

# **BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC**

## **FAMILY HANDBOOK**

2020-2021 School Year

## BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC

### WELCOME

Dear Family,

We are honored that you have become a part of the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center family. We share a small amount of your child's life and are privileged to be given the opportunity. Our goal is to impact our students' lives educationally, emotionally and socially so they are provided with a strong foundation for their educational career. We look forward to working as a family to help each child reach goals that are set for them throughout their time at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. We strive not only to provide a challenging academic program but a secure, personal environment of care to each individual student. We hope that we can exceed all of our families' expectations and want to take this time to personally welcome your family.

Thank you for choosing BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Donna Massucci

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC

# ABOUT US

## Philosophy

To help each child learn, grow, develop, and ultimately prepare for grade school. We identify and use topics that excite each individual child and makes learning a fun experience instead of a task. Just as each child is different in personality and appearance, they also differ in their learning style, motivation, and ability. These differences are to be embraced and encouraged through child directed activities while maintaining a structured curriculum. The structure of the curriculum covers core concepts and is not limited in time frame, appearance, approach, or activities. We believe success and growth come from encouragement and praise. Our teachers focus on building every child's self-esteem and confidence through positive feedback and rewards. We nurture their natural strengths. A child sees the world around them with wonder and awe, and we believe in encouraging their natural curiosity. It takes a village to educate a child and parent involvement is strongly encouraged in daily center activities and special events.

## Mission

The Reggio Emilia Philosophy is based upon the following set of principles:

- \*Children must have some control over the direction of their learning
- \*Children must be able to learn through experiences of touching, moving, listening, and observing.
- \*Children have relationships with other children and with material items in the world that they must be able to explore.
- \*Children must have endless ways to express themselves.

## Certification

Licensed Plus

School Choice Leadership Award

NAEYC Accreditation

## Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

## Hours of Operation

Childcare services are provided from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM Monday through Friday.

## Holidays

We are closed for certain holidays: Please see attached closing dates and early closures.

## Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed along with enrollment fee and first tuition payment paid prior to your child's first day of attendance. This includes state documentation surrounding authorized pickups, all enrollment forms, enrollment contract, and all health records (including latest physical and immunization record).

An enrollment fee of \$75 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is non-refundable.

A week before the enrollment of your child a one-week tuition deposit is required as parents pay ahead for the following week.

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 6 weeks to 5 years of age.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

## Inclusion

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

## Non-Discrimination

At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

## Family Activities

Each family is a child's first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children's classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

\*Please see the list of Family Activities at the end of this booklet.

## Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential. Upon request records will be available to:

- Administrators and teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian to access the records
- The child's parents or legal guardians
- Regulatory authorities

## Staff Qualifications

Our teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Teacher	Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education	2 years
Teacher	Child Development Associate	1 year
Assistant/Aide	Credential	

Caregivers participate in a hiring orientation process and are required to participate in ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy, and safety, environments, developmentally appropriate practices, assessment and developmental screening, positive guidance, family relationships, cultural competence & diversity, and professionalism.

We strongly discourage families from entering into employment arrangements with staff (i.e. babysitting). Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC.

## Child to Staff Ratios

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks, which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

Age	Child to Staff	Maximum Group Size
≤ 12 months	<u>4 to 1</u>	<u>8</u>
13-35 months	<u>6 to 1</u>	<u>10</u>
3-year-olds	<u>8 to 1</u>	<u>11</u>

4-year-olds	<u>12 to 1</u>	<u>14</u>
5 and 6-year-olds	<u>12 to 1</u>	<u>14</u>

Source: National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.

## About our Programming

### Secure Attachment

We believe in keeping our infants and toddlers with the same teaching staff for at least 9 months. Students thrive in organized environments with routines and consistency. A well supported classroom is crucial for young children as it gives them a sense of security and allows children to develop secure attachment. Through consistency students understand the day to day happenings and how the classroom structure. During this period the children are able to build strong connections with their teachers and in turn develop a sense of trust in the teachers as well. This trust will help the children be more confident in their exploration and engagement.

### Communication & Family Partnership

**Daily Communications:** Daily notes from center staff will keep you informed about your child's activities and experiences at the center. Notes will be sent home via Brightwheel and in some circumstances hard copy. Important notices will also be placed on the Family Sign-in Desk and may require a signature at times.

**Bulletin Boards:** Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

**Newsletters:** Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are available at the sign-in/sign-out desk for your taking.

