Employee Handbook

Revised: August 2011
Our Center

Welcome to Teddy Bear Child Care!

This handbook is designed to help new, current, and prospective employees understand who we are and what our expectations are for our employees. Each section addresses different aspects of Teddy Bear Child Care and your employment.

Being able to understand who we are and meeting our expectations helps you to embody our commitment to high quality child care and represent the Center in a positive way. Thus, all employees are expected to read this handbook and agree to follow the policies herein.

As with any policy manual, this handbook is subject to amendment as policies change or are added. Information on revisions and changes will be available to employees as soon as possible after adoption, either in hardcopy supplements or online at Teddy Bear Child Care’s website at www.teddybearchildcarecenters.com.

Who We Are

Teddy Bear Child Care began in 1998 as a home daycare run by the Center’s owner, Angela Gick. Over the next ten years, she opened a second home daycare and eventually the needs of Teddy Bear Child Care outgrew both homes. The current Center, at our Woods Edge location, opened in 2008, and in 2011 we opened our infant room to better serve the needs of our families.

In addition, in early August 2011, Teddy Bear Child Care became a Level 3 Paths to Quality Facility. This rating, as determined by Indiana’s Family and Social Services Administration, serves as an indicator of the quality of our facility in offering an environment supportive for children’s learning. Our ultimate goal is to achieve a Level Four rating, national accreditation, which is the highest ranking awarded by Paths to Quality.

The Center’s leadership consists of the following individuals and positions:

Director: Angela Gick
Assistant Director: Kristin Wolfe

In addition, we have an Advisory Board, whose membership consists of parents and community members who want to contribute their time, ideas, and efforts to helping improve Teddy Bear Child Care for our children. Current membership rosters are available through the Director of the Center.

And last, but certainly not least, there are the teachers like you who have chosen to contribute their talents and expertise to the Center. Without dedicated individuals like you, our Center could not serve the community at large. Welcome to the Teddy Bear Child Care family!
**Mission Statement**

Teddy Bear Child Care’s mission is to provide affordable daycare to diverse families within the Muncie community, with particular emphasis on low income families and students enrolled at local institutions of higher learning (e.g., Ball State University, Ivy Tech Community College). We provide a wide range of age-appropriate learning opportunities for children from 6 weeks to 12 years of age to develop and grow intellectually, socially, and emotionally, while also learning the physical skills necessary for day-to-day life.

**Philosophy**

Teddy Bear Child Care is dedicated to providing a warm and loving family environment for children. With our smaller size, we are able to give quality, individualized care to families at affordable prices, and we also offer various discounts and vouchers to help with the overall cost of care. Many basic child care necessities are provided at no additional cost by the Center, including diapers and wipes, as well as home-style meals and snacks; this helps reduce some of the stress for families where finances are an issue. For a child with special needs, we work to provide the best care possible while helping the family explore all additional resources to enhance the child’s well-being. As we view the Center as a family, the importance of family bonds cannot be understated; siblings are encouraged to interact with one another, and we want everyone involved - children, parents, and staff alike - to feel like they are part of our extended family.

Children here are encouraged to be children; we do not believe they are small adults. The individual progress, growth, and development of every child are important to us. The environment at the Center promotes learning while having fun during the process. Through a mixture of hands-on experiences, group activities, and individual play, our children develop the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical skills necessary for all aspects of life and growth.

Parent comments and suggestions are encouraged and are taken into serious consideration as we continually adapt to new challenges. The children are not the only ones who are engaged in the learning experience - all of our staff and parents also learn from the children.

**Goals**

The following are the basic goals for the children who are in our care:

*Emotional:*

- to become independent and learn to be in control of their emotions
- to be able to express and deal with the emotions they have
- to learn how others express and deal with emotions
- to develop empathy with others
Social:

- to be able to interact effectively with others, regardless of perceived differences
- to be able to respect others and the property of others
- to be able to function well in a group setting
- to be able to understand why they should cooperate with others
- to be able to develop meaningful friendships

Physical:

- to develop large and small motor skills
- to learn the importance of good nutrition and good hygiene
- to develop lifelong, healthy habits

Intellectual:

- to develop a lifetime love of learning
- to learn observation and discussion skills
- to build a love for reading
- to build upon natural curiosity
- to develop the foundation needed to advance in the primary grades
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I. PERSONNEL POLICIES

Teddy Bear Child Care strives to employ people who are the best qualified to meet the needs of the Center and the children under our care. Employment shall be on the basis of proven competence or potential ability as indicated by academic achievements, personal attitude, and prior work experience in accordance with the necessary qualifications and essential duties listed on the job description.

The employment of all persons shall be contingent upon the approval of the Director.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER/NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Teddy Bear Child Care is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All employment activities will be conducted in a manner to assure equal opportunity for all and will be based solely on the individual merit and fitness of applicants, candidates, and/or employees without regard to race, color, religion, creed, sex, gender, age, national origin, sexual orientation, pregnancy, or disability.

Employees hired for positions where the primary responsibility is direct child care must be eighteen (18) years of age. Employees who are in the Continuity of Care room must be twenty-one (21) years of age, and must be able to lift up to 25 pounds. These requirements are in accordance with the regulations established by our licensing agent and the state of Indiana.

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

Employment in the state of Indiana is considered to be “at-will.” The “At-will” relationship affords the employee the right to resign for any reason. We do, however, hope to provide a work environment which will encourage you to remain with our program.

Likewise, the employer may terminate the relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice. It is further understood that the “At-will” employment relationship may not be altered by any written document or by verbal agreement, unless such alteration is specifically acknowledged in writing and signed by an authorized executive of Teddy Bear Child Care.

EMPLOYMENT AT THE CENTER

Once an applicant has been offered a position at Teddy Bear Child Care, there are a number of additional criteria which must be met by the applicant within a prescribed time period in order to be employed at the Center. These include health and safety screening of the applicant, along with other required documentation which must be submitted and completed during the application process or within a pre-determined span of time upon being hired.
Teddy Bear Child Care is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment for its employees, the children under our care, and for those who visit our facility. The following health and safety checks must be completed prior to employment:

**Health Screening**

As you will be working with children, your physical health is very important! Staff must be free of physical and psychological conditions which might adversely affect the physical, mental, or emotional health of the children under their care. Thus, all employees must have the following health-related items on file with proper documentation before beginning employment at the Center:

- **Current Physical examination**
  The physical must be completed and signed by a licensed health care provider. Immediate relatives of the prospective employee who are licensed health care providers are prohibited from signing the documentation. Teddy Bear Child Care does not compensate employees nor otherwise provide for the physical exam.

- **TB Test**
  A TB test must be completed prior to employment and must be renewed annually. This test is provided free of charge by the Delaware County Health Department.

In some situations, additional health appraisals may be required to provide documentation for reasonable accommodations of an employee’s disability or to determine eligibility for leave.

If health changes occur during employment which may impact the ability of a staff member to perform the requisite duties of the position, or which may endanger or otherwise adversely affect others at the Center, an outside expert may be consulted to determine a staff member’s condition and its potential impact on children at the Center.

**Safety Screening**

Just as your individual health is important to the Center, other personal factors which may affect the safety and health of the children in your care or of other individuals at the Center must be assessed as well. The following items must be completed prior to employment:

- **Drug Screen**
  A five panel drug screen must be administered and passed prior to employment at the Center to demonstrate that a prospective employee is free of drugs or other substances classified as controlled substances under the Indiana Controlled Substances Act. While this drug screen does not have to be renewed according to a particular schedule, Teddy Bear Child Care, at its sole discretion, may require the drug screen to be completed again under certain circumstances - e.g., if the employee was involved in an accident in a company vehicle or while transporting children, as well as other situations deemed appropriate by the Director.
Teddy Bear Child Care will cover the cost of the initial drug screen and subsequent screenings as appropriate.

**Criminal Background Check**
State law mandates that all new employees have current clearances from State Police. State law and licensing regulations stipulate that the clearances show the employee has no open accusations or convictions of child abuse or neglect, nor of a felony violation of any law intended to control the illegal possession or distribution of any substance classified as a controlled substance in the Indiana Controlled Substances Act.

While prior violations of the law will not immediately disqualify a prospective applicant from being offered employment at Teddy Bear Child Care, some misdemeanor and most felony convictions will prohibit the Center from employing such an individual, as per Indiana state child care licensing rules and regulations.

Teddy Bear Child Care, at its sole discretion, may require additional criminal checks during the course of an employee’s tenure at the Center, if circumstances suggest this is necessary.

These items are all in accordance with state licensing guidelines. Prospective employees who fail to meet these guidelines or who refuse to comply with any of the items listed above will be disqualified from employment consideration. Please see also the policies later in this section addressing potential criminal violations, drug abuse, and alcohol abuse which occur after employment has begun.

**Required Training**
Teddy Bear Child Care must ensure that all staff have adequate and appropriate training to work with children. The following items are required training for all new employees of the Center:

- Universal precautions
- First aid (within the first 30 days/Continuity of care [CoC] staff must be certified before working in the CoC room)
- CPR (within the first 30 days/Continuity of care [CoC] staff must be certified before working in the CoC room)
- Safe Sleep
- Licensing rules
- Special Needs (including Inclusion Policy and general training)

Each type of training is described either in other sections of this handbook or information will be provided in separate documents to the employee at the training session. All training listed here will be provided and/or paid for by the Center.
Other Required Documentation

Federal and state law require that Teddy Bear Child Care have other documentation on file or recorded to ensure that you are eligible to work in the United States and that you are properly qualified for the position. These items can include:

- Proof of eligibility to work (Driver’s license or other state-issued identification; Social Security card)
- Education transcripts

Please note that the above list is not all-inclusive of items which may be required for a new hire to begin work at the Center. The orientation process will require additional documentation, and this will be explained before or during that time.

EMPLOYEE CLASSIFICATIONS

Every employee, at the time of hire, will be classified as either FULL-TIME or PART-TIME, as well as EXEMPT or NON-EXEMPT. These classifications are not intended as job descriptions; they are used solely to determine benefits and overtime eligibility. In addition, new hires are considered PROVISIONAL employees for the first part of their employment, as described below.

- **Full-Time Employee**: A person who is regularly scheduled for at least thirty-five (35) or MORE hours per week. Full-time employees are eligible for full-time benefits described later in this section.

- **Part-Time Employee**: A person who is regularly scheduled for LESS THAN thirty-five (35) hours per week. Part-time employees are eligible for part-time benefits described later in this section.

- **Exempt (salary)**: Employees not eligible to receive overtime pay, whose salary covers all hours worked, regardless of the number of hours required to accomplish all duties of the job as outlined in the job description.

- **Non-Exempt (hourly)**: Hourly employees eligible to receive overtime pay pursuant to Fair Labor Standards Act. Non-exempt employees are paid for the specific number of hours worked to complete their job as outlined in the job description.

Provisional Status

All employees will be considered provisional for up to 90 days calendar days of employment when initially hired or placed in a new position. During the Provisional Period, Teddy Bear Child Care will evaluate the provisional employee's performance to determine if she or he meets the standards set by TBCC as outlined by both the job description and this handbook.
Provisional employees who have been placed in a new position at the Center are not eligible to use any form of accrued paid absence during the provisional period (paid sick leave, vacation time, personal time), excluding designated holidays.

The provisional period may be extended up to 30 days, by approval of the Director and only where it is deemed necessary and appropriate. In all cases of requests to extend an employee's provisional period, the Director/Assistant Director will provide a performance appraisal and the reason for extension, and the length of extension that is recommended. Requests for extension cannot be submitted after the provisional period concludes.

Upon successful completion of the provisional period, the Director will recommend whether the provisional employee should be retained. The recommendation will be accompanied by a completed final provisional performance appraisal. Upon approval, the employee will enter regular employment status and thereby will be deemed eligible for those benefits provided to regular employees of the same classification.

Should the provisional employee not be recommended for regular status, the employee will be terminated no later than the last day of the provisional period or any extension thereof.

Employment may be terminated at any time during the provisional period with or without cause.

**Job Descriptions**

Teddy Bear Child Care currently has three primary positions, aside from the Director, with particular duties and responsibilities assigned to each. In addition, we offer practicum opportunities for Early Childhood Education students at Ivy Tech. Employees will receive copies of, and will be expected to be familiar with, their individual job descriptions. Please note that the responsibilities assigned to each position are not all-inclusive, and other duties appropriate to the position may be required. Full job descriptions are included in the Appendix of this handbook.

**COMPENSATION AND SCHEDULING**

Teddy Bear Child Care strives to compensate employees at a fair level reflecting the relative demands, requirements, and qualification of the position assigned.

**Starting Wages**

All employees begin their initial employment with an hourly rate commiserate with their educational experience:

- No degree/some college: $7.25/hour
- Associate’s Degree (ECE): $7.50/hour
- Bachelor’s Degree (ECE): $7.75/hour
Degrees beyond the baccalaureate are subject to higher rates of pay. Extensive formal child care experience may also be considered as a factor in determining starting wages in lieu of an earned degree. Increases to an employee’s starting wage occur at the end of each evaluation period, as noted in the Evaluation and Advancement section below.

In the event that a salaried position becomes available, the annual salary will be determined by education, experience, and other similar factors.

**Pay Schedule/Recording Hours**

Our work week begins on Sunday at 12:00am and ends on Saturday 11:59pm. Employees will be paid bi-weekly on Fridays, beginning two weeks after employment begins. Paychecks will be distributed no earlier than 3:00pm and no later than 6:00pm on those pay dates.

Employees must clock in and out to accurately record the actual hours worked. Employees who falsely represent the number of hours worked or those who fail to clock in and out correctly may have their paycheck delayed and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

When a payday falls on a holiday, paychecks will be issued on the next business day after the holiday.

**Overtime**

Employees will be notified at the time of hire as to whether they are classified as “exempt” or “non-exempt” as determined by the Fair Labor Standards Act. The overtime policy addresses payment for overtime for Non-Exempt employees only. Definitions of Exempt and Non-Exempt Employees can be found in the Employee Classification section of this document.

The nature of the duties and responsibilities of some non-exempt employees may require overtime work from time to time. Overtime work should be considered an exceptional situation.

The Director/Assistant Director must approve all overtime prior to the employee working the overtime hours. In cases when obtaining prior approval is not possible, such as situations involving the late pick-up of children by their parents, the employee must inform the Director/Assistant Director of the situation as soon as possible following the overtime hours. Employees who do not seek prior approval for working overtime will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

If circumstances dictate the need for overtime, the Director/Assistant Director may inform an employee of the need to work overtime with little or no notice.

