

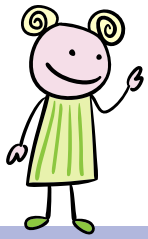
FAMILY HANDBOOK

childserve childcare center

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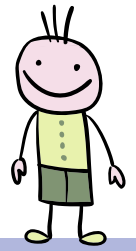
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childserve childcare center

• FAMILY HANDBOOK •



we partner with families to help children with special health care needs live a great life.

Section 1: Introduction

our purpose

ChildServe Childcare Centers are dedicated to partnering with families with children of all abilities to promote learning through developmentally appropriate activities in a quality, inclusive environment. Our mission is achieved through a strong commitment to four intrinsic values: care, integrity, trust and partnership.

our curriculum and educational philosophy

ChildServe Childcare Centers promote learning through developmentally appropriate activities that encourage independence, confidence, creativity and responsibility. Our educational curriculum is based on the Creative Curriculum text. It features a variety of engaging activities and fun play experiences which help each child develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially. It is designed to help children reach their fullest potential with the goal of preparing them for the next level of learning. We strive to provide for each child's needs in a nurturing, healthy and safe environment.

licensing

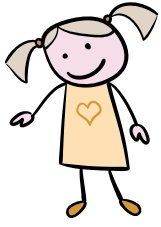
All ChildServe Childcare Centers are licensed by the State of Iowa, Department of Human Services. A copy of Licensing Standards and Procedures form SS-0711 is available to parents upon request. Centers are inspected regularly by a childcare licensing consultant and our own field management staff to ensure that they meet or exceed health, safety, and other state requirements, as well as the ChildServe standard of quality. Our centers partner with a childcare nurse consultant, sponsored by Child Care Resource and Referral, to promote best health and safety practices in all classrooms.

equal opportunity and non-discrimination

ChildServe is firmly committed to the concepts and practice of equal opportunity and non-discrimination. We administer our programs for children and our employment practices without regard to race, gender, religion, age, cultural heritage marital status, sexual orientation, political belief, veteran status, national origin, disability, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law. Our center is inclusive and we will make reasonable accommodations, based on the child's special needs and our abilities to meet those needs. If your child is in special education at a public school, we require a copy of his or her Individual Education Plan (IEP) or similar document for inclusion in the child's file. Having this plan will allow our teachers to provide the best possible care and learning for your child.

the staff

Our teachers are specifically chosen for their interest and dedication to provide quality care, nurturing and learning to young children. Each member of our staff has education, training and/or experience in Early Childhood Education and meet the qualifications set by the State of Iowa, Department of Human Services. Staff must pass thorough criminal and child abuse criminal record checks, references check, and health examination. Staff complete an orientation and ChildServe training program. We believe that learning is a life-long process, for children as well as adults. Our teachers are offered continual opportunities throughout their employment to further their education and improve their skills. We offer in-service training, company-wide workshops and seminars and tuition reimbursement. We partner with the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Iowa to provide scholarships and sponsorships to staff to earn an Early Childhood Associates or Early Childhood Bachelor Degree. Our full time staff members are eligible to participate in a comprehensive employee benefits program and are compensated above market rate which enables us to attract and retain high quality employees.



Enrollment

Section 2: Enrollment

We welcome the opportunity to enroll children who are between the ages of 6 weeks and 6 years of age. We offer inclusive childcare for children with special health care needs that can be met within the classroom environment. Prior to admission, we will assess your child's needs to ensure that we have the ability to provide the level of service required in the best interest of your child.

application

All application/enrollment forms must be on file at least 2 business days prior to the first day of care. A student file will be maintained for each child enrolled. The file includes application for enrollment, fee agreement, physical examination report, Iowa Department of Public Health Certificate of Immunization, emergency contact information and completed consent and authorization form. Student records are to be updated annually according to the Iowa Department of Human Services. Any change of address, telephone numbers, emergency contact information, and/or medical/health information should be reported to the office immediately. Enrollment information including emergency contact information must be renewed at least every 12 months.

fee and payment policies

A \$50.00 non-refundable family registration fee is due at the time of the child's acceptance in the program. If service is interrupted, a re-enrollment fee of \$50.00 will apply.

