



PARENT HANDBOOK

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Introduction

Welcome parents, children, and families to Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center! Here at Gingerbread we strive to meet the needs of the developing child, as well as the needs of the working parents. We offer childcare for children from 6 weeks to 5 years old. We have an infant department, toddler program, and preschool.

We are excited and eager about working with your child(ren) to provide the best education available. Our short term along with our long-term goal is to provide a safe and stable learning environment where students can be creative and express themselves. In addition, each child will have the opportunity to learn essential skills needed to prepare them for school. The well-being of your child is the main focal point of our goals, and we are aware that these practices are essential for operating a successful childcare facility. Thank you for entrusting us with your child(ren), and we look forward to you being a part of our family!

Nate Moore
President

Welcome

We are looking forward to a very happy and successful year. Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your child. The Gingerbread House has been open here since 1976. Please be assured that we will try our very best to provide a safe and happy place for your child while he or she is away from you.

If your child is new to the nursery school environment, please be patient during the adjustment period. For many children, this is a difficult time, but hopefully, with all of us working together the adjustment period will be short. The child who comes every day will adjust more quickly than the one who comes two or three times a week. It can take four to six weeks for some children to adjust to school while some will adjust much sooner. Should your child be having difficulties, we recommend that you leave immediately after dropping him/her off. Trying to talk or coax children in only seems to make matters worse. In most instances, they stop crying shortly after the parent leaves. If you are concerned, or need reassurance please feel free call the center and our director would be happy to give you an update.

Mission Statement

The mission here at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, LLC is to provide quality child care in a loving, fun, clean and safe environment that promotes social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development.

Admission & Enrollment

Enrollment at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center is open to children from 6 weeks to 5 years. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, national origin, handicap, ancestry or whether a child is being breastfed.

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child in Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center by completing the Enrollment Application and paying the \$75.00 Application Fee. The Application Fee is NON-REFUNDABLE in the event the parent chooses to not enroll their child at the time the child is scheduled to start or the parents withdraw their child or their child's enrollment is terminated by the center.

Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, registration fee, deposit, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt. The Enrollment Application and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any time duration.

Parents are required to notify Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being dis-enrolled from the program and forfeiture of any deposit.

A child will be admitted to the center when the following criteria have been met:

1. A starting date has been determined by both the parents and the director.
2. An Enrollment Packet on each child who will be attending has been completed, signed, and dated by the parent(s).
3. A current, valid immunization certificate issued by the facility that administered the immunizations is received by the center.
4. Other forms, such as, third party release form, a medical emergency release form, a center contract agreement, and an infant supply agreement (if applicable) has been completed and signed by the parent(s) and the director.
5. A copy of the child's birth certificate has been received.
6. All required fees have been paid.
7. A center tour has been conducted by the director or other authorized staff.

Education Programs

Infant Non-Mobile and Mobile: Infants (non-mobile) 6 weeks to crawling and pulling up age. Mobile Infants- Crawling and pulling up age to one year and walking. Our infant area consists of children age 6 weeks through approximately 1 year or until they are strong walkers. In this group we do tummy time to help strengthen their neck muscles. We also help them to develop fine motor skills as well as gross motor skills. They do projects for all major holidays. Teachers help babies learn to share and how to take turns. Teachers also assist infants in learning how to hand and spoon feed as well as use a sippy cup. This is also where we guide them in being social with their peers.

One year old class- One to two years of age. The toddler group consists of one year olds. The goal of this group is to teach the children self help skills as well as social-emotional skills. The teacher instructs on how to hold a spoon the correct way and how to drink from a sippy cup. The children are also taught how to hold colors or markers for projects as well as how to initiate play with their peers. Nursery rhymes are introduced and books are read aloud to the class featuring the theme of the week.

Two year old class- Two to three years of age. This group consist of 2 year olds. While the main goal of this group is developing social skills, teachers center their instruction around weekly themes. Children in this group will not only learn how to play together and share toys, but through play will develop their communication skills, language skills and fine motor skills. Children who show readiness will begin potty training in this group although most children are not really ready until closer to age 3.

Three year old class- Three to four years of age. This group is comprised of children that are 3 years old. The main goal of this group is to further strengthen social skills and to begin developing appropriate behaviors such as sitting and developing attention skills. Through daily instruction and guided play, the teachers use weekly themes to help each child meet the developmental milestones for their age. This includes language development as well as beginning writing and cutting. Children who show readiness will also concentrate on potty training.

Four year old class- This group is mostly four to five year olds. Our Pre-K 4's and 5's are the oldest group at our school. Children must be potty trained to enter this group. The goal of this group is to prepare children for Pre-K and Kindergarten. Daily lessons revolve around the weekly introduction of each letter of the alphabet. Teachers include a variety of activities including dramatic play, art, reading, and music. Instruction also includes lessons in counting, cutting, and writing. Each activity is adapted according to the child's age so as to challenge the older children and also to avoid frustrating the younger children.

Curriculum

We are currently using the Pinnacle Curriculum: a play-to-learn style early childhood curriculum that instills deep love for learning through active and engaging lesson plans. The Pinnacle Curriculum offers a flexible comprehensive age-specific program for Infants, Toddlers, Twos, Threes, and Fours.

