

Growth, Inc.

Parent Handbook



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Welcome to Growth, Inc Child Care Center

You are responsible for reading this handbook and becoming familiar with its contents. Please contact us if you have any questions. We are happy to be serving your family!!

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HAND IN HAND WE ARE GROWING

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Welcome to Growth, Inc.

We would like to welcome your family to Growth, Inc. Child Care Center! We are excited to watch your child grow and develop to their fullest potential while with us.

The information in this handbook should answer most of your questions regarding our services, policies, and fees. Upon enrolling children, parents are required to sign the application that states that you understand and will abide by the policies listed in the Parent Handbook

History

Growth, Inc. is not-for-profit child care center licensed by the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services. This means that the staff and the center meet state regulations for quality child care. Growth, Inc. was established in 1974 to provide quality child care to Geneseo and the surrounding communities.

During the past 30 years, Growth, Inc. has grown substantially. Beginning in Sue Sieben's basement as a preschool program, we quickly expanded to the Trinity Episcopal Church and offered a full day child care program for 30 children. Then in January 1981, Growth, Inc. moved to the Congregational Parsonage to further expand the number of children to 38. In September of 1981, Growth began offering additional child care for children ages 6 weeks-12 years at the First United Methodist Church. We continued to expand that facility until 1985, then we reached our capacity of 56 children. In March of 1991, Growth, Inc. moved to our current location adjacent to the Geneseo Community Center. We are currently licensed for 156 children.

Goals

Growth, Inc. Child Care Center strives to meet these goals for each child:

1. Offer a curriculum which encourages social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.
2. Teach the child to relate to others, to value friendship, and to respect all people.
3. Provide a safe, comfortable environment for these early learning and growth processes.
4. Help each child learn to develop self-discipline, independence, and to deal with his/her emotions in an appropriate manner.
5. Provide a well-balanced schedule of activity and quiet times.
6. Provide nutritious meals and snacks that contribute to the growth and development of a happy, healthy individual.

Mission Statement

Growth, Inc. Child Care Center exists to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate environment for children. Our focus is to provide a stimulating early care and education experience, which promotes each child's social/emotional, physical and cognitive development.

Admission Procedures

The order of admission to Growth, Inc. is "first come, first served." Placement will depend on age of child and days and times desired. Parents will be expected to complete all enrollment forms provided by the center prior to entry into the center. Please call and keep us informed of changes in name, address, phone number, family/custody, or employment.

Enrollment forms include but are not limited to the following:

- Certificate of Child Health Examination
- Emergency Rolodex Card
- Child Care Food Program Application Form
- Signature Sheet: Parent Handbook
- Enrollment and Admission Form
- DCFS Form IL 418-580
- Certified Birth Certificate from the courthouse

Each child, unless exempt for medical or religious reasons must have an examination and immunizations by a licensed physician not more than six (6) months prior to admission. We must have a copy of the physical on file and signed by the examining physician. Physical should reflect the following:

- Blood Test at one year of age
- TB Test at one year of age
- Immunization history: Hepatitis B, DTaP, Hib, Polio, MMR, Varicella

It is the parent's responsibility to update health examinations every two years and immunizations as they are administered. Please submit in writing the type of immunization and the date received.

Effective January 1, 2008, all public or private child care facilities licensed under the Child Care Act of 1969 will be required to collect a certified copy of a child's birth certificate, or other reliable proof of the child's identity and age, such as a passport, visa, or other governmental documentation, when a child is enrolled for the first time. By Illinois law, the person enrolling the child has 30 days to provide reliable proof. If reliable proof is not received within the 30 days of the child's enrollment at our center, the local law enforcement will be notified. After that, you will be notified in writing that you have 10 additional days to comply. information.

There will be no discrimination in admission or dismissal because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Affirmative action will be taken to ensure that all are treated without regard to the aforementioned attributes.

Hours of Operation

Growth, Inc. is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm. Parents who leave children in our care beyond regularly scheduled hours will be charged a late fee of \$15.00 for each 15 minutes per child after 6:00pm in addition to their regular fees.