Tuition must be paid by Tuesday of each week for the current week in accordance with your fee agreement. A late payment fee will apply to past due accounts. Payment must be received each week for service to continue the following week. Your child will not be allowed to attend the center if your account is not current and paid in full.

A late pick-up fee will be charged if your child is picked up after closing time. The fee is \$5.00 per child per 10 minute period after 6:00 p.m. Repeat occurrences of late pick-up could result in an increased late pick-up fee or discontinued enrollment.

A fee will be charged for checks returned due to insufficient funds. We reserve the right to refuse any subsequent payments by check.

Tuition fees are reviewed annually and are adjusted in January. Tuition rates vary according to the age of your child and classroom assignment.

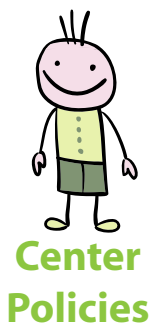
Additional fees for special field trips, in-center activities, swimming lessons, dance classes, etc. may apply and are not included in the weekly tuition fee.

payment methods

Payment is accepted in the form of scheduled electronic payment, check, money order, cashier's check or cash. To arrange electronic payment, simply complete the Automatic Payment Authorization form available at the center.

withdrawing your child

In the event that you need to withdraw your child, a written two week notice is required.



Section 3: Center Policies

hours of operation

The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

holiday closings

Our centers are officially closed on the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday following Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, it will be observed on Friday or Monday. Our centers are closed on Martin Luther King Day to conduct full-day professional development training for center staff.

Operating hours for Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve may be reduced.

Tuition is not reduced for absent days or center closings. The center will make every effort to remain open during inclement weather.

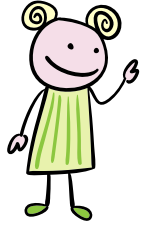
drop off and pick up

We require that children be brought into the center and personally escorted to the classroom teacher by an adult. We also require that the child be signed-in on the roster.

At the end of the day, we will release your child only to parents or guardians with legal custody or persons over the age of 18 who are designated by you on the Emergency Contact form. Under no circumstance will a child be released to a person who is not on the contact list or for whom the parent has not written an authorization note, even if the child and a staff member are familiar with the person. This includes parents of other children enrolled in the center as well as staff members. Adults other than parents or guardians will be required to show picture identification. The child must be signed-out by the person to whom the child is released. If you are unable to arrive at the center prior to our closing time of 6:00 p.m., it is your responsibility to contact your emergency pick-up person to make arrangements for timely pick-up of your child.

The safety of your child is our highest priority. For that reason, we require that all children be signed in and out each day, be escorted to and from the classroom by an adult and be supervised at all times in the center, in the parking lot and on ChildServe property. Please make sure that you or your designee has contact with your child's teacher both at drop-off and pick-up times.

If your child will not attend on a given day, or arrive late, please notify the center no later than 9:00 a.m.



Center Policies

open door policy

Parents/guardians are always welcome at ChildServe. We encourage you to visit anytime and join us for field trips or special center events.

In the event that parental contact is prohibited by court order, a copy of the applicable legal document (court/custody order) must be included in the child's file. Otherwise, we are unable to restrict access. We keep this information confidential and solely for the safety of your child. Even with a court order, our ability to deny access is limited to our notifying promptly the proper police authority and the custodial parent and following our organizational process should unsanctioned contact be attempted or occur at the center.

It is ChildServe policy to remain neutral in all custody matters. Our centers may not serve as a visitation site.

nutrition

Our center provides a nutritious lunch and two snacks that meet the Federal Food Program guidelines. Breakfast is also provided at some locations.

We do not allow outside food to be brought into the center unless the child is not ready for table foods. Infants will be fed according to your written diet plan. The plan will be updated as the diet changes. Bottles must be labeled with your child's name and date.

