

Updated Staff Policy Manual effective January 1, 2025



Kill Devil Hills, NC Campus
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The Management of *Healthy Environments Child Development Center* welcomes you and is proud to have you as a member of our team. Whether you are a new employee, or have been with us for some time, you are our most important and valued asset. We hope you feel comfortable with your work environment and with the people around you.

Good Luck and best wishes for a long and satisfying career at our Campuses. Share your passion for children daily and your rewards will be many!

Ms. Elizabeth Oppong

Employee Handbook

Welcome to the Kill Devils Hills Campus of **Healthy Environments Child Development Center, KDHNC LLC (HECDC)**! This center strives to be a center of **best practices and quality** in childcare and education. As an employee of the **Healthy Environments Child Development Center**, you will be expected to exemplify excellence and quality of service and care. By following the employee policy and procedures outlined in this handbook, combined with Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) regulations and NAEYC Code of Ethics, you will be well on your way to meeting the goal of excellence and quality we will strive for on a daily basis. This handbook is just a broad tool for conduct. You will be oriented on more specific policy and procedures through our on-going professional development and monthly meetings. Be sure to always keep the Code of Conduct at the forefront of all decision-making concerning children. If you do not find an answer to a question in this Handbook, or if you would like a particular policy or procedure clarified, please ask the Director or Staff Manager.

Authority

No manager or representative of Healthy Environments Child Development Center, other than the owner, has any authority to enter into any agreement for employment for any specific or indefinite period of time, or to make any agreement contrary to the terms of this manual. Any such agreement must be made by the owner and must be in writing to be effective.

Non-Solicitation and Non Complete Restrictions:

Employees are specifically forbidden from:

1. Opening home daycares within a 30 miles radius of our center and soliciting children from the Healthy Environments Child Development Center in Kill Devil Hills NC for 1 year after employment has ended.
2. Accepting Nanny positions from current or previous clients of Healthy Environments Child Development Center during their employment or 6 months after employment.
3. Babysitting requests from staff to parents are prohibited without express permission from Ms. Elizabeth Oppong. Such acts can have damaging impact on Healthy Environments Child Development Center, employees who violate this policy face legal action and temporary restraining order forcing them to give up such positions or jobs. In addition, former employees who violate their agreements are financially responsible for any losses incurred as a result of their actions.

Change of Policies and Benefits

The leadership at Healthy Environments Child Development Center KDHNC believes strongly in the plans, policies and procedures described in this handbook, but reserve the right to alter, modify, amend or terminate these policies and benefits in any manner which it believes to be in its best interests.

Termination of Employment

Based on North Carolina employment law, both parties (HECDC employee and HECDC as employer) have the right to terminate the employment relationship with or without cause and with or without notice, at any time.

Employment Status

Your employment with HECDC is an "at-will" relationship. This means that neither you nor Healthy Environments Child Development Center has entered into a contract regarding the duration of your employment. You are free to terminate your employment with HECDC at any time, with or without reason. Likewise, HECDC has the right to terminate your employment, with or without reason, at the discretion of HECDC.

Healthy Environments Child Development Center's Mission Statement

The mission of this quality center is to combine researched based elements necessary to grow happy healthy children in an Early Educational Environment. We want to be an extension of the home environment with emphasis on what is best for each individual child. We use a curriculum enhanced by many outside physical opportunities and engineered individualized learning experiences to help each child reach their full potential including social and self-concept development. The Healthy Environments' way is to provide each child with a healthy environment, healthy diverse well sourced food, and a highly qualified caring staff to allow each child to reach their full potential.

Equal Opportunity Statement

Healthy Environments Child Development Center, strives for each employee to be treated with respect and in a fair and just manner. In order to provide equal employment and advancement opportunities to all individuals, employment decisions at **Healthy Environments Child Development Center** will be based on merit, qualification and ability. **Healthy Environments Child Development Center**, does not discriminate in employment opportunities or practices on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, physical disability or any other characteristic protected by law. This policy governs all aspects of employment, including selection, job assignment, compensation, discipline, termination and access to benefits and training. However, all employees must be physically able to safely supervise young children.

The center strives to maintain a work environment in which all staff are free from harassment, and expressly prohibits any form of unlawful harassment of employees and co-workers on race, color, religion, creed, gender, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, or the presence of handicaps or disabilities.

Employees with questions or concerns about any type of discrimination in the work place are encouraged to bring these issues to the attention of the Director. Employees can raise concerns and make reports without fear of reprisal. Anyone found to be engaging in any type of unlawful acts and/or discrimination will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

General Center Information

Administration

Director: Ms. Elizabeth Oppong
hecdckdhnc@gmail.com Cell: (757) 535-1157

Hours of Operation and Closure Days:

Healthy Environments Child Development Center, LLC is open from **7:00 a.m. to 5:30 pm Monday through Friday.**

Healthy Environments Child Development Center, LLC will be closed or closing early on the following Days:

(New Year's Day):

(Presidents' Day for meetings & trainings);

(Memorial Day);

(Independence Day):

(Labor Day):

(October 31st—closing at 3pm);

(Veteran's Day for meetings & trainings):

(Thanksgiving Day):

(A Day after Thanksgiving):

(A Day before Christmas):

(Christmas Day):

(A Day after Christmas).

Severe Weather: Effective January 1st, 2026, Healthy Environments will no longer follow Dare County Schools closing procedures. We will be following late openings for severe weather conditions. Please check Brightwheel and emails for all up-to-date information. Make sure HE has an updated email addresses to receive all emergency closures and updates.

Services Offered

We provide full-time care for children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. Our program combines experienced, professional teachers, developmentally appropriate planning, quality programming, positive behavior support, diverse range of social, educational, and physical activities.

Ratios

At Healthy Environments Child Development Center, we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios at all times in our classrooms:

NC State Ratios

<i>Similar Age Levels</i>	<i>Staff</i>	<i>Children</i>
Toddler	1	6
2yr to 3yr olds	1	10
3yr to 4yr olds	1	10
4yr to 5yr olds (Pre-school)	1	10

When children are grouped in mixed age levels, the age of the youngest child in the group determines the staff: child ratio

Children of different age groups may be combined if the following guidelines are followed:

- 1yr and 2yr olds can be combined. **Ratio must be 1:6**

- 2yr and 3yr olds can be combined. **Ratio must be 1:10**
- 3yrs and older may be combined. **Ratio must be 1:10**

(All age groups can be combined at the first and last hour of the operating hours): Ratio is determined by the youngest child in the group

Nap Time

During naptime, at least one staff member shall be present in every room where children are sleeping and/or resting. Staff to-child ratios can be doubled except for the infant and Toddler classrooms. Note: All children must be in cribs or on cots for these ratios to apply

Ratios must be maintained at all times, including when emergency procedures are in effect.

Licensing

Healthy Environments Child Development Center is a public program voluntarily licensed by the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education. A copy of the licensing rules is available for review in the office and on the web at Division of Child Development and Early Education.

Weather/Emergency Delays and Closures

HECDC will follow Dare County School District closings during severe weather during the school year and Director or Manager will assess Emergency situations during summer off season. The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the center early or cancel care for the following day. In the event that HECDC closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up in a reasonable amount of time to ensure all parents, children, and staff can travel safely home.

Inclement weather or emergency closure information will be available on Brightwheel and email. You will receive an email and text alert by 5:30am with the details of the weather delay or emergency closure.

