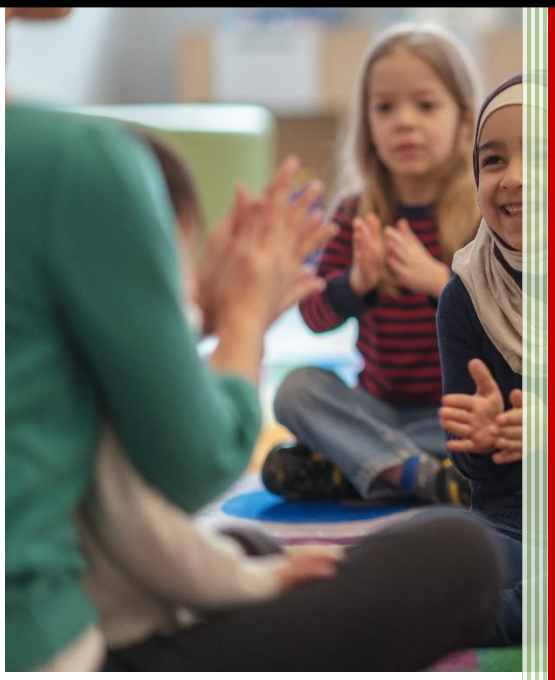
2026

The Big Red Barn Learning Center Parent Handbook



Owner: Caitlynn Hollis

Revised: January 2026

Dear Parents and Guardians,
Welcome to The Big Red Barn Learning Center. We are thrilled to have you, and your child join our warm and nurturing program. This handbook has been designed to provide essential information about our program, policies and procedures. We believe in open communication and collaboration, ensuring that your child's time with us is enriching and fulfilling. Keep this copy for your records. Please also know you will be given a parent contract to sign as well, that provides a condensed version of our handbook upon enrollment. Policies and procedures are reviewed annually.

Sincerely,
Caitlynn Hollis
Owner and Director

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Mission and Philosophy

At The Big Red Barn Learning Center, we are committed to providing a safe, healthy, caring and stimulating environment where each child can thrive emotionally, socially, cognitively, and physically. Our philosophy is rooted in fostering curiosity, respect, and a lifelong love of learning. Where our door is always open, because we were raised in a barn.

Our Program Overview

Our childcare program serves children from 0 to 5 years old. We operate from 6am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday. Our program includes age-appropriate curriculum, and our approach to early education inspires a love of learning. Whether they're building a skyscraper, cooking an imaginary feast, or healing a teddy bear's runny nose, your child will build confidence for life having fun with friends their age in our safe and supportive environment. They'll find teachers who believe in them and give them the freedom to be themselves, try something new, and make new friends.

Curriculum-
We currently us The Daycare Summit Creative curriculum and we are working to incorporate frog street curriculum on top of this. These curriculums allow for different monthly themes that promotes learning in fun and exciting ways such as STEM topics, new literature, and widening our children's vocabulary through ever changing sight words.

Enrollment Process

To enroll your child, please complete all enrollment forms provided in the enrollment packet. This includes the acknowledgment/ signature page of the parent handbook. Communication is key to a successful partnership. This includes a 200$ nonrefundable enrollment fee due at the time of enrollment to hold your child's spot. Please refer to the enrollment information below

This information is provided, because in the past it has been an area of confusion for some. So please read the following information carefully, so that our policies and procedures regarding these two matters are fully understood.

A **nonrefundable enrollment fee equal to $200 is due at time of enrollment.** However, do not give us the deposit until you have met with us, gone through our facility, and been given all the required forms. We recommend this order of doing things because we want to ensure that you feel comfortable with our policies and procedures before there are any money transactions.
The deposit is solely for the peace of mind of both parent and provider. You, the parent, can sleep well at night knowing that your child's childcare spot is fully secured and that your affairs are in order. Equally, we the providers can also sleep well at night knowing that we can comfortably continue to turn prospective parents away because we are holding the spot for your child. This is also why the deposit is nonrefundable. Parents must understand that we will be turning many other parents away because we trust that the spot has already been taken. Therefore, as a courtesy to us, it is of the utmost importance that if at any time your future need for childcare changes that you let us know as soon as possible.

The enrollment fee covers equipment use, administrative cost, and holding of a child's spot for up to 14 days prior to the start of care.

Parent Conferences (communication)-
To ensure that our parents and teachers are always on the same page, we provide opportunities for parents to sit down with their child/children's teacher throughout the year. This ensures that our school and home life work together to

care for the whole child and that we are creating an inclusive and engaging environment in all areas of development for the children we serve.

Daily Schedule/ Activity Plan

Our daily schedule is designed to offer a balanced blend of learning, play and rest. Our Daily Schedule is posted in the parent area of each classroom to give you a reminder of how your child's day will be structured. Our schedule is based on age-appropriate activities. Please see the schedule below for more information.

This schedule is meant to give you an idea of your child's day. Actual times and activities may vary depending on time of the year, weather, age and temperament of the children. Age-appropriate activities are scheduled with the flexibility allowed to respond to the needs of each individual child and their various ages.