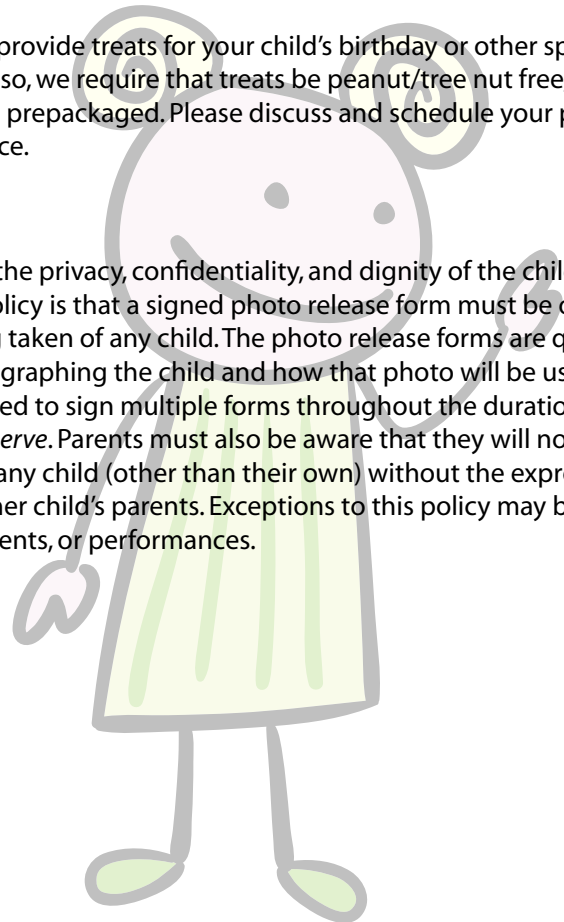
If your child has food allergies or requires a special diet, we will work with you and your child's physician to accommodate your child's needs.

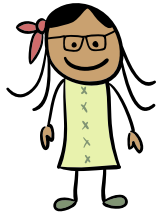
special occasions

It is not necessary for you to provide treats for your child's birthday or other special occasions. If you chose to do so, we require that treats be peanut/tree nut free, purchased commercially and prepackaged. Please discuss and schedule your plans with the Supervisor in advance.

privacy/photos

ChildServe strives to protect the privacy, confidentiality, and dignity of the children and families we serve. Our policy is that a signed photo release form must be on file prior to any photos being taken of any child. The photo release forms are quite specific both in who is photographing the child and how that photo will be used, so it is likely that you will be asked to sign multiple forms throughout the duration of your relationship with ChildServe. Parents must also be aware that they will not be able to take photographs of any child (other than their own) without the express written permission of the other child's parents. Exceptions to this policy may be made for field trips, group events, or performances.





Center Policies

personal items

Our center provides fun, educational toys, equipment and activities. Therefore, we ask you to keep your child's toys or special personal items at home to avoid loss or breakage. For occasional sharing times planned by a teacher, your child may bring in an item as long as it is safe, appropriate and labeled with his/her name.

clothing

Sturdy, washable play clothes are recommended for your child's safety and comfort at the center. In accordance with the Iowa Quality Rating Scale for childcare providers, your child should not wear clothing with drawstring ties near the neck. To prevent injury, your child should wear rubber-soled, closed-toe shoes, preferably sneakers, especially on the playground. Jellies, sandals, and crocs are discouraged. Flip-flops are not permitted. The children are expected to wear shoes at all times. When your child wears heavy boots to school during inclement weather in place of shoes, other shoes must be sent for use indoors. We ask that you provide a complete set of season-appropriate extra clothing, including underwear and socks, labeled with your child's name. All outdoor wear should also be labeled. Clothing soiled as a result of "toileting accidents" will be sent home in a plastic bag. According to health and safety guidelines, we are unable to rinse or launder soiled articles of this nature.