Tuition & Fee Information

Growth, Inc. offers scheduled child care services, meaning you have reserved a position for your child. A schedule of less than four days is considered part-time. This means that you could be at risk of losing that spot if a five-day family needs the spot. However, you will always be given the option of making your spot a full-time spot. We will notify you if this happens to your spot and give you three days to decide to take the full-time spot. If you decide not to take the full-time option, you will be given two weeks to make other child care arrangements. We do not hold any spots due to circumstances such as a maternity leave, summer vacations, or lay offs.

You are responsible for payment of your child’s scheduled days whether or not your child attends. The youngest child is considered the first child and is charged the full rate. Any older children are considered the second child to receive the 20% off second child rate.

Fees Effective January 1, 2020

Infant Rates (6 weeks-18 months)	<u>20% 2nd Child Discount Rate</u>
1-5 Full days \$43.00/day = \$215.00/week	\$34.40/day
Toddler Zoo Room (15-30 months)	
1-5 Full days \$37.00/day = \$185.00/week	\$29.60/day
Cookie Monster & Pooh Bear Room (24-36 months)	
1-5 Full days \$35.50/day = \$177.50/week	\$28.40/day
Mouseketeer, Tigger and Big Bird Rooms (3-5 years)	
1-5 Full Days \$32.00/day = \$160.00/week	\$25.60/day
Before/After School Age Rates	
1-5 school days \$17.50/day = \$87.50/week	\$14.00/day
Summer School Age Rate/Non School Days	
1-5 Full Days \$32.00/day = \$160.00/week	\$25.60/day

During the school year, we will provide lunch for your child on days that school is not in session or if there is a half day of school. Your tuition rate will be the same as a non-school day. If your child does not attend a non-school day you will only be charged before/after school rate during the school year.

All child care fees are due the first day of the week that your child is at the center.

Make checks payable to: Growth, Inc. If you wish to pay bi-weekly please make arrangements with the office. If you receive subsidy tuition assistance your co-pay is due by the 15th of each month. Accounts will be considered delinquent if they are not paid in full at the end of the following week. If your account is past due on Wednesday, you will receive an invoice stating what your past due amount is. If you receive another notice that states your account has not been paid, then your child or children will not be able to attend the center until the account is paid in full. Please make sure accounts are paid at the beginning of the week. We suggest if a problem arises concerning your payment, you talk with the director rather than let your payment become delinquent.

Growth, Inc. has Site Administered Funding Assistance available to qualifying families, if funds are available. You can also obtain funding assistance from Child Care Resource & Referral. A monthly fee is required and will be determined based on income.

There will be a \$25.00 fee for a returned check. The center will have the option to refuse any future checks and request payment in cash.

Adjusting to Growth, Inc.

Generally, we find that children need a few weeks to adjust to their new schedule and the center environment. Don't be alarmed if your child seems to adjust during the first few days and then later becomes upset. Children exhibit different reactions to separation. Our staff will be happy to work with you during your child's adjustment.

We have found that pre-enrollment visits help children adjust to the center. We invite you to stop and visit with your child several times before their first day. We have an "Open Door Policy" that states parents, guardians, and family members may stop in any time to visit. Please schedule a time with your child's teacher if you have a specific concern.

Attendance & Absence

If your child will not be in attendance for any reason, please notify the office by 9:00 am. Your child is special to us and we want to know why they are not here. Children who have a contagious illness will need a doctor's note to return to the center. Children receiving funding assistance for child care are expected to attend a minimum of 80% of their scheduled time each month. (Example: a full-time child that is scheduled 5 days a week must attend 4 days to meet 80% attendance.) If a child is consistently absent and does not meet this requirement, we have the right to ask you to find alternative child care arrangements. We understand that illness and other circumstances may arise that you cannot control and we will take this into consideration for each circumstance.

Children will be released to no one but their parents, legal guardians or to the people whose names are listed on the enrollment card unless you inform us in advance. Please fill out a permission to pick up form, stating who is authorized to pick up your child. This person must be able to identify themselves with a photo identification card or driver's license.

Vacations

Growth, Inc. does not have a special fee for families not attending due to vacation. Full tuition is due during all absences. Growth, Inc. would appreciate knowing when your child will not be in attendance. Please let us know in advance whenever possible since this makes it easier to schedule staff. Efficient staffing allows us to keep costs under control.