Staff To Child Ratios

Infants: 1:5

One year olds 1:7

Two year olds- 1:11

Three year olds-1:13

Four year olds- 1:15

Five year olds- 1:19

Nap Time/ Rest Time:

Each class is on their own nap schedule. Between 11:30 and 2:30 naps are taking place and we consider this time to be a quiet time.

Educational/ Personal Care Supplies

Please **write the child's name clearly on everything with a permanent marker.**

Infants Supply List:

Bottles (Enough pre mixed full bottles of formula or bags of breast milk for each day plus one)

Enough unopened baby food for each day.

Extra Clothes, Socks

Bibs

Diapers, wipes, cream for rash

Cereal if needed.

Copy of most recent immunization record from doctor.

Ages 1-4 Supply List:

Kinder Mat / Mat Cover

Thin blanket

Complete change of clothes (underwear, socks, shirt, shorts or dress).

If in diapers: Diapers, wipes, cream for rash if needed.

Bug spray

Copy of most recent immunization record from doctor.

It is important for children of all ages to have a change of clothing in a labeled zip lock bag at school, since even those beyond the stages of "accidents" will occasionally spill juice, milk, or paint. We ask that you please clearly mark all items and send them in a zip lock bag also marked with your child's name. Please dress your child appropriately for the school environment and for the weather since we feel it is important for children to go outside for exercise and fresh air each day. Even if it is cold we will bundle up the children to play outside even if only for a few minutes. Don't forget to update extra clothing when the seasons change as your child grows. The children play very hard when they are outside. For this reason, we recommend that you send your child in clothing that you don't mind seeing dirty. ALL children MUST wear closed toes shoes. Flip flops, crocks, and sandals are not permitted.

Each child needs his/her own mat with a small blanket, each clearly marked with large letters. Even if your child doesn't nap, he/she must lay quietly on their mat during the designated nap time. Mats are disinfected weekly. Small blankets will be sent home every Friday for cleaning. Please return your child's small blanket on the following Monday your child attends school.

If your child is not yet potty trained, you must send diapers or pull-ups and wipes to school. Your child's teacher will notify you when you need to send more. Wipes should be in a box initially then you can send refill packs as needed. Please label your pack of diapers and wipes with your child's name clearly written on the packaging.

If your child is potty training and still wearing pull-ups, please send pull-ups with velcro sides. These save time when changing the child because the child does not need to remove all clothing and shoes if he/she has an accident. This also gives the child independence of using the bathroom on his/her own. If a potty training child is wearing underwear and has an accident we may put on a pull-up. If a potty training child has a bm in their underwear, we have the right to cut underwear off of a child safely and dispose of them. This allows the underwear to be pulled off similar to a pull-up preventing the stool from spreading down a child's leg and onto their feet. Due to sanitary guidelines, we cannot clean stool out of underwear. Therefore the stool saturated underwear must be thrown away. Urine saturated underwear/clothes will be placed in a labeled ziplock bag and sent home with the child.

Meals

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center offers children breakfast from 7:45-8:30 AM., lunch at approximately 10:45am or infants & ones and 11:00am for twos, threes, and fours and an afternoon snack at approximately 2:00 p.m.

All meals are family style, with the children sitting at tables, to promote good manners, eating habits and socialization skills. Staff will encourage children to eat their main entrée first. All of Gingerbread House's meals meet or exceed the USDA standards for a healthy and balanced diet. No food may be brought in for consumption while in the center (except for special circumstances for allergy substitutions).

We serve breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack. Our meals and snacks are comprised of a variety of foods. Our goal is to have something on the plate that will appeal to nearly every child. We are mandated by State Licensing to serve $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetables and fruits. Because of this we only serve those which are the children's favorites. This is to avoid too much waste. We make changes as necessary according to the majority of the children's likes/dislikes.

If your child has any allergies we will substitute as needed for that meal. You must have a doctor's order on file which reflects the diet or allergy and you may be require to provide substitutions if our center does not provide a suitable substitute. If your child is allergic to milk we will serve them water.

In the event you would rather bring the child's food to school instead of having the child eat what the school is providing. You would need a doctor's note requesting the child be provided with meals from home. The provided meal must be clearly labeled. If the food needs to be kept cold, the parents must provide a lunch bag/box with an ice pack inside to keep cold. Meals provided from home cannot be refrigerated in our refrigerator due to rules from the Dept of Health.

The daily lunch calendar is posted on the parent wall board.

Celebration treats for birthdays, holiday parties, etc. (cupcakes, cookies, juice) may be brought for your child's class to enjoy. We ask that you let the teacher know beforehand and please refrain from bringing treats with peanuts or peanut butter to help protect children with allergies. All treats must be **store bought**, we will not be able to distribute anything homemade to the students.

Holiday Closings

The center will be closed in recognition of the following holidays:

Mardi Gras Day & Day after

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Labor Day

Thanksgiving and Friday After

Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after Christmas

(May be closed day before or after due to weekend holidays)

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

(May be closed day before or after due to weekend holidays)

Occasionally the center may be closed early due to mandatory training workshops that may only be offered during operating hours. You will be notified in advance of such closings

Licensing

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center is licensed by the Louisiana State Department of Education, Louisiana Dept of Health, and the Louisiana State Fire Marshall. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center must comply with any and all of their rules accordingly. These rules are always subject to change at the Louisiana Department of Education, Louisiana Dept of Health, and the Louisiana State Fire Marshall's office and all rules must be changed to comply with all rules accordingly.

