

# **Little Steps Early Learning Academy**



# **EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK**

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Little Steps Early Learning Academy (herein after referred to as the "Agency"). We hope your experience with us will be one in which you grow in your understanding of the services we provide as well as in your ability to work with children and individuals with disabilities. You are of great value to the Agency and key to providing the quality care our families have come to expect.

Before employment begins there are is paperwork that needs to be completed. Besides a current physical and TB (Tuberculosis) test, fingerprinting, and criminal history background checks are performed. All Agency employees hired must submit to fingerprinting and a criminal history background check. This check is completed during the initial hiring period. Due to the fact the process takes anywhere from 6-8 weeks to receive a report, the employee is usually hired and working in the Agency. In the event, the Agency is notified that an employee's fingerprint report has indicated a criminal history that involves children or dependent adults, the employee will be terminated immediately.

There will be opportunities provided for you to receive training. Your best learning experiences, of course, will be in the agency care rooms. Observing other staff will give you a model for appropriate and effective ways to work with children and individuals with disabilities.

Your presence at Little Steps Early Learning Academy makes it possible for us to offer a quality program. We are glad to have you as part of our team we offer our best wishes for your future success. We hope you will be just as proud to be a member of our organization as we are to have you.

### 1.2 PURPOSE OF THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook is for the information and use of all employees of Little Steps Early Learning Academy. It contains the policies of the Agency relating to hours, wages, employee benefits and conditions of employment, and provides a reference manual that should be followed by the Agency and its employees. Agency policies are operating practices and procedures of the Agency. These policies have been established for the benefit of the employees and management in order to provide the best working conditions possible.

THE LANGUAGE OF THIS HANDBOOK AND THE RULES AND POLICIES STATED WITHIN ARE NOT INTENDED TO CREATE, NOR DO THEY CONSTITUTE, A CONTRACT IMPLIED OR EXPRESS BETWEEN THE AGENCY AND ANY OF ITS EMPLOYEES. THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES ARE NOT UNCHANGEABLE. IF CIRCUMSTANCES ARISE THAT WARRANT CONSIDERATION OF A CHANGE IN POLICIES OR PROCEDURES, EMPLOYEES SHOULD BRING SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES TO THE ATTENTION OF MANAGEMENT. THIS HANDBOOK AND THE RULES AND

POLICIES CONTAINED IN IT ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME WITHIN THE SOLE DISCRETION OF MANAGEMENT.

EMPLOYMENT AT THE AGENCY IS ON AN "AT WILL" BASIS AND MAY BE TERMINATED BY THE AGENCY OR THE EMPLOYEE AT ANY TIME FOR ANY REASON. ANY CHANGE TO THIS AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT STATUS, INCLUDING EMPLOYMENT FOR A PARTICULAR REASON, MAY BE GRANTED ONLY WITH THE SPECIFIC PRIOR WRITTEN APPROVAL OF THE OWNER OF THE AGENCY.

It is the duty of the management to administer fairly without discrimination these policies, and all employees are expected to abide by and follow these policies. In the event you have any questions concerning the application of any procedure or policy, you should first ask your supervisor, if possible. Any employee who feels that a policy has not been administered in accordance with this handbook should refer the problem directly to his/her supervisor or to another member of management. No employee shall be penalized or discriminated against in any way for having requested consideration of the application of these policies or questioning the application of a policy in any situation.

Management intends that justice and fair dealing be the practice as well as the policy of the Agency. Every employee should feel free to discuss his or her problems and any policies contained in this handbook with members of management. We welcome suggestions from you that will aid in maintaining constructive and harmonious relationships throughout the Agency. Please read this handbook carefully and review it with whomever you like - your family, your fellow employees, or your supervisor. If you have any questions, please bring them to the Agency director. When you have completed your review, please sign the form at the end of the handbook stating that you have reviewed the handbook, understand its contents, and agree to abide by it. Please return the form to the director's office.

## II. WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM THE AGENCY

### 4.1 AGENCY POLICIES

#### LABOR POLICY

The Labor Policy of the Agency is an open door policy. Each employee has the right to deal with members of management with reference to all working conditions. No employee is required to obtain any other person or organization to represent him or her in the presentation of problems or questions of regarding the application of the Agency's working policies. No employee need pay to any person or to any organization any contribution or assessment for the right to work here. Management does not and will not discriminate against any employee because of membership or non-membership in any organization, whether it is religious, fraternal, professional or social. Each employee has the right to bring any problems to the attention of his or her supervisor or to any member of management. It is the duty of management to aid and assist whenever possible, in

the solution of any problems or in the working out of suggestions. It is by solving our problems and capitalizing on suggestions that progress is made.

The management has attempted to provide the best conditions of employment, the most satisfactory tools and the most opportunity for advancement for each employee. It is the policy of the Agency to compensate each employee in accordance with his or her ability and skill, and to provide him or her with every opportunity for training and development.

## CHANGES IN POLICY

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This Manual supersedes all previous employee manuals and memos that may have been issued from time to time on subjects covered in this Manual.

However, since our business and our organization are subject to change, we reserve the right to interpret, change, suspend, cancel, or dispute with or without notice all or any part of our policies, procedures, and benefits at any time. We will notify all employees of these changes. Changes will be effective on the dates determined by the Agency, and after those dates all superseded policies will be null.

### 4.2 EMPLOYMENT APPLICATIONS

We rely upon the accuracy of information contained in the employment application and the accuracy of other data presented throughout the hiring process and employment. Any misrepresentations, falsifications, or material omissions in any of this information or data may result in exclusion of the individual from further consideration for employment or, if the person has been hired, termination of employment.

### 4.3 HIRING POLICY

The Agency hires individuals on the basis of their qualifications and ability to complete the responsibilities and tasks of the job to be filled. Unless otherwise provided in writing, employment with the Agency is considered to be at will, so that either party may terminate the relationship at any time and for any lawful reason.

The Hiring Policy of this Agency includes the following:

#### A. EQUAL EMPLOYMENT POLICY

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The Agency is an equal opportunity employer. It is our policy to grant equal employment opportunities to qualified persons without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, veterans' or military status or non-job physical or mental handicap or disability or other classification protected by applicable federal, state or local laws,

except where there is a bona fide occupational disability. The Agency will provide equal opportunities in employment, promotion, wages, benefits and all other privileges, terms and conditions of employment. All recruiting, hiring, training, and promoting for all job classifications is done without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin except when a bona fide occupational qualification exist. All decisions on employment are made to further the principle of equal employment. All promotion decisions will continue to be made in accordance, with Equal Employment Opportunity principles, and only valid job requirements will be used.

#### B. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

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All persons employed by the Agency owe a duty of fidelity to the Agency. Employees must never place themselves in a position where their self-interest may conflict with this duty. Any employee who breaches this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.

#### C. NON-COMPETITION

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You may not sell any product or service that would compete with any of the Agency's products or services without permission in writing from Director. This includes, but is not limited to trainings, books, products, and freelance writing and in-home child care services. If in doubt, discuss this matter with your Director.

#### D. MOONLIGHTING

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Employees may engage in other employment provided it does not interfere with duties as an Employee of the Agency or impair the ability of the Employee to perform Agency duties. Employee must advise supervisor in writing that they have or want a second job. All outside Employment shall be subject to agency rules and regulations, and the prior approval of director.

#### E. INTRODUCTORY PERIOD

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The first 6 months of your job at the Agency are considered an introductory period and will be used to verify your skills, capabilities and suitability for our Agency. Likewise, this gives new Employees the opportunity to evaluate the Agency as a place to work. During this time you will receive training and tuition reimbursement and unpaid sick leave, but you will not be eligible for other benefits. As previously stated in this handbook, during the introductory period as at any time during employment, your job may be terminated at any time without any reason without notice.

#### F. STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

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It is anticipated that the Agency employees will apply themselves fully to their work. Included in this assumption is that employees will report to work punctually as scheduled, perform their work assignments in a timely and professional manner, and follow all the Agency policies, procedures, and practices.

Professional conduct includes discussions held with or in the presence of clients, children, visitors and other employees. Personal matters should not be discussed with clients or while children are present. Work-related issues or grievances should also not be discussed with clients or while children are present. Please greet each child, parent or guardian and visitor when they enter your child care room or work area, and provide positive information about room events. Parents need to feel their children are having a positive daycare experience when they are left at the agency. Provide a verbal report to each parent or guardian about their child's progress and care that day. Try to keep negative information balanced with positive reports, and avoid including information about other children in the room. If there are significant problems that need to be discussed with the parent or guardian, schedule a telephone or in-person conference to discuss the issue rather than discussing it in the presence of other children and clients.

When discussing problems with parents, be factual and be prepared to suggest solutions to the problem. Avoid attempting to diagnose the behavior or problem when a diagnosis or evaluation should be made by a licensed professional.

Conduct that interferes with operations will not be tolerated. The Standards of Conduct are designed to be used to correct behavior. For the most part, they follow the principle of progressive discipline, i.e., warnings followed by increasing discipline, depending on the type and frequency of offenses. Discipline under the Standards of Conduct will not be based on any employee's race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, or political affiliation. The standards were developed to protect the well-being and rights of all employees. The standards are intended to be illustrative but not all-inclusive. Accordingly, an offense which, in the judgment of management, although not listed in the policy, seriously undermines the effectiveness of the college's activities or the Employee's performance, is to be treated consistent with the provisions of the Standards of Conduct Policy.

#### **G. EMPLOYEE BACKGROUND CHECK:**

The Agency is required by the Nevada Department of Human Services to perform a background investigation to evaluate a job candidate's qualifications, character, fitness, and to identify potential hiring risks for safety and security reasons. A background investigation may include child, adult and sexual abuse registries, criminal history\*, social security number trace, past employment verification, credit score, and criminal history. Fingerprinting may be required to complete the background checks. All background checks and DHS evaluation of founded child and/or adult abuse must be completed before starting employment\*.

Medicaid program participation requires that all employees' names are searched for inclusion in the Office of Inspector General's (OIG) List of Excluded Individuals/Entities (LEIE). This list provides information to the health care industry, patients and the public regarding individuals and entities currently excluded from participation in Medicare, Medicaid and all other Federal health care programs. Individuals on this list are not eligible for employment at Little Steps Early Learning Academy.

In addition to completing the required record checks, Nevada law requires that all prospective employees sign a statement indicating whether they or not they have a record of:

- A founded child or dependent adult abuse
- A conviction in any state for any crime

If a person employed by Little Steps Early Learning Academy is convicted of a crime or has a record of founded child or dependent adult abuse entered in the abuse registry after the person's employment application date, the person shall inform the agency director of such information within forty-eight hours of the criminal conviction or entry of the record of founded child or dependent adult abuse\*.

The agency director shall act to verify the information within forty-eight hours of notification. If the information is verified, the requirements for evaluation by DHS regarding employability and evaluations shall be applied by the director to determine whether or not the person's employment is continued. The director may elect to continue to employ the person pending the performance of an evaluation by the department of human services to determine whether prohibition of the person's employment is warranted.

#### **H. HEALTH EXAMINATIONS**

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The Nevada Department of Human Services requires periodic physical examinations and/or tests to certify an Employee's continued ability to perform job duties or to serve as a measure of disease control. The costs of these examinations and/or tests are the responsibility of the employee. If there is reasonable cause to believe that an Employee has an illness that can be detrimental to other staff, the Agency may require the Employee to have a health examination to indicate whether the Employee has such an illness.

Hepatitis B vaccines are available at no cost to employees through Clark County Public Health in the courthouse basement. This is a three-shot series that is completed over six months. If you do not want to receive the vaccination, you will need to show proof of vaccination or immunity, or sign a refusal form. Call 563-886-2226 to schedule an appointment, and tell the health department to send the bill to Tipton Adaptive Daycare. Please submit a copy of your immunization record for your employee file.

#### **I. IMMIGRATION LAW COMPLIANCE**

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The Agency does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of citizenship or national origin but, at the same time is committed to employing only the U.S. citizens and aliens who are authorized to work in the U.S. In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986, each new employee, as a condition of employment, must complete the Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9 and present documentation establishing identity and employment eligibility.

#### J. PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

The protection of confidential business information and trade secrets is vital to the interests and success of Little Steps Early Learning Academy. Such confidential information includes, but is not limited to, the following examples:

- Compensation data,
- Financial information,
- Marketing strategies,
- Pending projects and proposals,
- Personnel/Payroll records, and
- Conversations between any persons associated with the agency.

Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

#### 4.4 ORIENTATION

All new employees are oriented to Little Steps Early Learning Academy's policies and procedures. Such an orientation should begin on the first day of employment and continue throughout his/hers first 30 days. Each staff member will be assigned a mentor to make sure that all procedures are explained and demonstrated. The 90 day review will evaluate an employee's performance of all expectations explained during orientation. Any staff member may ask the mentor or administration for further explanation or clarification of policies at any time. It is each staff member's responsibility to uphold agency expectations at all times.

#### 4.5 COACHING AND/OR PROGRESSIVE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

You are expected to follow all policies and procedures for smooth operation and safety of the children in your care. However, everyone occasionally makes mistakes or needs guidance for optimal performance of teaching duties. When an employee needs guidance progressive discipline procedures will be followed. Those procedures may include, but may not be restricted to the following: oral coaching or warning, written warning, written improvement plan, administrative leave with or without pay, up to termination. Nothing in this policy or in the handbook is intended to limit in any way the agency's right to terminate at any time, with or without cause and with or without advance notice.

## 4.6 HOURS AND PAYROLL PRACTICES

### “EMPLOYEES” DEFINED

An “employee” of Little Steps Early Learning Academy is a person who regularly works Little Steps Early Learning Academy on a wage or salary basis. “Employees” may include exempt, non-exempt, regular full-time, regular part-time, and temporary persons, and others employed with the Agency who are subject to the control and direction of Little Steps Early Learning Academy in the performance of their duties.

### HOW YOUR JOB IS CLASSIFIED

Exempt status is determined by federal and state law. In general, exempt employees are those engaged in executive, managerial, high-level administrative and professional jobs who are paid a fixed salary and perform certain duties. In addition, certain commissioned sales employees and highly paid computer professionals are exempt. Exempt employees are not subject to the minimum wage and overtime laws.

All employees who are covered by the federal or state minimum wage and overtime laws are considered nonexempt. Employees working in nonexempt jobs are entitled to be paid at least the minimum wage per hour and a premium for overtime.

Regular full-time employees are scheduled to work 30 hours per week and are eligible for all the Agency benefits subject to the terms and conditions of the benefit plan or policy.

Regular part-time employees are regularly scheduled to work less than 30 hours per week and are not eligible for the Agency benefits except as expressly described herein.

Temporary employees are hired for a limited period of time and/or for a specific project. These employees may be scheduled to work full or part-time, and are not eligible for any benefits except those required by law. Each employee will be advised of his or her status at the time of hire and any change in status.

Regardless of the employee's status, the employee is employed at-will and the employment relationship can be terminated by the Agency or the employee at any time, with or without cause.

### HOURS AND PAYROLL PRACTICES

The Agency's paydays are every other Monday. All employees are paid by check or direct deposit on the above-mentioned payday. If the regular payday falls on a Agency holiday, employees will be paid on the next business day after the holiday and/or weekend.

Each regular part-time, temporary, or non-salaried employee may be provided a personal clock card. This "clock card" may be in the form of a physical time card, electronic software based timecard system or other Agency approved time tracking method. If you are an hourly employee,

your clock card is your record of employment from which your pay is computed and from which all is determined. It is necessary for each employee to "clock in" at the start of work and "clock out" when he or she leaves. In the event that an employee fails to "clock in" or "clock out" a supervisor's approval and signature must be received prior to the submission and payment of any wages. Repeated failure to accurately log hours may result in disciplinary action. If any employee fails to submit a time log, as required, that employee's pay may be delayed.

## **OVERTIME**

Due to the nature of our business, situations frequently arise which require overtime work. In order to meet customer and licensing requirements and in order to insure efficient utilization of agency space, overtime work may be essential. In such cases, your supervisor will give you as much advance notice as possible. We will cooperate in every case with you in attempting to accommodate your abilities and preferences regarding overtime work. However, we reserve the right to require that any such work be performed.

Overtime or working beyond your scheduled shift may also be required to ensure adequate staffing and supervision of the clients in our care. If a parent or guardian is late picking up a client or the employee scheduled to relieve you at the end of your shift does not arrive, you may not leave until required staffing is available. You may not leave clients in the sole care of an employee that is under 18 years of age or with any adult that is not authorized to pick up that client. Notify the director if a client has not been picked up at closing time and you are unable to contact the client's parents or guardian, and remain with that client until an approved adult assumes care of that client. Abandoning a child without adequate adult supervision will result in child endangerment charges or dependent adult abuse against you.

## **4.7 WAGE AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW**

Periodically, the agency director or site supervisor will conduct a formal performance evaluation of each employee. The evaluation will consist of a review of the employee's performance, attitude, attendance, progress and ability. The information required to review your job performance is collected continuously by your supervisor and other management personnel. Evaluations will weigh heavily in determining promotions and merit pay increases.

An employee may at any time, take the opportunity to ask questions, make suggestions or to discuss any matters relating to his or her job or the Agency in regard to this evaluation. Employees will also be asked to complete an evaluation survey annually, to evaluate the childcare program and the effectiveness of it's policies. These surveys will be used to make a plan for program improvements.

## **4.8 PROMOTION**

It is the Agency's policy to promote employees from within the Agency, insofar as possible, to all jobs in which vacancies arise. Factors considered in making promotions are employee

knowledge, training, skill, efficiency, compatibility with fellow employees, and the ability to perform the job which is available, with due consideration of the employee's length of continuous service with the Agency. In the event of an opening for a promotion, the director shall determine which employee is to be promoted to the open position. Agency staff may recommend the strongest candidates for open positions in which a promotion is involved within the organization, and the director will consider these recommendations along with the candidates' other qualifications.

#### 4.9 LAYOFF

From time to time the business may require a reduction of the Agency's work force. Since it is the Agency's policy to transfer employees and maintain continuity in the event of a reduction in the work force, the Agency will retain those employees who, in management's judgment and discretion, have shown the greatest ability for the jobs available. In the event that two or more employees are judged to be equal in ability for the jobs available, the greater length of continuous service shall govern retention.

#### 4.10 BENEFITS OFFERED BY THE AGENCY

##### 1. GROUP HEALTH INSURANCE

The Agency does not currently offer Group Health Insurance benefits.

##### 2. GROUP LIFE INSURANCE

The Agency does not currently offer Group Life Insurance benefits.

##### 3. WORKERS' COMPENSATION INSURANCE

The Agency offers Worker's Compensation Insurance benefits according to state and federal requirements.

##### 4. TUITION REIMBURSEMENT AND PAID TRAINING TIME

We are a part of the Nevada T.E.A.C.H program. You must apply for the scholarship to be eligible and they will determine the amount to be reimbursed by the scholarship. Little Steps ELA will provide information on monthly free trainings that will assist you in keeping up with your annual training requirements. Shall there be a class that is not offered free, or not offered by Little Steps Early Learning Academy, the cost of the training course will be reimbursed to the employer, as long as the class is completed before Nevada Registry expiration date. This is only offered to full time employees who have passed their 90 day probationary period.

##### 5. FUNERAL LEAVE

Regular full-time employees are eligible for funeral leave without pay beginning their first full day of employment. This leave applies only to immediate family members including children, siblings, parents, and grandparents.

## 6. JURY DUTY

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Any employee who is requested to perform service as a juror shall be given time off while serving on the jury.

## 7. EMPLOYEE DISCOUNT

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All employees receive a 10% discount on private pay care at the agency for their dependents. Care availability is subject to the limitations defined in the parent and/or Medicaid handbook, and no credit or reimbursement is offered for care when spaces are not available in the agency. Sibling discounts may be used with the employee discount.

## 8. LEAVE OF ABSENCE

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There may be times when it becomes necessary for you to request an unpaid leave of absence. The purpose of the leave of absence program is to protect your service record during periods when you are authorized to be absent from work. Leave include military leave, personal leave and medical leave.

### A. MILITARY LEAVE

All employees required to go into military service will be treated as though on leave of absence in accordance with federal law. Nothing in this provision is intended to restrict any rights granted to employees under federal law.

### B. PERSONAL LEAVE

Personal leave is for a specified period not to exceed 10 days and may be granted only for unusual or extenuating personal or family reasons. You must submit to your supervisor a written request for personal leave which sets forth the reasons why a leave of absence is necessary. For a leave to be granted, the reason must be acceptable to management at its discretion.

### C. MEDICAL LEAVE

Medical leave is for a period not to exceed 20 days and will be granted when an employee is disabled from working for medical reasons. To be granted medical leave of absence, you must submit a statement from your physician setting forth the nature and extent of the disability, and the date of expected return to work.

#### D. FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

FMLA Leave means leave which qualifies under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 and the Department of Labor's regulations and is designated by Agency as so qualifying. Some states have family and medical leave laws that may entitle employees to benefits different than those provided under the Agency's FMLA policy. Applicable law is based on the state in which you are employed, not the state in which you live.

#### 4.11 REST AND LUNCH PERIODS

Nonexempt employees are provided with one 10-minute rest period for every four hour period of work, or major fraction thereof. To the extent possible, each rest period should be taken in the middle of the four hour work period. Lunch breaks are not paid. Child care room staffing ratios must be maintained at all times, including breaks, so employees may not take breaks until replacement staff is available.

Nonexempt employees scheduled to work more than five hours in a workday are provided with a 30 minute or 1 hour unpaid, duty-free meal period. The director will schedule meal periods to accommodate operating requirements. If the employee is completing required training during a meal period, the employee will receive payment for that time; however, training time is not counted toward overtime pay and is not eligible for time and a half pay.

Reduced child care room ratios are allowed by DHS during nap time to allow for lunch breaks, but the minimum staff must available in the building at all times. Staff must submit a request to the director or site supervisor at the beginning of each shift if they want to leave the building during their break. If there is not sufficient staff in the building to maintain staff ratios, staff members will not be able to leave the building to smoke during breaks. If multiple staff members wish to leave the building during breaks and not enough relief staff is available to fulfill all requests to leave the building during breaks, the amount of time each staff member is permitted to leave will be limited to allow all requests to leave the building to be accommodated as much as possible.

#### 4.12 SMOKING

The Nevada Smoke Free Air Act of 2008 prohibits smoking in almost all public places and enclosed areas within places of employment, as well as some outdoor areas. Smoking, as defined by section 142D.2, is prohibited in all daycare buildings and grounds, including parking lots, playgrounds, and any other outdoor area under the control of a public or private educational facility, including inside any vehicle located on such school grounds. Staff is discouraged from

smoking on the street directly in front of the child care facility as this presents a negative image to the public. If you chose to smoke in your vehicle, the vehicle must be removed from daycare property while you smoke. Please be courteous to neighboring property owners, and do not smoke on private property without owner consent. If you smoke on public or private property, do not leave cigarette butts or other debris on that property.

Odors and smoke from cigarettes remain on your clothing after you return to the daycare building. These odors and smoke may cause discomfort, irritation and/or allergic reactions in some people and children may smell like smoke after close contact with your clothing. Please wear a smock or jacket when smoking, and leave it in your vehicle or the staff break room when you return to the daycare building. Please do not take smoking jackets or smocks to your assigned work area or hang it where it might contact clothing belonging to other people.

