

Mustangs Child Care

2023-24 Parent Handbook



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Mission Statement

The mission of Mustangs Child Care is to provide reliable, quality child care services in an environment that nurtures and meets the individual needs of children and their families.

Goals

Mustangs Child Care strives to be:

Reliable: We know parents of young children need to know that childcare is available to them consistently during the work week.

Nurturing: We intend to provide a developmentally appropriate environment for young children that is safe, clean, and accepting of individual differences. We also intend to provide caregivers that engage the children in their care in meaningful interactions and activities throughout the day.

Affordable: We understand that families need quality childcare that is within their financial means. We strive to keep the cost of our service affordable while at the same time ensuring that we are able to compensate our care giving staff the wages they deserve. We are also an approved Child Care Assistance approved provider. If you would like more information or would like to apply please let us know.

Philosophy

Mustangs Child Care exists to provide high quality early childhood care and education to children six weeks and older. Recognizing that a nurturing environment is vital, our staff works together to provide safe, healthy, and welcoming surroundings for children in their early years. The educational component of our programming is provided by using a balanced curriculum that supplies child-initiated/adult-initiated activities. The child's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs will be met on a developmentally appropriate level. We view quality childcare as a combination of care and education as both components are important to the development of the whole child.

Rights and Responsibilities

Children have a right to...

- Feel safe and loved.
- Explore their curiosities.
- Feel good about themselves as valuable and unique individuals.
- Engage in meaningful interactions with peers and adults.
- Enjoy age-appropriate activities.
- Express themselves through language, writing, movement, and creative use of materials and resources.
- Grow in decision making, problem solving, and creative thinking.
- Expect a comfortable and welcoming environment with personal space for their belongings.

Children are responsible for...

- Learning to accept responsibility for their actions and decisions.
- Respecting the rules of the program and the daycare's property.
- Treating the staff and their peers with respect at all times.

Parents have the right to...

- Know their child is in a secure, stimulating, nurturing environment.
- Ask questions of or share concerns with the Director or staff at any time.
- Know if their child is experiencing any difficulties or behavioral problems. Parents have the right to be part of the decision-making process regarding solutions to the problem.
- Expect confidentiality regarding any information that might be in daycare records or conveyed in private conversation between a parent and caregiver.
- Know if their child has been exposed to any contagious diseases.
- Unrestricted access to their child at all times.

Parents are responsible for...

- Sending a clean, properly dressed, well rested and healthy child to daycare.
- Communicating questions, concerns, or issues to your child's caregiver or the Director.
- Providing clothing and supplies (labeled with your child's name) as needed.
- Signing children in and out each day
- Notifying the daycare in the case of an absence or late pick-up, after 5:30 PM.
- Notifying the daycare if your child is manifesting symptoms of a contagious disease.
- Keeping all your child's records at the daycare accurate and up-to-date.
- Paying all daycare bills on time
- Participating in fund-raisers to benefit the daycare.

Programming and Staffing

Staffing Ratios/Supervision:

No child is ever left unsupervised inside or outside the daycare. Caregivers directly supervise all the children by sight and hearing at all times, even when the children are napping.

According to state regulations and recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association, the following caregiver to children ratios are observed at Mustangs Child Care:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Caregiver:Children</u>
0-24 months	1:4
2 year olds	1:6
3 year olds	1:8
4 year olds	1:12
5 year olds +	1:15

When there are mixed-age groups of children 4 years and older in the same room, the caregiver:child ratio will be consistent with the age of the majority of the children in the room. When infants or toddlers are in the group, the caregiver:child ratio will adhere to the recommended ratio for the youngest children in the room.

Each staff member is trained in CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions, and as a Mandatory Reporter of Child Abuse or Neglect. Staff also receives continuing education in early childhood training through various workshops, seminars, in-services, staff meetings, and conferences throughout the year. We pride ourselves in providing a well-rounded and well-educated staff to care for your child.

Staff Training

New Staff Members

New staff will receive training as required by DHS. The following will be completed within the first three months of their employment:

- **1st Aid & CPR Certification**
- **Mandatory Child Abuse Reporting**
- **Universal Precautions (Blood Borne Pathogens)**
- **Essentials Child Care Pre-Service Training**
- **Orientation to Center Policies and Procedures & DHS Licensing Standards**

Within the first year of employment each staff member will receive an additional 6-10 hours of training in early childhood care and education. Every year thereafter, each staff member will receive an additional 4-6 hours of training.

Hours of Operation

The center is available throughout the year, Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM-5:30 PM for children ages 6 weeks up to school age. The before/after school program is available on days when school is scheduled to be in session for school age children. Mustangs Child Care is licensed to hold 56 children at one time.