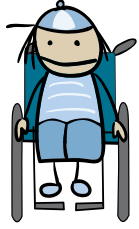
toilet training

Toilet training is usually initiated around the age of 2 years and ideally accomplished prior to a child's transition to the preschool classroom around the age of 3 years. Toilet training is approached in accordance with requests of the child's parents and in a manner that is consistent with the child's physical and emotional abilities. Once you start at home, we will make every effort to coordinate our program with yours. We ask that you supply us with at least two complete changes of clothing, and an ample supply of training pants or underwear for each day your child attends. If your child has just started toilet training, he or she may still wear a diaper at rest time. Children learning to be self-sufficient in the bathroom will have an easier time if they wear clothing that they can pull off and on by themselves. Your child's teacher will provide written communication daily regarding your child's toileting progress.

traditional holidays

Holiday themes will emphasize multi-cultural traditions. The children in our care represent many different religions and ethnic groups. The folklore and customs of each are an important part of our collective culture and are presented as such. The spirit of joy and happiness is the common theme. We do not emphasize religious themes or one particular tradition. Parents are encouraged to share their traditions and customs with other children and their families. Please offer your suggestions to the Supervisor or your child's teacher.





Health & Safety

Section 4: Health and Safety

illness

Our goal is to keep the spread of contagious diseases and illnesses at a minimum. For the comfort of your ill child and the health and wellness of other children, families and staff, your child may not attend the center if any of the following symptoms are present:

- Fever of 101 degrees or above
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (2 or more times in one day)
- Rash of unexplained origin
- Other illnesses that warrant exclusion until treatment has been initiated sufficient to reduce the likelihood of transmitting the illness. Sources such as the CDC Safe and Healthy Childcare manual and Iowa Department of Health may be used to provide guidance.

In general, children who are lethargic and unable to participate actively in the full, regular program will not be allowed to remain at the center. If your child becomes ill while at the center, we will call you and expect that your child be picked up within one hour of notification. Children should not return to the center until he/she has been fever-free for 24 hours, has been free from vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours, is on a normal diet, and/or has had adequate time of recovery recommended for the specific illness. In some instances, a physician's certificate of good health may be required before a child will be allowed to return.

contagious diseases

if your child is ill with a contagious disease, he or she may not return to the center without a physician's written statement indicating that the child is no longer contagious and is able to participate in activities. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the center if their child is diagnosed with any contagious disease so that other families can be notified according to recommendations of the Iowa Department of Health. We will post a notice on the parent information board in the lobby for any instance of contagious disease affecting children who may have had direct exposure at the center, and we will immediately report such disease to the local health authorities as required.

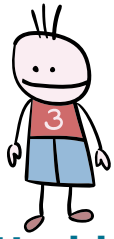
hand washing

We comply with infection control standards and require hand washing upon arrival at the center, before eating, after toileting, after playing outside and at any other appropriate time. We want to control the spread of germs and also strive to help teach your child valuable personal skills.

immunization records

To protect the health of all children, the Iowa Department of Health requires all children to be immunized against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, H. Influenza type B, polio, measles, rubella and varicella (chicken pox). A current signed and dated Iowa immunization certificate must be on file and updated in accordance with state law.

We maintain the right to deny attendance if immunizations are not current.



Health & Safety

allergies

Please inform the Supervisor if your child has an allergy. An emergency health care plan will be required prior to initial start day and updated as needed. The plan will be established by our nurse and center staff in collaboration with the parents/legal guardians and child's physician. If your child has food allergies or requires a special diet, we must be provided with a physician's note with recommendations. We will work with you and your child's physician to accommodate your child's needs. Our center is a peanut-free facility. Since peanut/tree nut allergies are potentially life-threatening, we carefully monitor all foods/ingredients.

medication

Medication will be administered only with written consent of a parent or legal guardian on a medication permission slip. Medications will be given by a caregiver who has completed medication administration training provided by ChildServe. When possible, it is preferred that medication be given at home. BID (twice/day) medications most often preclude distribution at the center.

All medications must be given to your child's teacher for safekeeping in a locked cabinet. Prescription medication must be supplied in the original container, complete with the pharmacy label including child's name, date, name of medication, prescription number, required dosage and schedule for administration. Over the counter medications, other than diaper ointment and sunscreen, require a written physician's order. Physician documentation must include child's name, name of medication, required dosage and time to be given, time frame for treatment, and reason for the medication. We cannot dispense over-the-counter medication on an "as needed" basis.