#### 4.13 HOLIDAYS

Employees will be off on all scheduled holidays

#### 4.14 VACATION

Full time employees are eligible to receive the following vacation benefits:

- New Employees: After one year of employment, employees shall receive vacation time beginning the following year as follows
- 1 Years to 5 Years of Employment: The employee shall be entitled to vacation equal to one week of regularly schedule hours. For example if the employee works 40 hours per week, they will receive 40 hours per week of vacation.
- 6 Years to 10 Years of Employment: The employee shall be entitled to vacation equal to two weeks of regularly schedule hours.
- 11 Years or More of Employment: The employee shall be entitled to vacation equal to three weeks of regularly schedule hours.

Vacation hours accrued based on the actual hours worked. If you work less than 40 hours per week, the number of vacation hours accrued will be reduced accordingly. In an attempt to encourage the use of accrued vacation benefits, all unused vacation time will be forfeited if not used. Any unused vacation is forfeited at separation and will not be paid to exiting employees.

Employees should notify their direct supervisor a minimum of 20 business days in advance of taking vacation time, unless special circumstances are recognized. All vacation requests must be submitted to the employee's direct supervisor and approved prior to using said vacation time. All requests will be reviewed by the supervisor with a focus on the Agency needs, deadlines and requirements during the requested vacation dates. The direct supervisor will inform the employee within 10 business days of receipt of the vacation request of the acceptance or rejection thereof.

Vacation time must be taken in full day increments. Vacation pay is based on your regular rate of pay.

Vacation Time may also be used for sickness/ illness. The time will be deducted upon submission of a doctor's note from your care provider.

#### 4.15 SUGGESTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

In any business where individuals are working together, employee complaints or ideas for improvement are bound to arise. It is the desire and responsibility of management to attempt to answer and solve problems whether of a business or personal nature. This Agency maintains an open door policy so that any employee has the right to discuss matters directly with any member of management he or she selects. Generally, complaints or suggestions may be taken up with your supervisor or the Agency director. We recognize and value employees' suggestions and note that often times they may find their way into actual practice. If satisfactory action is not taken, you should discuss the matter with the director. The director is available to discuss problems, whether business or personal, with any employee.

### III. WHAT THE AGENCY EXPECTS OF YOU

#### 5.1 EMPLOYEE RECORDS

DHS and Medicaid require that all agency employees have the following records in their employee file:

- Professional Growth and Development Record
- Employee/Volunteer/Substitute Statement
- SING Check Results for criminal history and child and dependent adult abuse registries
- FBI Results
- DHS evaluation, if any record check is founded, and documentation of follow-through on any employment restrictions as stated in DHS evaluation
- Verification of OIG excluded individual search
- Record of individual date of hire
- Date of transfer into Medicaid Waiver programs
- First Aid
- CPR

- Universal Precautions
- Mandatory Reporter Training
- Annual Physical
- Training Certificates
- New Staff Orientation
- Staff Emergency Plan Annual Training
- Annual job performance evaluation

## 5.2 CHANGES OF ADDRESS

When you change your address or telephone number, you should notify the director in writing of the change immediately, in order that the Agency will always have the correct home address and telephone number by which your home can be reached. It is important that the Agency be able to communicate with you, or, in the event of necessity or emergency, with members of your family, and this can only be done if an accurate record of your address and telephone number is on file with the payroll department. Proper mailing addresses are also necessary in order to keep records on a current basis for federal and state taxes, pension plans and group insurance coverages extended by the Agency.

## 5.3 ABSENCE

Regular is necessary in order to meet customer needs. Agency staffing is carefully scheduled and the absence of scheduled staff can cause a failure to comply with child care and/or Medicaid regulations.

Written permission from a physician must be obtained before returning to work if you have been absent 5 days or more due to illness. If you fail to call in for a period of 5 days, you will be considered to have voluntarily resigned. Repeated instances of one day absences from work will be grounds for discipline up to and including discharge.

## 5.4 SEVERE WEATHER CONDITIONS AND OTHER EMERGENCIES

When severe weather conditions exist, if you ask to leave work before regular quitting time, you may do so with your supervisor's approval unless your services are essential for the completion of work in progress or the supervision of the children present. Non-exempt employees who leave early will not be paid for time lost unless they request that the time be charged against their unused vacation allowance or paid personal days. Those who cannot be released will be paid their regular straight time rate of pay. If the Agency remains open during adverse weather conditions and you are unable to report to work, your time off will be charged to allowable personal days, if any are available. If the Agency is officially closed, you will not be paid for the time off and the hours will not be reflected in your personal days allowance.

## 5.5 VISITORS

As a general rule, employees should not have visitors joining them during working hours. Visitors are not allowed without special permission from management. All visitors must enter through the front entrance and be registered at the director's office. It shall be the responsibility of the director and site supervisor to enforce this policy.

## 5.6 DRESS STANDARDS

What we wear to work is a reflection of the pride we have in our Agency, in what we do and in ourselves. We also need to be good role models to the children in our care. Although dress code requirements will vary according to job responsibilities, we ask that your appearance at all times show discretion, good taste, and not present a hazard or impediment in the performance of your job. Clothing might get dirty or bleach stained in a child care agency, and care givers need to be able to get on the floor to interact with the children.

At a minimum, clothing needs to be clean, of appropriate fit, and free from stains, holes, tears, fraying, inappropriate messages or advertising, and severe fading. Shorts shall have an inseam at least 7 inches long, and skirts must be below the knees. Shirts must have straps that are at least 1 inch wide and cover the bra straps, and they must cover the cleavage and the front and back midriff, including when arms are raised, and when bending over or crouching down. Shoes shall be clean and in good repair and have non-slip soles. Flip-flops and heels over 1 inch are not allowed. Jewelry shall be discreet and not present a risk of injury to children. Piercings are to be limited to three or fewer posts or small loops in each ear, and necklaces should be able to be tucked into clothing to avoid being pulled by the children. No facial or body piercings are to be worn at the agency. Visible tattoos need to be covered during working hours.

To present a uniform, professional appearance, our preferred employee uniform consists of:

- Scrubs in any color or print
- Agency t-shirt or any solid colored shirt with black, navy blue or khaki pants or shorts.

On themed days at the agency, employees are expected to dress according to the theme.

- When leaving for work, ensure that your midriff area is not exposed when you raise your hands above your head, or when bending over.

## GROOMING

Staff is expected to arrive at work clean and free from strong perfumes or odors. Children, clients, visitors and other staff may have sensitivities or allergies to some odors, and strong odors make the work environment unpleasant.

Nails should be trimmed and clean. Long fingernails might puncture a glove, which may put the individual staff member in harm's way. Nail polish may chip and enter food. If a staff chooses to wear nail polish, gloves must be worn during food service to ensure this does not occur. As

recommended in Caring for Our Children "STANDARD 3.2.3.4, wearing artificial nails while working is not allowed.

Hair should be clean and neat, and controlled so that it is not obstructing the staff member's vision or is falling into food or children's faces. Long hair that is not tied back can also be pulled by young children.

#### 5.7 PERSONAL MAIL

All personal mail should be received by employees at home. In the normal operation of business, however, incoming mail is frequently addressed to individual employees. While this practice is not desirable, every effort will be made to deliver the mail to the proper party. It should be remembered, however, that all business mail is opened upon receipt.

#### 5.8 SOLICITATION

Persons not employed by the Agency may not, at any time, solicit or distribute literature or other printed materials on Agency property for any purpose. Employees may not solicit during working time in work areas or distribute literature or other printed material during working time or in working areas.

"Working time" is the time employees are engaged, or should be engaged, in performing their work tasks for the Agency. It includes the working time of both the employee doing the soliciting or distributing and the employee being solicited or to whom literature is distributed. "Working time" does not include the time when employees are properly not performing their work duties, for example, scheduled meal times and breaks.

If you have any questions regarding the meaning of "working time" or "working areas," please inquire in the director's office.

#### 5.9 COLLECTIONS

Collections for any cause are not to be taken up without prior approval of your supervisor.

#### 5.10 INJURIES AND ILLNESS

Whenever you feel ill, you should immediately inform your supervisor that you are ill. In the event the illness prevents your continuing work, the general manager shall be notified and you shall be advised to go home and consult your family physician. If necessary, some other person will accompany you home.

In the case of injury of any kind, no matter how minor, you should immediately report the injury to your supervisor. In the event of a serious injury, arrangements will be made to take you to the

hospital. First-aid supplies are available in each agency, agency vehicles and near the playground entrance.

#### 5.11 PERSONAL TELEPHONE CALLS

Employees are not to receive personal telephone calls while at work, except in emergencies. It is the responsibility of each employee to notify family, friends and others who might call, not to do so during working time in the absence of an emergency.

An employee that is using a cell phone or personal electronic device is not engaged in the care and supervision of the children, and the Nevada Department of Human Services might not consider an employee that is distracted by electronic devices to be a part of the required room caregiver ratio. To ensure that employees are not distracted, all cell phones and personal electronic devices are not allowed in room s and playgrounds. A cell phone may be carried on trips away from the building to allow for emergency contact with the Agency director or emergency services, but the phone may not be used for non-emergency uses. Please keep cell phones and personal electronic devices in your car or staff locker. You may check messages and return calls during your break.

#### 5.12 SECURITY

The Agency is committed to providing the organization with the most thorough and comprehensive security program possible. The program is intended to provide legitimate and reasonable guidelines for safeguarding our facilities and proprietary information.

Outside child care room doors and the staff room door should not be propped open when the room is unoccupied to prevent unauthorized access to the building. Playground gates should be secured at all times to prevent unauthorized access. Clients and visitors are required to enter and exit through the main entrance at the front of the building, and either sign in or register at the director's office.

No one may remove a child from the building without written consent from the child's parent or legal guardian. Non-custodial parents, including parents whose children have been temporarily placed under the custody of the Nevada Department of Human Services, must have legal authority to remove the child or written permission from the custodial parent or legal guardian.

Entry codes for the agency doors should not be shared with anyone, including clients and staff. If a client or staff member has forgotten the entry door code, they will need to request a new code from the Agency director. Opening and closing staff that have building keys or master door codes shall not share or allow access to these with any other individuals, including clients and staff, nor shall they make copies of any agency keys.

Every employee has an obligation to protect our Agency's proprietary data and to practice good security common sense. Further details on specific policies and procedures are provided in this handbook and can be supplemented by the director.

### 5.13 GRATUITIES/GIFTS

Employees may not accept gifts valued at greater than \$10.00 from business-related sources, including day care clients.

### 5.14 FIRE PREVENTION

Fire is always a hazard in any occupied building. However, minor fires can develop which can quickly be brought under control by careful adherence to our fire prevention policies. Each employee must be familiar with the location of fire alarms, firefighting equipment and the fire exits in the building, and must participate in monthly fire drills.

Each employee must be familiar with the proper use of the fire extinguishers located in the agency. If you are unsure about the proper use of the agency fire extinguishers, you should immediately report your concerns to your supervisor, and arrangements for appropriate training will be made. A serious fire would endanger lives, put you and your fellow workers out of work, and would interrupt child care services for our clients. It is part of each employee's job to protect the safety of our clients and protect the property and equipment against fire and other damage by keeping the agency clean and free from rubbish.

### 5.15 PERSONAL SAFETY EQUIPMENT AND HEALTH PRACTICES

All employees providing physical care that might result in contact with bodily fluids must wear appropriate personal protective equipment, including gloves. These will be provided at the Agency's expense. Employees must wash their hands after wearing gloves, contact with bodily excretions, diapering, and toileting. Your supervisor will instruct you on the use of all safety equipment and proper hand washing technique. Failure to properly wear safety gear or to perform proper hand washing may result in disciplinary action.

### 5.16 PERSONAL PROPERTY

All employees should be sure that their own personal insurance policies cover the loss of anything occasionally left at the agency. Little Steps Early Learning Academy assumes no risk for any loss or damage to personal property.

### 5.17 SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The Agency is committed to providing a safe and productive workplace for its employees. In keeping with this commitment, the following rules regarding alcohol and drugs of abuse have been established for all staff members, regardless of rank or position, including both regular and temporary employees. The rules apply during working hours to all employees of the Agency while they are on Agency premises or elsewhere on Agency business.

The manufacture, distribution, possession, sale, or purchase of controlled substances of abuse on Agency property is prohibited.

Being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcohol, or substances of abuse on Agency property is prohibited.

Working while under the influence of prescription drugs that impair performance is prohibited.

So that there is no question about what these rules signify, please note the following definitions:

**Agency property:** All Agency owned or leased property used by employees.

**Controlled substance of abuse:** Any substance listed in Schedules I-V of Section 202 of the Controlled Substance Act, as amended.

**Drug:** Any chemical substance that produces physical, mental, emotional, or behavioral change in the user.

**Drug paraphernalia:** Equipment, a product, or material that is used or intended for use in concealing an illegal drug, or otherwise introducing into the human body an illegal drug or controlled substance.

**Illegal drug:**

- a. Any drug or derivative thereof whose use, possession, sale, transfer, attempted sale or transfer, manufacture, or storage is illegal or regulated under any federal, state, or local law or regulation.
- b. Any drug, including – but not limited to – a prescription drug, used for any reason other than that prescribed by a physician.
- c. Inhalants used illegally.

**Under the influence:** A state of not having the normal use of mental or physical faculties resulting from the voluntary introduction into the body of an alcoholic beverage, drug, or substance of abuse.

Consistent with the rules listed above, any of the following actions constitutes a violation of the Agency's policy on drugs and may subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination.

Using, selling, purchasing, transferring, manufacturing, or storing an illegal drug or drug paraphernalia, or attempting to or assisting another to do so, while in the course of employment.

Working or reporting to work, conducting Agency business or being on Agency property while under the influence of an illegal drug or alcohol, or in an impaired condition.

## 5.18 DISCHARGE, DISCIPLINE AND WORK RULES

For the protection of all employees, and in order to operate efficiently, certain rules are necessary.

The following is a partial list of the kinds of improper conduct which shall constitute grounds for disciplinary action, up to and including immediate discharge:

- Violation of our supervision and discipline policies;
- Theft or inappropriate removal or possession of property;
- Working under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs;
- Possession, distribution, sale, transfer, or use of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace;
- Fighting or threatening violence in the workplace;
- Possession of firearms or weapons on Agency property;
- Boisterous or disruptive activity in the workplace;
- Negligence or improper conduct leading to damage of Agency-owned or customer-owned property;
- Insubordination or other disrespectful conduct;
- Violation of safety or health rules;
- Smoking in the workplace;
- Sexual or other unlawful or unwelcome harassment;
- Excessive absenteeism or tardiness or any absence without notice;
- Unauthorized use of telephones, or other Agency-owned equipment;
- Using Agency's equipment for purposes other than business (i.e. playing games on computers or personal Internet usage);
- Unauthorized disclosure of business "secrets" or confidential information;
- Violation of personnel policies; and
- Unsatisfactory performance or conduct.

## 5.19 GROSS MISCONDUCT

Some offenses are so serious that they can result in termination without previous warnings. The following examples are listed for the guidance of all. This list is not intended to be a comprehensive list of all prohibited activity. The following actions may result in immediate termination:

- Neglect, physical or sexual abuse of a child or dependent adult
- Withholding of food, nap or other comfort from a client
- Yelling or the use of harsh tones of voice

- Failure to report to work three consecutive workdays without proper notification
- Falsification of Agency records (i.e.: care documentation, employment application, time clock, and your records)
- Conviction of a felony for any offense committed while employed by the Agency.
- Receiving a DUI if the you transport clients for Little Steps Early Learning Academy
- Leaving a child or dependent unattended (inside or outside)
- Allowing a child or dependent adult to leave the agency with an unauthorized person
- Sleeping while supervising a child or dependent adult
- Insubordination that shows gross disrespect such as threatening, cussing, or yelling at administrators

Additionally, any employee may be discharged in the event of continued violation of work rules. Improper conduct may constitute grounds for the issuance of a warning before more severe disciplinary action is taken.

The Agency has a few; simple rules which are fundamental, and which provide for the safety and protection of its employees. Compliance with these rules is a condition of employment.

- Be careful - work safely at all times.
- Report all dangerous conditions and equipment to your supervisor immediately.
- Report every injury of a serious nature immediately to your supervisor and first aid will be provided.
- Do not attempt to work if you are taken ill.
- Keep your work area neat and orderly at all times.

## 5.20 TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Termination of employment is an inevitable part of personnel activity within any organization, and many of the reasons for termination are routine. Below are a few examples of some of the most common circumstances under which employment is terminated:

- **Resignation** – voluntary employment termination initiated by an employee.
- **Termination** – involuntary employment termination initiated by Little Steps Early Learning Academy.
- **Layoff** – involuntary employment termination initiated by Little Steps Early Learning Academy for non-disciplinary reasons.

### VOLUNTARY TERMINATION

If you decide to leave the Agency, we ask that you provide two weeks' written notice of your intention to quit. Failure to provide such notice will result in ineligibility for re-hire. Walking off

the job or absence for more than 5 days without a report to the Agency, with the reason for the absence will constitute a voluntary quit.

Any employee who terminates employment with Little Steps Early Learning Academy shall return all files, records, keys, and any other materials that are property of Little Steps Early Learning Academy. No final settlement of an employee's pay will be made until all items are returned in appropriate condition. The cost of replacing non-returned items will be deducted from the employee's final paycheck. Furthermore, any outstanding financial obligations owed to Little Steps Early Learning Academy will also be deducted from the employee's final check.

Employee's benefits will be affected by employment termination in the following manner. All accrued vested benefits that are due and payable at termination will be paid. Some benefits may be continued at the employee's expense, if the employee elects to do so. The employee will be notified of the benefits that may be continued and of the terms, conditions, and limitations.

For employees who have children who are enrolled at Little Steps Early Learning Academy, children will be disenrolled upon the termination of the employee's employment.

#### 5.21 REFERENCES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

An employee may request his/her supervisor to provide a letter of recommendation to a prospective employer.

### IV. CONCLUSION

This handbook has outlined the broad principles that guide our Agency in its relations with employees. Specific information about Agency insurance plans, retirement plans or other benefits, if offered, can be obtained in the office. It is quite possible that you may from time to time have questions about Agency matters which directly affect you, or you may desire further information about how Agency policies apply to your individual case. Should you be unable to find the complete answer to your particular question in this manual, feel free to ask the Agency director. If s/he does not have the information readily available, he or she will get the answer for you. The Agency reserves the right to amend its policies at its discretion. In case of amendments, employees will be informed appropriately.

**STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

I have received, read, and agree to abide by the **Little Steps ELA Employee Handbook**. I understand the policies and procedures set forth in the handbook, including all policies and procedures outlined in the addendums to this handbook. I also understand that the handbook is not a contract of employment, does not in any way limit the right of the Agency to terminate my employment and that my employment may be terminated at any time, with or without notice, within the sole discretion of the Agency management.

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Employee name (please print clearly)

---

Employee Signature

Date

## APPENDIX

APPENDIX A:      PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY

It is the policy of Little Steps Early Learning Academy to protect the privacy of the families in our care. All agency employees and volunteers are required to abide by state and federal privacy laws, and can face severe civil and legal penalties for violating these laws. In addition to the legal penalties, employees that violate our privacy practices will face disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. It is important that you read and understand our privacy policy and the applicable privacy laws and penalties included in this policy.

Do not speak about or disclose protected information about clients in our care to anyone except their guardians unless a signed release has been obtained. When a release of information has been obtained, only relevant information necessary for the care of the client should be disclosed. Protected health care information may not be displayed where visitors and clients will be able to see it.

Clients in our care, their family members, employees, visitors, agency property, or property belonging to employees or clients may not be photographed, digitally reproduced or copied without written permission from the director and every subject, or the parent or guardian of the subject, in the photograph, digital reproduction or copy. Photos, digital reproductions, or copies may not be distributed or posted outside of the agency, including via the internet, without written permission from the director, and every subject, or the parent or guardian of the subject, in the photo, digital reproduction or copy. This permission must include specific declarations for where and how the media will be displayed or distributed.

As a provider of healthcare services, the Agency and its employees must comply with HIPPA privacy laws:

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) was passed by Congress in 1996. As part of the Act, Congress called for regulations promoting administrative simplification of healthcare transactions as well as regulations ensuring the privacy and security of patient information.

These regulations apply to what are called "covered entities:" healthcare providers, health plans and healthcare clearinghouses who transmit any health information in electronic form in connection with a transaction covered under HIPAA.

The HIPAA Privacy Regulations govern the release of protected health information, called PHI. Covered entities must provide notice of privacy policies and procedures to clients, obtain consent and authorization for use of information and tell how information is generally shared and how clients can access, inspect, copy and amend their own medical record.

HIPAA Security Regulations dictate the kind of safeguards covered entities must have in place to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of electronic PHI. Definition of protected health information and specific privacy policies are detailed in the Agency privacy policy, and this document should be reviewed by all employees to ensure compliance with our privacy policies.

It is the policy of Fairman Family Assistance Programsto protect the privacy of the families in our care and our employees. We will do so by following these procedures:

1. We will abide by our state's privacy law. We will only share information with the Nevada Department of Human Services (DHS) child care registration department, DHS child care assistance, Medicaid, Promise Jobs, and the child care nutrition program that we are required to share to participate in those programs.
2. We will keep all records and information about the children in our care and their families private and confidential, unless we have their written permission to reveal specific information. A record of all disclosures are to be kept in each child's or employee's file. The following situations are exceptions to this general rule:
  - We will occasionally post photographs of the children and staff around the agency, in photo albums and in the monthly daycare newsletter that may be seen by current and prospective clients to the program and agencies that visit the agency.
  - The children and staff's names may appear on artwork, cubbies, attendance sheets, or on other objects around the agency.
3. Verbal authorization for release of information and verbal release of information should be limited to those circumstances when other methods of release cannot be used, such as in an emergency situation. Only the information required satisfying the emergency should be released. If the released information pertains to a minor, then a parent or guardian must authorize the release of information. A record should be made of the verbal release in the employee or child daycare record, and a written consent for the release of information should be obtained as soon as possible.
4. Prior to releasing protected information, the employee releasing the information must check the child or employee file to verify a valid release is on file and that release is current and authorizes release of information to the specific person or agency the information is being released to. Authorizations for release of information expire one year from the date they are signed. All releases of information must be documented in the child or employee file, including date, what information was released, how it was delivered (verbal, mail, fax, email, in-person, etc.), the person or agency it was released to, and the signature of the staff member who released the information.
5. Protected information that must be readily accessible to care providers, such as allergy information, care plans, care documentation, medication lists, etc., will be covered or

stored inside a cabinet where it is not within view of children, parents and visitors to the agency. Protected information must be secured from unauthorized access in a locked cabinet when left in an unoccupied room.

6. All staff must receive training on our privacy policies and practices within 30 days of starting employment and annually thereafter.

We are mandatory abuse reporters and are required by law to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services. We may also be required to disclose certain information to law enforcement officers conducting a criminal investigation or DHS representatives investigating suspected abuse or neglect.

### **Legal penalties for violations of privacy rule requirements**

There are civil penalties of \$100 per violation, but the penalties can be "stacked" if there are multiple violations with respect to a single individual. The maximum civil penalties are \$25,000 per year, per person, per standard. Thus, if two standards were violated with respect to one person, the potential penalties could mount to as much as \$50,000. Criminal penalties (up to a \$250,000 fine and ten years in prison) may be imposed for "knowingly and improperly" disclosing information or obtaining information under "false pretenses", with higher penalties reserved for violations designed for financial gain or "malicious harm". In addition, of course, state laws may impose additional penalties for the same offenses, and most states would also allow common-law suits for torts such as invasion of privacy and infliction of emotional distress, among other causes of action.

