
Growing Years School

Family Handbook



WELCOME

Dear Family,

This is a working document.

It provides information about policies set by the Board and procedures implemented by the director and staff all within the confines of Rules and Regulations set by the State Department of Human Services.

The intention is to help parents to be knowledgeable about how the school functions and to better understand the reasons behind the rules and regulations.

We welcome your questions and any suggestions for increased clarity. We hope this document provides you the needed guidance.

Thank you for choosing Growing Years School. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

Adele Melnick

Director

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Growing Years School

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ABOUT US

Philosophy

HISTORY

Growing Years School (GYS) was founded in 1988 by Chalmers Morse and Gail Dahling. Their vision was to provide a school in a residential community to serve the needs of local families. In 1998, Growing Years incorporated as a not-for-profit organization.

GOVERNANCE & CERTIFICATION- 2.2

GYS is a licensed childcare center. Governance of the school falls under a Board of Directors that consist mostly out of parents whose children are enrolled in our program. They welcome recommendations from parents. GYS is incorporated under Colorado law. It is administered by a director and qualified early childhood staff. All Board meetings except executive sessions are open to the public.

GYS is a Level 4 Colorado Shines rated school. More information can be found about our school's rating at: <http://coloradoshines.force.com/ColoradoShines>

PHILOSOPHY, GOAL & MISSION

Vision Statement

"We envision a world of children who are self-confident, self-disciplined, and enthusiastic about learning."

Philosophy

GYS exemplifies a high-quality, developmentally oriented program, delineating the best knowledge about how children grow and learn, providing for each child individually. In recognition that the arts are a basis of intellectual development, the program is rich in music, movement, visual and literary arts, and covers the rudiments of all disciplines from "astronomy to zoology."

GYS is a school where a child can become self-confident and self-disciplined; where the child's individual talents and strengths are developed; where home and school cooperate; and where staff is open to learning, using observation and non-judgmental recording as a basis for program planning, implementation and assessment.

Goal

The goal at GYS is to help young children make sense of the world. The intention is to provide a comfortable environment—one which is more home-like than school-like, creating an enthusiasm for learning, while developing good citizens.

Ages of Children Accepted

GYS is licensed for 65 children between the ages of 6 weeks to 6 years old. Growing Years have two different locations. The Infant Center that is licensed for 6 weeks up to 2 years old located at 151 School Street in Basalt and our Preschool that is licensed for 1 year to 6 years old, that is located at 151 Cottonwood Dr. in Basalt.

Hours of Operation & Holidays

GYS provides year-round services to families from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday, with the exception of legal holidays, teacher in-service and snow days. GYS is closed for a week between Christmas Eve and New Year's Day. Staff will assist parents in finding child care if it is needed during this period.

Parents are urged to bring children to school by 9:00 am. A child who arrives when other children are actively engaged or cleaning up after an activity often feels frustrated and usually has a more difficult day because relationships in group play are formed early in the day.

Parents are expected to pick up children promptly. If there is a pickup problem, a teacher will remain with the child until parents arrive, but there is a charge of \$1.00 per minute beyond school closure. Late pick-ups result in overtime payment to teachers. Charges will appear on the next billing.

If a call is not received by departure time, then the emergency contact provided will be called. Late picks ups create anxieties in young children which should be avoided. If all else fails, the teacher will take the child home with her/him.

Definition of Family

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of the child in our care.

Admission & Enrollment

Requirements prior to enrollment:

- Every family is required to make an introductory visit to the school prior to enrollment. Parents are urged to get acquainted with the program to be sure that GYS is the right place for their child.
- Parents are asked to plan to stay with the child until he/she is comfortable with the school environment and the child has made a transition from the parent to a staff member. Children vary in their ability to separate from parents. Parents who are anxious about leaving children transfer that anxiety to children. Visits work best when a parent finds a comfortable place to sit and waits for the child to leave them. Teachers will help parents know when the child is ready to let them go.

- Parents are required to sign a payment contract and to pay a \$50.00 registration fee and a \$250.00 deposit. The deposit is forfeited upon failure to provide a four week notice of withdrawal.
- Upon enrollment, parents will be asked to sign a payment contract stating how/when tuition will be paid. To avoid penalties, GYS requires a credit card number to which tuition will be charged if it has not been received according to the payment contract. If a credit card number is not on file, a late penalty will be added to the next billing.
- All enrollment forms must be completed and on file before the start date...
- Recognizing the importance of continuity in children's lives, GYS does not accept children who are simultaneously registered in other child care programs.
- Parents may enroll children for two, three or five days a week preferably on consecutive days. Early childhood research shows that children profit from attendance on consecutive days.
- Enrollment is filled on a first come first served basis. A chronological wait list is maintained and parents are called in order.

