

SPELLMAN CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
**PARENT HANDBOOK**



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to Child Saving Institute's Early Childhood Education program! We recognize how important it is for families to feel confident when selecting an early childhood setting, and we appreciate the trust you placed in our organization when choosing care for your child. At CSI, we are committed to partnering with families to provide high-quality, developmentally appropriate care that supports the well-being of children and families. We understand how important that "gut feeling" is when deciding whether an early childhood setting fits with your family and we are very thankful you are trusting your instincts and our agency to give your child the best possible care. We hope our quality program and exceptional teachers will be able to assist you in attaining your goals for your child and family.

The Spellman Child Development Center, located on the campus of College of Saint Mary, has been in operation for more than 30 years and is accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA). COA accreditation is a nationally recognized distinction that reflects an organization's commitment to best practices, continuous quality improvement, and accountability. Accreditation signifies that our programs meet rigorous standards related to child development, safety, staff qualifications, family engagement and organizational effectiveness. As a COA accredited program, families can expect:

Qualified and dedicated teaching staff who hold relevant degrees and participate in ongoing professional development.

Intentional assessment practices that document and support children's social, emotional and academic growth.

Safe, nurturing and engaging environments that are designed to promote learning, exploration and healthy development.

The Spellman Child Development Center emphasizes high quality care grounded in strong, responsive relationships among children, teachers and families. Our commitment to high quality, developmentally appropriate and responsive care as well as our emphasis on professional development, coaching and support make Spellman CDC a place that families can feel good about!

We encourage you to review this handbook and learn more about our program philosophy, policies and procedures. Should you have any questions, concerns or ideas about how we can best support your individual child's needs, we welcome your communication. We value families as essential partners in each child's learning and development. We look forward to working collaboratively with you and supporting your child's growth and success.

With heart and humanity,

Holly Marasco

Vice President of Education

## I. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

At Child Saving Institute (CSI), our Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs uphold the agency's mission—*Championing What's Best for Every Child*—by fostering environments where every child is known, valued, and supported as an individual. Guided by the standards of the Council on Accreditation (COA), Nebraska Childcare Licensing, and early childhood best practices we are committed to promoting each child's optimal growth and development through responsive caregiving, intentional teaching, and meaningful family partnerships.

We believe that positive, trusting relationships are the foundation of healthy development. Our educators build secure attachments with children, providing the emotional safety that encourages independence, exploration, and a lifelong love of learning. Through continuity of care, children benefit from stable relationships, peer learning opportunities, and an environment that adapts to their unique rhythms and developmental progressions.

Our curriculum and classroom practices are grounded in observation, assessment, and reflection. Teachers use formative assessments, family input, evidence-based curriculum and daily observations to design developmentally appropriate learning experiences that honor each child's emerging skills, cultural identity, and individual needs. Smaller group sizes allow educators to implement personalized strategies that support all domains of development—cognitive, physical, social-emotional, and language.

Families are essential partners in our work. We cultivate a collaborative, family-centered approach that values the insights, strengths, and goals each family brings to their child's education. By encouraging daily engagement and open communication, we strengthen the connection between home and school, creating a consistent and supportive environment where children can thrive.

Our goal is to nurture confident, capable children who develop the strong relational foundation needed for future academic success, emotional wellbeing, and healthy social connections. Through intentional practice, evidence-informed decision making, and alignment with COA and early childhood best practice standards, our ECE programs provide every child with the opportunity to grow, learn, and flourish.

## II. CURRICULUM

CSI utilizes the Creative Curriculum as the foundation for planning and implementing developmentally appropriate learning experiences. The curriculum is implemented in accordance with the Nebraska Child Care Licensing regulations (391 NAC) and Council on Accreditation (COA) Early Childhood Education standards, ensuring that instruction is intentional, individualized, and responsive to each child's developmental needs. CSI provides the curriculum for each age group: Infant, Toddler, Preschool, and Pre-K.

### CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK

The Creative Curriculum is used to plan activities based on each child's developmental capacity and individual strengths. All children are actively engaged in the learning process and are provided with a wide variety of developmentally appropriate experiences that support growth across all developmental domains, including social-emotional, physical, cognitive and language development.

The curriculum also guides:

- Classroom interest areas
- Daily schedules and routines
- Intentional Learning Strategies
- Learning environments that promote exploration and independence

This approach aligns with Nebraska childcare licensing standards requiring developmentally appropriate practice and COA standards that emphasize intentional, child-centered learning.

### A. Lesson Plans

The lead teacher for each classroom creates a weekly lesson plan. The lesson plan lays out the goals and objectives of each activity or daily routine with specific activities that reflect the child's interests in the form of "studies." Studies are topics that the children are interested in that children take a deep dive into to learn about the topic with embedded objectives throughout the study. Often these studies will last two to four weeks, depending on the topic and the children's interest. Lesson plans are posted in the classroom and are available to parents at the beginning of each week.

### B. Assessment

Each child's progress is assessed using an ongoing observational assessment system ("checkpoints") embedded within the Creative Curriculum. Teachers continuously observe, document and assess children's development during everyday activities and routines.

Teachers are responsible for:

- Using assessment data to inform lesson planning
- Individualizing learning experiences based on each child's developmental level, interests and strengths
- Adjusting instruction and materials as needed to support optimal development.

This practice meets COA standards related to continuous assessment and individualized learning as well as Nebraska requirements for documenting children's progress.

Child Saving Institute's ECE programs assess the strengths and needs of individual children in the following ways:

- Developmental continuums from Teaching Strategies GOLD
- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ);
- Daily observations
- Parent input (provided through conversations and conferences;)
- Daily notes to parents

Parents complete a baseline ASQ SE at the time of enrollment and then again at 18 months and 36

months. Additionally, assessments may be completed as needed to assess a child's development. Parents are involved in sharing information in all areas of development and receive results and summaries of all assessments completed by teachers. Teachers use assessment results to plan lessons and daily activities that are developmentally appropriate and relate to each child's goals and interests.

## C. Interest Areas

At CSI, our Early Childhood Education (ECE) classrooms are intentionally arranged into a variety of rich “interest areas”—inviting spaces that encourage children to explore, imagine, create, and learn at their own pace. These thoughtfully designed environments promote independence, curiosity, and development across all areas of growth. Children are encouraged to move freely among the interest areas, making meaningful choices that help them understand the world around them through hands-on experiences, discovery, and play.

Our approach reflects COA aligned best practices by supporting child-initiated learning and offering experiences that honor each child's unique interests, developmental needs, and learning style. Teachers serve as warm, responsive facilitators who engage with children by asking thoughtful questions, offering new materials, extending children's ideas, and gently scaffolding new skills. By observing children closely and building on their emerging interests, our educators design learning experiences that foster problem solving, creativity, social connection, and confidence.

## Blocks

The Block Area gives children the chance to plan, build, imagine, and solve problems. As children design structures—from simple towers to whole cities—they learn early math concepts such as measurement, comparison, and balance. Blocks promote creativity and help children develop perseverance as they try new ideas.