Dismissal

A child may be dismissed from Growth, Inc. if a child's behavior is detrimental to the group, teachers and/or themselves. If your child is experiencing difficulties which may warrant dismissal, a conference with the child's teacher, administrator, and parents will be scheduled to try to resolve the problems. If behavior persists, we will contact resources for assistance on how to help with the behavior. If the difficulties persist after a reasonable trial period, a dismissal may be in order. If so, the center will give the parents reasonable notice and assistance to place the child in a setting where his/her needs will be met. Growth, Inc. is an equal opportunity provider; applications for enrollment and the dismissal of children are without regard to race, religion, sex, or national origin.

Transportation

Before and after school transportation of school age children is provided to all four-area elementary schools. The Growth staff assumes responsibility for your child when the child appears at the pick-up site and is checked in by a staff member. Prior to that time school personnel are responsible for your child. Children are only transported in the Growth, Inc. licensed and insured bus and van. School-Age children must be at Growth, Inc. by 7:00 a.m. to be served breakfast. After school transportation of school age children is provided from the Middle School to Growth, Inc. There is no bussing fee. Growth, Inc. has a 14-passenger bus and van for school age bussing. On occasion, we may use the bus and van for local educational trips. Parents/Guardians may be asked to leave car seats for younger children; older children always use seat belts. Children are not transported by staff in personal vehicles.

Withdrawing Your Child

If you decide to withdraw your child from Growth, Inc. for any reason, we must have a **two-week written notice**. If Growth, Inc. fails to receive this notice, you will be billed for the two weeks of care. You are financially responsible for those two weeks. If you have a credit balance on your account it is your responsibility to request a refund check. If a request for refund is not made within 30 days of your child's withdrawal from Growth, Inc., any remaining funds will be deemed a donation to Growth, Inc.

Calendar

Growth, Inc. is not open on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July

- Labor Day
- Christmas Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day After Thanksgiving

Growth, Inc. will close at 3:00 pm on Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve. If one of the above holidays falls on a Saturday, then we will be closed on the previous Friday. If the holiday is on Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday.

Staff

The Executive Director who is hired by and responsible to the Board of Directors handles the administration of Growth, Inc. Each group of children has a lead teacher or two co-teachers who are responsible for the group. Lead teachers and Assistant teachers augment the staff. Our staff in each program has been specially trained to provide the best possible care for your child. Growth, Inc. has a dedicated staff with experience and training in child development. A food certified cook prepares all meals and snacks for the center, working in conjunction with the Assistant Director to maintain a high quality, nutritional menu program.

Adult-to child ratios required by licensing standards of the State of Illinois Department of Children and Family Services are met or exceeded for each group served:

Infants	6 weeks-18 months	1 staff to 4 infants
Toddlers	15 months-24 months	1 staff to 5 children
Toddlers	24 months-36 months	1 staff to 8 children
Preschool	3 years-5 years	1 staff to 10 children
School Age	5 years-12 years	1 staff to 20 children

Subpoena

If a staff member is subpoenaed in a civil case, the attorney will be billed the cost of the staff member’s salary, substitute teacher’s salary, and any expenses incurred.

Inclement Weather

If the center is closed due to severe weather, the following television stations will be notified: KWQC 6, WHBF 4, and WQAD 8

We will also post all closings on our website and Facebook page.

Growth, Inc. will only close in severe conditions, when it is impossible to meet staff to child ratios.

Parents are not required to pay for closed holidays or days when the center is closed due to severe weather.

Clothing & Supplies

Children should wear clothing that is comfortable, washable, and suitable for all activities. All clothing and other personal items need to be labeled with your child's name or initials. Children should wear tennis shoes when we use the gym at the Community Center. For safety reasons, we recommend that tennis shoes be worn on the outside playground. The children will be safer running and playing in tennis shoes, however, we will allow sandals or open toed shoes inside the building. Children are recommended not to wear cowboy boots, patent leather dress shoes, flip flops, or jellies on the playground! Cleats are not allowed!! We recommend that you bring or leave tennis shoes at the center for outdoor play.