Required Forms

State regulations require that all forms listed below be filed prior to the date of enrollment and up-dated annually:

- Payment contract: credit card, or other verification of payment
- Application for enrollment including emergency contacts;
- Updated immunization forms, including hepatitis B forms;
- Statement of health signed by physician;
- Authorization form releasing child to another adult(s);
- Authorization for emergency care; and
- Authorization for field trips.

Inclusion

Growing Years School believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging in child care. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs.

Non-Discrimination

At **Growing Years School** equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

Confidentiality

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

Interpreters:2.1

We have a bilingual teacher in each of our classrooms that is available to parents when a translator is needed. A lot of communication between home and school gets translated for parents to understand.

Open Door Policy/ Visitors

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

Our team will always do their best to speak with parents/guardians. Since staff days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

Staff Qualifications

Our teachers are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. Typical staff certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification	Experience
Teacher	Associate Degree in Early Childhood Education	2 years
Teacher Assistant/Aide	Child Development Associate Certification	1 year

Caregivers participate in an orientation class and ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the programs and services we offer is a private matter, not connected or sanctioned by **Growing Years School**.

Primary Caregiving Practices-4.4

Each child in our center is cared for by the same one or at least two teachers on a daily basis to promote formation for a strong bond. Children in our school stay with the same primary caregiver in the same peer group for at least two years depending on enrollment date.

Child to Staff Ratios- 4.3b

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We continue to improve our child ratios to maintain the best quality of care. We have on staff a floater teacher who help us maintain group and ratio size. Below you will find the State of Colorado child/staff ratios and group size as well the NAEYC guidelines. We constantly look at ways to improve and lower our group size to and improve our adult: child ratios. Our current goals are to maintain group size and adult: child ratios that are aligned with NAEYC guidelines:

Licensing group size and adult: child ratios:

Staff-Child Ratios:

Ages of Children	Number of Staff	Maximum group size
12 months to 36 months	1 staff to 5 toddlers	10 Toddlers
24 months to 36 months	1 staff to 7 toddlers	14 Toddlers
2.5 years to 3 years	1 staff to 8 children	16 children
3 years to 4 years	1 staff to 10 children	20 children
4 years to 5 years	1 staff to 12 children	24 children
5 year and older	1 staff to 15 children	30 children
Mixed age group (2.5 year olds to 6 years old)	1 staff to 10 children	20 children

NAEYC Group size and adult: child ratios:

Teacher-Child Ratios within Group Size										
Age Range ¹	Group Size ²									
	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24
12 to 28 months - Toddler	1:3	1:4	1:4 ³	1:4						
21 to 36 months- Toddler		1:4	1:5	1:6						
2.5 to 4 years- Preschool				1:6	1:7	1:8	1:9			
4 to 5 years						1:8	1:9	1:10		
5 years to Kindergarten						1:8	1:9	1:10		

¹These ages ranges purposefully overlap. If a group includes children whose ages range beyond the overlapping portion of two age categories, then the group is a mixed-age group. For mixed-age groups, universal criteria and criteria relevant to the age categories for that group apply.

²Group size as stated are ceilings, regardless of the number of staff

³Group size of 10 is permissible for this age range but an additional adult is required to stay within the best practice

Communication & Family Partnership-2.2

Growing Years have several Spanish staff members who can be used as an interpreter if needed. Our Parent Handbook is also available in Spanish. All of the information below is available in Spanish. We also have on staff bilingual teachers for each of our two classrooms.

Daily Communications. Daily emails from center staff will keep you informed about your child’s activities and experiences at the center. It is important for parents to inform us if you don’t check your email daily, we heavily rely on emails to communicate with parents.

Bulletin Boards. A bulletin board is located in the front hall, our bulletin board provide center news, upcoming events, faculty changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

Newsletters. Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are send out via email and a hard copy can be requested. We also post our newsletter on the bulletin board.

Family Visits. Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must sign-out upon leaving.

Family Night. 2.3 Family nights are scheduled on a regular basis. These nights include snacks, drinks and fun filled age-appropriate activities for families. Family Nights allow families and children time to share, learn, and have fun. Families have an opportunity to be a part of their child's learning experience and connect with other families.