Daycare Closing

The decision to close the daycare due to inclement weather will be made by the Director & School Superintendent. Closing information will be placed on the radio station KAYL, local news station KTIV, as well as the Mustangs Child Care Facebook page.

Admission/Enrollment and On-Going Requirements

Mustangs Child Care enrolls children six weeks and older without regard to race, culture, gender, religion, national origin, ancestry, income, or disability.

Prior to enrollment, new parents should meet with the Director to tour the facility and ask and answer questions. In addition, the following forms are required by the Department of Human Services and must be on file with the daycare before a child starts services:

- Registration Form
 - Emergency Contacts/Pick-up Authorization
 - Preferred Provider Information
 - Insurance Card Information
 - Parent Statement Health Status/Parental Emergency Consent (parents initial)
 - Allergies/Health Concerns (parents please explain)
 - Photography/Video, field trips, OTC medication Release
- Copy of Immunizations – **Must be on Iowa Department of Public Health Form**
- Infants through Preschool Aged Children- Child Health Form/Physical (signed from a physician within the past 6 months)
- Fee Policy Signature Sheet
- Policy Agreement (last page of this Parent Manual)
- CACFP Enrollment Form (Child & Adult Care Food Program)
 - CACFP Allergy/Food Exception Sheet (if applicable)
 - Infant Foods Tried at Home (if applicable, update when necessary)
- CACFP Parent Letter/Income Eligibility Form to apply for Free or Reduced Price lunches. (If over income guidelines, you do not have to fill out)

All forms and physicals must be updated yearly. The Director will inform you of when these will be due. Immunizations must also be updated as children receive them. Other forms not required by DHS but helpful to our staff may also be necessary. Enrollment information and forms submitted are confidential and accessible only to the Center's Administrative staff and the daycare's licensing official.

Accommodations for Special Needs

When the parent of a child identifies that a child has special needs, the Director and the parent will meet to review the child's care requirements. Mustangs Child Care will enroll a child with special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child. The Center will attempt to accommodate children with special needs consistent with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. If Mustangs Child Care is unable to accommodate the child's needs as defined by the child's health provider or the Individual Family Service Plan/Individual Education Plan without posing an undue burden as defined by federal law, the Center's Director will work with the parent to find an alternative, suitable childcare environment for the child.

Arrival and Departure Procedures

Children may not be dropped off or picked up at the door, and should be accompanied into the center by an adult (not a sibling). Parents must designate, in writing, on the Registration Form under the Pick-Up Authorization section, who is allowed to pick up the child from the Center. The staff will not release the child to anyone without written notification or a phone call and approval. In the case of a parent having resisted custody, we are required to have a copy of the court order stating the restrictions in the child's file to ensure our ability to enforce that order.

Disenrollment Policy

Please be aware that should one of the following situations arise, Mustangs Child Care may ask a parent to dis-enroll their child.

1. Failure to keep account up to date. Services will be discontinued if the account is largely in the hole and several attempts to notify you of this deficit have gone unanswered. Please refer to the Fee/Billing Policy Sheet on the next two pages for more information.
2. Verbal or physical abuse by a child to other children or to staff. A child's language or behavior that is hurtful to others such as profanity, using sexual language, humiliating, attacking or injuring others, throwing rocks, furniture, toys, etc. is inappropriate and unacceptable. If a child should display such behavior, an Incident Report will be written and the Director will review it with the parent to identify a possible solution.
3. If a child bites another child. If a child bites, we will develop a plan with the parent to try and correct the behavior. Mustangs Child Care may ask a parent to temporarily dis-enroll their child if the biting is aggressive and does not lessen within a reasonable amount of time (maximum of 10 bites in 3 weeks).
4. Non-compliance with the policies set forth in this Parent Handbook. It is the responsibility of the parent to comply with and respect our policies. If there is a policy that a parent has questions or concerns with please contact the Director to discuss it. Policies are designed and implemented in order to offer high quality care for the child and some are not negotiable.

Fees, Billing, & Payment Collection

Hours of Operation:

- ✓ The child care center is available throughout the year, Monday-Friday, 6:30 AM-5:30 PM for children ages 6 weeks up to school age. The before/after school program is available on days when school is scheduled to be in session for school age children.
- ✓ The all-day children will be provided breakfast, an AM snack, lunch, and a PM snack; this applies to the school age children on no school days as well. There is no additional charge for food at this time.

ALL-DAY RATES:

**Child Care Assistance is available, please inquire.*

***Upon child's birthday if category changes, rate will be adjusted for next billing cycle.*

<u>Age</u>	<u>1st Child</u> (up to 10 hrs/day)	<u>Drop-In</u> (no schedule by 5:30 PM Wed prev.)	<u>Half-day</u> (up to 5 hrs/day, limited spots avail.)
0-1 yr	\$38/day	\$40/day	\$25/day
1-2 yrs	\$38/day	\$40/day	\$25/day
2-4 yrs	\$34/day	\$40/day	\$22/day

****Rates start 9/5/2023, subject to change****

- If any child is **not picked up by 5:30 PM**, there will be a **\$1.50 per child per 5 min penalty** assessed.