Please bring a complete extra set of clothing for your child regardless of the child's age. These clothes should remain at the center in case of accidents or spills. Remember to label all items with your child's name and to change these items as the seasons and your child's size changes. If wet or dirty clothes are sent home, please return a clean extra set of clothes for the next day. The Henry County Health Department requests that we DO NOT rinse soiled clothing or cloth diapers.

Weather permitting, we will go outside every day. As the seasons change, we ask that you send appropriate outerwear for your child. In the winter this includes winter coat, waterproof gloves/mittens, snow pants, hat and boots. We will go outside if the temperature is 25 F degrees or warmer.

Outdoor education is an important part of early learning. Therefore:

- Students should learn to dress themselves independently or with adult help if necessary. Being able to "suit up," "boot up," and put on a hat and mittens is a part of gaining control of muscles. Also, dressing oneself gives the child an opportunity to feel good about herself/himself
- Fresh air is essential to a child's good health. Any pediatrician will tell you this. However, our children are not expected to go outdoors when the wind chill factor is severe or during inclement weather.
- Being able to go outdoors to "whoop" and "holler" is essential for good mental health, and letting off our frustration and excess energy. Outdoor play is essential to the sheer joy of being a child.

Please see to it that your child comes to the center properly dressed for outdoor play. No child may stay inside during outdoor play time. We realize that it is sometimes advisable to keep children inside after an illness, but we can only care for healthy children. We ask that you keep your child home longer if you do not wish her/him to be outdoors.

Infants and Toddlers:

You must provide diapers, wipes, and diaper ointment if needed. You can bring your diapers by the case and we will mark and store them. We cannot use baby powder. We ask you to provide several complete changes of clothing for your child. Soiled clothing will be put into a soiled clothing pail with your child's name to avoid cross contamination.

Cloth and disposable diapers must be covered with clothing and/or rubber pants.

At times clothing in good condition is donated and used for emergency situations. If for any reason your child needs to use Growth Inc.'s extra clothing, please make sure that it is laundered and returned promptly.

Your child needs to leave toys, candy, gum and other "treasures" at home. We cannot be responsible for breakage and loss. Guns, swords, or any toy that promotes fantasy violence must be left at home.

Each child will be provided a cubby in their classroom in which to put their change of clothes and personal items. Artwork and all communication from the center will be put in your child's cubby daily.

Illness

Growth, Inc. is licensed to provide care for healthy children. There are no available facilities or medical staff to care for sick children. Therefore, sick children will not be allowed to stay at the center. If your child becomes ill during the day, a parent or guardian will be contacted. Your child must be picked up within an hour. While waiting to be picked up, the child may be isolated from the play space. He/she will rest in a safe spot on his/her cot in a visible area and made as comfortable as possible until pick up. This policy is enforced to ensure that children and staff are exposed as little as possible to infectious diseases and illness. We ask that you have alternate child care available if your child is requested to leave the center due to illness. We will ask you to pick up your child or request that you keep your child at home if she/he exhibits any of the following symptoms:

- **Fever (over 100 degrees F auxiliary or 101.5 degrees F rectally)**
- **Vomiting**
- **A chronic "hacking cough"**
- **Red, matting and itching eyes**
- **Diarrhea: Children seem sick and have loose stools (2 to 3); stool is so runny or so large in volume it does not stay in the child's diaper; older children cannot reliably get their stool into the toilet**
- **Unidentifiable skin eruptions or rash**
- **If the child cannot participate comfortably in center activities**
- **If greater care is needed than child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children**

If your child has a temperature of 101 degrees or higher, he/she must be out of the center for 24 hours and may return only when he/she is fever free without the use of a fever reducer medication. If your child is vomiting and/or has a temperature he/she must be out for 24 hours and may return only when fever free and is able to eat food without vomiting. An illness form will be sent home stating why your child is being sent home

and when they may return. The form must be signed and dated by the parent. The center may require a physician to complete the Doctor's Release Form.