Volunteer Policy:

As you know, tuition never covers the cost of running a high quality program—a fact which makes us rely heavily on fund raising. Since children are the beneficiaries of a quality program, it is logical for us to seek assistance from parents in all our fund raising activities. We try our best to find ways parents can help without infringing on their time or their budgets. Success in these endeavors will help us keep our tuition low, which is always our goal.

Parents are required to volunteer one (1) hour/month by donating time, an activity or items as described in the monthly listing. A \$25 charge will be added to the monthly billing if parents fail to complete the volunteer requirement. A record of volunteer hours will be kept in the office for parents to check at will. Parents must be diligent in reporting any volunteer activities in writing so we can keep an accurate record. A parent volunteer list is distributed every month.

Conferences. – 2.7 Family & teacher conferences occur twice a year. During these conferences, we will discuss your child's strengths, likes and dislikes, and styles of learning. We will work together to set goals for your child's growth and development. You may request additional conferences regarding your child's progress at any time. We encourage you to communicate any concerns.

Connecting families with community service agencies:- 2.2

At Growing Years School, we offer a child oriented curriculum that is appropriate for the ages served. Besides our daily curriculum we offer, we also offer a variety of additional services to parents:

- Mia Wilson is a family therapist whose services are available to our families. Her contact information is available upon request. Mia is available to help parents with any behavioral issues or for any family therapy.
- On annual basis parents and children are offered a dental, hearing and eye screening. Our hearing and dental screenings are offered by our health nurse. The Lions Club of Basalt offers eye screenings to all children at our center.
- Children with concerning behaviors, will discussed with parents. Parents will be encouraging to contact Child Find, a service offered through Roaring Fork School District, for the child to be observed.

- Our Health Nurse- Robin Strecker is available to answer and help parents with any health concerns they might have.
- Basalt Lift-Up food pantry is available to families in need. Their office is located at: 167 Holland Hills Rd., Basalt Community United Methodist Church Basalt, CO - 81621 970-279-1492

All staff members are aware of our community services outreach plan and are informed when changes occur.

Grievances

Grievances between or among Growing Years and any participant, staff, parent, or Board member, must be handled by all parties with the intent of a satisfactory resolution of the problem or issue. All parties must recognize and honor the commitment for resolution. Each has a responsibility to help solve the problem in a manner consistent with the welfare of children and the school's mission.

A grievance or problem should be addressed using the following procedure:

- All parties must agree to meet as soon as possible to discuss the problem;
- All parties must agree that they want to find a solution to the problem;
- All parties must agree to listen to each other;
- Each party will relate his/her understanding of the issue at hand;
- All parties must agree to make suggestions as to how they can help solve the problem; and
- The solution must be mutually agreed upon.
- In the case that no resolution can be agreed upon by both parties, assistance from a Board member must be requested.

Complaints. Communication is the cornerstone of successful programs for young children. Parents are urged to bring any issue to the attention of the Director or a Board member. The grievance procedures listed above will be followed. Parents who feel they have not had a satisfactory resolution to their complaint may call the Department of Human Services at 303-945-9191 or 1-800-799-5876 or write them at the Denver Office, Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203

Child Abuse and Neglect:

24/7 Hotline: Call 1-844-CO-4-KIDS (844-264-5437)

Publicity

Unless the family indicates that they want their child to participate, we will not use pictures and names of children for publicity.

CURRICULA & LEARNING

Program Evaluation- 2.6

We have a continuous Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that is updated annually and the results are shared with parents at our annually “back to school” night. This plan reflects our goals, timelines and outcomes, a hard copy of our QIP is also available in the office to review.

PROGRAM

High-quality early childhood programs are planned in relatively large blocks of time to give children the opportunity to get deeply involved in an activity. Overlapping time-frames permit children who are absorbed to finish what they are doing.

Good early childhood programs provide a balance between teacher-planned and child-initiated activities. A schedule, which is followed judiciously to provide for individual needs, gives children the needed security of knowing what will happen next while providing opportunity for exploration and deep involvement. Times may vary in individual classrooms, depending on the ages of the children and teachers’ plans.