Complaint Policy

Parents may call the Louisiana Department of Education at 1-877-453-2721 should they have a significant unresolved licensing complaints.

As a licensed center, we encourage parents to contact this department with any complaints, recommendations, questions, concerns, complaints, etc.

The following information is in the CCDF Bulletin 137- Early Learning Center Licensing Regulations:

<http://www.louisianabelieves.com/docs/default-source/early-childhood/ccdf-bulletin-137-early-learning-center-licensing-regulations.prd?sfvrsn=4>

Fees

Below are the assessed center fees:

Registration:

Non-Refundable Admission Fee- due at the time of enrollment

Bi-yearly Registration Fee- due March & September

Summer Registration Fee- due May

Registration will be charged on an bi-yearly basis. Bi-yearly registration fee will be due on September 1st and March 1st of each year. Registration is non-refundable. These fees are to cover the cost of enrichment activities and school supplies. Summer registration fee covers vendors and activities throughout the summer.

A 30 day written notice is required to withdraw your child from enrollment. Exceptions will not be made to this policy. This notice enables the center to prepare your child and his/her friends for the transition as well as allowing time to fill the vacancy. If notice is not given as described, you will be charged and obligated to pay for the final 30 days. Please understand you are also responsible for all charges, late fees, collection costs, and court filings and fees if you do not abide by the above state policy.

Late Payment Policy

Tuition is due by FRIDAY evening, if tuition is not paid by Monday, a \$25.00 late fee will automatically be added at the end of the day on Monday and then \$25.00 for each day thereafter. If the tuition and the late fees are not paid by the Tuesday evening, CHILD CARE SERVICES WILL BE SUSPENDED ON WEDNESDAY UNTIL PAYMENT (TUITION AND LATE FEES) IS RECEIVED IN FULL. Non-payment of tuition and/or charges for five days in a row will result in the services of the center being terminated for your child. Your child's spot here will be open for the children on our waiting list to fill your child's spot. Your deposits will not be refunded and you will still be charged for the 30 day notice of termination. If services are terminated or child is withdrawn from our center, a new application, registration fee, and deposit will be required again, if you choose to reregister your child here at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center.

If you should have any questions or concerns regarding our Payment Policy or late fees, please reach out to your Director.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children. As mandated reporters, the staff of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- Severe verbal reprimands
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation.

As mandated reporters, all staff and owners shall report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Louisiana Child Protection Statewide Hotline (855) 4LA-KIDS [(855) 452-5437].

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center shall not delay the reporting of suspected abuse or neglect to the Child Protection Statewide Hotline in order to conduct an internal investigation to verify the abuse or neglect allegations. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center shall not require staff to report suspected abuse or neglect to the center or management prior to reporting it to the Child Protection Statewide Hotline.

Parent Code of Conduct Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center requires the parents of enrolled children at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center but, is the responsibility of each and every parent or adult who enters the center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. **Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on agency property thereafter.** Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding dis-enrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

Swearing/ Cursing Policy

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on agency property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

Threatening Policy

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the agency will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

Physical/ Verbal Abuse of A Child Policy

While Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center does not necessarily support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the child care facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Director.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or director's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or director will address the issue with the other parent. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

Confrontational Interactions Policy

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

Violations of Confidentiality Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families and employees associated with Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the Confidentiality Policy.

Social Media Policy

While we understand that in today's society it is normal for people to share their opinions in a public forum, we ask that you conduct yourself in the same manner as you would in person. Please refrain from posting negative comments about children, parents, staff or the center. Just as you would think before you speak, you should also think before you post negativity. These types of posts are a reflection on both yourself and the center. We do understand that sometimes we must enforce policies that may cause you an inconvenience at that time, but please consider that all policies are in place to protect the health and safety of each child. Please address your concern with the teacher, director or owner of the facility in person or over the phone rather than in a public forum. Any parent that socially post negative comments about children, family of children, staff, or the center itself may be dismissed from program immediately, with possible litigation. In this case, the parent will not be given a refund and the 30 day notice will still be charged.

PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.

Parent/Teacher Communication/ Conferences

If you would like a parent teacher conference, please call and speak to the director to let her know you would like a conference with the teacher or director. She will give you a day and time that would work best for both parties or you can speak with her over the phone at any time the teacher is at the center.

Parental Access Policy

Parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Director, and are allowed in the child care facility only at the discretion of the Center Director. An employee of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will accompany visitors at all times, throughout the center.

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will dismiss any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon agency property, without a court order. Due to the parents' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot have a child at the agency when the child's parent is prohibited access. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and will not be entertained.

Parental Involvement Policy

Several parental involvement activities will take place throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to attend as many activities as possible. Research indicates that parents' positive involvement in the early childhood stage can help in their child's cognitive development as well as school readiness and achievement.