If a non-exempt employee is required to work overtime hours, the employee will receive monetary compensation for the additional hours worked as mandated by federal and state laws.
**Evaluation and Advancement**

Reviews of an employee’s work are important to help determine advancement at the Center and an employee’s suitability for continued employment. Provisional employees are evaluated at the 30 and 90-day mark; employees who successfully complete the provisional employment period are then evaluated annually thereafter, on or near the anniversary of the first day of employment. The impact of successful evaluations on wages are described herein.

The first thirty (30) days of employment are provisional. At the end of 30 days, the first review of the employee will take place. Employees with a satisfactory or better review will receive a $.25 (twenty-five cent) raise. The new pay rate will be applied to the hours worked starting the next full week after the review.

A second, more extensive review will occur after the employee has worked 90 days. Employees with satisfactory or better reviews will receive a $.25 (twenty-five cent) raise. The new pay rate will be applied to the hours worked starting the next full week after the review.

Once an employee has successfully been employed by TBCC for ninety (90) days, future reviews will be conducted on an annual basis, occurring on or near the anniversary of the first day worked. Subsequent raises will be performance-based, with a $.25 (twenty-five cent) raise being the average. Exemplary service and performance may be rewarded with a more substantial raise; a poor review (but with correctable behaviors) may result in a smaller raise.

The purpose of each evaluation is to determine an employee’s overall fitness for the job, the assigned duties, and the Center as a whole. They are intended to be a positive experience for the employee and the Director/Assistant Director. Each evaluation will assess the entire period of employment since the employee’s previous appraisal.

The first evaluation (at 30 days) helps to determine a new employee’s overall competence and fitness for the job, as well as how the employee fits with the Center and its goals. Subsequent evaluations take into account overall job performance, in accordance with the employee’s job description and other appropriate criteria as determined by the Director (such as goals) and conveyed to the employee.

Evaluations not only look back on an employee’s performance, but also look forward by establishing short-term and long-term goals for the employee. Goals should serve both the needs of the Center and the employee, allowing both to grow. Progress toward reaching those goals may be used in an employee’s annual evaluation.

During the evaluation, the Director/Assistant Director will go over the evaluation with the employee, discussing the employee’s accomplishments, progress, and any areas of concern. The employee will be expected to sign the evaluation to indicate discussion and receipt of a copy of the evaluation. Note that signing the evaluation does not mean that the employee agrees with every item listed or discussed; in the case of an employee’s disagreement with the appraisal, written comments from the employee may be attached to document the
employee’s objections to particular items (or the evaluation as a whole), as well as provide the employee’s rebuttal to specific items.

If an employee refuses to sign the evaluation, another employee must witness the refusal by signing a statement verifying the refusal to sign the evaluation by the employee being evaluated. Refusal to sign the evaluation does mean the employee will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

All employees will receive a copy of their annual evaluations. The original, signed evaluation will be placed in the employee's personnel record.

Materials related to the evaluation process may be obtained from the Director upon request.

**Work Schedule**

Teddy Bear Child Care is open Monday through Friday from 7am until 6pm. Work schedules are prepared by the Director each week and will be posted on Friday, with hours set for the following week. The schedule will include work days, work hours, and days off. Temporary and permanent schedule changes may be necessary to effectively meet the needs of the program. In the event that a parent is late in picking up a child (after 6pm), the employee must remain with the child until an approved adult arrives to take the child home. Employees will be paid for any such time beyond their normal work hours.

Hours of attendance have been carefully planned and employees are required to work the hours and days for which they have been scheduled. If you are unable to report to work for any reason, you must notify the Director/Assistant Director at least 4 hours prior to your scheduled starting time. Failure to provide notice in a timely manner will be considered unexcused absence and may result in disciplinary action. Employees will not be permitted to use available leave time for an unexcused absence. Employees who fail to notify the Director/Assistant Director at all may be considered to have abandoned their position, which will result in termination.

**Holidays and Other Closings**

From time to time, the Center may be closed for a holiday observance or because of an emergency situation. Non-exempt (hourly) staff are not paid for their regularly scheduled hours during holidays or emergency closings. In situations where the Center closes after opening for the day, non-exempt employees will be paid only for the hours they actually work.

**Holidays**

Teddy Bear Child Care closes for the following holidays:

- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. day
- Presidents’ Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Christmas Day
Generally, when one of the listed holidays fall on a Sunday, it will be observed the following Monday. Likewise, if the holiday falls on a Saturday, it will be observed the preceding Friday.

Emergency Closings
Due to severe weather conditions or other emergency situations, there may be times when Teddy Bear Child Care may be closed. Emergency closing is at the discretion of the Director.

Severe Weather Conditions:
In the event of severe weather conditions, Teddy Bear Child Care will generally follow the Muncie Community School District in determining whether or not to close the Center. Employees are instructed to listen to local radio and television stations for emergency closing information in these circumstances.

Employees are also instructed to contact the Director or Assistant Director for further instructions. Employees are instructed to contact the Director by 6am and again at 8am for further instructions.

Other Emergencies:
Other situations, including but not limited to electrical power failure, lack of water, lack of heat or air conditioning, hazardous road conditions, or other situations which could endanger the safety or health of children and employees, may result in Teddy Bear Child Care being closed at the sole discretion of the Director. Employees will be advised of their obligations in these situations.

In the event of an emergency closing in the middle of the day, the Director or Assistant Director will instruct employees during the emergency. Employees are required to remain at the Center as long as there are children present. In rare instances, this may require employees to remain after normal closing hours. Employees must be mindful that compliance with Licensing Regulations must be maintained even in emergency situations (ratios, general policies, and the like). The Director/Assistant Director will inform employees when they are able to go home. Employees who refuse to cooperate during an emergency closing situation may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

HEALTH

Your health is important to us! Not only does your health affect your own ability to perform your duties effectively, but your health can also affect others - the children under your care, parents, and other staff. As such, staff should follow similar guidelines to those laid out for sending children home (temperature exceeding 101˚F, vomiting, etc.) as indicators as to when staff should also remain at home instead of reporting to work, or when a staff member should be sent home from work.

Illness
If you are ill, please contact the Director at least 4 hours in advance to ensure that we are able to provide adequate coverage to meet state ratio requirements. In general, staff who provide
adequate notice will not be required to provide documentation (doctor’s note, etc.) for the first day of absence. Providing less than 4 hours’ notice or having an illness which lasts more than a day may require official documentation in order to validate the absence and permit the employee to return to work.

**Sick Days**

Please refer to the Benefits section of this section for an explanation of how earned vacation time may be used as sick days.

**Family and Medical Leave**

The following family and medical leave policy is designed to comply with the provisions of the federal Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA).

Employees who have been employed for at least 1 year and for at least 1,250 hours during the preceding 12-month period are eligible for family and medical leave. For employees not eligible for family and medical leave, TBCC will review business considerations and the individual circumstances involved. Upon return from Family Medical Leave, the employee will return to the same or to an equivalent position. Family or medical leave will be unpaid leave.

Please refer to the Appendix of this handbook for the specific conditions and guidelines governing FMLA.

**Other Types of Leave**

Employee’s work schedules have been established giving consideration to the student/teacher ratio, workloads, and coverage requirements. Employee absences have a detrimental effect on these conditions. While absence for illness and emergency situations may happen from time to time, employees will not be granted leave beyond their accrued vacation, sick, and personal leave as a standard practice.

In addition, other situations may occur where an employee needs to request time off from work. Some of these are described below. Requests for leave other than those detailed below shall be referred to the Director, who may grant or withhold approval of such leave. All such absences shall generally be considered without pay or other compensation for the employee. Please submit requests in advance for approval, whenever possible. Emergency circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Leave without pay will only be granted in extenuating circumstances. Leave without pay must be approved in advance of the requested start date of the leave by the Director. Requests must be submitted in writing.

Employees will receive written notice of the approval/denial for a requested leave of absence.

Leave without pay which has not been approved by the Director/Assistant Director will be considered a voluntary termination.
Jury/Witness Duty
When leave of absence must be taken for jury duty or to answer a subpoena in court, Teddy Bear Child Care will recognize this leave WITHOUT pay. Employees must notify the Director/Assistant Director as soon as possible after they receive notice they are called for jury or witness duty. A copy of the official request to serve or subpoena should be provided to the Director/Assistant Director upon receipt of such notification.

Bereavement Leave
When the death of an immediate member of an employee’s family, as listed below, necessitates her or his absence from work, the Director may grant up to seven (7) days of leave, WITHOUT pay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spouse</th>
<th>Son</th>
<th>Brother</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>Grandparent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Sister</td>
<td>Grandchild</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In addition, anyone who permanently resides in the employee’s household may be considered a family member for purposes of bereavement leave, at the Director’s discretion.

When the death of a non-immediate member of an employee’s family, as listed below, necessitates her or his absence from work, up to three (3) days of leave WITHOUT pay may be granted by the Director:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step-parent*</th>
<th>Aunt/Uncle</th>
<th>In-laws (mother/father, son/daughter)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Step-child*</td>
<td>Nephew/Niece</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Bereavement leave for the loss of a step-parent/step-child may be extended to 7 days if step-child was primarily raised by the employee, or the employee was primarily raised by the step-parent.

Employees may be required to provide proof of the relationship between themselves and the deceased individual, and a copy of either the obituary or some other evidence of when burial/funeral services are to be held. Bereavement leave for other family members or non-family members is subject to the discretion and approval of the Director.

Employees must request Bereavement Leave as soon as possible in advance of the leave.

SAFETY

The safety of our employees, the children under our care, and of anyone we may interact with is important to us as well. The following are general principles and guidelines; specific procedures are covered in the General Duties section of this handbook.

Hazards

During the course of your employment, you have the potential to be exposed to bodily fluids, blood-borne pathogens, and chemicals. Please review the appropriate policies in the General Duties section for more information on how to correctly deal with situations where these hazards might be present.
Accidents
Accidents and injuries on the job, while rare, can happen. In order to protect your claim for compensation and/or minimize liability for Teddy Bear Child Care and its employees, all injuries or accidents to an employee occurring during the employee’s scheduled hours at the Center, no matter how minor, must be reported to the Director immediately.

All employees are covered by Workers’ Compensation insurance and must seek treatment for accidents and injuries as required by the plan. Employees will be required to provide information regarding the accident or injury to the Director within one day of accident.

Employees who are placed on Workers’ Compensation will be notified in writing of the status of the position, status of health insurance benefits, and their responsibilities while on Workers’ Compensation.

Accidents involving children, parents, or visitors to the Center are covered in the General Duties section of this handbook.

Controlled Substances
To ensure the health and safety of the children at the Center and of other employees, there are other restrictions regarding both legal and illegal behaviors which have been shown to be detrimental to the employee and those around the employee.

All facilities, grounds, and vehicles of Teddy Bear Child Care are tobacco-free environments. Smoking or any other use of a tobacco product in the presence of children or parents during working hours is strictly prohibited. Failure to abide by this policy will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

Furthermore, using, possessing, or being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during working hours or while on Teddy Bear Child Care property (including vehicles and during class excursions) is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate termination of duties.

Weapons and other Safety Hazards
Possession or use of any type of weapon, dangerous object, or explosive device while on Center property is prohibited, and will result in immediate termination. This does not include items which might reasonably be expected to be used during the normal course of an employee’s duties.

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS
Teddy Bear Child Care is a small, family-oriented daycare. We do strive to provide additional benefits to employees whenever possible, based on funding.

Benefits’ eligibility is generally determined by an employee’s classification. Employees are classified as either full-time or part-time for the purpose of determining applicable benefits.
Employees will generally be classified upon hiring; reclassification may be done at the Director’s discretion, based on changes to an employee’s overall hours worked or other appropriate circumstances. Each employee will be advised at the time of hire of the benefits for which they are eligible. Employees will be notified of additional benefits and their eligibility during the course of employment.

TBCC does not guarantee any benefits to any employee. TBCC reserves the right to change, cancel, and/or deny benefits at its sole discretion to maintain the fiscal soundness of the Center.

We currently offer the following benefits to employees. Some are immediately available when an employee starts work; others depend on the length of employment at the Center.

**Vacation Time and Sick Days**

Both full-time and part-time employees shall be eligible for vacation time, calculated as follows:

**Full-time:**

Upon completing one full year of employment (which includes the employee’s provisional employment period), the full-time employee shall earn one (1) week of paid vacation. Application to use earned vacation time must be submitted at least three (3) weeks in advance of the desired time off. A change to approved vacation time requires prior approval of Director. TBCC reserves the right to deny an employee’s Vacation request for any reason including, but not limited to: other employees requesting the same vacation time; the employee’s performance is not satisfactory and time off would disrupt corrective action efforts; special events or activities which would necessitate employee’s presence. Employees are discouraged from paying for or scheduling vacations until they have received approval.

After completing the second full year of employment, the full-time employee will earn two (2) weeks of paid vacation each year, subject to the same restrictions above.

No more than two (2) years’ worth of vacation time (four weeks total) may be accrued or used during a single calendar year. Unused vacation time is forfeited.

Vacation time may NOT be used in lieu of a full-time employee’s required two weeks’ notice to end employment at the Center. Any leftover vacation time must be taken in advance of the two weeks’ notice; remaining vacation time is lost if not used. Full-time employees whose employment has been terminated by the Center shall also lose all accrued vacation time, without compensation for the lost time.

Full-time employees may split up accrued vacation time for use as sick days, as needed. A full-time employee who chooses to do this must submit in writing a statement to the Director indicating the desire to use a vacation day as a specific sick day. The full-time employee will then be paid for eight (8) hours on the sick day requested. Requests to use vacation time for a sick day must be made no more than a week from the day the full-time employee called in sick.
Part-time:
Upon completing one full year of employment (which includes the employee’s provisional employment period), the part-time employee shall earn two (2) days of paid vacation. Application to use earned vacation time must be submitted at least three (3) weeks in advance of the desired time off. TBCC reserves the right to deny an employee’s Vacation request for any reason including, but not limited to: other employees requesting the same vacation time; the employee’s performance is not satisfactory and time off would disrupt corrective action efforts; special events or activities which would necessitate employee’s presence. Employees are discouraged from paying for or scheduling vacations until they have received approval.

After completing the second full year of employment, the part-time employee will earn four (4) days of paid vacation each year, subject to the same restrictions above.

No more than two (2) years’ worth of vacation time (eight days total) may be accrued or used during a single calendar year. Unused vacation time is forfeited.

