

Terra.Child

Nature Preschool

Family Handbook

Revised 11/07/2024

**Welcome**

Dear Family,

Thank you for your interest in Terra.Child. Terra is simply another word for earth. The concept of 'Earth Child' is multi-layered, promoting messages of respect for people and the planet. We follow a Nature-based philosophy and part of that philosophy encourages positive relationships and community. We do our best to be helpful in our community when we are able.

Terra.Child is grounded in fully inclusive, individualized learning while promoting respect for each other and the earth. My goal is to build a safe, nurturing environment for children where they have the atmosphere to grow. I believe that children thrive in nature-based environments and many of our individualized lessons are rooted in play outdoors. I am excited to invite you to join me in my journey to achieve that goal. Terra.Child has big plans for its future!

In 2025, we plan to:

* Expand our garden by increasing the amount of plants that we have and our growing time.
* Create a native flower and grasses play area..
* Increase art and music in the “forest” nature area.

In the next three years, we plan to:

* Become a National Association for Family Child Care accredited school.
* Install solar panels
* Expand community outreach.

I look forward to welcoming your child into our school family.

I am a “why not?” educator. If a child wants to do something, I often ask myself the question, “why not?” before answering.

I extend the same attitude to the parents and guardians in the program. This handbook has been carefully crafted so that we have a guidebook to keep our program thriving. I hope that you will communicate with me if you ever need an exception or a little extra help. If I can help a family without being harmful to others, I’m happy to do so.

Why not?!

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About Terra.Child

## Philosophy

We believe that nature provides endless opportunities for learning and development. When exploring their surroundings outdoors, children are not only developing their motor skills, but they are also developing the social skills necessary to be successful in life.

Our goal at Terra.Child is to purposefully set up the environment for your child to thrive. We use jumping off points to encourage curiosity and exploration and are available to help your child grow new interests.

## Mission

Our mission is to encourage positive social skills, life skills, and sustainable practices with the children and by extension their families and our community.

## Certification

Terra.Child has a Family Child Care License and a Subsidy Contract with the Department of Human Services.

Terra.Child aspires to be accredited by 2026.

Terra.Child maintains the highest possible Quality Rating Score of 5 stars.

## Definition of Family

In this handbook, the term family refers to a parent, legal guardian, sponsor or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest and responsibility of your child.

## Hours of Operation

Terra.Child is open 7:30 AM to 3:30 PM Monday through Friday. Tours are given by appointment only.

## Emergency Substitute Provider

In the rare case of an emergency situation, an emergency substitute provider will be called. S/he will come to the facility to stay with the children during my absence. In the event that a qualified substitute cannot be secured, you or your emergency contact will be asked to make arrangements to pick up your child (ren) and the program will close for the remainder of the day. Should this need arise, you or your emergency contact shall pick up their children within one hour of receiving the call.

## Holidays

Terra.Child is closed for certain holidays:

New Year’s Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Veteran’s Day, Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday

Terra.Child will be closed Christmas Eve- New Year’s Day for a winter vacation. School will resume the January 2nd or the following business day if the 2nd lands on a weekend.

## Admission & Enrollment

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed and first tuition payment paid prior to your child’s first day of attendance.

Terra.Child Nature Preschool enrolls children ages 2-5, based on the availability and openings.

We also have limited Terra.Tods spaces available for children 6 weeks to 23 months.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. I do not discriminate on the basis of special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

## Waiting List

Children will be enrolled from the waiting list in the order from which they are listed. A family with a child already enrolled at Terra.Child will be given priority.

## Inclusion

Children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance and belonging at Terra.Child. Every reasonable accommodation is made to encourage full and active participation of all children based on their individual capabilities and needs.

## Non-Discrimination

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 your written consent is provided, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at Terra.Child are confidential.

## Qualifications

Staff at Terra.Child participate in 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.

Laura holds a Certificate of Mastery in Infant/Toddler concentration, an Associate’s degree in Early Child Care and Development, and is completing a Bachelor’s degree in Early Intervention and Child Development. Her background in the Early Head Start program has given her experience working with families who have experienced loss, domestic violence, homelessness, and trauma; in addition to working with children with autism, ADHD, and various developmental delays.

## Communication & Family Partnership

Daily Communications.

In addition to communication at drop-off and pick-up times we use the app, Brightwheel to post photos and daily routines.

Bulletin Boards.The bulletin board at the entrance has program news, upcoming events, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

Email.Announcements, event invitations, newsletters and general updates will be sent through e-mail if an address is provided.

