



**Team Member Handbook**

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## **XY Learning Center Team Member Policies and Procedures**

We strive to have the best program possible for the children and families in our care. Our mission and values are centered around that every child is best understood in the context of his/her abilities and family culture.

- Every child has different needs and is an individual.
- Children learn best by doing, over and over.
- Children learn best through their senses and whole self.
- Children learn through play.

As educators, we have the opportunity to foster children's growth and development and create a love for learning that can last a lifetime. It is our job to do the best we can to provide quality care to all children in our program. As you read through this Team Member Handbook, you will be guided on what is expected from your job duties, interactions with children and their families and what the policies are.

### **Team Member Regulations**

When a group of people are working together, it is necessary to have common rules of conduct so that the actions of one individual will not be detrimental to other team members and children at XYLC. The purpose of these rules is not to impose unfair restrictions or limit the rights of anyone, but to define and protect the rights of all who work at XYLC and to ensure that all team members work under the same conditions.

All team members need to become familiar with [Montana state regulations](#) and [Code of Ethical Conduct](#). A copy to look over will be accessible in the team resource area. State rules and regulations and the Code of Ethical Conduct will be followed at all times.

### **Orientation Timeline/Plan**

At the start of employment, all team members must begin the process to meet all state requirements, which includes new hire licensing paperwork. This also includes:

- providing a most recent copy of immunizations including TB and MMR.
- providing a copy of first aid/CPR certificate or be willing to get certified
- must be willing to complete required training
- be able to pass a state and federal criminal background check
- establish a training plan to meet XYLC requirements

All team members will be provided with an orientation timeline and training plan customized to his/her needs.

### **Job Descriptions**

Each team member is to follow all guidelines in this handout. Lead Childcare Specialists are in charge of making the ultimate decisions when need be. Childcare Specialists are to help support the Lead Childcare Specialist and are not limited to all duties included in this handout.

Daily schedules are posted in each classroom. These are the blueprints of how the day should go, everyday. They will be updated regularly.

### **Personal Behavior**

- For the protection of each team member, we always work in teams. No team member is allowed to be alone with children, unless the ratio in children is very low.
- Conversations with other team members
  - Keep attention on children at all times in the classrooms, and during outdoor time. Avoid all inappropriate talking, gossip, etc. with others while working.

### **XYLC Message Center**

There is a parent message area. Please be sure to read all the notices so that you are an informed member of the teaching team. Keeping informed is part of your job responsibility.

### **Personal Belongings**

Coats, purses, etc. must be stored safely away from children. You will have an area where you can store your personal belongings

### **Breaks**

Each team will have an opportunity to take small breaks on premise during the down time in their classroom. If a team member or teacher needs to take a break to leave the building, it will need to be arranged with the lead teacher and/or Director. XYLC is required to maintain correct ratios between children and caregivers. In order to ensure we are in compliance, all breaks that require a caregiver to leave will need to be covered by another caregiver.

### **Snacks and Lunchtime**

These are times for eating and socializing. All team members working with the children must sit at tables with the children. Team members are encouraged to engage in conversations with children. Encourage children to eat their lunch and clean up any spills.

### **Emergency Health Care Policy/Risk Management**

#### **Emergency Contact Numbers:**

- Emergency Telephone Numbers
- Fire/Rescue (911): 406-582-2350
- Police (911): 406-582-2000
- Hospital: 406-414-5000
- Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222
- Gallatin Health Department: 406-582-3100
- Electric & Gas Company: 406-581-9903
- Water Company: 406-582-3168
- Child Protective Services: 1-866-820-5437

## **Daily Health Checks**

The teacher who opens each morning will be responsible for checking children into the program. When the other teachers arrive, each classroom teacher will be responsible for assisting in checking children in. While families are checking their child in for the day, the teacher assisting with that will ask the family how the past evening and morning has been. The teacher will look over the child very casually to notice if the child is exhibiting any sign of illness or discomfort. A daily health check will need to be filled out for each child, each day. This will be located in the sign in/out area.

If a child develops symptoms of illness while at XYLC:

- Isolate the child immediately from other children in the Director's office. Contact and inform the parent or guardian as soon as possible about the illness and request the parent or guardian to pick up the child asap

## **Emergency Procedure**

When a child becomes sick or an accident occurs, determine the severity of the situation and contact the parent/authorized person or arrange for transportation to the hospital. Call for an ambulance if the accident is severe enough that the child needs immediate medical attention. One team member (lead teacher or Director) should accompany the child to the hospital and take the child's emergency contact/health information. Remain with the child until the parent or alternative pick-up arrives. If a parent cannot be reached, contact the designated person on the child's permission form.