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR TODDLER ROOM

7:30–9:15	Arrival and free choice
9:15–9:30	Clean-up time
9:30–9:45	Snack time
9:45–10:00	Gathering time
10:00–12:00	Outside play, art, music or walks
12:00-12:30	Lunch
12:30-3:00	Rest time
3:00–3:15	Snack time
3:15–5:30	Outdoor play, inside activities

DAILY SCHEDULE FOR PRESCHOOL ROOM

7:30–9:30	Arrival and free choice
9:30–9:45	Clean-up time
9:45–10:00	Gathering time
10:00–10:30	Snack time
10:30–12:00	Outdoor play and/or fieldtrips
12:00–12:30	Lunch time
12:30–3:00	Rest time
3:00–3:15	Snack time
3:15–6:00	Outdoor play or free play inside

Curriculum daily activities

Learning spaces are designed to attract and delight children and lead them to some discovery. Choices in each classroom and outdoors provide an opportunity for selection from a wide variety of activities since selection is viewed as a learning activity. It is a much more difficult and stimulating task to decide what to do and to complete it to one's own satisfaction than it is to simply follow a teacher's directions. Starting Fall' 16 we will be implementing Creative Curriculum within our programs. The field of early childhood education has made great strides in identifying the building blocks of later school success. The Creative Curriculum uses these building blocks as the foundation for its philosophy, the objectives for children's learning, and guidelines for teaching and working with families. The Creative Curriculum helps teachers interact with children in ways that promote development and learning, foster children's social competence, support children's learning through play, create rich environments for learning, and forge strong home-school connections. By meaningfully translating research into practice, The Creative Curriculum gives educators the tools they need to help all the children in their classrooms succeed in school and in life Our curriculum is aligned with the domains of Colorado's Early Learning and Development Guidelines.

Each classroom provides the following activity centers for children to explore:

Art

Various materials in different media encourage development of children's creativity, self-expression, fine motor skills, color awareness and a sense of light and shadows.

Blocks

Blocks provide an outlet for children to recreate their world, contributing to their knowledge of math, science, social studies and language skills.

Cooking

Cooking experiences provide opportunities to follow directions, measure and explore textures, as well as to learn about foods from other cultures while integrating math and science skills and increasing motivation for reading.

Dramatic Play

Various props provide children with an opportunity to act out feelings, express emotions, and exercise imagination, as well as to imitate life experiences.

Language

An inviting Book Corner provides a quiet, cozy space for children to explore and expand their knowledge through stories, flannel-board characters, puppets, and story tapes. This develops language proficiency as children discuss, predict outcomes, use contextual clues and become aware of sounds, cadence and rhythm. It also provides opportunities to increase concentration recall story lines and deepen comprehension.

A writing center, with opportunities to communicate through written symbols, provides an outlet for language development.

Mathematical/Scientific Explorations

Everyday experiences and educational materials are used to develop problem-solving and reasoning skills through increased understanding of sets, classifications, patterns, sequence and numerals.

Science projects promote a child's use of senses, logic and observational skills as they describe, predict and understand their world better.

Music/Movement

Songs, finger plays, nursery rhymes, dancing, and musical instruments all develop a child's awareness of tone, pitch, and rhythm, as well as interest in many different types of music. All of these have been proven to increase reading abilities.

Sensory Activities

Water, sand, mud, etc., give children many opportunities to feel textures, understand equivalencies, extend their knowledge of volume, as well as extend their imaginative play.

Small Muscle Activity

Manipulatives, such as puzzles, beads, scissors, Legos, and Unifix cubes, develop and refine eye–hand coordination, tracking, sequencing, spatial awareness and visual discrimination.

Outdoor Activities

Outdoor activities are considered an extension of indoor learning activities with many opportunities for vigorous, imaginative play interspersed with quiet thoughtful activities which help consolidate past learning.

Grouping

GYS serves two age groups prescribed by licensing agreements. Multi-age grouping within each classroom is consistent with GYS philosophy, as listed below:

- Multi-age grouping provides a natural familiar setting. In this age of small families; children learn about the complexities of living together in an atmosphere that begins to make some sense.
- Teaching is a wonderful way of learning—older children, in essence, become the teachers of the younger ones as they gain confidence in their own competence. It's wonderful to be the top dog even if only for a little while.
- Interaction among children, across a span of several years, provides an opportunity for them to learn about each other's stages of development. The younger children begin to aspire to things they will be able to do, as they grow older. The older children begin to deepen their insights about what they did when they were little.
- Older children begin to take responsibility for the care and safety of younger children, a most important thing to learn in preparation for future parenthood, career teaching, and life. They begin to gain a sense of humor as they observe funny things young children do, which seem nonsensical, but they also get ideas as they watch the spontaneous, less-inhibited actions on which younger children embark, things the older children have learned to be cautious about.
- Research has shown consistently that all intellectual development is based on sound social-emotional development. But learning is also intellectual. Older children begin to put things in perspective, which is the beginning of logic and reasoning.