Vacation time may NOT be used in lieu of a part-time employee’s required two weeks’ notice to end employment at the Center. Any leftover vacation time must be taken in advance of the two weeks’ notice; remaining vacation time is lost if not used. Part-time employees whose employment has been terminated by the Center shall also lose all accrued vacation time, without compensation for the lost time.

Part-time employees may split up accrued vacation time for use as sick days, as needed. A part-time employee who chooses to do this must submit in writing a statement to the Director indicating the desire to use a vacation day as a specific sick day. The part-time employee will then be paid for four (4) hours on the sick day requested. Requests to use vacation time for a sick day must be made no more than a week from the day the part-time employee called in sick.

Training
Teddy Bear Child Care will cover the cost for new employees who do not have first aid or CPR certifications to receive such training. TBCC will also pay for annual recertification as needed or required for licensure. In addition, other required training (Universal Precautions, Safe Sleep policy, etc) will be offered to employees free of charge.

Education Assistance/Career Development
For employees who lack full credentials, or for those who wish to pursue additional education opportunities which may benefit themselves and the Center, Teddy Bear Child Care will provide tuition and fees assistance through the TEACH program. Employees who wish to make use of this assistance should fill out the appropriate request form with the Director to obtain approval.
In addition, conferences, in-service training, and other educational opportunities will either be provided by the Center or may be subject to reimbursement, with the Director’s prior approval.

After six months of employment at the Center, staff are required to begin work to obtain a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential (if not already earned). While there is no specific time limit to earn this credential, the Director shall make the final determination as to whether an employee will be considered as actively working toward the CDA. We are committed to helping our staff develop into increasingly more capable teachers, and thus better able to serve themselves, the children at the Center, and the Center’s overall goals.

**Child Care**

Teddy Bear Child Care allows employees to enroll their minor children in the program at the employee (discounted) rate, as noted on our child care fees schedule. Employees seeking to enroll their child(ren) in the program must discuss placement and tuition benefits with the Director. TBCC reserves the right to limit the number of employee’s children receiving reduced child care at the Center at any time.

Under most circumstances, an employee who has a child enrolled in the Center will be prohibited from providing direct care to her or his child.

Employees who fail to pay tuition according to the Fee Agreement will have their child care services terminated/suspended, just as any other parent would.

Teddy Bear Child Care further reserves the right to disenroll an employee’s child(ren) if the employee’s performance is affected by having his or her child(ren) at the Center. Employees must remember they are employed to perform a specific job and not allow themselves to be distracted by having their child(ren) enrolled in the program. Employees are prohibited from interfering with the supervision or authority of their child(ren)’s classroom teacher.

Non-enrolled minor children of employees are generally prohibited from being on Center property without an accompanying adult while the employee is on the clock, except with the prior written approval of the Director or when the employee’s family is invited to participate in Center activities.

**OTHER POLICIES**

**Meals and Breaks**

Because of ratio requirements and state guidelines, meals and breaks at the Center are handled as follows:

Employees will generally eat the same meal and food as the children in their care, as per state guidelines. Thus, meals taken with the children are considered paid time, as they are part of the duties assigned. The Center does not charge employees for these meals.
Employees may take a break of up to 15 minutes for every full 3 hours worked, ratios and staffing requirements permitting. Breaks of this sort are considered unpaid time. Employees cannot leave children unattended during a break, and ratios must be maintained at all times.

**Required Staff Meetings**

Because communication between the staff and the Director/Assistant Director is crucial to good practices within the Center, mandatory staff meetings will be scheduled on a monthly basis. All employees are expected to attend these meetings; exceptions must be approved in writing by the Director, in advance of the meeting.

All staff meetings will be announced in advance and generally will occur after the Center has closed for the day. Employees will be compensated at their normal hourly pay rate for the meeting.

**Required Training and Education**

As mentioned in the Benefits section, Teddy Bear Child Care offers a variety of training and educational opportunities to its employees. Many of these are required; others may be optional. Staff are advised that licensing requirements mandate that caregivers at the Center must complete 12 hours (with a degree) or 16 hours (without a degree) of training annually to remain in compliance with state and other regulations. All training and educational opportunities must be approved in advance by the Director in order to be paid for by TBCC. Workshops, conferences, and other training not approved in advance will not be paid for.

**CONDUCT AND ETHICS**

The reputation of Teddy Bear Child Care is built upon the ethical conduct of our employees, and the overall success of the business is tied to this as well. Our reputation for integrity and excellence requires careful observance of the spirit and letter of applicable laws and regulations, as well as a scrupulous regard for the highest professional standards of conduct and personal integrity.

Teddy Bear Child Care is dependent upon our families’ trust and we are dedicated to preserving that trust. Employees have a duty to TBCC and its families to act in a way that will merit the continued trust and confidence of the public.

Teddy Bear Child Care will comply with all applicable laws and regulations and expects its directors and employees to conduct business in accordance with the letter, spirit, and intent of all relevant laws, statutes, ordinances, and regulations and to refrain from any illegal, dishonest, or unethical conduct.

In general, the use of good judgment, based on high ethical principles, will guide employees with respect to acceptable conduct. When a situation arises where it is difficult to determine the proper course of action, the employee should discuss the matter with the Director/Assistant Director.
Compliance with these principles of conduct and ethics is the responsibility of every Teddy Bear Child Care employee. Disregarding or failing to meet any of the following standards may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Personal Appearance**

All employees are expected to present a neat and clean appearance and to dress appropriately for their position and duties. An employee’s appearance and dress should reflect the professional nature of the position as well as be functional within the expectations and responsibilities of the job. Please note that Teddy Bear Child Care is not responsible for damage to or loss of an employee’s articles of clothing, jewelry and/or accessories.

**Dress Code**

Radical departure from conventional dress or personal grooming is not permitted, as it may serve as a distraction or worse to the children at the Center, parents, and other employees. The following items constitute the basic dress code for employees of the Center. Final determination of the dress code acceptability of an employee’s attire shall be determined by the Director.

Unacceptable dress includes, but is not limited to:

- Short shorts (defined as shorts that come up higher than the tip of your middle finger when your arms are straight at your sides)
- Short dresses or skirts (dresses and skirts above the knee are not acceptable. Do not wear dresses and skirts if it will interfere with your ability to get down on the floor with the children. Shorts should be worn under dresses and skirts as a precaution)
- Low scoop neck shirts or blouses (at no time should undergarments be visible)
- Clothes that expose the stomach
- Clothing with logos and pictures that are inappropriate for children (profanity, sexual innuendoes, violence, drugs, and similar content)
- Jewelry which may present a safety hazard (long necklaces/earrings, etc.)

In addition:

- When wearing low waist pants (hip-huggers, etc) or skirts, staff should wear tops long enough to cover the bottom when bending or squatting. Undergarments should never be visible.
- During swimming activities, staff should wear one piece swimsuits, or a two piece swimsuit pre-approved by the Director. Appropriate clothing should be worn over the swimsuit when transporting children to and from the Center and the pool.

Employees who are found to be in violation of the dress code may be asked to go home and change; the time required to do so is unpaid. A verbal warning will also be given and documented. Second and subsequent violations will result in a written warning,
documentation of the incident, and may be subject to other disciplinary action, up to and including loss of employment.

**General Interaction**

In general, employees need to maintain a sense of decorum when interacting with others at the Center and observe general rules of proper conduct. Staff are expected to act in a caring, honest, respectful, and responsible manner consistent with Teddy Bear Child Care’s mission statement. Staff should always portray a positive role model by maintaining an attitude of loyalty, patience, courtesy, tact, and maturity.

This includes things like:

- Refraining from intimate displays of affection towards others in the presence of children, parents, and other staff.
- Prohibiting profanity, inappropriate jokes, sharing intimate personal details, or any kind of harassment in the presence of children, parents, or other staff.

Staff are required to report any violations by other staff members of these or other policies listed in the handbook to the Director for possible action. Such reporting is confidential.

**Co-worker Interaction**

While our employees are encouraged to develop professional and personal connections with one another, gossiping, spreading rumors, and other similar types of negative behavior are discouraged. Gossip which could affect the ability of the Center or staff to conduct business, maintain good community or employee relations, or otherwise impact Teddy Bear Child Care in a negative way may result in disciplinary action for the employee who has engaged in the conduct.

**Families**

Families (the children whom we serve, and their parents, guardians, and other family members) are our Center’s most valuable asset. Every employee represents Teddy Bear Child Care to our families and to the public. The manner in which we do our jobs presents an image of our entire organization. Families judge all of us by how they are treated by each and every employee. Nothing is more important than being, respectful, courteous, friendly, helpful, and prompt in the attention given to families.

Our personal contact with the public, our manners on the telephone, and the communications we send to families are a reflection not only of ourselves, but also of the professionalism of Teddy Bear Child Care. Positive interactions with our families not only enhance the public’s perception or image of TBCC, but also help us to obtain grants and contracts.

It is expected that all employees of Teddy Bear Child Care will interact respectfully, courteously, and promptly with our families.

All of the families have the right to their privacy. Do not discuss the children and families publicly or with family members, either by name or physical description. Some of the
families have also restricted photography permission for their children; please refer to the Social Media policy listed in this section for more information.

Employees who fail to have appropriate interactions with our families will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

**Children**
While many of the specific policies governing interaction with the children under our care are in the section of the handbook dealing Classroom and Curriculum, some general principles are as follows:

- Children have a right to be spoken to with respect. Staff should listen to what the children have to say, and respond to the children with respect and consideration.
- Children have a right to be cared about without prejudice. Staff will treat all children equally regardless of sex, race, religion, culture, economic status, or disability.
- Children have a right not to be yelled at or humiliated. Staff will maintain conversational voice levels and should not single out children for exclusion or in a manner which might otherwise overly embarrass the child.
- Children have a right not to be hurt. Staff will maintain a safe environment for the children, and will see to their safety. Staff should intervene to help a child avoid a dangerous or otherwise hurtful situation whenever possible.
- Children have a right to their own privacy. Staff will respect the rights of children to not be touched or looked at in ways which may make the children uncomfortable, and respect the children’s right to say no. Other than diapering, children are not to be touched on areas of their bodies that would be covered by a bathing suit.

**Phones**
Employees are not permitted to make or receive personal telephone calls during work hours unless authorized to do so by the Director or in the event of an emergency. This includes using one’s own cell phone and/or excessive texting. Cell phones are not prohibited in the classroom, but employees are expected to use them only when appropriate or necessary.

When an employee needs to call a parent, our business line should be used, rather than a cell phone. Every time you make or receive a business telephone call, you are representing not only yourself as a professional, but also Teddy Bear Child Care. Good telephone techniques to follow include the following:

- If receiving a call, answer promptly and courteously.
- When making or receiving a call, identify yourself clearly and specifically (e.g., “Teddy Bear Child Care, this is Angela speaking,” “Hello, this is Angela from Teddy Bear Child Care.”)
- Keep your conversation business-like and brief, avoiding prolonged chats.
- Transfer incoming calls to the appropriate party courteously and quickly.
• Take messages accurately and relay them to the person who was called as soon as possible.
• Answer questions thoroughly to ensure that the caller has received the information requested.
• Close your conversation with a pleasant "Good-bye."

E-Mail And Internet Use
Employees are not permitted to utilize Center computers or internet access for personal reasons, including email, web surfing, and other activities not related to the Center.

The use of Center computers to access pornographic websites, send emails of an explicit or sexual nature, or develop online relations of a similar nature is strictly prohibited.

In the event that the Center provides online accounts to employees, such accounts will be reserved for Center-related use only, and all passwords to those accounts will be available to the Director.

In addition, two specific policies address the increasing influence of online interactions:

Social Media:
The posting of confidential and identifying information about the children, parents, or staff at the Center on social media (e.g., Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, etc.) is strictly prohibited. In no way does Teddy Bear Child Care wish to abridge the rights of its employees to engage in critical commentary and observations that may relate to the Center and its operations; however, when such commentary and observations occur within a public forum and contain confidential information, it may result in disciplinary action for the employee. The posting of non-confidential information (promotional materials and the like) shall be restricted to official channels of communication (the TBCC website/Facebook page, etc.) unless prior written approval from the Director has been obtained.

Pictures:
As with the use of social media, the publication of photos from the Center, whether online or otherwise, is generally prohibited without prior approval from the Director. In general, approval will usually be granted for pictures which advance the Center’s mission, demonstrate the educational achievements of the Center or the children in our care, or which otherwise portray the Center’s positive contributions to the community. Staff may take pictures of the activities in their classrooms to share with the families of the children in our care, as appropriate (to document a child’s progress, etc.). As mentioned previously, some families have chosen to restrict photograph permissions, and it is expected that all employees will abide by those wishes. These restrictions will be noted in the classroom binder.

Gifts & Gratuities
Employees of Teddy Bear Child Care are prohibited from accepting gifts, money, services, or gratuities from families, vendors, contractors, and all other persons doing business with
TBCC without written permission from the Director. This prohibition also extends to employees giving gifts to the children under their care - toys, video games, jewelry, and the like are inappropriate and/or excessive. In the instance that a gift would be appropriate, approval from the Director needs to be obtained in advance.

**Non-Solicitation**

Employees of Teddy Bear Child Care are strictly prohibited from solicitation of any kind while on any TBCC property without written permission of the Director. This includes:

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**Commercial Activities:**

During hours of employment, while on Center property, or with the use of Center funds or equipment, employees of TBCC are prohibited from engaging in commercial solicitations for their own personal gain. In the event that the activity may instead benefit the community, the Center, a charitable organization, or similar entity, the Director may give prior approval for the activity, subject to limitations determined by the Director as necessary.

**Political Activities:**

During hours of employment, while on Center property, or with the use of Center funds or equipment, employees of TBCC are prohibited from the following:

- Participation in any partisan or non-partisan political activity or any other political activity associated with a candidate, or contending faction or group, for an election for public or party office.
- Participation in any activity to provide voters or prospective voters with transportation to the polls or similar assistance in connection with any such election.
- Participation in any voter registration activity.

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**Outside Employment**

Employees of Teddy Bear Child Care are prohibited from accepting any employment from any family of TBCC. Employees are specifically prohibited from accepting employment as a babysitter from any family of TBCC. Exceptions may only be granted by the Director. All such exceptions shall be made in writing, and must be obtained in advance.

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**Non-Fraternization**

At Teddy Bear Child Care, we strive to build relationships with the children in our care and their families, as well as with others we interact with at the Center. While friendships can result from this, it is imperative that employees treat families, vendors, co-workers, and the public with courtesy, appropriate distance, and respect.