The Following events are our school's main Holiday Celebrations of the year:

- Valentine's Day Party
- Easter Celebration
- Muffins with Mom
- Donuts with Dad
- Harvest Fest
- Thanksgiving Feast
- Christmas Celebration

(All Parents will be notified with detailed information of each holiday celebration in advance, along with flyers posted throughout the campus as a visual reminder.)

Dismissal Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center reserves the **right to dismiss any child at any time**, with or without cause.

Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of the dismissal **only in the case** where the child is dismissed by Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, (except when a parent violates the social media policy.) If the dismissal is due to a negative social media post, a refund will not be given and the 30 day withdrawal policy will remain in effect. An agency check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any past due balances must be paid within 30 days of the dismissal. An invoice detailing the past due balance will be forwarded to the address or email indicated in the child's file within one week of the dismissal. Any balances remaining after the 30 day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collection.

The Center Director or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to leave agency property in a calm and respectful manner, immediately. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings upon dismissal.

A dismissed child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Director if they wish to return to agency property following a dismissal. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Director and are not a right of the dismissed child or parent. Following a dismissal, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the agency by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, by Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center.

Withdrawal Policy

30 day written notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. Parents are still responsible for paying the child's tuition until 30 days past the date the 30 day notice is given. The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter agency property without prior permission of the Center Director. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Director if they wish to return to agency property following the last day of enrollment at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Director and are not a right of the withdrawn child or parent.

Parents who wish to change their child's days of enrollment at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, must submit a request to do so two weeks in advance of the proposed change. Request will only be accepted if the position is available.

The Center Director will notify the parents if the new schedule is available. A schedule change will not be considered to be final until a new fee agreement is signed. If the schedule change requires an additional deposit and/or registration fee, the change will also be contingent upon payment of these monies. If the requested schedule is not available, parents may choose to continue with the current schedule until such time as the requested schedule becomes available, or may choose to withdraw their child from the program. The date the request for the Center Director receives the schedule change will be used to toll the 30day notice required for withdraw.

Court Orders Effecting Children Policy

In cases where an enrolled child is the subject of a court order,(ex... Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order. **In the absence of a court order on file with Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center administration, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law.** Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot, **without a court order**, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself, where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued.

If conflicting court orders are presented, the **most recently dated** court order will be followed. Once presented with a Protection from Abuse Order or a Restraining Order, Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center is obligated to follow the order for the entire period it is in affect. Employees of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot, at the request of anyone, except the issuing judge, allow a Protection from Abuse Order and/or a Restraining Order to be violated.

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will report any violations of these orders to the court.

Toys from Home

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy.

Arrival Procedures Policy

Children are required to be present in the center before 9:00 AM. Parents are required to notify the center in advance if child will not be at the center by 9:00 AM. This is to maintain the appropriate number of employees and to ensure ratios are met as per required by the State Licensure. If your child needs to be here later than 9:00 AM, a written doctor's note will need to accompany your child. Upon arrival at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, the parents or the adult dropping the child need to bring the child to the side door. Someone will take the child's temperature and the child will be asked or assisted in washing his/her hands. If the child has a temperature of 100.4 or greater, the child will be excluded from care until he/she has been fever free for at least 24 hours without fever reducing medication. Your child's arrival time will be noted by the person working the door.

Parents are required to notify the child's teacher of any special instructions or needs for the child each day. The parent must present the special instructions in a Procure message. These special instructions include but are not limited to: Absent, Late Drop Off, Early Pick Up, Alternative Pick-Up Person, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed and/or any general issues of concern which the child care providers should be aware to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day. If you send your child's teacher a message, please be patient and allow your teacher time to either message you back or call you. Some teachers respond to Procure messages while the children are napping because they are busy caring for the children.

Pick-Up Procedures Policy

Authorized adults must be listed on the child's master sheet and set up in the child's Procure Profile in order to sign the child out. You must sign your name in print and it must be legible. You must also write the time the child was signed out. Once a parent/authorized person signs their child out, the parent/authorized person is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on agency premises. The parent/authorized person may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground. Parents/Authorized persons are required to handle all business issues prior to signing out their child.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. After the report is signed, the person picking up the child will be given a copy of the report. The classroom teacher will be able to briefly discuss the matter with you or other authorized adult at pick-up. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date because the teacher is responsible for supervising the remaining children in the classroom. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.

Arriving and Leaving Parking Policy

When arriving at daycare, please take notice of the driveway direction. It is ONE WAY with the entrance closest to the building. If someone new is picking up your child, please let them know our procedure. This will help prevent congestion in the driveway.

Normally pick up is under the cover or behind any cars that may already be there. If there is a line you may park in parking area so as to not block the driveway.

YOU MUST HOLD YOUR CHILD'S HAND OR HOLD YOUR CHILD WHEN ESCORTING YOUR CHILD TO YOUR CAR. PLEASE DO NOT LET YOUR CHILD WALK OUTSIDE WITHOUT HOLDING YOUR HAND.

Late Pick-Up Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center closes promptly at 6:00 PM. All children must be picked up and the building vacated by 6:00 PM. If you have encountered any unexpected circumstance that has caused you to be late, please call and let the staff know. Late fee of \$10.00 is charged if the parents pick up the child between 6:05 PM and 6:10 PM, then another \$1.00 for each minute after 6:10 PM. All measurements of time are to be according to what time the child was checked out on the Procure account. Check out is done on the iPad tablet located at the counter where you come in. Late fees will be added to the next week tuition bill and must be paid with that tuition payment.