**APPENDIX B:** RECORD RETENTION POLICY**Policy:**

All medical records (master, financial, and medical file information) on children served and employees shall be kept on file in the child care agency office. The complete records shall be kept in a locked file with limited access. The director/nurse is responsible to ensure that confidentiality is maintained of medical record information and verifying the existence of a release form prior to releasing any information, and for documenting what information has been released, when it was released, and to whom it was released.

All medical record information must be maintained during the time persons received services or were employed at the child care agency, and for a minimum of five years from the date a claim was submitted for payment. Financial information should be maintained for seven years.

**Procedures:**

1. When the master and medical files become too voluminous, out of date information will be purged. Current medical information should always be maintained in files at all times. The purged information should be placed into a manila envelope with the person's name in black letters on the envelope, with the date the information was put in the envelope, and the date the information may be destroyed. The envelope should then be sent to the director for storage in a locked area or locked container with limited access. After six years from the date the claim was submitted for payment, some purged medical information may be destroyed. Purged medical information that should not be destroyed includes social histories, psychological and psychiatric reports and evaluations, medical specialist reports and evaluations, guardian and conservator papers, legal papers (including court custody and restraining orders), individual education plans (IEP), individualized family service plans (IFSP), and other information that would be important for future reference. After seven years all purged financial information may be purged. Destruction of medical and financial information is coordinated through the director. All information on employees and children served must be shredded.
2. When the child served is discharged from care or an employee terminates employment, the medical record, financial information, and room records should be sent to the director for storage in a secure location. Information on all discharged children and employees is stored in a secure centralized location. All medical information may be destroyed after six years, and all financial information may be destroyed after seven years. Destruction of records is coordinated through the Agency director. All specific information on persons served or employed must be shredded.

**APPENDIX C:****EMAIL POLICY**

The Agency maintains a voice-mail system and an electronic-mail (E-mail) system to assist in the conduct of business within the Agency. These systems, including the equipment and the data stored in the system, are and remain at all times the property of the Agency. As such, all messages created, sent, received or stored in the system are and remain the property of the Agency. Messages should be limited to the conduct of business at the Agency. Voice-mail and electronic-mail may not be used for the conduct of personal business.

The Agency reserves the right to retrieve and review any message composed, sent or received. Please note that even when a message is deleted or erased, it is still possible to recreate the message; therefore, ultimate privacy of messages cannot be ensured to anyone. While voice-mail and electronic-mail may accommodate the use of passwords for security, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Messages may be reviewed by someone other than the intended recipient. Moreover, all passwords must be made known to the Agency. The reason for this is simple: your system may need to be accessed by the Agency when you are absent.

Messages may not contain content that may reasonably be considered offensive or disruptive to any employee. Offensive content would include, but would not be limited to, sexual comments or images, racial slurs, gender-specific comments or any comments that would offend someone on the basis of his or her age, sexual orientation, religious or political beliefs, national origin, or disability.

**Business Record Retention Policy.**

E-mail messages are written business records and are subject to the Agency's rules and policies relating to retaining and deleting business records.

**Confidential Information.**

Avoid sending confidential information by email. Unless authorized to do so, the users are prohibited from using email to transmit confidential information to outside parties. Users may not access, send, receive, solicit, print, copy, or reply to confidential or proprietary information about the Agency, its employees, clients, and other business associates.

**Violations and Sanctions.**

If an employee is found to violate any of this email policy rules, the Agency could take disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

The actual penalty applied will depend on factors such as the seriousness of the breach, the employee's disciplinary record, and any other factors the Agency deems necessary to consider. If an employee witnesses email policy abuse by, he/she is required to report the incident immediately to Deborah VanderGaast, by phone at 563-889-2560 or email at [mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com](mailto:mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com).

**APPENDIX D:****SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The Agency knows that online social platforms, including blogs, wikis, message boards, video and photo sharing websites, and social networking services, are constantly transforming the way we interact. We also recognize the importance of the Internet in shaping the public view of our Agency. The Agency is committed to supporting your right to interact responsibly and knowledgeably on the Internet through blogging and interaction in social media. We want our members to share and learn from others in order to build a valuable online community.

The purpose of these guidelines is two-fold: First, the Agency has an aim to protect our interests, including, but not limited to, the privacy of our employees and confidentiality regarding our business purpose, plans, partners, users, and competitors. Second, these guidelines will help you make respectful and appropriate decisions about your work-related interactions with people on the Internet.

Your personal online activity is your business. However, any activity in or outside of work that affects your performance, the performance of others at the Agency, or the Agency's business interests are a proper focus for this Social Media Policy. You must always assume that your work-related social media activity is visible to the Agency as well as current and potential employees, clients, partners, prospects, and competitors. The Agency reserves the right to direct its members to avoid certain subjects and remove inappropriate comments and posts. Our internal policies remain in effect in our workplace.

**Guidelines for Discussing Little Steps Early Learning Academy on the Internet**

You are not authorized to speak on behalf of the Agency without express permission from the Director.

If you have permission to discuss the Agency and / or our current and potential business activities, employees, partners, clients, or competitors, please follow these guidelines:

- ***Identification:*** Identify yourself. Include your name, and when appropriate, state your role or title within the Agency.
- ***Disclaimer:*** Use a disclaimer that "the views you express on the particular website are yours alone and do not represent the views of the Agency."
- ***Proof:*** Support any statements made online with factual evidence.
- Also, let your manager know about the content you plan to publish. Your manager may want to visit the website to understand your point of view.

**Guidelines for Confidential and Proprietary Information**

You may not share information that is confidential and proprietary about the Agency or its clients. This includes, but is not limited to, Agency strategy, information about trademarks,

upcoming service changes, finances, number of clients, number of employees, and any other information that has not been publicly released by the Agency.

The list above is given as example only and does not cover the range of what the Agency considers confidential and proprietary. If you have any questions about whether information has been released publicly or any other concerns, please speak with your manager before releasing information that could potentially harm the Agency, or our current and potential business interests, employees, partners, and clients.

For additional information on proprietary information, please review the Employee Handbook and the contract you signed when you joined the Agency.

The Agency's logo and trademarks may not be used without explicit permission in writing from the Agency. This is to prevent the appearance that you speak for or officially represent the Agency.

It is fine to quote or retweet others, but you should not attempt to pass off someone else's words, photography, or other information as your own. All copyright, privacy, and other laws that apply offline apply online as well. Always give proper credit to credit your sources when posting a link or information gathered from another source.

### **Transparency and Disclosures**

If you have permission to publicly share what a client, partner, or other organization is doing, such as launching a new website or coming out with a new product, you must disclose your relationship to the other party.

Do not discuss an organization or product in social media in exchange for money. If you receive a product or service to review for free, you must disclose it in your post or review.

### **Respect and Privacy Rights**

- Use common sense.
- Follow the rules of the social media sites you use.
- Speak respectfully about the Agency and our current and potential employees , clients, partners, and competitors.
- Write knowledgeably, accurately, and with appropriate professionalism. Despite disclaimers, your Web interaction can result in members of the public forming opinions about the Agency and its employees, partners and business interests.
- Refrain from publishing anything that could reflect negatively on the Agency's reputation or otherwise embarrass the organization, including posts about drug or alcohol abuse, profanity, off-color or sexual humor, and other inappropriate conduct. Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not otherwise be acceptable in the Agency's workplace. Please also show respect for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

## Media

Media inquiries for information about our Agency and our current and potential services, employees, partners, clients, and competitors should be referred to the Director. This does not specifically include your opinions, writing, and interviews on topics aside from our Agency and our current and potential products, employees, partners, clients, and competitors.

## Your Legal Liability

The Agency complies with all federal and state laws that apply to our operations and activities. Since you are involved in the Agency's operations and activities, you are responsible for understanding and observing these policies. Note that the breach of privacy and confidentiality, use of copyrighted materials, unfounded or derogatory statements, or misrepresentation may be considered illegal and is not accepted by the Agency.

Each person at the Agency is personally responsible, and may be legally liable, for the content he or she publishes online. You can be sued for not disclosing your relationship to the Agency, or for purposely spreading false information. You can also be sued by Agency employees, competitors, and any individual or Agency that views your commentary, content, or images as defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous or creating a hostile work environment. In addition to any legal action, your activity can result in disciplinary action up to and including ***employment termination***.

If you have any questions, please ask the Director for guidance on compliance with the laws. slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not otherwise be acceptable in the Agency's workplace. Please also show respect for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory.

- Honor the privacy rights of our current staff, clients, and partners by seeking their permission before writing about or displaying internal Agency information that could be considered a breach of their privacy and confidentiality.
- Ensure that your social networking conduct is consistent with the all policies contained in the Agency's Employee Handbook.
- Respect the law, including those laws governing defamation, discrimination, harassment, and copyright and fair use.

**APPENDIX F: INTERNET POLICY****Purpose.**

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the proper use of the Agency's internet system and make its employees and users aware of what the Agency deems as acceptable and unacceptable use of its internet system. This policy also provides for sanctions in the event of a breach or violation of the policy terms hereunder.

**Applicability.**

This Policy applies to all users of Agency technology, including employees, contractors, vendors, partners, associates, and any other parties accessing or using the Agency's System through on-site or remote terminals.

**Disclaimer of liability for use of Internet.**

The Agency is not responsible for material viewed or downloaded by users from the Internet. The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that contains millions of pages of information. Users are cautioned that many of these pages include offensive, sexually explicit, and inappropriate material. In general, it is difficult to avoid at least some contact with this material while using the Internet. Even innocuous search requests may lead to sites with highly offensive content. In addition, having an e-mail address on the Internet may lead to receipt of unsolicited e-mail containing offensive content. Users accessing the Internet do so at their own risk.

**Duty not to waste computer resources.**

Employees must not deliberately perform acts that waste computer resources or unfairly monopolize resources to the exclusion of others. These acts include, but are not limited to, sending mass mailings or chain letters, spending excessive amounts of time on the Internet, playing games, engaging in online chat groups, printing multiple copies of documents, or otherwise creating unnecessary network traffic. Because audio, video and picture files require significant storage space, files of this or any other sort may not be downloaded unless they are business-related.

**No expectation of privacy.**

The computers and computer accounts given to employees are the exclusive property of the Agency. No individual should have any expectation of privacy in any communication over this System. The System is to be used solely for Agency-related business, and is not to be used for personal business or pleasure.

**Monitoring computer usage.**

The Agency reserves the right to monitor, intercept and/or review all data transmitted, received or downloaded over the System. Any individual who is given access to the System is hereby given notice that the Agency will exercise this right periodically, without prior notice and without the prior consent of the employee. The Agency's interests in monitoring and intercepting data include, but are not limited to: protection of Agency proprietary and classified data;

managing the use of the Agency's computer System; preventing the transmission or receipt of inappropriate materials by employees; and/or assisting the employee in the management of electronic data during periods of absence. No individual should interpret the use of password protection as creating a right or expectation of privacy. In order to protect everyone involved, no one can have a right or expectation of privacy with regards to the receipt, transmission or storage of data on the Agency's Internet System.

#### **Blocking of inappropriate content.**

Agency may use software to identify inappropriate or sexually explicit Internet sites. Such sites may be blocked from access by Agency networks. In the event you nonetheless encounter inappropriate or sexually explicit material while browsing on the Internet, immediately disconnect from the site, regardless of whether the site was subject to Agency blocking software.

#### **Prohibited activities.**

Material that is fraudulent, harassing, embarrassing, sexually explicit, profane, obscene, intimidating, defamatory, or otherwise unlawful, inappropriate, offensive (including offensive material concerning sex, race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, or other characteristic protected by law), or in violation of Agency's equal employment opportunity policy and its policies against sexual or other harassment may not be downloaded from the Internet or displayed or stored in Agency's computers. Employees encountering, witnessing or receiving this kind of material should immediately report the incident to their immediate supervisor and Deborah VanderGaast, by phone at 563-889-2560 or email at [mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com](mailto:mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com).

Agency's equal employment opportunity policy and its policies against sexual or other harassment apply fully to the use of the Internet and any violation of those policies is grounds for discipline up to and including discharge.

#### **Games and entertainment software.**

Employees may not use the Agency's Internet connection to download games or other entertainment software, including wallpaper and screen savers, or to play games over the Internet.

#### **Illegal copying.**

Employees may not illegally copy material protected under copyright law or make that material available to others for copying. You are responsible for complying with copyright law and applicable licenses that may apply to software, files, graphics, documents, messages, and other material you wish to download or copy. You may not agree to a license or download any material for which a registration fee is charged without first obtaining the express written permission of your immediate supervisor and the director.

#### **Accessing the Internet.**

To ensure security and to avoid the spread of viruses, employees accessing the Internet through a computer attached to Agency's network must do so through an approved Internet firewall.

Accessing the Internet directly by modem is strictly prohibited unless the computer you are using is not connected to the Agency's network.

**Virus detection.**

Files obtained from sources outside the Agency, including disks brought from home; files downloaded from the Internet, newsgroups, bulletin boards, or other online services; files attached to e-mail; and files provided by customers or vendors may contain dangerous computer viruses that may damage the Agency's computer network. Employees should never download files from the Internet, accept e-mail attachments from outsiders, or use disks from non-Agency sources, without first scanning the material with Agency-approved virus checking software. If you suspect that a virus has been introduced into the Agency's network, notify the Help Desk immediately.

**Sending unsolicited e-mail (spamming).**

Without the express permission of their supervisors, employees may not send unsolicited e-mail to persons with whom they do not have a prior relationship.

**Amendments and revisions.**

This policy may be amended or revised from time to time as the need arises. Users will be provided with copies of all amendments and revisions.

**Violations of this policy.**

Any employee who abuses the privilege of access to the Agency's Voicemail, E-mail or the Internet System will be subject to corrective action, up to and including termination. If necessary, the Agency also will advise law enforcement officials of any illegal conduct.

**Use of Internet.**

Use of the Internet via Agency's computer system constitutes consent by the user to all of the terms and conditions of this policy.

**Points of Contact.**

Questions concerning the use of the Internet System should be directed to Deborah VanderGaast, by phone at 563-889-2560 or email at [mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com](mailto:mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com). Questions concerning the improper use of the System should be directed to the employee's immediate supervisor and Deborah VanderGaast, by phone at 563-889-2560 or email at [mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com](mailto:mrs.v@tiptonadaptivedaycare.com).

**APPENDIX G:** CONFLICT RESOLUTION POLICY**PURPOSE**

To provide a quick, effective and consistently-applied method for a non-supervisory employee to present his/her concerns to management and have those concerns internally resolved.

**POLICY**

Problems, misunderstandings and frustrations may arise in the workplace. It is Tipton Adaptive Daycare's intent to be responsive to our employees and their concerns. Therefore, an employee who is confronted with a problem may use the procedure describe below to resolve or clarify his or her concerns.

It is our desire to create a work environment that promotes team work and cooperation between employees. Unless there is a safety concern or violation of laws or regulations, it is expected that employees will discuss concerns about work performance directly with the offending employee and offer guidance to help that employee improve their job performance before filing a formal complaint. Leadership and mentoring skills are considered in employee evaluations and promotions.

**PROCEDURE**

## 1. Step One.

- a. Employees should initially direct their concerns with their immediate supervisor. If the complaint involves the employee's supervisor, the employee should schedule an appointment with that supervisor to discuss the problem that gave rise to the complaint within five (5) working days of the date the incident occurred.
- b. The immediate supervisor should respond in writing to the complaint within five (5) days of the meeting held with the complainant employee.

## 2. Step Two.

- a. If the discussion with the immediate supervisor does not resolve the problem to the mutual satisfaction of the employee and the supervisor or if the supervisor does not respond to the complaint, the employee may submit a written complaint to the Agency director. The submission of the written complaint is due within five (5) working days of the response from the supervisor and must include:

1. The problem and the date when the incident occurred.
2. Suggestions on ways to resolve the problem
3. A copy of the immediate supervisor's written response or a summary of his or her verbal response and the date when the employee met with the immediate supervisor. If the supervisor provided no response, the complaint should state this.

- b. Upon receipt of the formal complaint, the director will schedule a meeting with all involved employees within five (5) working days to discuss the complaint. Both sides will be given an opportunity to discuss the complaint with the other party present. Within

approximately five (5) working days after the discussion, the director will issue a decision both in writing and orally to the employee filing the complaint.

3. Additional guidance.

- a. If an employee fails to appeal from one level to the next level of this procedure within the time limits listed above, the problem shall be considered settled on the basis of the last decision and the problem submitted by the employee shall not be subject to further consideration.
- b. Because problems are best resolved on an individual basis, the conflict resolution procedure may only be initiated by individual employees and not by groups of employees.
- c. Little Steps Early Learning Academy reserves the right to impose appropriate disciplinary action for any conduct it considers to be disruptive or inappropriate. The circumstances of each situation may differ and the level of disciplinary action may also vary, depending upon factors such as the nature of the offense, whether it is repeated, the employee's work record and the impact of the conduct on the organization.
- d. No one will be retaliated against for filing a complaint under this procedure. All complaints must be made in good faith.

**APPENDIX H:****MENTORING POLICY****PURPOSE**

Mentoring is a pastoral care activity that encourages team work, helps new employees become acclimated to our Agency, increases job satisfaction, and promotes and develops leadership skills. Little Steps Early Learning Academy recognizes that the recruitment, retention, professional development of key staff and the delivery of a satisfying workplace environment are critical success factors for the Agency.

**POLICY**

Little Steps Early Learning Academy's policy is that all staff should be assisted to establish a mentor relationship with another staff member (the mentor) who can assist their professional development and be a point of reference on professional or business related matters.

Mentoring is essentially a relationship between a more skilled or experienced person (mentor) and a lesser skilled or experienced person (mentee) where the agreed goal is for the lesser person to grow and develop specific competencies with the assistance of a coworker. Ideally the relationship should be a long term one.

A mentor fulfills a variety of roles such as:

- adviser
- role model
- facilitator
- ideas person
- confidante
- motivator
- critical friend

**PROCEDURE**

When a new employee begins orientation, the director will designate an experienced employee to act as the new employee's mentor, preferably from the same room that the new employee will be assigned to. During the first month of employment, this mentor will orient the employee to the room routine and answer questions help clarify policies, procedures and standards the new employee will be learning through orientation trainings. After the first month of employment, the mentoring relationship may continue on an informal basis, if so desired.

**Mentor Guidelines**

1. Don't be afraid to be a mentor. Many people underestimate the amount of knowledge that they have about child care or their organization, the contacts they have, and the avenues they can use to help someone else.
2. Remember that you don't have to fulfill every possible function of a mentor to be effective, but let your mentees know where you are willing to help and what kind of information or support you can give that you believe will be particularly helpful. Be clear

about whether you are willing to advise on personal issues, such as suggestions about how to balance family and career responsibilities.

3. Clarify expectations about how much time and guidance you are prepared to offer.
4. Mentors may have to take the initiative for the first couple of meetings, since mentees may feel intimidated. Hopefully, the mentee will assume more of the responsibility for initiating contact as he/she grows more comfortable. If you don't hear from him/her for an extended period of time, either call or e-mail him/her just to see how things are going.
5. Let mentees know if they are asking for too much or too little of your time.
6. Begin your mentoring with the idea that the relationship will work.
7. You need to feel comfortable with the person you are mentoring. Don't try to force a relationship. Not all relationships will thrive, including mentoring ones. If, after three months, the mentoring relationship has not begun to take hold, consider bringing the relationship respectfully to a close.
8. Be sure to give criticism, as well as praise, when warranted, but present it with specific suggestions for improvement. Do it in a private and non-threatening context. Giving criticism in the form of a question can be helpful, as in "Do you think the child's behavior would be better if you....?"
9. Don't try to turn your mentee into your clone. That person may have a different style from yours. In some instances, listening may be more important than giving advice. Most important: don't be judgmental.
10. If your mentee fails, remember that you cannot always ensure success, but you can help that person to begin again more intelligently. You can help a him/her see a failed experience as valuable by recapping the situation, reframing it appropriately, and honestly identifying where it went wrong. Mentors can often prevent failure from happening repeatedly.
11. Where appropriate, "talk up" your mentee's accomplishments to others in the Agency, as well as at trainings and other meetings. .
12. Be willing to provide support for people different from yourself. Avoid the temptation to assist only those with whom we feel the most comfortable, those who are the closest to being clones of ourselves. However, if you are from different backgrounds, be aware that some miscommunication may occur. This should not prevent a relationship from developing, but it does require an extra effort by both parties to communicate effectively.
13. Eventually the relationship will come to an end. The mentor should give careful thought to the appropriate time and method for ending the relationship. Many times a mentor will "keep the door open" in the event that the mentee wishes to make contact again.

### **Mentor Guidelines for New Employees**

1. After your initial contact with your mentor, it is expected that you will contact him/her.
2. Begin to ask for help understanding policies, documentation, etc.
3. Asking for things from people you don't know or who have more experience might feel intimidating. Remember that your mentor knows the parameters of the relationship and is expecting your questions.
4. Learn to evaluate the ideas and suggestions given to you by your mentor. Just because something felt right to another person does not necessarily mean that it is right for you.

On the other hand, it never hurts to try new things. Be open to new ways of looking at situations and doing things differently.

5. Seek out several mentors if it seems appropriate. Nobody is or can be perfect at everything. You will learn different things from different people.

## APPENDIX I:

## OCCUPATIONAL STRESS MANAGEMENT

**Objective:**

Little Steps Early Learning Academy is committed to providing a healthy and safe workplace for its employees. This commitment extends to all aspects of occupational health and safety including the effects of stress.

Little Steps Early Learning Academy will take every reasonable step required to reduce the risk of staff members developing work induced stress related disorders.

**Definitions:**

Stress is defined as the emotional and physical effects of stressors in an individual's work, home or social environment. An additional view is that stress is the reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them.

It arises when they worry they can't cope.

**Causes of harmful effects of stress:**

Little Steps Early Learning Academy is aware that there is no simple way of predicting what will cause harmful levels of stress. The levels of stress that are harmful differ for each individual according to their personality, experience, motivation and importantly the support they receive from managers, colleagues, family and friends. The ability to cope with high levels of stress will also be determined by the amount being experienced outside of work, resulting from such situations as bereavement, family sickness, and marital or other interpersonal problems.

Harmful stress is more likely to occur when there is/are:

- a) Pressures which are cumulative and or/prolonged.
- b) Demands placed upon the individual over which he/she feels he/she has lost control.
- c) Lack of competence or training.
- d) Demands which are conflicting, which lead to confusion.
- e) High levels of uncertainty about their work, their objectives or job prospects.
- f) Over demanding or too simplistic work schedules.
- g) There is prolonged conflict between individuals.
- h) Absence of leadership and or understanding from management.

These factors, combined with others such as health problems and pressures outside work, may lead to the reduction in the ability to cope with pressures at work.

**EFFECTS OF STRESS**

Excessive stress can manifest itself in physical, emotional or behavioral effects.

These effects are usually short-lived and cause no lasting harm. When the pressures recede, there is quick return to normal. Stress is not therefore the same as ill health.

It is only when pressures are intense and continue for some time that the effects of stress can become more sustained and far more damaging, leading to longer term psychological problems and physical ill health.

Long term stress has been associated with conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety and depression. These conditions may arise from other causes, and if a particular individual is suffering from one of these disorders, it will be for a medical practitioner to advise on the extent to which it is work related.