### Benefits for your child:

- Strengthens math and spatial reasoning
- Encourages cooperation and communication
- Supports creativity and imagination
- Builds problem solving and planning skills

## Art

In the Art Area, children enjoy open-ended experiences that focus on the process of creating rather than the final product. Whether painting, drawing, gluing, or exploring textures, children learn to express themselves while developing important fine motor skills needed for writing.

### Benefits for your child:

- Encourages creativity and self-expression
- Builds fine motor control and hand-eye coordination
- Promotes sensory exploration
- Helps children learn about colors, shapes, patterns, and design

## Toys and Games (Fine Motor)

This area includes puzzles, manipulatives, lacing cards, building sets, and early learning games. These tools strengthen children's hands and fingers while helping them learn to concentrate, make

decisions, and work through challenges.

### Benefits for your child:

- Strengthens the fine motor muscles needed for writing
- Builds early math and reading readiness skills
- Enhances problem-solving and logical thinking
- Encourages turn taking and cooperative play

## Dramatic Play

The Dramatic Play Area is a place where children can step into pretend roles—family members, shoppers, doctors, chefs, community helpers, and more. Through imaginative play, children make sense of their experiences and practice social skills in a safe, joyful environment.

### Benefits for your child:

- Builds language and communication skills
- Encourages empathy and understanding of others
- Strengthens imagination and creativity
- Helps children process real-life experiences in a healthy way

## Sensory Play

The Sand and Water Area offers calming, hands-on sensory experiences that support both learning and emotional development. As children pour, scoop, sift, and experiment, they naturally explore early science and math concepts while enjoying soothing play.

### Benefits for your child:

- Supports scientific thinking and experimentation
- Teaches measurement, volume, and cause-and-effect
- Encourages concentration and self-regulation
- Provides calming sensory input

## Music & Movement

In the Music and Movement Area, children sing, dance, play instruments, and explore rhythm. Music helps children develop early literacy and listening skills while giving them a joyful outlet for expressing emotions and energy.

### Benefits for your child:

- Strengthens gross and fine motor skills
- Supports language development and sound awareness
- Promotes creativity and emotional expression
- Encourages group participation and a sense of community

## Library

Our Library Area is a cozy, inviting space filled with books, puppets, flannel board stories, and opportunities for meaningful conversations. Here, children are encouraged to explore stories, ask questions, and use their imaginations to bring characters and ideas to life. Books help children make sense of the world by connecting them to familiar experiences, diverse cultures, and new concepts. Through daily reading, storytelling, and shared conversations, children build vocabulary, develop an understanding of how print works, and learn the rhythm and flow of language.

In our preschool classrooms, additional materials such as notebooks, writing tools, newspapers, and

magazines help children experiment with early writing and strengthen their awareness of print in their everyday environment. Whether snuggled up with a favorite book or acting out a story with friends, children gain confidence as learners and communicators.

Benefits for your child:

- Strengthens early literacy, vocabulary, and comprehension
- Builds imagination and storytelling skills
- Encourages empathy and understanding of diverse people and experiences
- Develops print awareness and early writing skills
- Creates a calming, predictable space for selfregulation and quiet time

## Science & Discovery

The Science and Discovery Area invites children to explore the natural world with curiosity and wonder. Materials such as rocks, shells, magnets, leaves, seeds, and other natural objects give children opportunities to touch, sort, compare, and investigate. Teachers may offer additional hands-on experiences—such as safe tools, old gadgets to take apart, or simple science activities—that encourage children to ask meaningful questions like, “What will happen if...?” or “How does this work?”

In preschool classrooms, technology is introduced thoughtfully and safely. Tools such as Nabi tablets are used with close teacher guidance, helping children explore digital learning in developmentally appropriate ways while reinforcing curiosity, problem-solving, and early research skills.

As children experiment with textures, weights, colors, and physical changes, they build early science concepts and expand their vocabulary. This area nurtures children's natural desire to explore, predict, observe, and discover how things work.

Benefits for your child:

- Promotes scientific thinking, experimentation, and problem-solving
- Builds vocabulary related to nature, science, and inquiry
- Strengthens observation, prediction, and comparing skills
- Encourages curiosity, wonder, and confidence in asking questions
- Introduces technology in a safe, guided, age-appropriate way
- Supports cognitive development and expands understanding of the world

## D. Technology

At our program, we understand that children are growing up in a world where technology is part of everyday life. We use technology thoughtfully and in age-appropriate ways to support learning—while always keeping relationships, play, and hands-on experiences at the center of your child's day.

Our Philosophy

Technology is used as a learning tool, not as a replacement for active play, social interaction, or teacher engagement. Children spend the majority of their day exploring, playing, creating, and interacting with peers and caring adults.

How Technology Is Used

When technology is included in the classroom, it is:

- Limited and intentional
- Teacher-guided and interactive
- Chosen to support learning, curiosity, and creativity

Examples may include:

- Listening to music or stories
- Viewing photos or short videos connected to classroom topics
- Exploring nature, animals, or cultural events through high-quality media
- Documenting children's learning with photos or drawings

Technology is never used as a babysitter, reward, or punishment, and children are always supervised by teachers.

Screen Time Guidelines

Our practices follow American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations for young children:

- Infants under 18 months do not use screens.
- Toddlers may have limited exposure to high-quality content with a teacher present.
- Preschool-age children have limited screen use (no more than 15 minutes per day) and only when it adds value to learning.
- Screens do not replace:
  - Outdoor play
  - Hands-on activities
  - Story time
  - Meals or rest time

Safety and Supervision

To keep children safe:

- All digital content is carefully selected and age-appropriate
- Children do not access the internet freely
- Teachers model safe, respectful technology use
- Privacy and confidentiality are always protected

Supporting Healthy Habits

We work to help children build healthy technology habits by:

- Encouraging balance between screen time and active play
- Talking with children about what they see and experience
- Focusing on learning, not entertainment

Families are important partners in this process, and we welcome conversations about technology use both at school and at home.

## E. Physical Play

Our program believes outdoor play is an essential part of young children's healthy growth and development. Children are provided daily opportunities for outdoor play, weather permitting, in a **safe, supervised, and developmentally appropriate environment**.

The outdoor play area supports:

- Large-motor development through climbing, running, and balancing
- Socioemotional skills through cooperative and imaginative play
- Exploration, independence, and connection to nature

Outdoor spaces include a balance of **active and quiet play opportunities** and are inclusive of all children's abilities. Teachers actively supervise and engage with children to support learning, safety, and positive interactions.

We encourage families to provide weather-appropriate clothing so children can fully enjoy outdoor experiences.

When the weather is not conducive to outdoor play, we utilize our indoor gross motor areas and provide the same types of activities for children during this time.

At CSI's ECE programs:

- Children have a scheduled outdoor time every day.
- All children will go outside to play whenever the temperature is above 25 degrees, taking into account factors such as the sun, wind, rain, and snow.
- During the summer, the children will stay inside if the heat index gets above 90 degrees.
- Sweaters, coats, boots, hats and mittens should be worn at the center during the winter months. During the summer, children may also need hats to cover their heads. CSI provides sunscreen and with parental approval and will apply it during the summer months to children ages six months and up. Parents are welcome to bring their own sunscreen as well.