**Email:** We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates via Brightwheel.

**Parent Resource Board:** Our parent resource room provides a learning environment for parents to share opinions, ideas and experiences and increase their understanding of learning and development.

**Family Visits:** Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor's badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving.

**Family Celebration Nights:** Family nights are scheduled around holidays and seasonal celebrations. These nights include snacks, drinks and fun filled age-appropriate activities for families. These celebrations allow families and children times to share, learn, and have fun.

Families have an opportunity to be a part of their child's learning experience and connect with other families.

**Conferences:** Family & teacher conferences occur through the year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. Conferences will be offered upon the completion of each assessment; you may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

### Open Door Policy

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during the day, call the center whenever the need arises, or email us at any time. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times. Doors are only to be accessed with security codes or will be answered by a member of our staff.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. We always encourage families to check in with our teaching staff at morning drop off or at evening pick up. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have long discussions when teachers are in ratio. If a situation requires a longer discussion, we kindly ask you work to arrange an appointment and our staff will take time to meet with you!

### Publicity

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website. Written permission will be obtained prior to use of photographs.

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

## CURRICULA & LEARNING

### Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment that is Reggio Emilia inspired. The curriculum is developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible day routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work

and play with others.

### Family Partnership

At BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC we value Family-Teacher partnerships, as we understand and celebrate that the family is the child's first teacher. Through dedicated partnership we believe that together we can help children to develop a strong sense of self, develop a positive attitude for learning, and connect with curriculum. We encourage you to discuss your family's values, beliefs, and dreams with our teaching staff. This type of conversation will help our staff to ensure your wishes for your child help us to influence our curriculum and conversations.

We also trust that you will bring any of your concerns surround your child to any member of our team, whenever you need. We are here to address your questions surrounding child development, assessment, your child's needs, family support, transitions, behaviors, or anything else that may arise. While we encourage you to speak openly with our staff, we recommend finding or scheduling a time where our attention is dedicated to you and we are not in ratio.

### Family Involvement

To help better represent your family dynamic, culture, or values we invite you to be a part of our classrooms! Through our Strengthening Families Approach we invite you to help the classroom come alive with your talents, second languages, skills, or experiences. If you are interested in volunteering to be a part of your child's classroom in any way, please reach out to your child's teacher.

### Curricula & Assessment

Curriculum: BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC uses a Reggio Emilia inspired curriculum. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom so as to deliver the best-individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

For information about your child's day, please see copies of daily schedules and lesson plans posted in each classroom.



## Assessment:

Goals of assessment: 1.) Track and monitor each child's developing skills so we can have informed conversations with parents, know if there is a need to call in outside resources to assist child with gaining skills, and modify programming to meet the child's current needs. 2.) For the program to evaluate the current teaching practices and curriculum. This information will be used to inform planning for overall program improvements. 3.) To ensure we are using assessment information to influence the daily happenings within each classroom which include teaching to varied abilities, taking children's interests and needs into consideration, and teaching to each child's level.

## Observations

Observation is a tool utilized by our staff to help assess individuals and groups here at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. We believe that through "ordinary moments" we can observe children's play and conversations to better identify the need for individualization of lesson plans or classroom experiences. These observations both formal and informal help our staff to introduce lessons, tools, open-ended questions, or other methods to meet each child's individualized needs in their education experience. Observations may also be used to assess a child's progress and growth in the classroom environment, as well as help guide conversations with families.

## Developmental Screening

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC encourages families to become familiar with the AQS-SE tool. Many local pediatricians provide families on information to complete the ASQ-SE developmental screening. We will work to complete the ASQ-SE at the following milestones: 2 months, 6 months, 12 months, 18 months, 24 months, 30 months, 36 months, 48 months, and 60 months. Our staff will provide each family with their own copy of the ASQ-SE to fill out on their own. Once completed, the staff and family will come together to share the findings and create future goals for the child.

## Transitions

Your child's transition in childcare should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

### Transition from home to center

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

### Transition between learning programs

Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

### Transition to elementary school

Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

### Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. New Hampshire rules prohibit any screen time for children under two. This includes TV, videos and computers.

### Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

### Celebrations

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community.

### Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants every 10 minutes.

After lunch, all children less than 5 years of age participate in a quiet rest time. Caregivers/teachers are required to directly observe these children by sight and sound, including when engaging with other children who may be awake.

