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# **Parent/Guardian Handbook**

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## **WE WELCOME YOU...**

Welcome to Beginnings and Beyond. We are a child care and early learning center that is committed to providing a safe and caring environment where children feel they are part of a home away from home. At Beginnings and Beyond we want to provide a place that your children will look forward to returning to each day, and where they can learn through play and hands on activities, as well as build their socialization skills. Our goal is to have yourself, your family, and your children feel as though they are part of something wonderful ~ where you are all a part of the decisions that are made, where your children are encouraged to experience and learn new things and make new friends, and where children learn to become confident with who they are as individuals.

Our door is always open and we do hope that you speak freely with us regarding your thoughts, ideas, feelings, or concerns in order for us to meet all of your families' needs. Suggestions and input are always encouraged and by this way we hope to partner with you. We are committed to constant communication. We strive to make your families' experience a great one, and we want you to feel confident that you made the right choice in child care. We are extremely happy that you have decided to place your children in our center and look forward to building a relationship with you and your children.

Sincerely,

Danielle Harrison, Owner and Early Childhood Administrator

## **WHO WE ARE...**

Beginnings and Beyond is a family owned and operated center, and we ensure that we have all highly skilled, trained, and licensed individuals to care for your children.

About the Owner/Early Childhood Administrator: Danielle Harrison

- Human Resources background as well as early child care center experience.
- Bachelor's degree in Psychology and Sociology, with a focus on child development
- Master's degree in Industrial/Organizational Psychology.
- Licensed Early Childhood Administrator, as required by the State of Delaware
- Early Childhood Education Teaching Certification
- CPR and First Aid Certification
- Most importantly, the Owner/Administrator is a mother, who understands the importance of good child care

About the Staff:

- Licensed Early Childhood Education Teachers, as required by the State of Delaware
- Early child care center experience
- CPR and First Aid Certification
- All staff members bring unique talents and skills to our team and are carefully selected and trained.

The licensing requirements are put in place by the State of Delaware in order to provide a safe environment for all the children enrolled, and we support this initiative fully. Our center complies with all regulations and standards to include, but not limited to, facility, staff, health and safety, nutrition, teacher/child ratios, and record keeping.

## **VISIT OUR WEBSITE...**

On our website, [www.beginnings-beyond.com](http://www.beginnings-beyond.com), there are many different items which we hope will make your life a bit easier. On the website you can review the menu for the current month, the basic curriculum goals for the center, weekly tuition rates, center closing dates for the current year, pictures of the classrooms, checklists of items to bring for each age group, available positions and volunteer opportunities, a calendar of events, monthly newsletters, and a pay on line tool. We hope that this will make things a bit easier for you in our busy world.

## **PROGRAM GOALS...**

Our goals at Beginnings and Beyond are as follows:

- To create a warm, comforting, caring, and nurturing environment for children, as well as an environment with an abundance of opportunities for movement, exploration, and self-discovery according to individual needs, interests, and abilities.
- To assist children to grow to their fullest potential by recognizing each stage of development and creating an environment (i.e. curriculum, facilities, employees) designed to nurture and facilitate development during each stage.
- To help children achieve independence, self-discipline, social competence, self-knowledge, enthusiasm for learning, positive attitudes, confidence, intellectual growth, and an approach to problem solving.
- To assist families in understanding the developmental stages of their children, enabling them to contribute to their children's growth and development.
- To partner with families in order to make them an integral part of the center and their children's lives during their stay at the center.
- To incorporate our main learning objectives, as listed below, into the children's learning environment.

## **CURRICULUM AND ASSESSMENT ...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, our teachers create lesson plans for the children utilizing a state approved curriculum which is called Creative Curriculum. Each teacher is responsible for creating their own lesson plan, which is then reviewed by either the Administrator or the Curriculum Coordinator. The following domains are encompassed in all lesson plans: Language and Literacy, Social Emotional, Healthy Lifestyles, Gross Motor, Math, and Science.

Below are the main learning objectives that are focused on for each age group:

### YOUNG INFANTS

Supporting their Heads  
Grasping Toys  
Sitting Up

Tummy Time  
Rolling Over  
Eating Baby Foods

Recognizing Name When Called  
Interacting with People (Smiling,  
Cooing, babbling)

### OLDER INFANTS

Cruising and Walking  
Using a Sippy Cup  
Sign Language

Weening off of Formula  
Encouraging Talking – First Words

Feeding Themselves  
Wearing Shoes – Once Walking  
Well

### YOUNG ONES

Animal Names / Sounds  
Counting to 10  
ABCs - Uppercase  
Body Parts  
Coordination  
Fine Motor Skills

Self-Soothing Skills  
Table Manners  
Basic Sign Language  
Social Skills  
Using Utensils  
Attention Span

Cleaning Up  
Colors  
Following Directions  
Shapes

### OLDER ONES

Drinking from a Regular Cup  
Know Animals and their Sounds  
Manners – Please, Thank you  
Patience  
Basic Sign Language  
Colors

Counting to 10  
ABCs – Uppercase  
Social Skills  
Shapes  
Know Body Parts  
Eating with Utensils

Fine Motor Skills  
Self-Soothing Skills  
Following Directions  
Learning How to Clean up - Put  
Items Where They Belong

### TWOS

Colors  
Shapes  
Social Skills  
Manners  
How to use Utensils

Recognizing Numbers up to 20  
Recognizing their Name  
Counting to 20  
Letter Recognition – Uppercase /  
letters of their name

Identifying Body Parts  
Attention Span – Circle Time  
Cleaning up after Themselves  
Familiarization with the “Potty “

### THREES

Colors  
Shapes  
Numbers Recognition – Up to 50  
Counting – Up to 50  
Tracing Lines, Shapes, and  
Uppercase Letters  
Letter Sounds

Patterns  
Letter Recognition – upper and  
lowercase  
Identify/Write their Name  
Getting Dressed  
Buttoning, Zipping, Snaps  
Toileting

Using Scissors  
Staying in Centers  
Self-Regulation  
Social Skills  
Manners  
Conflict Resolution

### PRE-K

Change Themselves  
Use Bathroom Alone  
Using “Inside Voice”  
Zipping, Snapping, Buttoning  
Lacing  
Proper Use of Glue  
Use Utensils  
Cleaning up After Meals  
Asking for Help  
Follow Multi-Step Directions  
Sit and Focus for 10 minutes  
Patience  
Holding Pencil Properly  
Scissor Skills - Cutting Various  
Shapes

Recognize Colors  
Recognize Shapes  
Trace Shapes  
Identify / Write Name  
Number Recognition up to 100  
Counting Up to 100  
Letter Recognition – upper and  
lowercase  
Letter-Sounds  
Recognize Some Sight Words  
Basic Addition  
Conflict Resolution  
Self-Regulation  
Expressing selves through words  
Social Skills

Manners  
Science Activities  
Writing Letters – Upper and Lower  
Patterns  
Rhyming Words

## SCHOOL AGE

Engaging in Conversation  
Long Division  
Multiplication  
Critical Thinking  
Conflict Resolution  
Team Work  
Self-Help Skills  
Self-Regulation  
Social Skills  
Homework  
Helping Others  
Manners  
Respect  
Kindness

Children are formally assessed three times a year, with assessment reports going home to families three times a year, and signed copies remaining in the children's files. They are assessed on various developmental and learning areas utilizing a Delaware State-approved Assessment Tool (Teaching Strategies Gold). Teachers continually input their observations into the assessment tool throughout the year in order to ensure enough documentation is obtained in order to create the formal assessments three times per year.