Outings & Field Trips

Children are taken on walks or buggy rides throughout the neighborhood. A signed permission slip, which is kept on file, provides permission for these walking activities.

Parents will be notified in advance of any trips needing bus or other transportation. A separate permission slip will be needed for each such trip. Parent volunteers will be sought for trips, which require additional transportation. Proper safety procedures are always followed. Parent-volunteer drivers must show a valid driver's license and proof of liability insurance.

If a child is late coming to school on a trip day, a parent or guardian must stay with the child until the class returns. A sign will be posted to notify parents where the group is so that the child may join the field trip. Children cannot remain at school unless a teacher is present and has accepted responsibility for the child.

Transition-2.4 +2.5

Your child's transition in child care should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. We will work with you and your child to ensure the smoothest possible transition occurs as new routines and new people are introduced.

Transition from home to center. Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's peers and teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. At this time please share the best communication methods that the teacher may use to reach you.

Transition between learning programs. Children are transitioned to the next program based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will meet with you to propose a plan to introduce your child into the new program.

Transition to elementary school. Transition activities such as a field trip to a local elementary school, creating a mural of special friends and special times at our center will be part of your child's education at our center. We will provide you with information on local schools, what to expect, and ideas on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school.

Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

Celebrations

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff and community.

Birthdays and other special days are wonderful to share with all children. Rituals are very important to children; families are encouraged to share any special celebrations or family traditions. .

Parents may plan a special snack with teachers to celebrate birthdays or other occasions. It is difficult to come up with sugarless desserts, but the less sugar, the better. Children's birthdays are important and special to them, but they also are important to other children. Parents should send invitations through the mail to those children invited to a party given outside of school, unless all children in the room are invited, in which case the invitations may be left in the children's cubbies.

It has become a tradition for children to donate a book for the classroom in celebration of the child's birthday

Services available to families 2.11

At Growing Years School, we offer a child oriented curriculum that is appropriate for the ages served. Besides our daily curriculum we offer, we also offer a variety of additional services to parents:

- Mia Wilson is a family therapist whose services are available to our families. Her contact information is available upon request. Mia is available to help parents with any behavior issues or for any family therapy.
- On annual basis parents and children are offered a dental, hearing and eye screening. Our hearing and dental screenings are offered by our health nurse at school. The Lions Club of Basalt offers eye screenings to all children at our center.
- When we observe behaviors in the classrooms that is of concern to us, we will have a meeting with parents to discuss the behavior. In certain cases, where we are not trained to appropriately handle the behavior we will recommend to families to contact Child Find, a service offered through Roaring Fork School District.
- Our Health Nurse- Patty McCall is available to answer and help parents with any health concerns they might have.

All staff members are aware of our community services outreach plan and are informed when changes occur.

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families and Referral information for children with developmental concerns:

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care. Examples of such instances include:

- A child appears to be a danger to others.
- Continued care could be harmful to, or not in the best interest of the child as determined by a medical, psychological, or social service personnel.

- Undue burden on our resources and finances for the child's accommodations for success and participation.

We also have available Child Find that is part of Colorado's system for identifying children suspected of having a delay in development. If a young child is not meeting typical developmental milestones, or someone is concerned about the child's growth or learning, child find teams will evaluate how the child plays, learns, speaks, behaves and moves. The purpose of the evaluation is to determine if there is a significant delay or if there is a need for early intervention or special education services. Evaluations conducted by Child Find teams are at no cost to parents.

Children who are not yet in Kindergarten may be referred at any time when a family member, doctor or child care provider has a concern about their development.

- For children from birth to three years of age, Child Find teams partner with local Early Intervention Colorado programs who provide service coordination and eligibility determination.
- Children three to five years old are evaluated as a part of the preschool special education process.

Rest Time

GYS provides a sheet to cover sleeping cots for rest period, as mandated by licensing requirements. Children may enjoy having a special comfort item and a small blanket. These are stored in the cubbies. Bedding should be washed regularly, at least weekly. This is a responsibility of the parents.

Children are required by state regulations to rest at least 20 minutes each day. Children who do not fall asleep are given quiet activities after thirty minutes. Attempts are made to accommodate parents' requests for shortened naps whenever possible.