No child may be dropped off after 9am unless drop off has been approved by the daycare provider with a 24 hour prior notice and the proper documentation.

Toddler/Preschooler (12 months and older)

6:00am - 8:30 drop-offs, welcome children, free-play and/or structured-play, etc.

8:30 - 9:00 Am snack, clean-up/wash-up

9:00 - 9:30 circle-time

9:30 - 10:00 story-time, various learning games

10:00 - 10:30 Arts and crafts, music, song and dance

11:00 - 12:00 outside play-time or indoor gym play

12:00 - 12:30 free-play and/or structured-play, tabletop activity (paint, sensory bins ect.) interactive video (Little Einstein's, Blippy, etc.)

12:30 - 1:00 lunch time, clean-up/wash-up, and get on mats

1:00 - 3:00 rest-time and/or quiet-time (nap time)

3:00 - 4:00 outside time (weather permitted) or indoor gym free play

4:00 - 4:30 afternoon snack, clean-up/wash-up

4:30 - 5:30 coloring, play-dough, toys, story-time, etc.

5:30 – 6:00pm pick up, wind down time, soft music, quiet play

Infant/Young Toddler (younger than 18 months)

Throughout each day we practice on reaching, grasping, rolling, sitting, crawling, standing, walking, climbing, throwing, catching, kicking, cooing and talking, whichever developmental stage your child happens to be in at the time. For a younger child still taking two to three naps a day, a third nap can be incorporated into their late afternoon schedule and as we all know infants come with their own special set of needs and may need a more individualized schedule.

All diapers are changed every 2 hours.

6:00am - 8:30 drop-offs, welcome children, free play and/or structured-play, story-time, toys, etc.

8:30 - 9:00 AM snack, clean-up/wash-up

9:00 – 11:00 nap

11:00-12:00 sensory play/ tummy time / individual play

12:00-1:00 lunch

1:00-3:00 Nap

3:00 to 4:00 outdoor play or indoor gym play

4:00-6:00pm snack and individual play time/ pick up

Activities- Indoor and Outdoor

Your child will engage in activities that encourage creativity, problem solving and social interactions. Please see the attached current and age-appropriate activities. All activities will be documented and sent to parent/ Guardians through our Playground app that keeps track of all your child's day to day activities.

At this time our center will not be offering any screen time, we appreciate your understanding and may for special occasions once every few months play a movie for children over the age of 2 years old.

Health and Safety

The well-being of your child is our top priority. We maintain rigorous health and safety standers, including regular cleaning and sanitization, hand washing routines and allergy awareness. This includes CPR and first aid training by all members of our staff. The following policies will be followed on a regular basis and are outlined here, so that you as a family can understand exactly how we operate.

-Our 8-step diapering process
1. prepare all required materials
2.Always put on disposable gloves
3.clean the child and unfasten the diaper
4.Dispose of the diaper. Fold the diaper over the wipes inside and secure the diaper with the tabs
5. put child in a dry diaper
6. Wash child hands
7. sanitize changing table using the 4 step process
8. Wash your hands

- Child assessments (additional resources)

We here are The Big Red Barn understand that every child is unique in their own way. With this said we also understand that each child also develops at their own pace. Our teachers work very closely with all development therapies here in the Amarillo area. This includes training our staff with the understanding of when to asses a child, when to refer a child out for therapy and when to communicate with parent of things a child may be struggling with. We complete official

developmental assessments twice a year or as needed to ensure all children are given the opportunity to show us what they are capable of.

Communication

We value open communication with all parents/guardians. Here at The Big Red Barn Learning Center, we use an app called Playground. We ensure that all parents/guardians are involved in their child's day as much as they can be. We record your child's activities, meals, naps potty/diaper changes throughout the day and we encourage an active form of open communication. If you ever feel the need to reach out with any questions or concerns, we are here to help. Please read the following information explaining our communication efforts further.

Once you have enrolled your child in our childcare program, you will want to make sure that it will be a positive and rewarding experience for everyone involved. An effective childcare partnership benefits the parent, the childcare provider, and the child. Your child's providers are counting on you to keep up your end of the bargain; they keep your child smiling, safe, healthy, and happy while you're at work, and you agree not to take advantage of them. Through good communication and by working together, you and your child's provider can help to ensure that your child receives the best start to his or her life. There are several steps you can take, as a parent, to build a successful partnership with your child's provider. You can show appreciation for your childcare provider, the center, and their business by being thoughtful and considerate in the following ways.

- Be sure you read and understand the childcare programs policies/procedures and requirements before you enroll your child. These rules are put in place to help all involved succeed. Do your best to abide by the policies and procedures to which you have agreed.

- Turn in all necessary paperwork.

Even before your child attends his first day of childcare, you'll need to submit a number of documents, such as immunization records and medical health release forms. State law mandates that all childcare programs comply with this law, so help your childcare provider out and hand in forms on time. During the duration of the program, you'll need to sign permission slips authorizing providers to give your child medications, such as antibiotics for an ear infection, etc. Sign these right away and turn them in.