Additionally, an Ages and Stages questionnaire goes home to parents annually, where any developmental delays or "red flags" may present themselves. During any time in which the center feels there may be a developmental delay or other concern with a child, the center will reach out to the families and request a meeting to discuss the concerns. Referrals to various agencies, resources, as well as suggestions to the families will be given during this time in order to assist the child in overcoming any delays or challenges that have presented themselves.

Parent/Teacher Conferences are also available twice a year for families that would like to have formal sit down meetings with their child's teacher. Conference sign-up sheets go up two times a year, in May and November. Families that want parent teacher conferences will be scheduled according to their scheduling needs. Conference meeting notes will be signed by the parent at the meeting. Families that waive a conference must sign a conference waiver form. Meetings at other times during the year occur on an as needed basis as well. If any improvement or learning plans need to be put into place they will be done at the meetings with the parents' cooperation.

## **HOURS OF OPERATION AND TYPICAL DAILY SCHEDULE...**

Beginnings and Beyond opens at 6:30 AM and closes at 6:00 PM Monday through Friday. We strive to be convenient for families and understand the need for early and late care due to working parents and guardians. We do not want to place a burden on you and therefore hope that our hours will assist you



in keeping your work schedule as it needs to be. We are open year-round, with limited closings. All closings are pre-determined, aside from emergency or inclement weather closings, so that you can plan accordingly.

A typical daily schedule for the center would be 6:30 am open, free choice play from 6:30 to 8:00 am, 8:00 to 8:30 am breakfast, 8:30 am clean up, 9:00 am to 11:00 am daily activities, learning activities, circle time, and free choice center play as determined by individual classrooms, 11:00 am lunch, 12 pm to 2:00 pm nap time, 2:15 pm snack time, 2:30 to 6:00 pm daily activities, learning activities, and free choice center play as determined by individual classrooms. Outside play time twice a day weather permitting. 6:00 pm center closes.

## **ENROLLMENT...**

Beginnings and Beyond is open to children ranging from six weeks through Pre-K. We also have a before and/or after school program for children up to age 12 at the Buckson Drive location. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, or disability; and without regard to the family's race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, disability, age, or pregnancy.

In order to enroll your children into our center, an enrollment form must be completed. We require a non-refundable registration fee, along with a non-refundable deposit, which is equal to one week's tuition, to be submitted in order to hold you children's spot at the center. This deposit will be applied to the child's first week of enrollment.

## **TUITION PAYMENT AND FEE PROCEDURE...**

A non-refundable registration fee and a non-refundable deposit equal to one week's tuition payment is required in order to secure available space for your children's enrollment. The deposit will then be utilized for the first week's payment of your children's tuition.

Payment is due weekly, every Monday for the upcoming week. You may also pay for additional weeks in advance if you prefer. Payment may be hand delivered directly to the Owner, Administrator, or Curriculum Coordinator, placed into the locked payment box outside the office, paid online through our website, or paid through the Brightwheel app. We also accept cash, checks, money orders, credit cards, and debit cards for payment, and we allow you to call and make a credit card payment over the phone if need be as well. We hope that by having various payment methods, this will make tuition payments more convenient.

Tuition payments are due every Monday for that current, regardless of children's absences from their regularly scheduled days.

If your children are enrolled for less than five days a week, and if an additional day is added to your children's regular weekly schedule, your tuition payment would increase for that week to include the additional day(s) added.

If payment is not received by Friday of the current week, your child will not be able to return the following week until payment is received in full. It is very important to get payments in on time as it keeps the center running as smoothly as possible.

In addition to this, a late pick up fee will be assessed for the first ten minutes after 6:00 PM, and each five minutes thereafter. Excessive late pick up's (exceeding 3) are grounds for termination of services. Although we understand that issues arise from time to time, it is the family's responsibility to ensure that they, or someone else who is authorized, is available to pick up their children on time.

There is an annual "replenishment" fee that parents/guardians are required to submit. This fee is to assist the center in obtaining new developmental toys, and any other necessary equipment for the care of the children at the center.

## **TUITION PAYMENT AND FEE SCHEDULE...**

### **Weekly Tuition Rates:**

#### **Infant Rooms:**

\$205 weekly for 5 days; \$195 weekly for 4 days; \$185 weekly for 3 days; \$175 weekly for 2 days

#### **One Year Old Rooms, Two Year Old Room and Preschool Three's Room:**

\$195 weekly for 5 days; \$185 weekly for 4 days; \$175 weekly for 3 days; \$165 weekly for 2 days

#### **Pre-K Room:**

\$185 weekly for 5 days; \$175 weekly for 4 days; \$165 weekly for 3 days; \$155 weekly for 2 days

#### **School Age:**

\$105 for before and after care; \$65 for before care only; \$65 for after care only

Full days: \$175 weekly for 5 days; \$165 weekly for 4 days; \$155 weekly for 3 days; \$145 weekly for 2 days

### **Deposit and Fees:**

#### **Registration Fee:**

A non-refundable registration fee of \$25 will be due for each child enrolled at the center. This is due prior to the child starting.

#### **Deposit:**

Equal to one week's tuition payment. This deposit is then used to pay for your first week of tuition. Please note these are non-refundable deposits and if you choose to not enroll, you lose the deposit.

**Late payment fee:**

We do not charge late payment fees, however if payment is not received by Friday of the current week, your child will not be able to return the following week until payment is received in full.

**Return check fee:**

\$35 non-refundable

**Late pick up fee:**

\$10 for the first ten minutes past 6:00 PM and \$5 each additional five minutes late past 6:10 pm.

**Annual Replenishment Fee:**

\$50 once a year per child enrolled due the first week in April for pre-k classes and under. \$25 once a year due the first week in April for school-age children.

**MULTIPLE CHILD DISCOUNT ...**

At Beginnings and Beyond we offer a discount if families enroll more than one child into the center. We understand the burden of having to make payments for more than one child and hope to alleviate some of this burden by offering a multiple child discount. Families must pay the highest tuition rate and each additional child's tuition will be discounted 10% per child.

**MILITARY DISCOUNT ...**

At Beginnings and Beyond we offer a 10% discount per child for our military families and veterans.

**SUPPLIES NEEDED ...**

The following list should help you when determining what items you will need to bring into the center for your children. Please remember to label everything with your children's first and last name.