Family Activities.Each family is a child’s first teacher. Families are valued as partners in the growth and development of children in my care. We periodically plan family activities to provide some extra time for fun and communication.

# Curriculum & Learning

## Learning Environment

Terra.Child has an adaptive environment to be able to meet children’s needs. The daily routine is flexible, providing children with time for transitions. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through free time in interest areas, planned small-group activities, and planned individualized activities. We start our day with Baby Doll Circle Time, a Conscious Discipline program by Dr. Becky Bailey.

## Outings & Field Trips

Weather permitting, supervised walks around the neighborhood may occur. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

In lieu of field trips, Terra.Child will have pre-planned family outings. Please dress your child appropriately for such outings. Families will be responsible for the transportation and safety of their children for such events.

## Television Time

The normal daily routine does not include television watching, but on special occasions, a short, educational video may be shown to children two and up. The focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Alternative activities are available for children during television time.

## Multiculturalism

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

## Celebrations

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

Our goal is to respect and learn about everyone’s celebrations. We invite you to share your traditions.

## Rest Time

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a 25% of children under the age of 5 don't get adequate sleep. This is worrying because poor sleep in early childhood has been linked to allergic rhinitis and problems with the immune system, as well as anxiety & depression. There is also emerging evidence that poor sleep in childhood may carry future cardiovascular risks in the form of obesity, diabetes & high blood pressure.(Sleepfoundation.org)

Infants are laid to sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of SIDS. Cribs remain free of blankets, toys, and bottles. Infants may be swaddled until they are three months of age in a thin swaddling cloth with written permission from their parent or guardian.

All children participate in a quiet, rest time after lunch. We prioritize sleep for those who need it and make quiet activities available for children who wish to remain awake. Disruptions during rest time are not tolerated and a child who is disruptive for fifteen minutes or longer may be asked to leave.

Toilet Learning

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a home/child care 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. Working with you to make sure that toilet training is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child’s physical and emotional abilities and your family’s concerns is a priority.

# 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. Children are encouraged to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

## Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. When a child becomes physically aggressive, immediate intervention occurs to protect all of the children.

The 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 permitted for discipline.

## Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

If a child’s behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with your family as the first step to understanding your child’s individual needs and challenges. Partnerships between families and Terra.Child staff are especially crucial to find solutions to any challenging behaviors a child may exhibit.

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 resources and finances for the child’s accommodations for success and participation.

If such a rare occasion occurs, Terra.Child will work with families to find more suitable care.

# Tuition and Fees

## Tuition Rates

Full-Time Rate (4-5 days): $1000 per month.

Tuition may be paid at the beginning of the week or month, depending on your chosen contract.

Families contract for a specific schedule as indicated on the Enrollment Agreement Form. Payment for this contracted schedule is required year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather.

## Tuition Deposit

A Tuition Deposit equal to two weeks of care is required upon enrollment. This deposit is applied to the last two weeks of care provided a two-week written notice is given prior to the tuition due date. (Four weeks total) If a two-week written notice is not given when a child has withdrawn from the program, the family will be billed for two weeks of care, which may come out of their deposit.

## Payment

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control.

## Methods of Payment

Several methods of payment are available for families’ convenience. Families can pay by cash, Brightwheel, money order, or check.

## Late Payment Charges

Late payments can pose serious problems for our program and as a result, the business does not allow families to accrue a balance equal to more than one week of tuition. **Late payments will result in the imposition of late payment fees. Failure to pay will result in services being terminated.**

Children will not be accepted into care until payment is made or you have worked out a plan with Laura. Repeated late payments will result in your family being required to prepay..

## Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee of $50. 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.

## Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of $1 per minute will be accrued beginning five minutes after their designated pick-up time. Late fees are due before children may return on Monday.

**Repeated late pick up may result in services being terminated.**

## Credits & No Credits

Families contract for a specific schedule as completed on the Enrollment Agreement Form. Payment for this contracted schedule is required year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather, infectious disease, or public health emergency such as a pandemic, or weather-related or environmental emergencies.

**Credit will not be given for my absence** – there are no credits for days when I must close my program for personal reasons. This will be a rare occurrence as I maintain a list of substitutes to fill in during my absence.

# Attendance & Withdrawal

## Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive after 8:30 AM, please let me know as early as possible to minimize food waste.

## My Vacation

My personal vacation days are typically on state or federal holidays so that it is easier for parents to find alternate care. This is also why I take my one-week vacation between Christmas and New Years. Full tuition is still due during these weeks, and you will be notified well in advance if additional days are needed.