- Let your provider know as much as possible about your child.

They need to know what words their child uses to ask for things, their nap, eating, and toilet habits, their likes and dislikes, and any information about their general development. A quality provider will take your child's unique characteristics into consideration as they care for him or her.

- Develop a rapport.

This starts with a very simple but genuine, "Good morning. How was your weekend? Your new haircut is adorable." Yes, technically you're a parent paying for a service, but childcare is much more than a business relationship. You want all the pleasantries that should come along with someone watching your child; the stuff money can't buy. Frequent, informal communication between you and your child's provider is an important part of building a good relationship. Taking a few moments to talk briefly with your child's provider when you drop-off and pick-up your child, can keep the lines of communication open and can make sharing information about your child a matter of routine. Should concerns arise, a good relationship can make it easier to arrive at a solution.

- Bring up any problems or concerns immediately with the childcare provider.

Handling problems with a childcare provider, whether in daycare, or elsewhere, requires diplomacy, maturity, and directness. After all, this person is watching your child, so you want your relationship to be the best it can be. Talk to your child's provider. Take a non-confrontational approach, looking to come up with a solution to a problem together. Your relationship with your childcare provider is important, so communicate clearly from the start. Discuss everything that comes to mind even if it may not seem like important information about your child.

- Updated information

Located in our lobby we have set up a communication box this way in the event that a parents phone number changes, children move to a new address of there are just general comments or concerns you would like to voice you are welcome to leave a note in the box informing us of life changes, staff feedback, or general communication needs that could help us improve our center.

Billing, fees and Payment

Infant rate (0 to 18 months)
(240$ a week) or (840$ every 4 weeks)

Toddler (19 months and up)
(210$ a week) or (760$ every 4 weeks)

Pre-school (3 years and up)
(190$ a week) or (680$ every 4 weeks)

Part time enrollment (100-180)

Drop in enrollment (50$ or 80$ per day)

CCMS Parent that do not sign their child in and out each day are charged a 3$ fee per day in which the staff must sign child in or out for the day

Drop in enrollment is at max of 1 day a week with advanced notice of no less than 24 hours and a reservation in place for the day on which the child needs care. Drop in enrollment can be used on an every week basis, but is subject to availability. Children who need more than 2 days of care will be subject to pay the full amount of tuition.

- Late pick up fee- 50$ a day for the first 30 minutes and 1$ a minute after 6:30pm
- Late Payment fee- 20$ a day per child everyday a payment is late following the original due date of the payment
- Supplies fee- a 20$ fee will be applied for each day diapers are supplied for any child

- Nonrefundable Registration fee – 200$ one time due at the time of enrollment per family not per child
- All payments are final and no refunds will be issued unless otherwise stated.

We encourage all parents to pay using our Playground app.

Attendance

Please see our information below on attendance and drop-off/pick up procedures. It is very important to inform us if your child will be absent. Well prepared drop-off's and pick-ups ensure a smooth transition for all children. Lets create a plan that works best for your child.

Start Date: Based on points already stated above, your child's start date is agreed upon between parent and provider at the time of enrollment. In other words, in order for us to continue to hold your child's spot, childcare tuition and fees need to start being paid by the morning of Monday within the week the parent and provider have agreed upon the child will start care.

Good, open, and regular communication is at the heart of any good childcare provider and parent team. We could not believe that statement to be truer. However, that being said, an appropriate balance between communication and our hours of operation should strive to be maintained. It goes unsaid that we love our job. But that job is very demanding. In the interest of mental longevity, we need our down time to recharge the batteries as it were. So please feel free to contact us, with the smallest or slightest thought regarding your child (or anything for that matter), but while doing so, please try and keep in mind our hours of operation are from 7:30AM to 6:00PM Monday through Friday.

Of course, if it's a real or even perceived emergency please don't hesitate to contact us after hours. Example, your child has unusual or excessive diarrhea or vomiting, and you are trouble shooting as to why, or to inquire or to give us a heads-up with regards to a multitude of other troubling sicknesses, or something that can simply not wait.

Parents will need to provide a state issued ID card or any valid form of ID on enrollment of any child. Anyone who wishes to pick up or drop of a child will also be required to show a valid form of Identification at the time of pick up or drop off unless, the third party has done so prior and is on the approved pick up and drop off list. Any party who wishes to pick up a child who has not done so before will also require preauthorization from the childs parent/ legal guardian

All children must be signed in and out each day of care. This is a requirement for the state and provides a record for everyone involved in care to know exactly when and where your child is at all times.

If your child will not be attending daycare due to illness or other, please let us know as soon as possible so the day's activities won't be held up waiting for your child to arrive. Also, we need to know how many children we need to prepare meals for. No discounts will be given for your child's absences due to illness or vacations. If your child will not be attending daycare for whatever reason, you are still required to pay.

Parent involvement

We believe that parental involvement enriches the childcare experience. Opportunities for participation are listed below. Parent involvement can be as simple as feedback on your child's experience in care. This helps us tailor the program to better meet the needs of both the parents and the children.