**Infants:**

Bottles and formula (separate or prepared already)  
Baby food  
Diapers and wipes  
Two crib sheets  
Extra changes of clothes  
Soft bibs and plastic feeding bib  
Blankets  
Pacifier

**Age 1:**

Plastic feeding bib  
Diapers and wipes  
Two crib sheets for nap mats

Blanket and/or snuggie toy for nap  
Extra changes of clothes  
Pacifier  
Small Plastic Tote for extra clothes, etc.

**Age 2:**

Diapers and wipes  
Two crib sheets for nap mats  
Blanket and/or snuggie toy for nap  
Extra changes of clothes  
Pacifier  
Small Plastic Tote for extra clothes, etc.

**Ages 3, 4, and 5:**

Two crib sheets for nap mats  
Blanket and/or snuggie toy for nap  
Extra changes of clothes  
Small plastic tote for extra clothes, etc.

**ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PROCEDURE...**

Upon enrollment, we ask that families designate names and contact numbers for individuals other than themselves who are authorized to pick up their children. Families have access to update this on the brightwheel app as needed. If we do not have an individual's name listed as authorized, we will not release the children to them. We do encourage families to include all individuals whom you may ask to pick up your children. Please note that biological parents are permitted to pick up their child, unless there is a court document dictating otherwise.

For any authorized individual who is not the parent/guardian picking up a child, we verify with a photo id to ensure the individual is in fact who they state they are. In an unplanned situation where the parent needs to have someone pick up their child, and they are not on the authorized pick up list, they need to call and speak to someone in the office to inform us who will be picking up and their full name. A parent may also temporarily add someone to pick up their child, when planned in advance, without placing them on the permanent authorized pick up list. They may do so leaving a signed note in the office with the child's name and the authorized pick up's name and the date they are authorized to pick up. The center will keep a copy of the photo id for any unknown approved person picking up a child.

In the case of an emergency, Beginnings and Beyond will contact the parents/guardians first. If they cannot be reached, the remaining individuals listed as emergency contacts will be contacted until someone can be reached.

When a non-custodial parent attempts to pick up a child without the consent of the custodial parent/guardian, the non-custodial parent will be instructed that they are not permitted to take the child out of the center. The custodial parent/guardian will be contacted. If it reaches a situation where further intervention is necessary, the center will contact the Police Department.

Beginnings and Beyond will not release any children to a person whose behavior or health appears to endanger the health or safety of the children, including anyone under the influence of alcohol or other drugs. In the event that this should occur, we will contact the other parent/guardian or authorized person, the local police and Child Protective Services.

All children must be dropped off by 10:00 AM each day. This allows Beginnings and Beyond to maintain the appropriate number of employees to ensure the proper teacher/child ratios are met when the children arrive at the center. It also allows for our Cook to prepare the appropriate amount of food for our lunch time which is served by 11:00 am. Furthermore, it is beneficial for your child to arrive no later than 10:00 AM to ensure that they are getting the fullest benefit of our programs, and allowing them the ability to interact, socialize, learn, and participate in projects rather than arriving solely in time for lunch, nap, snack, and end of day activities. Exceptions can be made for families who know that their children will be arriving after 10:00 AM for reasons such as a pediatrician appointment, etc. The family must call the center before 10:00 AM to inform the Owner/Administrator that the child will be in late.

Beginnings and Beyond discourages families from sneaking out of the classrooms after dropping off their children. Although we understand the reasons for these actions, we believe it is best for families to tell your children that you will be leaving, to hug and kiss your children, and to say goodbye. This will prepare the children for your departure. Some children exhibit separation anxiety when it is time for their families to leave. Although this is very upsetting for families to observe, it is normal for it to occur, and the children calm within minutes after the departure. The teacher in the classroom will comfort your children during this time. Teachers are always open to suggestions and will readily communicate with families regarding any concerns.

### **SIGN IN AND OUT PROCEDURE...**

Families must sign their children in and out of the center. There is a sign in and out QR code that you can sign your child in and out utilizing the Brightwheel app that you download onto your phone. If you do not sign your child in and out utilizing Brightwheel, the teacher will do so.

### **REPORTING ABSENCES...**

If your children will be absent from the center, please notify the office by 10:00 AM. By knowing in advance, it allows Beginnings and Beyond to staff appropriately to maintain the required teacher/child ratios. If the reason for the absence is related to an illness, please also notify regarding the nature of the illness, particularly if it is contagious. It is helpful for the center staff to be aware of any illnesses that may be spreading.

### **SCHEDULE CHANGES...**

If you require your children to attend the center on a day in which they are not ordinarily scheduled (switching days), this can be arranged assuming we have the space available. We do ask that 24-hour notice be given during such instances and we strive to meet your needs as best we can. We are flexible assuming that we have the space and staff available on the day requested in order to meet teacher/child

ratios. If an additional day is needed for a short time, and it is not a permanent schedule request, we again will do all that we can to make this occur. This may entail a change in payment due for that week.

If a family would like to change their children's permanent schedule at the center, they may do so upon request with someone in the office. Schedule changes may have a change in payment due, depending on what the schedule change entails.

## **DROP-IN CARE...**

Beginnings and Beyond also understands that at times there is a need to have a safe, nurturing environment for children that are not enrolled in the center. They may need care for a short span of time, for instance while you attend an important appointment. We would like to be as flexible as possible at times like this. Because of this, we offer a drop-in-care service where you can bring your children to the center for an hour or more, depending on your needs. The cost is \$10.00 per hour OR the weekly rate for the age of the child divided by 5 days. You will be charged whichever amount is less. Please note the sibling and military discounts will also apply if applicable. If your children are at the center for drop-in care during our normal breakfast, lunch or snack times, they will also be served what is on the menu for that day, without additional cost.

## **BEFORE AND/OR AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM...**

Beginnings and Beyond has a before and/or after school program for families that need to be at work earlier than their children's school schedule begins, and/or who need to work later than their children's school schedule ends. It is the family's responsibility to contact the school in order to inform them that Beginnings and Beyond will be picking up your child after school. It is the family's responsibility to drop their children off at the center in the morning and to pick them up in the evening. The before and after school program rate is \$95 per week and the before or school program rate is \$55 per week. This program is for school age children, kindergarten up to age 12.

## **VACATION CREDIT...**

Beginnings and Beyond understands the importance of vacation for families. Vacations are wonderful experiences for children and they grow into wonderful memories as time goes by. Because of this, after your children's continuous enrollment at the center for one year, we will offer one week's free tuition each year for each child enrolled at the center. This vacation credit must be used for vacation purposes, and therefore your children can not be present at the center during this free week. These vacation weeks cannot roll over.

## **REFERRAL CREDIT...**

Beginnings and Beyond offers a \$50 credit to your account for children enrolled in the center due to your referral. This credit is per child referred. In this way we hope to express our thanks for your recommending us as a child care and early learning center.