Employment with Healthy Environments

Initial Employment Process

1. Required Paperwork to Start

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- a) Complete the application form (you must include both your cell phone number and current email address as this will be the primary mode of communication initiated by HECDC).
- b) Provide proper copies of identification as outlined by the I-9 Employment Eligibility Form. Typical combinations of identification are as follows:
 - (1) Driver's License and Social Security Card.
 - (2) Driver's License and Birth Certificate.
 - (3) Student ID/Voter's ID/Military ID and Social Security Card.
 - (4) Passport or Passport Card (suffices both forms of legal identification).
- C) Submit appropriate educational documentation as required to be qualified for your job description.
- g) Provide a NC qualifying letter (good for 5 years)
- h) Provide a clear medical physical with negative TB Test or TB assessment completed by a Dr .
 - i) Provide two letters of recommendation (cannot be written by members of your family)

Note: Once the above documents and processes are complete and approved, you will receive a copy of your training schedule via email. There are certain circumstances in which HECDC may be contacting you to obtain updated documents after employment.

Note: Until Healthy Environments has received all of the above paperwork, you have not been approved for employment by Healthy Environments Child Development Center KDHNC LLC.

2. Required Clearances

NC Qualifying Letter: http://ncchildcare.nc.gov/general/dhhscrc_childcare.asp

3. Certifications/Other Requirements

Certain positions require specific certifications, skills or abilities. Your official transcripts will be copied and kept in your employee file as well as being sent to workforce development to assess your job qualifications <https://dcdee.works.nc.gov/>

4. Required Payroll Paperwork

By your first day of employment, you must turn in the completed payroll forms (w-4, I-9, and Local Residency Tax form). You will need to fill out a Healthy Environments application, Staff Emergency Sheet and have items above copied and added to your file.

5. Professional Development Modules

You must complete the appropriate professional development training modules as outlined within the DCDEE website during the allotted time as well as sign up or possess Pediatric CPR and First Aide.

Ongoing Employment Process

1. Certification and Clearance Updates

Per the Division of Early Childhood Education regulations, North Carolina Qualifying Letter aka FBI Fingerprinting must be updated at least every 5 years and you must receive a new physical exam every two years (you do not need to get additional TB tests unless recommended by your health care provider.) Certain positions require specific certifications, skills or abilities as you advance in experience or credit hours you may be required to provide updated unofficial transcripts.

2. Professional Development Hours

Each staff member must complete **Fire Safety** training yearly. Healthy Environments Child Development Center will host one training yearly at Colington fire station. If you are unable to attend this scheduled training, it will be your responsibility to find an alternate training and bring in the certificate or letter of completion by the deadline the director sets.

All staff members must be **First Aid/CPR** certified. HECDC will try to host one training yearly at the center. If you are unable to attend this scheduled training, it will be your responsibility to find an alternate training and bring in the certificate of completion by the deadline the director sets.

Each staff member must also complete between 5 and 20 hours of professional development yearly from their date of hire depending on your education level. The remaining hours are your choice (First Aid/CPR, Fire Safety, and Mandated Reporter Training do not count to your yearly hours.) New Hires need to document a minimum of 16 clock hours of on site training and orientation within the first 6 weeks of employment. ITS-SIDS training needs to happen within 2 months of hire then every 3 years after for those staff members who will be working with Infant Toddlers. North Carolina requires Health and Safety for Early Care and Education Professionals online through prosolutionstraining.com.

3. Deactivation

Deactivation does not mean your employment with HECDC is terminated.

Deactivation does mean you are ineligible to be scheduled due to incomplete or missing credential(s). You remain employed with HECDC but must contact your director for direction on how to resolve your deactivation and return your status to active and eligible to be scheduled.

4. Informational Changes

Please contact HECDC at hecdckdhnc@gmail.com regarding information changes or corrections. This includes: email or postal mail address changes or updates, name changes, tax or payroll changes, certification updates and other information related to your employee file. It is the responsibility of an employee

to maintain current records with HECDC including your email and postal mail address at all times.

5. Staff Meetings

All HECDC staff members are required to **attend all staff** professional development days and meetings. Important information, procedures, and policies are introduced and reviewed at these meetings; it is important to have 100% attendance. Employees will be notified at least two weeks in advance and must meet with the Director and/or Assistant Director if unable to attend a staff meeting. The required staff meetings are paid or time adjusted during the pay period.

6. Staff Evaluations

The director, assistant director, and either a manager or head teacher will conduct a performance evaluation for each new employee after 1 year. Performance evaluations will be done once yearly in December/January after the initial year of employment. They will include each staff member's PD plan and goals for the year. After conducting an evaluation, the staff manager and/or director will personally meet with each staff member to go over the evaluation and set goals for the upcoming year. These performance evaluations are not meant to be negative toward any staff member they are intended to keep lines of communication open and make your experience better at Healthy Environments Child Development Center.

Lead Teacher:

Responsible for the children assigned to his or her care.

Lesson planning for children in care

Cleanliness of room

Diapering/potting of children in care

Abiding by all NC Rules and regulations(please read and be familiar)

Floater:

Responsible for laundry

Setting out cots

Assisting Teachers with potty breaks for staff and children

Supporting of staff in classrooms whatever is necessary

Respecting NC Rules and Regulations at all times.

Asst Teacher:

Will support the Lead Teacher in all aspects of care

Assist in lessons and maintaining cleanliness at all times

Respect all NC Regulations and Ratios

7. Leave of Absence (LOA)

The following is a list of possible requests for a LOA. Please contact HECDC with any specific leave request in order to be placed on a leave of absence. All leaves of absence are unpaid. If you receive employee benefits through HECDC, you are expected to pay for all employee benefits selected to maintain coverage during your leave.

a) Military Leave

Requests for military LOA will be granted in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws. Requests including service requirements in the armed forces, the National Guard and Reserves. Such leaves of absence are without pay.

b) Medical Leave

All requests for medical LOA will be granted at the Company's discretion, or where otherwise required by law. A medical leave must be requested in writing and include a written statement from your doctor. A medical LOA will not be extended beyond a 12-month period.

c) Maternity Leave

Maternity leave is treated the same as a medical leave and will typically not exceed three months unless medically necessary. Such leave must be requested prior to the anticipated period of time for which the leave is required. This request must be accompanied by a letter from a physician verifying the need. If more time is needed beyond what is medically necessary, you may request a personal LOA which will be granted at the company's discretion.

d) Jury Duty

If you are summoned for jury duty, you will be granted a LOA for the time necessary for jury duty.

Return from Leave

Contact HECDC at least 14 days prior to returning from a leave. When you return to work from a medical or maternity leave, you must provide a doctor's release statement to HECDC indicating you are able to return to unrestricted work activity. If you are unable to return to unrestricted work activity, the statement must indicate the extent of your limitations and whether these limitations are permanent or temporary, as well as the probable duration of any temporary limitations.

Leave may Initiate Termination

A leave may initiate termination (or reemployment may be refused), if it is determined that you accepted employment elsewhere, even on a temporary basis, while on leave. In addition, re-employment may be refused if you fail to return to work according to the terms of the LOA.

8. **Arraignment and Convictions (while employed by HECDC)**
 - As required by North Carolina law, you must notify HECDC of any arraignment on a felony charge.
9. **Terminations**
 - a) **HECDC:**

Violations of Company and or NC Division of Child Development and Early Education's policies and procedures may lead to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
 - b) **Employee:**

In courtesy of our children, parents and other staff, Healthy Environments Child Development Center requires all staff members to put in a written (or email) notice to the director at **least 2 weeks** prior to your last date of employment to voluntarily resign and terminate your employment. If you fail to do so or are under 6 months with us, you forfeit any unused Vacation days and all training fees paid on my behalf by HECDC within the past year will be automatically deducted from your last check.

Compensation Policies and Information

1. Defined Work Week

The normal work week for a HECDC employee is Monday through Friday. For payroll, the technical work week is Sunday through Saturday.

2. Pay Periods and Pay Days

HECDC defines a pay period on a biweekly pay cycle. Pay dates are on a Friday beginning with Friday, January 12th for 2018. Note: If a payday falls on a banking holiday, you will receive your paycheck on the work day prior to the holiday.

3. Pay Rates

Pay rates are determined based on your job description, level of education, skill set and experience in the field. Hourly positions are broken down into hourly rates.