Because of the need to maintain appropriate distance, employees of Teddy Bear Child Care are generally prohibited from fraternizing with any family of TBCC outside of our normal interactions at the Center. While this does not specifically prohibit all contact or interaction
between employees and the families we work with, there are some particular items here for consideration.

- Staff may not be alone with children from the Center outside of work. This includes babysitting, sleepovers, driving and riding in cars, and inviting children to their homes. Exceptions require a written explanation in advance and are subject to Director approval.

- Attending a "social event" or a "private gathering" with a family of TBCC shall occur only when approved in writing by the Director. This includes birthday parties for the children and other activities.

- Employees should abstain from any intimate physical contact and involvement with families. Employees should also avoid any unwelcome advances and intimate acts made by families. Employees are required to report any unwelcome advances or attempts at intimate acts made by families or co-workers to the Director/Assistant Director.

- Employees should abstain from any intimate physical contact or involvement with other employees. This shall include dating other employees.

Employees should immediately report any action by a family or employee that would be considered a violation of this policy to the Director/Assistant Director.

**HARASSMENT**

Teddy Bear Child Care employees, volunteers, families, and applicants have a right to work in a discrimination-free environment, including freedom from sexual harassment. Actions, words, jokes, or comments based on an individual's sex, race, age, ethnicity, religion, or any legally protected characteristic are not tolerated. Both overt and subtle harassment create an offensive, hostile, and uncomfortable work environment and are strictly prohibited. This section concerns any and all types of harassment, with particular attention to the definition of sexual harassment.

Harassment of or by an employee requires investigation. Employees who harass others will be subject to disciplinary action including termination.

Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Sexual harassment may be defined as, but is not limited to:

- Suggesting to an employee that submitting to sexual favors enhances employment opportunities and/or advancement.

- Threatening or insinuating that refusal to submit to sexual advance will adversely affect employment appraisal, wages, advancement, assigned duties, shifts, or any other condition of employment or career development.

- Unwelcome sexual advances or flirtation.

- Using sexually degrading words.
• Offering sexually suggestive or erotic comments regarding a person's body or mannerisms.

• Displaying graphically sexual pictures and/or objects in the workplace.

All incidents of harassment, sexual or otherwise, need to be reported to the Director so that the offense may be handled in a manner appropriate to the situation.

**Harassment Complaint Procedure**

Complaints about sexual and other types of harassment should be reported immediately to the Director/Assistant Director. Sexual harassment complaints will be investigated promptly and all information will be kept confidential. Forms for reporting harassment are available through the Director and may be obtained at any time.

**PERSONNEL RECORDS**

A confidential file will be maintained on each employee containing all employment-related documents such as the employment application, résumé, job and salary history, performance appraisals, disciplinary action, general correspondence, and other documents that pertain to employment at Teddy Bear Child Care. To comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, TBCC keeps all medically-related information in a separate confidential file.

Any false statements made by employees on their employment applications or personnel records will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

An employee may have SUPERVISED access to her or his file during normal business hours upon request to the Director. Personnel files may not be removed from the office. Employees are prohibited from removing any documents from their personnel file. Employees may only add documentation to their personnel file with the permission of the Director.

Employee requests for copies of the documents contained in the personnel file must be made in writing to the Director. Employees will be charged $1.00 per page for photocopying.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

This Confidentiality Policy has been adopted to insure the confidentiality and protection of individual rights of privacy for children, families, and employees of Teddy Bear Child Care. The individual dignity of children, families, and employees shall be respected and protected at all times in accordance with all applicable laws.

Information about children, families, or employees will not be divulged to anyone other than persons who are authorized to receive such information. This policy extends to both internal and external disclosure of information.

An employee’s responsibility to maintain confidentiality regarding information learned about children, their parents/guardians, families, and other employees applies 24 hours per day, 7 days per week regardless of how or where the information was obtained. Employees must be
diligent in their efforts to maintain confidentiality, and should be aware that there are job-related consequences for violations of confidentiality and rights of privacy, and that there is the potential for civil liability against the individual employee and the Center.

Confidentiality of Children's and Families' Information

- All children's private records (home address, medical file, etc.) must be locked in a secure file.
- Classroom binders are not considered private records, but will only contain information specific and necessary to the care of each individual child. Access to classroom binders is restricted to staff members who work in that specific classroom or the Director.
- Access to children's records is limited to employees with a “need to know.”
- Children's records must not be removed from the Center.
- Children's records must never be left out on desks, tables, etc. where others may have access to them.
- Children's or families’ private information must never be discussed among employees except on a “need to know” basis. Employees must be particularly aware of their surroundings when discussing this information. Special caution must be taken to ensure other children, families, or employees do not overhear information that is confidential.
- Discussion of children's or families' information with volunteers, other families, friends, or community members is prohibited.
- Information and documents which are considered to be confidential include, but are not limited to, medical records, educational records, special needs records, family records, financial records, and any other private information about the children or their families.
- All requests for release of information shall be made to the Director.
- Information will only be released to persons outside of TBCC with the express written consent of the child's parent or legal guardian.

Confidentiality of Employee's Information

- All employee records must be locked in a secure file.
- General access to an employee's records is limited to the Director and Assistant Director.
- An employee's records must not be removed from the Center.
- An employee's records must never be left out on desks, tables, etc. where other people may have access to them.
- An employee's private information will never be discussed among employees except on a "need to know" basis. Employees must be particularly aware of their surroundings when discussing this information. Special caution must be taken to
ensure children, families, or employees do not overhear information that is confidential.

- Discussion of an employee's information with volunteers, families, friends, or community members is prohibited.

- Information and documents which are considered to be confidential include, but are not limited to, medical records, educational records, employment records, financial or pay records, and any other private information about the employee.

- All requests for release of information to persons outside of TBCC shall be made to the Director.

- Information will only be released to persons outside TBCC with the express written consent of the employee.

Confidentiality Related to Proprietary Information

Teddy Bear Child Care has developed unique techniques, curricula, and tools for evaluation which make our program more competitive in the industry and are not to be revealed to sources outside of the company. Anything which the company designs, produces, implements, and markets is treated as proprietary information. This includes, but is not limited to, the Center’s family list, employee list, curriculum, philosophy, mission statement, personnel policies, and employee/parent handbooks.

No employee should discuss proprietary information with other employees in any public place where such information could be overheard. Employees should also not provide others with any documents relating to this propriety information. Employees must understand that it is not only their duty to protect Teddy Bear Child Care’s proprietary information during their term of employment, but that this legal obligation continues even after separation from employment. Employees are required to return any and all documentation that contains proprietary information at the time of separation. This obligation may be enforced through court action, if necessary.

Violation of Confidentiality Policy

Any employee/volunteer who violates the Confidentiality Policy will be subject to disciplinary action including termination. In addition to job-related consequences, the employee/volunteer may face possible civil liability for their actions.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Conflicts can arise between employees, employees and families, and the like. In the event that two or more parties find themselves in a situation where conflict is inevitable or has already occurred, has affected or will affect the Center and its operation, and can be potentially resolved through the actions of the Center, procedures have been established to ensure that all parties to any conflict receive fair and equal hearing to help resolve the circumstances surrounding the issue. This process is described in the Appendix of this handbook.
Terminated/Former Employees are not eligible to participate in the Conflict Resolution process.

**DISCIPLINARY PROCESS**

In the event that an employee is found to be in violation of one or more policies outlined in this handbook, the disciplinary process may be initiated. While this is generally a process of escalating actions, certain violations may be more egregious in their severity, frequency of occurrence, and/or scope, and thus could warrant a disciplinary action higher on the list, up to and including termination of duties. The determination of the specific disciplinary action to be undertaken is at the discretion of the Director, and will be appropriate to the nature of the offense.

**Reprimand**

A reprimand may be given to any employee when a minor violation of Center policies or procedures has occurred. A reprimand may be either verbal or written. Verbal reprimands will be documented by the Director/Assistant Director, and the documentation will be placed in the employee’s personnel file. Written reprimands will include brief documentation of the incident and the date on which it occurred. Written reprimands require that a copy of the written reprimand be given to the employee, and a copy of the reprimand signed by the employee to acknowledge receipt of the document must be placed in the employee’s file.

**Written Warning**

For more serious violations of policies and procedures, or repeated minor violations, an employee may be given a written warning. The written warning will clearly describe the deficiency in the performance or conduct, and will cite the policy, licensing regulation, or procedure violated. The written warning will contain a corrective action plan, outlining the necessary action(s) to correct the deficiency and a timetable in which the corrective action must occur.

A copy of the written warning and the corrective action plan will be given to the employee. Employees are required to sign a copy of the written warning, acknowledging its receipt, which will then be placed in the employee’s personnel file. Signing the written warning does not indicate that the employee agrees with the contents; it simply indicates receipt of a copy of the written warning. Failure or refusal to sign the written warning will be considered insubordination and will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Copies of all documentation regarding corrective action plans will be retained by the Director.

**Investigatory Suspension**

For suspected severe, but unconfirmed allegations of policy and procedure violations, the Director may initiate an Investigatory Suspension of the employee. During this time, the employee is suspended without pay. The outcome of an investigatory suspension is generally
either full reinstatement (if the employee is found not to be in violation of the policies) or further disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Examples of situations which would warrant use of Investigatory suspension include, but are not limited to:

- Charges of driving while intoxicated
- Report of child abuse or neglect
- Accusations of theft
- Violation of the Substance Abuse Policy
- Other similar situations

Investigatory suspension may not exceed 10 working days without the approval of the Director.

**Suspension**

Suspension of an employee may occur at the discretion of the Director/Assistant Director for specific, major infractions of the Personnel Policies. Suspension of an employee will not require prior verbal or written disciplinary action. Suspension may be used in circumstances where a confirmed violation of policies is not considered severe enough to warrant termination of employment, and where the employee can be successfully rehabilitated to effectively discharge the duties of the position. Possible violations are similar to those on both the list for Investigatory Suspension and Termination, though certain violations are still subject to immediate termination of employment, without recourse to an initial suspension. Each situation is different, and will be treated as such.

Suspension will be without pay. The employee will be notified in writing of the specific charges and the length of the suspension, and will be provided with a copy of this notice. The employee is required to sign a copy of the suspension notification to acknowledge receipt of same. Failure to sign the suspension notification will be considered insubordination and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

When circumstances permit, an employee will be suspended upon receipt of the suspension notification. However, an employee may be suspended verbally if immediate suspension is in the best interest of Teddy Bear Child Care, its employees, or the children under the Center’s care. Written notification in these circumstances will promptly follow via certified mail. Suspension by verbal notice may be given by the Director/Assistant Director, followed immediately by written approval of the Director.

**Termination**

Involuntary termination does not necessarily require prior verbal or written disciplinary action. Teddy Bear Child Care, in accordance with Indiana law, is an “at-will” employer and may terminate the employment relationship at any time with or without cause and without notice. This policy is to be used as a guide for employees, but is not inclusive of all possible
reasons or causes for termination from employment. Termination is an action which must be approved by the Director. Notification of Termination may be written or verbal.

Causes for involuntary termination include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Unsatisfactory provisional period
- Falsifying or misusing records, including application
- Violation of confidentiality rules
- Theft or misuse of Teddy Bear Child Care funds, equipment, or property
- Absence from work without notification and/or approval as per related policies
- Discourteous treatment of the public, families, or co-workers
- Inappropriate behavior
- Non-performance of duties resulting in injury to the Center, its children, families, or employees.
- Being abusive or neglectful to children, parents, or employees
- Violation of the Substance Abuse Policy
- Failure to submit required documentation within mandated time frame
- Neglect of duty or refusal to comply with directives of Director/Assistant Director
- Misuse of leave policies
- Insubordination
- Receipt of 2 suspensions for the same infraction during any 12 month period.
- Failure to implement job specifics
- Receipt of 3 written warnings for any violations during any 12 month period; the date of the third warning will be the employee's last day of employment
- Failure to return to work following a leave of absence
- Failure to meet deadlines as presented by Director/Assistant Director

Employees who are involuntarily terminated shall forfeit all accrued vacation time and other benefits. Once employment has been terminated under this action, the employee is expected to return any keys and other property of the Center to the Director, and leave the Center at that time. The former employee will be escorted out of the building, and is no longer permitted on Teddy Bear Child Care property without the written approval of the Director. Any of the former employee’s personal property or effects which remain at Center will be packed and shipped to the former employee’s home address. The former employee’s final paycheck(s) will be mailed to that address as well, and may not be picked up at the Center. All final paychecks will be sent on the scheduled paydays for the pay period applicable for the hours worked.
RESIGNATION

Although we want every employee to stay with us for as long as possible, sometimes new opportunities arise that an employee may wish to explore. While we do not wish to hinder our employees from pursuing these endeavors, we also ask that our employees provide ample opportunity for us to seek suitable replacements for the departing employee. As such, employees are required to give two (2) weeks’ notice of the intention to terminate employment. Notice must be given in writing to the Director. If submitted by any other method other than directly to the Director, the two week period begins upon receipt of the notice by the Director, not when the notice was mailed or otherwise sent. As noted in the Benefits section, unused vacation time may not be used as part of the required two weeks’ notice.

Employees who give the required notice will be entitled to payment of accumulated vacation time, provided all Center equipment and property has been returned. Employees who fail to give the required notice will forfeit payment for any accrued, unused vacation time.

In general, an employee’s final paycheck(s) will be sent to the home address listed in the employee’s file on the regularly scheduled pay dates for the hours worked.

EMPLOYMENT REFERENCES

Requests for references should be directed to the following:
Angela Gick
4704 West Woods Edge Lane
Muncie, IN 47304

Teddy Bear Child Care will release information regarding positions held and length of employment for reference purposes. In order to release any additional information regarding employment, the employee must provide a signed release. Confidential information will only be provided with the employee's express written permission. All requests for references must be in writing.

Unless specifically authorized by the Director, employees are strictly prohibited from providing references for any employee under any circumstance, including a personal reference.
II. GENERAL DUTIES

This section of the handbook details the basic duties, expectations, and general policies for all employees. This is not all-inclusive of all possible duties which may be assigned; these are basic guidelines to follow. Please note that classroom-specific policies are contained in another section of this handbook.

CENTER OPERATION

These policies govern specific expectations for the Center’s day-to-day operations. Many procedures are explained in greater depth in the classroom binders or are posted to specific classrooms.

Opening/Closing Procedures

Staff are expected to know the standard opening and closing procedures for the Center and for their specific classrooms. These procedures are listed on the opening and closing form, located in each classroom’s binder. Please note that these are specific duties which must be completed and indicated as such each day as noted. In the event that one or more of these duties have not been completed on a particular day, the staff member should notify the Director/Assistant Director of the deficiency.