Before School Program (school age children): 6:30 AM – 8:00 AM; the children will be walked to the school for breakfast before the start of school.

After School Program (school age children): 3:20 PM – 5:30 PM; the children will be fed a snack around approximately 3:30 PM. At this time, there is no charge for the afternoon snack, except for adults who will be charged \$1. Children may be split between the school and center each day.

- \$4.00/hr for the school age children, year-round.

Late Starts/Early Outs:

- If school is delayed, children may stay at the center at a flat rate of \$4.00/hr. Breakfast will be served at the center.
- If school is **cancelled**, staff will be in contact with families as to whether there is *enough staff for extra children to stay the entire day, or if the center will be closing for the day.*
 - If enough staff is available at the center in order to maintain ratios, school age children may stay at the center for the day. Lunch would be served to them as well. **Please call the center for more information on days like this. 712-272-4147**
- There are six **1:15 PM early out days** this year; rate of \$4.00/hr applies.
 - **Early Outs:** Oct 20, Nov 22, Dec 22, Mar 15, Mar 27 and last day of school (May 14)
 - **Drop-Ins:** Children who do not contract for time by Wed @5:30 PM the week prior.
- **Children that are not contracted will be charged the \$40 drop-in fee.**

No exceptions will be made.

Billing:

- ❖ To help us staff accordingly, schedules will be due **each MONDAY** by 5:30 PM for the following week. If you do not turn your schedule in on time you will be charged the drop-in rate for that week, and you may forfeit your spot if there are other kids on the waiting list.

Every Monday by 5:30 P.M. schedules will be due for the week following.

- ❖ We hope that daily rates help families budget their weekly daycare bill. If you need help figuring out your approximate weekly daycare cost please let us know. Feel free to pay in advance.
- ❖ The district bills for services weekly. Payments are expected to be paid promptly. A late payment fee will be assessed at the rate of 1.5% for balances more than 3 weeks old.
 - **You have until the end of the day, 4 weeks from the week of services**
- ❖ In the event that a balance reaches more than \$500 and ***continues to go unpaid***, families will be required to complete a balance resolution. Balances will be required to be paid up front prior to services for the week until a resolution is met. Continued lack of payment may result in your reserved spot being offered to another family.
 - Be sure to reach out in the event that a resolution is needed. Failure to inform the staff in a timely manner may result in balances being written to collections and an additional 30% fee being assessed on the balance transferred.
- ❖ The **before/after school program** is run similar to the lunch account program. We expect families to deposit funds into their childcare account (which is separate from their school lunch account), and a daily balance will be maintained.
 - When these funds begin to get low, an account summary will be provided with the most current account balance as a reminder to deposit more funds.
- ❖ Account summaries will be provided upon request, or a current balance can be checked by calling the school at 712-272-3324. This information is also available 24 hrs/day on the Smartcare Parent Portal.
- ❖ Methods of payment include ACH, debit/credit, and cash/check. **It is beneficial to the center when payments can be made by ACH as it provides savings that continue to keep rates affordable. If you are currently utilizing your debit card, please consider this option.**
- ❖ Payments may be left with Lori Bodholdt in the central office at the school, or at the daycare center in the schedule/payment drop box.
- ❖ ***We are an approved Child Care Assistance facility which can aid you in making child care more affordable. If you would like more information please contact us.***



Smartcare: Parent App & Web Portal

Smartcare is a cloud-based solution that enables Parents, Center Directors and Teachers to be connected in real time - throughout the day, anytime, from anywhere through your own mobile devices and via web portal.

Our Center is bringing true connectivity and communication directly to you. Smartcare will serve as our Centers management software and we want to make sure that you understand what this means for you, moving forward. ***NOTE: Some features are only available from a desktop view of the app via web access.

Features:

- **Sign-In / Sign-Out Kiosk** – This will allow you to use your mobile devices to seamlessly scan your children in or out, with a unique QR Code. You could also use the Key Tag QR to scan – or set up a numerical passcode. *You'll also be able to send a QR Code via text, to an authorized pick up person.
- **Real-Time Parent / Teacher Communication** – Updates on your child throughout the day, via App “push notifications” or Parent Web Portal to receive photos, videos, milestones, meals, daily reports and more.
- **Mobile Features** –Check Communication Notifications, View Billing Account Information, Pay Your Tuition/Balances – all on the Parent App!
- **Manage Billing/Tuition** – View and Pay by Debit Card, Credit Card or by Checking Account on the Parent App, or via the Parent Web Portal. *Because Smartcare is cloud-based, when payments are processed, the Center will update in real-time.