During any field trips, take along the First Aid Kit, which will have every child's emergency contact information included. Any time off site, at least one team member will have a cell phone.

## **First Aid Equipment**

Supplies will be checked on a regular weekly basis. The first aid kit is located by the front entrance of the daycare.

First Aid is administered by any team member trained in First Aid/CPR (supervising lead teacher preferred).

Contents of First Aid Kit:

- Gauze bandages • Scissors • Band-aids • Triangular bandage • Cotton • Thermometer • Rubber gloves (next to box) • Instant Ice Packs (freezer) • tweezers • CPR face mask

## **Plan for Evacuation**

Evacuation drills will be conducted regularly. Each classroom will exit out the nearest exit. Evacuation plans are posted at every exit of the building. Any additional team member in the building, including teacher aids, volunteers and the Director will assist the infant room with evacuating infants and children with special needs out of the building.

All team members are responsible for making sure that all children are evacuated from the building. Here are the steps for evacuation:

- Supervising teacher leads children out of the building once everyone is accounted for.
- Everyone meets in the parking lot, south of the building
- Supervising teacher takes attendance to make sure all kids are accounted for.
- Supervising team member or the Director assesses if the building is safe to return to. If it is not deemed safe, parents will be contacted or the procedures listed below will be followed.

Supervising teacher and Director arrange fire drills every month (at different times of the day).

- Supervising teacher keeps a log of each drill.
- Children or team members with special needs may require additional assistance.

### **Injury Prevention Plan**

- Daily monitoring of the environment is led by the Director and supervising lead teacher. All team members are required to bring their attention to any problems, repairs, or hazards.
- Equipment and toy purchases should be carefully examined and all donated materials checked for safety and health concerns.
- Supervising teachers will maintain the injury log.
- The program maintains a record of any unusual or serious incidents including but not limited to behavioral incidents, accidents, property destruction or emergencies.
- Parents/guardians are to be shown a written accident form informing them of any injuries of their child. Parent/guardian and team member sign the form. If a parent seeks follow-up at their health care provider or emergency care following an injury or illness reported from school, it needs to be recorded in the accident form.

### **Plan for Managing Infectious Diseases**

- Children are greeted by the team member upon entering, observing any possible health problems.
- If a child exhibits any of the symptoms listed in the [exclusion list](#) (distributed to both parents and team members and is posted in the program), the supervising lead teacher or Director will ask the parent to take the child back home.
- If a child becomes ill while in our care, a parent or authorized person is contacted to pick up the child. A quiet area needs to be set up until the parent arrives.
- A note from the child's physician is required in some circumstances.
- The Director will notify all parents and team members in writing when any communicable disease/illness has been introduced to XYLC immediately.
- The Director and supervising lead teacher are responsible for managing the environment.
- All problems are reported to the Director or lead teacher.
- A schedule is made for daily cleaning of toys and play areas.

- Director provides team members with directions for daily and monthly cleaning: daily disinfecting of toilets, toilet seats, sinks, faucets, floors, all table top surfaces, kitchen counter, classrooms, toys and materials, frequently touched surfaces, diapering areas, items frequently used by team members, etc. All cleaning supplies will be stored out of reach of children.
- At the end of the day all dishes and utensils are properly washed and returned to proper cabinets.
- The classrooms are maintained ongoing to keep walk areas clear and items organized. Classrooms will be left in a neat and clean condition whenever left unattended.
- Water play equipment is disinfected and properly stored after daily play.