General Housekeeping

Employees are responsible for a variety of housekeeping duties. Most of these are particular to your classroom, but some duties will require you to help with the upkeep of other areas of the Center. A list of housekeeping duties will be provided each month. This list is kept in each classroom’s binder and then handed to the Director at the end of each month. Please use the checklist. It is there to help us keep up with the work in the classroom. Take pride in your classroom!

- Cleaning surfaces
  - Eating areas/all surfaces where food and dishes may be prepared or placed must be cleaned with soap and water or another cleaner, and then sanitized prior to use.
  - Playing surfaces: all shelves and toys should be cleaned according to the cleaning schedule.

- Sanitizing
  Spray sanitizer on item or surface and let it sit on the item for one minute then wipe clean. The cleaning schedule will provide more information about what to sanitize.

Personal Property/Effects

Any personal property and effects (purses, backpacks, etc.) should generally be left in your vehicle, locked up, or put in the office while you are at work. Such items are not allowed in the classrooms unless locked up securely and inaccessible to any children under your care.
If an employee chooses to bring in personal property for use in the classroom, prior approval from the Director should be obtained whenever possible, unless the item is something generally used within the classroom already and a replacement is needed (e.g., glue, paint, crayons). Employees will not be reimbursed for such items unless the purchase is approved in advance by the Director.

**CHILDREN’S HEALTH**

Teddy Bear Child Care takes the health of the children in our care very seriously. The policies below are our general expectations and procedures for various situations within your classroom and outside of it.

**Food and Meals**

Meals are an important time for the children. It is a social time as well as a time for nutrition. As you will be eating the same meals with the children, your attitude about food and meals will be reflected in the children. Your manners and etiquette are important. You teach by example. If you say that a food is disgusting, the children will believe you and imitate your feelings, not their own. Our menus are created to meet state nutrition guidelines and to provide healthy choices for the children.

**Food handling policy:**
Teddy Bear Child Care follows Indiana restaurant guidelines for food handling, as required by law. You will be expected to set up and serve the snacks and meals to your classroom. When coming into contact with food, you should always wear an apron, a pair of gloves, and a hair net. Before handling any food, you should wash your hands with soap and water. Each utensil can only be used for one food. If the same type of utensil is needed for a second food, a new utensil must be used (the same utensil cannot be shared between the two dishes). The entire meal must be placed on the table prior to a child sitting in front of his/her plate. *Loss of meal and/or snack privileges may NOT be used as part of any disciplinary process.*

**Meal patterns:**
Each age group has different serving size requirements, as noted on the menu. These serving sizes are determined by state guidelines. The first serving offered to each child must constitute a full serving for that child’s age group. Milk must be measured as well. Even if the child insists that he or she does not like a particular food, a full first serving must be given to the child.

If your classroom participates in family style meals (where all foods for the meal are instead available for the children to take their own servings), children can choose which foods to accept or deny, as long as all of the foods are made available.

**Infant and toddler meal procedures:**
Infants who are bottle fed must be held for feeding. Infants who can eat solids must be fed with a spoon by a teacher. Toddlers who can eat on their own should be encouraged to do so. Make sure a bib or extra t-shirt is put on the child prior to the meal, as this can be messy. Food for the toddlers should be cut in pieces no larger than ¼ inch in size.
Illness
Illnesses don’t just affect the child who is ill; anyone who comes into contact with the child may also contract the illness. As such, employees must be aware of how to recognize the signs and symptoms of possible illness, and how to address those situations when they occur.

If a child shows signs of illness, those symptoms should be reported immediately to the Director. In some cases, the child will be sent home until the illness has passed.

Recognizing
A child who shows any sign of the following should be reported to the Director for observation:

- Fever above 101˚F (38˚C)
- Vomiting
- Rash (other than heat or diaper)
- Diarrhea
- Infectious mucus (green)
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Breathing difficulties

This is not an all-inclusive list. Please refer to the care sheet in your classroom’s binder for the complete list of symptoms which need to be reported.

Procedures for Sick Children
Once a sick child’s symptoms have been reported to the Director, the determination will be made as to whether the child should be sent home. Staff should not make the initial determination. If the child is determined to be sick, the parent(s) of the child will be contacted to make arrangements to pick the child up from the Center. The child will remain separated from the other children at the Center until he/she is picked up.

If a sick child is sent home, the child will not be allowed to return until either the child no longer has the symptoms, begins a course of treatment for the illness, or otherwise appears to be well enough to attend the Center. A child sent home after 12 pm will generally not be allowed to return the following day.

Medication
You may be required to administer medication to a child in your care. Please note the following guidelines:

- Each medication has to have a signed permission slip. You may NOT administer any medication to a child unless there is signed permission on file for the medication.
• Medication can only be kept in the lock box in the office. No medication should be kept in the classroom.
• Each medication in the lock box must be documented on the form located on the lock box.
• For medications to be administered close to or during a meal time, put a note on the CACFP form as a reminder.
• Document the time(s) at which you give the child the medicine.
• If medicine is given for a fever, take the child’s temperature 30 minutes after the medicine is given.

Allergies
Some of the children under your care may have allergies to specific foods or other allergens. It is your responsibility to be aware of these allergies and take appropriate precautionary measures to ensure the health and safety of those children. Any allergies will be noted in the classroom binder.
• Food allergies: If any children in your classroom have a food allergy (milk, peanuts, etc.), great precaution should be used to not accidentally serve the child this food. In some cases, the food item will not be offered on the menu at all.
• Asthma: Can be triggered by allergies. If you have animals at home, the child may have a reaction to your clothing. It may be helpful to change into other clothes upon your arrival at the Center or wear an apron so that exposure is limited. The use of perfume or air freshener, extremely hot or cold weather, seasonal allergies (pollen), and dust can also trigger an asthma attack. Immediately notify the Director if a child is having breathing difficulties.
• Other allergens: Children may have other types of allergies. Specific precautionary measures will be provided as needed in the classroom binder.

Diapering
Diaper changing procedures are posted at each diaper-changing area.
• Place diaper-changing paper on diaper-changing table
• Change the child’s diaper (use gloves if necessary - if there is blood or the child has had a bowel movement)
• Never walk away from the table while a child is on the changing table
• Let the child wash his or her hands, unless the child needs you to assist in washing
• Throw away the used diaper and other diaper-changing materials in the container designated for this kind of disposal
• Spray the table with sanitizer and wipe it off
• Wash your hands
**Handwashing**

Proper handwashing helps curb the spread of disease and promotes general hygiene. By modeling these behaviors for the children under your care, and insisting that they follow the same process, you help to ensure the health of everyone you encounter.

- Turn water on and wait for water to be warm
- Lather soap on your hands
- Rinse and scrub hands for 30 seconds
- Towel dry hands
- Use a disposable towel if you are using the toilet or assisting a child with toileting

**Universal Precautions**

All employees are required to strictly adhere to Universal Precautions Procedures to control exposure to Bloodborne Pathogens (discussed below) and other hazards, and to promote good hygiene.

To assist in this, Teddy Bear Child Care provides vinyl/latex gloves in a variety of sizes and CPR guards as personal protective equipment for the use of the employees; these items are located in the first aid cabinet. Employees are required to have personal protective equipment in their immediate area at all times.

When traveling outside of the classroom area, employees are required to carry the First-Aid backpack at all times. Employees are required to use the personal protective equipment in each and every instance warranted by this and other policies and procedures, in the manner in which the personal protective equipment is intended for use. Failure to appropriately use personal protective equipment at any time will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**Bloodborne Pathogens**

During your employment at the Center you may, in the course of your daily activities, come into contact with potentially infectious materials. Those situations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Providing assistance after an accident has occurred with children, employees, parents and/or volunteers.
- Assisting children during medical procedures, i.e., first-aid, nose bleeds, times of illness, administration of medication, etc.
- Diapering children or cleaning up after a child has a toileting accident.
- Handling of contaminated items such as soiled clothing, tissues, and diapers.
- Cleaning up and handling broken glass and/or sharp objects.
While not all of the above situations are inherently dangerous, failure to follow universal precautions (using the appropriate protective gear) places the employee and others at risk.

Thus, for your own safety and the safety of others, all employees are required to treat all children and fellow employees as though they might be infected with a bloodborne pathogen, regardless of a known medical condition, how they look, or what is known about their lifestyle. Persons infected with bloodborne pathogens do not look a certain way, act in a particular fashion, are a certain age or lead particular lifestyles. Persons with a bloodborne pathogen disease are not required to disclose their illness to the employees or administration of Teddy Bear Child Care, as such information is confidential and protected by law. Common bloodborne pathogens include, but are not limited to: HIV, hepatitis, syphilis, and herpes. These and other bloodborne pathogens are transmitted primarily through human blood and other potentially infected materials (OPIMs), which include, but are not limited to: semen, vaginal secretions, feces, urine, or any other bodily fluid that may contain blood.

**Exposure and Incident Reporting**

Because of the nature of the job, routine contact with some OPIMs will occur with some regularity. Employees must:

- Always wear personal protective equipment (gloves) when changing diapers, cleaning up accidents, etc.
- Report any incident where the employee comes in direct contact with blood or OPIMs, either through unprotected skin contact or a breach in the protective gear (e.g., a torn or broken glove)

**Reporting an incident involves**

- Notifying the Director of the direct exposure to/contact with blood or OPIMs, as noted above
- Completion of an Exposure Control Incident Report

These actions should be completed within one (1) hour of the exposure incident. Failure to report an exposure incident and/or complete and turn in the Exposure Control Incident Report as outlined will result in disciplinary action, as noted elsewhere in this document.

Within 24 hours of an exposure incident, Teddy Bear Child Care will provide, at its own expense, laboratory tests (including testing the employee’s blood), a Hepatitis B vaccination (if the employee has not been previously vaccinated against Hepatitis B), and a medical evaluation performed by a licensed medical professional for the employee, to help ensure and protect the overall health of the employee. The employee has the right to decline any or all of the above, if desired. An Exposure Control Consent Form must be filled out indicating the employee’s choice regarding testing and other medical care.

Employees should be mindful of blood or OPIM on their clothing or personal items. Contaminated clothing and personal items must be cleaned and/or disposed of in a manner to ensure that further exposure does not occur. This may require that an employee’s clothing be torn or cut off and/or thrown away. Teddy Bear Child Care is not responsible for clothing or
personal items ruined or destroyed as a result of contamination and/or removal as per this policy.

Employees are required to attend an annual Bloodborne Pathogens and Universal Precautions Training. Teddy Bear Child Care will provide the required training and employees will be notified in advance of the date and time of such training. Failure to attend this training will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

**CHILD SAFETY**

Teddy Bear Child Care does everything possible to provide a safe environment for our employees and the children in our care. As such, some items are prohibited from being used at or brought to the Center. Other policies and procedures govern specific situations dealing with safety before, during, or after an incident has occurred.

**Prohibited Items**

Certain items are prohibited from being brought into our classrooms and the Center:

- Glass containers (except in the kitchen area and other areas designated by the Director)
- Weapons
- Any other item which might reasonably compromise the safety or health of the children in our care, employees, or visitors to the Center

**Emergency Evacuation Procedures**

Evacuation routes are posted in each classroom, noting the specific exits for that room in case of an emergency that requires staff and children to leave the Center. While an emergency situation can be quite chaotic, you need to maintain a calm and level head, regardless of the situation.

**Emergency (Leaving the Center)**

In the event of an emergency which requires leaving the Center (during a fire, for instance), you should:

- Gather up the classroom binder and emergency backpack
- Take the children across the street to the sidewalk in front of the Woods Edge playground
- Place children in the Continuity of Care (CoC) room inside a crib and wheel the children to the same sidewalk
- Take attendance and report any missing children or staff to the Director/Assistant Director immediately

This procedure should be followed in the event of any real or perceived emergency, even if the event is a scheduled drill.
Emergency (Remaining at the Center)

For emergencies where leaving the Center would be unsafe (such as during a tornado warning), you should:

• Gather up the classroom binder and emergency backpack
• Go to the designated Safe Area listed for the particular emergency
• Take attendance and report any missing children or staff to the Director/Assistant Director immediately

Please note that parents are prohibited from picking up their children during this kind of emergency! While the parent is permitted to join the child in the designated Safe Area, you may not release the child into the parent’s custody until after the emergency situation is no longer a threat.

This procedure should be followed in the event of any real or perceived emergency, even if the event is a scheduled drill.

Accidents

Accidents or injuries involving children must be reported immediately to the Director. Employees should not contact the parent(s) until the Director/Assistant Director has been notified of the accident. Employees will be advised by the Director to call the child’s parents to apprise them of the incident/accident as necessary. If an accident causes the child to bruise or bleed, the parent will be notified immediately once the Director has been informed of the incident, even if the accident is not serious. It is important to think about how you would feel if you picked your child up at the end of the day and you were not notified of a bruise or serious cut.

When an accident involving one of the children under our care occurs, the employee must fill out an Accident/Injury Report immediately following the incident. Two copies will be made. One copy will be given to the Director, and will be placed in the child’s classroom file. The other copy must be signed by and given to the parent(s) within 24 hours following the incident/accident.

Accidents involving parents or visitors must be reported immediately to the Director. Employees are required to complete Accident/Injury reports for these incidents. The report will be given to the Director. The document will become part of the agency's record.

Any employee who fails to appropriately report an accident or injury, or who purposefully files a false report will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

Other Emergencies

While no policy can cover every contingency, you are expected to follow all rules from CPR and First Aid training, as well as Universal Precautions, in any emergency which may necessitate the use of such training. When blood or other bodily fluids are involved, you are
expected to use gloves in handling the situation. If immediate medical attention is needed for a child or another staff member, call 911 before administering assistance, whenever possible.

**Behavioral Incidents**

Behavioral incidents between children may also occur where one child hurts or attempts to hurt another child at the Center, and the incident leaves a mark. While some of these are relatively mild, all such incidents should be documented as noted:

**Behavioral Incident (General):**
This kind of incident usually involves two or more children engaging in behavior against one another which would not be considered acceptable - e.g., Child A throws a toy at Child B, leaving a mark. The incident must be documented for both children. Identifying information for each child involved should only be placed on that child’s form - in the example above, the name of Child A (who threw the toy) would only go on Child A’s form. The name of Child B would only go on Child B’s form. Under no circumstances are employees allowed to acknowledge which child hurt another in writing, verbally, or non-verbally (pointing, nodding one’s head, etc.).