Steps to Complete Smartcare

1. You will receive an email from Smartcare Services to set up your account. Please make sure we have your correct email address on file. *If you are unsure, please update your information with the staff.
2. Download the Smartcare app on your mobile phone or mobile device from the App Store or Google Play and begin receiving updates from your child's teacher throughout the day! It's that simple.

IMPORTANT NOTICE***

- **At this time, the center is able to process your payment without charging additional fees.(Subject to change) See associated fees below.**
- **ACH (checking) transactions cost \$0.40 with each payment**
- **Debit or credit cards are charged 2.85% of the amount paid**
 - **If you are making payments via a debit card, please help us decrease our fees by considering a switch over to ACH!**
 - **Payment of \$250 = \$7.13 fee!**
 - **Fewer fees mean more stays with the center to help us keep costs low!**

Meals and Snacks

For the all-day children, breakfast, lunch, and an AM & PM snack will be served at the center at designated times. See the daily schedule on the next page. Before school children will be walked over to the school for breakfast between 7:45-8:00 AM; after school children will be given an afternoon snack around 3:30 PM. All meals and snacks on days when school is in session are prepared and transported to the center by the Newell-Fonda School District. On non-school days, meals and snacks may be prepared at the center. Menus are posted on the Parent Information table located near the sign-in/out area by the main entrance. We are a CACFP participating facility; we strive to offer wholesome nutritious meals to all of our participants regardless of age.

Parent Communication

Parents are welcome to participate in our program in several ways. We enjoy having parents join us for meals/snack, special days, and field trips. Please remember that our Center has an “open door policy” and unless denied access by a court order, you are welcome to be here at any time of the day.

Notices of policies, meetings, and exposure to communicable diseases are posted on a bulletin board near the main entrance.

If the need arises, a one-on-one conference with caregivers or the Director can be scheduled at any time. In addition, parents are welcome to stop into the Director’s office any time the door is open.

After School Program

Once numbers are known after registration in August, you will be notified whether your school aged child(ren) will be located at the school or daycare on a daily basis. We have a limited capacity at the center, so in order to accommodate as many families as possible we will utilize multiple spaces that are available to us. On days that there are events in the lunchroom/commons/gym areas, the children will be moved to another designated space. The lead teacher will keep parents informed. Around 5:00 PM, the remaining children at the school will return to the center to make pickup for parents that arrive around closing time quicker and easier.

Curriculum

Just as schools use different curriculums to teach different subjects, there are a variety of early childhood curriculums Center staff can purchase and/or receive training in. At this time Mustangs Child Care uses a balanced curriculum that supplies child-initiated/adult-initiated activities. These activities will involve art, music, drama, science, math, large and

small motor development, literacy, and language. The child's social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs will be met on a developmentally appropriate level.

In order to participate in the Iowa Quality Rating System, our Center will begin the process of choosing and implementing a particular curriculum.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is a regular part of each day, weather conditions permitting. The weather conditions are monitored using the Child Care Weather Watch to determine wind chill factor or heat index, so unless conditions are dangerous all children over the age of two will play outdoors on a daily basis. All children should come with appropriate outdoor play clothing. It is the parent's responsibility to label and have the proper outerwear available each day. If a child is well enough to be in attendance in the Center, he/she is well enough to play outdoors.

Field Trips

All guardians must sign the field trip authorization located on the registration form filled out at enrollment. At this time most field trips we will be going on would be to visit the school or city playground.

When the children are away from the building the teachers always take their First Aid Bag with emergency contact information. Children are counted before leaving the building, as they arrive to their destination, and as they return to the center. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. For ratio reasons they may have to stand outside the restroom door after checking the bathroom. Whenever the children are taken on a field trip away from the building we are required to have one staff over the ratio.

Multicultural and Religious Awareness Policy

Mustangs Child Care reinforces an awareness and pride in multicultural heritage and various religious backgrounds in the world around us. As incidents happen in which questions arise on these subjects we will create the teachable moment. Examples of this would be "Why are they a different color?" or "What is Hanukkah?" We will provide a curriculum that will offer a variety of multicultural experiences through books, puzzles, music, crafts, and other visual items in the environment.

If anyone is interested in volunteering their time to share any cultural backgrounds or knowledge with the children, we would be more appreciative to you offering this learning experience to the children. This could be preparing a food that the children could try, reading a book about your culture, learning a few new words of your language, sharing family traditions, etc. Please speak with the On-Site Supervisor or the Director if you are interested.

Daily Schedule of Activities

A.M.