## Withdrawals

A written notice, with your final full tuition payment, is required by me when a child is being withdrawn. Failure to notify will result in forfeiture of your two-week deposit.

For example, A child that is going to be withdrawn on April 15th would give notice on March 1st if they paid tuition on the 1st of the month.

If a child’s final day is going to be March 31st, they would give notice with their February payment since March would only be a partial payment with the return of the deposit.

## Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent me from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced through the Brightwheel app and text message.

If it becomes necessary to close early, I 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

Morning arrivals are from 7:30- 8:30 a.m. Please have your child signed into the Brightwheel app and settled in by 9 a.m. for circle time. Please let Laura know if your child will not be in attendance for breakfast to reduce food waste. If you drop your child off after breakfast, please check the daily schedule and bring your child to join the group.

Terra.Child closes at 3:30 PM. Please do not pick-up your child later than this time. Families are expected to enter Terra.Child, sign their child out of Brightwheel, and leave by closing time. Laura is always happy to help when she can, but failure to clear any alternate pick-up times beforehand may result in late fees.

## Use of Cell Phones

Drop-off and pick-up are my primary windows of time to communicate with you about your child. In addition, children need your full attention at this time. Therefore, I respectfully request that you not use cell phones while dropping off or picking up your child.

## 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 me 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 my policy.

If your child has not been picked up after closing and I have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. I will stay with your child as long as possible, but if after one hour I have not been able to reach you or any person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, I will call the Oklahoma Department of Human Services (DHS).

## Right to Refuse Child Release

I may refuse to release children if I 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 your child. To protect your child, I may request that another adult listed as an Emergency and Release Contact pick-up your child or I may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from my program.

# Personal Belongings

## Ideas of what to Bring

* **Infants**: bottle, pacifier, sleep sack or swaddle, diaper cream, diapers, wipes, spare clothing,
* **Toddlers**: A cup or bottle for water, spare clothing, a favorite teether, stuffed animal or favorite blanket for nap time, diapers, wipes, diaper cream.
* **Older Toddlers and preschoolers:** Water bottle, change of clothes, favorite nap time snuggle or book

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

Children are encouraged to be curious about their surroundings and that leads to messy clothes and shoes. Some parents choose to send alternate shoes for outdoor play. At Terra.Child, all clothes are play clothes. Please do not send your child in clothing that cannot get messy.

## Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a cubby basket and a diapering cubby. Cubbies are labeled with your child’s name and photo. The basket cubby will typically hold your child’s spare clothing. Please check your child’s diapering cubby daily for items that need to be taken home and to check their diapering supply.

## Toys from Home

Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home that have sentimental or monetary value. Terra.Child is not responsible for lost or broken toys.

Some children choose to bring a stuffed animal for rest time.

# Nutrition

## Go Napsacc and CACFP

We follow the federal food reimbursement program along with best practices with the Go Napsacc initiative.

We are committed to providing healthy foods and beverages and positive mealtimes so that your child can learn good eating habits and grow up strong.

Foods and Beverages

• Children are offered a fruit and/or vegetable at every meal and snack.

• We do not serve fried foods, high fat meats, or vegetables cooked in fat.

• Sweets and salty snacks are offered once a month or less.

• We offer only healthy beverages like milk and water

We prefer that you do not bring outside food or drinks without prior approval.

## Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify me in writing so that I can make appropriate substitutions. 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. A copy should be given to me prior to enrollment.

## Meal Times

* Teachers and children eat meals together, family style, so that children can learn and practice table skills.
* Television and other screens are turned off so that teachers can talk with children about healthy habits and healthy foods, and check-in with them about hunger and fullness.
* Teachers never force or bribe children to eat any particular foods or to clean their plates.

## Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

* Bottle-fed infants are fed while being held or sitting up.
* Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
* Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. Fresh breast milk must be used within 48 hours. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with your child’s name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to 3 months.
* Formula must be brought in a factory-sealed container in a ready-to-feed strength or powder or concentrate. Formula brought from home must be labeled with your child’s name.
* Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family.

## 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](http://www.aap.org).

Illness

**I 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 my program.** I have 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. This is not an all-inclusive list. I 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 I can provide.**
  + **In addition to classroom management and teaching, Laura is responsible for diapering, hygiene, and cooking for up to 7 children on days that she is solo.**
* Fever (above 100°F) 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 my care is required.

## Allergy Prevention

Families are expected to notify me regarding children’s food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide me a letterdetailing your child’s symptoms, reactions, treatments and care from a medical professional.