### **PROVISIONS TO PREVENT HARMFUL LEVELS OF STRESS**

1. Role/Job Description – responsibilities and tasks can be clarified and communicated to each staff member at Little Steps Early Learning Academy.
2. Staff members are not placed in roles for which they do not have the ability, experience and qualifications.
3. There is scope for varying working conditions and for people to influence the way their jobs are done – increasing their control, interest and sense of ownership.
4. Little Steps Early Learning Academy will monitor and if necessary, change physical conditions in the workplace, such as noise, heat, humidity, overcrowding, bad ergonomic design or other hazards that might increase stress levels for staff.
5. Leadership and Management. Tipton Adaptive Daycare endeavors to provide a consistent and caring style of management from the director and owner. Should there be periods of change, the levels of uncertainty suffered by individuals inevitably increase and efforts will be made to reduce these to the minimum by regular communication.
6. Little Steps Early Learning Academy will provide training in identifying causes of stress, managing stress and communication as needed.

### **2. SOME GUIDELINES FOR STAFF TO ALLEVIATE THE NEGATIVE SIDE OF STRESS**

1. Identify the problem/problems.
2. Try and think of solutions.
3. If you can change the situation, do so.
4. Raise the issue at a staff meeting, or talk to Director about concerns and for help and advice.
5. Let the director know if workload is too heavy or light.
6. Prioritize your workload. Deal with high priority tasks first.
7. Match your workload and pace to your abilities and training. Do not be afraid to ask for help.
8. Try not to express or experience anger in the workplace. If this emotion comes to the surface, take a deep breath, “stand back” in your mind’s eye (count to ten) before reacting. Devise your own personal strategy for this emotion.
9. Try to maintain a sense of humor and keep things in perspective. How bad is the event when compared with some world catastrophe?
10. Practice “self-care” and make time to do something for yourself. Make healthy life choices – get regular exercise, eat healthy food, get plenty of sleep, discover new hobbies.
11. Attend trainings offered by Little Steps Early Learning Academy - it will make your time at work easier and more enjoyable.

### 3. FURTHER ACTIONS

If the above guidelines have been met without resolution of the stress/stressor, then the following is recommended:

1. One to one discussion with the Director/ Owner - (This is subsequent to any discussions in 2.4)
- 2.4) The Director will be the first point of formal contact for staff member who is reporting stress in the workplace. The Agency owner is the first point of formal contact for the Director if he/she is reporting stress.
2. Investigation by Director of workplace stressor (within 3 days of 3.1)
3. Agency Director may make referrals to:
  - (a) Mediation
  - (b) Counseling
  - (c) Dispute process
  - (d) Medical advice
  - (e) Stress leave
  - (f) Attainment of a second medical opinion or report from other health professionals
  - (g) Any other such action as may be appropriate

**Source:**

Workers Health Centre [www.workershealth.com.au](http://www.workershealth.com.au)

## APPENDIX J:

## HARRASSMENT-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

## PURPOSE

The Agency is committed to providing an environment for our members, directors, officers, employees, volunteers and persons served by the Agency ("Covered Persons") that is comfortable, safe and free from harassment of any kind. Any type of harassment is a violation of this policy and may be illegal.

## DEFINITION

Harassment can take many forms. It may be, but is not limited to, the following: words, signs, jokes, pranks, intimidation, physical contact, or violence. Harassment does not have to be sexual in nature. Sexual harassment may include unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; or other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature when such conduct creates an intimidating environment or prevents an individual from effectively performing the duties of his or her position, or when such conduct is made a condition of employment or compensation, either implicitly or explicitly. It is not the intent of the behavior by the offender that determines if harassment has occurred but whether the behavior is welcome by the receiver.

## RESPONSIBILITY

A covered person is responsible for helping keep our work environment free of harassment, including the work environment of Agency's Clients with whom you have contact. If you become aware of an incident of harassment, whether by witnessing the incident or being told of it, you must report it to Deborah VanderGaast, Director. When the Agency becomes aware of harassment, it is obligated by law to take prompt and appropriate action, regardless of whether the victim wants the agency to do so.

## COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

Any Covered Person, who believes that he or she has suffered harassment in violation of the Harassment Policy, should take the following action:

## CONFIDENTIALITY

The Agency, including all persons to whom a violation of this Harassment Policy has been reported and persons who have become aware of a complaint, must maintain confidentiality, to the extent possible given the need to investigate. All complaints shall be considered confidential to the maximum extent possible.

## RETALIATION

The Agency, or any director, officer, or employee may not retaliate against any victim, or witness, who reports a violation of this Harassment Policy. Any person who believes that he or she has been retaliated against should consult the Organization's Whistle-Blowing Policy or a Agency official.

- If you are able to do so without conflict or danger, tell the harasser as clearly as possible that the behavior is unwelcome;
- If the behavior continues, advise your direct supervisor of your complaint. Clearly identify the behavior surrounding the complaint.

Addendum Added 01/2019

#### BREAK PERIODS

Lunch periods and breaks will vary. You are expected to cooperate with your Director in taking lunch periods and breaks at a time where there will be no interference with the children. Hourly employees will receive a minimum of one 30 minute unpaid meal break in a shift of 8 hours or longer. Supervisors may modify the break schedule to meet the requirements of licensing, at their discretion.

#### TIME OFF & ABSENSES

Our philosophy at Little Steps ELA on absenteeism is this: first, absenteeism is controllable. Second, with the exception of an emergency, there is no reason why all employees cannot be at work, on time, all the time. And finally, a few employees cause most of the lost time. Therefore, absence and tardy control is best achieved through individual focus aimed at the irresponsible, chronic employee who is absent and/or tardy. Remember that the first 90 days is a probationary period. There is no paid time off during this period. It is important to refrain from unnecessary absences during this time in order to remain employed past the probationary period.

The center cannot operate effectively or efficiently unless its employees can be depended upon to show up for work on a timely and consistent basis. Little Steps ELA depends upon each employee, and when one person is absent, a replacement must be found for the day. Thus, absenteeism has a particularly disruptive effect on both the Center and the children. Employees, who take excessive time off, or abuse the benefits of paid time off are subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

Employees requesting leave related to any medical condition concerning the employee or family members will be required to provide a physician's statement verifying the condition, the beginning and expected ending date of the requested leave, the need for the leave must be clearly stated, and the estimated time required prior to returning from leave must be outlined. This means a signed doctor's note must be provided on the day the employee returns to work.

Note: Foreseeable absences must be requested at least 10 working days in advance.

☐ Request for leave should be in advance for foreseeable events (at least 10 days) and as soon as possible for unforeseeable events. Requests for leave must be made in writing on the Employee Time-Off Request Form and submitted to your supervisor. Requests will be evaluated based on a number of factors, including anticipated work load requirements, staffing conditions, mandatory meetings and/or trainings, and hardship to Little Steps ELA operations during the proposed period

of absence. All requests must be approved. Requests that cannot be accommodated may be denied or deferred. Completing a request form does not guarantee time off.

☐ ++s due to illness, children's illness, or family emergencies must be called in AT LEAST three hours before an employee is scheduled to work. Opening staff are required to call in between the hours of 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. the day prior. Sooner for all shifts if at all possible!

☐ Employees are asked to limit their absences for illnesses to occasions that they are too ill to perform their duties or the illness is contagious.

☐ Employees with children needing care are encouraged to have alternative, back-up child care arrangements made for their children to help eliminate absences due to child care needs.

☐ Non-Director Administrative positions report both to the Center Director and Owner.

☐ Car trouble is not considered an emergency. Please arrange for a ride from a friend or family member if the problem arises.

☒ Employees are required to call their Director. If the Director is not available, the designated Assistant Director must be contacted. Please try both numbers until the phone is answered. The following are not acceptable and could be cause for immediate termination: ☒ Leaving a message on the voicemail at Little Steps ELA ☒ Calling or texting a co-worker ☒ Texting or leaving a voicemail for the Director (without talking to them directly on the phone)

It is your responsibility to notify your Director personally BEFORE your starting time. State the reason for your lateness and when you expect to arrive at work. Failure to call in personally to report absences or lateness is a violation of Center rules, and the absence or tardy will be considered unauthorized. Calls from friends or relatives on your behalf will not be accepted as an authorized notice of absence or lateness; you may be required to submit evidence verifying the reason for your absence or lateness. Failure to provide the requested documentation will result in discharge.

Staff are required to attend the regularly scheduled staff meetings and trainings. If you do not attend staff meetings and trainings it will be considered a no call/no show and appropriate sanctions will be taken. Agendas for these staff meetings and trainings will be kept on file for licensing to review. Staff will be paid for the time they spend at the mandatory staff trainings and meetings. Little Steps ELA expects each member of the staff to conduct themselves in a professional manner as a mature adult, respecting each member's contributions. Comments and complaints should be made to the Director. Remember that employment and family records and conduct at the center are confidential.

Please Note: All absences will be monitored. Excessive absences or patterns of absence that begin to occur, will be addressed by the Director and could be grounds for termination. It is important to understand that when we are short on staff, it is not only stressful on the other staff members, but affects the children as well. We have developed a policy that allows employees to take time off for legitimate reasons when necessary. This policy is also designed to address employees whose absences become excessive (10-12 points in a year). 5-6 absences in a 6 month period may result in a reduction of hours.

Tardy

½ Pt.

- ☐ Arriving after the start of your shift, up to a maximum of 30 minutes.

**Early Out**

½ Pt.

- ☐ Punching out or leaving work early, up to a maximum of 1 hour before the end of your shift, unless requested to do so by your supervisor.

**Extended Break**

½ Pt.

- ☐ Absences less than 4 hours, when you request an extended break after the start of your shift and return prior to the end of your shift.

**Absence**

1 Pt.

- ☐ Arriving 30 minutes or more after the start of your shift.

☒ Punching out or leaving early more than 1 hour before the end of your shift.

☒ Missing a full day of work for any reason.

☒ Consecutive days will count as one point per day unless verified by a doctor. Consecutive absences of up to 3 days will count as 1 point per day. Each day's absence verified by a doctor beyond 3 days will count as  $\frac{1}{2}$  point. Failure to provide doctor verification immediately upon return to work will result in a point for each day.

☒ Absences greater than 4 hours, where the employee leaves after the start of the shift and returns prior to the end of the shift.

Without a doubt, working in a child care environment can sometimes be very stressful. Please let the Director know if a situation arises where time is needed to regroup. Little Steps ELA strives to be sensitive to the needs of its employees and will try to make arrangements to accommodate an over-stressed staff member. Simply walking out and not returning from break leaves co-workers in a bind, but even more important, the children who are left are the ones who suffer.

Any employee, who chooses to walk off the job or simply does not return after leaving for break and/or lunch, will be reported to Child Care Licensing for NEGLECTFUL SUPERVISION. This action results in the employee's inability to work in child care again. Also, the employee's last paycheck will be mailed to the employee, less a deduction of \$50.00 for the non-return of the Employee Manual and Company Handbook fee. The employee may not return to Little Steps ELA premises. This also applies to employees who simply do not show up for work and do not call or give notice of their decision to quit. If any employee plans to terminate employment with Little Steps ELA, a two week written notice is required. If this procedure is followed and company manuals are returned, the employee's paycheck will be processed without the Employee Manual and Company Handbook fee.

#### TIMEKEEPING PROCEDURES

Accurate recording of time worked is the responsibility of every full-time, part-time, salary and non-salary employee. Two time clock systems are located at each center, one for Little Steps ELA, Inc. and one for Little Steps

ELA Center, Inc. Employees must record hours worked using the time keeping system identified for the agency they are employed. Federal and state laws require Little Steps ELA to keep accurate records of time worked in order to calculate pay and benefits. Your supervisor will determine the hourly schedule for each employee. Employees should be sure to review any changes noted on the schedule. Employees are to record the beginning and ending time of all work shifts, and any split shifts or other departures from your work station for personal reasons. Staff assigned to an alternative center for substitute coverage or meetings are expected to clock out prior to travel time and clock in upon arrival at their new work location. Staff are expected to take care of personal business, such as dropping their child off in their classroom for care, before and after they clock in or out.

All pay sheets and time sheets must be initialed by your Director for approval for pay prior to submitting to the payroll department. Assistant Directors may approve time sheets in the event the Director is absent from work the day time sheets are due to payroll. If you are requested to come to work early or work after your regular scheduled hours, notification of this event must be indicated on your time sheet. All employees must receive prior written approval from your supervisor to work time outside of their scheduled time. This constitutes clocking in more than four (4) minutes before or four (4) minutes after your scheduled time. This also includes clocking in and out for break time.

Staff will receive pay at their regular salary rate for the time spent in training at mandatory company meetings and trainings. Travel or meal time while attending these trainings will not be included in the hours identified as training time hours. Your supervisor will record your time in attendance on your time card.

All approved paid time off requests must be attached to your time sheet. Please comply with our procedure to ensure that you are paid accurately and on a timely basis.

Any failure to clock in or out properly will result in a delay in payment of wages due.

Note: Altering, falsifying, or tampering with time records, or recording time on another employee's time record may result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

#### **OVERTIME PAY**

From time to time, it may be necessary for you to perform overtime work in order to complete a job on time, unless otherwise provided in a valid and enforceable collective bargaining agreement. All overtime or time worked

outside of your scheduled hours (more than 4 minutes before or after scheduled hours) must be approved by your supervisor in writing prior to working these hours. Approval must be attached to your time sheet. When it is necessary to work overtime, you are expected to cooperate as a condition of your employment. All over time must be approved by your Director in advance. Approval must be attached to your weekly time sheet. Directors must receive prior approval from the owner to authorize any overtime pay for hours worked beyond forty (40) hours per week. When an Little Steps ELA employee is required to work in excess of forty (40) hours per Monday through Friday work week the following applicable overtime pay policies will apply:

Non-exempt employees are to be paid one and one-half times their "regular hourly rate" for all hours worked in excess of forty (40) hours in a work week.

Exempt employees are paid a salary commensurate with their job responsibilities regardless of their number of hours worked, and therefore are not eligible for overtime pay.

#### **ANNIVERSARY DATE**

The first day after your 90 day probationary period, becomes your "official" anniversary date. In the event you were hired on a temporary basis and converted to permanent status, your anniversary date will be the first day that you were paid by Little Steps ELA, Inc. or Little Steps ELA Center, Inc. as a regular permanent full- time, regular part-time employee or part-time employee. Your anniversary date is used to compute various conditions of employment and benefits described in this Employee Handbook, unless otherwise provided in a valid and enforceable collective bargaining agreement.

Employees who work less than twelve (12) months per year with the exclusion of medical or family emergency leaves, will have a new hire date and termination date each year based on their actual dates scheduled to work.

#### **MEDICAL & EMERGENCY LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

Unpaid Leave of Absence

Under emergency circumstances, for medical or personal, you may need to be temporarily released from the duties of your job with Little Steps ELA, Inc. or Little Steps ELA Center, Inc. It is the policy of Little Steps ELA to allow its eligible employees to apply for and be considered for certain specific emergency leaves of absence. Medical leaves may not last more than ninety (20) days.

Unless otherwise provided in a valid and enforceable collective bargaining agreement, time off for any reason during a working day will count first against your allotted paid time off. Thereafter, unless specifically exempted, any time off will be without pay.

All requests for emergency or medical leaves of absence shall be submitted in writing to your supervisor. Each request shall provide sufficient detail such as the reason for the leave, the expected duration of the leave, and the relationship of family members, if applicable.

Full-time and regular part-time employees who have completed their probationary period, are eligible for thirty (20) day personal emergency leave of absence. A request for a personal emergency leave will be evaluated on a number of factors, including anticipated operational and staffing requirements during the proposed time of absence. Pending approval, you should take available paid time off prior to the effective date of the leave of absence.

In the case where the initial 20 calendar days are insufficient, consideration may be given for an extension of 20 more days if your supervisor is informed in writing and according to staff needs.

Failure to return to work as scheduled from an approved leave of absence or to inform your immediate supervisor in writing of an acceptable reason for not returning as scheduled will be considered a voluntary resignation of employment. All leaves granted will have a termination date. If the supervisor makes the determination to rehire this individual, the standard company hiring procedures will apply. Prior time worked for the company is not cumulative with the employee new hire date.

Time on leave for either medical or emergency leave does not accrue towards seniority, pay raises and/or other benefits.

#### **JOB STATUS UPON RETURN FROM LEAVE**

Little Steps ELA, Inc. and Little Steps ELA Center, Inc. will hold your position for the time period of the granted leave. Employees returning from an absence due to medical leave will return to the same position. For leaves other than medical, you will be returned to your former position, if possible, or an equivalent one if otherwise qualified and one is available.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUEST**

Employee Name \_\_\_\_\_ ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Hire \_\_\_\_\_

I am requesting a ( ) medical ( ) emergency leave of absence beginning

\_\_\_\_\_ (exact date) to \_\_\_\_\_ (exact date)

or approximate date for medical leave.)

The reason for the leave is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Employee Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Action Taken \_\_\_\_\_

Director Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

( ) Medical ( ) Emergency

### **Teacher Assistant - Job Description \$11.00-14.00 per hour**

- Assist staff with both long and short range activities in accordance with curriculum objectives, developmentally appropriate practice and program philosophy.
- Maintain daily open communication with parents
- Maintain confidentiality
- Report any suspect abuse to supervisor
- Arrange a classroom environment in accordance to program goals and philosophy
- Maintain a safe and healthy environment
- Inspect and replace damaged or lost materials
- Attend Inservice and staff meetings
- Keep all appropriate records such as records, attendance and time sheets.
- Meet all applicable licensing regulations

### **Lead Teacher/ Director's Assistant Job Description \$13.00-25.00 per hour**

- Plan both long and short range activities in accordance with curriculum objectives, developmentally appropriate practice and program philosophy.
- Meet the emotional, social, physical and cognitive needs of each child
- Encourage assistants to contribute to curriculum planning
- Coordinate field trips
- Prepare monthly plan charts
- Complete bi-annual assessment of children's development
- Report progress of children to parents in bi-annual reports and through parent-teacher conferences
- Maintain daily open communication with parents

- Keep accident reports
- Maintain anecdotal records
- Maintain confidentiality
- Report any suspect abuse to supervisor
- Arrange a classroom environment in accordance to program goals and philosophy
- Maintain a safe and healthy environment
- Inspect and replace damaged or lost materials
- Attend inservice and staff meetings
- Supervise assistants, aides and volunteers in the classroom
- Keep all appropriate records such as records, attendance and time sheets.
- Meet all applicable licensing regulations

**Teacher Job Description \$12.00-15.00 per hour**

- Assist group supervisor with both long and short range activities in accordance with curriculum objectives, developmentally appropriate practice and program philosophy.
- Provide input for bi-annual assessment of children's development
- Maintain daily open communication with parents
- Keep accident reports
- Maintain anecdotal records
- Maintain confidentiality of all records
- Report any suspect abuse to supervisor
- Arrange a classroom environment in accordance to program goals and philosophy
- Maintain a safe and healthy environment
- Inspect and replace damaged or lost materials
- Attend in service and staff meetings
- Keep all appropriate records such as records, attendance and timesheets.
- Meet all applicable licensing regulations

### **DAYCARE DIRECTOR/ ASSISTANT DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION**

**\$41,000-100,000 PER YEAR**

A daycare director oversees the operation of a daycare facility, ensuring the little ones they're charged with caring for are given a safe, happy, and educational environment. Directors may work in nursery schools, daycare facilities, preschools, or other pre-kindergarten settings, but the main focus of their jobs essentially remains the same: making sure all wheels are turning at their centers. And since they're the go-to for any problem that may arise, they should be diligent task-

masters who can think quickly on their feet. Hours vary depending on the facility, but directors typically have a Monday-through-Friday workweek with most regular school and federal holidays off. Natural leaders, they're generally the highest authority at work, although they may report to an owner or district director.

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## DAYCARE DIRECTOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The type of organization daycare directors work for greatly determines the duties and responsibilities they can expect to undertake. That said, there are several core tasks common to all daycare directors, such as:

### **Develop Programming and Curriculum**

Daycare directors will often play a large role in the programming and educational curriculum offered by the facility. They work closely with the center's teachers and staff to create programs and learning plans that meet any state and federal requirements, as well as the expectations of the parents. A background in education or instructional design can be useful to the daycare director.

### **Supervise Staff**

Perhaps the most important task of the daycare director is staff management. This may include interviewing and hiring staff members, providing training, ensuring all background checks and fingerprint records have been processed, scheduling, filing timesheets, and observing staff with children. A daycare facility relies on excellent employees for its success, so the daycare director must recruit the top candidates and ensure they adhere to all protocols and requirements. In addition to childcare staff, directors may also hire janitors, kitchen staff, and any other personal needed.

### **Manage Daycare Facilities**

Maintaining safe and well-stocked facilities is a task that falls on all daycare directors. This means ensuring that required safety equipment is available and in working order, no hazards are present, the facility is kept clean and orderly, and any supplies and equipment needed are ordered regularly. They must also adhere to any local and federal regulations and allow regular state inspections of the facility.

### **Set and Maintain an Operational Budget**

Daycare directors are responsible for managing all aspects of their program's finances. This includes creating and maintaining a budget, setting up a system for bookkeeping and accounting, overseeing accounts payable and receivable, and applying for funding when applicable.

## **Attract Prospective Clients**

Despite the growing demand for childcare, there's a great deal of competition among daycare facilities. It's up to the daycare director to map out a marketing plan so locals are aware of their services. This may include setting up a website, maintaining social media accounts, and buying local ads. In addition to getting the word out there, directors are tasked with giving tours to prospective families and staying active through community outreach.

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## **DAYCARE DIRECTOR SKILLS AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Daycare Directors should have a passion for working with children as well as strong leadership skills. Licensing, certificates, and childhood education credits required for this position will vary by state, but a bachelor's degree along with two years of experience are typically sought out. Employers also prefer candidates who possess the following abilities:

- **Business management** – daycare directors run all aspects of their facilities, from setting up security systems to overseeing the program's budget. Along with being organized and detail-oriented, they must also have working knowledge of state and federal daycare laws and requirements
- **Classroom experience** – since they will be hiring childcare staff, daycare directors know how to handle a room full of squirmy children and are well versed in tracking childhood development, establishing classroom structure, and creating curriculum
- **First aid** – daycare directors must have knowledge of safety regulations regarding children and stay up-to-date on first aid protocol for the age ranges at the facility
- **Managing people** – it's the job of the daycare director to keep staff motivated, hire and train new teachers and support staff, and resolve conflicts in the workplace
- **Communication skills** – daycare directors are the face of their centers, so they must possess excellent communication skills and feel confident giving tours to prospective parents, writing newsletters, and running staff meetings and retreats. Bilingual abilities may be required at some programs

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**DAYCARE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

A bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a similar field is required in most states for daycare director positions, though educational requirements do vary by state. Coursework and experience in childhood development, teaching, and tracking children's progress is preferred by most employers. Required credentials and licensure also varies by state, but daycare directors will most likely need to pass background checks, provide immunization records, and have up-to-date CDA credentials and certifications in CPR and first aid.

**ALL EMPLOYEE HOURLY WAGES AND SALARY WILL BE BASED ON POSITION, EDUCATION, AND EXPERIENCE, AS WELL AS OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS.**

**RAISES**

Daycare employees will be considered for raises upon completion of the 90-day probationary period. Please note that all raises will be based on performance and are not automatic. Performance evaluations will be performed annually on the employees anniversary date (the date

regular employment began) and the employee will be considered for a raise at this time. There will be 4 Appraisal ratings

- 1- Unacceptable Performance: 0.00% increase permitted
- 2- Partially Meets/Needs Improvement: 0.00% to 2.00% Increase Permitted
- 3- Meets Expectations: 2.25%-3.00% Increase Permitted
- 4- Far Exceeds Expectations 3.50% to 5.00% Increase Permitted

## BONUSES

An annual bonus will also be offered to employees. Each year we have several inspections. Bonuses will be determined by the results of all inspections. Each inspection from childcare licensing and SNHD that is passed without demerits will result in a annual bonus of \$75-\$1000 for each employee. Please note that the employer will notify employees immediately if the annual bonus is not possible for the year due to the company's financial state.

**Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form**

I have received and read my copy of the Little Steps Early Learning Academy Employee Handbook. I understand that this handbook is intended as a guide for Human Resources policies, benefits, and general information, and that these guidelines are not to be construed as an employment contract.

I understand that Little Steps Early Learning Academy management reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, change, or terminate any or all such Human Resources policies and benefit plans, in whole or in part, at any time, with or without notice.

I also understand that employment by Little Steps Early Learning Academy is one of employment at will and is terminable at the will of either Little Steps Early Learning Academy, or myself at any time, and that no representative of the Company other than the President or CEO has any authority to make any contrary agreement.

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Employee Name (Print)

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Employee Signature

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Date

## SAFE SLEEP POLICY FOR INFANTS

All child care providers at Little Steps ELA will follow safe sleep recommendations for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), other sleep-related infant death, and the spread of contagious diseases: 1. Infants will always be put to sleep on their backs until 1 year of age. 2. Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a fitted crib sheet, in a crib that meets the Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards. 3. No toys, mobiles, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, positioning devices or extra bedding will be in the crib or draped over the side of the crib. 4. Sleeping areas will be ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Infants will not be dressed in more than one extra layer than an adult. 5. If additional warmth is needed, a one-piece blanket sleeper or sleep sack may be used. 6. The infant's head will remain uncovered for sleep. Bibs and hoods will be removed. 7. Infants will be actively observed by sight and sound. 8. Infants will not be allowed to sleep on a sofa/ couch, chair cushion, bed, pillow, or in a car seat, stroller, swing or bouncy chair. If an infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crib, the infant will be moved to a crib right away. 9. An infant who arrives asleep in a car seat will be moved to a crib. 10. Infants will not share cribs, and cribs will be spaced 3 feet apart. 11. Infants may be offered a pacifier for sleep, if provided by the parent. 12. Pacifiers will not be attached by a string to the infant's clothing and will not be reinserted if they fall out after the infant is asleep. 13. When able to roll back and forth from back to front, the infant will be put to sleep on his back and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position.

### ADDENDUM/CHANGES 06/28/2024

ATTACHED TO THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, YOU WILL FIND A LIST OF CRITICAL ISSUES. THESE ARE ITEMS THAT DECREASE THE QUALITY OF OUR PROGRAM AND ARE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. VIOLATIONS OF THESE ITEMS MAY LEAD TO IMMEDIATE TERMINATION

STAFF WILL BE GIVEN A WEEK OFF FOR A MENTAL HEALTH BREAK EACH YEAR. THESE DATES WILL USUALLY OCCUR IN JULY. THE DATES WILL BE PROVIDED IN ADVANCE. THERE HAS NOT BEEN AN OFFICAL START DATE FOR THIS. WE MUST GIVE ADVANCE NOTIFICATION TO PARENTS AND BE SURE THAT THIS IS DONE IN A WAY THAT WE DO NOT LOOSE OUR FAMILIES.

HOLIDAYS: STAFF WILL BE PAID FOR THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS: THANKSGIVING DAY, CHRISTMAS DAY, CHRISTMAS EVE, AND NEW YEARS DAY ( SHOULD THESE HOLIDAYS FALL ON YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED SHIFT. STAFF MUST BE PRESENT AT WORK THE DAY THEY ARE SCHEDULED PROCEEDING THE HOLIDAY AND THE DAY FOLLOWING THE HOLIDAY

STAFF IS REQUIRED TO STAY IN THEIR CLASSROOMS DURING THEIR SHIFT AND MUST PROVIDED RELIEF BY A SUPERVISOR OR A FLOATER ASSIGNED BY A SUPERVISOR. TWO TEACHERS MUST BE IN CLASSROOMS WITH 4 OR MORE CHILDREN.

STAFF WILL ACCRUE 1 POINT FOR ANY WRITEUPS THEY RECEIVE FOR VIOLATING COMPANY POLICIES. THESE WILL BE DOCUMENTED ALONG WITH ATTENDANCE. THE POINT SYSTEM IN THE ORIGINAL HANDBOOK REMAINS THE SAME.

STAFF MUST BE IN UNIFORM THIS INCLUDES BLACK OR GREY SCRUBS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FRIDAYS WHEN A DAYCARE THEMED SHORT IS ACCEPTABLE ALONG WITH JEANS. STAFF MUST ALSO HAVE THEIR BADGES.

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Early Head Start  
Critical Issues Criteria - Addendum A**



Critical Issues refer to the primary policy or program concerns that define the most vital situations and risks faced by a center/home. Issues identified through ongoing monitoring (unannounced, scheduled, investigation, etc.) are used to actively improve teaching practices, child assessments, family outcomes, health and safety practices, and other comprehensive services, to ensure the center/Family Child Care is delivering quality services.

SCF Child Care Partner/Family Child Care Provider, along with their team, will design and implement a “Quality Improvement Plan” that adheres to and demonstrates progress toward actively correcting situations and eliminating risks. Compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, The Head Start Act, and state and local licensing agencies is crucial in determining program improvements. Failure to comply with the standards may result in non-negotiable recommendations, deductions, suspension, and/or termination.

Critical Issues are measured based on three criteria:

**Priority Area ONE, Priority Area TWO, and Imminent Danger**

- **Priority Area ONE - Concern**  
situations where the agency's model is not followed, leading to reduced program quality.
- **Priority Area TWO - Critical**  
situations that compromise program safety, sanitation, and quality. Any situation that leads to an immediate deficiency or requirement for re-competition from OHS. Priority Area TWO situations may not cause immediate harm, but they are a potential liability.
- **Priority Area THREE - Imminent Danger**  
situations where, without immediate action, children, parents, staff, or property could suffer serious harm. These situations are a potential liability to EHS.

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*SCF Child Care Partner/Family Child Care Designee  
Print and Sign*

*Date*

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Critical Issues Criteria - Addendum A**



**Priority AREA THREE - IMMINENT DANGER**

situations where, without immediate action, children, parents, staff, or property could suffer serious harm. These situations are a potential liability.

<b>Immediate Action Required!</b>	<b>Timeline for Corrections/ Notifications:</b>	<b>IMMEDIATELY - Up to 24 HOURS</b>
<b>Accountability:</b>	Event and safety action taken to be documented in the Quality Improvement Plan, with emails and or texts as well as calls to SCF Child Care Partnership Manager immediately up to 24 hours.	
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Failure to respond or causing an imminent danger as well as any unsupervised child can lead to disciplinary action and/or immediate recommendation for termination.	

***Examples include but not limited to:***

Failure to acquire or to renew the following upon hire and ongoing to include but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• criminal background check/ fingerprints</li> <li>• Tuberculosis Testing (TB Test),</li> <li>• I-9 &amp; corresponding documents,</li> <li>• Staff Immunizations, and Physicals</li> <li>• Child Abuse and Neglect State Registry Check</li> </ul>	Persons inside/outside the building who have weapons or who threaten physical harm (includes threats over the phone or through technology).	
Withholding food as a form of punishment;	Any 911 call (including child abuse, lockdowns, or medical emergencies).	CCL license, health, and fire permits, and CACFP revocation or expiration, etc.
Failure to ensure that the standards of conduct are abided by for all team members	Aggressive physical and/or verbal behavior by an adult with a child (hitting, shaking, grabbing, threatening, etc.).	Any unsupervised child (child not within line of sight of responsible adult).
Failure to conduct child counts as required during the day;	Failure to sign Children/teacher in or out of the classroom;	Child left alone with a volunteer;
Parent or staff under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription and over the counter medications that affect the person's ability to be safe	Unauthorized staff departure from class that would put the classroom out of ratio, including stepping all the way in a storage closet or bathroom	Immediate dangers (unlocked chemicals, uncovered electric outlets, no soft surfacing, dangerous objects, standing water, sharp tools or utensils, disposable gloves, balloons or plastic bags) including those identified by CCL.
Only one adult in the center when children are in care	Failure to meet Head Start or CCL adult/child ratios	Failure to notify parents/guardian of injury or accident

Child released to an unauthorized or unsafe person	Injuries that require immediate medical or dental treatment by a doctor (child or employee or volunteer or parent)	Unsecured broken equipment or materials that may cause injury
Failure to maintain a first aid kit in each classroom that is easily accessible in the case of an emergency;	Falsifying documents including but not limited to payroll, reimbursement, attendance, CACFP etc.	Failure to maintain proper heating/cooling and ventilations systems.
Dangerous animals, insects, or reptiles in the immediate area	Lack of basic services (water, electricity, cooling or heating, sewer)	Failure to maintain the required number of qualified team members.
Improperly secured building or gates when children are present including not having the proper precautions in place so that children cannot open doors or gates without staff being notified.	Failure to meet the daily nutritional needs of each child. Sweets or foods with little nutritional value must not be served to children except as an addition to the meals or snacks served	Failure to provide at least one meal and two snacks for any child in care for less than 10 hours a day or at least two meals and two snacks or one meal and three snacks for any child in care for more than 10 hours.
Failure to contact families within one hour of typical start time when there is an absence	Staff encouraging families to falsify eligibility, enrollment, attendance, etc. documentation/information	

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Early Head Start  
Critical Issues Criteria - Addendum A**



**Priority Area One - *Concern***

situations occur when the agency's model is not being followed and program quality is diminished.

**Timeline for Corrections/Notifications: Up to 10 Days**

<b>Accountability:</b>	SCF will conduct on-going monitoring to ensure compliance and quality services are being maintained at all times. Should a situation be observed at any time by any SCF staff member, they are responsible to share their concerns with the center director/FCC provider. Director/FCC Provider or designated person is required to document the event and safety action taken in the Quality Improvement Plan.
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Repeated and/or a pattern of Priority 1 situations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination.

**Examples include but not limited to:**

Failure to update SCF on new hires, separations (voluntary and involuntary)	Failure to preform annual staff performance appraisals/evaluations.	Failure to have new hire orientation and documentation
Failure to implement and maintain Creative Curriculum and its components including but not limited to: Group Planning Forms, Individual School Readiness Learning Plans, Curriculum Corners and the use of the Mighty Minutes, Hello Goodbyes, and Intentional Teaching cards		Failure to conduct enrolled children's initial home visit and or meet and greet.
Failure to ensure that all staff have completed TSG Coursework and Interrater Reliability Certification Process	Failure to conduct or submit child screenings and Assessments in the required time frame.	Failure to maintain children's individual binders in the classroom including all necessary components.
Failure to allow for Intensive Coaching opportunities for staff and or failure to allow staff time/space for intensive coaching.	Failure to ensure teachers are entering quality, objective, anecdotal records for each child in their classroom into the TSG system, ensuring that each objective and dimension has at least one observation.	Failure to ensure teachers finalize their children in the TSG system at the end of every checkpoint.
Failure to submit and or record any accidents, incidents or illness to SCF and or parent.	Failure to conduct monthly Family Connections (parent trainings) in collaboration with SCF Family Advocate.	Failure to ensure Evacuation Suitcase and Emergency Binder are accessible and all required components are there and not expired.
Failure to ensure teachers are providing positive teacher child interactions.	Failure to maintain qualified teacher schedules that considers the continuity of care of all children.	Failure to be inclusive to the needs of all children enrolled.

## **Priority Area TWO *Critical***

situations that compromise program safety, sanitation, and/or quality. Any situation that leads to an immediate deficiency or requirement for re-competition from OHS. Priority Area Two situations may not cause immediate harm, but they are a potential liability.

### **Timeline for Corrections/Notifications: *Up to 5 Days***

<b>Accountability:</b>	Staff members observing Priority Area TWO situations are to intervene to the extent that they are able or knowledgeable. These situations are to be brought to the attention of the center director so that person can take action, depending on the urgency of the situation.
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Event and safety action taken to be documented in the Quality Improvement Plan, with emails and or texts as well as calls to SCF Child Care Partnership Manager and corrective actions to be completed within 5 days.
	Priority Area TWO situations are treated as staff development opportunities. Notes are kept assisting with performance planning.
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Repeated and/or a pattern of Priority 2 situations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination.

### **Examples include but not limited to:**

Failure to maintain staff with SCF	Failure to Schedule opportunities to learn about mental health, wellness, and health education for children, families, and staff	Failure to maintain the minimum clock hours of professional development per year according to HSPPS and the Nevada Registry
Failure to document daily meal counts at point of service.	Failure to adhere to EHS center hours.	Failure to recruit parents for Policy Council and encourage attendance.
Verbal behavior by an adult with a child that is demeaning, shaming, or punishing and/or physical interaction that is excessive for the situation. Prohibits the use of food as punishment or reward, isolation of child, or denial of basic needs		
Failure to follow proper food handling	Escalating conflict between adults.	Failure to follow confidentiality rules.
Failure to update and keep current child records	Failure to follow sanitizing/disinfecting, toileting, and tooth brushing procedures.	Failure to follow proper diapering procedures.
Failure to follow proper handwashing procedure.	Failure to follow procedures for identification, notification, and reporting of communicable/infectious health conditions.	Failure to follow SNHD and CCL procedures in medication administration and storage.
Unsafe floors, e.g., food, water or other liquid spills, objects, or uneven surfaces.	Minor Injuries that do not require or dental treatment by medical a doctor dentist (child or parent).	Significant health hazards relating to food service, as required in the most current <i>SNHD Regulations Governing the Sanitation of Food Establishments</i>

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Critical Issues Criteria - Addendum A**



Wearing shoes, jewelry, or dress that may place a person at risk for personal injury when carrying out job responsibilities, ie large hoop earrings, long fingernails, etc.	Failure to promptly evaluate the cause of any given accident or injury and make corrective actions as needed to prevent reoccurrence of the accident or injury in question.	Language or acts by staff that are by nature or intent discriminatory or stereotyping based on sex or sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, culture, disability, or age.
Every attempt must be made to keep attendance above 85%. Obvious neglect in this area may reduce the number of children/months being for which partner is reimbursed. Attendance must be recorded daily in the ChildPlus system.		

**These lists do not cover all possible examples, and the priority area will be determined by the seriousness of the action.**

**The use of suspension of an Early Head Start child due to their behavior is severely limited and the use of expulsion is PROHIBITED. HSPPS 1302.17**

A temporary suspension must be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications.

Before a program determines whether a temporary suspension is necessary, a program must engage with a mental health consultant, collaborate with the parents, and utilize appropriate community resources – such as behavior coaches, psychologists, other appropriate specialists, or other resources – as needed, to determine no other reasonable option is appropriate.

If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, a program must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by:

- (i) Continuing to engage with the parents and a mental health consultant and continuing to utilize appropriate community resources.
- (ii) Developing a written plan to document the action and support needed.
- (iii) Providing services that include home visits; and,
- (iv) Determining whether a referral to a local agency responsible for implementing IDEA is appropriate.

When a child exhibits persistent and serious challenging behaviors, a program must explore all possible steps and document all steps taken to address such problems and facilitate the child's safe participation in the program. Such steps must include, at a minimum, engaging a mental health consultant, considering the appropriateness of providing appropriate services and supports

If the child has an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP), the program must consult with the agency responsible for the IFSP or IEP to ensure the child receives the needed support services; or,

- (ii) If the child does not have an IFSP or IEP, the program must collaborate, with parental consent, with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to determine the child's eligibility for services.

If, after a program has explored all possible steps and documented all steps, a program, in consultation with the parents, the child's teacher, the agency responsible for implementing IDEA (if applicable), and the mental health consultant, determines that the child's continued enrollment presents a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children and determines the program is not the most appropriate placement for the child, the program must work with such entities to directly facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.

## SAFE SLEEP POLICY FOR INFANTS

All child care providers at Little Steps ELA will follow safe sleep recommendations for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), other sleep-related infant death, and the spread of contagious diseases: 1. Infants will always be put to sleep on their backs until 1 year of age. 2. Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a fitted crib sheet, in a crib that meets the Consumer Product Safety Commission safety standards. 3. No toys, mobiles, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, positioning devices or extra bedding will be in the crib or draped over the side of the crib. 4. Sleeping areas will be ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult. Infants will not be dressed in more than one extra layer than an adult. 5. If additional warmth is needed, a one-piece blanket sleeper or sleep sack may be used. 6. The infant's head will remain uncovered for sleep. Bibs and hoods will be removed. 7. Infants will be actively observed by sight and sound. 8. Infants will not be allowed to sleep on a sofa/ couch, chair cushion, bed, pillow, or in a car seat, stroller, swing or bouncy chair. If an infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crib, the infant will be moved to a crib right away. 9. An infant who arrives asleep in a car seat will be moved to a crib. 10. Infants will not share cribs, and cribs will be spaced 3 feet apart. 11. Infants may be offered a pacifier for sleep, if provided by the parent. 12. Pacifiers will not be attached by a string to the infant's clothing and will not be reinserted if they fall out after the infant is asleep. 13. When able to roll back and forth from back to front, the infant will be put to sleep on his back and allowed to assume a preferred sleep position.

### ADDENDUM/CHANGES 06/28/2024

ATTACHED TO THIS EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK, YOU WILL FIND A LIST OF CRITICAL ISSUES. THESE ARE ITEMS THAT DECREASE THE QUALITY OF OUR PROGRAM AND ARE TO BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY. VIOLATIONS OF THESE ITEMS MAY LEAD TO IMMEDIATE TERMINATION

STAFF WILL BE GIVEN A WEEK OFF FOR A MENTAL HEALTH BREAK EACH YEAR. THESE DATES WILL USUALLY OCCUR IN JULY. THE DATES WILL BE PROVIDED IN ADVANCE ( This program is not yet active and staff will be notified when it is implemented)

HOLIDAYS: STAFF WILL BE PAID FOR THE FOLLOWING HOLIDAYS: THANKSGIVING DAY, CHRISTMAS DAY, CHRISTMAS EVE, AND NEW YEARS DAY ( SHOULD THESE HOLIDAYS FALL ON YOUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED SHIFT. STAFF MUST BE PRESENT AT WORK THE DAY THEY ARE SCHEDULED PROCEEDING THE HOLIDAY AND THE DAY FOLLOWING THE HOLIDAY

STAFF IS REQUIRED TO STAY IN THEIR CLASSROOMS DURING THEIR SHIFT AND MUST PROVIDED RELIEF BY A SUPERVISOR OR A FLOATER ASSIGNED BY A SUPERVISOR. TWO TEACHERS MUST BE IN CLASSROOMS WITH 4 OR MORE CHILDREN.

STAFF WILL ACCRUE 1 POINT FOR ANY WRITEUPS THEY RECEIVE FOR VIOLATING COMPANY POLICIES. THESE WILL BE DOCUMENTED ALONG WITH ATTENDANCE. THE POINT SYSTEM IN THE ORIGINAL HANDBOOK REMAINS THE SAME.

STAFF MUST BE IN UNIFORM THIS INCLUDES BLACK OR GREY SCRUBS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FRIDAYS WHEN A DAYCARE THEMED SHIRT IS ACCEPTABLE ALONG WITH JEANS. STAFF MUST ALSO HAVE THEIR BADGES.

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Critical Issues refer to the primary policy or program concerns that define the most vital situations and risks faced by a center/home. Issues identified through ongoing monitoring (unannounced, scheduled, investigation, etc.) are used to actively improve teaching practices, child assessments, family outcomes, health and safety practices, and other comprehensive services, to ensure the center/Family Child Care is delivering quality services.

SCF Child Care Partner/Family Child Care Provider, along with their team, will design and implement a “Quality Improvement Plan” that adheres to and demonstrates progress toward actively correcting situations and eliminating risks. Compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards, The Head Start Act, and state and local licensing agencies is crucial in determining program improvements. Failure to comply with the standards may result in non-negotiable recommendations, deductions, suspension, and/or termination.

Critical Issues are measured based on three criteria:

**Priority Area ONE, Priority Area TWO, and Imminent Danger**

- **Priority Area ONE - Concern**  
situations where the agency's model is not followed, leading to reduced program quality.
- **Priority Area TWO - Critical**  
situations that compromise program safety, sanitation, and quality. Any situation that leads to an immediate deficiency or requirement for re-competition from OHS. Priority Area TWO situations may not cause immediate harm, but they are a potential liability.
- **Priority Area THREE - Imminent Danger**  
situations where, without immediate action, children, parents, staff, or property could suffer serious harm. These situations are a potential liability to EHS.

---

*SCF Child Care Partner/Family Child Care Designee  
Print and Sign*

*Date*

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**Priority AREA THREE - IMMINENT DANGER**

situations where, without immediate action, children, parents, staff, or property could suffer serious harm. These situations are a potential liability.

<b>Immediate Action Required!</b>	<b>Timeline for Corrections/ Notifications:</b>	<b>IMMEDIATELY - Up to 24 HOURS</b>
<b>Accountability:</b>	Event and safety action taken to be documented in the Quality Improvement Plan, with emails and or texts as well as calls to SCF Child Care Partnership Manager immediately up to 24 hours.	
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Failure to respond or causing an imminent danger as well as any unsupervised child can lead to disciplinary action and/or immediate recommendation for termination.	

***Examples include but not limited to:***

Failure to acquire or to renew the following upon hire and ongoing to include but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• criminal background check/ fingerprints</li> <li>• Tuberculosis Testing (TB Test),</li> <li>• I-9 &amp; corresponding documents,</li> <li>• Staff Immunizations, and Physicals</li> <li>• Child Abuse and Neglect State Registry Check</li> </ul>	Persons inside/outside the building who have weapons or who threaten physical harm (includes threats over the phone or through technology).	
Withholding food as a form of punishment;	Any 911 call (including child abuse, lockdowns, or medical emergencies).	CCL license, health, and fire permits, and CACFP revocation or expiration, etc.
Failure to ensure that the standards of conduct are abided by for all team members	Aggressive physical and/or verbal behavior by an adult with a child (hitting, shaking, grabbing, threatening, etc.).	Any unsupervised child (child not within line of sight of responsible adult).
Failure to conduct child counts as required during the day;	Failure to sign Children/teacher in or out of the classroom;	Child left alone with a volunteer;
Parent or staff under the influence of alcohol or drugs, including prescription and over the counter medications that affect the person's ability to be safe	Unauthorized staff departure from class that would put the classroom out of ratio, including stepping all the way in a storage closet or bathroom	Immediate dangers (unlocked chemicals, uncovered electric outlets, no soft surfacing, dangerous objects, standing water, sharp tools or utensils, disposable gloves, balloons or plastic bags) including those identified by CCL.
Only one adult in the center when children are in care	Failure to meet Head Start or CCL adult/child ratios	Failure to notify parents/guardian of injury or accident

Child released to an unauthorized or unsafe person	Injuries that require immediate medical or dental treatment by a doctor (child or employee or volunteer or parent)	Unsecured broken equipment or materials that may cause injury
Failure to maintain a first aid kit in each classroom that is easily accessible in the case of an emergency;	Falsifying documents including but not limited to payroll, reimbursement, attendance, CACFP etc.	Failure to maintain proper heating/cooling and ventilations systems.
Dangerous animals, insects, or reptiles in the immediate area	Lack of basic services (water, electricity, cooling or heating, sewer)	Failure to maintain the required number of qualified team members.
Improperly secured building or gates when children are present including not having the proper precautions in place so that children cannot open doors or gates without staff being notified.	Failure to meet the daily nutritional needs of each child. Sweets or foods with little nutritional value must not be served to children except as an addition to the meals or snacks served	Failure to provide at least one meal and two snacks for any child in care for less than 10 hours a day or at least two meals and two snacks or one meal and three snacks for any child in care for more than 10 hours.
Failure to contact families within one hour of typical start time when there is an absence	Staff encouraging families to falsify eligibility, enrollment, attendance, etc. documentation/information	

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Early Head Start  
Critical Issues Criteria - Addendum A**



## **Priority Area One - Concern**

situations occur when the agency's model is not being followed and program quality is diminished.