6:30 AM

- Center Opens

6:30-7:40 AM

- Children Arrive
- Centers
- Open Play

7:40-8:00 AM

- Pick-up/pack-up
- Bathroom/wash-up
- School-aged children walk to school for breakfast
- All-day children:
 - Bathroom/wash-up

8:00-8:30 AM

- Breakfast

8:30-10:00 AM

- Circle Time
- AM Activities
- Centers/Themes

10:00-10:30 AM

- Bathroom/wash-up
- AM Snack

10:30-11:45 AM

- Outside/active play

11:45-12:00

- Pick-up
- Bathroom/wash-up

P.M.

12:00-12:30 PM

- Lunch

12:30-2:00 PM

- Story time
- Rest time

2:00-2:30 PM

- Wake up/Bathroom
- Quiet time

2:30-3:30 PM

- Active Play/Centers
- Fine Motor

3:20-3:30 PM (school aged children)

- Meet in Mustang Alley
- Younger children will walk to the center; older children will walk to the school commons.
see pg 13 for more info

3:30-3:40 PM

- All-day children, clean-up
- After school children arrive, put school bags away
- Bathroom/wash-up

3:40-4:00 PM

- PM snack

4:00-5:30 PM

- Active Play/Center
- Homework
- Outside Play
- Clean up – Home time

5:30 PM

- Center Closes

Accidents, Injuries, and Emergencies

When an accident or injury occurs, a caregiver will administer the appropriate First Aid and TLC. A First Aid Kit is kept in the Office. This kit is also taken to the playground and/or on field trips. If the nature of the injury is serious, or requires further medical attention, the parent/guardian will be notified by the staff immediately. Any accident or injury that occurs at Mustangs Child Care will be documented on our accident/injury report by the staff member who witnessed the incident. A copy of the report will be shared with the child's parents and requires a parent's signature, and then the report is kept in the child's file. If requested, a copy will be given to the parent or guardian.

Illness and Medications

Health providers agree that one of the best ways to prevent the spread of germs is frequent hand-washing. We require that all staff and children wash their hands when they arrive at the Center, and we direct the children to wash their hands frequently throughout the day.

Mustangs Child Care is not equipped to care properly for children who are sick. Please be aware and make your supervisor aware that there may be times when you need to pick up a sick child and take him/her home. Please arrange for family members or friends to be available to care for your child in the case that you cannot leave work.

The decision to send a sick child home will be based on the severity of the illness and whether there are adequate resources and staff to meet the needs of both the sick child and the other children in the group. When a child becomes sick during daycare, the Center staff, not the child's parents, will make the final determination about whether a child must be sent home. When you are notified by a Center staff member that your child is sick, you must make arrangements for the child to be picked up within the next hour.

Our top priority in cases of illness is the sick child and the other children in the group. Our desire is to cooperate with parents so sick children can be cared for as well as possible and heal as quickly as possible.

If a child at the Center has been diagnosed with a communicable disease, an anonymous notice will be posted, informing all families of their child's exposure to the disease. In cases of serious illness, notices will be sent home. See next page for standards regarding when your child should not attend.

Sick children should not be in daycare if...

- They have had one or more of the following symptoms in the past 24 hours:
 - A temperature of 100 degrees or higher
 - More than two instances of diarrhea that cannot be contained in the child's diaper or that causes an "accident" in the child's underwear
 - More than one vomiting episode
 - Sore, red, discharging eyes
 - An undiagnosed rash along with a fever, itching, or other discomfort
- The child's illness and lethargy leave him/her unable to participate comfortably in the activities the Center routinely offers for children who are well.
- The sick child requires more care than the staff is able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group.
- The child is contagious and poses an undue risk to either the child or the children and staff with whom the child will interact.
- The child has been diagnosed with live head lice that has not been treated.

Mildly sick children may participate in daycare if...

- They have been free from the symptoms listed about for 24 hours (fever free/no Tylenol).
- They have been on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- A health care provider note indicates the child is cleared to participate in daycare.
- They are only mildly ill and can comfortably participate in the Center's activities.
- Their illness is not contagious.

What to do if your child is sick:

If your child becomes sick during daycare, a staff member will call you at work. You must make arrangements for your child to be picked up within the hour, and you must keep your child out of the Center for at least 24 hours.

Also, let the Director know if your child has a contagious illness so caregivers can watch for symptoms among the other children.

Hand Washing

Mustangs Child Care complies with the nationally recommended standards of the U.S. Public Health Service, Centers for Disease Control, American Public Health, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. The guidelines were developed with the goal of implementing hand washing and sanitization procedures into the daily routines of the children and staff to control the spread of disease and infection. Children need to learn good health habits and this is taught by imitating.

Children AND staff are required to wash their hands multiple times throughout the day:

1. After toileting or diapering.
2. Before and after meals and snacks.
3. After playing outside.
4. Before and after messy play.
5. After handling or cleaning up bodily fluids.
6. After handling pets and other animals or any other material that might be contaminated by contact with animals.
7. Before and after feeding a child.
8. When entering daycare.
9. Before and after administering medicine.
10. After handling garbage or cleaning.