**Biting Incident:**
This particular kind of incident is documented separately for children 3 and under. All other ages should use the Behavioral Incident form instead. As with the previous form, the Biting Incident must be documented for both children, withholding the identifying information as noted above. If the bite draws blood, the Director needs to be notified immediately, regardless of the age of the children involved.

**ABUSE AND NEGLECT**

While Teddy Bear Child Care provides a safe environment for children, other types of harm may come to a child despite our best precautions. In particular, the abuse or neglect of a child is of paramount concern. To this end, all staff are required to read and sign all policies relating to identifying, documenting, and reporting child abuse. Mandatory training sessions on the subject are required.

**Mandated Reporting Of Suspected Child Abuse And Neglect**

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities.

*ALL EMPLOYEES of Teddy Bear Child Care are considered mandated reporters in this context.*

In the case of suspected abuse or neglect, you are asked inform the Director prior to making a report to Child Protective Services. If you feel that the Director is not adequately protecting the child, you can call the number listed below and report the incident anonymously. Remember that abuse and neglect are serious allegations.
Employees are required to report their suspicions of child abuse/neglect to:

**Indiana Child Protective Services 1-800-800-5556**

**Guidelines**

The following guidelines contain information relating to child abuse. It is extremely important to make yourself familiar with the information, especially the parts pertaining to the characteristics of battered children and the indicators of child neglect. If you have any suspicions or concerns regarding a child, please get in touch with the Director and begin to keep a record of items which may indicate abuse of the child.

**General reasons for reporting suspected child abuse/neglect include, but are not limited to:**

- Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child’s body
- Witnessing severe verbal reprimands from the parent
- Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g., car seats, seat belts)
- Dropping off/Picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs/alcohol
- Not providing appropriate meals, including a drink, for the child
- Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- Sending a sick child to school over-medicated to hide symptoms which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside
- Children who exhibit other behavior consistent with an abusive situation

**Characteristics Of Battered Children**

Abused children endure life as if they are alone in a dangerous world, with no real hope of safety. Feeling unprotected, abused children try to protect themselves in any way they can.

When a child has been injured and is brought for treatment, the child usually appears to:

- *Have no close feelings or affection with parents or other people.*
- *Be fearful or quiet.*
- *Show no reaction to pain or expectation of being comforted.*

Having had violent physical contact with adults in the past, the child is often *wary of physical contact initiated by an adult.*
When admitted to a hospital ward, the battered child seems less afraid than other children and settles in quickly.

When other children cry, the battered child becomes apprehensive and watches them with curiosity.

The battered child will also become apprehensive when an adult approaches the crying child.

While in a new situation, the child seeks safety in sizing up the situation and being alert for danger.

Children who have been battered do not generally behave as typical children do. They display many adult-like reactions.

**Indicators of Child Neglect**

Neglect is a form of abuse. There are various characteristics that can describe child neglect in general, but for clarity, neglect can be divided into two subgroups - physical and emotional neglect. These two aspects contribute to each other and rarely occur separately.

The following are characteristics that may indicate physical neglect:

- Malnourished
- Ill-clad or dirty
- Overcrowded or unhealthy sleeping arrangements
- Receiving inadequate supervision
- Totally unsupervised

Many of the abovementioned characteristics may also indicate emotional neglect, along with:

- Insecurity, seemingly withdrawn or overaggressive
- Failure to attend school regularly
- Constant friction in the home
- Exposure to unwholesome and demoralizing circumstances
- Denied normal nurturance

**Reporting Child Abuse**

In Indiana, Child Protective Services (CPS) investigates reports of suspected child abuse and neglect. CPS staff are available to receive referrals at the local district office at any hour.

CPS accepts all reports of suspected child abuse and neglect and other referrals in writing, by telephone, and in person from all sources, including identified sources, news media, anonymous sources, sources that have incomplete information, and referrals from the child or parent.
To contact Indiana Child Protective Services, please call 1-800-800-5556.

**Immunity From Civil or Criminal Liability**

Any person who reports abuse or neglect, pursuant to the law, or testifies in a child abuse hearing resulting from such a report is immune from any criminal or civil liability as a result of such action. As mandated reporters, employees of Teddy Bear Child Care cannot be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are ultimately determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in “good faith.”

**PENALTY FOR FAILURE TO REPORT**

Any person who knowingly fails to report suspected abuse or neglect, pursuant to the law or to comply with the provisions of the law, may be subject to a **fine of up to $500.00, up to six months’ imprisonment, or both.**
III. CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT AND CURRICULUM

This section of the handbook deals with policies governing our classrooms, as well as information about our curriculum and how to contribute to it.

GENERAL CLASSROOM PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES

The following are general principles and rules to follow with the children in your classroom. From the moment a child arrives at the Center to the moment the child leaves the Center’s property, we have a responsibility to ensure the child’s safety and to appropriately conduct ourselves around the children and others.

Children Entering/Exiting the Building

It is your responsibility to make sure that the children do not leave the building without an authorized, responsible adult. No child should be playing in the parking lot alone. We are responsible for the child until the family drives off of our property. Even if the family member says it is ok, it isn’t. Just simply tell the parent that the child’s safety is our concern and that the child cannot leave the building without an accompanying adult.

Child Drop Off and Pick Up

You need to be prepared when parents drop off children and pick them up. The following procedures are designed to ensure a certain level of interaction each day with our families and promote a consistent process for parents, children, and employees.

Drop off: When a child is dropped off at the Center, please do the following:

- Greet the family upon their arrival.
- For families who receive Child Care Connections assistance, remind the parent to clock in properly.
- Each day a basic health check should be conducted on each child upon arrival, noting any fever, bumps, bruises, burns, and other signs and symptoms of ill health. Questions and comments about anything noted should be addressed to the parent or child in a non-threatening way. Any questionable marks or responses should be documented in writing and submitted to the Director.
- Obtain information that will help you care for the child; e.g., ‘When is the last time he had a bottle?’ ‘How did she sleep last night?’ ‘Did you have fun with whatever activity you planned yesterday?’
- Help the child say goodbye and get the child involved in an activity.
- Be sure to mark down that the child has attended that day, and make notes for the afternoon teacher about the child if needed.
- If the child has any medications, these should be given to the Director at this time to be placed in the lock box.
Pick up: When a child is picked up at the Center, please do the following:

- Greet the family upon their arrival.
- If you are unsure of the identity of the person who has arrived to pick up the child(ren), check the adult’s identification card against the pick up list, even if the child seems to know the adult. Only those individuals formally authorized in writing by the parent/guardian are permitted to take a child from the Center. This is further discussed below.
- Tell the family about something good that happened. Discuss challenges, but don’t make it a habit of making the family feel bad about the child’s behavior.
- Make sure the family has all papers, projects, notes, etc. that are intended to go home with the child.
- For families who receive Child Care Connections assistance, remind the parent to clock out properly.
- Say goodbye.

**Pick Up Permission List**

Each child has a Pick up Permission list on file (located in each classroom’s binder) where the parent(s) have given express written authorization and consent for individuals on the list to pick up the child. Unsigned changes to the permission list or changes submitted verbally, via telephone, or any other method of communication other than a signed change to the document will not be considered valid, and the child will not be released to any individual who has been added in any of those ways. All changes must be authorized by the Director or Assistant Director and must be made in person, and the parent must sign and date the form to reflect the current list.

As noted previously, any person who is on the list, but not known by the staff member caring for the child, will need to show a valid identification card in order to pick up the child. If the person has no identification card, someone else will have to be contacted to pick up the child. Keep in mind that some individuals may not be allowed to have contact with the child through court order, and the Center will have a copy of that order and note this on the pick up permission list. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES IS A CHILD TO LEAVE THE CENTER WITH SOMEONE WHO IS NOT ON THE PERMISSION LIST.** Employees who release a child to a person who is not on the pick up list will be subject to immediate termination.

**Intoxication and Picking Up Children**

It is our policy to not release a child to any person who is or seems to be intoxicated or impaired. In any situation where a person who is intoxicated or impaired tries to pick up a child from the Center, please notify the Director immediately. The Director will then call the emergency contacts to find another person to pick up the child. If the intoxicated person leaves the Center with the child, the Director will call the police.
Field Trips
From time to time, field trips may be planned to enrich the learning experiences of our children. You may suggest and plan field trips as appropriate. All field trips must be approved in advance by the Director, and information about the specifics for the trip (when, where, cost, travel arrangements) must be submitted before approval can be granted.

Written permission from a child’s parent(s) is needed prior to the child going on the field trip. In addition, children under the age of four (4) may not go on a field trip unless the child’s parent attends as well. The classroom binder and first aid backpack must be brought on all field trips.

If taking a car:
- All children must wear seat belts and, if under 4’9” in height, be in car seats.
- Children will enter and exit on the curb side of the vehicle.
- Children will keep one hand on the side of the vehicle until told otherwise.

If taking a bus:
- All children must sit together on the bus.
- We do not eat or chew gum on the bus.
- We must keep our inside voices on.
- Children do not get up until the teacher says to get up.

General field trip rules:
- Children must hold hands with one another when walking
- No one should hurt anyone or anything.
- If a child breaks a rule, that child may not go on the next trip.

Staff may not transport children in their own vehicles.

Child Interaction
While general guidelines for interacting with children are in the preceding section, this covers a few, more specific items.

The children are our number one priority. Make sure that you make time each day for going outside, a large motor activity, a small motor activity, a small group activity, and a large group activity. The curricula we have developed will help you with this.

Make time for positive attention, many hugs, and praise. Have plenty of eye contact - bend down to their level and talk to them. Don’t yell across the room if at all possible. Be involved with what the children are doing. Take the time to work on puzzles with them, talking with them, and engaging in other appropriate activities. Be a part of the things that they do.
At no time should any staff person be alone with a single child where the staff member cannot be observed by others. You should always take care in such situations to position yourself so that other staff can see you.

In addition, no staff member shall ever leave a child unsupervised.

**Restroom Supervision**
You must ensure that the restroom is not occupied by anyone (suspicious/unknown individuals) before allowing a child to use the facilities. You should stand in the doorway of the restroom while the child is using the facilities to ensure privacy for the children and protect yourself (not being alone with a child). When you assist younger children, the doors to the facility must remain open. No child, regardless of age, shall enter a restroom alone on field trips or at other off-site locations. Children should always be sent in threes and, whenever possible, with a staff member.

Private activities (diapering, changing clothing, putting on swimwear, taking showers, etc) should be conducted or supervised in pairs. When this is not feasible, you should position yourself to be visible to others.

**Abuse**
You shall not abuse children in any way, including:

- Physical abuse - striking, spanking, shaking, slapping, etc.
- Verbal abuse - using words that threaten, humiliate, degrade, etc.
- Sexual abuse - touching or speaking inappropriately
- Mental abuse - shaming, withholding kindness, being cruel, etc.
- Neglect - withholding food, water, or any other type of basic care

**Parent Interaction**
While general guidelines for interacting with parents (and other members of the general public) are in the preceding sections, this covers a few, more specific items.

- In general, talk to the parents whenever possible. We need to maintain open lines of communication with them at all times.
- Daily communication is required, as noted in the Drop Off and Pick Up procedures.
- Take every opportunity to discuss with the parent(s) what positive things the child has done that day.
- If there has been a behavioral issue, try not to discuss the child’s negative behavior in front of the child (or other children and families). Ask another teacher or the Director to watch your class while you talk with the parent. Be sure to emphasize how you addressed the situation (as discussed later in this section).
Conferences
To maintain a good rapport with our families, we conduct parent/teacher conferences twice a year, generally once in the fall and once in the spring. Portfolios and classroom notes are kept to document the child’s weekly progress, and can be compared with the child’s later work. This allows us to discuss the child’s overall progress with the parent(s).

Snacking/Drinking
Discreet snacking in the classroom is permitted, as is drinking water or soda. Please keep such snacks and drinks out of the reach of any children in the room. Employees should not share their own snacks and drinks with the children.

Naptime
Naptime/quiet time runs daily from 12:30-2:30 Center-wide (with a slight exception for the Continuity of Care room). It is important to find ways to wind down the room prior to putting the children on their cots. Switch the music to soothing sounds. You might read a story or a chapter from a chapter book. Once they are on their cots, cover the children and make them comfortable. Turn out the lights and say “Good night.”

After half an hour, non-sleeping children should be offered a naptime bag and a book. Naptime bags have a variety of materials in them to keep children’s minds and hands busy at quiet time. These are reserved for children who are still awake after 30 minutes of quiet time or for children who do sleep, but wake up early.

Ratio Requirements (Teacher/Children)
State guidelines determine the acceptable ratio of teachers to children in a given classroom. These ratios are important to maintain, as they affect our licensure.

Acceptable ratios vary, dependent on the ages of the children and the type of classroom you are working in. You have a responsibility to maintain a proper ratio at all times. The ratios are posted near the Director’s office. They are also listed here for your convenience.

- Continuity of Care (CoC) Room:
  - If all children are UNDER sixteen (16) months of age: 4 children to 1 adult
  - If all children are OVER sixteen (16) months of age: 5 children to 1 adult
- Preschool Room:
  - If any children are UNDER thirty (30) months [2.5 years] of age: 5 children to 1 adult
  - If all children are AT LEAST thirty (30) months [2.5 years] of age: 7 children to 1 adult
  - If all children are OVER three (3) years of age: 10 children to 1 adult
• School-Age Room:
  - For classrooms with children younger than five (5) years of age: 12 children to 1 adult
  - If ALL children are five (5) years of age or older: 15 children to 1 adult

Correcting Ratios:
If the number of children in your classroom exceeds what is acceptable for your classroom’s ratio, notify the Director or Assistant Director as soon as possible. Do not wait until the end of the day or the next day to do so; it is imperative that those ratios be corrected immediately.

Classroom Observers:
At times observers will visit your classroom. Please treat them with respect - your actions reflect on the Center as a whole. Answer questions to the best of your ability, but don’t speculate about questions to which you do not know the answer. Remember that any time there is an observer, your classroom should run as scheduled. The children come first. Some of the people who may visit are:

  - Administration (Director/Assistant Director)
  - FSSA (Family and Social Services) Licensing Consultant
  - CCDF (Child Care Development Fund)
  - CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program)
  - Paths to Quality
  - CCR&R (Child Care Resource and Referral)
  - Parents
  - Students (practicum, etc.)
  - Other accrediting agencies

Some of these agencies and individuals are there to ensure that we are in compliance with state and other regulations regarding child care centers. Others may observe your classroom for different reasons - to learn more about the Center, learn more about child care in general, or provide other accreditations.