Diapering

Parents supply disposable diapers. They must be labeled with the child's name. The school will provide unscented and/or natural wipes. Children, in the process of potty training will be reminded frequently to try to use the toilet.

Children requiring diapers will be checked for wetness or feces at least every two hours, or whenever the child indicates discomfort or exhibits behavior that suggests a soiled or wet diaper. The child shall be changed when found to be wet or soiled. A diaper changing station or changing area shall be provided and located separate from any food preparation, storage or serving area and will comply with Colorado Department of Health and Environment Rules and Regulations Governing the Health and Sanitation of Child Care Facilities.

Toilet Training

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically,

and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

Thoughtful direction and planning ahead are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

Acts of Aggression and Fighting

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children.

Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child.

Physical restraint is not used or permitted for discipline. There are rare instances when we need to ensure a child's safety or that of others and we may restrain a child by gently holding her or him only for as long as is necessary for control of the situation.

TUITION AND FEES

Payment

Payment is always due on the first of the month, no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due as outlined in the *Enrollment Agreement*.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per minute will be assessed beginning at 5:30 PM and will be due upon arrival.

Special Activity Fees

Parents are charged additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are added to parents monthly bill.

Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our program and we have put procedures in place to reduce their impact.

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$25 will be added. If your account has not been paid in full within 30 business days, your child may be discharged from the program.

If payment is more than 60 business days past due, we may attempt to recover payment in small claims court and/or your account may be sent to a 3rd party collections agency. You will be responsible for all expenses associated with these actions including all court and attorney fees.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee up to the maximum amount allowed by law. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on “cash only” status.

Additional Fees Credits

- **Withdrawals** - if a child is suddenly withdrawn from the program without a 4week written notice of withdrawal, a ~~4~~-week tuition fee may be applied.
- **Credits & No Credits**
- **Credit will be given for Excused Absences** - if your child is hospitalized written doctor's note is required to receive a credit.
- **Credit will [not] be given for Sick Days** – there are no credits for sick days. Sick days are pre-considered in determining tuition and are not refundable.
- **Credit will not be given for Inclement Weather** - if we do not open due to inclement weather on a day that your child is scheduled to attend, your account will not be credited for that day.

ATTENDANCE & WITHDRAWAL

Absence/Late Arrival

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 9:30AM, please call us at (970) 927 8008 or email us at: growingyears@sopris.net. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you.

Withdrawals

A written notice, 4 weeks in advance, is required by the center when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in additional fees.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on KSPN and KSNO radio. You can also contact our local school district snowline at: (970) 384 6075.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 7:30AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in.

We close at 5:30PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after 1 hours we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

Obligation to inform Law Enforcement or When we have to inform Police

If we have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child, to protect your child, we may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up the child or we may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

- **Toddlers:** enough clean bottles for a day's use (if applicable), six diapers and at least two changes of clothes per day.

- **Older Toddlers:** at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program. [click to insert any other requests for toilet training items]
- **Preschoolers:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.

Please label all items brought from home with your child’s name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a “cubby.” Cubbies are labeled with your child’s first name and photo. Please check your child’s cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the Lost-and-found Box located in the hallway. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

Toys from Home

Personal toys should be left at home. Children want others to see their new acquisitions, but they are crushed if the toy is broken or lost at school. In school everything belongs to everyone. Young children sometimes find it impossible to share something new or treasured. New acquisitions may be shown to the group and stored in cubbies for safety.

Guns or other toys, which encourage violent play, are discouraged in the school. Children are encouraged to share interesting items, such as stories and photographs of family experiences. Books and tapes, which can be shared with all the children, are always welcome.

NUTRITION

Foods Brought from Home

[B] Food brought from home is permitted under the following conditions:

- Perishable food to be shared with other children must be store-bought and in its original package.
- Baked goods may be made at home if they are fully cooked, do not require refrigeration and were made with freshly purchased ingredients. A list of ingredients is required, and there must be enough food for all children.
- Foods should be labeled with the child’s name, date, and type of food.
- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child’s family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.
- Leftover food will be discarded except for foods that do not require refrigeration and/or come in a commercially-wrapped package that was never opened.

Good Lunch Box Suggestions for a Balanced, Nutritional Lunch.

½ turkey sandwich Celery sticks Raisins Milk/water	Chicken strips Roll Orange wedges Broccoli Milk/water
Peanut butter on graham crackers Apple slices Carrot sticks Milk/water	Yogurt Crackers Sugar snap peas 100% juice

Food Prepared for or at the Center

Food prepared for or at the center will be properly planned, prepared and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service.