Hand washing is very important for our children and staff. All must lather with soap and water for at least 20 seconds before rinsing off and turning off water with a paper towel.

Mustangs Child Care REQUIRE staff to wear gloves when dealing with a blood-borne pathogen situation. Staff still is required to wash hands after removing gloves.

Distribution of Medications

The care giving staff will administer medication to children in the Center only if they have a medication form with clear dosage and schedule instructions signed by a parent. First doses of any medication should be given at home in case the child has an unexpected reaction. Parents may visit the Center to administer medication at any time.

All prescription and nonprescription medication must be in their original containers with accurate pharmacy and/or product labels. The container must be child-resistant and the expiration date cannot be past. Medications are stored in locked containers at the Center. When medication is administered, it will be documented on the medication form. In the case of long-term medication distribution, a parent must complete and sign a new form every 30 days.

Medication WILL NOT be given to a child that has been prescribed for another member of the family. For medications, including over-the-counter, that read “ask a doctor” for under the age of 2, parents must have a label from the pharmacy including all of the information, and stating it is okay to give that medication to your child. Parents who would like diaper ointments, bug repellent, and/or sunscreen applied to their child are asked to bring the brand of their choice, in the original container, labeled with their name. An authorization form will need to be completed before the ointment, bug repellent, and/or sunscreen can be applied.

Behavior Management and Discipline

At Mustangs Child Care, we want children to...

- See themselves as valuable and unique individuals
- Express strong emotions in ways that do not hurt others.
- Learn to make appropriate decisions and solve problems
- Become aware of the feelings and viewpoints of others.
- Work cooperatively and collaboratively, accepting others' beliefs, feelings, and needs

The staff at Mustangs Child Care strives to...

- Work together to create an environment that encourages each child to develop at his/her individual pace.
- Be positive caregivers and role models.
- Design their curriculum to the attention span, learning styles and family background of each child
- Arrange classrooms so children's activities are productive
- Use a variety of guidance and discipline techniques when interacting with the children in their care.

To ensure that Mustangs Child Care is a safe, hospitable, and nurturing environment for all the children and the staff, caregivers will equitably use positive guidance, redirection, planning ahead to prevent problems, encouragement of appropriate behavior, consistent clear rules, and involving children in problem solving to foster the child's own ability to become self-disciplined. When the child understands language, discipline will be explained to the child before and at the time of any disciplinary action. Caregivers will encourage children to respect other people, to be fair, respect property, and learn to be responsible for their actions.

Caregivers will guide children to develop self-control and orderly conduct in relationship to peers and adults. Aggressive physical behavior toward staff or children is unacceptable. Caregivers will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect all of the children and encourage more acceptable behavior. Caregivers will use discipline that is consistent, clear, and understandable.

Methods of Discipline

For acts of aggression and fighting (i.e. biting, hitting, etc.) staff will set appropriate expectations for children and guide them in solving problems. This positive guidance will be the usual technique for managing children with challenging behaviors rather than punishing them for having problems they have not yet learned to solve. In addition, staff may:

- Separate the children involved.
- Immediately comfort the child who was injured.
- Care for any injury suffered by the victim involved in the incident.
- Notify parents of children involved in the incident.
- Review the adequacy of caregiver supervision, appropriateness of Center activities, and initiate corrective action if there is a recurrence.

Physical restraint will not be used except as necessary to ensure a child's safety or that of others, and then in the form of holding by another person as gently as possible only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation. Caregivers will never use physical punishment or abusive language.

The following is a list of the prohibitive disciplines found on page 140 of the DHS Licensing Standards:

- Corporal punishment including spanking, shaking, and slapping.
- Punishment which is humiliating or frightening or which causes pain or discomfort to the child. Children shall never be locked in a room, closet, box or other device. Mechanical restraints shall never be used as a form of discipline. When restraints are part of a treatment plan for a child with a disability authorized by the parent and a psychologist or psychiatrist, staff shall receive training on the safe and appropriate use of the restraint.
- Punishment or threat of punishment associated with a child's illness, lack of progress in toilet training, or in connection with food or rest.
- No child shall be subjected to verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family.

Medicines or drugs that affect behavior will not be used except as prescribed by a child's health care provider and with specific written instructions from the child's health care provider for use of the medicine.

Time-outs: Time-out will be used in specific circumstances to allow a child to have an opportunity to calm down and think about the consequences of their actions. Time-outs also give your child's caregiver time to reflect and get a perspective on the child's behavior. We try not to overuse time-outs. For some children, they are not effective, even when used minimally.

When caregivers use time-outs, they will use the terms "thinking chair" or "thinking spot". Caregivers will explain to the child the reason he or she is being removed from play.