If your child is running a fever, lethargic and sick, please keep your child home to rest. A child may only return to the center when fever free. If you feel your child is not well enough to participate in their child care activities, they may need to remain at home. **If the child cannot participate comfortably in center activities, you will be contacted to pick up your child**

Contagious Diseases

The following guidelines are enforced for contagious diseases:

- **Chicken Pox:** Your child will be allowed to return to the center after all pox are crusted over (5-7 days)
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye):** Your child will be allowed to return to the center 24 hours after proper medication is administered.
- **Fifth's Disease:** Your child may return to the center when fever free.
- **Flu/H1N1:** Your child will be allowed to return to the center when fever free without use of fever reducing medications.
- **German Measles (Rubella):** Your child may return seven days after the rash begins.
- **Giardia, Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter:** Your child will not be allowed to return to the center until there is documentation of two negative stool cultures after treatment.
- **Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease:** Your child may return to the center if he/she is free of rash and has a doctor's release.
- **Head Lice:** Your child may return to the center the day after treatment begins.
- **Hepatitis A:** Your child may return to the center one week after the illness has started, free of fever and has a doctor's release.
- **Herpes Simplex Infections:** Your child may return to the center after the sore is completely dry and with approval from health care provider.
- **Hib Disease (hemophilia influenza):** Your child may return to the center when he/she is well and has completed a four-day course of Rifampin and has a doctor's release.
- **Impetigo:** Your child may return 24 hours after treatment begins. The sore needs to be covered.
- **Measles (Rubeola):** Your child may return to the center four days after the treatment of the rash.
- **Meningococcal Disease (Neisseria meningitides):** Your child may return to the center when he/she is well and has completed a two-day course of Rifampin and has a doctor's release.
- **Mumps:** Your child may return to the center nine days after the swelling appears.
- **Pinworms:** Your child may return to the center after 24 hours of treatment. The area needs to be covered.
- **Ringworm:** Your child may return to the center after 24 hours of treatment. The area needs to be covered.

- **Roseola:** Your child may return to the center when he/she is rash and fever free.
- **Rotavirus:** Your child may return to the center when the diarrhea is gone and he/she is fever free.
- **RSV:** Your child may return to the center when fever free for 24 hours without a fever reducing medication and with a doctor's release.
- **Scabies:** Your child may return to the center the day after treatment begins.
- **Shingles:** Your child may return to the center when all sores are crusted.
- **Strep throat/Scarlet fever:** Your child must be on an antibiotic 24 hours and fever free before returning to the center.
- **Tuberculosis:** A child diagnosed with active TB disease must be excluded from the center. Children with TB disease may return after they have begun treatment and their doctor states, they are not contagious.
- **Whooping Cough (Pertussis):** Your child may return after five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed.

If a child develops any of these symptoms while at the center, the parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child. Please do not bring your child to the center with any unidentifiable symptoms. Please report any contagious diseases to an administrative staff member. All families will be notified when a contagious disease is circulating among the children.

A RELEASE FROM THE DOCTOR MUST BE TURNED IN TO THE CENTER BEFORE YOUR CHILD MAY RETURN IF HAVING ANY OF THE ABOVE CONTAGIOUS DISEASES. It MUST state the diagnosis and the doctor's permission to return.

Medication

Aspirin or Aspirin Substitutes

Aspirin or an aspirin substitute will only be administered for teething pain or for immunization reasons and only with a written prescription from a doctor. The written prescription must contain: the child's name, date, medicine to be given, amount, frequency, reason for use of medication, physician's signature, and length of time medicine should be used.

Prescription Medication

Necessary medications will be administered to your child provided there is a personal prescription filled by a pharmacist on a physician's order. The label must bear the child's name, the pharmacy, and prescription number, date of prescription, and directions for administering. We strongly suggest that you inform your physician that your child is enrolled in a child care center. Medication must be checked in with the staff person in charge and an authorization form must be completed and signed by the parent/guardian.

Non-Prescription Medication

Non-prescription medication recommended by a physician may be administered in accordance with package instructions (must have the child's exact age on recommended dosage), and shall be labeled with the child's name and date. When your physician recommends an over-the-

counter medication that does not have your child's age or the recommended dosage, you must request a written note from your doctor.

We will not allow parents to come into the center and administer prescription/non-prescription medication to their child. We cannot take responsibility in the event that a child might have an adverse reaction to medication. All medications will only be administered upon completion of the Medication Release Form.

Food Program

Children receive a well-rounded, nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack to meet daily requirements as set by the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Our kitchen is state licensed by the Department of Health and is supervised by a State Certified Food Handler.