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. A care plan will be put together by our Health Nurse to have on file. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

Meal Time

Teachers bring their own lunches and sit and eat with the children. This is an important group conversation time. Children are encouraged to serve themselves. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged.

A caregiver who is trained in first-aid for choking is present at all meals.

Toddler Feedings

- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. Every [January], we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

Physicals

Routine physicals are required according to the current recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics, www.aap.org. A copy of your child's physical should be received before but must be received no later than 30 days after your child begins the program. Families are responsible for assuring that their child's physicals are kept up-to-date and that a copy of the results of the child's health assessment is given to the program.

Medical Insurance / Medical Home- 5.2

It is required that we have evidence of medical insurance and information on a child's medical home/primary care physicians. This information can be filled out in our enrolment package. More information about medical insurance and primary physicians are available in the office. A resource list with information on where families can obtain health coverage and potential medical homes are below:

Health Insurance, Non-emergency, primary services:

Patricia Pier- Health Insurance Broker: (970) 963-8888

Connect for Health Colorado: 1855 752 6749

Pitkin County Health and Human Services: (970) 920-5235

Eagle County Health and Human Services: (970) 328-8840

Garfield County Health and Human Services: (970) 945-9191

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children, you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. If there are doubts about sending a child to school, a good rule to follow is: "if another child had the symptoms your child is experiencing, would you want your child to be

exposed?" Attached is a copy of suggestions which determine when children should be denied admission to the center or sent home because of health reasons.

This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever (above 100°F under the arm, above 101°F in the mouth, above 102°F in the ear) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea – stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in a diaper/underwear or toilet.
- Vomiting – green or bloody, and/or 2 or more times during the previous 24 hours.
- Mouth sores caused by drooling.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
- Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
 - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and;
 - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the main area and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

Medications

All medications should be handed to a staff member with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in the child's cubby or with the child to administer on their own. Our staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed.

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require a note signed by the physician.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the physician if a child already have a diaper rash, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered. Teachers are only allowed to apply diaper rash without a physician's note if it's being used as a preventative.
- **Sunscreen:** Each child is required to have his/her own bottle of sunscreen with his/her full name printed on it. Because of the school's high altitude location, protection from the sun is crucial throughout the year. If your child does not have sunscreen at school we will be applying the following brand on your child: Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF- 50.

Communicable Diseases

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments.

Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Hemophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)
- H1N1 Virus
- Any cluster/outbreak of illness

SAFETY

Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including: painting, outdoor play, sand, weather, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and daily programs are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities.

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 99 °F or less than 36 °F degrees. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality rating is 50 or below.

Communal Water-Play

Communal, unsupervised water play is prohibited. Supervised children are permitted to engage in water-play. Precautions by cleaning water tables daily are taken to ensure that communal water-play does not spread communicable infectious disease.

Injuries

Safety is a major concern in child care and so daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

Biting

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers – and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter to learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notes will be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Respectful Behavior

All children and families will be treated with respect and dignity. In return, we expect the same from all of our families. We will not tolerate hostile or aggressive behavior. If this occurs, we reserve the right to ask you to control your behavior or to remove your children from our care.

Smoking

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

Prohibited Substances

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

Dangerous Weapons

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

Suspected Child Abuse

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

EMERGENCIES

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely even that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child. If the child is not located within 10 minutes, the family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with fire alarms and lights.

Our fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children and staff on a monthly basis.

Emergency Transportation

In the event your child needs to be transported due to a medical emergency, if no other authorized person can be contacted and the need for transportation is essential, an ambulance will be called for transportation. A proper escort will accompany and remain with the child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

PARENT COMPLAINTS

Communication is the cornerstone of successful programs for young children. Parents are urged to bring any issue to the attention of the Director or a Board member. The grievance procedures listed above will be followed.

Parents who feel they have not had a satisfactory resolution to their complaint may call the Department of Human Services at 303-945-9191 or 1-800-799-5876 or write them at the Denver Office, Colorado Department of Human Services, 1575 Sherman Street, Denver, CO 80203

CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies are reviewed quarterly updated annually or more frequently and are available for review upon request. To view the center policies, please contact the center director.