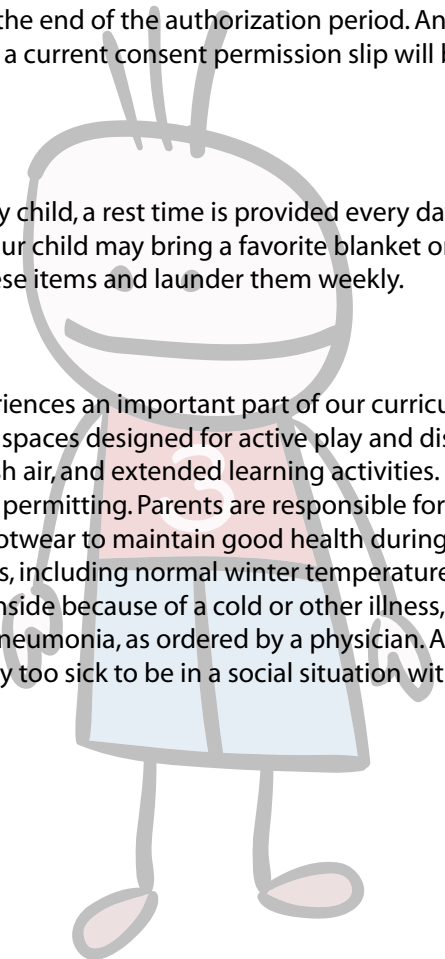
Medications must be taken home at the end of the authorization period. Any medication left in the center without a current consent permission slip will be disposed of.

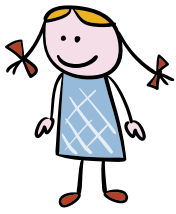
rest and naptime

For the health and well being of every child, a rest time is provided every day. We provide a cot, sheet, and a blanket. Your child may bring a favorite blanket or small sleep toy from home. Please label these items and launder them weekly.

outdoor play

We consider children's outdoor experiences an important part of our curriculum. Our playgrounds include equipment and spaces designed for active play and discovery to provide children with exercise, fresh air, and extended learning activities. Daily outdoor activities will occur, weather permitting. Parents are responsible for sending children in adequate clothing and footwear to maintain good health during outdoor play in all suitable weather conditions, including normal winter temperatures. Please do not ask us to keep a child inside because of a cold or other illness, except for recuperation from bronchitis or pneumonia, as ordered by a physician. A child who is too sick to go outside is usually too sick to be in a social situation with other children.





Health & Safety

accidents, injuries, or emergencies

We take every precaution to protect the safety of your child. This includes routine inspections and maintenance of our facilities, playgrounds and equipment, a safety awareness program, and monthly fire and tornado drills. We follow SIDS prevention practices in our nursery. All staff receive first aid training and are certified in CPR. Any accident or injury is reported to the supervisor and is documented. You will be informed of any injury, will be asked to sign an incident report and will receive a copy of the report when you pick up your child.

Because children will be children, accidents may happen. When they do occur, and we determine that medical attention is needed, we will call you or your designated emergency contact. If a child experiences a medical emergency, ChildServe staff will take the action that is in the best interest of your child, including calling emergency medical personnel if necessary.

