pick up schedule, the parent responsible for picking up the child on that date should complete a schedule change form for that day indicating that the scheduled pickup parent is aware of and consents to the change in schedule. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated as your child's safety is of paramount.

### **Toys from Home**

We furnish our classrooms with appropriate toys and learning materials to foster and enhance your child's development. We appreciate your cooperation by not sending toys from home with your child. If your child arrives at the center with a toy from home, you will be reminded to take the toy with you when you depart from the center. In the event that it becomes a consistent disruption to the child or class, we will work with the parent and child in an effort to find an alternative solution. If necessary, a decision may be made to no longer allow the child to arrive at the center with a toy from home.

Individual teachers reserve the right to have special days where they allow children to bring an item from home. In the event of these special days, parents will be notified in advance.

Please mark all personal items with your child's name in the event that they may be lost, stolen, or broken. *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items.

### **Transitions**

When making a transition from one classroom to another within *Little Jungle Safari, LLC*, several factors need to be considered. Physical, cognitive, and social-emotional needs are all taken into consideration. After leaving our program, toddlers will be able to enter the program offered at *My Learning Safari, LLC* located directly across the street. My Learning Safari, LLC offers childcare from two years-school age and a strong preschool program to ensure that children are fully prepared and confident to enter either a public or private school setting.

If a child begins their educational journey at *Little Jungle Safari, LLC*, the initial deposit paid at the time of enrollment will be applied to their account prior to admission to *My Learning Safari, LLC*. Children making the transition from Little Jungle Safari, LLC to *My Learning Safari, LLC* will not be required to pay another registration fee or initial deposit in order to continue their learning adventure at *My Learning Safari, LLC*.

### **Unlimited Access**

Parents have unlimited access to their children while they are in the care of *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* staff unless a court order exists which would restrict/terminate parental contact. All parents are encouraged to participate in program activities and are invited to volunteer or share special skills/talents with children at the center. The door is always open to *Little Jungle Safari, LLC* families for both announced and unannounced visits.

**Volunteers/Visitors**

A volunteer can perform non-teaching duties involving supervision and assistance to the teacher to enable them to better perform their teaching duties. Any person who is responsible, dependable, and cares about children and would work under the direction of a classroom teacher can be a volunteer. If you would like to volunteer, you need to contact your child’s teacher for further information. All regular volunteers will be asked to fill out a background check form that will be sent to a law enforcement agency for clearance. **All Volunteers/Visitors must check in with the Director/Assistant Director to receive their volunteer badge before going to a classroom.**

**ALL POLICIES & STATE REGULATIONS: I understand that the above policies are not an all-inclusive list of policies, and that my Child, my family members, authorized agents and I are bound by state Child care regulations and all other company policies which may be modified at any time, without notice. I also understand that the Child care regulations of Iowa may prevail over those policies when the state regulation is more strict.**

**NOTES**

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