### **Universal Health Care Precautions**

- Wash your hands...
  - When arriving at preschool - team members and children
  - Before handing food
  - After toileting (self/child)
  - Before and after water play
  - After handling bodily fluids
  - After performing cleaning tasks or using cleaning products
  - Before and after medication administration - team member and child
  - After taking out/handling garbage
  - After returning from outside play
  - After handling animals or their equipment
  - Before leaving XYLC
- Latex gloves must be worn when you feel more comfortable using them.
- Use disinfectant or bleach solution to sanitize any surfaces that can not be washed.
- Air Quality
  - Keep room temperature 65-70 degrees (F)
  - Open the windows in each room every day to circulate fresh air- even in winter

### **Plan for Identifying Special Health Care Needs/Allergies etc.**

- Parents provide information regarding any allergies or other health care concerns at registration. This information will be shared with all team members and posted in a place we can keep the child(ren) information confidential from the public.
- XYLC will provide reasonable accommodations to meet allergy or special environment conditions to the team and children without undue financial hardship. Information on children with specific conditions including allergies will have a food allergy form and special care form completed by parents at enrollment or before a child attends.
- In the event that a child has an allergic reaction to an unknown allergen, call the child's parent right away. In addition, these steps are to be followed.
  - If it is a severe reaction, call 911, this includes:

- Sudden raised, red areas (hives) all over his or her body.
  - Swelling of the throat, mouth, lips, or tongue.
  - Trouble breathing.
  - Passing out (losing consciousness). Or if the child feels very light-headed or suddenly feels weak, confused, or restless.
- If the child is experiencing these symptoms, call the parent and ask them to come assess their child and contact their family physician:
  - A rash or hives (raised, red areas on the skin).
  - Itching.
  - Swelling.
  - Belly pain, nausea, or vomiting.
- Help the child feel comfortable and monitor the child's symptoms until the medics or family member arrives

### **Medication Administration**

The following procedures must be followed for the administration of medication at XYLC:

- Medication may be administered with written parental permission by trained team member(s).
- Team members designated to administer medication must complete policy and procedure training prior to administration of medications.
- All prescription medications provided by parents or legal guardians must:
  - Be in a child-resistant container that has the original pharmacy label.
  - Have been prescribed by a licensed health professional. The name of the health professional who ordered the medication must be on the container.
  - Have the date the prescription was filled
  - Have the expiration date.
  - Have specific instructions for giving, and storing of the medication.
- Team members will not administer over-the-counter medication without a documented recommendation by the child's health care provider. A child resistant container will be provided and appropriately labeled and dated with the child's first and last name; instructions for use and storage; and the name of the health care provider who suggested the medication.
- Team members will apply topical non-steroid medication (sunscreen, diaper ointment, and lotion) only with a signed waiver from the parents or guardians. A record of administration does not need to be kept for topical non-steroid medication.
- Instructions for the dose, frequency, route and duration of treatment for prescribed and over-the-counter medication will be provided to the team member in writing by the parent.
- Prescribed and over-the-counter medications will be kept in a locked storage box at the recommended temperature as prescribed on the label.
- We require that all medications be given at home whenever possible.
- Team members designated to administer medications must triple check the five essential safety "rights" prior to giving a medication to any child.



- THE RIGHT CHILD – The child’s identity must be confirmed.
- THE RIGHT MEDICATION – The authorization form must be compared to the medication log and the pharmacy label.
- THE RIGHT DOSAGE – The exact amount of the medication specified by the health care provider must be given as ordered.
- THE RIGHT TIME – The medication log must be checked to determine the time of the administration of the last dose. The label on the medication should be checked to confirm the correct interval between dosages.
- THE RIGHT ROUTE – The pharmacy label must be checked for the exact route for the medication to be given, e.g., by mouth, ear drops, etc.
- Medication will not be used beyond the expiration date on the container or beyond any expiration instructions provided on the label. The child’s health care provider will annually review all medications prescribed “as needed”.
- A medication log will be maintained by team members to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of the medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted on the log.
- Designated team members will administer medications required for emergency treatment *only* if authorized by a local poison control center or physician.
- If a child is mistakenly given another child’s medication, or an incorrect dosage, the poison control center must be called immediately. The parents and physician of the child who mistakenly received the medication must then be notified. Team members must complete the Medication Error/Incident Report form within 24 hours of the incident and return the form to the Director.

### **Contingency Plan for Emergency Situations Responsibility**

- XYLC – XYLC team members will retain responsibility of all children on premises until they are released to a parent, guardian or other designated person, or until they have been transported to an official evacuation center, in which case selected team members will remain with the children until they have reunited with their families.
- TEAM MEMBERS – All team members will remain on the premises as service workers, as designated by law. Such team members will be subjected to whatever tasks are assigned by the person or persons in charge, and may not leave the premises until the same person or persons in charge give them official permission to do so.
- PARENTS – Parents should follow official instructions relayed by officials via the radio and other news sources. If parents are able to reach XYLC without danger to themselves or without interference with disaster workers, they should come to pick up their children. Children will be released only to parents, guardians, or other designated persons known to them or to their parent guardians.