biting

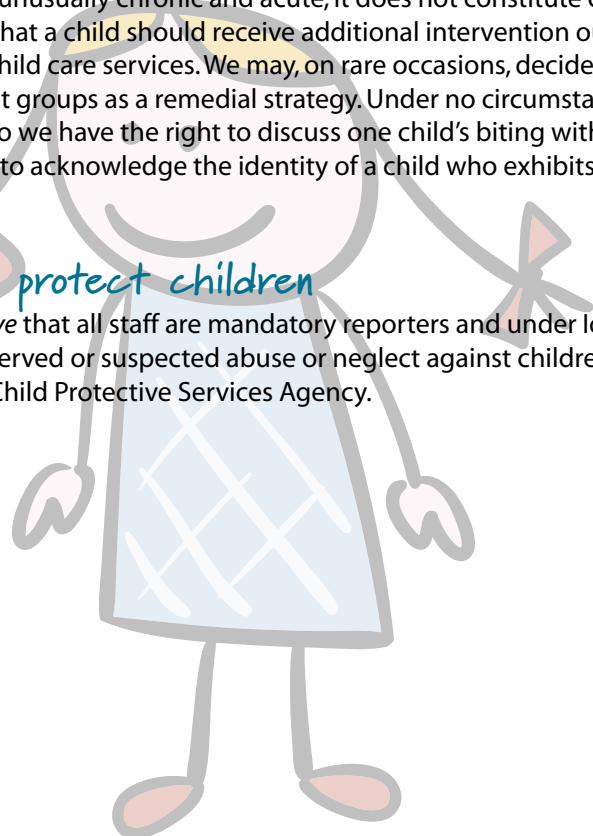
Biting is an unfortunate but natural stage in the development of most young children. Although parents may not observe this behavior at home, most children who participate in a social environment with other children, may, on occasion, bite another child or be bitten by another child. While this is unpleasant for everyone involved, biting does not, under normal circumstances, represent a health threat.

The center's policy on biting is to help children outgrow this undesirable behavior by learning more acceptable forms of social interaction. Our approach to managing biting is consistent with our policy for managing behavior problems in general. We examine the environment and the activity schedule to see how they may be contributing to the behavior, and we make any adjustments that we feel may help the child to modify the behavior. We also help parents to understand the behavior so they can be prepared to respond in a constructive way.

Unless biting by a child is unusually chronic and acute, it does not constitute cause for the center to suggest that a child should receive additional intervention outside the center or alternative child care services. We may, on rare occasions, decide to assign children to different groups as a remedial strategy. Under no circumstances, outside of a court order, do we have the right to discuss one child's biting with another child's parents or to acknowledge the identity of a child who exhibits biting behaviors.

responsibilities to protect children

It is the policy of ChildServe that all staff are mandatory reporters and under Iowa state law, must report observed or suspected abuse or neglect against children or dependent adults to the Child Protective Services Agency.





Family Partnership

Section 5: Family Partnership

parent involvement

We maintain an open door policy for parents and guardians. We welcome visits and involvement in program activities at any time when your child is present. Parent-teacher conferences are regular features of our program. We will also accommodate your request for a special conference with your child's teacher and/or an administrator with reasonable notice. We encourage open communication between families and staff and advise you to make time that you need to visit with your child's teacher at drop off and/or pick up time. We want to speak with you daily about the small but important changes that can affect your child's ongoing development. Our goal is to establish an ongoing dialogue with your family. Please keep in mind that your child's teacher must continue to monitor the rest of the class even though you may feel that you have something very important to discuss. For extended discussion, you will always be able to arrange an appointment with your child's teacher or Supervisor at a mutually convenient time.

Parents of infants and toddlers receive daily reports noting activities, including nourishment, naps, and diaper changes. Daily notes are posted in our two year old and preschool classrooms to highlight activities of the day. Please check the classroom family information boards to keep up to date with daily happenings and special events. Periodic bulletins with special announcements will also be posted or provided to you. Regular newsletters are posted on our web site. Printed copies of newsletters are available upon request.