We allow one blanket and one sheet during rest. One small resting buddy is allowed for this rest time. Blankets and sheets are sent home every Friday to be cleaned and returned the following Monday.

### Supervision

Teachers are required to supervise children in their care by keeping them in sight all of the time.

Supervision by sound is permissible in classrooms serving children over the age of four as long as teachers frequently check on children who are out of direct sight frequently.

## Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

## GUIDANCE

### General Procedure

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Upon hire staff members are required to read our protocols and policies and family handbook to ensure understanding of discipline, expulsion prevention and positive guidance. They are required to sign documentation of their agreement and understanding.

### Discipline Policy

Staff are to use a positive guidance approach with children. Here at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC we understand children learn through exploration, experimenting and testing limits. Through this lens we allow children to understand how the world works through support and discussion. Our teachers are trained to guide children through redirection, positive guidance, and modeling children will gain the knowledge to make a positive influence on the world around them. Teachers will NEVER use physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion when disciplining a child.

Prohibited Practices are as follows:

- Corporal Punishment including spanking
- Shaking, jerking, squeezing, or physical indication of disapproval
- Shaming or verbal abuse
- Labeling children as “bad”
- Using false threats, bribes, or choices
- Withholding food, drink, diapers, or activity times
- Potty Shaming
- Biting
- Retaliation of action
- Unwanted Touches which cause distress

## EXPULSION PREVENTION

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC is committed to ensuring that all children attending our program have access to a quality early childhood education that provides a safe and developmentally appropriate experiences and nurtures positive learning and development. We will involve the child’s family in our efforts to support his or her successful inclusion in our program. BVS will make every effort to successfully include and maintain children in our program if the parents/ guardians show us they are willing to be active participants in the correction of the child’s behaviors. If we see the parents/guardians not wanting to be active participants, we will work with them to figure out a pleasant exit strategy for all those involved.

If the decision to expel a child from the program is made, the considerations are strictly based upon our abilities to assist the child and are NOT based upon the behavior or misconduct of the family.

### What is expulsion?

The complete and permanent removal of a child from an educational system, e.g., childcare center (Gilliam & Shahar, 2006).

Terminating the enrollment of a child or family in the regular group setting because of a challenging behavior or a health condition. (Caring for Our Children; National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd edition)

### What is suspension?

Reduction in the amount of time a child may be in attendance of the regular group setting, either by requiring the child to cease attendance for a particular period of time or reducing the number of days or amount of time that a child may attend. Requiring a child to attend the program in a special place away from the other children in the regular group setting is included in this definition. (Caring for Our Children; National Health and Safety Performance Standards Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs, 3rd edition)

## What are challenging behaviors?

Any behavior that makes it difficult for a young child to be successful in a group environment. Such behaviors interfere with a child's ability to positively interact with others and may disrupt the learning process or even pose health and/or safety risks. Such behaviors often frustrate adults because the behaviors do not respond to typical behavior intervention strategies. (Izen and Kalinowski, 2010)

- Any repeated pattern of behavior that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro social interactions with peers and adults. (Powell, Fixsen, Smith, & Fox, 2007)

## First steps towards success:

BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC teachers are set up to redirect challenging behaviors in a way that guides and promotes positive outcomes for both the child and the teacher. These different techniques include but are not limited to:

- Turning a "no" to a "yes"
- Redirecting to appropriate behavior
- Reinforce appropriate behaviors around the child
- Providing positive attention when challenging behavior ends
- Teaching more appropriate skill and focus on reinforcing appropriate skill

Teachers are asked to document challenging behaviors each time they occur, how the behavior is handled, the outcome of the situation and then shared with the both the families and the director. The teachers continuously work with parents through communicating and exchanging techniques to better support the child at home and at school. After these techniques have been used over trial and error and the challenging behaviors are still occurring, we are able to reach out to outside resources.

## Who can help?

When the teachers are unable to provide positive results from these different strategies they will ask for assistance from the Director. It is then the Director may choose to consult with outside agencies that specialize in challenging behaviors. BVS works closely with PTAN, the Early Childhood Learning Center and Community Partners. PTAN is a grant-funded statewide technical assistance and support network that promotes quality, developmentally appropriate and culturally competent early childhood education and special education programs. The mission of the ECLC is to foster early foundations for lifelong learning and social growth. We provide a welcoming, healthy, safe, confidence-inspiring environment where individuality is nurtured, and independence is encouraged. Together, students, staff, and families foster meaningful relationships and a vibrant community. Community Partners are dedicated to providing quality developmental and mental health services to meet the needs of families and individuals in Strafford County.