**Timeline for Corrections/Notifications: Up to 10 Days**

<b>Accountability:</b>	SCF will conduct on-going monitoring to ensure compliance and quality services are being maintained at all times. Should a situation be observed at any time by any SCF staff member, they are responsible to share their concerns with the center director/FCC provider. Director/FCC Provider or designated person is required to document the event and safety action taken in the Quality Improvement Plan.
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Repeated and/or a pattern of Priority 1 situations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination.

**Examples include but not limited to:**

Failure to update SCF on new hires, separations (voluntary and involuntary)	Failure to preform annual staff performance appraisals/evaluations.	Failure to have new hire orientation and documentation
Failure to implement and maintain Creative Curriculum and its components including but not limited to: Group Planning Forms, Individual School Readiness Learning Plans, Curriculum Corners and the use of the Mighty Minutes, Hello Goodbyes, and Intentional Teaching cards		Failure to conduct enrolled children's initial home visit and or meet and greet.
Failure to ensure that all staff have completed TSG Coursework and Interrater Reliability Certification Process	Failure to conduct or submit child screenings and Assessments in the required time frame.	Failure to maintain children's individual binders in the classroom including all necessary components.
Failure to allow for Intensive Coaching opportunities for staff and or failure to allow staff time/space for intensive coaching.	Failure to ensure teachers are entering quality, objective, anecdotal records for each child in their classroom into the TSG system, ensuring that each objective and dimension has at least one observation.	Failure to ensure teachers finalize their children in the TSG system at the end of every checkpoint.
Failure to submit and or record any accidents, incidents or illness to SCF and or parent.	Failure to conduct monthly Family Connections (parent trainings) in collaboration with SCF Family Advocate.	Failure to ensure Evacuation Suitcase and Emergency Binder are accessible and all required components are there and not expired.
Failure to ensure teachers are providing positive teacher child interactions.	Failure to maintain qualified teacher schedules that considers the continuity of care of all children.	Failure to be inclusive to the needs of all children enrolled.

## **Priority Area TWO *Critical***

situations that compromise program safety, sanitation, and/or quality. Any situation that leads to an immediate deficiency or requirement for re-competition from OHS. Priority Area Two situations may not cause immediate harm, but they are a potential liability.

### **Timeline for Corrections/Notifications: *Up to 5 Days***

<b>Accountability:</b>	Staff members observing Priority Area TWO situations are to intervene to the extent that they are able or knowledgeable. These situations are to be brought to the attention of the center director so that person can take action, depending on the urgency of the situation.
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Event and safety action taken to be documented in the Quality Improvement Plan, with emails and or texts as well as calls to SCF Child Care Partnership Manager and corrective actions to be completed within 5 days.
	Priority Area TWO situations are treated as staff development opportunities. Notes are kept assisting with performance planning.
<b>Failure to Comply:</b>	Repeated and/or a pattern of Priority 2 situations can result in disciplinary action, up to and including a recommendation for termination.

### **Examples include but not limited to:**

Failure to maintain staff with SCF	Failure to Schedule opportunities to learn about mental health, wellness, and health education for children, families, and staff	Failure to maintain the minimum clock hours of professional development per year according to HSPPS and the Nevada Registry
Failure to document daily meal counts at point of service.	Failure to adhere to EHS center hours.	Failure to recruit parents for Policy Council and encourage attendance.
Verbal behavior by an adult with a child that is demeaning, shaming, or punishing and/or physical interaction that is excessive for the situation. Prohibits the use of food as punishment or reward, isolation of child, or denial of basic needs		
Failure to follow proper food handling	Escalating conflict between adults.	Failure to follow confidentiality rules.
Failure to update and keep current child records	Failure to follow sanitizing/disinfecting, toileting, and tooth brushing procedures.	Failure to follow proper diapering procedures.
Failure to follow proper handwashing procedure.	Failure to follow procedures for identification, notification, and reporting of communicable/infectious health conditions.	Failure to follow SNHD and CCL procedures in medication administration and storage.
Unsafe floors, e.g., food, water or other liquid spills, objects, or uneven surfaces.	Minor Injuries that do not require or dental treatment by medical a doctor dentist (child or parent).	Significant health hazards relating to food service, as required in the most current <i>SNHD Regulations Governing the Sanitation of Food Establishments</i>

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Wearing shoes, jewelry, or dress that may place a person at risk for personal injury when carrying out job responsibilities, ie large hoop earrings, long fingernails, etc.	Failure to promptly evaluate the cause of any given accident or injury and make corrective actions as needed to prevent reoccurrence of the accident or injury in question.	Language or acts by staff that are by nature or intent discriminatory or stereotyping based on sex or sexual orientation, race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, culture, disability, or age.
Every attempt must be made to keep attendance above 85%. Obvious neglect in this area may reduce the number of children/months being for which partner is reimbursed. Attendance must be recorded daily in the ChildPlus system.		

**These lists do not cover all possible examples, and the priority area will be determined by the seriousness of the action.**

**The use of suspension of an Early Head Start child due to their behavior is severely limited and the use of expulsion is PROHIBITED. HSPPS 1302.17**

A temporary suspension must be used only as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances where there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated by the provision of reasonable modifications.

Before a program determines whether a temporary suspension is necessary, a program must engage with a mental health consultant, collaborate with the parents, and utilize appropriate community resources – such as behavior coaches, psychologists, other appropriate specialists, or other resources – as needed, to determine no other reasonable option is appropriate.

If a temporary suspension is deemed necessary, a program must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by:

- (i) Continuing to engage with the parents and a mental health consultant and continuing to utilize appropriate community resources.
- (ii) Developing a written plan to document the action and support needed.
- (iii) Providing services that include home visits; and,
- (iv) Determining whether a referral to a local agency responsible for implementing IDEA is appropriate.

When a child exhibits persistent and serious challenging behaviors, a program must explore all possible steps and document all steps taken to address such problems and facilitate the child's safe participation in the program. Such steps must include, at a minimum, engaging a mental health consultant, considering the appropriateness of providing appropriate services and supports

If the child has an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP), the program must consult with the agency responsible for the IFSP or IEP to ensure the child receives the needed support services; or,

- (ii) If the child does not have an IFSP or IEP, the program must collaborate, with parental consent, with the local agency responsible for implementing IDEA to determine the child's eligibility for services.

If, after a program has explored all possible steps and documented all steps, a program, in consultation with the parents, the child's teacher, the agency responsible for implementing IDEA (if applicable), and the mental health consultant, determines that the child's continued enrollment presents a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children and determines the program is not the most appropriate placement for the child, the program must work with such entities to directly facilitate the transition of the child to a more appropriate placement.



## Chapter 3: Health Promotion and Protection

### 3.2 Hygiene

#### 3.2.1 Diapering and Changing Soiled Clothing



#### Standard 3.2.1.5: Procedure for Changing Children's Soiled Underwear/Pull-Ups and Clothing



The following changing procedure for soiled pull-ups or underwear and clothing should be posted in the changing area, should be followed for all changes, and should be used as part of staff evaluation of caregivers/teachers who change pull-ups or underwear and clothing. The signage should be simple and should be in multiple languages if caregivers/teachers who speak multiple languages are involved in changing pull-ups or underwear. All employees who will change pull-ups or underwear and clothing should undergo training and periodic assessment of these practices.

Changing a child from the floor level or on a chair puts the adult in an awkward position and increases the risk of contamination of the environment. Using a toddler changing table helps establish a well-organized changing area for both the child and the caregiver/teacher. Changing tables with steps that allow the child to climb with the caregiver/teacher's help and supervision are a good idea. This would help reduce the risk of back injury for the adults that may occur from lifting the child onto the table (1).

Caregivers/teachers should never leave a child unattended on a table or countertop, even for an instant. A safety strap or harness should not be used on the changing surface. If an emergency arises, caregivers/teachers should bring any child on an elevated surface to the floor or take the child with them.

An EPA-registered disinfectant suitable for the surface material that is being disinfected should be used. If an EPA-registered product is not available, then household bleach diluted with water is a practical alternative. All cleaning and disinfecting solutions should be stored to be accessible to the caregiver/teacher but out of reach of any child. Please refer to Appendix J, Selecting an Appropriate Sanitizer or Disinfectant.

Step 1: Get organized and determine whether to change the child lying down or standing up. Before bringing the child to the changing area, perform hand hygiene, and gather and bring supplies to the changing area.

- a. Non-absorbent paper liner large enough to cover the changing surface;
- b. Unused pull-up or underwear, clean clothes (if you need them);
- c. Wipes, dampened cloths or wet paper towels for cleaning the child's genitalia and buttocks readily available;
- d. A plastic bag for any soiled clothes, including underwear, or pull-ups;
- e. Disposable gloves, if you plan to use them (put gloves on before handling soiled clothing or pull-ups) and remove them before handling clean pull-ups or underwear and clothing.

Step 2: Avoid contact with soiled items.

- a. If the child is standing, it may cause the clothing, shoes and socks to become soiled. The caregiver/teacher must remove these items before the change begins;
- b. To avoid contaminating the child's clothes, have the child hold their shirt, sweater, etc. up above their

### 3.2.1.5 - Procedure for Changing Children's Soiled Underwear/Pull-Ups and Cloth



waist during the change. This keeps the child's hands busy and the caregiver/teacher knows where the child's hands are during the changing process. Caregivers/teachers can also use plastic clothes pins that can be washed and sanitized to keep the clothing out of the way;

- c. If disposable pull-ups were used, pull the sides apart, rather than sliding the garment down the child's legs. If underwear is being changed, remove the soiled underwear and any soiled clothing, doing your best to avoid contamination of surfaces;
- d. To avoid contamination of the environment and/or the increased risk of spreading germs to the other children in the room, do not rinse the soiled clothing in the toilet or elsewhere. Place all soiled garments in a plastic-lined, hands-free plastic bag to be cleaned at the child's home;
- e. If the child's shoes are soiled, the caregiver/teacher must wash and sanitize them before putting them back on the child. It is a good idea for the child care facility to request a few extra pair of socks and shoes from the parent/caregiver to be kept at the facility in case these items become soiled (1).

#### Step 3: Clean the child's skin and check for spills.

- a. Lift the child's legs as needed to use disposable wipes, or a dampened cloth or wet paper towel to clean the skin on the child's genitalia and buttocks. Remove stool and urine from front to back and use a fresh wipe, dampened cloth or wet paper towel each time you swipe. Put the soiled wipes or paper towels into the soiled pull-up or directly into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can. Reusable cloths should be stored in a washable, plastic-lined, tightly covered receptacle (within arm's reach of diaper changing tables) until they can be laundered. The cover should not require touching with contaminated hands or objects;
- b. Check for spills under the child. If there are any, use the paper that extends beyond or under the child's feet to fold over the soiled area so a fresh, unsoiled paper surface is now under the child;
- c. If gloves were used, remove them using the proper technique (see Appendix D) and put them into a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
- d. Whether or not gloves were used, use a fresh wipe to wipe the hands of the caregiver/teacher and another fresh wipe to wipe the child's hands. Put the wipes into the plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;

#### Step 4: Put on a clean pull-up or underwear and clothing, if necessary.

- a. Assist the child, as needed, in putting on a clean disposable pull-up or underwear, then in re-dressing (1);
- b. Note and plan to report any skin problems such as redness, skin cracks, or bleeding;
- c. Put the child's socks and shoes back on if they were removed during the changing procedure (1).

#### Step 5: Wash the child's hands and return the child to a supervised area.

- a. Use soap and warm water, between 60°F and 120°F, at a sink to wash the child's hands, if you can.

#### Step 6: Clean and disinfect the changing surface.

- a. Dispose of the disposable paper liner used on the changing surface in a plastic-lined, hands-free covered can;
- b. If clothing was soiled, securely tie the plastic bag used to store the clothing and send home;
- c. Remove any visible soil from the changing surface with a disposable paper towel saturated with water and detergent, rinse;
- d. Wet the entire changing surface with a disinfectant that is appropriate for the surface material you are treating. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for use;
- e. Put away the disinfectant. Some types of disinfectants may require rinsing the change table surface with fresh water afterwards.



Step 7: Perform hand hygiene according to the procedure in Standard 3.2.2.2 and record the change in the child's daily log.

- a. In the daily log, record what was in the pull-up or underwear and any problems (such as a loose stool, an unusual odor, blood in the stool, or any skin irritation), and report as necessary (3).

#### **RATIONALE:**

Children who are learning to use the toilet may still wet/soil their pull-ups or underwear and clothing. Changing these undergarments can lead to risk for spreading infection due to the contamination of surfaces from urine or feces (1). The procedure for changing a child's soiled undergarment and clothing is designed to reduce the contamination of surfaces that will later come in contact with uncontaminated surfaces such as hands, furnishings, and floors (2,4). Posting the multi-step procedure may help caregivers/teachers maintain the routine.

Assembling all necessary supplies before bringing the child to the changing area will ensure the child's safety, make the change more efficient, and reduce opportunities for contamination. Taking the supplies out of their containers and leaving the containers in their storage places reduces the likelihood that the storage containers will become contaminated during changing.

Commonly, caregivers/teachers do not use disposable paper that is large enough to cover the area likely to be contaminated during changing. If the paper is large enough, there will be less need to remove visible soil from surfaces later and there will be enough paper to fold up so the soiled surface is not in contact with clean surfaces while dressing the child.

If the child's foot coverings are not removed during changing, and the child kicks during the changing procedure, the foot coverings can become contaminated and subsequently spread contamination throughout the child care area.

If the child's clean buttocks are put down on a soiled surface, the child's skin can be resoiled.

Children's hands often stray into the changing area (the area of the child's body covered by the soiled pull-ups or underwear) during the changing process and can then transfer fecal organisms to the environment.

Washing the child's hands will reduce the number of organisms carried into the environment in this way.

Infectious organisms are present on the skin and pull-ups or underwear even though they are not seen. To reduce the contamination of clean surfaces, caregivers/teachers should use a fresh wipe to wipe their hands after removing the gloves or, if no gloves were used, before proceeding to handle the clean pull-up or underwear and the clothing.

Some states and credentialing organizations may recommend wearing gloves for changing. Although gloves may not be required, they may provide a barrier against surface contamination of a caregiver/teacher's hands. This may reduce the presence of enteric pathogens under the fingernails and on hand surfaces. Even if gloves are used, caregivers/teachers must perform hand hygiene after each child's changing to prevent the spread of disease-causing agents. To achieve maximum benefit from use of gloves, the caregiver/teacher must remove the gloves properly after cleaning the child's genitalia and buttocks and removing the soiled pull-up or underwear. Otherwise, retained contaminated gloves could transfer organisms to clean surfaces. Note that sensitivity to latex is a growing problem. If caregivers/teachers or children who are sensitive to latex are present in the facility, non-latex gloves should be used. See Appendix D for proper technique for removing gloves.



A safety strap cannot be relied upon to restrain the child and could become contaminated during changing. Cleaning and disinfecting a strap would be required after every change. Therefore safety straps on changing surfaces are not recommended.

Prior to disinfecting the changing table, clean any visible soil from the surface with a detergent and rinse well with water. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions for use, application and storage. If the disinfectant is applied using a spray bottle, always assume that the outside of the spray bottle could be contaminated.

Therefore, the spray bottle should be put away before hand hygiene is performed (the last and essential part of every change) (5).

Changing areas should never be located in food preparation areas and should never be used for temporary placement of food, drinks, or eating utensils.

#### **COMMENTS:**

Children with disabilities may require diapering and the method of diapering will vary according to their abilities. However, principles of hygiene should be consistent regardless of method. Toddlers and preschool age children without physical disabilities frequently have toileting issues as well. These soiling/wetting episodes can be due to rapid onset gastroenteritis, distraction due to the intensity of their play, and emotional disruption secondary to new transition. These include new siblings, stress in the family, or anxiety about changing classrooms or programs, all of which are based on their inability to recognize and articulate their stress and to manage a variety of impulses.

Development is not a straight trajectory, but rather a cycle of forward and backward steps as children gain mastery over their bodies in a wide variety of situations. It is normal and developmentally appropriate for children to revert to immature behaviors as they gain developmental milestones while simultaneously dealing with immediate struggles which they are internalizing. Even for preschool and kindergarten aged children, these accidents happen and these incidents are called 'accidents' because of the frequency of these episodes among normally developing children. It is important for caregivers/teachers to recognize that the need to assist young children with toileting is a critical part of their work and that their attitude regarding the incident and their support of children as they work toward self regulation of their bodies is a component of teaching young children.

#### **TYPE OF FACILITY:**

Small Family Child Care Home, Center, Large Family Child Care Home

#### **RELATED STANDARDS:**

[2.1.2.5 Toilet Learning/Training](#)

[3.2.1.3 Checking For the Need to Change Diapers](#)

[3.2.2.1 Situations that Require Hand Hygiene](#)

[3.2.2.2 Handwashing Procedure](#)

[3.3.0.1 Routine Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting](#)

[5.2.7.4 Containment of Soiled Diapers](#)

[5.4.4.2 Location of Laundry Equipment and Water Temperature for Laundering](#)

[Appendix D: Gloving](#)

[Appendix J: Selecting an Appropriate Sanitizer or Disinfectant](#)



#### REFERENCES:

1. ECELS-Healthy Child Care Pennsylvania. Changing soiled underwear for toddlers.  
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#### NOTES:

Content in the STANDARD was modified on 07/13/2012 and 11/5/2013.



# Teacher Resource Cards

# Clock in and then....

- ▶ Temperature check
- ▶ TDL form
- ▶ Wash my hands
- ▶ Sign into my classroom on sheet
- ▶ Student attendance: Sign in children on attendance sheet as they enter

# Grab my Items on the way to class

- ▶ Shoe Covers
- ▶ Speaker
- ▶ Lights
- ▶ Towels
- ▶ Bottles of Cleaner is full
- ▶ Paper towels and soap stocked
- ▶ Trash bags stocked

## Once the Kiddos arrive

- ▶ Is the child signed in? ( daily connect and sheet)
- ▶ Has the child's temperature been checked?
- ▶ Has the child washed their hands
- ▶ Shoes off, socks on in infant room
- ▶ Shoes remain on in all other rooms

# Positive Guidance Phrases

- ▶ How can we solve this problem?
- ▶ What do you think the problem is?
- ▶ Do you have a way you want to do it?
- ▶ What could fix this?
- ▶ Let's try team work
- ▶ Can you show me a different way to do that?
- ▶ Let's rewind and try again
- ▶ Would you like to help me?
- ▶ You're feeling upset because Jorge is sitting too close, ask Jorge to please move over.

# Positive Guidance Phrases

- ▶ How about we take turns?
- ▶ Would you like me to help?
- ▶ Let's try this again, this time together.
- ▶ Can you show me how?
- ▶ How about this toy instead?
- ▶ Would you like a helping hand?
- ▶ Feet on the floor, so we can be safe
- ▶ Don't push your friend, he can fall and get hurt
- ▶ Be gentle
- ▶ Be nice to your friends

# Encouraging Phrases

- ▶ You are very helpful helping me
- ▶ You are a healthy eater
- ▶ You did a great job!
- ▶ You are a hard worker
- ▶ Thank you for listening to me
- ▶ You did it all by yourself
- ▶ You are kind and gentle
- ▶ Thank you for

# Ending Power Struggles

- ▶ Do not panic
- ▶ Hug snug
- ▶ Kneel to their level
- ▶ Speak low and slow
- ▶ Acknowledge their feelings
- ▶ Give two choices

# Cleaning During the day

- ▶ Wash hands frequently
- ▶ Sanitize tables and chairs before and after eating or doing art activities (soap and water, pink sanitizer, 2 minutes)
- ▶ Disinfect toys during nap time
- ▶ Sweep/Mop after meals
- ▶ Take away any items placed in children's mouths and disinfect
- ▶ Keep the trash can, sink clean
- ▶ Disinfect cots after use

# Cleaning at Night

- ▶ Sanitize and vacuum carpets
- ▶ Sweep and mop floor( under large furniture and centers)
- ▶ Clean off chairs
- ▶ Clean tables
- ▶ Replace trash bags
- ▶ Mirrors and Doors cleaned with glass cleaner
- ▶ Empty dust pan
- ▶ Put cleaning supplies away neatly
- ▶ Sanitize Water Dispenser

## Before I leave

- ▶ Make sure all outlets are covered
- ▶ Charge lights
- ▶ Charge Speakers
- ▶ Charge tablets

# What else?

- ▶ All cups must be labeled
- ▶ All bottles and solid food must have the child's name and date
- ▶ No child can be left in a playpen for more than 15 minutes if they are not sleeping
- ▶ Always use gentle touches
- ▶ Refer to allergy list in daily connect
- ▶ Keep up with required trainings
- ▶ Print lessons and send material list on Thursdays
- ▶ Temperature must be between 73 and 82 degrees
- ▶ Print Newsletters for parents

# Trainings??

- ▶ You must also complete the Nevada Registry professional development survey
- ▶ After your first year, you are required to complete 24 hours of trainings due by April 30<sup>th</sup> of each year.

Wellness is required yearly.

# How to clean

- ▶ We always start with soap and water first
- ▶ To sanitize we use the hard surface sanitizer (pink) (2 minutes)
- ▶ To disinfect we use the disinfecting cleaner (blue) (10 minutes)

# Daily Connect Entries

- ▶ Health
- ▶ Diapers
- ▶ Meals
- ▶ Lessons
- ▶ Sleep
- ▶ Incident Reports
- ▶ Behaviors
- ▶ Bottles
- ▶ Needs

# QRIS Reminders

- ▶ Acknowledge all children and parents by name upon arrival
- ▶ No long periods without interaction with children
- ▶ Talk about past, present, future
- ▶ Respond to crying, sooth immediately
- ▶ Random singing throughout the day
- ▶ Read a story ( whole group, small group, individual)
- ▶ Always be prepared for the next activity
- ▶ Talk about tempo ( fast/slow)
- ▶ Talk about the displays ( twice)
- ▶ Talk about the story/pictures and ask questions
- ▶ Prepare bottles ahead of time
- ▶ Write words to the pictures children draw.
- ▶ Post artwork
- ▶ Pictures of the child's family
- ▶ Center signs
- ▶ Encourage children to go to different centers
- ▶ Bring different toys to infants that are not mobile

# Learning Through Play

- ▶ What animal is this?
- ▶ Tell me about the animal
- ▶ Where does the animal live?
- ▶ What sounds does this animal makes?
- ▶ What are you making?
- ▶ What color is this?
- ▶ Engage in back and forth pretend play
- ▶ What vegetable is this?
- ▶ Is this a fruit?
- ▶ How many dimes are in the cash register
- ▶ How can you help your baby to stop crying?
- ▶ Is that food good?
- ▶ What are you eating?
- ▶ How high can you stack these blocks?
- ▶ Wow! You stacked 6 blocks!
- ▶ What shape is this?