## **FIELD TRIPS...**

Any field trips that Beginnings and Beyond offers shall have transportation provided by a licensed and insured bus service. All families will be notified regarding any upcoming field trips in advance and will be required to sign an authorization form to allow their children to participate in the field trip. The permission slip must be filled out correctly and all field trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your children to participate. Families are always welcome to attend any field trips. Please note that if families do attend field trips, they may only transport their own children in their personal vehicles if they choose not to utilize the bus.

A separate transportation policy will be given to parents/guardians at time of enrollment.

## **HOLIDAYS...**

Beginnings and Beyond observes certain holidays and on these days the center is closed: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and the day after Christmas. On New Year's Eve, the center will close at 3 PM. If the holiday occurs on a Sunday, the center may be closed on Monday. If the holiday occurs on a Saturday, the center may be closed the Friday before. The center reserves the right to add any closure days to the schedule as they deem appropriate. Tuition is not reduced on holiday weeks and full tuition is due.

## **BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS...**

Birthdays are important days for all children. At Beginnings and Beyond we have the desire to make each child's birthday a special day. A small celebration will occur for each child on their birthday in order to honor their special day. This celebration will be specifically for that child and their specific classroom, to include cupcakes for all the children in that classroom. As part of the enrollment paperwork, families will be required to fill out an authorization form, allowing your children to eat the cupcakes during these celebrations. The celebration will be short, to be incorporated during the children's afternoon snack time. It is a small way for us at Beginnings and Beyond to say thank you to you and your children for being a part of our center.

If parents would like to give out birthday party invitations to the other children at the center for a party you will be throwing for your children, we do allow that to occur.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS...**

Each child has a special cubby area for their personal belongings, such as coats, hats, blankets, sheets, etc. Please label all items with your children's name on them in order to avoid having them taken accidentally to the wrong home at the end of the day. We will make every effort to ensure that your children's items are placed in their cubbies by the end of each day, however in the event that something is missing we are unable take responsibility for any lost or stolen belongings. We do ask that if any

families happen to inadvertently take home something that does not belong to your children, to please return it the next day to the classroom.

We ask that if you have your children bring a special toy or item into the center, that you understand we are unable to take responsibility for lost or stolen personal belongings, including these special toys.

There is a lost and found bin and if you are missing anything you may check the bin. Items that remain unclaimed after a reasonable amount of time may be donated to charity or to the center.

## **MEALS AND NUTRITION...**

At Beginnings and Beyond we serve breakfast at 8 am, lunch at 11:00 am, and one snack at 2:00 pm. These meals are included in the tuition payment fees. Meals and snacks provided adhere to USDA/Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements. If families prefer to bring in their own breakfast, lunch, and/or snack for their children, we will keep that stored in the refrigerator until meal time. Nutritional requirements will be provided to families if you choose to bring in your children's food. If the food brought from home fails to meet the nutritional guidelines, that child's meal(s) will be supplemented with food provided from the center. The food, snacks, and drinks served at our center are all high quality, natural products, without unnecessary additives/ingredients. We feel that this is an important element to nutrition and offer this to your children for this reason.

Nutrition is an extremely important part of a child's physical, mental, and emotional development. At Beginnings and Beyond, we feel that healthy eating habits begin at birth. We strive to maintain a healthy mealtime policy for the children of our center. All foods are clean and safe, and we follow all CACFP guidelines to ensure food does not get spoiled.

At breakfast and lunch time, the entire meal will be served at one time in order for the children to choose what they would like to eat first. All children are given their own individual meal/snack on their own plate/bowl and it is not shared. Children will all be given the same menu items at meal and snack times, unless of course families prefer to bring in their own food items for their children. Children may have second helpings of food and drink if they are still hungry. Good table habits are discussed and modeled at meal and snack times.

Plastic BPA free plates, cups, and utensils will be used for serving any food and drink. By using this type of dishware, we feel that it gives the children the feeling of a home environment and helps them to learn to use proper dishware/utensils as well. Also, since BPA is a well known harmful agent, we choose to serve your children with non-BPA products.

All meals are prepared in compliance with the federal and state guidelines to ensure nutritional value. Menus are posted on our website this way they are available for you to review at any time. If there are meals that your children are allergic to or that you do not want your child to eat for any reason (religious or other dietary restrictions), you are required to bring in nutritionally sound meals for that day, which fulfill the food requirements. Please note that if your children do have a known allergy, we ask that you



notify the Owner/Administrator and classroom Teacher and fill this information out on the enrollment paperwork.

Families of infants at the center can utilize the center provided formula, cereal, and other foods for them or may provide prepared formula, cereal, and other foods/drink for them. Once children are able, and families approve, they will be fed from the regular menu. Food menu items cut small for infants on solids and/or one year old children still transitioning.

Please note that children are encouraged, but not forced to eat. All of the required food components, as per The CACFP (Federal Food Program) and the Office of Child Care Licensing, will be placed on each child's plate so that the food is offered to them, as they are encouraged to eat the components.

Menus are prepared in advance, dated and posted on the parent board as well as the Center's website [www.beginnings-beyond.com](http://www.beginnings-beyond.com).

**SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Should the family request any modification of the basic meal plan due to religious beliefs or family food preference, the family must provide the Center with those food/snacks/drinks.

**NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION AND GUIDELINES:**

1. All meals provided are age-appropriate and adhere to current USDA/Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements and are based on the basic food groups: milk, proteins, fruits & vegetables, and grains.
2. Breakfast will have at least one item each from the milk, fruits & vegetables, and grain food groups.
3. Lunch will have one item from each of the milk, protein and grain food groups and two items from the fruit & vegetable food group.
4. Snack will have at least one item from two of the food groups, milk, protein, grain or fruit & vegetable.
5. Fruit juice when served is 100% unsweetened juice.
6. When not on formula or breast milk, children one to two years of age will be served fluid whole pasteurized cow's milk.
7. Water will be served if neither fruit juice nor milk is served with that snack.

**FOOD BROUGHT FROM HOME:**

1. Parents/guardians are encouraged to review and adhere to The USDA recommendations regarding nutritional requirements appropriate to the age of the child.

## **INFANT FEEDING:**

1. Parents/Guardians should notify their child's teacher(s) of food requirements and feeding schedules including specific formula or breast milk for their infant on a monthly basis or as needed.
2. Feeding is on demand or during a span of time consistent with the infant's eating habits.
3. Formula or breast milk should be prepared ahead of time in bottles for your infants.
4. Bottles of formula or breast milk and infant foods are NOT to be warmed or thawed in a microwave oven.
5. The same staff person shall feed a specific infant for most of that infant's feedings.
6. A staff person shall not bottle feed more than one infant at a time.
7. An infant shall be held for bottle-feeding.
8. At no time shall an infant be placed in the crib with a bottle for feeding that has been propped.
9. Unused portions of formula or breast milk shall be discarded one hour from the beginning of feeding.
10. Baby food, when appropriate, for each infant is served from a dish unless the entire contents of the jar will be served at that feeding.
11. An infant too young to use a feeding chair or other age-appropriate seating apparatus shall be held when fed.
12. Center staff shall discourage the use of a bottle and encourage the use of a cup when a child is over one year old and is developmentally capable of drinking from or holding a cup.
13. A daily record of each infant's nutritional intake shall be maintained and provided to the family through brightwheel. Any feeding problems experienced by an infant shall be discussed with the family before the infant's daily departure from the Center.