YOUR CLASSROOM

There are many components that go into making your classroom a safe and fun learning environment for the children at Teddy Bear Child Care. You will be provided with a wide range of materials to help you maintain and develop appropriate lessons and curricula for the children in your classroom, along with other items containing important information about the children under your care.


Classroom Binders
Each classroom has a binder with specific information about the children assigned to that classroom, as well as listing policies and procedures for the Center. Some of that information includes:

Child Information
Before you watch children on your own in a classroom, you need to know the names, ages, and specific needs of each child assigned to that classroom. There is an information sheet in the binder for each child. Make sure you read about their likes and dislikes, fears, security or cuddle items, allergies, etc. You will need to know the things on that sheet so you can better care for the children.

Pick Up Permission List
As noted in the previous section, this is a list of people who have been approved to pick up a particular child.

Emergency Information
Each child has an orange card in the binder with emergency contact information for that child.

Continuity of Care Room
While in most classrooms the age range of the children is more restrictive, children in the Continuity of Care room (CoC) are a variety of ages. Children in this room range in age from 6 weeks through 3 years old. As such, ratios and developing appropriate curricula can be a greater challenge for this room. Please work with the Director to develop appropriate strategies for this larger age group.

Daily Schedules and Routines
A daily schedule allows the children to know what is coming next. It helps to build a classroom routine for the children. A daily schedule allows for outside play, meals, snacks, free play, small group play, and large group play. Each schedule must be posted in plain view. It is understandable that at times your schedule will vary from what is posted, but in general you should follow your schedule.

If you come into your classroom later in the day to take over duties from another teacher, be sure to find out what events may have already occurred that day or other information which you may need to be aware of. This includes things like:

- New medication for a child
- Parent communications
- Diapering
- Feeding
- Alterations to or omission of lessons
- Other significant events
Classroom Learning Centers

Each classroom’s layout is slightly different, but all of them contain the following Learning Centers (at a minimum):

- Music center
- Art center
- Easel
- Play dough table
- Block center
- Reading center
- Math/ manipulative center
- Science center
- Dramatic play center
- Discovery table
- Writing center
- Quiet area/Alone spot

These Learning Centers are required to be present within the classroom, in accordance with state guidelines. The Learning Centers are used in the activities developed for the curriculum within each classroom. These are described in greater detail in the Curriculum Development Guide.

CURRICULUM

At Teddy Bear Child Care, our curriculum encourages learning through play, using a variety of activities and techniques to reach particular goals.

Our developmentally appropriate curriculum provides for the whole child; it combines physical, emotional, social, and cognitive learning through an integrated approach. Each of these domains is interconnected and impacts the others.

Children learn by doing. Through active involvement with their environment, children attempt to make sense of the world around them. They learn by exploring their environment through hands-on experience. Teaching young children is a creative process. An early childhood curriculum provides the framework for what actually happens in a planned environment where children interact with materials, peers, and adults. The primary teaching goal is to help young children use the environment productively and see themselves as capable learners. They will acquire the skills and abilities needed for a lifetime of learning through carefully planned, developmentally appropriate activities arranged by the teachers.

When a learning environment encourages exploration and discovery, children develop a sense of trust and belonging. They feel important and valued when others listen to them, seek out their ideas, and allow them to express themselves. This type of environment is considered hands-on or learning through play.

Children in our classrooms are encouraged to discover things on their own. They learn by exploring the actual objects we talk about. The teachers inspire the children by asking open-ended questions and finding new ways to teach new things within the subject area.
Developmentally Appropriate Practices

Our teachers use developmentally appropriate practices to nurture the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development of each child. The theories of early childhood education are used to implement the curriculum. Assessments are done to identify the strengths of each child as well as the needs of each child. These assessments help us to tailor the curriculum to the needs of each classroom.

Age Appropriateness

Human development research indicates that there are universal, predictable sequences of growth and change that occur in children during the first nine years of life. These predictable changes occur in all domains of development – physical, cognitive, emotional, and social. Knowledge of the typical development of children within the age span served by our programs provides the framework from which teachers prepare the learning environment and plan appropriate experiences.

Individual Appropriateness

Each child is a unique person with an individual pattern and timing of growth, as well as an individual personality, learning style, and family background. Both the curriculum and adults’ interactions with the children should be responsive to those individual differences. Learning in young children is the result of interaction between the child’s thoughts and experiences with materials, ideas, and people.

Themes

Each month the entire day care focuses on one general theme or concept (camping, the zoo, etc.). The group activities are themed as well. Individual teachers are encouraged to base their classroom’s appearance and activities on the theme.

Objectives

Each class has its own goals and objectives, appropriate to that classroom’s age group. The goal is for each child to reach his or her full potential with these goals before moving to the next classroom.

Every month, we focus on up to 10 goals and objectives for each classroom. Activities are then designed to facilitate learning the objectives. While participating in the activities, each child’s individual discoveries and progress are noted in that child’s file. Every time a similar activity is done or a comparable objective is desired, this record provides the means by which the child’s overall progress may be assessed against common core standards, where appropriate.

Some goals and objectives will be determined by the curriculum designer. Others may be determined as appropriate by the teacher in each particular classroom. The Curriculum Development Guide provides more detail about these objectives.
Lesson Plans
Lesson plans are weekly lists of activities and goals that make up the curriculum as a whole. Lesson plans can be created by the Director, Assistant Director, or individual classroom teachers.

Lesson plans should be completed the week prior to implementation. A lesson plan dictates the week’s events at a glance. A lesson plan should cover every subject area. Each area should have a new item added every week to teach the classroom objective(s).

Please refer to the Curriculum Development Guide for more information about how to create lesson plans and develop a curriculum for your classroom.

Other Activities

Outside Play
The play yard is meant to be an extension of our classroom. The items that are in the classroom are items that can be adapted for outside use. For instance: the easel. Typically, an easel is set up in the classroom, but outside it becomes different experience for the children. The same goes for the discovery table, dress up, dramatic play, blocks, science, etc. Outside we also play games and, best of all, we get to do lots of things that are unacceptable inside, like yelling and running.

Gross Motor Play
Gross motor play develops and builds large motor skills (walking, crawling, running, jumping, climbing, etc.). Children develop these skills outside while using the play equipment, running, taking walks, and inside by exercising, climbing on the soft blocks, and climbing in the ball pit. These skills are important in many ways. The children develop large muscle movements that ultimately translate into beginning writing skills. Children grow from the trunk of their bodies out to their fingers. They need to master large movements before they can master the small ones. Teachers can facilitate play by planning games and exercises.

Small Group Activities
Teachers take groups of 2-3 children to work on projects or do assessments. The children get more individual attention in the small group.

Large Group Activities
In large group activities the entire class participates in an activity. This allows the children to use peer interaction to help one another with ideas. This is a great way to teach and use cooperation skills. Older children who have mastered skills are usually willing to help the younger ones. This helps to teach both of the children.

Circle Time
Circle time is a large group activity. During circle time, children learn about the days of the week, the months, the weather (and weather predictions), the alphabet, and counting. The children also find out their jobs of the day. The teacher generally reads a story at this time as well.
DISCIPLINE

Teddy Bear Child Care is committed to providing a safe, happy, and nurturing environment for the children in our care. Our goal is to help each child grow to his or her potential, and participate in our community at the Center and, ultimately, in the community overall. As with any community, large or small, rules are necessary to ensure smooth functioning and to reduce conflict. With children, it can be difficult to enforce these rules without appropriate strategies of behavior management to create a sense of discipline.

Before we continue, two terms need to be specifically defined to understand our approach to behavior management:

- **Discipline**: the ongoing process of helping children to develop self control for self management while protecting and maintaining the integrity of the child.
- **Punishment**: the use of negative consequences to correct unacceptable behavior

Each child potentially presents a unique behavioral challenge, and thus we deal with each situation and circumstance individually. The techniques we use are designed to help the child take responsibility for his or her actions by teaching appropriate behaviors and, when the child acts inappropriately, using positive redirection and reinforcement. Harsh, humiliating, and shaming techniques are counter-productive in most cases, and are thus not used. Time out and other isolation strategies are rarely used.

**Positive Discipline Strategies**

In circumstances where discipline is necessary, positive techniques of guidance should be used, including redirection, encouragement, and positive reinforcement, rather than competition, comparison, and criticism. Age-appropriate expectations and guidelines should be used to minimize the need for discipline.

1. **Develop appropriate limits** that protect children’s health and safety, teach self-control, and are meaningful. Limits should be stated firmly, positively, and with respect. Some teachers have basic rule: You may not hurt yourself, others, or things.

2. **Be clear about rules. Consistent** and fair rules help children control their own behavior. Rules should be kept simple, few in number, truly necessary, and reasonable for the age of the child. Reasons for the rules and limits should be given. Communicate your expectations clearly.

3. **Ignore minor misbehavior.** Some children misbehave because they are seeking attention. Find out why a misbehaving child is seeking attention. Encourage the child to voice feelings. Encourage a more acceptable behavior. This strategy takes time before results are felt, but the result is well worth the effort and time.

4. **Distract or redirect children from potential problems.** Be ready to step in to shift a child’s attention or add a new activity to divert a problem before it gets out of control. Change something about the problem situation. If a child is yelling, whisper something in his/her ear. If two children are fighting over a toy, offer another type.
Ask the children to visit the “peace table or area” to talk over issues and come up with a resolution to their conflict.

5. **Use suggestions phrased as a request or question whenever possible.** Get the child to actively consider alternatives to the behavior. “Instead of hitting your friend when she takes your shovel, what could you do?”

6. **Use “no choice” statements when you expect a child to do something.** “When you clean up your area, we will be ready to go outside.”

7. **Make “I” statements** to children which focuses on the behavior and consequences, leaving out blame.
   - Describe the **behavior**. “When you walked off by yourself…”
   - **State your concerns** about the consequence the behavior produced in you. “I was so worried that something happened to you because I did not know where you were.”

8. **Deliver logical consequences.** Give the child a choice, then accept the choice and communicate your acceptance. An example: While on the playground, a child takes off his shoes and gets up to play. You can say, “You can either put your shoes on and play with your friends, or you may sit here so you won’t hurt your feet.” If the child chooses to sit, then say, “I see you want to sit. Please make sure you don’t get up without your shoes on.”

9. **Remove the child from the group only when necessary.** When a child continues to make unwise choices and refuses to follow directions after all other guidance techniques have been attempted, ask child to choose a quiet toy and play at the table. The child may also choose to go to the “quiet area” to regain control. Explain to the child that when he/she has gained self-control, he/she may return to the group. Allow the child to decide when he/she is ready to return to play. When a child asks to return to play, ask 3 questions:
   - “Do you know why I asked you to take a break?”
   - “What were you doing?” (“Throwing blocks.”)
   - “What are you going to do now?” (“Build with the blocks.”)

When the child answers the questions, say to the child, “I see that you understand why you were taking a break and that you know what you should be doing. I am going to trust that you will play appropriately now.”

10. **Remove the child from the environment only when necessary.** When a child is hurting him- or herself, others, or things and cannot be redirected, call the Director or Assistant Director for additional help and intervention. The administrator will decide if the child needs to be removed from the room for a short period.

11. **Sending the child home for inappropriate behavior or releasing the child from the Center.** Only the Director or Assistant Director can make the decision to send a child home or release the child from the Center.
Some additional important tips:

- Supervision is your best preventive technique. Be aware of all children and what they are doing.
- The teacher sets the example for appropriate play. Remember children look at you as a role model. You should be interacting with the children in a positive manner, discussing their play and actually playing with them.
- Children who are engaged in developmentally activities and receive positive reinforcements seldom need redirection. If you are having extreme behaviors, examine the classroom, your activities and your guidance techniques.
- Remember children respond much better if their feelings are respected and addressed!

And so we welcome you to the Teddy Bear Child Care family! There’s still plenty more to learn and plenty more to do, but our Director, Assistant Director, and our teachers are ready to help answer your questions and help you contribute your talents and love to our Center and the families we serve. We have many other resources for your use at the Center, and we will introduce you to those as we work together to help ourselves, and the children under our care, grow.
IV. APPENDIX

The appendix to this handbook contains further explanations of some policies and procedures. This material is generally supplemental, but is important to particular situations and circumstances.

A. State Guidelines

As Teddy Bear Child Care is a licensed center, we follow specific guidelines determined by the state of Indiana. As an employee of TBCC, you are expected to be aware of these guidelines and follow them as required by law.

These guidelines are available in the main office through the Director, and may also be accessed online at http://www.in.gov/fssa/carefinder/2734.htm. The policies contained within this handbook are representative of these guidelines.

B. Job Descriptions

Teddy Bear Child Care currently has three primary positions of employment. In addition, we offer practicum opportunities for Early Childhood Education students from Ivy Tech. Employees will be given a copy of their particular job description upon hiring and during each evaluation. Job descriptions may be reasonably altered from year to year at the Director’s discretion to reflect the changing needs of the Center. Each job is generally described as follows.

**Caregiver (Teacher)**

**Job Description:**
Caregivers/teachers are responsible for providing and maintaining a nurturing and educational environment for the children in their care. Caregivers report to the Director/Assistant Director and the Lead Caregiver assigned to their classroom.

**QUALIFICATIONS:**
(please note: Caregivers must be at least eighteen (18) years of age to work at the Center, as per state guidelines. Caregivers working in the Continuity of Care room must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age)

**Education/Certification:**
Minimum:
High school diploma or its equivalent (GED)

Preferred: Any of the following:
- Current CDA credential or an acceptable equivalent
- Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education

**Special Knowledge/Skills:**
- Experience working in an early childhood setting
- Experience working with persons from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds
- Must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of the children and the Center
MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:

1. Assist in the creation of a classroom environment conducive to learning and appropriate to the physical, social, and emotional development of children
2. Perform duties as planned by the Director or Lead Caregiver for the assigned classroom
3. Assist in implementing the curriculum planned by the Director or Lead Caregiver
4. Interact with the children in a way which conveys respect and nurturing
5. Support the social and emotional development of children
6. Engage in active play with children; this will often mean getting down on the floor to interact with them
7. Provide activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the development levels of the children
8. Maintain accurate and appropriate records for children in the assigned classroom.
9. Attend to the personal hygiene of each child in your care, including changing diapers or soiled clothing and washing hands
10. Maintain a safe environment based on safety standards set by the Center and state guidelines
11. Help other staff in preparing meals for children as required
12. Assist in the cleaning and straightening of the child care rooms
13. Work cooperatively and effectively as a team member by communicating and contributing information on a continuous basis
14. Assist in the development and facilitation of interactive parent and child literacy activities
15. Maintain open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family and encourage their involvement in the program
16. Continue professional development through attending workshops, conferences, and other staff development opportunities
17. Demonstrate behavior that is professional, ethical, and responsible
18. Perform other reasonable duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Director

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES
None

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Mental Demands:
Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written); ability to maintain emotional control under stress

Physical Demands/Environmental Factors:
Ability to routinely lift children (if assigned to the Continuity of Care room - must be able to lift a minimum of 25 lbs regularly), move furniture in the classroom, and sustain long hours of active work

The aforementioned statements describe the general requirements for this job and are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills that may be required. Other duties may be logically assigned as appropriate.
Lead Caregiver

Job Description:
Lead caregivers are responsible for providing and maintaining a nurturing and educational environment for the children in their care. Caregivers report to the Director/Assistant Director.