Resource Contact Information  
PTAN: (603) 206-6800

Early Childhood Learning Center: (603) 664-5586  
Community Partners: (603) 516-9300

## Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness.

Each student at BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director of the Center.

## Physical Restraint

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

## Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.
- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

## TUITION AND FEES

### Payment

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due

weekly by 6 pm on Thursday if you are paying via ACH or 5pm by check or cash, as outlined in the Enrollment Agreement.

### Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs. Therefore, we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$25 will be added to your account. Your account must up to date for your child to be welcomed back on Monday.

Please meet with Donna for any special needed arrangements.

### Returned Check Charges

All returned checks will be charged a fee of \$35. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on “cash only” status.

### Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$2 per minute per child will be assessed beginning at 5pm. That fee is to be paid directly to the team member with your child, it does not go to BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC. If you are late more than twice in a short time frame you will be asked to meet with the director.

### Additional Fees/ Credits

- A non-refundable enrollment/ registration fee of \$75 is due annually on August 17<sup>st</sup>.

## ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

### Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9 AM, please call us at (603) 905-9183. As BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC is a learning center we expect your child to be in the building by 9am to participate in curriculum and learning opportunities.

### Vacation

While we recognize the value of family vacations, the center does not provide credit for vacation days.

### Withdrawal

A written notice, 2 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn.

## Transfer of Records

Whether transitioning to the next program setting or to a new classroom, your child's records will be transferred internally.

If your child is transitioning to a new school, a written request from you with instructions to where the records should be sent is required. Please allow 72 hours to receive your files.

## Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on WMUR, Bright Wheel, and our Facebook Page. BVS follows SAU 74 for closings and delays.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

## Closing Due to Pandemic

Should BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC need to close due to a pandemic or viral outbreak such as COVID-19, we will take extreme measures to ensure the safety of your child, family, and our staff. These include, but are not limited to daily temperature check, social distancing, closures, a change in the hours of our operation, and a change of specific policies. Families will be responsible for their full tuition, but BVS will attempt a reduction if at all possible.

## DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

### General Procedure

Please do not drop-off your child prior to your registered hours unless you receive approval from the teacher or Director. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

Please turn cars completely off during drop off and pick up times. If a quick drop off is necessary please utilize the drop off lane, if there is no space please ensure to park in designated parking spaces NOT in front of the dumpster.

We close at 5:00 PM, please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

### Cell Phone Usage

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you NOT use your cell phone at any time while visiting the center.



## Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

In order to safeguard your child, we will need copies of any court ordered custody agreements. Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after one hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

## Right to Refuse Child Release

We may refuse to release children if we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child. To protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Recurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

# PERSONAL BELONGINGS

## What to Bring

- **Infants:** Enough prepared bottles for a day's use, at least 8 diapers per day, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be prepared, labeled, and dated. Please ensure all personal items are labeled with your child's name.
- **Toddlers:** At least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program, one blanket (sheet optional).
- **Preschoolers:** at least two changes of clothes, socks, one blanket (sheet optional).

All items brought from home MUST be labeled with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the center.

## Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a cubby. Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and picture. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home. Our classroom cubbies hold essential items such as extra clothes, jackets, winter gear, small backpack and small lunchbox. Space is limited so please leave any extra items at home.

## Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located at the entryway. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

## Toys from Home

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center.

# NUTRITION

## Foods Brought from Home

Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch.	
Bean & cheese dip Tortilla chips (crackers) Tropical fruit salad Broccoli Milk	Chicken strips Whole Wheat Roll Orange wedges Broccoli Milk
Cheese quiche Fresh fruit cup Broccoli Milk	Whole Wheat Macaroni & Tuna Salad Green Beans Carrots Milk

## Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

If your child will need an epi-pen it must be in the original package with the original prescription label.

## Mealtime

A caregiver who is trained in first aid for choking is present at all meals. We ask that you supply your child with appropriate utensils.

Staff will communicate the food the child consumed and the amount with families of infants, children with special feeding needs, or upon request. This information can be found within the child's daily sheet on the Bright Wheel App.

## Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed "on cue" to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies.
- Labels on all milk containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after family has tried the food at home to ensure there are no allergies.
- Bottles that are unfinished or unrefrigerated (formula or breast milk) will be discarded after one hour.

## Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 2.5 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

# HEALTH

## Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every August, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

## Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than 10 days after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for ensuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

## Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Fever (100°F or higher under the arm, 101°F or higher in the mouth, 102°F or higher in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms. Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or more than 2 times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
- Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
- Rubella, until 6 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Has a physician or other health professionals written order that child be separated from other children.

Children or staff who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.

- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

## Medications

(A) Our center does not administer prescription or over the counter medication to children unless we have the proper authorization forms.

(B) All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific written instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- Prescription medications require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- Non-prescription medications require written permission and instructions signed by the child's primary care physician. The written permission must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and all medications must be in the original container. Non-prescription medication should not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.

(C) Non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream or teething gel), sunscreen and insect repellent require a note signed by the family, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months.

## Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments.

Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)

- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness
- Tuberculosis

### Cleanliness

Our staff work to ensure the cleanliness of the classrooms and bathrooms. They utilize the NAEYC Cleaning, Sanitizing, and Disinfecting Table to influence the frequency and suggested methods to ensure our environment is supporting healthy practices. At BVS we believe in using non-chemical cleaners and fragrance-free options. The center utilizes essential oils, vinegar, castile soap, and baking soda to naturally clean the environment. Our ventilation system also uses a Silver Ion Filter to help sanitize incoming air.

All of our toys, materials, and supplies consist of non-toxic products.

### Tooth Brushing

To promote a healthy mouth, children over the age of one are encouraged to brush their teeth daily. Children will be provided with their own toothbrush and toothbrush cover upon enrollment (or age eligibility). Children are provided with the opportunity to brush their teeth after “lunch”, for children over the age of 24 months organic toothpaste is used with written parental consent.

## SAFETY

### Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children’s clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children’s clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

## Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will occur unless a heat or cold advisory occurs.

## Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. Precautions are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease.

## Injuries

Safety is a major concern in childcare and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will be alerted through the Bright Wheel app and receive an incident report outlining the incident. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

## Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

## Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

In the event of arising difficulties between a family and BVS Staff we will try to alleviate the problem with the following:

1. **Open Communication:** We encourage all parties to express openly their interpretation, understanding, and feelings regarding any situation that has taken place. Families and Staff are encouraged to reach out to the Administration team members if they are ever uncomfortable in a situation or communication. It is our hope that all parties use a solution driven approach.

2. **Actively Listening:** We hope that in communications all parties are actively listening and trying to see the other's point of view. By using active listening individuals can connect with limited interruption and open communication.
3. **Be open to Solutions:** Sometimes compromise is necessary. BVS will make every effort to take family needs and perspectives, we ask that you allow us to help you understand our knowledge of child development in the process.
4. **Our Ultimate Goal:** To agree on an option that benefits both sides to some extent. We want all parties to walk away with the underlying conflict resolved.

## Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

## Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

## Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called, and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

## Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

## Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report



is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

## EMERGENCIES

### Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located, the family and the police will be notified.

### Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with alarms, lights, rolling cribs and fire extinguishers, Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a yearly basis.

### Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

## CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed yearly and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.

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# Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC Family Handbook and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the BVS staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the BVS Family and Child Enrichment Center, LLC Family Handbook that I do not understand.

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Recipient Signature

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Date

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Recipient Name

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Center Staff Signature

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Date

## FAMILY ACTIVITIES

We offer a variety of ways for families to participate in the growth and improvement of our program. We encourage families to take an active role.

**Family Events:** We have several events throughout the year that bring our entire community together. Watch for the announcements!

- Holiday Gatherings
- Annual Family Picnic

**Classroom Activities:** Enjoy and help your child's class with these special activities.

- Share a meal with your child
- Chaperone field trips
- Read to children at arrival or pickup
- Volunteer in the classroom
- Donate requested items
- Welcome new families
- Contribute to class Potluck Meal
- Family Teacher conferences

**Family/Parent Workshops:** Our menu of family workshops changes annually. Below is a list of workshops we typically offer when requested. We try to offer these in the early evening or on Saturdays. See the monthly calendar for scheduled topics. We welcome requests for workshop topics.

- Positive Guidance and Loving Discipline
- Toilet Training
- Safety in the Home
- Childproofing Your Home
- Brain Development
- Nutrition and Exercise for Small Bodies
- Supporting Your Child in Times of Stress
- Food Allergies
- How to Prepare for a Conference
- Warning Signs for Developmental Delays
- Value of Reading to Your Child
- Everyday Math