## **Policy Specific to Breast Milk:**

1. Accommodation will be made for the mother of a breast-fed infant to feed her child at the Center.
2. Breast milk will be fed only to that mother's own infant.
3. Expressed breast milk shall be in a sterilized bottle labeled with the date, the infant's name and will be refrigerated until warmed for feeding.
4. Frozen bottled breast milk will be thawed under running cold water or in the refrigerator, then warmed under running warm tap water or by placing it in a container of water for no more than five minutes.

5. Expressed breast milk shall be discarded if it is in an unsanitary bottle or has been un-refrigerated for more than one hour.
6. Refrigerated, unused, expressed breast milk that was never frozen shall be discarded after forty-eight hours, or by three months if frozen and stored in a deep freezer at zero degrees F.
7. Unused, frozen breast milk that has been thawed in the refrigerator shall be used within twenty-four hours.

#### **FOOD SAFETY:**

1. Food brought from home will be kept refrigerated until prepared and served at the scheduled meal and snack times.
2. Bottles and nipples maintained by the Center will be washed and sanitized before use.
3. Unused portions of formula or breast milk shall be discarded one hour from the beginning of feeding.
4. Refrigerated, unused, prepared formula shall be discarded after forty-eight (48) hours.
5. Refrigerated, unused, expressed breast milk that was never frozen shall be discarded after forty-eight hours, or by three months if frozen and stored in a deep freezer at zero degrees F.
6. Expressed breast milk shall be discarded if it is in an unsanitary bottle or has been un-refrigerated for more than one hour.

#### **EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:**

An ample supply of non-perishable food and bottled water will be kept on hand for power outages or emergency situations that would require an extended stay at the Center. Food included will be that which requires no electricity to prepare.

#### **SAFETY AND SANITATION...**

The center shall maintain a clean and safe environment, free from hazards. This includes floors, walls, counter surfaces, bathrooms, playground etc. All medications and cleaning products or other toxic items will be kept up high so children cannot access them. Should families notice anything that they feel is a safety concern, they should bring the concern up to the office for discussion so that if a solution is possible it can be handled appropriately.

#### **DRESS CODE...**

Children are engaged in many activities throughout the course of a day. Some activities can be messy or require comfortable, loose fitting clothing. We ask that you dress your children seasonably appropriate, and to bring necessary coats, hats, gloves, boots, or any other necessary items if the season requires it.

We also ask that you dress your children comfortably to allow them to have free movements for play and activities. Please also label your children's clothing with their first and last names.

Shoes should have rubber soles and should have closed toes, to allow children to participate comfortably in all activities.

For children that wear jewelry to the center, please note that we are not responsible for lost or stolen items. We will do our best to find any lost pieces, however we may not always be able to retrieve anything lost.

### **TELEVISION AND COMPUTER USAGE...**

At Beginnings and Beyond we feel that Television is something that television should be used rarely, during a special pre-planned movie time. Any programs or videos will be age appropriate.

Computer usage is utilized on a limited basis for children that have computers in their classrooms (ages three and up only). Exposure to screen time is limited to thirty minutes per day.

### **BITING...**

Beginnings and Beyond understands that biting is a developmentally appropriate behavior for children in the infant through two year old classrooms. Families should understand that their children may be bitten or may bite another child at some point. We do understand that this is an upsetting situation to occur, therefore we do take the following steps: the child who received the bite will be comforted and the bite area will be cleaned to prevent infection. An incident will be notated on brightwheel and the family must sign an injury log at the time of pick up. Families will also be notified about the bite prior to pick up. The other child will be redirected to appropriate activities. The family of that child will also be notified and if multiple biting occurrences are noted for that particular child, a behavior report may be placed in that child's file and a plan of action, which includes shadowing of the child who is biting, will be put in place. Please note that the identity of the child will be kept confidential.

For children that continue to bite, it may become necessary to remove them from the center, however biting is ordinarily due to frustration from a child's inability to communicate, and the goal is to redirect this behavior into a more positive realm. The teacher will assess the classroom in order to minimize frustration for the child, as well as discuss the incident with the child's family in order to determine additional ways to redirect the behavior.

### **SUBSIDIZED CARE...**

Beginnings and Beyond wants to assist in making our center affordable for families. We do accept Purchase of Care and Purchase of Care Plus for this reason.

## **CUSTODY, VISITATION, AND COURT ORDERS...**

If there are any visitation orders, custody restrictions, or other court orders which your children are subject to, we ask that you please notate those on your enrollment form as well as supply the office with supporting documents. A Certified Copy of the most recent order and amendments are required. Beginnings and Beyond will adhere to the restrictions as outlined in the documents.

## **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR ALL CHILDREN AND DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION POLICY...**

Beginnings and Beyond will comply with Americans with Disabilities Act and applicable federal, state, or local law in providing services to children with disabilities and medical conditions/medical needs.

At Beginnings and Beyond, we promote inclusive practices in order to meet the needs of the children and families of our community. All children are welcome to attend our center regardless of ability. We support the right of every child to participate in a broad range of activities. Through inclusive practices, we aim to reflect our wider community and promote positive attitudes to both the similarities and differences in each other. Discussion with parents will be held to determine the needs of the child and ways in which we can meet those needs, along with documentation from doctors if necessary to assist in this process. A written plan (IEP or IFSP or Behavioral Health Plan) will be put into place and a copy of any IEP or IFSP or Behavioral Health Plan that the parent has regarding their child should be given to the office. If necessary, monthly meetings will be held with parents to see if additional changes need to be made to the IEP. Documentation of these meetings will be made as well.

Appropriate accommodations are made for all children in the center, to include their own personal cubby space, personal nap mats, space for napping, "mailboxes" to take their work and daily paperwork home, etc. There is adequate seating and tables and chairs are adjusted to appropriate heights for their particular age group. We strive to make accommodations comfortable and home-like for all children.

At our center, we also promote a culture of diversity. We welcome all children and their families from diverse backgrounds and cultures and do what we can to make everyone feel welcome.

## **POSITIVE BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, we believe in positive behavior management. If children break a rule, they are redirected to other alternatives. If breaking rules becomes a persistent problem, the family will be notified and we will communicate with each other in order to determine ways to handle the situation.

The following outlines the center's approach to positive behavior management:

### **A. STAFF BEHAVIOR**

1. Staff members are expected to model positive behavior management techniques and respectful communication interactions when relating to other staff members and families while at the Center.