A child's services will be terminated should the child be picked-up late on three occasions in one school year regardless of the reasons for the late pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or Emergency/Alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time.

Notification of Absence Policy

Parents are required to inform the center by 9:00 AM if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. Please message your child's teacher on Procure to notify. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day. Parents who fail on three occasions in one school calendar year to give proper notice of an absence will result in the child being dismissed from the program.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center director not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Center Director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP POLICY

The staff of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the agency from denying a custodial parent access to their child in the event a parent is or appears to be impaired. However, Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person beside the parent who attempts to pick-up a child, and appears to the staff of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will contact the child's parents, local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

Agency's Refusal Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center strives to maintain an ample list of substitutes in anticipation of staff absences, however, there are times when substitutes are not available, and classrooms need to be closed to maintain compliance with licensing regulations. Refusal will be based on a "first come first served" basis when seeking to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios and/or when closing classrooms.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
3. Staff deems the child to ill to attend.
4. Domestic Situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center if the child were to be present at the center.
5. Parent's failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
6. Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.

Parents WILL NOT be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program unless it is because of lack of staff to maintain staff to child ratio.

Emergency/ Alternative Pick-Up Policy

At enrollment, parents will be presented with a Master Sheet with an Emergency/Alternate Pick-up Section where parents will designate Emergency/Alternate Pick Up Persons whom they give permission to pick up their child from daycare. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center. In an emergency situation the child's parents will be called first. If they can not be reached staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Failure of the parent to make such arrangements will result in dismissal from the program. Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate pick-up form will be required to provide a Government issued photo ID prior to the agency releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule. All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

Children with Severe Allergies Policy

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Authorization For Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, provided Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

Health and Diseases Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual.

Parents are required to pick up an ill child within one hour of notification by phone.

If a parent is reached, but cannot pick their child up within one hour, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent can not be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the center director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours. A fever is defined as a temperature reading of 100.4 or greater. Children with a temperature above 100.3 are excluded from the program.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea that is contained in the diaper, which occur 2 or more times in a 24 hours period of time. Children are required to be excluded from the program for watery diarrhea that is NOT contained in the diaper, which occurs only one time. Children that exhibit one diarrhea along with nausea/vomiting are required to be excluded from the program. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the center director. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. This information will only be shared with faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

Illness Reporting Policy

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease or any infectious illness it should be promptly reported to the teachers or director so that we can watch for early symptoms.

Health Exclusions Policy

You will be notified when your child has a sign or symptom that requires exclusion from daycare. Once notified, the child must be picked-up within one hour. Occasionally, even though your child's physician has given approval that your child may return to school, we may still exclude him/her under daycare policy. If a doctor's note is required for your child to return to daycare, the note must be hand signed by the doctor. A stamp with nurse's initials will not be accepted. If you have another child here at Gingerbread, we will need to exclude both children until both children have followed the protocol for the illness. If anyone in your household is exhibiting symptoms the child enrolled in the facility must be excluded until he/she is symptom free. These policies are in place to protect your child, as well as all other children in the facility and our staff. Your child may be excluded for one of the following reasons:

In order to minimize the spread of illness among children, it is important that parents have arrangements available for alternative care whenever your child shows signs of illness. The following symptoms will require exclusion from the center:

- **FEVER:** Currently, a temperature of 100.4 or more is considered a fever. A child with a temperature of 100.4 or more will be excluded from the program. He/she may return to school only when they have been fever free for 24 hours without the use of medication.
- **DIARRHEA:** A child having 2 occasions of diaper contained diarrhea or 1 occasion of non diaper contained watery diarrhea or 1 occasion of diarrhea with nausea/vomiting in one day will be sent home. He/she may return when the condition improves (stools have returned to normal consistency). One occasion of diarrhea that is not able to be contained in a diaper results in exclusion regardless if child is on antibiotics or other type of medication. If the daycare is experiencing an outbreak of a gastrointestinal virus, we will send the child home after only one episode of diarrhea or vomiting.
- **CLOSTRIDIUM DIFFICILE (C-DIFF):** Any child that is diagnosed with C-diff may be excluded upon the event of one event of diarrhea. The child may return one he/she is having a normal consistency of stool.
- **VOMITING:** If a child is acting ill and has vomited he/she will be sent home. The child may return if there has been no vomiting for 24 hours and is tolerating food. In the event we have an outbreak of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting combination, we will increase the exclusion time from 24 to 48 hours to prevent exposure to other children.
- **EYE INFECTION:** Parents will be notified if their child has signs and symptoms of conjunctivitis (pink eye). The child will be sent home with recommendations to see a physician. He/she may return after 24 hours of antibiotic therapy and the eye is no longer leaking, or with a doctor's hand written note that the child is not contagious.
- **IMPETIGO:** A child with impetigo lesions will be excluded from daycare as it is a highly contagious skin infection. He/she will be referred to a physician and may return to daycare 24 hours after the start of antibiotic therapy. The lesion must remain covered with a Band-Aid until healed.
- **RINGWORM:** If a child is suspected to have ringworm, parents will be notified and required to take the child to a physician. The child may return after the start of medication or with a hand signed doctor's note. The infected area must remain covered with a Band-Aid until healed.
- **ROTAVIRUS:** A child with rotavirus or rotavirus symptoms will be excluded from the daycare until diarrhea and vomiting have stopped and the child has been fever free for 48 hours without the use of medication. In the event we have an outbreak of fever, diarrhea, and vomiting combination, we will increase the exclusion time from 24 to 48 hours to prevent exposure to other children.
- **RASH:** A child will be excluded if he/she exhibits an undiagnosed rash with/without fever. Once the rash has been diagnosed and treated for 24 hours, the child may return to the program. Any child with a diaper rash that exhibits a break in skin integrity, fever, discomfort, bleeding, drainage will be excluded from the program and a physician will need to evaluate and treat.