4. Overtime Policy

A normal full-time workday is 8 hours. The maximum hours you are approved to work is 40 hours per week. You must not work overtime unless it is authorized by the director.

5. Miscellaneous Compensation Policies

a) Compensation Errors and Correction Process:

Due to the inherent nature of payroll processing, sometimes an error is made when calculating payroll. If you find a discrepancy with your paycheck, please contact us as soon as possible via email at hecdckdhnc@gmail.com. HECDC will promptly contact the payroll company to make necessary corrections. In

the event that the discrepancy is an underpayment, you may expect the correction by the next available payroll.

b) Delays and Cancellations:

HECDC does not compensate for center delays or cancellations due to weather or emergencies.

Employee Benefits

Paid Holidays:

After one year of employment, all full-time employees are eligible for the following Five Paid Holidays: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, New Year's Day, Memorial Day, and Independence Day. You must work a day before and a day after the holiday in order to get paid for the holiday. HECDC may be closed additional days other than the paid holidays listed above.

Paid Vacation and Sick

Healthy Environments Child Development Center will award **Five paid Vacation Days and Five paid Sick Days** to all full-time employees after their first year of employment with HECDC.

Paid Vacation and Sick hours will be disbursed in a lump amount of 40 hours on January 1st of every year, and must be used by December 31st, any unused days will expire on December 31st. Vacation time must be scheduled by providing the days in writing to the director by Friday at 5:30pm at least 30 days in advance. Requests received after that time are ineligible to be paid as you did not provide the center timely notice that your classroom or shift will need coverage. Only one full-time staff member may be absent at a time. You may use vacation hours to cover sick days. Sick hours cannot be used for vacations.

Tuition Assistance

All staff members who regularly work 30 hours or more per week are eligible for tuition reimbursement through the TEACH Scholarship Assistance program upon completion of 9 continuous months employment.

Health Insurance/Vision/Dental

Details will be provided before open enrollment

Retirement Benefits

An email was sent to all staff regarding retirement benefits.

1. Other Mandated Benefits

HECDC also complies with and contributes to other government required programs for your benefit. These programs are not financed through

general taxation, but from contributions paid by the Company on your behalf.

1. Worker's Compensation Insurance:

You are protected by worker's disability compensation insurance, which provides benefits if you suffer a work-related illness or injury. Proper handling of a worker's compensation claim requires that you report on the-job injuries (within 24 hours) to the director at your work location. Discretionary failure to report an injury may jeopardize or delay your benefits and future employment with HECDC.

2. Unemployment Benefits

Day to Day Policies and Procedures

The following policies are intended to protect the rights of staff members and to ensure maximum understanding and cooperation. HECDC staff members are expected to be:

- **On-time and alert** when scheduled to be at work.
- Careful and conscientious in performance of duties, including the use of **positive words and actions**.
- Respectful, thoughtful, and considerate of other people.
- Courteous and helpful when dealing with children, parents, visitors, and other staff members

*Must maintain at all times a professional, kind, courteous demeanor when dealing with children, their families and staff.

Time Clock

You must be **physically present and ready to supervise children** in order to punch in and start your shift. Please if you need to use the bathroom or any other thing, do not punch in till you are ready to be present and in ratio in your assigned classroom.

You are required to punch out for one hour lunch if you are scheduled for more than 8 hours per day

Late Policy

HECDC expects you to be on time and ready to go when you are scheduled for all shifts as we are relying on you to be responsible for children at that time. If you know you will be late for your shift, please call and/or send a text message to the opening staff and the

Director or Asst Director.. Instances of tardiness will be documented in the staff member's personnel file and recurring tardiness is subject to the Disciplinary Procedure. Any No Call No Shows will be considered job abandonment and you will not be eligible for unemployment/rehire.

Calling Off

Consistency is crucial to creating a successful program. We make every attempt to have as few different staff members as possible in each classroom daily. Therefore, all staff members are expected to be in regular attendance, in order to provide a consistent environment and routine. Instances of absenteeism will be documented in the staff member's personnel file and recurring absences or tardiness are subject to the Disciplinary Procedure and or termination.

All absences must be reported to the Director and/or Manager with the expectation that the staff member will arrange for their own substitute. If the staff member needs help in securing a substitute, he/she should speak with the Assistant Director. HECDC will require a doctor's note to return to work after 2 consecutive days absent or if deemed necessary due to chronic call offs.

Requesting Off

As we have many children with schedules that change, we typically make the schedule a week in advance. If you know you need a certain day off you are normally available or aren't available for certain hours due to an appointment, please submit a written note or email with your request at least 2 weeks before you have a conflict; otherwise, you will be scheduled per your normal availability and it will be your responsibility to find a replacement for your shift. Requests will be granted on a first come first serve basis. It is your responsibility to inform the Director of any changes in your availability as soon as possible.

One regular staff member must always be in the classroom (I.e. either the teacher or regular aide for any given class). Staff members are expected to communicate with each other to ensure both regular staff are not absent on the same day.

Confidentiality:

It is important that all staff members be discreet in sharing information regarding the children and their parents in public areas. Names and identifying characteristics of children and families should not be shared with anyone other than staff members working in the classroom and the Director and/or Assistant Director.

Confidentiality is expected and required when grievances arise; staff members who discuss issues with individuals not directly related to the situation may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure. Staff should also be careful in discussing details of the center operation with others in public. Staff members may not distribute or post

children's last names, address, phone numbers, etc. with the exception of distribution to HECDC employees.

Personal information should never be used for personal purposes. North Carolina law specifically prohibits the sharing of information about children or staff members within a childcare setting without written consent from the parent, guardian, or individual. This applies to outside professionals as well. You must seek written parental consent before consulting with an outside agency about a child.

HECDC staff will sign a non-disclosure form through signature of receipt of this handbook as a binding contract.

Confidentiality Agreement for Healthy Environments Child Development Center

As an employee of Healthy Environments Child Development Center, I will pledge to not discuss HE Children, Family, Staff, Wages, and HE Procedures with anyone outside the Facility or inside the facility in an effort to maintain confidentiality of all parties.

Children's file information will be shared among those individuals that are in the need to know.

I pledge that I will not discuss or communicate in any form confidential information in order to maintain and respect the rights of all parties. I understand the failure to do so could result in my immediate termination.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All HECDC staff members are mandatory child abuse reporters. Suspected cases of child abuse or neglect must be reported to Dare County: Division of Social Services at 252-475-5500 and tell the receptionist that you would like to make a CPS report.

Staff members may directly report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect. The staff member should inform the Director of the report and together decide whether or not to inform the parents of the report. Employers are **prohibited** from retaliating against caregivers who make reports in good faith.

If an HECDC staff member is accused of abuse and/or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director and a determination will be made as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and/or neglect. HECDC will cooperate with any DHS investigation. In addition, the accused staff member will be informed of the allegations and be given an opportunity to respond to those allegations. Termination of employment after a child abuse allegation is at the discretion of the Director.

Co-Worker Communication

Conversations during work hours should be professional and relate to the lesson, classroom or the children not to staff's personal issues.

Open communication between staff members, parents, and children is crucial to a successful program. Before leaving a classroom for any reason (bathroom, making a copy, calling a parent) an employee should inform his/her cooperating teachers of the reason he/she is leaving. For all involved, it is important that all issues be addressed and resolved as they arise. All employees are expected to function as a team member at all times.