2. Staff members will recognize that they are setting guidelines for children by their behavior and interaction with other adults.
3. Under no circumstances will a staff member pull hair, pinch, slap, spank or shake a child.
2. Children shall not be yelled at, humiliated, frightened or verbally, physically or sexually abused.
3. Disparaging comments about a child's appearance, ability, ethnicity, family and other personal characteristics will not be tolerated.
4. Children will not be restrained in any way or deprived of food or toilet use as a consequence of inappropriate behavior.
5. Children will not be punished for not going to sleep, for toileting accidents, failure to eat all or part of food or failure to complete a prescribed activity.

**B. POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT**

1. Staff is expected to praise and encourage children for positive behavior and redirect or guide inappropriate behavior into more positive actions, rather than relying on punishment.
2. Responses to a child's behavior will be appropriate to the child's level of development and understanding.
3. Staff members will use positive developmentally appropriate methods of behavior management which encourage self-control, self-direction, positive self-esteem, social responsibility and cooperation.

**C. PREVENTION OF BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS**

1. Appropriate, educationally valuable materials and activities will be provided.
2. Realistic expectations that are age-appropriate will be met in planning the program.
3. An organized, stimulating environment will be created.

**D. SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN**

The Center will discuss with the family of a special needs child an effective positive behavioral method and to adapt behavior management practices to the needs of the child.

**E. USING TIME OUT**

1. Time-out will only be used as a supplement to, not a substitute for, other developmentally appropriate, positive methods of behavior management.
2. Time-out will be limited to no more than one minute for each year of a child's age.
3. Before using "time-out", the staff member will discuss with the child the reason for the "time-out" in language appropriate to the child's level of development and understanding.
4. Time-out is to be a positive opportunity for the child to regroup and focus on appropriate behavior.

## **F. TIME OUT PROCEDURE**

1. Remove the child from the group but keep the child within eyesight of the group so that he/she may observe the activity.
3. The child will be placed in an area that is comfortable and under supervision.
4. Before rejoining the group, staff will talk to the child about alternatives to the inappropriate behavior in a way that shows faith in the child's ability to make more positive decisions in the future.

## **G. FAMILY INVOLVEMENT**

Families will be notified and consulted should a behavioral problem develop that would require their intervention.

## **FAMILY COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT ...**

Beginnings and Beyond believes that communication with families is an extremely important component for a successful childcare and early learning center experience. Families are of primary importance to their children's development, and for this reason we strive to make communication a top priority. Families may visit the center at any time they would like to see their children, without prior approval of the center. We welcome any monitoring of the programs your children are enrolled in. For this reason, we also have a closed-circuit video monitoring system for currently enrolled families to view with the owner or Administrator, at the owner's discretion. If a family unenrolls their child from the center, they will not be provided access to video footage after unenrolling.

We ensure that there is no discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, sex, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, creed, disability, veteran's status, or any other category protected by state and/or federal laws. We ensure that all staff have the utmost respect for all children and their families, as well as each other.

Communication regarding your children's behavior and achievements occurs on a daily basis through the everyday conversations between the Teacher and families. Because of this, we have formal sit-down parent/teacher meetings twice a year, as well as when needed or requested. We offer Parent/Teacher Conferences twice a year in June and November. A sign-up sheet will be posted at these times for families who wish to have meetings with their children's Teachers. Families waiving the conference will need to sign a waiver form.

To show our commitment to welcoming suggestions and wanting the families to voice any concerns they may have, suggestions may be placed anonymously in the black payment box outside of the office in which you may submit any ideas or issues that you may have. The owner will send an email to families stating any suggestions received with action plans beside each suggestion/concern. Please note that if there is any confidential information placed in the box, this will remain confidential and will not be posted.

We also urge you to have open communication with the Owner/Administrator or Teachers at any time you feel necessary, and any concerns you have will be addressed in a timely manner with feedback given to the family regarding what was done to rectify the concern. We ask that any concerns be brought up with someone in the office so that we are aware and can in fact address the issue at hand.

In addition to this, family surveys will be distributed annually in order for Beginnings and Beyond to continue to improve. These surveys are anonymous and will be sent out and retrieved electronically. Responses to the survey will be given back to the families with updates on how we plan to make improvements based on survey results.

Daily electronic reports are provided to families of all children at Beginnings and Beyond through the Brightwheel app. These reports will inform you of your children's activities and advancements, of any concerns the teachers note, any fun tidbits of information about your child for that day, as well as their daily schedules in terms of how much they ate, what time they ate, and diaper changes or toileting information. Brightwheel also has photos that are shared with families of their children, and it also allows for messaging between teachers and families to keep constant lines of communication open.

Any photo and/or videotaping of children would have parental consent if the photo and/or video is to be used for our facebook page, our website, or any other social or print media. Photos of the children will be used from time to time for projects the children and completing in class or for classroom décor. These types of photos do not require parental consent as they are in house only.

Finally, Beginnings and Beyond has a Newsletter for families which will contains information on activities, parenting issues and other items. We distribute this Newsletter via email every month as well as post a hard copy on the parent board.

In these ways, we strive to have various open lines of communication for all families, and to show our dedication and commitment to constant communication and improvement.

Support is given to families in any way that is possible. Parent-Teacher Conferences are available twice a year as well as any other time requested or needed. Teachers work closely with parents to come up with plans when behavioral or other issues are noticed in a child. We work closely with parents to help their children reach the necessary goals. If additional assistance is needed outside of the center, information is given to parents for other programs that can assist them and their children.

Parents are always welcome to ask questions regarding current licensing regulations by speaking with someone in the office. The regulations binder is available to parents as well if they have questions regarding licensing regulations.

## **PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES ~ VOLUNTEERS...**

All families are encouraged to participate in any activities with Beginnings and Beyond, whether it be on the center premises or off site. Families may volunteer to assist during field trips, coordinate any special events, or to read in the classrooms. Volunteer opportunities will be posted at the Central News Board



as well as on our website. Anyone interested in volunteering can speak to the classroom Teacher or to someone in the office. If there are families who wish to help out but are unable donate his or her time, they may donate items. Other means of volunteering could include assisting in the office, or assisting with maintenance items, inside or out. All volunteers are always welcome. Additionally, we have a number of family events throughout the year which families are invited to attend. Some events are social based, some are learning/educational based, and some are experiences where you can bond and touch upon important social-emotional aspects of your growing child.

## **PARTNERING WITH LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, we partner with the local school districts in order to help assist your child with any needs they may have. For example, we reach out to schools if there is a developmental delay that we see early, in order to help get them the assistance they need in order to succeed once they are of school age. We also assist with allowing the school districts to submit any flyers or information to us to send out to our center families, and by allowing them to come on site to perform kindergarten assessments.

## **COMMUNITY BASED AGENCIES...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, we try to help families as much as we can, knowing that there are many needs both within the scope of and outside the scope of childcare that families face. Please reach out to us and you can view our binder of information detailing resources available to help you with various needs.