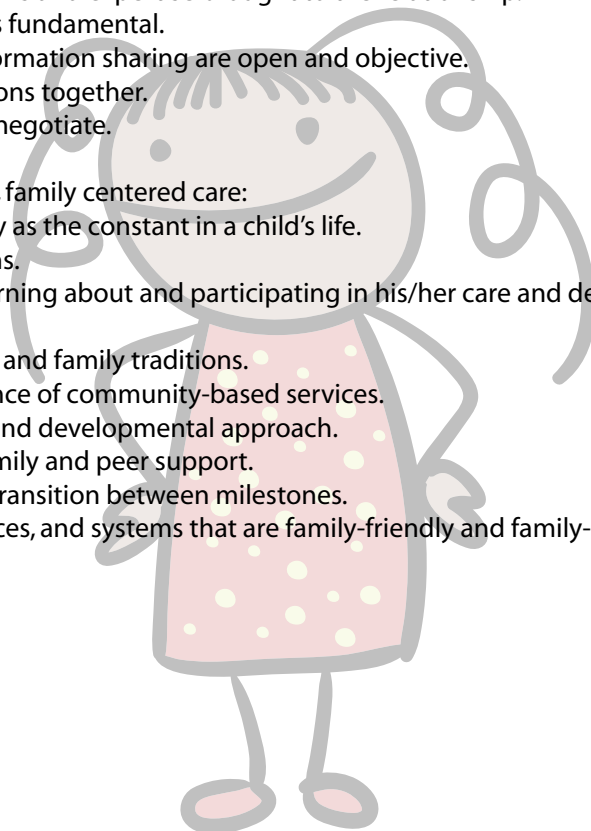
principles of family centered care

The foundation of family-centered care is the partnership between families and professionals. Key to this partnership are the following principles:

- Families and professionals work together in the best interest of the child and family.
- Everyone respects the skills and expertise brought to the relationship.
- Trust is acknowledged as fundamental.
- Communication and information sharing are open and objective.
- Participants make decisions together.
- There is a willingness to negotiate.

Based on this partnership, family centered care:

- Acknowledges the family as the constant in a child's life.
- Builds on family strengths.
- Supports the child in learning about and participating in his/her care and decision making.
- Honors cultural diversity and family traditions.
- Recognizes the importance of community-based services.
- Promotes an individual and developmental approach.
- Encourages family-to-family and peer support.
- Supports youth as they transition between milestones.
- Develops policies, practices, and systems that are family-friendly and family-centered in all settings.
- Celebrates successes.





Family Partnership

partnering with childserve

The purpose shared by both the parent and ChildServe is the health and well-being of the children entrusted to ChildServe for support. Our dependence on one another requires us to work together to meet your child's needs.

Together we are responsible to:

- Treat each other with dignity and respect.
- Share essential information to understand your child's needs.
- Develop a plan of care that will meet the priority needs of your child.
- Keep each other informed of any changes in your child's health or any circumstances that would affect the services received from us.
- Notify each other in advance of any scheduling changes.
- Talk with one another at least once every three months to review your child's progress.
- Meet with one another at least once a year to develop a new plan of care.
- Resolve concerns in ways that build a positive relationship.

professional boundaries

ChildServe recognizes that families often like to express their appreciation for the care and support provided to their child by giving gifts. Words of appreciation expressed verbally or in a thank you card are the best ways to express your appreciation. Families wanting to give a gift should direct that gift to all caregivers in our center. Individual staff are not allowed to accept gifts from families.

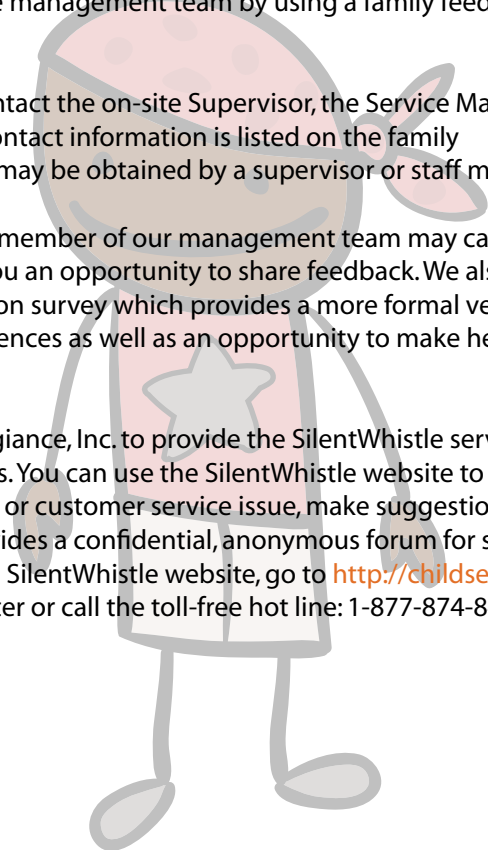
providing feedback

ChildServe is committed to the highest ethical and quality standards. We rely on our staff, volunteers, board members, families and strategic partners to help us identify sources of concern or confusion. ChildServe professionals are available during arrival and departure times to listen to your feedback in person. Those individuals will share your feedback with the appropriate management team by using a family feedback form.