Record Keeping Policy:

- Child and Staff file checklist will be used from the provider's documents on the DCDEE website for each child and staff file. When a new child is starting all items will be collected before the first day. The family will be given digital copies of all forms needed as well as the children's medical report so that they can get everything in in a timely fashion.
- Child and Staff files will be updated monthly to make sure everything is in order and all materials within the file are up to date. Post it notes will be generated to show when upcoming deadlines for each child so we are able to inform families of what we need so they have time to complete the necessary forms.
- The Director and the Designated Staff person (retired DSS certified in MHQP) will be responsible for maintaining records and keeping them complete and up to date.
- When missing items in files are discovered they will be handled immediately by getting the proper forms to the parents to complete and return immediately or depending on the item by the next business day.
- A running tally will be used when going through files monthly to highlight what is coming due by the person reviewing the files so we can be proactive with items needed and provide staff or child's family with appropriate forms and timeline. Staff will be responsible to complete items needed as well as be on top of qualifying letter renewal so as to not have a lapse in employment. Children's families and staff who do not complete necessary forms to remain in compliance will suffer a lapse in care or employment till their files are up to date.

Grievance Procedure

As childcare professionals, all staff members are expected to make reasonable attempts to resolve conflicts directly with the individual(s) concerned. If a solution cannot be reached, staff members should then seek assistance from the Assistant Director in resolving the conflict.

Confidentiality is expected and required when grievances arise. **Staff members who discuss issues with other staff members not directly related to the situation may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure.** This policy applies both during paid hours as well as on a staff member's personal time.

Employee Discipline Procedure

Healthy Environments Child Development Center uses progressive discipline as a positive way to correct unacceptable job performance. This is not a contractual obligation because all HECDC employees are "at will" which means an employee can be terminated at the will of HECDC for any reason or no reason. The following are the steps, which are taken using progressive discipline.

STEP 1 Verbal Warning:

If a staff member's job performance is not meeting HECDC standards, or if a staff member is in violation of any policy stated in this handbook, he/she will be informed of the problem and the possible penalties if performance does not improve. Suggestions on ways to improve job performance are discussed. Verbal warnings may be given for violation of HECDC policies, failure to follow procedures, unsatisfactory performance, absenteeism or tardiness.

Verbal warnings will be recorded and discussed with the Director and Assistant Director. After three (3) verbal warnings have been issued for any reason within a period of six (6) months, a written warning will be issued.

STEP 2 Written Warning:

A written warning is given if a problem/s identified by multiple verbal warnings has not been corrected. Written warnings will be recorded, discussed, and signed by both the staff member and the Assistant Director. A staff member may receive only one (1) written warning during a six (6) month period. After one (1) written warning has been issued, any further issues or actions subject to the Disciplinary Procedure may result in suspension or termination.

Written warnings will be issued immediately for refusal to follow lawful instructions or any other serious policy violation, which endangers the safety or integrity of a child or staff member.

STEP 3 Termination:

Termination may result when using progressive discipline if steps have not produced satisfactory and acceptable performance. Termination may be immediate without using progressive discipline. Reasons for immediate termination may include, but are not limited to:

- Commitment of child abuse under North Carolina law.
- Abuse of a parent/guardian of a child or another staff member
- Harassment
- Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while at work
- Theft
- Possession of a weapon
- Violation of any policy which states that violation of such policy may result in termination

The above violations are only examples and are not meant to be all-inclusive. Disciplinary action up to and including termination may be taken immediately at the discretion of the Director.

Suggestions

HECDC is always seeking suggestions that will: improve methods, procedures, and working conditions; reduce costs or errors; and benefit the children, staff, and center. Staff members who have suggestions or innovative ideas are encouraged to discuss them with the Lead Teacher and Assistant Director and/or Director.

Supplies

Lead Teachers are responsible for reporting to the Director and/or Assistant Director when supplies are running low so they can be replenished before supplies are completely depleted. If you need special supplies for a lesson, please request these by Thursday the week prior so we have time to get them with our weekly grocery run.

Reimbursement

The Director must first approve all purchases made by a staff member using personal funds. Any unapproved purchases may not be eligible for reimbursement. Original sales receipts should be submitted to the Director and/or Assistant Director within one week of purchase to receive reimbursement.

Illness

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

- Fever accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Signs/symptoms of severe illness, including: lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability or persistent crying, difficulty breathing, and/or wheezing
- Diarrhea (not associated with diet changes or medications) until diarrhea stops or the continued diarrhea is deemed not be infectious by a licensed health care professional.
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Vomiting until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the cause for vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness
- Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease

- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until after treatment has been initiated
- Head lice, from the end of the day until after first treatment
- Scabies, until after treatment has been completed
- Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever
- Chicken pox, until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)
- Pertussis, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of symptoms
- Hepatitis A virus, until 1 week after onset of illness
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash
- Rubella, until 6 days after onset of rash
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion
- Herpes simplex, with uncontrollable drooling

A child who becomes ill while at HECDC must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease. An ill child will be sent to the front by the administrator's desk to wait for his/her parent to arrive with the administrator.

HECDC reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

Notice of Exposure and Reporting Disease

If a child or staff member is found to have a communicable disease, a notice will be posted on the door of all affected classrooms. Additionally, families and staff who have provided an email address will receive email notification of the illness. In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Director will notify the health department.

Medication Authorizations

Staff members may not administer medication to any child unless a parent has completed a Medication Authorization Form. Parents must indicate a start date and end date, a reason for the medication, and the dosage or medication cannot be administered. If a child becomes ill while at HECDC and a parent requests that medication be given, verbal authorization can only be given to the Director and/or Assistant Director. A Medication Authorization Form will be completed by the Director or Lead Teacher and must be signed by a parent upon pick-up.

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

Medications may be administered only by Lead Teachers, the Director, or manager. When a medication is given, the teacher will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given as well as any unusual reactions or circumstances. Expired Medication Authorization Forms must be turned in to the Assistant Director to be filed in the child's permanent enrollment file.

Documentation of Allergies

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

Peanut /Tree Nut-Free Daycare Policy

Our Center may have children with severe peanut allergies. We understand that many of our children are not old enough to make sound decisions when it comes to what should go into their mouths and are less able to manage their allergies. And while our staff members do an amazing job of cleaning and wiping down playing surfaces, toys, and chairs, there are some children who are in our Center who could have a serious allergic reaction from contact with even a microscopic amount of peanuts. As we work on transition with the little ones, there are many instances where children use common space within our building, and it is because of this that we have decided to make our Center a Peanut/ Tree Nut-Free Daycare Center. We ask that no peanuts or tree nuts must be brought into our center. Food sent in for snack, lunch, or any class event (including parties, field trips, etc.,) should be carefully checked to make sure they are peanut/ tree-nut free. Families can help ensure that our Center stays peanut tree-nut free by reading packaging labels and reminding children not to share food with other children at the Daycare Center. We need to make sure that there is little opportunity for a child to be exposed to foods that could harm him/her.

Emergencies and Accidents

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at HECDC using an Accident/Incident Report. Please document all biting incidents as accidents. If a biter breaks the skin of another child or has bitten multiple times an accident report needs to

be completed for the biter as well as the child who was bitten. Use great detail when explaining events, but never include other children's names. If the injury is serious, a parent needs to be contacted before pick-up. All accidents or serious illnesses must be reported immediately to the Director and/or Manager and reported to parents as a courtesy. Accident(s) reports must be written, signed by the staff member that witnessed the incident, copied for the child's file, and given to the child's parents.

You are responsible for understanding Healthy Environments Child Development Center, LLC's Emergency Preparedness plan including how to respond in an emergency, all evacuation routes, and the location of first aid kit at front of room. It is essential proper supervision be maintained at all times even an emergency. In the event of a medical emergency, the procedure is posted upfront and in back of building. If you are unclear of any of the procedures please ask before an emergency occurs.

Leaving the Building with the Kids

Whenever you leave the classroom with the children, you are responsible for bringing the Emergency clipboard for your class. It is the responsibility of all staff to notify the director and/or manager immediately if you use all of one of the supplies in your class' emergency kit and/or if anything is missing.