# Learning Through Play

- ▶ What would you like to build?
- ▶ Can you tell me what you are making?
- ▶ Do you have pets at home?
- ▶ Does your mom or dad cook this for you?
- ▶ What would you like to draw first?
- ▶ What shapes did you use in your drawing?
- ▶ Use your body to show me how the animals go in and out of the barn
- ▶ You said you built a \_\_\_\_\_ was it hard? What was the hardest part
- ▶ Show me how to take care of the baby
- ▶ Talk about feelings (sad, happy, excited, etc)
- ▶ How did that make you feel?

## Infant Toddler

### Display for children

- Pictures of children and their families
- Many colorful simple pictures
- Pictures/Art changed regularly
- Displays where children can easily see them
- Must point out and talk about displays during observation

### Meals/snacks

- Must not have more than three hours between meals
- Sanitary procedures must be followed. Spray with soap and water. Wipe with paper towel or towel. Spray with sanitizer wait 2 minutes. Wipe with new paper towel or towel
- Children must wash hands right before eating. Tables must be cleaned right before eating.
- Sit with children, talk with children. Don't force children to eat. Positive interactions while eating.
- Must supplement any missing food groups

### Diapering

- Follow Diapering procedure exactly. Diapers must go inside the dispenser not on top with a bag.
- Positive teacher interactions
- Hang pictures, or items around diaper changing table
- Sing while diapering
- Must be checked at least every hour

### Safety

- Pick children up ONLY under both arms. Do not hold a child by one arm
- Children must ALWAYS be in the sight of staff
- Children's unsafe behaviors stopped in an appropriate manner
- Use simple explanations for why children cannot do unsafe actions ( feet on the floor, don't push your friend, he will fall and get hurt, use your walking feet, Daniels, or you will knock your friends over. **Must be observed once**
- **Staff must be seen washing their hands throughout the day.**
- 

### Language and Books

- Frequent positive talk
- Talk to the children frequently with few silent moments.
- Have personalized conversations with children, about their families, and their interests, etc
- Frequently use specific names for people, places, things, actions
- Repeat words for children ( ex. Frequent using the word bottle while feeding, or use the words we or dry during diaper changing
- Talk about here and now and past, present, and future, experiences- **Must be observed twice**
- Make comparisons and contrasts ( red rattle vs blue rattle) ( you're going fast and I'm walking slow) **Must be observed twice**
- Use descriptive words ( it's a mouse, a fury little animal)
- Picture/word schedule

### Responding to children's communication

- Respond immediately to crying or upset children
- Much positive and no negative communication throughout the observation

- Show positive interest in what children are trying to communicate.
- Say words child is trying to communicate ( oh you're hungry, lets get your bottle, You wanted maria's ball? I'll help you find a doll. You want me to pick you up? **Must be observed with two different children**
- Initiate engaging conversations with children throughout the conversation.
- There should not be ongoing conversations among staff
- Personalize conversations for individual children. Talk about their families, what they did over the weekend, child's mood, child's name

#### Books with Children

- Informal book reading with one child. **Observed once**
- Staff must make book times attractive, puppets, exciting voices, children can leave if not interested
- Staff point out names of some pictures in the book. **Observed with 2 different children**
- Read the books as well as talk about the pictures in the book. **Observed once**
- Show interest and enjoyment
- 20 accessible books, books easily accessible to children
- Staff give positive attention to child using a book independently and make a brief comment about the book, labels pictures or asks a question

#### Fine motor

- 10 fine motor choices
- Staff resolve problems with sharing in a positive way 9 redirect child to a duplicate material.
- Frequently talk to children as they are using fine motor materials
- Center must remain well organized and comfortable, toys should not be thrown everywhere

#### Art

- At least 1 drawing material along with paper ( under 23 month just needs to be brought out at some point during the observation.
- Close attentive supervision when art materials are being used.
- Staff to talk briefly with children about their artwork ( What did you draw? I like your red circle.) **Must be observed for two different children**
- Most art materials allow children to use materials on their own

#### Music and Movement

- At least 10 music materials
- Music and music individualized, lullabies sung to children going to sleep, do one on one finger plays with children, sing hand washing song, sing while diapering. **Observe once**
- Draw attention to features of the music, fast/slow
- Music related to classroom themes

#### Blocks

- Individual interest center
- Enough blocks are accessible for each age group
- Blocks and accessories organized by type
- Staff talk with interested children about block play. **Observed with two different children**

#### Dramatic Play

- Many varied materials accessible
- Dress up clothing and accessories
- Must have an individual interest center
- Staff interreact positively and never negatively while playing. **Observed with two different children**

## Nature and Science

- Some outdoor Experiences with nature observed
- Some easily experienced living plants or animals observed
- Staff point out and talk to children about nature/science materials9 discuss weather and clothing, blow and talk about bubbles, show how to use a magnifying glass, feed class pet. **Observe once**
- Some sand and water play accessible for children 24 months and older

## Math and numbers

- Correctly compare shapes, quantity, and sizes. **Observe once**
- Count objects for children in an engaging manner ( playfully count toes while changing diaper, move blocks around as they are counted, count children in line **Observed with two different children**
- Use number songs, chants, and nursery rhymes in an engaging manner. **Observe once**

## No use of technology

## Diversity

- At least 10 positive examples of diversity
- Classroom materials include at least 4 to 5 types of diversity (race, culture, age, ability, and non traditional gender roles.
- Staff support children in their own individuality
- Staff promote diversity read diverse books etc

## Gross Motor

- Teachers should not be sitting
- 30 minutes of outdoor time
- Organize outdoor space into centers
- Staff initiate vigorous gross motor
- Constant, close, attentive supervision and interactions with children
- Positive interactions only
- Children must be within sight and easy reach of staff
- Staff must react quick to solve problems
- Children can not be taken in as a punishment during outdoor play
- Children must go outside at the same time
- Staff initiate activities. Encourage children to play and run

## Transitions

- Transitions should be gradual or individualized
- Staff must always be prepared for the next activity

1. At least 1/3 of displays are children's artwork
2. Talk about displays at least two different times

#### Display for children

- Pictures of children and their families
- Many colorful simple pictures
- Pictures/Art changed regularly
- Displays where children can easily see them
- Must point out and talk about displays during observation
- At least 1/3 of displays are children's artwork
- Talk about displays at least two different times

#### Meals/snacks

- Must not have more than three hours between meals
- Sanitary procedures must be followed. Spray with soap and water. Wipe with paper towel or towel. Spray with sanitizer wait 2 minutes. Wipe with new paper towel or towel
- Children must wash hands right before eating. Tables must be cleaned right before eating.
- Sit with children, talk with children. Don't force children to eat. Positive interactions while eating.
- Must supplement any missing food groups

#### Diapering

- Follow Diapering procedure exactly. Diapers must go inside the dispenser not on top with a bag.
- Positive teacher interactions
- Hang pictures, or items around diaper changing table
- Sing while diapering/toileting
- Positive experience during toileting
- Must be changed at least every two hours

#### Safety

- Pick children up ONLY under both arms. Do not hold a child by one arm
- Children must ALWAYS be in the sight of staff
- Children's unsafe behaviors stopped in an appropriate manner
- Use simple explanations for why children cannot do unsafe actions ( feet on the floor, don't push your friend, he will fall and get hurt, use your walking feet, Daniels, or you will knock your friends over. **Must be observed once**
- **Staff must be seen washing their hands throughout the day.**

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- Talk to the children frequently with few silent moments.
- Have personalized conversations with children, about their families, and their interests, etc
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- Repeat words for children ( ex. Frequent using the word bottle while feeding, or use the words we or dry during diaper changing
- Talk about here and now and past, present, and future, experiences- **Must be observed twice**
- Make comparisons and contrasts ( red rattle vs blue rattle)( you're going fast and I'm walking slow) **Must be observed twice**
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- Read the books as well as talk about the pictures in the book. **Observed once**
- Show interest and enjoyment
- 20 accessible books, books easily accessible to children
- Staff give positive attention to child using a book independently and make a brief comment about the book, labels pictures or asks a question
- Menu with pictures in classroom
- Picture/word schedule

#### Fine motor

- 10 fine motor choices
- Staff resolve problems with sharing in a positive way 9 redirect child to a duplicate material.
- Frequently talk to children as they are using fine motor materials
- Center must remain well organized and comfortable, toys should not be thrown everywhere

#### Art

- At least 1 drawing material from each area ( drawing materials, paints, three dimensional objects, collage materials, tools)
- Close attentive supervision when art materials are being used.
- Staff to talk briefly with children about their artwork ( What did you draw? I like your red circle.) **Must be observed for two different children**
- Most art materials allow children to use materials on their own
- Staff write down what the child say about their picture

#### Music and Movement

- At least 10 music materials
- Music and music individualized, lullabies sung to children going to sleep, do one on one finger plays with children, sing hand washing song, sing while diapering. **Observe once**
- Draw attention to features of the music, fast/slow
- Music related to classroom themes

#### Blocks

- Individual interest center
- Enough blocks are accessible for each age group
- Blocks and accessories organized by type
- Staff talk with interested children about block play. **Observed with two different children**
- 3 categories unit blocks and large hollow blocks
- Accessories ( animals, people, vehicles)
- Write children's comments about what the built

#### Dramatic Play

- Many varied materials accessible
- Dress up clothing and accessories
- Must have an individual interest center
- Staff interreact positively and never negatively while playing. **Observed with two different children**
- **Interest Center**
- 

#### Nature and Science

- Some outdoor Experiences with nature observed
- Some easily experienced living plants or animals observed
- Staff point out and talk to children about nature/science materials9 discuss weather and clothing, blow and talk about bubbles, show how to use a magnifying glass, feed class pet. **Observe once**
- Some sand and water play accessible for children 24 months and older
- 15 nature/science materials ( books, living things, natural objects, tools, sand/water

#### Math and numbers

- Correctly compare shapes, quantity, and sizes. **Observe once**
- Count objects for children in an engaging manner ( playfully count toes while changing diaper, move blocks around as they are counted, count children in line **Observed with two different children**
- Use number songs, chants, and nursery rhymes in an engaging manner. **Observe once**
- 10 math materials ( counting and comparing, measuring, and familiarity with shapes
- Encourage children to use their fingers to count
- Encourage counting while washing hands

#### No use of technology

#### Diversity

- At least 10 positive examples of diversity
- Classroom materials include at least 4 to 5 types of diversity (race, culture, age, ability, and non traditional gender roles.
- Staff support children in their own individuality
- Staff promote diversity read diverse books etc
- At least 2 different types of dramatic play diversity items

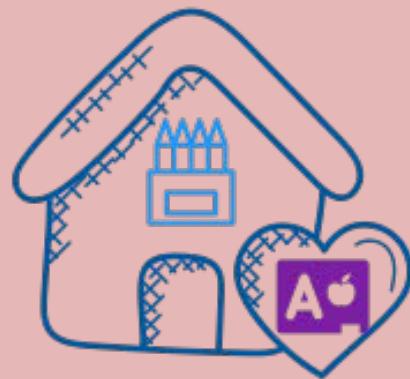
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LITTLE STEPS EARLY LEARNING ACADEMY



HOME SWEET CLASSROOM  
"YOUR CHILD'S HOME AWAY FROM HOME"

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**Little Steps Early Learning Academy offers childcare, pre-kindergarten, and before/after care for children 6 weeks-12 years old. Enrollment forms may be found on our website at [www.littlestepsela.com](http://www.littlestepsela.com), under "forms". All forms must be completed and returned to us along with your child's up to date shot records. A health statement by your child's pediatrician will be required within 30 days of enrollment.**

## **Assessment Plan**

Child assessment is a vital and necessary component of all high-quality early childhood programs. Assessment is important to understand and support young children's development. Each classroom completes screenings and assessments that encompass all areas of development; sensory, language, cognitive, gross-motor, fine-motor, and social-emotional, it is also essential to document and evaluate how effectively programs are meeting young children's educational needs, and to inform on program improvement.

Little Steps Early Learning Academy uses Brigance to assess our students. Brigance screeners and assessment inventories use observation, interviews, and child performance to pinpoint understanding in the domains tied to early development and school or kindergarten readiness. Test content aligns to the Common Core and many state-specific learning standards to equip educators with familiar information to fit their existing framework. Once the assessment is complete, the results are uploaded to the Online Management System. Parents will receive a copy of results and a copy will remain in the child's file. For Children ages 3-5 we will use a combination of Funshine Curriculum, and COR assessments to evaluate student progress. For children ages 0-3 we will also use Funshine Curriculum and Assessments as well as provide Quarterly Progress reports to parents.

## **Child Development**

Children do not just grow in size, they develop, evolve, and mature, mastering ever more complex understandings of the people, objects, and challenges in their environment. There is a general pattern **or** sequence for development that is true of most children. However, the rate, character, and quality of development vary from child to child. Culture influences development in different ways, and the goals for children differ from culture to culture. Quality assessment looks at not only to what is happening within the child, but also to the care that child requires in order to thrive. For a child to develop and learn in a healthy and normal way, it is important not only to meet the basic needs for protection, food and health care, but also to meet the basic needs for interaction and stimulation, affection, security, and learning through exploration and discovery.

**Procedure:** All screenings, checklists, and assessments will be completed by the lead teacher in the assigned classroom. Any assistance in this procedure will be completed by staff persons under the direct supervision of the lead teacher. Developmental screenings are completed within the first month of a child's enrollment in the Little Steps Early Learning Academics. This information is then discussed with parents during a formal parent/teacher conference after the screening is completed. Screenings are Completed as an individually administered test and as checklist based on parent report. Developmental assessments are completed throughout the day and year using naturalistic observation of the children's interactions and behavior. Both group and individual observations will be used to compile documentation. All screenings and assessments are completed within the Little Steps Early Learning Academy complex. Parent/teacher conferences will be scheduled semiannually or more often as needed.

## **FACILITY STATEMENT**

**At Little Steps Early Learning Academy**, our mission is to provide child care that meets the needs of each child and family in a safe, educational environment. We pride our Center's focus on the individual needs of each child, while providing quality, reliable and safe child care to provide for special needs of our children. We maintain a smoke free environment. Smoking is prohibited in or around the facility at all times. Staff is well trained and CPR certified. Parents are encouraged to tour our facility and ask questions before enrolling your child. Little Steps Early Learning Academy does not discriminate against any child or family based on race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or disability.

### **Our Goals Are:**

- To provide affordable, convenient, dependable child care services
- To create a child care setting for social, cognitive, and physical development
- To provide a nurturing environment
- To provide learning experiences for our children
- To provide a preschool program, readying children for lifelong learning

**Little Steps Early Learning Academy** offers the opportunity for each child to develop physically, socially and cognitively according to their individual learning style. Each child is considered unique in temperament and rate of development. Curriculum is planned to enhance and challenge, particular, distinct individual needs, interests and abilities. Activities and relationships occur in a healthy, positive and relaxed environment in which well-qualified staff provide personal attention, guidance and nurturing to each child. Young children develop rapidly. In fact, more development occurs during the first five years than at any other stage of life. A balance of, social, emotional, intellectual and physical stimulation is essential for development to be optimal. In our program we support and enrich individual development through several goal areas.

Physical Development – includes large and small motor development, and an understanding of personal health and safety. The day is a blend of child-initiated and Teacher-initiated activities including group time, free choice times, outdoor play, appropriate meals, snacks and rest times.

The Center strives to maintain continuity and consistency throughout the program by conducting cooperative staff planning, training and a variety of joint activities involving the various groups of children. In this context, all caregivers at **Little Steps Early Learning Academy** are encouraged to express their individual educational strengths as they work with children and in their cooperative efforts with other staff members.

When you come to **Little Steps Early Learning Academy**, your child will receive the best care the industry has to offer. All you need to do is "expect more."

**Little Steps Early Learning Academy** is able to care for children ages 6 weeks to years. We also provide before and after school care for school aged children. Transportation is not available at this time.

Hours: Monday — Friday 6:30am- 6:00pm

Breakfast: : 8:30 am

Lunch: 10:30am-11:00am

Snacks: 2:00pm

Milk is served with meals . Milk served to one year olds must be unflavored whole milk. A one-month transition period is allowed for children 24 months to 25 months old. They may have whole milk or a mixture of milks as they transition to low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk. A doctors note is required for children who may have an allergy to dairy. The note must outline an alternative. Forms are available to take to your physician.

Little Steps Early Learning Academy provides 3 meals per day with tuition. Parents are more than welcome to send an afternoon/evening snack with children who will be attendance past 5:00 pm or as a means for an additional snack after our last school wide snack is served. Please alert teachers at sign in and by way of a message in DailyConnect if your child has additional snack items to be served.

**Referral Sources** Lead teachers discuss with parents developmental milestones reached, developmental progress, and developmental concerns. The lead teachers in conjunction with the administrative team will annually evaluate the current screening and assessment tools. Outside professionals and parent involvement is sought to inform this evaluation. Based on the assessment, Little Steps ELA may collaborate with Community Health, Empowerment, and Support Services (C.H.E.S.S), for evaluation for necessity for behavioral health or mental health services. Students may also be referred to Child Find if there is a noticeable delay in development. The owner or designated staff will be available to attend school IEP meetings. Please submit time and dates for these meeting as much in advance as possible so that we may make arrangements to attend.

## ***Confidentiality***

All information obtained regarding any center family/child( ren) is considered confidential. Information obtained *and* collected by our program will be shared with other staff on a "need to know" basis. The lead teachers may use the information during in-service trainings to identify children's interests and needs. Practicum students and volunteers are not to be included in discussions of children and families, except for information which is relevant in order for them to complete their objectives.

While the lead teacher may require assistance from the program staff to compile documentation for assessment, only the lead teacher and designated graduate assistants/assistant teachers will have access to the complete assessment materials.

All confidential materials will remain in a lockable filing cabinet in the office.

All parents/guardians may gain access to their child's information by either asking the lead teacher associate director, or director.

All information compiled during screenings and assessment will be used to promote the healthy developmental growth of the child. The lead staff along with the participation of parents will review the completed information and together make goals for the child or a referral in cases of developmental delay.

No information can be shared with an outside agency without written consent from the legal guardian. The decision to share information will be made by administrative staff (lead teachers, director)

On request, the Regulatory authorities (Nevada Department of Human Services) of the Little Steps Early Learning Academy will have access to our confidential materials.

## ***Language***

It is important to the Little Steps Early Learning Academy that all families are given the opportunity to fully understand, interpret, and become involved with their child's assessment.

and goals. Little Steps Early Learning Academy will provide an interpreter for any family that needs and makes a request.

### **Training**

Each lead teacher has had training in assessment delivery and interpretation. In addition, the lead teachers have had formal training before using the specific screenings *and* assessments they employ within their assigned classrooms. All teachers are trained in CPR/ First Aide and must complete the required licensing trainings.

## **Child Care Curriculum**

We believe that children should be allowed to learn and grow at their own pace, and that a child-centered, play-based curriculum is the most appropriate and effective method of learning for children.

### **Child Care Curriculum Philosophy**

Our goals for children's learning is for them to become independent, self-confident, and enthusiastic learners for life, developing strong self-esteem and positive attitudes toward exploration and learning so they're not afraid to try out new ideas or make mistakes.

### **Child Care Curriculum Components**

Many people think of teacher planned activities when they think of "curriculum," but a good child care curriculum is so much more! In addition to planned activities, a good child care curriculum is child-centered, promotes learning through play, provides appropriate materials and toys, considers the child care environment a third teacher, and nurtures close relationships between children and teacher and among the children.

A child-centered child care curriculum is constantly changing to help teachers support children's learning. Teachers observe the children to discover each child's needs, strengths, interests and previously learned knowledge and skills, then use this information to plan new experiences and daily activities for each child. This kind of intentional teaching is one hallmark of a good child care curriculum.

### **Play-Based Child Care Curriculum**

The Funshine Curriculum is a play-based curriculum that emphasizes a warm, responsive relationship between provider and child and a rich educational environment. The majority of children's learning and development occurs spontaneously during child-led free play.

The Curriculum supports age-appropriate play-based learning for infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children while preserving the special characteristics of a home-style learning environment. It also offers a variety of additional resources for enhancing, assessing, and documenting the children's learning. It also introduces children to sign language and Spanish.

### **Child Care Curriculum for School Readiness**

Despite the recent "push-down" of academics to younger and younger children, studies show that play is the best way for children to learn.

### **The Environment as Child Care Curriculum**

The child care environment plays an integral role in facilitating children's learning. New concepts, improved skills and enhanced comprehension come to children while playing in a rich educational environment. Children's senses help them explore the world around them, and their imaginations take them anywhere they want to go.

### **Toys in the Child Care Curriculum**

Toys are often called the "learning tools" of children. While playing with toys, children learn about themselves, the world around them, and other people. Toys foster children's learning by helping them:

- Figure out how things work.
- Test new thoughts and ideas.
- Develop small muscle control.
- Use their imagination.
- Develop problem-solving skills.
- Practice cooperating with others.
- Strengthen verbal and negotiation skills.

The toys available at (Little Steps Early Learning Academy arms are selected to promote children's learning and development of language (books), large and small muscles (slides, puzzles and blocks), creativity (artwork), imagination (dress-up), self-help skills (dressing self) and cultural awareness (books and toys).

Little Steps ELA also offers an optional Christian Curriculum that includes Bible Art, prayer, bible verses, and bible themed activities. Parents must sign a permission form in order for children to participate in this curriculum.

Little Steps Early Learning Academy's Emergency plan is made in order to ensure the safety and well being of all staff and children in our facility. It outlines how to prepare and respond to an emergency including without limitation a fire or natural disaster. The plan must at a minimum be reviewed on a quarterly basis during a meeting of the facility. We will ensure that the plan is updated as often as needed minimally once per year.

**Duties of Director and staff:** Staff and Director should be trained and prepared to respond to emergency situations in a manner that keeps everyone safe and calm. In case of an emergency that requires shelter in place or evacuation quickly scan the space around you looking for any potential hazards. Report any findings to the Supervisor. Account for all children. Conduct a head count and ensure accurate attendance records.

Attendance records must be kept with staff. Director will ensure that emergency plan is reviewed quarterly and that changes are made at least annually. Director and staff will ensure that all parent contact and emergency contact information are up to date for all children. In case of an emergency parents will be contacting by phone according to the contact information that is listed with the facility. Parents will also be notified via Daily Connect of any emergency situations. Shall staff fail to reach parents through all contact avenues Staff and Director with the help of authorities will try to contact parents through the listed addresses.

**Evacuation:** In case of the need to evacuate our site the following procedures will be followed

#### Evacuation routes exits

- This is a one story building that contains exit doors in each classroom that lead directly outside the building.
- All exit and doors are checked regularly to ensure opening. Front Entrance Exits can be accessed by any individuals who are not near a classroom.
- Children will be evacuated together using a portable play yard with wheels for those children who do not walk and by walking for children who are able to walk. Staff is responsible to ensure that children proceed quickly and safely to the nearest exit. Exit doors are labeled. Notification once all children are safely evacuated
  - Parents will be called
  - Parents will be notified of the evacuation

#### Emergency kits information

- Emergency bags are hung by an exit door in each classroom. • Each door mailbox will have an envelope attached to it with each child's emergency contact information.

**Evacuation Sites:** • As transportation is not provided, Children will walk to the nearest business plaza located at 1240 West Owens Ave. Las Vegas, Nevada 89106. East on Owens 100 Feet. Wealth Place Ministries 920 West Owens Ave. East on Owens .3 miles. Turn Left into parking lot

#### Lockdown/Shelter in Place

Lockdown may be required with an active shooter or a dangerous person is in the area. There may be emergencies where you may need to shelter-in-place due to atmospheric contamination or radiation leaks. In both cases, listen to your radio or TV to stay informed.