Volunteer Opportunities

-Donating Lunch or a snack

-Read the class a book

- Donating old clothes or diapers

-Volunteer hours through community program connections

Drop-off and Pick-up:

We operate between the hours of **6:00 am and 6:00pm**. There should never be any reason unless otherwise communicated that a parent should be here before or after the hours in which we operate. Children will not be permitted to attend care after **9am** unless a doctor's note has been provided.

Children are expected to arrive clean and well prepared for the day. All children should be awake alert, dressed in clean clothes, well-groomed and cared for before being dropped off.

All parents are required to sign their child in and out each day and ensure that all records of when they are here and when they are absent are properly documented.

Illness/Injury Policy:

At times, circumstances beyond our control, safety concerns, or unexpected events, may necessitate the need to make policy adjustments swiftly. It is always our desire to keep everyone (including the caregivers) happy, healthy, and safe, but it isn't always possible. Please see below for our illness and injury policy.

In the event that a child becomes ill and is in need of medication, medication can be provided to the child only under the direction of the doctor that has prescribed the medication. All children that require medication will need to ensure that a medication form is filled out. The parent will also need to provide all documentation from the child's physician of the child's diagnosis and need for medication. Over the counter medications will not be provided nor administered to any child under any circumstance without a parent being contacted prior to administrate the medication. Medication will always be given under the direct

supervision of the director and will not be allowed to be given if a member of management is not present. This way there is never a chance for a medication error.

Any child that shows symptoms of having any kind of illness will not be allowed to return to daycare for a 24-hour period following the child's first symptom or longer depending on the child's illness.

In the event a child is ill and has siblings that normally attend care, all children must remain home due to the illness. This allows us to potentially eliminate the risk of any illness spreading while children are in our care.

Symptoms that will result in the need for immediate pick-up.

- Vomiting
- 2 consecutive Diarrhea accidents within an hour
- Rash
- Body Temperature over 100.2
- Lethargic
- Excessive cough/ excessive runny nose
- Any injury or illness that prevents a child from participating in regular center activities including outdoor activities.

In the event of any injury that occurs on the property while the child is in care, the care provider takes responsibility for the aid in assisting the child with the proper first aid needs and must notify the parents within the hour. With this said our daycare does not currently hold any form of liability insurance and is not responsible for any medical treatment a child may need as the need for treatment is the responsibility of the parents/guardian.

Medication Administration (If Any) / Immunization Policy:

All medication that your child requires during care will need a doctors note before any staff can administer medication (including over the counter)

All immunizations are also required to be completed based on age and pediatric doctor recommendations. I will also require a copy of all immunizations to keep in your child's file to show the state when they come to do an inspection.

The only excepting to the immunization requirement is a signed doctors note stating that the child is allergic to a certain immunization. Children who are not vaccinated are not welcome in our program.

Allergy/ Safe Sleep Policy (Sleep Positioning, Crib Requirements/Restrictions, Blankets, Toys, Mattresses, Restrictive Devices)

We take allergies very seriously here at The Big Red Barn Learning Center. Please let us know if your child has any type of allergy. This may include, but is not limited to food, animals, pollen, laundry detergent, ect.

Please fill out the Allergy/ Epi pen form provided in the enrollment packet which allows us to administer an epi pen in the unfortunate incident your child should encounter an allergen that may cause an anaphylactic reaction.

For Information on safe sleep please see the following pages from the Texas Health and Human services that outline the do's and don'ts of safe sleep.

All infants (children 0-18 months old) sleep in a crib that has been Labeled with their name on it. All infants are laid on their back in comfortable clothes, never swaddled and with nothing in the crib with them. The crib is fitted with a clean and well-fitting sheet that should be provided by the parent at the start of care on Monday. If the parent or guardian is worried about the infant being cold, they are welcome to provide a sleep sack that can be used during nap time.

Jumpers, sit me up seats and any restrictive infant equipment is not used for sleep unless we have been provided with the proper medical documentation stating the reason to do so. If an infant falls asleep in a restrictive device during the 15 minutes of use time they are allowed, the infant is immediately taken out and laid in the crib following all safe sleep measures to reduce the possibility of SIDS.

Children over the age of 18 months will be transitioned to a sleep cot. Parents are asked to provide additional bedding as needed, which will be sent home once a week or as needed to be washed. Students are also allowed a comfort item to help them fall asleep. Children over the age of 18 months get 1 nap a day for 2 hours beginning at 1pm and ending at 3pm.

Nap time is an essential part of allowing the children to rest their bodies, so that they can continue to learn, grow and develop with an emotionally rested mind.

Although children are assigned a naptime during the day they are not required to sleep and are allowed other quite activities in the even they are unable to nap.

Discipline & Guidance Approach

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize them toward appropriate behaviors. These actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial for children because they promote self-control, teach responsibility and help them make thoughtful choices. The more effective adult caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort they will spend correcting misbehavior. Family specialists agree that using physical force, threats and put-downs can interfere with a child's healthy development and this type of behavior will not be tolerated in our care or otherwise.