- **Hand, Foot, Mouth Disease:** If a child is suspected to have hand, foot, mouth disease, parents will be notified and required to take the child home. If the child is diagnosed with hand, foot, and mouth disease, the child cannot return for at least 5 days after symptoms began. Once the 5 days has passed he/she cannot return back until the child has been fever free for at least 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication and/or all lesions are not leaking fluid. The lesions must be drying up in the healing stage. Hand, foot, and mouth is highly contagious. Even though we constantly clean and wash hands, it is very hard to stop it from spreading once someone brings it into the room. Please help us keep the other children safe by keeping your child home if you suspect he/she has hand, foot, and mouth.
- **FLU:** If a child has tested positive for the flu, the child cannot return until he/she has either tested negative for the flu or five days has passed from the onset of symptoms. The child must also be fever free for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication before returning back to daycare. A doctor's note is also required to return back to daycare with the date the child can return back, clearly stated on the note. The doctor's note must be signed by his/her physician.
- **RSV:** In the event an infant is diagnosed with RSV, he/she cannot return back to daycare until he/she has been without fever for at least 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication and cold symptoms have subsided. (Lingering clear runny nose and occasional cough may linger for weeks after a RSV diagnosis) If one child in the class is diagnosed with RSV and your child has cold symptoms, we may ask you take your child to the doctor to test for RSV to prevent the spread of the virus early. RSV is highly contagious and children may test positive for weeks even after symptoms have subsided.
- **SKIN:** If a child is suspected to have measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, shingles, scabies, impetigo, pinworms, ringworms, hand foot and mouth, or hives, parents will be notified and required to take the child to the physician to be evaluated. The child cannot return back until the child has been fever free for at least 24 hours without taking fever reducing medication and all lesions are not leaking fluid. The lesions must be drying up in the healing stage. All lesions must be covered by bandages or clothing.
- **LICE:** If a child is suspected to have lice, the child will be excluded from the program until the child has been evaluated by a physician. A physician's note allowing the child to return stating the child is lice/nit free before returning back to the program.

A child will continue to be excluded if the appropriate note is not received before the child is brought to school.

Dispensing of Medication Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will only dispense over-the-counter and/or prescription medication that is in its original labeled container. Over the counter medications must be unopened when brought to the center. Each medication will need to have a filled out and signed medication form. The medication must have the child that is to be given the medication's name labeled on the medication. (It cannot be prescribed to any other person) Medication forms can be found on the parent communication board next to the side door. You can ask whoever is working the door to grab you however many you may need. Medication Forms, doctor's notes and medications are to be turned into your child's teacher. One doctor's note or prescription per course of treatment is required for each medication that needs to be given. A measured syringe/cup is required to be brought by the parents with each medication that must be given for administration. Once the administration dates or illness are complete, the medication along with the administration cup/syringe will be returned back home to the parents.

Prescription Drugs: Prescription drugs must be in their original container along with a completed medication form. If you choose to leave the medication at the daycare during the illness you can ask your pharmacist to fill your prescription in two bottles. (one for home and one for the daycare) If you choose not to fill in two bottles, we will return the prescription home each day.

Over the Counter Mediations: Over the counter medications need to come to the daycare unopened. The medication must have the child's name clearly written on the medication bottle/package. All over the counter medications (with the exception of diaper rash cream) need a doctor's note stating the instructions (dose, route, frequency, time) what the medication is being used for, and a timeframe the medication must be given. You will also need to fill out a medication administration form for each over the counter medication (except diaper cream) for each illness. All over the counter medications will be sent back home after the illness has cleared.

PRN Medications: Over the counter PRN medications will follow the same instructions as the over the counter medications. The only difference is a PRN medication may stay at the daycare longer to be used on an as needed bases. The doctor's note will need to state that the medication is PRN and for what symptoms it must be given. The doctor's note must be dated for each six month period. Each doctor's note will need to be updated every 6 months. You will also need to update the PRN medication administration form every 6 months, along with the doctor's note. PRN medications will only be given for the specific symptom that is prescribed by the doctor that is listed on the prescription. If you child does not exhibit the symptom that is specified by the doctor for administration of the PRN medication, we will NOT administer the medication. Prior to administering a PRN medication, staff will contact a parent or person listed on emergency contact form for approval. If a parent/emergency contact person cannot be reached, the medication will not be given. Staff will also inform the parent or emergency contact person if it is necessary for the child to be picked up due to illness.