Visitors

All individuals who are visiting the center (i.e., someone who is not a parent or authorized pick-up person; or staff member) is required to sign in at the front desk before entering the center. The visitor is then required to sign out before leaving the building. Staff members should notify the Director and/or Manager if expecting a visitor.

Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with childcare shall not have unrestricted access to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio. Unrestricted access means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for childcare.

Any person who does not have unrestricted access will be under the direct supervision and monitoring of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any childcare responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Lead Teacher unless he/she delegates it to the Full Time Assistant Teacher due to a conflict of interest with the person.

Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If a staff member is unsure about the reason, contact the Director to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation, staff will follow the "Dangerous Adult" procedure. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc., will be monitored by a paid staff member and will not be allowed to interact with children on the premises.

General Staff Expectations

Professionalism

Each Healthy Environments Child Development Center staff member is a child care professional and is expected to act as such. The following general guidelines for professionalism should be maintained at all times:

- Arrive on time and stay for entire shift, if needed.
- Is not absent from work on a regular basis and finds a substitute when necessary.
- Dress appropriately for interaction with children.
- **Take directions, suggestions and criticisms, and follow through to improve performance.**
- * **No food is to be eaten in front of children or shared with children at anytime.**
- **Respect confidential information regarding children, families, and co-workers.**
- **Display a positive attitude toward the entire center** (the program, children, families and co-workers).
- Attend staff meetings and other Center events.
- Complete required training courses in a timely fashion.

Professional Demeanor

Demeanor involves your manner and your non-verbal tone and gestures. At Healthy Environments Child Development Center, LLC every teacher must be conscious of the emotional undertone that they are exuding.

Four Characteristics to Maintaining Professional Demeanor:

- * Pleasant Smile
- * Gentle Approach
- * Friendly Greeting/Conversation
- * Maintaining Professionalism

Note: All employees at Healthy Environments Child Development Center will **greet every parent and family with a smile**; to let them know that you are truly happy to care for their child.

Dress Code

Dress, grooming and personal cleanliness standards contribute to the morale of all employees and affect the image **Healthy Environments Child Development Center** presents to parents, the children, specialists and visitors. Our philosophy is to provide a culture that allows staff to dress in a style which presents a neat, business-like appearance and that promotes confidence and professionalism to the public while being able to participate and interact comfortably with the children. HECDC does not have a

uniform at this time and expects you to accept the responsibility of dressing appropriately for your position and/or planned activity for the day.

With that in mind, the following dress code will be implemented and enforced at all times. **All employees** should wear appropriate tops, blue jeans with no holes, black pants, or khakis (business casual but comfortable), Nice shorts or skirts to the knee and comfortable close toed shoes.

***Clothing** should be cleaned and in good repair at all times. Clothing must be appropriate to engage children in all types of activities throughout the day. You are hired to work with children and being down on the floor frequently is part of the job responsibility. No low-cut tops, shirts with inappropriate images or language, or exposed bra straps will be allowed. No ripped jeans, sweatpants or pajama pants will be permitted.

* **Jewelry** if worn, should be conservative. Long chain necklaces or pendants and hoops should not be worn as they can present a safety hazard to small children. Earrings should also be small, conservative, and secure, to prevent children from grabbing and pulling loose.

* **Shoes** must be neat and in good repair at all times. Tennis shoes and sneakers are preferred because you are expected to engage the children in activities on the playground and the shoes should be appropriate for the situation. Open toe or open heel shoes are not permitted for safety reasons. **No flip-flops or sandals will be allowed.**

Note: Employees who report for work inappropriately dressed will be sent home and directed to return to work in proper attire. Under such circumstances, employees will not be compensated for the time away from work. Consult your Director if you have questions as to what constitutes appropriate dress.

Personal Belongings

Coats, backpacks, purses, etc. must be out of the classrooms and put on high hooks, in closets/cabinets and out of reach of children. Healthy Environments Child Development Center is not responsible for lost or stolen items. NO handbags are to be left out on counters or shelving. All drinks are to be placed in a closed travel mug! No drinks with straws, cans, coffee cups that are not in a travel mug are permitted.

Cell Phones

It is important that every staff member's attention remains on the children at all times. A second's lapse in attention could result in a serious accident, which, with appropriate supervision, would have been prevented. Therefore: Cell phones are not permitted in any of the program rooms. Cell phones should be stored in a purse, bag, coat, etc. outside the classroom while a staff member is clocked in. **Cell phone use is permitted only during an approved break, and never in a classroom. It is never appropriate to make a personal**

phone call, send a text message, check voicemail, etc. while in the presence of children, even while on an approved break.

It is expected that when leaving the center for any reason (playground), one staff member (lead teacher in most cases) will carry with them a walkie Talkie and one of the center's phones.

In the event of a personal emergency, the staff member must inform both the Lead Teacher and Director of the situation and wait till a substitute has arrived to replace the staff member. Ratios must be maintained at all times.

We have a 3 strikes policy; this means if you are asked to put your phone away while you are responsible for children on three separate days that is automatic grounds for termination.

The Center's Phone

To ensure effective telephone communications, employees should always use the approved greeting and speak in a courteous and professional manner. Please confirm information received from the caller, and hang up only after the caller has done so. In case of an emergency, all emergency information is posted next to each phone.

Personal use of HECDC's office telephones is not permitted unless given director approval. Long-distance and toll free calls will **not** be permitted.

Computers

All HECDC-owned computers are to be used for work purposes only. Under no circumstances may software be installed without the prior permission of the Director and/or Assistant Director. Staff members may bring in a personal computer/tablet to use during nap time only. The wireless network password may be obtained from the Director and/or Assistant Director. Computer use is forbidden during all times other than nap/rest time. You may use a computer/tablet to play lesson appropriate music for the class (cell phones are not permitted for music).

Handwashing

All HECDC staff members must wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arriving at the center
- After each diaper change
- After helping a child use the toilet
- After wiping a nose, coming into contact with saliva or any other bodily fluid.
- Before preparing meals
- Before and after meal-times
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After removing gloves
- After using the restroom

- After returning to the center from a break
- After coming indoors from the playground

**Frequent hand washing with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses like diarrhea, the flu, and conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Unmonitored Contact

For the protection of each staff member, we always work in teams. No HECDC staff member or outside therapist/support staff should ever be alone with a single child. Another HECDC staff member should be **within sight/sound at all times**.

Parking

Staff members should park in the side of the building when possible.

Tobacco Use

Cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on HECDC premises, including parking lot and outdoor play areas. Staff members who smoke or vape are strongly suggested against doing so immediately before or during their shift, as smoke can stay on clothing and hair for an extended time. Staff members must wash hands immediately after smoking or vaping and change their shirt/jacket, before returning to work.

Substance Abuse

Any staff members reporting for work under the influence of alcohol or controlled substances will be asked to leave immediately. If the Director or any other staff member has probable cause to believe a staff member's faculties are impaired while on the job, the staff member may be suspended or terminated immediately.

Our Curriculum

Healthy Environments Child Development Center's educational program will be changing to the Abeka Curriculum effective January 1st, 2026. This is a Christian based curriculum with literature for a diverse range of physical and cognitive activities all planned around unit themes. Themes can last from one to four weeks. Each teacher will follow the same lesson plan only adapted for each individual age group and developmental levels of the children in her classroom.

Through the Abeka curriculum, we will concentrate on letter activities such as phonics, Long/Short Vowels, art projects, printing the letter, sounds of letters, words that begin with each letter, etc., all individualized to the developmental level of the children in each class. Other areas of our curriculum include: number

lessons, counting, color identification, shape recognition, name spelling and writing, learning phone numbers and addresses, sight word identification and using the calendar, including naming months, days and seasons. Music and Physical Education are also incorporated in our weekly activities.

Areas of study for the Pre-School class (3 year old and up) are geared toward meeting Kindergarten prerequisites and transitioning. We incorporate children's favorite literature into the program by having a featured author or character of the month. These books may be simply read at story time or our teachers may plan classroom lessons around them.