Family specialists also agree that there is no perfect formula that answers all questions about discipline. Children are as unique as the families they belong to. A discipline strategy that works with one child may not work with another. We strive to work alongside each family to create individualized guidance and discipline that is in line with a child's home environment and that aligns with our state's minimum standards.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their parents and other caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and teach the child to be unkind to others. Acknowledging a child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, encourages healthy development.

Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. It also requires knowledge of one's own strengths and struggles with disciplinary issues. Unfortunately, the only preparation for most parents is their own experience of being parented. Such past experiences may not always be helpful in raising children.

Proactive strategies

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers will not expect. However, there are many positive steps adults can take to minimize misbehavior:

- Set clear, consistent rules.
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities.
- Provide appropriate and engaging playthings.
- Encourage self-control by providing meaningful choices.
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided.
- Build children's self-image as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative.
- Expect the best from the child.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "yes" whenever possible and appropriate.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right.
- Act before a situation gets out of control.
- Be encouraging.
- Set a good example.
- Help children see how their actions affect others.
- Allow children to take a break as needed to focus on regulating their emotions

Possible reasons children misbehave

If parents or caregivers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavioral problems. These reasons for misbehavior may help parents develop a better understanding of their children:

- Testing whether caregivers will enforce rules

- Expectations differ between school and home
- Inadequate understanding of the rules, or being held to expectations beyond their developmental levels
- Asserting themselves and their independence
- Feeling ill, bored, hungry or sleepy
- lack of accurate information or prior experience
- Previously rewarded with attention for their misbehavior
- Copying the actions of their parents or caregiver

Positive disciplinary techniques

True misbehavior occurs when a child chooses to behave inappropriately. Before we can act, we consider these points about discipline:

- Is the child really doing something wrong? Is there a real problem, or are you just tired and out of patience?
    - If there is no real problem, release your stress away from the child.
    - If there is a problem, go to the next question.
- Think for a moment about whether the child is actually capable of doing what you expect.
    - If you are not being realistic, re-evaluate your expectations.
    - If your expectations are fair, go to the next question.
- Did the child know at the time that they were doing something wrong?
    - If the child did not realize they were doing something wrong, help them understand what you expect them to do and how they can do that. Offer to help.
    - If the child knew what they were doing was wrong and intentionally disregarded a reasonable expectation, they misbehaved.

If the behavior was an accident, like wetting their pants while sleeping, it was not a misbehavior. If the behavior was not an accident, ask the child to tell you their reasons for doing what they did. If the child is old enough, ask how they might solve the problem or correct the situation. Children develop by thinking through a situation and developing possible solutions.

- Responding to misbehavior

Here are five strategies parents and other caregivers can use to respond to child misbehavior. Rules should be fully explained and clearly understood before

misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the family or the classroom.

- Natural consequences

Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, Gena does not put her books back in her school bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it.

Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.

- Logical consequences

These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related.

For example, Andrew, who is a teenager, knows that if he stays out past his curfew on a school night, his parents will not allow him to go out with his friends over the weekend.

- Fix-up

If children damage something, they need to help fix it or clean it up. If they cause someone distress, they should help relieve it.

For example, "Now that you made your friend upset, please come with me so we can apologize and help me soothe them."

- Time out

During time out, children are required to spend time alone in a specific place that has few, if any, rewarding characteristics. This strategy gives children a chance to reflect quietly on their behavior away from others. When giving a time out, we are calm and firm. One minute for each year of the child's age is appropriate.

For example, "Hannah, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. But because you hit Jerry, please leave the playground and go to the Time Out Table for five minutes. Please think about how Jerry might have felt when you hit him."

- Redirection

This strategy can work when you notice a child not following the rules and being uncooperative. Quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity.

For example, "Tom, can you please help me water the flowers? You've been riding the bike for a long time and now it's Lena's turn."

Parenting styles

Researchers have described four general styles of parenting: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative. Most parents do not fall neatly in one category, but somewhere in the middle with characteristics of more than one style. Also, some parents change styles depending on experience, age, maturity level and the situation. It is our job as care givers to work together to find an appropriate guidance style that works best for each child.

A caregiver who is authoritarian

- Values obedience, tradition and order
- May use physical punishment (which is never an option when caring for a child in our home)
- Usually doesn't allow choices or freedom of expression

Possible outcomes
Children of authoritarian parents might become followers and depend on others for making decisions. They may develop low self-esteem, become aggressive or defiant.

A caregiver who is permissive

- Sets few rules and guidelines
- Does not provide structure
- Does not enforce limits when they are established

Possible outcomes
Children of permissive parents may have low self-control and handle frustration poorly. They may remain immature and have difficulty accepting responsibility.

A caregiver who is authoritative

- Sets appropriate rules and guidelines
- Is firm, consistent and fair
- Has reasonable expectations
- Encourages child's independence and individuality
- Uses clear communication and reasoning
- Allows choices and empowers the child

Possible outcomes
Children of authoritative parents are likely to be responsible, independent, have high self-esteem and able to control their aggressive impulses. This style of parenting provides a balance between setting appropriate limits and granting the child independence, as well as providing warmth and supportive guidance.