QUALIFICATIONS:
(please note: Lead Caregivers must be at least eighteen (18) years of age to work at the Center, as per state guidelines. Lead Caregivers working in the Continuity of Care room must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age)

Education/Certification:
Minimum: One (1) of the following conditions must be met:
A. Current CDA credential;
B. A Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree in Early Childhood Education or Elementary Education with a kindergarten endorsement with grades of C or better from an accredited college or university;
C. A Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degree from an accredited college or university that includes one (1) of the following:
   a. Fifteen (15) credit hours in college level courses with content related to the needs, skills, development, or teaching methods of children six (6) years of age or younger and grades of C or better
   b. A two (2) year associate’s degree in Early Childhood Education from an accredited college or university, with a grade of C or better

Preferred: Any of the above, plus 1 or more years of child care experience

Special Knowledge/Skills:
• Experience working in an early childhood setting
• Experience working with persons from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds
• Must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of the children and program

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:
1. Supervise the creation of a classroom environment conducive to learning and appropriate to the physical, social, and emotional development of children
2. Manage one classroom of children, including curriculum planning
3. Perform duties as planned by the Director
4. Implement the curriculum planned by the Director or Lead Caregiver
5. Interact with the children in a way which conveys respect and nurturing
6. Support the social and emotional development of children
7. Engage in active play with children; this will often mean getting down on the floor to interact with them
8. Provide activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the development levels of the children
9. Assist in the selection of books, equipment and other instructional materials appropriate for the early childhood program
10. Maintain accurate and appropriate records for children in the assigned classroom.
11. Attend to the personal hygiene of each child in your care, including changing diapers or soiled clothing and washing hands
12. Maintain a safe environment based on safety standards set by the Center and state guidelines
13. Help other staff in preparing meals for children as required
14. Assist in the cleaning and straightening of the child care rooms
15. Work cooperatively and effectively as a team member by communicating and contributing information on a continuous basis
16. Assist in the development and facilitation of interactive parent and child literacy activities
17. Maintain open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family and encourage their involvement in the program
18. Continue professional development through attending workshops, conferences, and other staff development opportunities
19. Demonstrate behavior that is professional, ethical, and responsible
20. Supervise caregivers, volunteers, and visitors assigned to the classroom
21. Perform other reasonable duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Director

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES
Supervise caregivers, volunteers, and visitors assigned to the Lead Caregiver’s classroom.

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Mental Demands:
Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written); ability to maintain emotional control under stress

Physical Demands/Environmental Factors:
Ability to routinely lift children (if assigned to the Continuity of Care room - must be able to lift a minimum of 25 lbs regularly), move furniture in an early childhood classroom, and sustain long hours of active work

The aforementioned statements describe the general requirements for this job and are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills that may be required. Other duties may be logically assigned as appropriate.

Assistant Director

Job Description:
The Assistant Director is responsible for providing and maintaining a nurturing and educational environment for the Center and for the children in their care. The Assistant Director is also responsible for helping with the administration and day-to-day operations of the Center, including supervising other employees. The Assistant Director reports to the Director. This is a salaried position.

QUALIFICATIONS:
(please note: The Assistant Director must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age to fulfill the requirements of a director-designee when the Director is not present on site)

Education/Certification:
Minimum: One (1) of the following conditions must be met:
A. A bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree from an accredited college or university in early childhood education or elementary education with a kindergarten endorsement and grades of C or better.
B. Any bachelor of arts or bachelor of science degree from an accredited college or university must include one (1) of the following:
a. Fifteen (15) credit hours in college level courses with documented content relating to the needs, skills, development, or teaching methods of children six (6) years of age or younger and grades of C or better.

b. A CDA.

c. A two (2) year associate’s degree in early childhood education from an accredited college or university, with a grade of C or better and a minimum of three (3) years of experience in an early childhood program.

*Preferred: Any of the above, plus two or more years of child care experience*

**Special Knowledge/Skills:**
- Experience working in an early childhood setting
- Experience working with persons from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds
- Must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of the children and program, including working hours outside the Center’s regular hours of operation, as needed
- Experience supervising and directing staff

**MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:**

1. Plan and create of classroom environments conducive to learning and appropriate to the physical, social, and emotional development of students with an emphasis on language development and emergent literacy skills
2. Perform duties as planned by the Director
3. Assist in the screening and preparation of children to fully participate in program services
4. Implement the curriculum planned by the Director
5. Interact with the children in a way which conveys respect and nurturing
6. Support the social and emotional development of children
7. It will be the child care provider’s responsibility to play with children; this will often mean getting down on the floor to interact with them
8. Provide activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the development levels of the children
9. Assist in the selection of books, equipment and other instructional materials appropriate for the Center
10. Maintain attendance records of children enrolled at the Center
11. Attend to the personal hygiene of each child in your care, including changing diapers or soiled clothing and washing hands
12. Maintain a safe environment based on safety standards set by the program
13. Help other staff in preparing meals for children as required
14. Assist in the cleaning and straightening of the child care rooms at the end of the day, as well as putting away any outside equipment
15. Work cooperatively and effectively as a team member by communicating and contributing information on a continuous basis
16. Assist in the development and facilitation of interactive parent and child literacy activities
17. Maintain open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family and encourage their involvement in the program
18. Continue professional development through attending workshops, conferences and other staff development
19. Demonstrate behavior that is professional, ethical, and responsible
20. Supervise lead caregivers, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors
21. Assist in the orientation of new caregivers to the Center
22. Assist in the evaluation of caregivers at the Center
23. Assist in providing ongoing training to caregivers at the Center
24. Perform other duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Director

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES
Lead caregivers, caregivers, volunteers, and visitors

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Mental Demands:
Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written); ability to maintain emotional control under stress

Physical Demands/Environmental Factors:
Ability to routinely lift children (if assigned to the Continuity of Care room - must be able to lift a minimum of 25 lbs regularly), move furniture in the classroom, and sustain long hours of active work

The aforementioned statements describe the general requirements for this job and are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills that may be required. Other duties may be logically assigned as appropriate.

Practicum Students

Job Description:
Practicum students are responsible for helping to provide and maintain a nurturing and educational environment for the children in their care. As this is an educational opportunity, practicum students are expected to observe and assist as needed. Practicum students report to the Director/Assistant Director and the Lead Caregiver assigned to their classroom. Practicum students may not be left alone with a group of children. This is a volunteer (unpaid) position.

QUALIFICATIONS:
(please note: Practicum students must be at least seventeen (17) years of age to volunteer at the Center and must be currently enrolled in a high school Early Childhood Education vocational program, as per state guidelines. Practicum students enrolled in college ECE programs should be at least eighteen (18) years of age; those working in the Continuity of Care room must be at least twenty-one (21) years of age)

Education/Certification:
Minimum:
- Currently enrolled in a high school Early Childhood Education vocational program
- High school diploma or its equivalent (GED), and currently enrolled in an accredited college or university Early Childhood Education program

Preferred: Any of the following:
- Current CDA credential or an acceptable equivalent
- Associate’s Degree in Early Childhood Education
- Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education

Special Knowledge/Skills:
- Experience working in an early childhood setting
• Experience working with persons from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds
• Must be flexible and adaptable to meet the needs of the children and the Center

MAJOR RESPONSIBILITIES AND DUTIES:
1. Assist in the creation of a classroom environment conducive to learning and appropriate to the physical, social, and emotional development of children
2. Perform duties as planned by the Director or Lead Caregiver for the assigned classroom
3. Assist in implementing the curriculum planned by the Director or Lead Caregiver
4. Interact with the children in a way which conveys respect and nurturing
5. Support the social and emotional development of children
6. Engage in active play with children; this will often mean getting down on the floor to interact with them
7. Assist in providing activities and opportunities that encourage curiosity, exploration, and problem-solving appropriate to the development levels of the children
8. Assist in maintaining accurate and appropriate records for children in the assigned classroom.
9. Attend to the personal hygiene of each child in your care, including changing diapers or soiled clothing and washing hands
10. Maintain a safe environment based on safety standards set by the Center and state guidelines
11. Help other staff in preparing meals for children as required
12. Assist in the cleaning and straightening of the child care rooms
13. Work cooperatively and effectively as a team member by communicating and contributing information on a continuous basis
14. Assist in the development and facilitation of interactive parent and child literacy activities
15. Maintain open, friendly, and cooperative relationship with each child’s family and encourage their involvement in the program
16. Continue professional development through attending workshops, conferences, and other staff development opportunities
17. Demonstrate behavior that is professional, ethical, and responsible
18. Perform other reasonable duties and responsibilities as assigned by the Director

SUPERVISORY RESPONSIBILITIES
None

WORKING CONDITIONS:

Mental Demands:
Ability to communicate effectively (verbal and written); ability to maintain emotional control under stress

Physical Demands/Environmental Factors:
Ability to routinely lift children (if assigned to the Continuity of Care room - must be able to lift a minimum of 25 lbs regularly), move furniture in the classroom, and sustain long hours of active work

The aforementioned statements describe the general requirements for this job and are not an exhaustive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills that may be required. Other duties may be logically assigned as appropriate.
C. Family and Medical Leave: Policy and Procedures

Conditions for Granting Leave
All employees who meet the applicable time of service requirements may be granted a total of 12 weeks of unpaid family leave and paid sick, vacation, and personal leave combined (during any 12-month period) for the following reasons:

- The birth of the employee's child and in order to care for the child
- The placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care
- To care for a spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition
- A serious health condition that renders the employee incapable of performing the function of her or his job.

The entitlement to leave for a child's birth or for placement of a child for adoption or foster care will expire 12 months from the date of the birth or placement.

Applying for Leave
In all cases, an employee requesting leave must complete the "Application for Family and Medical Leave" and return it to the Director. The completed application must state the reasons for the leave, the duration of the leave, and the starting and ending dates of the leave. As noted below, documentation must also be provided when applying for leave.

Notice Of Leave
An employee intending to take family or medical leave because of an expected birth or placement, or because of a planned medical treatment, must submit an application for leave at least 30 days before the leave is to begin. In situations where leave is requested in an emergency situation, application for leave must be made as soon as the employee is capable of doing so.

Medical Certification of Leave
An application for leave based on the serious health condition of the employee or a “Medical Certification Statement” completed by the applicable health care provider must accompany the employee’s spouse, child, or parent. The certification must state the date on which the health condition commenced, the probable duration of the condition, and the appropriate medical facts regarding the condition.

If the employee is needed to care for a spouse, child, or parent, the certification must so state along with an estimate of the amount of time the employee will be needed to assist with such care. If the employee has a serious health condition, the certification must state that the employee cannot perform the functions of her or his job.

Benefits Coverage During Leave
During a period of family or medical leave, an employee is not entitled to the accrual of any seniority or employment benefits that would have accrued if not for the taking of leave (e.g., the employee will not accrue vacation time during FMLA leave). An employee who takes
family or medical leave will not lose any seniority or employment benefits that had accrued before the date leave began.

**Restoration to Employment**

An employee eligible for family and medical leave will be restored to her or his old position or to a position with equivalent pay, benefits, and other terms and conditions of employment. Teddy Bear Child Care cannot guarantee that an employee will be returned to her or his original job. Teddy Bear Child Care will make a determination as to whether a position is an “equivalent position.”

**Return From Leave**

An employee must complete a "Notice of Intention to Return from Family or Medical Leave" before she or he can be returned to active status. If an employee wishes to return to work prior to the expiration of a family or medical leave of absence, the employee must notify the Director at least 5 working days prior to the employee's return.

**Failure to Return From Leave**

The failure of an employee to return to work upon the expiration of a family or medical leave of absence will subject the employee to immediate termination unless an extension is granted. An employee who requests an extension of family leave or medical leave due to the condition, recurrence, or onset of her or his own serious health condition, or of the serious health condition of the employee's spouse, child, or parent, must submit a request for an extension, in writing, to the Director. This written request must be made as soon as the employee realizes that she or he will not be able to return at the expiration of the leave period.

**D. Conflict Resolution Process**

Conflicts can arise between employees, employees and families, and the like. In the event that two or more parties find themselves in a situation where conflict is inevitable or has already occurred, has affected or will affect the Center and its operation, and can be potentially resolved through the actions of the Center, procedures have been established to ensure that all parties to any conflict receive fair and equal hearing to help resolve the circumstances surrounding the issue. This process is as follows:

1. The employee/petitioner must submit a written statement to the Director/Assistant Director within 5 working days of the employee's knowledge of the event which caused the conflict.
2. The Director/Assistant Director shall attempt to resolve the conflict within 5 working days following receipt of the statement and issue a written decision. A copy of the decision will be provided to the petitioner.
3. If the employee/petitioner is not satisfied, or if the conflict is with the Director/Assistant Director, the employee/petitioner may appeal the decision within 5 working days to ad hoc committee composed of Advisory Board members.
• The ad hoc committee will meet within 5 working days to review the employee/petitioner’s written statement regarding the conflict. The ad hoc committee will set the date and time of the meeting and will invite the employee/petitioner to attend. If the employee cannot attend, the ad hoc committee will make one good faith attempt to reschedule the meeting so the employee may be present. However, the employee’s presence at the ad hoc committee meeting is not required to issue a decision.

• The aggrieved employee shall be permitted to be present at the meeting of the ad hoc committee. The employee has the right to be represented by an attorney licensed to practice in Indiana at his or her own personal expense.

• The committee has a right to require appropriate employees to present relevant information.

• The Conflict Resolution Committee will submit its written recommendation to the Director at the next scheduled meeting. Upon review of the recommendation the Director will issue a final decision.

• The employee will be notified in writing of the final decision of the Director within 5 days following the last decision-making body’s meeting. This decision of the Director is final and binding.

Terminated/Former Employees are not eligible to participate in the Conflict Resolution process.