It is all about the FOOD (food is suspended at this time)

Children provide their own food. Food from home must be cooked, labeled and dated each day.

We want you to encourage each child to try all foods that are on their plate. While at the table, it is your responsibility to show and encourage the use of proper table manners and respect for others.

Staff is permitted to eat with the children during all snack and meal-times; however, it must be what the children are eating or a healthy snack from home. No food we wouldn't allow the kids to eat themselves (ie candy, nuts, chips, fast food, etc) is permitted to be eaten at the table or in the presence of the children. **You may not share your food from home healthy or not with the children in your care! Children must never share food.**

******Teachers must sit with the children during meal time to ensure safety******

Lesson Plans

Each teacher or co-teachers, must submit a completed copy of the weekly or monthly depending on classroom age lesson template by Sunday night before the lesson week to the director or office manager for review. We ask that you incorporate each of the learning styles at least once per week.

Please include a list of any supplies or print outs that are not readily available in your classroom you may need for the week by Friday the week before the lesson week. As management is very busy, we need the time to procure the supplies and while last minute requests may not be possible, you are still expected to be prepared for the day's lesson.

Schedules

Each age-group follows a unique schedule that is posted outside each classroom and located within the classroom binders. It is especially important to stick to the schedule as much as possible to make transitions on the kids easier and allow for the multiple age-groups to share the meal and gym spaces. Each class, will be required to stick to roughly

the same content time each day as we will be bringing tours through during those times. We are always welcome to suggestions to make the schedule more functional for each classroom.

Morning Meeting

Each classroom (except infants) will start the day with a morning meeting. During this time, all the children and teachers will sit together to go over what day it is, the weather, the activities for the day, and review classroom rules. It should be appropriate to the age of child and include fun songs and finger plays.

Outdoor Time

We encourage and offer many opportunities for physical activity for the children throughout the day. The children are given the opportunity for free play outside twice a day weather permitting. There will be scheduled outdoor time for each classroom; during this time we would like each teacher to plan an organized age-appropriate activity relating to the month's theme to do with the kids at least 3 days out of the week (the other days may be just free play).

Outdoor play must be incorporated into the daily schedule at least once a day in almost all weather conditions. In the event of rain, severe wind/cold, or extreme heat, children are permitted to remain indoors or go to the porch for an outdoor activity.

There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, it is expected that staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children are able to choose their friends and who to interact with. The outdoor learning environment is an extension of the indoor classroom. Concepts taught indoors can be expanded upon while outdoors. For example, building with blocks on an uneven surface outside, or playing with toy cars in the mulch teaches children about different textures, sounds, and smells because the environment is naturally different from the indoors. Lesson plans should include an outdoor learning component.

Free Play

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) must be incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. Teachers are expected to actively participate with the children during free play activities by asking questions about what the

children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc.

Weapons/Violent Play

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

Competitive behavior is minimized in our programs. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior; all efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others.

Nap/Quiet Time

All children will be provided a regularly scheduled nap or rest time. Children will not be forced to sleep but may be encouraged to lie quietly for a period of time. The length of time a child should have to remain resting varies by child. Children should be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to nap or if the parent does not wish the child to nap. Our center's quiet time runs from approximately 12pm to 2:00 pm.

Decorating the Classrooms

Our classrooms are personalized by the teachers and children. As part of Best Practices, all artwork displayed on the walls must be free-handed by the children (i.e. teachers may not draw something or print something to have the children color or cut out for display.) Healthy Environments Child Development Center aims to be friendly to children with sensory processing issues and ask that teachers limit the amount of things hung up on the walls or displayed throughout the classroom. No putty or staples will be allowed to fix items to the walls or ceilings as they have caused a lot of damage in the past and can be dangerous to small children. If you choose to use thumbtacks, they must be secured with tape and can't not be low enough that a child could reach them. If you have a question about what is acceptable just ask.

Daily Reports

These are the full or half sheets provided to parents at pick up time so they know what their child ate, the activities he or she participated in and anything they might need to bring. Most parents are very eager to see what their child learned today so please be detailed when describing the activities you have done with the kids (i.e. colored or learned about the letter "t" is not acceptable). When filling out the food portion, refer to the

posted weekly menus to describe the food; we want to convey the variety as much as possible. Since food and its healthy nature is our difference.

Daily Reports may be done ahead and photocopied for the group, but we ask that an observation/note personal to each child be written in the comments section daily. If you need to report a behavioral issue on the daily log, please include a positive observation/note prior to addressing the negative issue.

Daily Observations

Within each classroom, either the teacher or aide (it is your responsibility to decide) is responsible for keeping daily observations for each child. Each child should have at least one observation recorded weekly. These observations are informal and can be jotted down on the notepad or stickers provided in each classroom. These are separate from the daily reports that go to parents. These observations will be used to create progress reports for the children around parent conference time or should a behavior problem arise.

Parent Conferences

November and April are reserved for parent conferences. We send home a permission slip that the parent's return with their availability and the director will schedule conferences during times predetermined to work for the center and teacher. Both the child's teacher and whenever possible the director will meet with the parents to discuss each child's progress and goals for the future. The better the communication, the better childcare service we can provide to each family.

Throughout the year, teachers are required to keep a file for each child in the classroom to hold their observations, developmental checklists.

Toddler Program Information

The following information is specific to the toddler program room:

- Parents must supply labeled diapers, wipes, diaper cream, and extra clothing. Please remind parents to label all items with child's name.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Check with parents before introducing ANY new food. Document all foods on their daily sheet and how much eaten.

Guidance Strategies

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's

self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledge the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, is likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. HECDC staff will use only positive guidance techniques.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions: "Am I..."

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children's choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children - not at them?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child's eye level?

Reasons for Misbehavior

If caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave.

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

Preventing Misbehavior

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected.

However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules. (e.g., walking feet; gentle touches)
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities. (e.g., participating in activities with the children so they stay interested for longer periods)

- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices. (e.g., "You may pick up the blocks or go to the art center.")
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided. (e.g., "Ashley, please use gentle touches with your friends.")
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right. (e.g., "Joey is playing so nicely. I like it when you keep the blocks on the table.")
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example. (e.g., using a quiet voice when children should be quiet)
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

Supervision Policy -

- When children are arriving and departing from the HE each day, adequate supervision will be maintained at all times. At arrival, the parent/guardian is responsible for signing their child in at the vestibule at front of the center. Specific times of arrival/departure are required to be entered in the sign in and out sheet along with parent signature. Once staff is aware that the child is in the classroom, then the child becomes HE responsibility. At departure, the parent is responsible for signing their child out at the front vestibule. If their child is in their classroom then the parent/guardian will retrieve their child from the classroom. If their child is outside, the parent/guardian will retrieve their child from the playground. To ensure safety of all children in care, staff is not permitted to leave the playground to walk a child inside to meet their parent.
- When toileting children and other transitions (with children under 3) within the Center a floater, cook or Administrator will be asked to help so as to make sure children are always adequately supervised during these times. If extra help is not available at that moment then the children will be lined up and counted then move them to the bathroom where those not needing to be toileted will sit outside bathroom and Infant classroom to wait for the friends. All children will be counted when moved to and from spaces to ensure all children in the group are accounted for and present. In preschool room the teacher will position his or herself to visually see all children in their care so they can maintain adequate supervision for each child including the one in the bathroom incase that child needs help with anything. During a Transition or emergency, communication to other teachers in the open concept will make each teacher aware of the transition or emergency, so that all teachers are on the same page when moving children through the open spaces. This will ensure adequate supervision for all groups of children with in HE.