## **TRANSITIONS...**

Transitioning your child into our center is a big step! We take the care to allow you to spend time in the classroom with your child whenever you want in order to acclimate your child to the center and classroom and to put yourself more at ease as well. You may visit the classroom at any time and can schedule time prior to enrollment to have your child spend some time and meet the class and the Teachers. We make whatever accommodations we can to allow for a successful entry into our center!

At our center, we understand how having your child move from one classroom to another can be both exciting and nerve wracking at the same time. We have put into place a transition plan that will benefit your child and make the progress very easy for them. This transition plan details out the transition for your child that will occur over the span of one week. It details Monday through Friday of their transition week, the times they will be spending in their new classrooms and what they will be doing while there. After their transition week they will permanently move up to their new classroom. It is a slow and easy transition and rest assured they will do just fine! The center will always give out a letter informing you as the parent/guardian when your child will be transitioning. Along with this letter will be a letter from your child's new teacher, and any other information pertinent to the specific classroom.

## **GRADUATION...**

There will be a small graduation ceremony held each year in August to honor and congratulate the Pre-K children who are moving on from our center. This will be announced each year with prior notice to families. Children who are getting ready to transition to Kindergarten will have information sent home with them for families to read to prepare for the transition to Kindergarten and to help aid in their move from early childhood to school age. We also receive feedback from families exiting our program and utilize that feedback to make any necessary changes for improvement.

## **EMERGENCY CLOSINGS AND INCLEMENT WEATHER PROCEDURE...**

In the event of an emergency closing or inclement weather, families will be notified of the closure via a message sent through the brightwheel app.

In the event that the center needs to close in the middle of the day, families will be notified of the early closure via a message sent through the brightwheel app. All staff will then assist in attempting to contact the children's parent/guardian first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parent/guardian, the individual(s) listed on the emergency contact form will be contacted until pick up arrangements can be made. If the children need to be evacuated from the center, the staff will notify families, and/or emergency contacts of the pick-up location.

Any time that Beginnings and Beyond needs to close due to emergency situations or inclement weather, payment will not be refunded or reduced for closures of less than 5 school days. If it extends past the 5 day mark, the payment will be reduced as determined and signed off on by both the Owner/Administrator and the parent/guardian.

## **WEATHER AND OUTDOOR PLAY POLICY...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, all infants and children will play outdoors daily, so please dress your child appropriately for the weather.

Children will go outside daily, weather permitting for at least one hour a day. The children will go outside if the wind chill factor is 32 degrees or higher or when the heat index is 89 degrees or lower and the weather and conditions outside do not pose a significant health or safety risk.

Please note that if the weather does not permit outside play, the children will remain indoors and participate in indoor gross motor activities. Weather permitting means that children should go outside every day unless there is active precipitation or public announcements that advise people to remain indoors. These public announcements would occur on days where it would be unsafe to be outdoors, including extremely hot and cold conditions or days with poor air quality. We would obtain these public announcement notifications by visiting [www.weather.gov](http://www.weather.gov). All Teachers would be notified of these days by the Owner/Administrator or Curriculum Coordinator to ensure that they are aware of the weather conditions and playground plans for that day.

## **ACCIDENTS OR INJURIES...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, we ensure that if an accident or injury does occur to your children during our care, we will take the necessary steps to protect the children from further harm. Families will have immediate notification of the injury or incident via a brightwheel notation. Families will be directly called regarding any injuries of a more serious nature. We ensure that all injuries that occur, no matter how small, shall have a completed injury report noted on brightwheel and the parent/guardian will also have to sign an accident/injury log at the time of pick up.

Beginnings and Beyond will maintain an electronic injury report on brightwheel for each incident, to include the child's name, date of injury, description of injury, how the injury occurred, and required treatment. These injury reports will be kept electronically indefinitely. Injuries that result in death or inpatient or outpatient treatment will be reported to the Office of Child Care Licensing.

## **CHILD ILLNESS...**

A child exhibiting any of the following symptoms will not be allowed at the center unless a licensed physician provides written documentation that the child has been diagnosed and poses no serious health risk to his or herself or others.

- A. Temperature: infants four months old and younger, equivalent to 100 degrees or greater even if there has not been a change in behavior.
- B. Temperature: children older than four months, equivalent to 101 degrees or greater accompanied by behavior changes or other signs of symptoms or illness – until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the facility.
- C. Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (such as unusual lethargy, uncontrolled coughing, inexplicable irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs) – until medical evaluation allows inclusion.
- D. Uncontrolled diarrhea, that is, increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper – until diarrhea stops.
- E. Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medications, or hard stools.
- F. Vomiting illness two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous twenty four hours until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the cause of the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- G. Persistent abdominal pain continues more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
- H. Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider determines that condition is non-infectious.

- I. Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.
- J. Purulent conjunctivitis defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until after twenty four hours after antibiotic treatment has been initiated.
- K. Scabies, until twenty four hours after treatment has been initiated.
- L. Head lice, until twenty four hours after treatment has been initiated.
- M. Tuberculosis, until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend care
- N. Impetigo, until twenty four hours after treatment has been initiated.
- O. Strep throat or other streptococcal infection, until twenty four hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever.
- P. Varicella-Zoster (chicken pox) until all sores have dried and crusted – usually six days.
- Q. Shingles, only if sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing; if not exclude until sores have crusted and are dry.
- R. Pertussis, until five days of antibiotic treatment.
- S. Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- T. Hepatitis virus, until one week after onset of illness, jaundice or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis (currently immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff.
- U. Measles, until five days after onset of rash.
- V. Rubella, until six days after onset of rash.
- W. Herpetic gingivostomatitis (cold sores) if the child is too young to have control of oral secretions.
- X. Unspecified illness if it limits the child's comfortable participation in activities or if it results in a need for greater care than can be provided without compromising the health and safety of other children.

Procedures:

If your children become ill at school, a parent/guardian will be contacted to pick up your children. Once contacted, we request that children be picked up as soon as possible. If parents/guardians are not able

to be contacted, Beginnings and Beyond will then contact the emergency contact. Children who are ill and need to be picked up will be kept isolated from other children so as not to expose them to any health risks. Isolated children will be kept comfortable until they are picked up from the center.

Children with reported communicable diseases shall not be permitted to remain at the center, as specified by the Division of Public Health, unless:

- Written documentation from the child's health care provider states that the child has been evaluated and presents no risk to the child or to others.
- The licensee (child care center) has reported the illness to the Division of Public Health and has been advised that the child presents no health risk.

A written notice of an outbreak of a communicable disease will be posted if any children may have been exposed to the illness. The information will also be posted via brightwheel.

**\*\*Please note that if the health care provider's opinion differs from the opinion of the Division of Public Health, the center will follow the instructions of the Division of Public Health.\*\***

Communicable diseases include, but are not limited to: bacterial meningitis, diphtheria, influenza disease (not the flu), german measles, hepatitis, measles (rubella), mumps, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella (3 day or german measles), tuberculosis, iardiasis, hepatitis A, salmonellois, shigellosis.