## F. Field Trips

In addition to the classroom and its interest areas, other planned activities outside of the ECE program enrich the lives of young children. Trips for the preschool classes are planned and are designed around the lessons being discussed in the classrooms. Transportation is provided in CSI's mini bus. Parents receive advance written communication concerning the specifics about each trip. Parents are asked to sign permission slips before each trip and are always welcome and encouraged to accompany their children on these trips.

## H. Inclusion of children with Special Needs

Child Saving Institute provides an inclusive environment for children with special needs. When assessment or screening tools indicate there might be a developmental concern, information is shared with parents regarding resources that are available to obtain formal assessments and provide services. For children with special needs, parents provide information to the center regarding goals, health care plans and caregiving routines. Parents determine if teaching staff are involved in IEP/IFSP teams. Our staff works with the family and other service providers as a team to help children reach their goals. Children are included in classrooms and daily activities and accommodations will be made to the greatest extent possible. Teachers will be provided additional training as needed in order to provide optimal care for each child.

## III. BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PROCESS

### DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

At Child Saving Institute (CSI), we recognize that children are actively learning the skills necessary for success in the classroom, within relationships, and throughout their lives. Children develop these skills through explicit instruction, modeling, and repeated opportunities for practice within a safe and supportive environment.

CSI is committed to a proactive, developmentally appropriate approach to behavior guidance that is rooted in positive support strategies and focused on social-emotional development. By implementing the Pyramid Model Framework, educators promote an inclusive, nurturing learning

environment that supports all children in developing self-regulation, positive relationships, and appropriate social behaviors.

Discipline practices within CSI's Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs are designed to teach skills, build competence, and strengthen relationships rather than place blame or apply punitive measures.

### EARLY CHILDHOOD BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE POLICY

This policy establishes guidelines for promoting positive social-emotional development and addressing challenging behaviors within early childhood settings. The Pyramid Model Framework serves as the foundation for creating supportive learning environments that foster emotional well-being, self-regulation, and individualized support.

1. Building Nurturing and Responsive Relationships: CSI educators prioritize the development of strong, supportive relationships among children, families, and staff. These relationships serve as the foundation for effective behavior guidance and social-emotional growth.
  - Teachers and caregivers intentionally develop trusting, responsive relationships with children.
  - Families are recognized as essential partners in their child's learning and behavior development.
  - Positive, consistent relationships support children's emotional security and engagement.
2. Creating High-Quality Supportive Environments
  - Classroom environments are intentionally designed to be predictable, engaging, and developmentally appropriate, reducing the likelihood of challenging behaviors.
  - Daily routines and transitions are consistent and clearly communicated.
  - Behavioral expectations are developmentally appropriate and reinforced consistently.
  - Environmental and instructional supports are individualized based on children's needs, strengths, and interests.
3. Teaching Social and Emotional Skills
  - Social-emotional learning is embedded throughout daily interactions, routines, and learning experiences.
  - Children are explicitly taught skills such as emotional regulation, problem-solving, communication, and positive peer interactions.
  - Instructional strategies include visual supports, emotion coaching, storytelling, and guided practice.
  - Teaching focuses on helping children understand their emotions and express them in appropriate ways.
4. Implementing Targeted Behavior Support
  - When children demonstrate early signs of challenging behavior, staff implement targeted supports to prevent escalation and promote skill development.
  - Preventive strategies are used to address behavioral challenges before they become persistent.
  - Small-group and individualized interventions support the development of self-regulation and coping skills.
  - Positive reinforcement and encouragement are used to strengthen prosocial behaviors.
5. Providing Intensive Individualized Interventions (When Needed)
  - For children who exhibit persistent or significant behavioral challenges, more intensive supports may be implemented.

- A Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) may be conducted to identify the purpose of the behavior.
- Families are actively involved in all phases of assessment and intervention planning.
- Collaboration with early childhood specialists, mental health professionals, and community partners ensures comprehensive support.
- Individualized behavior support plans are developed and implemented in alignment with the child's developmental goals.

### **BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE STRATEGIES**

CSI educators utilize the following evidence-based strategies to support positive behavior and social-emotional development:

- Reinforce positive behavior by acknowledging and praising appropriate actions.
- Provide clear and consistent expectations that are developmentally appropriate.
- Encourage emotional expression by helping children identify, label, and express feelings constructively.
- Model appropriate behavior through respectful, calm, and cooperative interactions.
- Redirect behavior and offer choices to support problem-solving and autonomy.
- Use calm and supportive responses, focusing on teaching skills rather than using punishment.

### **PROHIBITED FORMS OF DISCIPLINE**

Child Saving Institute's (CSI) Early Childhood Education (ECE) programs prohibit the use of harsh, inappropriate, or punitive discipline in all circumstances. All behavior guidance practices must be developmentally appropriate, respectful, and consistent with CSI's commitment to positive behavior support. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including immediate termination of employment.

In accordance with Nebraska Child Care Licensing regulations, staff members shall not discipline or punish children for:

- Toilet training accidents
- Refusal to eat
- Refusal to take medication

Staff are strictly prohibited from using any form of discipline that is not permitted under Nebraska Child Care Licensing regulation 3-006.20A. Prohibited practices include, but are not limited to:

- Corporal punishment in any form
- Harsh, humiliating, frightening, or degrading disciplinary methods
- Verbal abuse, including yelling, shaming, belittling, or threatening language
- Physical restraint used as punishment or for staff convenience
- Withholding food, rest, toileting, or other basic needs as a form of discipline
- Isolation, confinement, or exclusion that is not developmentally appropriate or supportive
- Labeling a child as "bad" or "good"
- Ignoring the child
- Group punishment for individual behavior concerns,

Although time-out is not prohibited under Nebraska licensing regulations, CSI does not utilize time-out as a behavior guidance strategy. Instead, children are supported in using a designated calming or cozy area to promote self-regulation. Children may leave the area when they are emotionally regulated and ready to join the group, with staff support as needed.

Verbal harshness of any kind is strictly prohibited. Staff are expected to use calm, respectful, and supportive communication at all times and to model appropriate social-emotional behavior.

### **PLANS FOR ONGOING CHALLENGING BEHAVIOR**

Child Saving Institute (CSI) is committed to ensuring that every child is supported in a nurturing, safe, and developmentally appropriate learning environment. While most children respond successfully to universal behavior supports, some children may require additional assistance to develop skills related to selfregulation, emotional expression, and following classroom expectations.

**Tiered Behavior Support and Intervention:** When a child demonstrates ongoing or challenging behavior, teaching staff implement Tier 2 targeted supports in alignment with the Pyramid Model Framework. These supports include explicit instruction, modeling, and guided practice of socialemotional and selfregulation skills tailored to the individual needs of the child.