- When combining classrooms a teacher needs to be extra careful with supervision of children not normally in their care as well as within a environment the children may not be familiar with.
- When children are to be heading outside to the playground they will be counted prior to leaving the room and again as they leave the building to enter the playground. Children from classrooms under 3 will ask floater, cook, or administrator to help with the transition outside to the play space. The Responsible Teacher will grab a walkie talkie, their clipboard, and continue to count as to make sure each child is accounted for. Counting will occur at the gate to the ramp inside the building to make sure each child is present. The Responsible Teacher will move around the playground space in order to help children make good decisions on the playground. When leaving the playground, a quick attendance from the sheet on clipboard of those present that day to make sure all are accounted for. The floater will be asked to help move the children (under age 3) back into the classroom and help with hand washing and diapering of the children to ensure children are adequately supervised at all times.
- When a child has a bathroom emergency in the facility alerting the Prek and Infant teacher while asking the floater, administrator, or cook to stand in the classroom while the main teacher can assist the toileting child. If no one is available regroup children to come with you to the bathroom and sit outside of the bathroom while the teacher is assisting the child in cleaning up and toileting.
- When a child has a bathroom emergency out on the playground the Responsible Teacher will walkie inside to have the administrator, floater or cook join her on the playground and take care of the child needs. If no one is available the Responsible teacher will gather the children in his or her care and bring them inside to toilet the child or change a child's diaper.
- During nap/rest period supervision will be maintained at all times. In infant rooms children will be checked every 15 minutes and documented on a sleep chart. In each of the other rooms, children will be checked on while they are resting or napping.
- Cell phone usage among staff will be limited to breaks except for Managers not in ratio with children. Walkie talkies will be used outside to alert for support in caring for a child's needs.
- In the case of an absentee teacher a substitute or floater will be brought in where possible otherwise the acting Director will take the teachers place. Daily sheets for parents and lessons will be completed by the substitute teacher in the room.

- Floaters and extra staff will be used for completing tasks outside the classrooms like obtaining the gym foarnasium equipment, preparing cots, and prepping lunch plates so that teachers are always about to supervise the children.
- Teachers will keep count of the children in their care and bring with them the clipboard supplied to each classroom for the purpose of Accident reports, emergency contact sheets in case of emergency situations, and to be able to add information to their daily sheets.
- Supervision of children in your care has to be maintained at all times. A teacher will make sure his or her back is not to the children allowing him or her to be able to see and hear all children in his or her care. Please ask for help from Floater, cook or Administrator when plating food for the children in the Toddler rooms so you are able to adequately supervise all children in your care.
- A child in the bathroom will be observed while watching the classroom as well and whenever possible the floater, cook, or administrator will be asked to help with toileting of children so no child is left in the bathroom unsupervised.
- Always think about supervision and how you are positioning yourself in the space you are located. Outside play spaces if monitored by more than one teacher will be positioning self in a different area than your coteacher making sure you communicate your movement so all areas of the play space can be visually seen and heard.
- When children are transitioned from one care giver to another the staff coming in to the room will be given information on each child in their care to help maintain the continuity of care and supervision.
- When combining classrooms the transition of children to another area children will be counted as well as their clipboard of sheets coming with them to the new classroom where the teacher in the transitioned classroom needs to receive information on all children in his/her care as well as any special issues a child may have, propensity for biting, or any other issues that may come up when in an environment that may be unfamiliar to the child. If any diapers or wipes are needed to come with the child please make sure they are made assessable to the teacher or teachers in that room. Once the children are safely transitioned and information is exchanged then the teacher in the room will make sure he or she continues the continuity of care with the teacher making sure her positioning is where all children can be supervised at all times.
- Staff will be given the staff handbook upon hire and the Administrator will go over the policies highlighted in the book before the staff member takes over any child

supervision in HE. Administration will monitor staff's ability to properly supervise the children in their care. Anecdotal Notes will be written gone over with staff immediately and will be added to the staff files.

- When an accident or incident occurs an accident or incident report gets filled out and the director is notified and the Director or Administrator will decide how to handle the incident unless it is an emergency then 911 is called and follow protocol from CPR and First Aide Training. The Director or Administrator will notify the child's parent with a picture to let the parent know of the issue and how we are handling it. All Emergencies, incidents, and accident reports will get copy signed and place in the file for the Director.
- Non compliance with the above Supervision Policies can result in an immediate termination of employment.

Responding to Misbehavior

Below are strategies HECDC staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. Remember, however, that it's always a good idea if rules are explained fully and clearly understood before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

• Redirection:

This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Kate, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time and it's now Logan's turn."

• Logical Consequences:

These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, Andrew is standing on his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt; this will make him sad.

• Participate in the Solution:

If a child damages something, he/she needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Brandon very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better."

- **Natural Consequences:**

Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, Laura does not put her books back in her school bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it. Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.

- **"Take a break" or "Calm down chair or area":**

In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a particular situation in which he/she has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should be directed to "take a break" or sit in the "calm down chair." This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, and reflect quietly on her or his behavior away from others. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing a break or being sent to the calm down chair. For example, "Hannah, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. But because you hit John, please leave the blocks center and go to the calm down chair. I will talk to you when you are ready."

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director and or Manager.
2. The Director and/or Manager will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Director, Lead Teacher and Assistant Teachers, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan. If needed, adjustments will be made.
5. **At no time will raising voice or yelling be acceptable** from Staff to a child.

** If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom and possibly the program for a period of time.

Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. There are a variety of strategies we implement at HECDC to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a child bites:

- The biting child is stopped and told, "Stop biting. Biting hurts" in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child's needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. Bite will be washed with soap and water; cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers need to work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are the steps the teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
 - Was the space too crowded?
 - Were there too few toys?
 - Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
 - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times?
2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways
4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent and Director and/or Assistant Director will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and measure outcomes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Incident/Accident

Report which is completed and signed by a teacher. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child's permanent enrollment file in the office.

Removal of a Child from Classroom

Children cannot be removed from the classroom as we do not have extra staff available to correct ratios. In rare instances, children may be brought to the office area and the Director will assist the child in calming down and/or help staff manage the classroom. Teachers must speak to the Director before removing a child from the classroom.

If at any time a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff or teachers, the Director should be immediately notified.

Shaken Baby Policy:

Procedure/Practice Recognizing:

- Children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma including irritability and/or high pitched crying,
- Difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.

Responding to:

If SBS/ABT is suspected:

- Staff will Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform the director. Call all the parents/guardians.
- If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff will begin pediatric CPR
- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in child care are reported to Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 18008590829 or by emailing webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov.
- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in the home are reported to the county Department of Social Services.

Prevention strategies to assist staff in coping with a crying, fussing, or distraught child

- Lead staff in that room first determines if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, staff will attempt one or more of the following strategies
- Rock the child, hold the child close, or walk with the child.
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees.
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Gently rub or stroke the child's back, chest, or tummy.
- Offer a pacifier or try to distract the child with a rattle or toy.
- Turn on white noise or music.
- Try a new staff person to help soothe the child.
- If all else fails Director or Floater will take child to help soothe.
- Parent will be notified and also trouble shoot comforting strategies.

Strategies to assist staff members understand how to care for infants Staff reviews and discusses:

The five goals and developmental indicators in the 2013 North Carolina Foundations for Early Learning and Development, ncchildcare.nc.gov/PDF_forms/NC_Foundations.pdf

How to Care for Infants and Toddlers in Groups, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families, www.zerotothree.org/resources/77howtocareforinfantsandtoddleringroups

Including Relationship Based Care Practices in Infant Toddler Care: Implications for Practice and Policy, the Network of Infant/Toddler Researchers, pages 79, www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/nitr_inquire_may_2016_070616_b508compliant.pdf

Prohibited behaviors

- Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to): shaking or jerking a child; tossing a child into the air or into a crib, chair, or car seat; pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture.

Toddler Safe Sleep Policy:

For babies 12 months of age or younger, to reduce the risks of SIDS we will adhere to the following rules.