## Medications

* All medications should be handed to me with specific instructions for administration. Medications should never be left in your child’s cubby or with your child to administer on their own. Staff will ensure that the medication is recorded along with the directions and proceed to dispense the medication as directed. Medication will be stored in a locked box and the administration of medication will be recorded.
* **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from your child’s physician. The label on the medication meets this requirement. 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 parent/guardian. Non-prescription medication will not be administered for more than a 3-day period unless a written order by the physician is received.
* **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream) require a note signed by the parent/guardian, specifying frequency and dosage to be administered.
* Sunscreen is encouraged and must be provided by parents/guardians.

## Communicable Diseases

When a child in my program has a suspected reportable disease, it is my legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. I 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
* COVID-19
* Diphtheria
* Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease
* Heamophilus 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

## Home Safety

I pride myself in having a warm, loving and safe environment in which your child can explore, learn and experience many different things. Some features that help ensure your child’s safety are:

* Working smoke detectors are located in each room that children have access to.
* Working carbon monoxide detectors are near the sleeping area.
* Adequate Ventilation throughout the home.
* No guns or firearms on premises.
* Fire extinguishers are maintained properly.
* Toys are age appropriate, in good repair and of a non-violent nature.
* Electrical outlets are covered.
* Pens, pencils and office supplies are out of reach.
* Knives and adult scissors are out of reach.
* Cleaners, chemicals, matches and fire starters are out of reach.
* The hot water heater is regulated at 120°F.
* Medications are out of reach.
* A well-stocked first aid kit is kept near and expiration dates are observed.
* Staff is certified in Infant & Child CPR and Pediatric First Aid.
* Hot radiator and water pipes are covered or out of reach or not very hot to the touch.
* Safe grassy areas to play.
* Safety approved play equipment and toys.
* Outside areas where children play is fenced and gate locked.
* Children do not play outside unsupervised.

## Clothing

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement that 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. The backyard is used as an extension of the program, and daily activities are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

## Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 100 °F or less than 0 °F degrees. Staff will follow the Child Care Weather Watch chart for guidance on appropriate temperatures and length of time outdoors.

## Injuries

First aid will be administered by staff in the unlikely event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive a 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. Terra.Child is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, your child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while staff 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, my response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the child who bit learn a more appropriate behavior. My focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Noteswill be written to the family of the child who was bitten and the family of the child who did the biting. I will work with the families of both to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

## Pets/Animals

Pets will not normally be on the premises. On special occasions, staff may choose to bring a pet to work with them. In this event, the parents will receive previous notification of their attendance. All pets will maintain immunizations per DHS requirements.

## Respectful Behavior

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

## Smoking

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

## Prohibited Substances

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence is required to leave the premises immediately.

## Child Custody

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. I am 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. I will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

## Suspected Child Abuse

**I am required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if I 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. My program 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 event that a child becomes lost or separated from the group during an outing or fieldtrip and is not located within 15 minutes, emergency services will be called and the family will be notified.

## Fire Safety

My home is fully equipped with fire extinguishers and alarms.

My fire evacuation plan is reviewed with the children 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. If available, a staff member will accompany and remain with your child until a family member or emergency contact arrives.

# Family Activities

From time to time, I offer an opportunity for families to participate in the activities that help with growth and improvement of their child’s education. I encourage families to take an active role and I am always open to help if you see something specific that needs to be done.

Examples of Family Events: Please be sure to look at the Bulletin Board for announcements of these activities and events.

• Holiday Gathering

• Book Swap

• Fall Festival

• Annual Family Picnic

Program Activities: Enjoy and help your child’s class with these special activities.

• Share a meal with your child

• Read to children at arrival or pickup

• Volunteer in the classroom

• Donate requested items

• Contribute to Pot Luck Meal

• Family Teacher conferences

Family/Parent Workshops: Family workshops change as needed. Below is a list of workshops I may offer.I welcome requests for workshop topics.

• Positive Guidance and Loving Discipline

• Toilet Training

• Safety in the Home

• Child Proofing Your Home

• Brain Development

• Nutrition and Exercise for Small Bodies

• Supporting Your Child in Times of Stress

• Food Allergies

• How to Prepare for a Conference

• Warning Signs for Developmental Delays

• Value of Reading to Your Child

• Everyday Math

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

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

This handbook will be updated from time-to-time and you will be provided notice as updates are implemented.

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures set up are for the safety and welfare of all children in Terra.Child care. I look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received and reviewed the **Family Handbook**. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask questions if I do not understand any policies, procedures or information contained in the **Family Handbook**.

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| Recipient Signature |  | Date |
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|  |  |  |
| Provider’s Signature |  | Date |