If a child's behavior cannot be adequately addressed within the context of the classroom through Tier 2 strategies, the center will seek additional support. This may include consultation with external specialists, such as Kids Squad Consultants and/or Mental Health Consultants, to further support the child and teaching team.

- **Collaborative Behavior Planning:** When ongoing challenging behavior is identified, data related to the behavior is collected through observation and documentation to better understand patterns, triggers, and effective strategies. This information is used to collaboratively develop an individualized behavior support plan.

Behavior planning is conducted in partnership with:

- Classroom teachers
- The child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s)
- Center administrators
- Early Childhood Specialists and external consultants, as appropriate

Every effort is made to actively involve families in the development and implementation of behavior support plans. CSI prioritizes consistent communication and alignment between home and the center to support the child's success across environments.

### **SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS AND PROGRAM LIMITATIONS**

It is the intent of CSI's ECE program to meet the needs of every child through individualization, inclusion, and supportive interventions. However, in rare circumstances, the center may determine that it is no longer able to safely provide services. Such circumstances may include, but are not limited to, behaviors involving persistent or escalating aggression, selfharm, or other actions that significantly impact the safety of the child or others and continue despite documented interventions and supports.

If this determination is made, the Vice President of Educational Services will meet with the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) to discuss concerns, review interventions that have been attempted, and explore alternative resources that may better meet the child's needs. Families will receive written notification outlining the reasons for the decision and will be provided with referrals to appropriate community resources or programs.

## NONDISCRIMINATION AND EQUITY

Child Saving Institute provides services without regard to race, color, religion, gender, disability, sexual orientation, national origin, age, or any other protected class, in compliance with all applicable federal and state civil rights laws. Decisions related to behavior support, intervention, or service continuation are based solely on the ability of the program to safely meet a child's needs and are implemented in an equitable and nondiscriminatory manner.

## VI. ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

The Center's hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

The first time a child is brought to the center, it is a good idea to allow a little extra time to help the child feel comfortable. Children find security in routines. Establishing a routine leading up to departure is also important for successful home-center transitions, whether it is helping the child get settled, taking time for "one more hug" or putting a blanket away in the cubby.

Parents are asked to notify the center by 10:00 a.m. if their children will not be attending. If a child is not in the center by 10:00 a.m. and no call has been received, staff will call or send a Brightwheel message to verify the reason for absence.

In the event of a pickup during gross motor or outdoor play, please ensure you speak with a staff member before leaving with your child; the child will then be signed out for the day.

Children must be accompanied in the center by a parent or a designated person at all times who is 16 years of age or older and only left in the center with a staff member. Adults should instruct children to remain with them in the hallway, in sight, while departing the center. This ensures that all children are safely supervised and the doors to the parent entrance remain closed to other children.

Staff will request picture identification for any person picking up that they do not know. The identification will be checked against the Emergency Information Sheet to determine if the person is authorized to pick up the child. Parents can update authorized pick ups at any time and can give verbal authorization over the phone for new pick ups; the Emergency Information Sheet should be updated by parents following a verbal authorization.

Idling vehicles (busses, families' automobiles, and staff vehicles) are discouraged in parking areas except if the vehicle needs to idle in extreme heat or cold to maintain interior or engine temperatures. All adults transporting children should have a valid car seat appropriate for the child's height/weight/age requirements.

Children will be released to parents or legal guardians unless a court order restricts a person's access to child.

If an authorized pick up person appears to be impaired, the staff will ask for an alternative driver to escort the child. If a suspected impaired individual leaves the center with a child, staff will call 911.

## VII. SITE ENTRY AND VISITING

Parents will receive an access badge at enrollment that will allow them entry to the center's parent entrance and playground between 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Monday-Friday.

All visitors (anyone other than a parent or without an access badge) must enter the main agency entrance (northwest corner) to check in at the front desk. A staff member will then escort them to their destination.

## VIII. DAILY SCHEDULES

Daily schedules are posted in each classroom and will be made available to parents at the time of enrollment. They include:

- Breakfast/Lunch/Snack;
- Large Group time;
- Gross Motor/Outdoor Nature Explore;
- Interest Areas;
- Small Group Experiences;
- Rest time;
- Music and movement; and
- Transitions for toileting and diapering.

## XIX. REST AND RELAXATION

Each classroom has scheduled rest times, which occur directly following lunch time. Infants have rest time on an individual basis, directed by the needs of each child. Napping is not a requirement, but all children benefit from rest time that is quiet. Children not napping may be offered a quiet alternate activity, such as a book on their mat. Children should not be made to stay on their mat after 30 minutes of rest. If they are awake, a quiet activity should be made available. Please see infant care for more information regarding infant sleep protocols.

## XX. CLASSROOM INFORMATION

The following is a list of items to supply for care:

### MULTI-AGE:

- Change of clothing (including socks and underwear, if applicable);
- Seasonal clothing (boots, hat, mittens for winter, sun hat for summer);
- Diapers/pull-ups and wipes;
- Over the counter items as needed (diaper cream, moisturizer, sunscreen;)
- Clean bottles or sippy cups labeled with child's name;
- Breast milk or formula (if using a brand other than Similac Advance with Iron;)
- Pacifier (if applicable;)
- Sleep sack (if applicable;)
- Blanket, mat sheet and special item (optional) for naptime (ages 18 months and up;)
- Family pictures for family wall.

### TODDLERS:

- Change of clothing (including socks and underwear, if applicable);
- Seasonal clothing (boots, hat, mittens for winter, sun hat for summer)

- Diapers/pull-ups and wipes;
- Over the counter items as needed (diaper cream, moisturizer, sunscreen;)Pacifier (if applicable;)
- Blanket, mat sheet and special item (optional) for naptime;
- Family pictures for family wall.

#### PRESCHOOL:

- Change of clothing (including socks and underwear);
- Season clothing (boots, hat mittens for winter, sun hat for summer;)
- Over the counter items as needed (moisturizer, sunscreen, toothpaste;)
- Blanket, mat sheet and special item (optional) for naptime;
- Family pictures for family wall.

## XI. CLOTHING

Please be sure that your child has an extra set of clothes in the classroom at all times, for those unexpected accidents or messy play days. Children being potty trained may need several changes of clothes. Each child's clothing should be labeled with the child's initials including coats, hats, shoes, sweaters and mittens.

## XII. DIAPERS

Parents are responsible for furnishing disposable or cloth diapers, wipes and diaper cream. When cloth diapers are used, parents are responsible for providing and laundering the cloth diapers, as well as providing a covered container or wet bag for soiled diapers.

## XIII. TOILET TRAINING

Readiness for toilet training is developmental and varies with each child. Children must have both muscle control and enough language to communicate their needs. When a child begins showing signs of readiness for toilet training, parents or staff may initiate a conversation regarding this milestone. A toilet training program or "potty plan" can be developed that is consistent between home and center. We recommend that children be toilet trained before attending preschool.

Ask the following questions before determining a child's readiness to be toilet trained:

- Does the child show signs of discomfort when wet or soiled?
- Can the child "hold back," even briefly, when he or she feels a bowel movement coming?
- Does the child show interest or willingness to go to the bathroom with you?
- Can the child pull down his or her pants alone?
- Does the child remain dry for long periods of time?
- Does the child have the language to communicate his or her needs?