You are also encouraged you to contact the on-site Supervisor, the Service Manager, or any administrator at any time. Contact information is listed on the family information board at the center or may be obtained by a supervisor or staff member.

Because we value your feedback, a member of our management team may call you to simply touch base and to give you an opportunity to share feedback. We also conduct an annual family satisfaction survey which provides a more formal venue for families to share positive experiences as well as an opportunity to make helpful suggestions.

ChildServe has partnered with Allegiance, Inc. to provide the SilentWhistle service. SilentWhistle serves many purposes. You can use the SilentWhistle website to report an ethical, legal, compliance, or customer service issue, make suggestions or ask questions. SilentWhistle provides a confidential, anonymous forum for staff, families, and partners. To access the SilentWhistle website, go to <http://childserve.silentwhistle.com> from any computer or call the toll-free hot line: 1-877-874-8416.





Family Partnership

confidentiality

ChildServe believes in protecting the confidentiality of all families who choose to use our services. Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential.

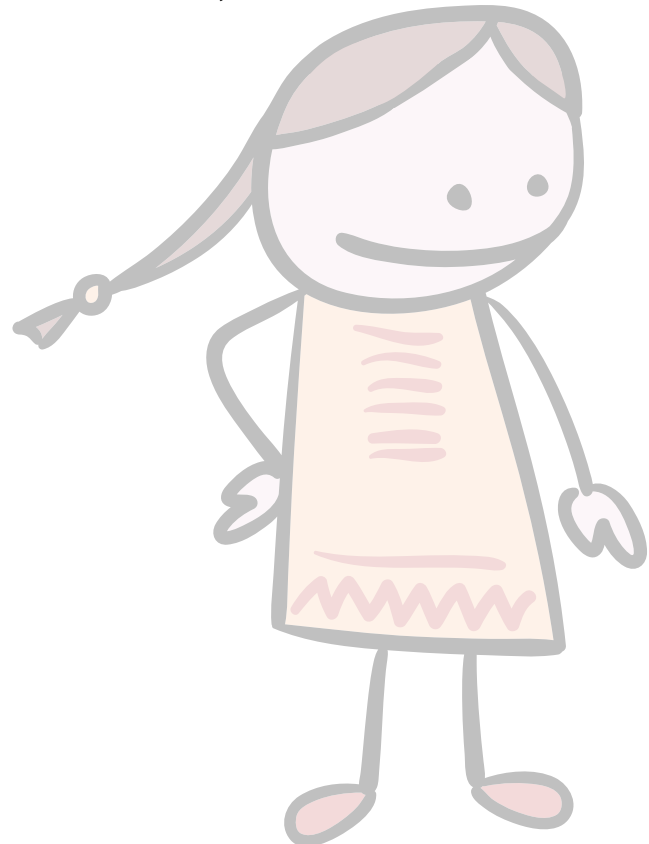
guiding behavior

ChildServe programs incorporate goals for positive guidance to help children learn appropriate behavior and to develop a positive self-concept. Teachers use the following strategies to encourage self-control:

- Redirection – offering an appropriate, alternative activity or choice.
- Positive statements – explaining appropriate behavior and referring to the behavior, not the child.
- Giving attention to the children who are hurt before talking to the child who hurt someone.
- Focus on positive behavior and acknowledge children's good choices.
- Using the "cool-down" strategy by giving the child time to calm down and improve his/her behavior.
- Partnering with families to establish an action plan for guiding behavior at home and at school.

Should there be concerns about a specific developmental issue or behaviors, we may partner with you to develop a plan to help identify both the child's needs and sources of help available to address those needs, including outside referral organizations.

Because we provide care and education in a group setting, we must be concerned for the welfare and safety of all children and staff. If a child exhibits behaviors or needs that jeopardize the welfare and safety of other children or our staff, we reserve the right to discharge your child immediately, without notice.





childserve

Believing in the spirit of a child.