Growth, Inc. participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's federally subsidized food program. It is administered through the State Board of Education's Child & Adult Care Food Program. The CACFP annual enrollment form is required for enrollment. The Household Eligibility Application is also required if your family meets income eligibility for free or reduced priced meals. If you do not qualify for free and reduced meals you do not need to fill out the Household Eligibility Application.

The Child Care Food Program is available to all eligible children without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, or handicap. Any person who believes that he or she has been discriminated against in any USDA related activity should write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

School age students eat breakfast from 7:00 am to 7:30 am prior to leaving for school. Child care children eat breakfast at 8:00 am to 9:00 am. Lunch is served between 11:00 am to 12:00 pm. Afternoon snack is served between 2:30 pm and 3:45 pm. A copy of the menu cycle is posted in each room. Skim or 1% milk and 100% juice are served with meals and snacks. Children will be encouraged to try new foods but never forced. Drinking water is readily accessible to children.

Food Substitutes

We are required by DCFS licensing and the CACFP to provide all of the required meals throughout the day for the children enrolled at Growth, Inc. This means that it is not permissible for parents to restrict their child's diet based on dislikes or presumed intolerances. We will allow food substitutions for medical, personal, and religious reasons. Any child requiring a special diet due to a medical condition must fill out a form regarding food allergies and food intolerances. Foods to be avoided must be listed on this form, and it must be signed by your child's physician. Unless we have this form, your child will be served all food components.

Birthday

We would love to help make your child's birthday special. If you would like to send in a treat for your child's classmates, please talk to the teacher a day or two in advance. Any food brought to be shared with the class must be **store bought** and in the original sealed package.

Infants

Infants who are not eating table food have the option of being served Walmart-brand iron fortified formula, Rice Cereal, and the 2nds in jar food. If your child is not using the brand of formula we use, families must provide their own formula from home. We recommend that at least one extra bottle a day be brought in case the baby is extra hungry that day.

Parent/Guardians of infants are required to provide bottles (plastic only). DCFS licensing regulations require a clean bottle for each feeding. Growth, Inc. does not have the ability to properly sanitize the bottles. All bottles must be labeled with the child's initials with a permanent marker. Bottles can be filled with formula, breast milk, whole milk, or water, unless accompanied by a physician's note. Juice can only be served to children in a cup. We will follow your at home feeding schedule as closely as possible. A detailed record is kept as to the amount of food eaten and the times food is consumed. Unused portions of bottles must be dumped to avoid cross contamination. As your infant grows and is able to eat table food, we will provide breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack.

Hygiene

Good personal hygiene is practiced by everyone in the center. Children are assisted with their personal care and cleanliness in all respects. All children have their hands washed after a diapering or after use of the bathroom. Children's hands are washed before and after each meal and snack. Wet or soiled clothing is changed immediately. Upon request of the Henry County Health Department, we do not rinse out soiled clothing or cloth diapers. Any formed fecal matter will be dumped into the toilet. Clothing soiled by bodily fluids will be tied in a plastic bag marked with your child's name and placed in a soiled clothing pail.

Accidents or Emergencies

Growth, Inc. makes every effort to insure the safety of all children. However, accidents requiring medical attention do occur. Growth, Inc. carries both accident and liability insurance. This insurance is secondary to any insurance the parents/guardians have. In the event of an emergency or accident, a parent/guardian is immediately contacted. When the parent/guardian is not available, an alternate designated adult is called. Be sure to inform the office staff of any changes in information contained on the Rolodex card you filled out when you registered. Children will be transported by ambulance to the nearest hospital in case of serious injury or illness.

Special Instructions/Concerns

Please notify the staff if there is a change in your child's normal home routines. These could include a parent traveling, death, divorce, illness, new child, etc. At all times, the staff is available to help you in working through problems that affect your child and his or her behavior.

Mandated Reporter

If the staff at Growth, Inc. has reasonable cause to believe that a child is being abused or neglected, they are required by law to report it to the Department of Children and Family Services. This includes any person under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Pesticides

Growth, Inc. contracts with Emerick Pest Control to provide safe and effective pest control for our facility. Technicians service Growth, Inc. every month and do so after we have closed for the day. The chemicals used are approved for child care settings. If you have any questions about our pest control policy, please contact the office.