Prior to actual toilet training, parents and teachers can both help a child begin to identify when he or she is wet or soiled. Adults may ask, "Are you wet?" or "Do you have dirty pants?" during the changing process. The child can then be transitioned to realizing what it feels like before going. Parents may be requested by the teacher to provide pull-ups, training pants, or underwear for toilet training. Clothes should be kept simple and easy to pull down; many accidents are the result of clothing that is too hard to pull down or unfasten. Pants with elastic waistbands work best! Typically, the development necessary for effective toilet training occurs around the age of two.

## XIV. ITEMS FROM HOME

For children ages 18 months and older, parents are responsible for providing a blanket and a mat sheet, as well as any special item for naptime (optional.) Crib sheets for infants are provided. Blankets and stuffed toys may be taken home each Friday for cleaning. Items left will be laundered during the classroom's regular on-site laundry day. This helps to keep infectious disease from spreading, especially during the cold and flu seasons.

The center is adequately equipped with educational materials and toys. Toys from home are easily lost or broken, and pose difficulties with sharing. CSI is not responsible for toys brought from home. If your child must leave home with a toy, encourage the child to leave it in the car where it will be waiting for the ride home. Those toys that are brought to the center will be put aside until pickup time. Classrooms may host a special "show and share" day; on these days, children are able to bring an item to share with their peers, with direction from a teacher.

## XV. TRANSITION POLICY

CSI's Individualized Transitioning Plan

### 1. PreTransition Planning (Individualized)

- Transition timing selected to avoid periods of increased stress or major changes
- Child will not experience multiple major transitions simultaneously
- Staffing plan reviewed to ensure required stafftochild ratios and continuous supervision during all transition activities
- Key child information shared between classrooms, including:
  - Interests and strengths
  - Comfort strategies
  - Triggers and soothing supports
  - Health, developmental, or sensory needs

### 2. Child Preparation

The child will be prepared ahead of time using developmentally appropriate strategies:

- Child will be told about the transition using simple, positive language
- Photos of the new classroom and teachers will be shared
- Visual supports may be used (picture schedule, Now-Next-Then card)
- Books or social stories about moving to a new classroom will be read
- Comfort item identified (if applicable)

### 3. Gradual, Supported Visits

- Short visit to new classroom with familiar teacher
- Child participates in one routine (e.g., play, story, snack)
- Length of visits gradually increased based on child's comfort cues
- Familiar adult present during early visits
- Required ratios and supervision maintained at all times
- For infants and toddlers, primary caregiving consistency will be maintained whenever possible.

### 4. First Full Days in the New Classroom

- Child greeted by a consistent, assigned teacher
- Extra time allowed for separation and adjustment
- Comfort item available throughout the day
- Teacher prioritizes emotional connection before behavioral expectations
- Familiar routines, songs, and visuals used from previous classroom

### 5. Family Engagement and Communication

- Family informed of transition plan and timeline in advance
- Family invited to visit the new classroom
- Talking points and visuals shared for use at home
- Ongoing communication provided during adjustment period

### 6. Monitoring Adjustment & Individualized Support

The child's adjustment will be monitored for the first 2–4 weeks for:

- Emotional regulation
- Engagement and participation
- Changes in behavior or regression
- Eating, sleeping, or toileting changes

All transition paces may be adjusted if needed.

CSI will provide additional supports implemented if child has an IEP, IFSP, trauma history, or sensory needs as needed.

#### Transition Out of CSI Program

Upon receiving the 30-day written notice from parents/guardians when transitioning out of CSI's early childhood program, a staff member will schedule a brief meeting to learn about the reason for departure, to identify any supports needed during the transition and to review next steps.

The teacher will prepare an individualized transition plan that may include materials to help with the transition, contacting the new school or program (with parent permission) to share information regarding the child, or providing resources for the family as they transition.

An exit survey will be sent to the family via email before closing the child's Brightwheel account.

## XVI. STAFFING PATTERNS

The quality of any childcare program is dependent on the quality of its staff. CSI employs staff with high levels of education and experience, and a sincere commitment to the welfare of children. CSI's ECE program is staffed by adults who have a clear understanding of child and family development. Staff recognize and are capable of meeting the developmental and learning needs of all children. All levels of care are staffed with teacher-to-child ratios that are consistent with quality care of children and approved by accreditation standards as follows:

Age Group	Staff-to-Child Ratio	Maximum Group Size
Infants (6 weeks–18 months)	1:4	8
Multi-age (6 weeks–3 years)	1:4	8
Toddlers (18 months–3 years)	1:6	12
Preschoolers (3–5 years)	1:10	10
Pre-K (5 years)	1:12	12

Staffing is managed so that there are limited transitions for the child and each child is assigned a primary caregiver that supports each child's learning. In situations where there are mixed age groups, the ratio of the youngest child will be followed.

At times, CSI partners with volunteers to assist in classrooms. Volunteers receive an agency orientation, background checks, and are never left alone with children. Volunteers are not in ratio and are not a "substitute" for qualified staff. They may take part in feeding children but never with toileting and diapering. Classroom volunteers include parents, foster grandparents, practicum students and adults from the community.

## XVII. STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

- Vice President of Educational Services: The Vice President of Educational Services is required to have at least a Master's Degree in one of the following areas: Consumer/Family Science, Child Development, Early Childhood Education, or a related field and at least five years of experience in administration and early childhood education.
- Site Director: The Site Director is required to have at least a Bachelor's Degree in Family Science, Child Development, Early Childhood Education, or a related field and at least five years of experience in early childhood education.
- Assistant Site Director: The Assistant Site Director must have an Associate's Degree in Family Science, Child Development, Early Childhood Education, or a related field with at least two years of experience in early childhood education.
- Educational Supervisors: Associate's Degree in Family Science, Child Development, Early Childhood Education, or a related field with at least two years of experience in early childhood education, preferred.
- Early Childhood Educators: Child Development Associate (CDA) or 18 higher education credits in Child Development, Early Childhood Education or a related field with at least six months of experience in early childhood education, Associate's Degree is preferred.
- Early Childhood Support Staff and Substitutes: A minimum of a high school diploma/GED with at least six months of experience in early childhood education, preferred.

Exceptions to staff qualifications may be made when it is in the best interest of the center and only with approval from the Vice President of Educational Services, the Chief Human Resources Officer, and executive level approval (COO/CEO.)

## XVIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY

### A. DRILLS: FIRE, TORNADO, LOCKDOWN AND LOCK OUT

Monthly fire drills and quarterly tornado drills are conducted at CSI. Evacuation plans are posted by all exits. For their own safety, all children and staff are trained in the procedures and expected to take part in the drills. CSI staff will assist in evacuating children for drills.