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will only give medications that are prescribed every 2, 4, 6 hours, PRN, or the middle dose for three times per day. We will not administer a medication that is prescribed twice a day. Medication that is prescribed twice per day is required to be given by the parents at home. We will also not administer the child's first dosage of any medication. The first dosage of any medication must be administered by the parents at home so the child can be monitored for any adverse effects of the new medication. Refer to the policy listed above regarding picking up ill children.

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and is not expired. All prescription medications must be in the original package with the original prescription labeled on the medication box/bottle. All over the counter medication must be unopened and labeled with the child's name. Any child experiencing side effects from taking any medication will not be allowed to remain at the center if the side effects interfere with the child's daily routine of the child care facility. If your child takes medicines to prevent seizure, allergic reactions, asthma, high blood pressure, heart failure, diabetes or other life threatening chronic conditions he/she will not be permitted to stay at the facility without the necessary medicine and a complete Medication Administration Form for the medication. If your child has any type of severe allergy, you are required to fill out the severe allergy form at the end of this handbook. This form is to be completed by both you and the child physician.

Discipline Policy

We operate on the premise that young children are not "bad". The types of inappropriate s most often seen in young children (temper tantrums, refusal to cooperate, hitting other children, failure to follow rules) are usually the result of a child's level of development. The child may simply lack the social, emotional, or physical skills to comply with many adult demands. For the reasons we use the following guidelines for promoting positive behavior and for responding to problem behavior. We do not shout or yell at children. Yelling usually frightens children and distracts them from the problem. Shouting also damages a child's self-esteem.

Our policies do not mean the staff wants to permit inappropriate behavior. Instead we hope to change behavior using positive techniques. Some of these techniques include:

1. Developing rules that are stated at the child's developmental level
2. Clarifying the consequences of disobeying rules before disobedience occurs
3. Having age appropriate expectation for children
4. Ignoring some kinds of inappropriate behavior. Some behavior is an attempt to get attention and will be repeated if attention is received.
5. Reinforcing desirable behavior by praising or rewarding the child. When attention comes from appropriate behavior, that behavior is more likely to continue.
6. At no time shall any child be allowed to discipline another child.
7. At no time shall any child be deprived of a meal as a form of discipline. This does not include special treats (birthdays, etc), in which case the child would be given a substitute snack (crackers, pretzels, etc).

Using "time out" for other types of inappropriate behavior. Time out removes the child from the situation for a short time, giving him a chance to calm down. Time out consists of having the child sit in a chair in the classroom in view of the teacher. On some occasions the child must be removed from the room in order for the child to calm down. In these instances the child is put sitting in the office with the director or owner. Time out should not be used for children under age two. The length of time out shall be based on the age of the child and shall not exceed 1 minute per year of age, not to exceed five minutes. For children over age six, a time out may be extended beyond one minute per year of age, if a signed and dated statement, including a maximum time limit, from the parent granting such permission, is on file at the center.

Children are most likely to respond to attempts to discipline them when the adults involved are consistent. One of the roles of the staff at Gingerbread is to work together with parents to help children develop appropriate behaviors. Parents are invited and encouraged to discuss their concerns about their children's behaviors with the teachers and plan together means of responding consistently to problem behaviors. In this way, children will always get the same message from the important adults in their lives about those behaviors that are acceptable and those that are not.

Biting Policy

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center recognizes that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through 2 year old classrooms. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit, or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which, provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. **Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior.** Uncooperative parents will have their child's services terminated after all attempts to stop the behavior have been exhausted.

Children older than 3 years of age may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. Uncooperative parents and unresolved results will have their child's service terminated. The safety of all the children in the program is of the utmost concern of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report on the Procure App that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day or at the end of the day if the bite did not break the skin. If the bite does break the skin, the parent will be notified immediately. The staff will not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and cannot be disclosed. The staff of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center cannot discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. It is recommended that any child involved in a biting incident be seen by their family physician if the parents are concerned about communicable diseases possibly resulting from the biting incident.

AS OF 09-25-2020 We have implemented a more detailed biting/breaking the skin (scratching/ pinching) policy. This policy pertains to a child causing serious injury to another child:

1st Incident: A paper report will be sent to both parents of children involved in the biting incident. Please sign the report and a copy will be given to you.

2nd Incident: (In the same day): Another incident report will be filled out for you to sign and a parent will be called to come speak with the child causing the injury immediately.

3rd Incident: (In the same day): Another incident report will be filled out for you to sign and the child causing the injury will be sent home for the day.

Next Day Returning: If the child injures again, the child will be sent home on the first incident. If the same child continues this behavior, parents will be required to meet with the director and the teacher to discuss an appropriate individual plan of action for that child.

Provisional Employee Monitoring

It is the policy of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center NOT to hire "provisional employees". All prospective employees MUST have a completed criminal background check returned and deemed eligible for childcare purposes before an offer of employment is proffered.

However, the Louisiana Department of Education's licensing division requires that we add the following to our policies:

In the event that it would become necessary to hire a provisional employee here at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center (an employee that is waiting for their background check to be completed and returned) to fulfill the department of Education mandates concerning child to staff ratios, said employee would be supervised at all times by another staff member who has a fully completed criminal background check that has been approved by for childcare purposes by the Louisiana Department of Education's Childcare Criminal Background Check Division.