Parent Involvement

Parents are encouraged to become actively involved in the program at the center. Each year, several events are scheduled to help strengthen the link between home and center. Parents are encouraged and welcome to attend these activities, or to visit the center any time during operating hours.

We are always looking for interested parents/guardians to enhance our programs. If you would like to share your profession, hobby, or talent with us, we would appreciate your contribution of time and expertise.

If at any time you as a parent/guardian have a concern, good or bad, please let us know. We rely on you for feedback and advice. Parents/Guardians should read notes, and other communication sent home. Our monthly newsletter is posted on our website. Parents/guardians will be encouraged to participate in several fundraising events throughout the year. Proceeds are used to offset operational expenses.

Staff and Parent Communication

Parents, Teachers, and the Director have the opportunity to exchange information regarding the children twice daily, during arrival and departure. This is important in providing continuity between the child's family environment and child care setting. The staff is pleased to answer any questions or help with any problems that the parents may have regarding their children. If there is not enough time for this type of exchange during arrival/departure times, a time for more in-depth discussion can be set. The staff welcomes all suggestions for improvement of any part of Growth Inc.'s program.

Telephone messages can be received throughout the day. Each classroom has a telephone and if needed you may contact us and we can transfer the call to the teachers.

Daily grams are sent home in the Muppet Babies room to keep parents informed of their child's activities. Daily notes will inform you of how your child ate, length of nap, activities, moods, and reminders. This provides the parent/guardian with a means of sharing in what the child has done or accomplished during the day. Please feel free to call if you need additional information or have any questions.

HiMama is a web-based app that teachers will use to keep parents informed of their children's activities throughout the day. Updates will be entered and will inform you of how your child ate, length of nap, bathroom and activities. You will receive updates to your email and/or smartphone. Photos will be stored safely and securely in a journal format.

Conferences are scheduled twice year with parents. Teachers are happy to meet with parents/guardians anytime the need arises.

Naptime

Children are assigned individual cots that are labeled with their names. Sheets are changed one per week or as needed. You are asked to provide a blanket for your child. Blankets will be sent home to be washed at the end of a two-week period. Please be sure to return blanket on the following week. Length and time of nap is recorded on each child's daily gram. There will be no sharing of bedding without the affected bedding being properly cleaned between each child's use. Children who are awake after one hour will be allowed access to quiet activities until the other children are awake.

Infants are assigned individual cribs which are labeled with their names. Beds are sanitized daily. Through daily communication, we help your child rest in accordance with their home schedule. There is often an adjustment period where your infant needs to adapt to the noise level of the room. If you are concerned your child is not sleeping enough or getting too much sleep, please keep us informed. Both time of nap and length of nap are recorded daily.

Discipline Procedures

Growth Inc.'s philosophy, in addition to the laws of the State of Illinois, prohibit physical punishment. Our basic rules for the children are simple. We cannot allow a child to hurt themselves, other children, or our equipment. The Teachers and Assistants handle discipline in an adult, calm manner. For the safety of the children some form of discipline or managing the children's behavior is occasionally necessary. This is done primarily through activities.

Teachers and Assistants use the following procedures:

1. Walk over and get the child's attention getting down to child's level. Talk through the correct behavior he/she should be showing. State the rule simply and the reason behind the rule.
2. If the behavior continues, repeat the above procedure. Offer the child a choice of behaving correctly or taking a time out.
3. If the behavior continues after the choice is given, separate the child from the group. Make certain he/she knows why they are being separated from the group and sent to the safety zone. This safety zone is an opportunity for the child to sit quietly and think about his/her behavior. It is an area in the classroom where a child can go to or be sent to regain composure when they become angry, upset or frustrated. After a short period of time, or when the child is ready, he/she is invited to rejoin the group and is reminded of appropriate behavior.

Parents are notified if the above procedures are ineffective. We will invite you to share more about your child and his/her behavior at home and to help him/her learn to control his/her inappropriate behavior.