However, parenting is not the only factor influencing child outcomes. Cultural values, peer behavior, family circumstances and community characteristics all affect the development of children. These factors also influence the style of parenting that is used. For example, authoritative parenting is more effective in some contexts and for some groups than others.

Knowing what to expect from a child

At times, adult expectations may be beyond children's abilities. Discipline and guidance strategies should take into account a child's unique needs and developmental level.

Birth to about age 2
Children need support, contact and loving interactions. If the caregiver is absent, the child may fear that they will not return. At this stage, children build attachments with caregivers. They learn to trust that adults will be there for them when they need them. During these years, children learn through their senses and physical activities.

Age 2 to about 6
Children learn language, some reading and many social skills. They also begin to struggle for more independence from caregivers. If such efforts are understood and encouraged, children begin to take more initiative. During these years,

children learn by exploring, pounding, touching, mixing, moving and throwing objects, and asking many questions.

Age 6 to about 12
Children begin to act with increasing self-control. During these years, they begin to lay the groundwork for becoming productive members of society. They process information and can make complex decisions. They are able to follow rules and accept responsibility. They also develop a self-image based on their experiences and feedback they receive from significant adults. If this feedback is positive, children grow to become confident and successful teens. If it is frequently negative, children can grow to feel inadequate and inferior.

- **In the event of challenging behavior beyond our capability**

- **Step 1: talk to a child about the behavior and guide a child to make better choices**
- **Step 2 : redirection, when necessary, give time away from the group to calm down**
- **Step 3: Parent will be notified about the behavior when repeated behavior occurs**
- **Step 4: parents conference will be scheduled to see how providers and parents can come together to find a solution to challenging behaviors.**
- **Steo 5: follow up will be made daily to ensure the issue is able to be resolved**
- **Step 6: If behavior can not be resolved them parents must seek care elsewhere.**

<u>Reasonable accommodations</u>

-If there are any reasonable accommodations needed while your child is in care, please make sure to reach out to the director so we can do our best to accommodate your child as we see fit.

Emergency Procedures (Including Medical and Weather Emergencies)

Unfortunately, we all know that emergencies can happen and do happen every day all around the country. The worst time to have any type of emergency is when you are separated from your child. We have put in place medical evacuation procedures, weather evacuation procedures, shelter in place procedures and extreme weather precautions.

- *Medical Emergency*

  In the event that a child has a medical emergency and requires medical attention the parent or guardian will be notified immediately, and the child will be transported through ems to the parents chosen local hospital and staff will follow up as soon as possible.

- **Inclement weather**

During times of inclement weather, we may or may not close, but if your child is with us during a period where the weather is not suitable for travel we will extend care past normal means and shelter in place as much as possible until a parent or guardian arrives.

  - **Evacuation**

In the event of any evacuation all parents are to refer to our evacuation plan attached to the back of the parent handbook with its own tab to indicate where we will be, how to contact us and any local emergency contacts. This information is also located on the parent board and is discussed with every parent/ Guardian before enrollment.

Parent Visits / Nap Time Information / Recommended clothing

- Parent visits

We strive to have a wonderful parent and caregiver relationship. With that said we allow parents to visit their child at any point in the day they wish to visit, we just ask that parents be respectful of every child who is in care and try to limit

visits to before or after nap as much as possible unless the child will be leaving the property with their parent/ guardian.

- Nap Time

Infants sleep in the same room as the toddlers and preschoolers. The infants sleep in a provider provided pack n plays, and the toddlers and preschoolers sleep on cots or nap mats that must be provided by the parent of guardian. Our goal is to have the two different age groups (24 months and older, younger than 24 months) sleeping on the same afternoon nap schedule. Nap time for children 12 months and older is during the time between 1:00pm and 3:00pm each day. By the age of 12 months, we try to drop napping once a day for an extra hour or so, but it is not uncommon that children 12 months and younger will take two naps in a day and may require a different nap schedule than the older children. Typically, children 6 months and younger may need a third nap during the day, which can be incorporated into their late afternoon schedule. The State of Pennsylvania requires that all children under the age of five have at least a two-hour rest period every day. No child will ever be forced to sleep; however, they are encouraged to remain quiet and on their mat during this time.

- Recommended Clothing

All children are required to always wear clothing during care. Children are required to dress in weather appropriate, meaning jackets in the winter and shorts in the summer.

All children enrolled in care are also required to bring 1 change of clothes as needed, for infants under the age of 12 months we require 2 changes in clothes. If a child is potty training a minimum of 2 sets of clean underwear is also required not including the pair the child has been dropped off in.

All children who can walk without assistance are required to always have socks and shoes during care. They can be taken off during nap and throughout the day as needed, but due to the fact we are outside for 2 hours a day shoes are a must!