Safe Sleep Policy:

Providing infants with a safe place to grow and learn is very important. For this reason, **Growing Years** has created a policy on safe sleep practices for infants up to 1-year-old. We follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Product Safety Commission to provide a safe sleep environment and reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is “the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation.” The staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at **Growing Years School** follow the AAP safe sleep policy.

Sleep Position:

- Infants will be placed flat on their backs to sleep every time unless there is a physician, practitioner or clinician signed sleep position medical waiver up to date on file. In the case of a waiver, a waiver notice will be posted at the infant’s crib without identifying medical information. The full waiver will be kept in the infant’s file.
- Infants will not be placed on their side for sleep.
- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used since such devices are not proven to reduce the risk of SIDS.
- Infants who use pacifiers will be offered their pacifier when they are placed to sleep, and it will not be put back in should the pacifier fall out once they fall asleep.
- Pacifiers will be cleaned between each use, checked for tears, and will not be coated in any sweet or other solution.
- Parents are asked to provide replacement pacifiers on a regular basis.

Sleep Environment:

- Our program will use Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines for safety-approved cribs and firm mattresses.
 - Crib slats will be less than 2 3/8” apart
 - Infants will not be left in bed with drop side down
 - Playpen weave will be less than 1/4”
- Consumer Product Safety Commission safety-approved cradles and bassinets may also be used for sleeping if the infant meets the weight and height requirements.
- Infants will not be placed to sleep on any standard bed, waterbeds, couches, air mattresses, or on other soft surfaces.

- Only one infant will be placed to sleep in each crib. Siblings, including twins and triplets, will be placed in separate cribs.
- The crib will have a firm tight fitting mattress covered by a fitted sheet and will be free from blankets, loose bedding, toys, and other soft objects (i.e., pillows, quilts, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, etc.)
- To avoid overheating, the temperature of the rooms where infants sleep will be checked and will be kept at a level that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult.
- Sleep clothing, such as sleepers, sleep sacks, and wearable blankets, may be used as alternatives to blankets.
- Bibs and pacifiers will not be tied around an infant's neck or clipped on to an infant's clothing during sleep.
- Infants who fall asleep in a car safety seat, bean bag chair, bouncy seat, infant seat, swing, jumping chair, playpens, swings, high chairs, chair, sofa, adult futon, adult bed or other piece of equipment not approved for sleep must immediately be moved to their approved sleep area and placed on their back to sleep.
- Smoking will not be allowed in or near **Growing Years School**.

Supervision:

- When infants are in their cribs, they will be within sight and hearing of staff at all times.
- A staff member will visibly check on the sleeping infants frequently.
- When an infant is awake, they will have supervised "tummy time." This will help babies strengthen their muscles and develop normally.
- Infants will spend limited time in car seats, swings, and bouncer/infant seats when they are awake.

Training:

- All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at **Growing Years School** will be trained on safe sleep policies and practices.
- Safe sleep practices will be reviewed with all staff, substitute staff, and volunteers each year. In addition, training specific to these policies will be given before any individual is allowed to care for infants.
- Documentation that staff, substitutes, and volunteers have read and understand these policies will be kept in each individuals file.
- All staff, substitutes, and volunteers at Growing Years School will be trained on first aid for unresponsive infants as well as what to do when they have a question or need assistance before they are allowed to care for infants.

When The Policy Applies:

This policy applies to all staff, substitute staff, parents, and volunteers when they place an infant to sleep at Growing Years School

Communication Plan for Staff and Parents:

Parents will review this policy when they enroll their child in Growing Years School and a copy will be provided in the parent handbook. Parents are asked to follow this same policy when the infant is at home. These policies will be posted in prominent places. Information regarding safe sleep practices, safe sleep environments, reducing the risk of SIDS in child care as well as other

program health and safety practices will be shared if any changes are made. A copy will also be provided in the staff handbook.

Any individual who has questions may ask:

Program Contact: **Adele Melnick- (970 927 8008 or email at: growingyearsbasalt@outlook.com**

Health Professional Contact: Robin Strecker- (970) 920 5326 or email at: Robin Strecker
robin.strecker@cityofaspen.com

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

The handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are completed.

Thank you for your cooperation, and we look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the **Growing Years School Family Handbook**, and reviewed the family handbook with a member of the **Growing Years School** staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management any questions I may have regarding any policy, procedure or information contained in the **Growing Years School Family Handbook**.

[I have read and agree to the above policies. \(This recommended by Colorado Child Care Licensing\)](#)

Recipient Signature

Date

Center Staff Signature

Date