1. Always place baby on its back to sleep. Post on crib when a child can roll over.
2. Do NOT cover baby's head.
3. Visually check every 15 minutes the sleeping baby and record the date, time, baby's position and checked by whom.
4. Create a safe sleep place with proper cribs, firm mattresses, sleep sack, and pacifier.

6 SMOKING if not permitted around children at all times. (staff who may smoke are asked to change their clothing to prevent allergies and asthma)

7. Only awake and alert babies are placed on their stomachs for "Tummy Time".
8. All information concerning ITS/SIDS policy is provided to families where it is signed and placed in the child's file.

Daily Duties for Classroom Staff

Each classroom has a set of opening, nap time, closing and weekly cleaning tasks. Below are some general things that must be completed each day. Staff members are expected to familiarize themselves with the classroom specific duties.

MORNING DUTIES:

- Put away sanitized toys
- Straighten toys and shelves
- Re-stock supplies such as soap, paper towels, toilet paper, diapers, wipes, etc.
- Complete room set-up for the day's lesson plan.
- Do a quick health and safety check of the room Daily.
- Morning openers will perform a health and safety check of facility and playground prior to the Center opening.

NOON/NAP-TIME DUTIES:

- Straightening of shelves
- Sanitizing toys from Mouthed toy bin
- Cleaning tables/chairs/floors
- Curriculum planning
- Wash dishes
- Complete daily activity sheets for children
- Prepare for afternoon

AFTERNOON DUTIES:

- Wash or spray toys that have been mouthed by children
- Take trash to Can, sanitize trash can and replace trash bag
- Put toys and equipment away
- Check outdoor play area for equipment that needs to be put away
- Sanitize tables, chairs, and shelves
- Vacuum carpets

- Lock all program room doors after the last parent leaves for the day.
- Turn off air or in winter turn down the thermostat to not waste electric.
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Arrival and Departure

ARRIVAL

Staff members are expected to greet each child and parent by name upon their arrival to the classroom. Arrival is the opportune time to discuss how the child's night was, what he/she ate for breakfast, special instructions for the day, etc. Upon arrival, each child must have direct contact with a staff member. Staff should be looking for previous injuries, signs of illness, or unusual behavior.

DEPARTURE

During the enrollment process, each family completes an "Emergency Contact and Parent Pick-Up Authorization" form. This form provides authorization for select individuals to pick-up children from the center. If you are not familiar with the person attempting to pick-up a child, you must request photo identification and check the "Emergency Contact" form. At the end of the day, staff must check the attendance clipboard to verify all children have been signed out.

LATE PICK-UP

HECDC charges a late fee of \$15 plus \$1.00 for every minute a child is present past 5:30pm. If a child is picked-up after 5:30pm, please make a note on the attendance clipboard and inform the Director or Assistant Director the following day. If parents do not arrive by 5:30 pm to pick-up their child, attempt to contact them prior to 5:15pm if past their normal pick up time at all available phone numbers. If the parents cannot be reached, attempt to contact the authorized pick-up persons. If you are unable to reach the authorized pick-up persons, contact the Director. The Dare County Sheriffs Office will then be contacted.

Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting of Equipment

Cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting are important steps to removing dirt and reducing the spread of germs in child care settings. Routine cleaning with detergent soap and water removes dirt and grime from surfaces. Floors, carpets, walls and windows are cleaned. Sanitizing removes dirt or filth and small amounts of germs. Bedding, bathrooms, kitchen counters, dishes and eating utensils are cleaned (to remove dirt) then sanitized. But some child care items and surfaces require the added step of disinfecting after cleaning to kill the germs on a surface. Diaper changing tables, hand washing sinks, table tops, and some toys should be cleaned then disinfected.

SANITIZING

The Sanitizing solution may be used in several ways:

- Dipping the object into a sink or pan filled with the Sanitizing solution then letting the item air dry.
- Using paper towels soaked in Sanitizer solution to wash surfaces, then letting the surface air dry.
- Using spray bottles to thoroughly wet a surface, then allowing the surface to air dry.

Remember to keep all containers of cleaning and disinfecting products out of the reach of children.

DISINFECTING

Use a stronger Bleach solution made to Health Dept regulations posted in kitchen on diaper changing tables, hand washing sinks, toilets etc

- Allow the surface to remain wet for 2 minutes

Handwashing Procedure

All adults in HECDC classrooms need to follow ALL the steps identified below to prevent the spread of disease to children and staff members.

HOW TO WASH YOUR HANDS MOST EFFECTIVELY

- Use soap and warm (between 60 and 120 degrees F), running water
- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds (sing the "ABC's").
- Wash all surfaces, including backs of hands, wrists, under fingernails with fingers pointed to the sink drain
- Rinse hands well with the water running
- Dry hands with a disposable towel
- Turn off water with the paper towel

WHEN TO WASH YOUR HANDS

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- When changing from one group of children to another
- Before preparing or serving food
- After eating food
- After diapering/toileting a child
- After contact with bodily fluids (vomit, blood, mucus)

- Before and after administration of medication
- Before and after sensory play, including water play
- After coming indoors or returning from a break
- After using the restroom

WHEN TO WASH THE CHILDREN'S HANDS

- Upon arrival in the classroom
- Before eating, drinking or preparing snacks for others
- After eating
- After using the toilet or having their diapers changed
- After contact with bodily fluids (vomit, blood mucus)
- Before and after sensory play, including water play
- After returning indoors from the playground

If they are too young to do it themselves, YOU wash the children's hands. Older children should get into the habit of hand washing to stop disease from spreading. Remember: they will learn by watching YOU.

EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM

I have received and read the Healthy Environments Child Development Center KDHNC, LLC Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook. I expect to be guided by the rules and policies contained therein. I understand that any or all of the provisions contained in the Employee Policy and Procedures Handbook may be modified, amended, or eliminated by Healthy Environments Child Development Center at any time with or without notice. **I also understand ignorance of the policies does not preclude me from being responsible for them.**

I further understand and agree that my employment with Healthy Environments Child Development Center KDHNC, LLC is at will and may be terminated by the Director/Owner of the Healthy Environments Child Development Center KDHNC, LLC at any time for any reason or without reason. I understand that nothing in the Personnel Policies and Procedures handbook or in any oral statement or representation by any employee or representative of Healthy Environments Child Development Center shall be deemed to create a contract of employment or any other modification of the at-will employment relationship. **I understand that if I leave before my 6 months time period I will be responsible for my CPR and all other training costs incurred. If I fail to give 2 weeks written notice of voluntary termination of my employment with Healthy Environments Child Development Center KDHNC LLC, I will be responsible for all training fees paid on my behalf by Healthy Environments Child Development Center, LLC within the past year.** (initial each policy)

HE Discipline policy_____

HE Shaken Baby_____

HE Biting Policy_____

HE Supervision Policy_____

HE Infant Toddler Safe Sleep_____

HE NC Smoking and Vaping Policy_____

HE Cell Phone Policy_____

HE Employee conduct Policy_____

HE Non Solicitation and Non Compete Clause_____

HE NDA Confidentiality Policy_____

I pledge that I will not discuss or otherwise communicate any form of information concerning the care or condition of any child with unauthorized individuals, parents, staff or volunteers. All communication about children and families in our care along with proprietary information about the business, staff or volunteers (medical files, assessments or reports, scheduling, procedures, protected confidential information about business and staff etc)

shall be considered confidential and shall not be disclosed to or discussed with anyone other than those authorized to receive such information unless disclosure is authorized by law. Failure to abide by this agreement could result in immediate termination, written warning, and or . This applies to all communications about children, parents, staff or volunteers. Breach of this policy and any other will be punishable under North Carolina law to the fullest extent. I confirm that I have read and understand the above and will comply with above directive on Confidentiality and above policies._____

Employee Name

Date

Employee Signature

Date

Director/Assistant Director Name

Date

Director/Assistant Director Signature

Date