Smoking Policy

For the health of all Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

Violations of the Safety Policy

Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center. Please be particularly mindful of Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center entrance procedures. We all like to be polite. However, we need to be careful to not allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite; however that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Center Director.

Programs, Movies, and Video Game Policy:

Programs, movies, and video games with violent or adult content including but not limited to soap operas, television news, and sports programs aimed at audiences other than children, shall not be permitted in the presence of children. With the exception that television, DVD, or video viewing shall be limited to no more than one hour per day. All television, video, DVD, or other programming shall be suitable for the youngest child present.

PG programming or its televised equivalent shall not be shown to children under the age of five. PG programming shall only be viewed by children age five and above and shall require written parental authorization.

Any programming with a rating more restrictive than PG is prohibited.

All video games shall be suitable for the youngest child with access to the games:

E10+ rated games shall be permitted for children ages 10 and older.

T and M rated games are prohibited.

Electronic Devices Policy

Cell phone use is prohibited for both staff and parents inside the center. Staff phones should be stored in a place inaccessible by the children and should not be kept on their person. Parent phones should remain in their car.

Water Activities

During the warm months of the year, children ages 3 and up may participate in water activities on site. During the summer months those children have water play in wading pools with/without slides and/or sprinklers. Extra Gingerbread House staff is by their side during these activities, having at least two staff members present at minimum. All staff members responsible for supervising the children will be certified in infant, toddler, and adult CPR and Pediatric First-Aid. All teacher/child wading pool ratios are met. Onsite activities with a water slide may be used twice during the summer months for children 3 and older. All parents will be notified in writing of such activities. Parents must sign and date a permission slip for their child to participate in any water activities.

Dress Code

Children:

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable, clothing. Coats and, hats must be provided in the winter months.

Parents are prohibited from dressing children in overalls, or clothing with difficult closures. These types of clothing present particular challenges for children in relation to toileting. At Halloween, children are permitted to dress up in a costume for Halloween. Please make sure the costume is a two piece and not an all in one outfit. All in one outfits present challenges for children in relation to toileting.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes. Children that are potty trained are required to have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. Children that are not potty trained are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, and socks. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes coats, hats, gloves, scarves, and shoes. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

Jewelry/Accessories:

Children are not permitted to wear jewelry (except for very small earrings). It is a safety hazard for your child as well as the other children enrolled in the program. In addition, Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will not be responsible for lost or stolen valuables. It is the parents' responsibility to enforce this policy with their children. Should a child come to school wearing any jewelry, parents will be required to take it with them, or to return to the school to remove the jewelry if it discovered after the parent leaves. Repeated (more than 3 violations per school year) violations of this policy are considered to be violation of safety and will result in dismissal from the program. Hair beads, barrettes, bobby pins, etc. are not to be worn by children. These accessories are considered to be safety hazards. When choosing accessories for your children be mindful of the potential safety issues they present not only for your child, but also for the older and younger children attending Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center.

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center is not responsible for damage to or loss of and articles of clothing.

Dress Code

Parents:

Parents are required to be dressed in appropriate clothing while at Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center, or involved in any Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center sponsored events.

Inappropriate clothing would include, revealing, extremely short, ripped/torn (in inappropriate places), and/or see through articles of clothing. Anything with suggestive or vulgar language is prohibited.

Parents wearing shoes with wet/dirty soles, will be required to remove their shoes prior to entering any classroom with children under 1 year of age. This will reduce the risk of injury to a child on the floor, and will help to maintain a clean floor. Parents can simply leave their shoes outside the classroom door prior to entering the classroom.

Emergency & Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by messaging the parents on the Procure App. It is the parent's responsibility to stay updated with messaging on the Procure App.

Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, a message will be sent on the Procure app. We ask that you message us back so we know you received the message. If a child is not picked up, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person on the Procure message or at the time of the call, the pick-up location should the children need to be evacuated from the child care center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated.

Should the center need to close for an emergency or inclement weather, tuition will not be refunded or reduced. Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center will follow Private Schools/Iberia Parish School Closure schedule due to inclement weather.

Fire/ Emergency Drills

Gingerbread House Creative Learning Center conducts fire and emergency/evacuation drills monthly. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

During a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation, parents may not sign children into or out of the program. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child into the program. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe-zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the director or designate will inform each classroom teacher that the school will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within 1 hour of the telephone call.

Parents wishing to sign their child out of the program during a fire/emergency drill or real fire/emergency situation are expected to have patience with the staff as they are trying to maintain order during an often hectic and dangerous situation. If the center is in the midst of a fire/emergency drill, parents will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children are returned to the building to sign their child out of the program. If the center is having a real fire/emergency situation, parents will be asked to wait until the director or designee has accounted for all staff and children and gives the staff permission to release children. Once again, it is important for parents and staff to work together, remain calm, and cooperate with the fire/emergency personnel and center administration during these important and critical situations.

Firearms and Weapons Policy

At no time is any person permitted to carry any type of Firearm, Ammunitions and/or Weapon on agency property for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.