Biting: It can be quite a shock to find out that your child has been bitten by or has bitten another child. Caregivers try to use biting prevention strategies such as eliminating stressors like crowded play areas, inconsistent routines or lack of rest. An interesting play environment also keeps children involved, so situations that lead to biting are minimized. The Center provides an adequate number of staff who can readily respond to the particular needs of each child.

When a child is bitten:

1. A caregiver intervenes immediately to separate the biter from the bitten child, and the child who was bitten is helped immediately. We will apply ice to the bite if the child allows it. If the skin is broken, we will clean the site and apply First Aid.
2. When the bitten child has been cared for and calmed down, the caregiver talks to the child who did the biting. When two or more staff members are present, the second and third step can occur simultaneously.
3. Parents of the bitten child are notified with an incident report. The name of the child who did the biting is kept confidential.
4. The caregiver reflects on the situation to determine what can be changed to keep the biter from doing it again.
5. **The child who is the biter will also have an incident report.**

When a child bites, the parents will be informed personally and privately on the day of the incident. If your child seems to be developing a chronic biting problem (repeated biting over several weeks, we will develop a plan of specific strategies, techniques, and timelines to address the behavior. We will never employ any technique that harms a child or is known to be ineffective.

Suspected Child Abuse

The health and safety of our children is one of our top priorities. All observations or suspicions of child abuse or neglect by any caregiver will be immediately reported to the Department of Human Services or the local Police Department.

Emergency Plans

Mustangs Child Care has written emergency plans in place for fire and severe weather. The Center's emergency procedures and evacuation routes are posted in every occupied program area.

Fire Plan

The Center's fire alarms are tested annually and fire drills are performed monthly. In the case of a building fire, the children will be escorted outside and then, if the weather is inclement, to the nearby School.

Snow/Ice Storms

Snow or ice storms may result in the closing of the Center at any time of day. Daycare closing announcements will be placed on the radio such as KAYL, local TV such as KTIV, and the Mustangs Child Care Facebook page. When those announcements are made, please pick up your children as soon as possible so our caregiving staff, especially those who live out of town, can get home safely. If local staff members are able to remain at the center, the center may not close despite school being cancelled. If it is possible weather could strand you out of town, please plan ahead for a substitute to pick up your child.

Severe Thunderstorms/Tornado Watches and Warnings

In the case of severe thunderstorms and tornado watches and warnings, should the siren sound, the children are quickly escorted to the restrooms located in the center of the building by the caregiving staff. Parents should not drive to the Center in the midst of severe weather. The staff and children perform a tornado drill monthly.

Intoxicated driver or parent

In the event of an intoxicated parent, if a caregiver feels a child is in imminent danger, child protection laws require us to report to the police. If in the caregiver's opinion, the parent is unable to transport the child safely, she/he shall immediately notify the Director/On-Site Supervisor.

The Director will then try to convince the parent not to transport the child. The Director will offer to call someone else from the emergency number file to transport the child for the parent. If the parent refuses to agree and insists on leaving with the child, the Director will call the police and report the driver of the car to be intoxicated or unsafe.

Power outages or Loss of water

In the case of a power outage or loss of water lasting more than one hour, parents will be contacted to pick up their children.

Missing or Abducted child

In the event that a child is lost or abducted, the Director/On-Site Supervisor shall be immediately notified. The caregiver or Director will then call 911 to reach the police department to notify them of the situation giving any available information regarding description or circumstances surrounding the disappearance. The Director/On-Site Supervisor will then notify the parents to make them aware of the situation. If the child is lost or has run away from the Center, any available staff shall remain searching for the child while still maintaining staff ratios.

Unauthorized person/intruder in the building

When an unauthorized person/intruder is present, the staff shall observe the situation to determine if this person poses any threat to the children. If the staff feels there is a potential for danger, she/he should immediately gather the children together to re-enter the building if they are outside. If someone has entered the building, the teacher should direct this person to the office for help, continuing to observe that the person goes where directed and receives the proper guidance. If the person is not welcome but refuses to leave, inform that person that the police will be called. Never let a child leave with an unauthorized person/intruder. The children should be reminded to never speak to a stranger and to go directly to a teacher if someone should ever approach them.

Earthquake, Flood, Bomb Threat or Structural Disaster

In the event of an earthquake, flood, bomb threat or other structural disaster that could create structural damage to the child care facility or pose a threat to the health of the children, the staff shall implement the Evacuation Procedure. The caregiver or Director shall bring the attendance record and emergency cards. The caregiver will account for each child before leaving the site. Once at the designated spot, parents will be notified by phone and through the media to pick up their children at this alternate location. In the case of a bomb threat, 911 shall be called and the police notified from this alternate location.