- Fire evacuation – all children and staff exit the closest door and meet on the north or south sides of the building.
- Tornado – all children and staff exit to the storm shelter classrooms in which they are assigned.
- Lockdown – all children and staff move out of sight, are quiet and do not open the door
- Lockout – all children and staff are inside and business is conducted as usual; the perimeter doors are locked.

Parents who arrive to pick up a child during a drill should wait until the drill is finished before leaving the agency property with their child. Once the doors to the shelter classrooms are closed, parents will be required to wait until the “all clear” is given so that the doors can be reopened.

### B. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

In the event of an emergency, the center will follow the fire, tornado, lockdown or lockout drill protocols described above. If there is a center wide situation where children need to leave the building (e.g., loss of water or power,) an alert will be sent to the family member(s) designated at enrollment.

### C. ACCIDENTS

In case of an accident, emergency first aid or CPR will be administered and a parent or guardian will be immediately notified. If the staff is unable to reach a parent or guardian, emergency contacts will be called. An emergency unit will be called only in extreme cases. These units are dispatched by city or county officials according to the location of the center and are usually required to take patients to the nearest hospital, which would be the University of Nebraska Medical Center. Where possible, a staff member may escort the child in the emergency unit.

### D. HEALTH

To protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of all children, families, and staff, **CSI Early Childhood Education programs** follow exclusion guidelines recommended by the **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Nebraska Child Care Licensing Regulations,** and **COA standards.** We aim to minimize the spread of illness while balancing children’s developmental needs and family considerations.

A child will be excluded from care if they exhibit any of the following conditions:

#### Respiratory Illness

- Persistent cough, wheezing, or difficulty breathing
- Green or yellow nasal discharge accompanied by fever or behavior changes

#### Skin Conditions & Rashes

- Unexplained rash with fever or behavior changes
- Open, oozing, or infected sores that cannot be covered
- Suspected or diagnosed contagious skin conditions (e.g., impetigo, scabies, ringworm) without appropriate treatment

#### Eye and Throat Infections

- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) with discharge until evaluated or treated

- Strep throat or other bacterial infections until treated for at least 24 hours

#### Communicable Diseases

Children must be excluded for CDC identified communicable diseases including, but not limited to:

- Influenza
- COVID19
- RSV
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (when accompanied by fever or open sores)
- Chickenpox
- Measles, mumps, rubella
- Pertussis (whooping cough)

Exclusion will follow **CDC recommended timelines** and/or guidance from the Nebraska Department of Health or a licensed healthcare provider.

Certain symptoms in children may suggest the presence of a communicable disease. If a child has any of the symptoms outlined below, he or she should be excluded from the early childhood setting until: 1) a physician has certified that the symptoms are not associated with an infectious agent; 2) the child is no longer a threat to the health of others; and 3) the symptoms have subsided.

Fever – Fevers of 100.4 and higher will not be medicated. Children must be excluded from care until fever-free without medication. CSI recommends, as a minimum guideline, that child be fever-free without medication for 24 hours prior to returning.

Gastrointestinal Symptoms – Children who have uncontrolled or uncontained diarrhea must be excluded from care and may return after 24 hours of no diarrhea or until a medical exam indicates that it is not a communicable disease. A child would not need to be excluded if on a medication with a diarrhea side effect and if the side effect is documented by a physician.

Vomiting – Children who are vomiting must be excluded until vomiting stops and the child is no longer in danger of dehydration. Vomiting is defined as two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours.

Respiratory Illness – Children will be excluded from care if they exhibit a persistent cough, wheezing or difficulty breathing. They may return to care when a doctor has cleared them to return.

Rash/Skin conditions (rashes, impetigo) – Children with these symptoms must be excluded until a medical exam indicates the symptoms are not contagious, or 24 hours after medical treatment is initiated.

Lice – Children must be excluded from care until the first treatment for lice is completed and there are no signs of live lice or nits. (i.e. lice eggs).

CSI staff will monitor all children's health and notify parents of symptoms of illness (e.g., lethargy or a

low-grade temperature under 100 degrees). Please notify the staff if a child is taking any medication that may alter behavior.

Parents will be notified of any communicable disease or lice present at the center that children may have been exposed to; a description of the illness along with the symptoms and incubation period will be posted on the classroom door.

Typical communicable diseases include:

Disease	Symptoms	Exclusion Period
Chicken Pox	Mild fever, small raised pimples	Until spots are scabbed over and the child is fever-free
Measles	Fever, cough, rash, red eyes	Until 4 days after rash appears
Rubella	Fever, rash	Until 6 days after rash appears
Mumps	Fever, neck swelling	Until 9 days after swelling begins
Scarlet Fever	Fever, sore throat, rash	Until fever-free and 24 hours of treatment
Scabies	Itchy skin rash	Until treatment is complete
RSV	Cough, sneezing, wheezing, fever	Until fever is gone
Head Lice	Itchy scalp, lice, and nits	Until all lice and nits are gone

By helping Child Saving Institute observe good health standards, parents will be protecting their own children as well as the health of others.

### E. MEDICATIONS

The following guidelines are used when administering medication:

- Where possible, it is encouraged that the parent or guardian gives the medication at home, as opposed to sending it to the center.
- Staff who have had medication administration training are responsible for dispersing medication to all children. All medications must be labeled with the child's name, be current (not expired) and be in the original over the counter or prescription container.
- Medication cannot be administered by staff without written permission from the parent or guardian.
- All medication given must be documented on the medication forms and placed in the child's file. The forms must be signed by the employee administering the medication.
- Parents will be notified if medication is not given at the exact time on the written authorization; permission to give the medication at a new time must be granted by the parent or guardian.
- If a physician or dentist has ordered a special medical management procedure for a child, an adult that has been trained in the procedure must be on site when the child is present. All

children with allergies or asthma must have an action plan on site and signed by a physician, along with the appropriate medication.

### F. IMMUNIZATIONS

A child will not be admitted for care unless a record of immunizations has been obtained at the time of enrollment or a formal written medical or religious exception is requested. All immunizations need to be current to the age of the child. When taking a child for his or her shots, please update the center with the additional immunizations. Each year the immunization records will be updated as required by the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services.

Children who are under-immunized will be promptly excluded from care if a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program.

### G. PHYSICAL

A child must have had a check-up and physical examination at least six months prior to enrolling in childcare. The purpose of the check-up is to ensure that the child is in good health and can safely participate in childcare.

### I. ABUSE AND NEGLECT PROCEDURE

Any staff member or volunteer who suspects abuse or neglect of a child is required to report such suspected abuse or neglect to the Vice President of Educational Services. The Vice President will immediately review the circumstances and report the suspicion to the COO and if "reasonable cause" exists, report the incident to the proper law enforcement or child protection agency. As employees of CSI, staff do not make judgments as to whether a child is abused or neglected; the requirement to report is for the protection of children and to assist families in accessing needed services.

Although an unpleasant topic, there is always the possibility that staff who work with children may act or speak in a way that may hurt someone. Such words or actions by staff are not tolerated at CSI. Any description or suspicion of abuse by a staff member should be immediately reported to the Vice President of Educational Services. CSI will then report the suspected abuse to Child Protective Services, Childcare Licensing, and conduct an internal investigation.