## **MEDICAL EMERGENCY SITUATIONS...**

If there happens to be a medical emergency situation that occurs to your children while at Beginnings and Beyond, the following steps will be taken to ensure the proper care and attention is given to your children.

- An ambulance will be called if there is a situation involving a life threatening accident, injury, or illness.
- Transportation by the Owner/Administrator to the hospital will be provided should a non life-threatening emergency occur which requires prompt medical attention.
- Parents/Guardians will be notified immediately if any of these situations occur. If the parent/guardian is unable to be reached, the emergency contact will be notified.

## **MEDICATION...**

Staff at Beginnings and Beyond who are certified in medication administration, if requested by the family, shall administer medication as needed. Administration of medication will always be recorded in brightwheel.

Any medications that are brought into the center, whether they are prescription or non-prescription, must have a form filled out detailing the children's name, date of birth, medication allergies, doctor's

name and phone number, pharmacy name and phone number, name of medication, dosage (amount to be given), time (when to be given), route of administration (oral, eye, ears, etc.), expiration date, start and end dates for administering the medication, reason for medication, and any additional special instructions regarding the medication.

All medication must be in the original container, properly labeled, unexpired, and authorized by the children's health care provider (if prescription). Any deviations from the label on the medication must be in writing from the children's health care provider, whether it is prescription or non-prescription.

Written permission must be obtained from the parent/guardian in order for Beginnings and Beyond to administer any medication to your children. There is a medication information and authorization log on which parents/guardians will need to sign in medication.

All medications will be stored in a locked area so they are inaccessible to the children at the center. Any unused portions will be returned to the parent/guardian.

Any topical applications such as diaper rash ointment, sunscreen, insect repellent, etc. must be authorized by the parent/guardian as well in order for Beginnings and Beyond to apply these to your children. The written authorization will be placed on a medication form as well for these purposes. Please ensure that the items are labeled with your children's name on them.

If your children require medication for life threatening conditions (allergies, bee stings, etc.) the prescription can be kept at the center for as long as your children are enrolled. Medications of this type will be administered when necessary. Please also ensure that new prescription medications are brought in if the medications have expired.

## **FIRE AND EMERGENCY DRILLS...**

Beginnings and Beyond conducts monthly fire and emergency evacuation drills. Families, staff, and children will not be made aware of the drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of the evacuation plans.

During drills, families may not sign their children in or out of the center. The drill must first be completed and all children must first return to their classrooms if being signed out.

If there is a real emergency situation, the Owner/Administrator will notify all staff that the center will be closing. At this time, any families waiting to sign their child in or out must vacate the premises for safety reasons. All other families or emergency contacts will be notified of the situation. Children must be picked up immediately after the phone call is received.

## **REPORTING OF SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT...**

As a child care provider, Beginnings and Beyond is required by law to report suspected child abuse and neglect. All staff are trained in how to handle suspected child abuse and neglect. The following steps will be taken should there be a suspicion of child abuse or neglect:

- Abuse or neglect is immediately reported, as required by law
- Remedial action is immediately taken to protect the child from harm
- Long term corrective action will be taken to eliminate the factors or circumstances that may have caused or resulted in a continuing risk of abuse or neglect to children if the abuse or neglect occurred at the center by a staff member.
- Any staff member alleged to have perpetrated an incident of abuse or neglect shall not have direct contact with any child and will be placed on Administrative Leave until the investigation is complete. If the allegation proves to be true, the staff member will be terminated from employment and placed on the Delaware Child Abuse Registry.

### **PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS...**

Parents/Guardians of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in our care at Beginnings and Beyond, as provided by law.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (such as custody order, restraining order, or protection from abuse order), Beginnings and Beyond must be provided with a certified copy of the most recent order issued by the court and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed.

In the absence of a court order on file with Beginnings and Beyond, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. Beginnings and Beyond cannot without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, Beginnings and Beyond suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. Beginnings and Beyond staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

### **VISITORS...**

Visitors are allowed in the center only at the discretion of the Owner/Administrator. An employee of Beginnings and Beyond will accompany visitors at all times throughout the center.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY...**

At Beginnings and Beyond, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with staff members of Beginnings and Beyond who have a need to know in order to care for your children. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other families and/or children will not be shared with families, as we strive to protect everyone's right to privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, health status or information of any individual at Beginnings and Beyond.

You may observe children at our center who are disabled or who exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (such as biting, hitting, etc.) You may be curious or concerned about the child. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of Beginnings and Beyond are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

Furthermore, written permission from the parent/guardian is required before we disclose or use your child's written, electronic, or digital information, unless it is for the performance of official duties by employees of the Office of Child Care Licensing, or other entities with statutory responsibilities for issues relating to the health, safety, and well-being of children. Written permission would be obtained for items such as the use of our TSI Gold assessment tool, Ages and Stations questionnaires, etc.

### **HIRING STAFF FOR PERSONAL BABYSITTING...**

If families ask the teachers or other staff at Beginnings and Beyond to babysit, the center will take no responsibility for any services provided by staff outside of the premises of Beginnings and Beyond or outside of any special programs or trips sponsored by Beginnings and Beyond. We do understand that finding a trustworthy and caring babysitter is just as important as finding a trusting and caring childcare center, therefore if there are staff members with whom you feel comfortable asking to babysit, we do permit it, however take no responsibility.

### **WITHDRAWING YOUR CHILDREN...**

If you would like to withdraw your children from Beginnings and Beyond, we ask that you provide a two week notice. However, we do understand that certain circumstances do not allow for this to occur and we are flexible with your needs and life situations. Exit interview questionnaires are given to all families that are withdrawing from the center in order to better improve our center.

### **SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION...**

Suspension and/or expulsion of children are taken very seriously at our center and these methods are utilized only when absolutely necessary. We resort to utilizing suspension and/or expulsion in cases where there is a determination of a serious safety threat or when a detailed progression of intermediate interventions for the child or for others has been implemented and documented and failed to show progress or too little progress. The interventions will be as follows: planned assistance with the child in order to eliminate the challenging behaviors, a meeting with the parents regarding the child's behavior and the plan going forward, and follow up plans/meetings as required.

Suspension and/or expulsion of children may also be necessary if a parent behaves in a threatening, offensive, or inappropriate manner in which the center feels it is for the center's well being or safety to have the parent removed from the center.



## **WE LOOK FORWARD TO PARTNERING WITH YOU...**

This truly is a partnership between families, children, and staff. We are committed to making this a wonderful experience for you, your families, and your children, and we look forward to our future together!

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN RECEIPT OF HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM**

I acknowledge that I have received a Parent/Guardian Handbook which contains all the pertinent information regarding Beginnings and Beyond and its policies and procedures for the center.

Specifically in the handbook, I have received information on all of the following:

- Positive behavior management techniques
- Routine and emergency health care, health exclusions, and prevention of communicable diseases
- Food and nutrition
- Procedures for releasing children
- Reporting of accidents, injuries, or critical incidents
- Mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect
- Administration of medication procedures
- Transportation information

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren)'s Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_