Chemical Spills

In the event of a chemical spill, our Center will follow the recommendations of the notifying authority. If the children need to leave the area, parents will be notified through phone calls and the media to pick up their children, attendance sheets and parent emergency information numbers will be taken by the caregiver. Staff shall remain with the children until the parents pick them up. Ratios shall be maintained.

Visitors and Access

Parents who want to visit their children at the Center may do so at any time of day and for any reason. Other adult family members also may visit your children at the Center. When extended family will be visiting the Center, please give the staff a courtesy call or note before the visit occurs to explain who will be visiting and when. In the case of divorce or separation, both parents may visit their child at the Center. Parents who want to restrict the access of a divorced or separated spouse from the Center must obtain a court order. Other visitors to the Center must sign in at the Office to identify themselves and explain their purpose for visiting the Center. If a visitor will not identify him/herself or arouses any suspicion, the police will be called to escort the visitor out of the Center. Anyone required to register on the sex offender registration must meet with the Director to establish an individualized written agreement.

Smoking

Mustangs Child Care and the Center's playground is a smoke-free environment.

Daily Cleaning Policies

1. Bleach water spray is to be made daily in a labeled spray bottle. Bleach bottles need to be emptied and rinsed out nightly. Spray bottles need to be labeled "Bleach Spray" and "1 TBSP to 1 QT."
2. Bleach Spray bottles need to be kept away from children at all times.
3. Sinks are required to be washed and sprayed with bleach water throughout the day.
4. Tables and high chairs will be washed with soap and water and then sprayed with bleach water IMMEDIATELY before and after every meal, snack, art, messy play, etc.
5. Anytime that bleach spray is used it can be left to air dry or wiped dry after sitting for two minutes.
6. Toys that have been in a child's mouth or that have been contaminated by bodily fluids will be removed after the child is done with it then put in a container to be sanitized.
7. When toys are being rotated they will be sanitized before and after entering a room. Any toys that are broken will be thrown away.
8. Machine washable toys will be washed and sanitized daily.
9. Indoor toys will not be shared with another room until they are sanitized.

Confidentiality

Mustangs Child Care respects the rights of each family to have privacy and confidentiality regarding all health, behavioral, and developmental records and information concerning their child. Any employee, parent or person associated with Mustangs Child Care who acquires information regarding a child or an employee, shall not directly or indirectly disclose information except upon inquiry before a court of law or with written consent from this person or the child's guardian.

It is extremely important to protect the confidentiality of any information concerning children and their families. Staff will maintain a professional attitude and show respect to the children by refraining from talking about or labeling a child negatively or positively, in front of them or their peers.

It is also important that the parents do not ask questions to the staff or children about issues that we are not to comment on or about others. No information about any particular child shall be shared with another child's parent. Staff and Parents may become close, and parents of one child may work with another parent from the center, please refrain from discussing specific situations about others at the center. Examples of this would be; asking "Who has pink eye in my child's room?" if a communicable disease notice is posted, "Who is the biter?", or discussing other personal issues. It is important that we all respect the privacy of all the families and staff here at the center.

Pet Policy

We encourage the children to experience a variety of animals, learn about them, and care for them. It is important that if you are aware of your child having an allergy to any animals that you inform the Director. The center may, at times, have their own pet to take care of or have visitors bring them in. All animals requiring shot records, including rabies vaccinations, are required to be kept on file at the center. We do not have or allow any reptiles, amphibians, or birds of the parrot family (parrots, cockatiels, parakeets), which can carry bacteria that can cause serious illness in humans. All areas where pets have been will be cleaned and disinfected with bleach spray. Teachers and children are required to wash hands before and after handling or caring for any pets.

Access Policy

Parents

Parents have unrestricted access to their children as long their child is in attendance at the center.

Visitors

Visitors to the center must give prior notification to the center Director if they have an interest in visiting the center. Visitors will NOT be allowed to be in any child occupied area without direct staff supervision.

Sex Offenders

Individuals that have children attending the center and that are required to register on the Sex Offender Registry must meet with the center Director to establish an individualized written agreement regarding access to the center.

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Mustangs Child Care

Policy Agreement

My child(ren) _____ will be attending Mustangs Child Care.

I, _____, have read the parent handbook and agree to follow all of the rules, policies, and responsibilities that have been laid out in the handbook. If I have any questions I will contact the director.

Parent signature

Date

Director signature

Date

Mustangs Cuidado de Niños

Acuerdo de la Política

Mi niño(s)/niña(s) _____ asistirá Mustangs Cuidado de Niños.

Yo, _____, he leído el manual de los padres y de acuerdo en seguir todas la reglas, políticas y responsabilidades que han sido establecidos en el manual. Si necesito alguna ayuda en leer o en comprender cualquier parte del material me pondré en contacto con el director.

Firma del Padre/Madre

Fecha

Firma del Director

Fecha