## XIX. NUTRITION

Please note: Child Saving Institute's Early Childhood Education Center is a peanut free center. Any food or drink will either be discarded or returned home. Thank you for your attention to this.

CSI's food Service program incorporates on site cooks. Planned menus are in compliance with USDA's guidelines and are approved and monitored by the Department of Education. In addition:

- Menus are posted in the classrooms and via Brightwheel.
- CSI works with families who have special circumstances for their children regarding food service. Children with allergies or dietary restrictions will have items supplemented for their meal(s.)
- CSI provides the infant formula Similac Advance with Iron. Parents will be responsible for providing their own formula if using an alternate. CSI also provides Gerber rice cereal and strained fruits and vegetables up to 13 months. If the child's pediatrician recommends starting these foods at an earlier age than 6 months, a signed permission from the child's doctor must be provided. CSI uses the USDA recommended meal patterns.
- CSI is a breastfeeding friendly environment. Breast milk may be brought to the center and

should be labeled with the child's first and last name, the date the milk was received by the center, and the date the milk was expressed. Milk should also include a frozen date if applicable. Mothers are welcome to nurse or pump at the center. Both centers have private lactation rooms available for use.

- Breakfast, lunch, and snack are served family-style in each classroom. Children will serve themselves, with adult assistance as needed. Children will be encouraged by the classroom teacher to serve themselves all of the foods offered, but will not be required to take or eat everything on their plates. Staff will encourage the children to try new foods, but will not force them to eat. Children will be asked if they are full before being offered a second helping; this helps children listen to their bodies and understand when they have had enough to eat.
- Water will be offered throughout the day.
- Breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack are provided for children one year of age and older. Skim milk is given to children two years of age and older, while whole milk is given to children twelve months old up to age two years. Food on the daily menu is served at the following times:

Breakfast	8:30 a.m. (infants)	9:00 a.m. (toddler & preschool)
Lunch	11:30 a.m. (infants)	12:00 p.m. (toddler & preschool)
Snack		3:00 p.m.

If a child arrives after the specified meal times and has not eaten, staff will provide them with meal or snack options.

## XX. BIRTHDAY AND HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays are special days and we want to recognize them at CSI in ways that fit into the children's daily routines and activities. In order to maintain a consistent routine for the children, birthdays will be celebrated during the classroom's regular afternoon snack time. We will allow parents to bring in pre-packaged, store purchased treats to celebrate birthdays.

Staff may celebrate holidays that are represented within their classroom and the center. If food is a part of the celebration, staff will offer the regular menu items in order to balance treats brought in by families.

## XXI. PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

### Family Communication and Engagement

Child Saving Institute (CSI) recognizes that strong partnerships with families are essential to the delivery of high-quality early childhood education services. In accordance with Nebraska Child Care Licensing Regulations (391 NAC) and Council on Accreditation (COA) Early Childhood Education standards, CSI is committed to maintaining open, ongoing, and meaningful communication with families to support children's development, safety, and well-being. CSI's Early Childhood Education program uses the following communication plan.

**Daily Communication:** Consistent with Nebraska licensing requirements for parent communication and COA expectations for family engagement, classroom staff provide daily written communication for each child via Brightwheel. These updates include information about:

- Learning activities and experiences
- Eating patterns and nutrition
- Rest and nap routines
- Mood, behavior, and social interactions
- Toileting and hygiene (when applicable)
- Any special notes, concerns, or instructions

Daily communication is available for parents to review on the Brightwheel app., ensuring families are informed of their child's day and ongoing needs.

**Open Door Policy:** In compliance with Nebraska Child Care Licensing standards, CSI maintains an open door policy that allows parents and guardians to visit the program at any time without prior notice. Families are informed of this policy at enrollment and are encouraged to visit their child's classroom. Parents of infants, including those who are nursing, are especially encouraged to visit frequently to support secure attachment, continuity of care, and healthy nutrition practices.

This policy aligns with COA standards promoting transparency and family participation in program activities.

**Newsletters:** Classroom newsletters are posted monthly via Brightwheel for parents and staff. Newsletters include information about:

- Classroom learning activities and curriculum themes
- Important dates and upcoming events
- Parenting tips and child development information
- Community resources and family events

This practice supports COA standards related to ongoing family communication and access to program information.

**Parent Engagement:** CSI actively encourages parent involvement in accordance with COA standards emphasizing family partnership. Parents are invited to share their cultures, traditions, talents, and professional experiences within the classroom to enrich children's learning. Parents are also welcome to participate in preschool field trips to support learning experiences outside the classroom.

At enrollment, families are asked to complete a Parent Utilization of Skills form to identify interests and skills that may be shared within the program.

### Parent Contact and Communication Access

Parents are encouraged to maintain ongoing contact with program staff. Families may:

- Call directly to their child's classroom to speak with teachers
- Contact the Site Director or the Vice President of Education at any time
- Use approved our approved electronic communication platform Brightwheel
- Communicate via email

These communication methods align with Nebraska licensing expectations for caregivers' access to staff and COA standards for responsive communication.

**Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Formal parent-teacher conferences are held twice annually, in May and November, for each enrolled child. Conferences provide an opportunity for teachers to share written documentation of the child's developmental progress, including strengths and areas for growth and to work with parents to set goals for their child. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and provide input to ensure shared decision-making.

In alignment with COA standards, parents and teachers collaborate during conferences to:

- Review assessment and observation data
- Discuss how classroom strategies support the child's needs

- Establish individualized goals for the next three to six months

**Transition Planning Meetings:** CSI recognizes the importance of developmentally appropriate transitions. In alignment with both Nebraska licensing expectations and COA standards, staff work collaboratively with families to determine when a child is ready to move to the next classroom. A transition plan is developed to support the child's emotional comfort, continuity of care, and successful adjustment (Attachment F).

**Parenting Education:** To support families, Child Saving Institute offers parenting education opportunities, including classes on parenting skills. These classes are available on a sliding fee scale or at no cost. Parenting education and resources are also shared during periodic parent meetings. This practice supports COA standards related to family education and support services.

**Parent Advisory Teams:** Each CSI center maintains a Parent Advisory Team, consistent with COA expectations for family voice and shared governance. The purpose of the advisory team is to:

- Serve as a link between families and staff
- Provide input on program practices and activities
- Support decision-making in the best interest of children and families
- All parents are encouraged to participate.

**Family Participation Expectation:** Families are encouraged to participate in program activities and engagement opportunities to the extent possible. Active family involvement supports positive outcomes for children and strengthens collaboration between home and program.

## Contact

Parents are encouraged to call directly to their child's classroom to speak with the teachers. Calls to the Directors are welcome at any time. Parents may also email teachers and/or the Directors. Please allow a 24-hour turnaround for email responses.

Families will also be invited to participate in a free application called Brightwheel where announcements are made from the classrooms and center, as well as access to pictures, videos, and a messaging board.

## Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are held for your child every twice per year in November and again in April. This gives the CSI staff the opportunity to share information on the developmental progress of each child, their individual strengths, and areas for improvement as well as the current assessment results. This is also an opportune time to establish individual goals for the next six months with input from parents.

## Parent Information Board

Each classroom has a parent board that includes the current menu, lesson plan and classroom schedule, classroom newsletter, and weekly reminders. The center also has a "Parent Center" at the entrance to the building that lists community events and shares resources.

## Parent and Teachers

The Parents and Teachers group (Family Impact Team - FIT) meets periodically to share input into the

policies, procedures, and activities in CSI's ECE program. Meetings also provide an opportunity to network with other parents. The group is open to all parents to attend.

## Family Events

CSI hosts several parent and child activities throughout the year. Some of these activities occur in the evening, while others are planned during the day at times convenient for most parents to participate. The activities allow parents and children to spend an enjoyable time together and support parents in promoting their child's development.

## Fundraising

CSI staff facilitate fundraisers throughout the year in order raise money for extra early childhood activities, staff appreciation, and early childhood scholarships. Families are welcome to participate as a way of supporting CSI's Early Childhood centers.

## Volunteer Opportunities

Parents and family members can volunteer in a variety of ways including:

- Assisting in the classroom (reading or helping in a center area);
- Attending and helping with field trips;
- Planning for and assisting at special program events and activities;
- Making phone calls to other parents to remind them of events and activities;
- Assisting program staff in preparing materials for the classroom;
- Reading stories to the children at story time;
- Rubbing backs at nap time;
- Talking to the children about their profession;
- Assisting in supervising a cooking activity;
- Rocking babies;
- Teaching a song or dance;
- Advocating at the legislature for pro-childcare bills;
- Teaching preschoolers about their culture and/or heritage;
- Sharing a special interest or hobby; and/or
- Participating on the Parent Advisory Team.

# XXII. GENERAL ACCOUNTING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## A. Enrollment

Enrollment is open to all children six weeks to six years of age. Child Saving Institute will accept enrollment of a child based upon the center's ability to meet the needs and/or requirements of that child. The center's enrollment policies are as follows:

- All children are enrolled for regularly scheduled, ongoing care. Requests for changes in a child's enrollment schedule must be submitted in writing to the Site Director.
- Care for children is available on a full-time basis only.
- As a general rule, drop-in care is not available. Drop-in care is based on availability and must be approved in advance by the Site Director and services must be paid in advance.

## B. Center Closings

The center is open Monday-Friday from 6:30 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

Holidays -The center will be closed on the following holidays:

New Year's Day		Thanksgiving Day & Thanksgiving Friday
Martin Luther King Day	Independence Day	Christmas Eve Day
Memorial Day	Labor Day	Christmas Day

When a holiday falls on a Saturday, the center will observe the holiday and will close on the Friday before. When the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will observe the holiday and will be closed on the following Monday. Parents will be assessed the regular fee during holidays.

- Agency Retreat Day & Professional Development Day – The agency generally closes two days per year to allow staff the opportunity for in-service training. CSI prioritizes ensuring that staff have training opportunities that directly impact the care of your child. Parents will be notified of the in-service dates at least 30 days in advance.
- Inclement Weather Days – The center is closed for inclement weather only in cases where the safety of the children and staff are at risk. We will make the decision on the morning of the closure and will send out an agency text message to inform our families of the closure. We do not close for cold weather as our children do not wait at bus stops outside in the cold. If local school districts cancel, it does not mean that we will automatically cancel. We do also utilize late starts for weather-related issues. We make every attempt to be open for care as we know how important it is for our families to be able to go to work.
- After-Closing Late Fee- Closing time for the center is 6:00 p.m. When parents arrive to pick up their children after that time, staff are required to stay late. To discourage late pick up, a late fee of \$10.00 is charged at 6:05 p.m. and \$1.00 for each minute after 6:05 p.m. that a child is still at the center. Late fees will be added to your monthly tuition bill.

## C. Payment Procedures

### All fees are due in advance of care

Preferred method for payments is by automatic checking withdrawal (ACH.) A \$30.00 fee will be assessed for all returned checks. Visa, Master Card or flexible plan payments can also be accepted. Some flexible spending accounts are accepted. Payments made two weeks after the due date will be charged \$15.00 for each week past due and a payment plan will be required. The payment plan must be signed by the parent, accounting, Site Director and the Vice President of Educational Services. Late payments can result in the termination of care.

### Sick Leave

- Minor Illness- Please notify the center when a child is ill. Payment is still required. This includes, but is not limited to, chicken pox, flu, colds and diarrhea.
- Terminations - Notice of termination requires at least 30 days in advance of the child's last day.
- Fee Related Questions- Comments or questions regarding fees or fee-related procedures can be addressed to the accounting department, Site Director, or Vice President of Educational Services

## D. Fees

See Enrollment and Fee Schedule for current rates and tuition fees.

## XXIII. FEDERAL CHILDCARE SUBSIDY GUIDELINES

### A. Attendance Policy

- Children are required to attend a minimum of six hours a day, five days a week as CSI only accepts Title XX for fulltime care.
- Families are required to complete a schedule of care upon enrollment, detailing the hours that the child will be in care. Care is authorized only for those times. If care beyond what Subsidy will cover is needed, an arrangement must be made with the parent, site director, accounting, and the Vice President of Educational Services to determine those hours and an hourly rate will be assessed.
- Children may not miss more than 5 days per month. Anymore days than that affects reimbursement for care and may be grounds for termination.

### B. Authorization

- Initial Authorization - Prior to the child's first day of attendance, a written authorization for the \$25 enrollment fee, days of care and hours of care must be received by the accounting department. Only full-time authorizations of 30 hours or more will be accepted.
- On-going Authorizations - It is a parent's responsibility to keep authorizations current.
- Re-Acceptance into the Program – After written authorization is received and balance is paid in-full, the child may return if an opening is available and with permission from the Vice President of Educational Services.

## 4. Fees

- Co-payments are due on the first of each month. When care is terminated, the amount due will be calculated according to the date that care was terminated.
- CSI reserves the right to terminate care if payments are not made on a timely basis.

## XXIV. CONFIDENTIALITY

CSI recognizes that as a parent in our program, you share very confidential and private information with us. All forms and information about you, your children, and your family are considered confidential and protected and can only be viewed by appropriate CSI staff and those professional consultants and reviewers who have specific and designated permission. Family records are secured in locked file cabinets and in our management information system on the computer. Persons will not be given access to this information without written consent.

## XXV. GRIEVANCE PROCESS

Although it is not always possible for Child Saving Institute staff members to accommodate or concur with the wishes of clients, all clients are entitled to reasonable explanations of decisions made regarding their care. The clients served by Child Saving Institute programs have a right to be treated with courtesy and respect and to express their concerns. Therefore, all Child Saving Institute clients are provided with information regarding their basic rights as clients or consumers and with a means of expressing a grievance or an appeal in the event that they are dissatisfied regarding service provision. In the event of a grievance with the agency, refer to steps for filing a grievance received at enrollment.





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