#### Lockdown

- Lock outside doors and windows.
- Close and secure interior doors.
- Close any curtains or blinds.
- Turn off lights.
- Keep everyone away from doors and windows. Stay out of sight, preferably sitting on floor.
- Maintain calm atmosphere in room by reading or talking quietly to children.
- Remain in lockdown until notified by local authorities

#### Shelter in place:

Gather everyone inside, preferably in a room with few or no windows.

- Shut down ventilation system, fans, and clothes dryer.
- Close and lock doors and windows.
- Account for all children.
- Close off non-essential rooms. Close as many interior doors as possible.
- Seal off windows, doors, and vents as much as possible. • Monitor radio for information and emergency instructions.

#### Supervision Of Children

- Staff will have an attendance list along with their emergency contact forms for each child. Attendance will be taken once we reach the evacuation site. Children will be consistently supervised by staff putting a name to face and attendance checks to ensure that all children are accounted for at all times.

#### Fire And Disaster Drill

- Fire drills are performed once a month, and Natural disaster drills will be performed by the facility once every three months as required by licensing.

#### Attendance

Staff will maintain daily sign in sheet with the first and last names of all of the children as will as times of arrival and departure. Little Steps Early Learning Academy ensures that we meet all standards for fire safety established by the State of Nevada Fire Marshall, who inspects annually.

#### State of Emergency

During any and all pandemics, natural disasters, or any other situation that may result in the declaration of a state of emergency, Little Steps Early Learning Academy Will remain open unless otherwise ordered by a government entity to close, or is directly effected by the event ( i.e destroyed by the natural disaster, has a substantiated case of extreme illness) All tuition, attendance, and vacation policies will remain in effect. There will be exceptions. a. If a parent is directly impacted by the natural disaster, pandemic, or state of emergency. For instance, if the child is diagnosed with the illness which caused the state of emergency these policies will be waived and we will work with the parents regarding enrollment. Enrollment would resume once the child is released by his/her doctor. If the child will not be returning, a two weeks notice will still be required. Parents will be responsible for any tuition incurred after doctor's clearance. b. If a parent is laid off, without pay, Little Steps ELA will work with parents to reserve enrollment and Suspend tuition costs for a period of time. Written acknowledgement from your employer will be required. This is also the policy should a parent be displaced or must move out of state due to a natural disaster or pandemic. Regular tuition policies will apply to parents who continue to receive their regular salary or hourly wage. c. Vacation time of 5 days per year may be used during this time with at least a 3 day notice. ( this is for full time students)

#### Natural Disasters

- Determine if program should be closed.
- Follow any and all directives issued by authorities during any and all natural disasters.
- Monitor radio for storm updates and any emergency instructions.
- Notify parents/guardians to pick up or not drop off children if program is to be closed. If site is in (imminent) danger of being flooded:
- Escort children to designated meeting spot.
- Search all areas, including bathrooms, closets, playground structures, etc., to ensure that all have left the building. • Account for all children, staff, and visitors

## Clothing

Your child's attire first and foremost should be age appropriate. Clothing should never display inappropriate pictures or wording. Underpants should be covered at all times. If a child is wearing a dress, they must have shorts or bloomers underneath. Also, should spaghetti straps be worn, they must fit correctly. If they constantly slip off and expose the child's chest, a t-shirt will be placed on the child unless alternate clothing is provided, at which time we will have the child change. Clothing malfunctions, so to speak, often produce unnecessary, age inappropriate conversations.

In regards to footwear, children are often building with large blocks, playing outdoors, etc. Because of this, it is REQUIRED that all children wear a pair of closed toed shoes each day. Please remember that your children are here to learn. At this age, this is often accomplished through play. It is very difficult to explain to a child that they cannot play outside or ride tricycles because they have to protect their new shoes. They are here to have fun. Please dress them accordingly.

In addition, the children are required to wear their shoes throughout the day. This rule is aligned with our new shoe policy:

~~Shoes~~ should be comfortable and provide adequate protection for the feet during outdoor play. Flip-flops, slip-on shoes, open-toed sandals, jelly shoes and any shoes with heels are prohibited as they present a safety hazard.

Diapers are required for each child who is not Actively potty training. Please be reminded that multiple children will need to be changed at any given time, and often times when children who are not actively potty training are wearing pull-ups, it requires staff to remove all clothing during every change which take away time that staff can be spending with the children.

It is vital that parent's check DailyConnect on a daily basis. Teachers will list any needed items for the child.

### **FAMILIES INVOLVEMENT**

Families are welcome to participate in the class activities and program events. Parents are welcome to observe their child's classroom by scheduling with the director.

### **WAYS FOR THE FAMILIES TO BE INVOLVED:**

*Making things for the program, cutting and assisting with preparations for lessons, volunteering in the classroom and more*

***Please note that the front lobby will close daily between the hours of 11:30 am-2:30pm. This is to ensure that the children's nap times are not interrupted. Please notify the director if exceptions need to be made. It is recommended that children are brought by 10:15am daily so that they may be included in the meal count and may eat lunch with their class. Any child brought after this time will need to eat prior to signing in for the day.***

### **CHECKLIST: WHAT YOUR CHILD WILL NEED**

***Individual cubbies will be available for each child so that items can be left at the program.***

***Please label all belongings.***

***Infant bottles and food must be labeled daily with child's name and date.***

***All other items must be labeled with the child's name.***

#### **INFANTS:**

***Disposable diapers and diaper wipes***

***Bibs***

***Baby Cereal***

***Extra can of Formula***

***5 Changes of clothes***

***Pacifiers, if used***

***Blanket and crib sheet***

***Clean bottles (enough for each feeding, labeled with child's name and date) solid foods (optional) (labeled with child's name and date)***

#### ***TODDLERS Disposable diapers and wipes***

***3 Changes of clothes including shoes/play clothes for outside***

***Cot sheet,***

***blanket (daily, sent home daily)***

***1 empty, no spill cup, daily (labeled with child's name)***

#### ***PRESCHOOLERS***

***3 changes of clothes including shoes/play clothes for outside***

***Cot sheet,***

***blanket (daily, sent home daily)***

***2 empty, no spill cups, daily (labeled with child's name)***

## **ENROLLMENT**

Our program gathers information during the enrollment process by asking parent's questions and collecting the following items: enrollment form, health history, child and family background information. All the data is kept strictly confidential in the child's file and kept locked in the director's office. The Little Steps Early Learning Academy only releases your information under your authorization. Our program has an Open door policy. Parents and family members are welcomed at all times. Our friendly entranceway provides an attractive and cozy area for families to ease transitional times. Each family is asked to create a DailyConnect account upon Enrollment for communication purposes. A complete physical examination is required by state law. It must be within 30 days prior to enrollment if the child is over 6 months old and within 30 days if the child is under 6 months old. An updated physical examination is required yearly, on the expiration date of the current physical. Your child will be excluded if their physical has expired until an updated physical has been submitted. Immunization records must be in compliance with SNHD schedules.

## **Parental Involvement**

Little Steps Early Learning Academy wants parents to feel involved and knowledgeable concerning child's experience at the center. Parents are able to visit the classroom during the times that their child/children are in attendance. There are many ways for parents to be involved in their child's preschool experience. Parents may volunteer in the program. There is a sign-up with times and activities; before volunteering parents will meet with the Director for a brief orientation. As many parents work full-time we will have opportunities that allow the parents, their children and the teachers a relaxed opportunity to get together and share.

In addition, parent training opportunities will be posted on the information screens.

Parents may be asked to complete a survey 2 times per year. These survey assist us in making our program better. We want to hear your concerns, suggestions, or praise. We want to make sure that we maintain a high quality environment for your children.

Parents may contact staff directly through Daily Connect Messaging or by phone at 702-483-0092.

## **Family Engagement**

There will be several family engagement opportunities throughout the year. We encourage all parents to attend or send another adult family member in your place.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Children who are having difficulty for any reason will be re-directed to another activity with teacher assistance. in the event that a child's behavior is likely to result in harm to the child, others, or property, or seriously disrupts group interaction, the child may be separated briefly from the group. During this separation the child will be consistently supervised. A method of

discipline that frightens, demeans, or humiliates a child is strictly prohibited. Suspensions may be necessary if the child's negative behaviors are persistent and unwavering. If a child is suspended, the parent is still responsible for tuition fees. Extremes behaviors may result in the child being expelled from the program. Little Steps Early Learning Academy will follow all suspension and expulsion policies enacted by Children's Cabinet.

## **CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

All staff of Little Steps Early Learning Academy program are mandated reporters and are required to report any suspected abuse, neglect, or maltreatment on the part of an employee, parent, or volunteer. Any abuse or maltreatment of a child, either as an incident of discipline or otherwise is prohibited. Any means of corporal punishment will not be tolerated. Additionally, withholding or using food, rest or sleep as a punishment is prohibited. If any type of abuse or neglect is suspected it will be reported to the Department of Child and Family Services.

## **Children with Special Needs**

It is important to notify your childcare provider of any special needs that your child may have, in detail. This includes any current, or pending diagnosis, concerning behaviors, or accommodations that may be needed. Our goal is to ensure that Little Steps ELA is an appropriate fit for your child and that we are able to provide safe care for your child in an inclusive environment. At this time we do not offer one-to-one care. If for any reason, we feel that your child may be better served in a smaller class size, or may need one-to-one , or accommodations that we do not have available, the director may terminate enrollment and refer the parent to other accommodations.

## HEALTH POLICIES

*"The risk of transmission of the agents that cause infectious diseases is increased when children are gathered into groups for any reason. This risk is particularly significant in day care because of the many close physical interactions between children and adults. The majority of daycare programs attempt to exclude ill children. However, illness among young children is frequent and many parents want to bring mildly ill children to day-care programs. This results in a struggle between staff and parents and a desire for absolute criteria to use to determine when a child's illness requires exclusion. Day-care personnel criticize parents for demanding care for sick children. In turn parents criticize day-care programs, believing that their children acquire their illnesses from day-care contacts. The resulting tensions strain parent/staff relationships, negatively affecting the quality of the day-care experience. Unfortunately, absolute criteria for exclusion of ill children does not exist. Day-care programs base their exclusion policies on two issues (1) risk of transmission of infectious diseases and (2) the demand of sick children for increased adult attention, which may exceed the resources of the day-care program"* (Quoted from *Pediatrics in Review*). The health policy of the Little Steps Early Learning Academy Program is designed to best meet the needs of our children, parents and staff. We consult with doctors, nurses and other health care professionals in formulating our health policies. No policy will eliminate the problem of illness endemic to group care - especially of young children - no policy will satisfy all the populations the program serves, and no policy can entirely eliminate the element of subjective judgment inherent to individual situations. The Little Steps Early Learning Academy health policies may differ from your child's pediatrician's opinion in all situations, the policy will override your child's doctor's recommendation. Group care conditions differ from individual care situations.

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## DAILY HEALTH CHECK

Staff will perform a daily health check on each child upon drop off every morning. The daily check will examine whether or not the child has: Fever or elevated body temperature of 100°, Skin rashes or unusual spots.

## ILLNESS

Signs/symptoms of disease including: Severe coughing, sneezing, breathing difficulty discharge from the nose, ears or eyes, diarrhea or vomiting.

Should any of these symptoms present themselves the child will be excluded until a medical evaluation allows inclusion. **A doctor's note must be submitted stating that the child is not contagious and indicating the date that they can return to daycare.** 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 necessitate exclusion from the program:

## **FEVERS**

A temperature of 100° F or higher is reason for exclusion from group care. A child who has been sent home with a fever of 100° F or higher may return to the program after being fever free for 24 hours without any medication.

## **SEVERE COLDS**

Colds with extreme symptoms of excessive coughing, sneezing, nose drainage that is yellow or green and that interferes with a child's ability to eat, sleep or play are reason for exclusion.

## **DIARRHEA**

Bowel movements that are extremely loose, watery and frequent are reasons for exclusion. A child should be free from diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to the program.

**EXPLANATION** — Diarrhea in children is an extremely contagious illness. Bowel movements that cannot be contained in a diaper or a toilet pose a high risk of contagion. Young children, especially infants, may have frequent or loose stools regularly or in response to a variety of conditions, but these are different from diarrhea. One or two meals should be eaten during the "24 hours free from diarrhea" (overnight with no meals eaten should not be considered 24 hours free from diarrhea). Secondary symptoms of crying, pain, refusal to eat, etc., must be considered.

## **VOMITING**

Vomiting is a reason for exclusion. As with diarrhea, 24 hours should pass (with at least one meal eaten) without an episode of vomiting before a child returns to the program.

**EXPLANATION** — infants can spit up or throw up for many different reasons. With no other symptoms present we would wait to see if an infant threw up a second time before calling the parent to pick up the child.

## **RASHES**

Rashes must be physician diagnosed for a child to be in the program. 17

## **MOUTH SORES**

Mouth sores with drooling are reason for exclusion, unless the child's pediatrician states the child is non-infectious.

## **CONJUNCTIVITIS**

Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow discharge, often with matted eyelids after sleep, and including a child with eye pain or redness of the eyelids or skin surrounding the eye is reason for exclusion. A child may return to the program 24 hours after medication is begun.

## **TEETHING**

Teething is not a reason for exclusion. Teething can cause low-grade fever (under 100 F), crankiness, loose bowel movements and a clear, runny nose. Teething does not cause the exclusionary conditions described above, though.

## **SYMPTOMS OF CONTAGIOUS CHILDHOOD DISEASE**

Symptoms of contagious childhood diseases are reason for exclusion. The program, however, adheres to the Americans with Disabilities Act in the application of its disease policies. Parents should notify us if their child has been exposed to Measles, Chicken Pox, Roseola, Conjunctivitis (pink eye), impetigo, Pediculosis (head lice) RSV, Bronchiolitis, Strep Throat, Ringworm and Coxsackie. Exposure to contagious disease is not reason for exclusion.

## **SIGNS OF POSSIBLE SEVERE ILLNESS**

Signs of possible severe illness, including unusual lethargy, undefined irritability: persistent discomfort crying or difficult breathing are reasons for exclusion.

## **ABSENCE**

Please call the program if your child will be absent and let us know why. Contagious illnesses must be posted so other parents know what is going around. To be cleared by a pediatrician for group care, we need:

1. the child to be seen by a doctor,
2. a note from the doctor stating

- (a) a diagnosis
- (b) that the child is not contagious
- (c) the date that the child may return to group care

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

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

A stuffed animal or doll may ease the transition from home and comfort the child feeling anxious; please be sure these items are "soft cuddliest." A book or cassette to share with the whole class is always welcome. It is recommended that other toys be left in the car or at home, so as not to be lost, broken or envied by others. Action figure/superhero toys and projectile toys are not permitted in the program. Action figure toys encourage strong physical play which often leads to aggressive play; this can get out of control when children confuse make-believe with reality. Toy guns, weapons, violent material, and money are not allowed. Videotapes brought from home, to be shared at school during inclement weather or when curriculum themes relate, necessitate a few words of caution. Disappointment may arise when we are not able to show a videotape due to time constraints or developmental appropriateness. We require administrative approval after advance screening before your child offers to share a video with his/her class.

## **TUITION and FEE POLICY**

**Fees:** May vary. Please contact Center for tuition pricing. There will be a \$75 registration fee incurred at the time of enrollment. Please call the center at to inquire about fees for your child. We reserve the right to increase tuition and charges. You will be notified no less than one month prior to any changes in rates. Tuition will include up to 10 hours per day. Additional time will incur additional fees of \$5 per hour. Any child that is not picked up by closing will incur a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute per child for the first five minutes and \$5.00 per minute thereafter. If any child that has been left at the end of the day, attempts will be made to utilize emergency telephone numbers in the child's file. If there is still no response, we will call the police or Child Protective Services.

Tuition is due payable on Monday of each week. Any payments made after Monday will incur a late fee of \$5 per day. There will be no refunds or credits for missed days while the child is enrolled. Parents who are more than 14 days in arrears will be withdrawn from the program.

Please refer to holiday policy for planned absences. For those families who receive reimbursement assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program, please note that all nonreimbursed tuition fees are the parents' responsibility. Please be reminded that these programs will not reimburse for excessive absences, so it is important to make sure that your child attends during their approved schedule. All co-payments are due on the 1st of each month. Late fees apply for co-payments not paid on time. Provider professional development is usually scheduled on the weekends when the daycare is closed. There may be trainings that occur during daycare hours. Should this occur, parents will be notified in advance of daycare closure dates.

## **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

At Little Steps Early Learning Academy, you pay for the "position" held by your child. if your child misses a day for any reason outside of a daycare holiday closure, or vacation time, you are still expected to pay for that day missed. Payment is based on a flat weekly fee. Little Steps Early Learning Academy does not currently accept drop-ins. Children attending must maintain a schedule of at least 3 full time days. A 2 week written notice is required prior to withdrawing your child from care. In the case that notice is not given, the parent will be responsible for charges equaling a 2 week period. If your child will be transitioning to another program, we will be more than happy to provide you with any assessment information needed to ensure that your child's transition is smooth.

Please note that if you are the recipient of a childcare subsidy, excessive absences must be reported to the agency. Excessive absences will lead to termination. Parents are required to pay any co-payments and any uncovered expenses that the childcare subsidy declines to reimburse.

### **Vacation Days:**

Up to 5 days per full-time family per year with full credit. Must give 1 week written notice to receive credit. Part time family's vacation days will be based on the number of days they are enrolled each week( ex: enrolled 3 days per week, you will receive 3 vacation days per year).

The following holidays will be observed for teacher in-service training: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Nevada Day, Columbus Day. These are paid days for staff and tuition must be paid for these days. If any of these holiday fall on the weekend, the daycare may observe the preceding Friday or the following Monday to observe the holiday. The daycare will close on Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, and the day after Christmas. The daycare will notify parents of holiday closures outside of those listed above at least 7 days in advance.

### **Toilet Training-Is your child ready?**

1. Expresses interest in coming into the bathroom with you to find out what goes on there and perhaps even sits on the toilet herself.
2. Understands what the toilet is for and what it means to have a wet or dirty diaper. If she also shows a preference for being clean and dry fussing when she's wet, pulling off a dirty diaper, or asking to be changed; all the better!
3. Knows the words for urinating and having a bowel movement (such as "going potty" or whatever words your family chooses).
4. Can stay dry for at least two hours at a time.
5. Has regular bowel movements with soft, formed stools
6. Can and will follow simple directions, such as those for washing hands.
7. Can help pull pants up and down
8. Seems to recognize at least a few seconds ahead of time that she's about to go and can tell you before it happens.  
(Many youngsters will squat, leave the room, or get "the look" before having a bowel movement.)
9. Is in a willing, receptive mood and isn't going through any major transitions (like adjusting to a new sibling or school).
10. Demonstrates a desire for independence (for example, wants to be a "big girl" and do things for herself) -- or, better yet, shows a specific desire to use the toilet like mommy and daddy do!

If your child meets most of these criteria, she's ready to try. If not, wait a month or two and reevaluate.

Potty-Training should begin at home over a long weekend or holiday.

Once you have had success at home for at least a week, your child may begin wearing CLOTH training pants with rubber pants to cover them at child care.

You must still provide me with 1-2 pull ups for nap or other extended periods. Also you MUST provide me with at least 2 complete changes of clothing for your child.

Under no circumstances will your child be allowed to potty-train in regular underwear.

This is for sanitary reasons! Regular underwear cannot contain urine & feces to prevent the spread of germs in my home & to other children in care & to my family. Please cooperate with me on this matter.

Also, if you begin training, please notify me so that I can continue with all the work you have accomplished.

Further, if within 2-3 weeks, your child shows no signs of progress, I reserve the right to put your child back in diapers & try again in a few weeks.

Parent has read & agreed to the Toilet training policies.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **HANDWASHING PROCEDURE**

All child care providers, staff, volunteers, and children shall wash their hands at the following times:

**Before and After:**

- Preparing or handling food or feeding a child
- Administering medication
- Playing in water used by more than one person (i.e., water table)
- Eating a meal or snack

**After:**

- Handling bodily fluid (mucus, blood, vomit, feces or urine) from sneezing, wiping and blowing noses, from mouths, or from cuts or sores
- Before engaging in any activity related to serving food, including, without limitation, setting the table, handling uncooked food, especially raw meat and poultry, dispensing snack
- After using the toilet or helping a child use the toilet
- Changing a diaper with or without gloves (Hands must be washed after **EVERY** diaper change)
- After attending to an ill child
- After handling an animal
- Cleaning or handling the garbage

The staff of the facility shall ensure that each bathroom has running water, soap and paper towels.

All child care providers, staff, volunteers, and children shall use the handwash procedure:

1. Check to be sure a clean, disposable paper towel is available
2. Turn on WARM water to a comfortable temperature
3. Moisten hands with water and apply liquid soap to hands
4. Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 10 seconds. Rub areas between fingers, around nailbeds, under fingernails, jewelry, and back of hands.
5. Rinse hands under warm running water until they are free of soap and dirt. Leave the water running while drying hands.
6. Dry hands with the clean, disposable paper towel
7. If taps do not shut off automatically, turn taps off with a disposable paper towel
8. Throw the disposable paper towel into a lined trash container. Use hand lotion to prevent chapping of hands, if desired.

HAND SANITIZERS OR PREMOISTENED CLEANING TOWELETTES DO NOT SUBSTITUTE FOR HANDWASHING. THEY MAY BE USED AS A TEMPORARY MEASURE WHEN RUNNING WATER IS UNAVAILABLE, SUCH AS DURING AN OUTING, UNTIL HANDS CAN BE WASHED UNDER RUNNING WATER.

NAC 432A.412.2 requires that child care providers instruct, monitor and assist the children being cared for to ensure that the children follow the handwash procedures.

Caregivers shall provide assistance with handwashing at a sink for infants who can be safely cradled in one arm and for children who can stand but not wash their hands independently. A child who can stand shall either use a child-size sink or stand on a safety step at a height at which the child's hands can hang freely under the running water. After assisting the child with handwashing, the staff member shall wash his or her own hands.

If a child is unable to stand and is too heavy to hold safely to wash the hands at the sink, caregivers shall use the following method:

- Wipe the child's hands with a damp paper towel moistened with a drop of liquid soap. Then discard the towel.
- Wipe the child's hands with a clean, wet, paper towel until the hands are free of soap. Then discard the towel.
- Dry the child's hands with a clean paper towel.

#### State of Emergency

During any and all pandemics, natural disasters, or any other situation that may result in the declaration of a state of emergency, Little Steps Early Learning Academy

Will remain open unless otherwise ordered by a government entity to close, or is directly effected by the event ( i.e destroyed by the natural disaster, has a substantiated case of extreme illness) All tuition, attendance, and vacation policies will remain in effect. There will be exceptions.

a. If a parent is directly impacted by the natural disaster, pandemic, or state of emergency. For instance, if the child is diagnosed with the illness which caused the state of emergency these policies will be waived and we will work with the parents regarding enrollment. Enrollment would resume once the child is released by his/her doctor. If the child will not be returning, a two weeks notice will still be required. Parents will be responsible for any tuition incurred after doctor's clearance.

b. If a parent is laid off, without pay, Little Steps ELA will work with parents to reserve enrollment and Suspend tuition costs for a period of time. Written acknowledgement from your employer will be required. This is also the policy should a parent be displaced or must move out of state due to a natural disaster or pandemic. Regular tuition policies will apply to parents who continue to receive their regular salary or hourly wage.

c. Vacation time of 5 days per year may be used during this time with at least a 3 day notice.