Field Trip, Transportation, Water Activities

Field Trips

We currently are not offering any type of field trip as we do not have any vehicle that is large enough to hold all the children. With this said, we would like to offer them in the future and would like to give you more information on the topic.

Children must be walking without assistance, off formula and be able handle and outing with other children present. All children who will be attending a field trip will need to have a permission slip signed by a parent or guardian. If you look at the list below you will se the types of field trips we are hoping to offer in the upcoming year.

- The Discovery Center
- Palo Dura Canyon
- Local Nature Trails
- Splash Pad
- The Amarillo Botanical Garden
- The Amarillo Zoo
- Little Bees Playhouse
- And much much more!!

Infant Field Trips-

We are located next to a public library this mean many time our teachers will take our infants younger than 12 months of age on a buggy ride around the library or may allow the infants to spend time outside in the grass neighboring the public library. Although we understand that we are with in a few feet of the building our state department does classify this as a field trip and we must make all parents aware of this travel outdoors.

Transportation

We currently do have the availability to transport children to and from school as needed and ask all parents who have children enrolled in our school age programs to fill out the required transportation forms.

Water Activities

As everyone should know by now the Texas heat is not a laughing matter and can be very dangerous in the right conditions. With that said it can also make for an extremely fun time to throw on a swimsuit and play in the sprinkler.

We do offer water days throughout the summer, weather permitted. All children are required to arrive in their swimsuits, bring a can of sunscreen and a towel from home.

Food, Meals and Menus

We provide a morning snack that is served at 8:30 am and a Pm snack that is served at 4pm each day.

We do currently offer a catered lunch option for an additional 35$ a week or you are welcome to pack lunch from home. If your child has any reasonable accommodation that they need for their dietary requirements, that have been ordered by their doctor, we would be more than happy to accommodate.

Our Mandatory Abuse/Neglect Reporting Requirements

The health and safety of all the children in our care is our number one priority and if any of our staff have any concerns of neglect or abuse that may be happening outside of our care we are required to report it to the proper authorities.

It's the Law!

Texas has both civil and criminal laws to protect children from abuse and neglect. If you suspect that a child is being abused or neglected, the law requires that you report it. [Texas Family Code Section 261.101 (a)]

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) is the agency to call if the suspected abuse or neglect involves a person responsible for the care, custody, or welfare of the child or someone who lives in the home with the child. Child Protective Services (CPS), a division of DFPS, is responsible for conducting civil investigations of alleged abuse or neglect by caregivers or household members. You may also report suspected abuse or neglect to any local or state law enforcement agency. Law enforcement agencies are responsible for criminal investigations, which focus on figuring out who committed a crime. The CPS investigation is a civil court matter that focuses on the welfare of the child and family.

You are protected by law from liability when you make a report or provide information in good faith during a CPS investigation. However, you are not protected from civil or criminal liability if you report your own abuse or neglect of a child or intentionally file a false report against someone else. (Texas Family Code, Section 261.106).

Failure to report suspected child abuse and neglect is a criminal offense (Texas Family Code, Section 261.109).

To report to DFPS, call the 24-hour, toll-free abuse hotline at 1-800-252-5400 from anywhere in the United States to report abuse or neglect that happened in Texas. The important thing is to call and report what you suspect. You will be given a call ID number to prove that you made the call. You can call back and use the call ID number to give additional information about the same case. Anonymous callers are welcome, but they will not be given a call ID number. The identity of the reporter is confidential and is not revealed to anyone but law enforcement, unless disclosure is ordered by a court (Texas Family Code Section 261.201)

Termination / Move Notice / Graduation

TERMINATION POLICY: The first 30 Days will be regarded as a trial period, in which case either party may terminate the contract without notice. After the first 30 Days of enrollment, a 14 Day written notice from parent or provider is required to terminate the contract, except for gross misconduct on part of the provider, parent, or child. This is grounds for immediate discontinuation of service.

ADVANCE NOTICE: When the day comes you no longer need our childcare services, 14 Days advance notice needs to be given to us. Whenever possible even more notice is better. This helps us tremendously. The reason being, unlike childcare centers, we can only take a maximum of 6 children, so when we are full we are forced to say NO to all incoming requests for childcare. If we have advance notice of discontinuation of needed services.

GRADUATION: When your little one is ready to move on to bigger and better things, we will celebrate them and their great accomplishments. We understand that they can't stay little forever, and we want them to continue to learn and grow every day. We look forward to putting there name in our year book one more time knowing life has much more in store for them and we of coarse want to send them off with the best foundation they can have.

Staff / Helper

This section introduces you to the individuals who play a pivotal role in creating a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment for your child. Get to know who the faces are behind the smiles and the rest assured that your child is in the hands of caring dedicated professionals.

Closings / Holidays / Vacation

We realize your need for reliable daycare and will attempt to give as much notice as possible whenever we must close for any reason. In order to spend quality time with my own family, We may be closed for the holidays.
Daycare may be closed with pay of the following holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Columbus Day
- Easter Monday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- New Year's Eve (unless otherwise stated)
- The day before Thanksgiving
- The Day of Thanksgiving
- The Day after Thanksgiving
- The Day on Christmas eve
- The Day of Christmas
- The Day after Christmas

If a holiday should land on a Saturday, We reserved the right to close the Friday before and if the holiday should land on Sunday, We reserve the right to close on the Monday after.