When a child's behavior becomes difficult to manage in the classroom, he/she will be brought to the office. If (or when) this occurs, a parent will be notified and have the opportunity to talk to his/her child. When the child has regained control, he/she may return to the classroom. When children are unable to participate constructively in a classroom setting, and are brought back to the office for a second time during the same day, a parent/guardian will be notified to pick up their child. Growth, Inc. is committed to the well being of each and every child. In order to provide a safe, caring stimulating environment for all children, we ask for cooperation from all children and parents/guardians.

Unfortunately, there may be times when your child comes home with a scratch, bite, or bruise. Please understand that this does happen in group care and that the staff are doing their best to help the other children learn to control their inappropriate behavior. At times biting can be prevalent in the toddler and two-year-old classrooms. Although this is not acceptable behavior, we do realize and take into consideration the fact that it is common occurrence among children this age. We work closely with the child and his/her family to ensure that it stops as soon as possible.

Curriculum

Creative Curriculum is used in the classroom to help children learn and grow through play. Each room has specific learning centers that help children learn through discovery, imagination, exploration, and curiosity. Materials purchased for the classroom are carefully chosen to enhance the curriculum and spark the children's interest and desire to learn. Many leading psychologists agree that children learn best through free play when they have access to manipulatives and materials that inspire children to learn and grow. The overall curriculum of Growth, Inc. is designed to offer your child a warm and nurturing environment as he/she learns to socialize with other children. Within this environment we strive to build each child's self-esteem as a basis for future happiness and ability to learn. Our curriculum is filled with "hands-on" experiences that stimulate the development of a child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual skills. Further, our program strives to foster independence as it guides a child to self-discipline.

Toddlers (15-24 months)

The toddlers follow a monthly curriculum guide. Activities in their curriculum include:

- Art-Variious art activities such as: clay, finger painting, water coloring, crayons and painting
- Music-Ample time is allowed for singing, marching, and experimentation with instruments and rhythm. Often, listening to music serves as a way to relax the child and provide smooth transitions to other activities.
- Language-Books are readily available to children. In addition, special time is set aside for puppets and felt board stories. All of these experiences contribute to the child's language development and understanding of the world.
- Large and Small Motor Skills-Physical exercise and the development of motor skills are experienced daily in all programs.

- Socialization-All activities strive towards helping the children learn how to get along with others. Emphasis is put on helping the children learn to express his/her feelings.

Preschoolers (2-5 years)

Children follow a weekly curriculum guide. Activities in their curriculum include:

- Large Motor Skills-Hopping, balancing, running, crawling, climbing, jumping and throwing.
- Small Motor Skills-Cutting, coloring, tracing, zipping, snapping, puzzles, clay, play dough, and lacing.
- Language-Puppets, letters, numbers, names, areas of the room, colors, textures. Introduce and practice new songs, finger plays, and dramatic play.
- Math Activities: Recognizing numbers, counting, sorting
- Art Activities: Colors, cutting, painting, chalk, collages, and easel painting. Art is incorporated to enhance and encourage creativity, fine motor skills, perception, and eye-hand coordination.
- Self-Help/Social Skills-Encourage the child to do thing on his/her own. Encourage hand-eye coordination, patience, waiting turns, etc.
- Music-Ample time is allowed for singing, marching, and experimentation with instruments and rhythm.
- Science- Hands on science, nature studies, creative inventions, and exploring projects. What makes it cold? What shape is it? How does it smell?

School-Age

- During the summer months and school vacations our program curriculum is organized around school-age friendly topics. Within each week we may cook, sing, read books, make projects pertaining to our topic, do creative art work, science, field trips, swim, go to the park, and play group games.

Fundraising

Growth, Inc. is a not-for-profit organization and it is necessary for us to have fundraisers to meet budget guidelines. Fundraisers are held periodically throughout the year to help raise funds. Participation in these fundraisers is voluntary, but your participation is vital to help defray higher fees and ensure a high-quality program.

Signature Sheet for Center Policies

Parent/Guardian:

Please sign this form and return it to the office. Thank you for your cooperation.

I have read and agree to adhere to the stated policies and procedures in the Parent Handbook.

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

Signature of Parent or Guardian

Date

****Geneseo Development and Growth, Inc. at its option, may change, delete, suspend, or discontinue any part or parts of the policies in the Handbook****