We try our best to always keep our doors open when at all possible and will always give as much notice to our parents when we can.

In addition to the above list of holidays we do close for the occasional staff development days to ensure our staff is properly trained and our facility is maintained to a high standard.

- Birthday/Holiday Parties:

You may bring, if you wish, a small, healthy snack to share for your child's birthday, but is not mandatory. We do celebrate holidays with a small party; a sign-up sheet may be posted on the parent board if you wish to donate. For Christmas, I ask that instead of gift buying for other children in care, each parent purchase a gift for the daycare that the children may open and share here but is not mandatory. You can spend as little or as much as you would like. I will give out a "wants and needs" list to offer suggestions of the children's wants and interests. Some of the things the list might include are replacements of a broken toys, educational video or CD, books, games, art supplies, etc. I would prefer your child not to know what you are buying to make it more special. Gifts are to be wrapped and labeled "Happy Hearts" and have no "from" on it.

- Child's Absences and/or Vacations

If your child will not be attending daycare due to illness or other, please let us know as soon as possible so the day's activities won't be held up waiting for your child to arrive. Also, we need to know how many children we need to prepare meals for. No discounts will be given for your child's absences due to illness or vacations. If your child will not be attending daycare for whatever reason, you are still required to pay.

Also, if your child is on CCMS they are required to be here. We will make every effort to inform you of how many days your child has missed, but the ultimate responsibilities lie on the parent to understand the CCMS handbook and allow all attendance needs.

Contact Information

Please save our essential contact details to facilitate seamless communication. No matter if you have questions, concerns or simply wish to stay informed about your child's day-to-day activities. This information ensures you're always connected to the support you need.

We currently use an App called Playground to do most of our day-to-day communication as the children's activities are always up to date and uploaded as the day progresses. ProCare is the best way to communicate with all staff involved in your child's care, but if you feel the need we are only a phone call away at any time.

Owner/Director - Caitlynn Hollis 806-477-9435

Supplies Needed At Daycare

Parents are responsible for supplying the following items: diapers/pull-ups, diaper creams, weather appropriate clothes and a couple change of clothes, jacket, shoes that lace-up or Velcro and/or stay on feet (no flip-flops please), pacifier (if needed), a swimsuit (for water days) and sunscreen. We apply sunscreen every day to any child playing outside. For the older children sleeping on a cot a nap mat (typically 2 years old and over): a crib sheet, a blanket, and a pillow are needed. If necessary, a comfort object for rest-time, and anything else your child may need. Your child's crib sheet, blanket, and pillow should be taken home on the last care day of the week and then washed and returned to daycare the first day of care the following week.

There is a good possibility your child will get dirty throughout the day because of food, paint, markers, dirt, bubbles, potty accidents, diaper blowouts, etc. So please dress your child accordingly for play. Wet, dirty, and soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag in your child's locker to be taken home and cleaned. We are not

responsible for replacing stained or soiled clothing. We suggest that you write your child's name on the tags of their clothing (especially socks and underwear) in order to prevent any clothing mix-ups.

Failure to provide the necessary supplies will result in additional fees as we will never let a child go without. Please refer to our tuition and fees list if you have any questions.

Additional Resources

Meal Patterns for CACFP

https://squaremeals.org/Programs/Child-and-Adult-Care-Food-Program/Meal-Patterns

Food allergy

https://www.foodallergy.org/living-food-allergies/food-allergy-essentials/food-allergy-anaphylaxis-emergency-care-plan

Screen time

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Media/Pages/adverse-effects-of-television-commercials.aspx?_gl=1*1sdd3zr*_ga*MjAyMzExOTA5Ny4xNjk5MzkONTIx*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*MTY5OTM5NDUyMS4xLjEuMTY5OTM5NDU4NC4wLjAuMA

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/eyes/Pages/What-Too-Much-Screen-Time-Does-to-Your-Childs-Eyes.aspx?_gl=1*rrn8q2*_ga*MjAyMzExOTA5Ny4xNjk5MzkONTIx*_ga_FD9D3XZVQQ*MTY5OTM5NDUyMS4xLjEuMTY5OTM5NDU4NC4wLjAuMA

Updated Health and Nutrition Practices Online Links in the back of the handbook for additional health and nutrition practices.

https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/resources/index.htm

https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/limit-screen-time/

https://www.usa.gov/benefits

https://yourtexasbenefits.com/Learn/Home

Breastfeeding

https://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/index.htm

https://www.texaswic.org/breastfeeding

https://www.texaswic.org/wic-foods-and-recipes

https://www.texaswic.org/health-nutrition

Behavioral therapy Parent information

https://www.healthychildren.org/English/health-issues/conditions/adhd/Pages/Behavior-Therapy-Parent-Training.aspx