### **In Case Of Fire, Natural Disaster, Or Bomb Threat**

- Save lives- evacuate any persons in immediate danger.
- Evacuate the children and adults out the door/exit they are closest to. Meet as a group in the parking lot south of the building.  
Person in charge checks for stragglers, takes attendance, and makes a head count.  
Secondary exit plan: (if driveway is not accessible) the parking lot to the east of the building.
- Sound alarms. Supplement with voice shouts, whistle or bullhorn.
- Report fire- dial 911. Say: "There is a fire at 202 S. Wilson"
- Use a portable fire extinguisher or wall extinguisher if it is safe to stay inside the area while doing so.
- Contain the spread of the fire and smoke by closing all doors and windows (if possible).

After evacuation:

- When safe within the pre-designated area, all children and adults must be accounted for.
- Person in charge reassures children of their safety.
- First Aid is administered if needed.
- Building is not re-entered until permission is given by the officials.

Evaluations:

Follow the emergency with an evaluation by all team members in order to spot areas of weakness or oversight to be remedied for any future emergency.

### **In Case Of Power Outage:**

- Remain calm.
- If the weather is nice, evacuate the building if rooms are too dark to use.
- If weather is hot go outdoors in a cool, shady spot, if possible.
- Utilize available emergency supplies to keep children comfortable.

### **In Case of Loss of Water or Heat:**

- The person in charge will notify the responsible parties.
- XYLC must meet minimum requirements regarding temperatures, hot water, flushing of toilets, running water, etc. in order to operate. After the problem is evaluated, the person in charge will make a decision whether or not XYLC should close.
- Parents or guardians will be notified to pick up their child if deemed necessary.
- Expanded Emergency Evacuation Plan

## **Emergency Evacuation**

- In the event of an emergency situation that requires an evacuation and in all situations that require leaving the building, these things should be taken when evacuating:
  - Accurate attendance list, Go Kit, first aid kit, which should have accurate emergency contact information enclosed.
  - Account for all children and team during any boarding of vehicles.
  - Bring any necessary medications/supplies and emergency records.
- If the environmental emergency is confined to the immediate area of the child care, e.g. fire, toxic fumes, etc. and the children cannot stay on the premises, the children will walk outside where they will remain accompanied by teacher(s) while parents/emergency contacts are notified of the situation and arrangements are made for either the transporting home or care taking for the remainder of the day.
- In the event of exposure to toxic materials, gases, flooding, etc. and a physical examination is recommended, children will be transported by ambulance/police cars.
- In the event of a major environmental emergency which is more widespread and encompasses a larger area (neighborhood, several buildings/homes) due to a non-confirmed environmental threat, e.g. toxic materials/fumes from a spill, floodwaters, fires, etc. and the children cannot remain in the area, the children will be brought to the nearest safe area.
- In the event of a major environmental hazard that necessitates a larger area evacuation (several neighborhoods, a city/town) due to a non-confirmed hazard (e.g. nuclear accident, earthquake, etc.) the children will be transported by emergency vehicles/personal cars (if necessary) to a Red Cross designated mass shelter or nearest safe area. They will remain accompanied by teacher(s) while parents/guardians/emergency contacts are notified and arrangements are made for their pick-up.
- We will work closely with all emergency personnel to evacuate all children and teachers to the safest location as quickly as possible.

## **Hazardous or dangerous outdoor conditions**

Sometimes the weather outside will not permit outdoor play. When this happens, all children will need to have large motor skill activities indoors. The lead teacher will set up activities and arrange activities to support large muscle movement. Times where children may not be able to go outdoors while in care are the following:

- Extreme temperatures, children should not go out if it is below 15 degrees for long periods of time and not at all if the temperature falls below 0. If the temperature is above 90 degrees, children should not be outside for long periods of time or at all if it is above 95 degrees.
- Hazardous air from smoke from wildfires.
- Weather conditions that could cause bodily harm like hail storms, blizzards, extreme wind or lightning.
- Any conditions that are deemed to be unsafe for children to be outdoors.

## **Intruder, Suspicious Unidentified Person on Premise**

In the event of an intruder or suspicious unidentified person in or around the building, the lead teacher or Director will call 911 immediately. The following steps are to be followed:

- All team members will move children away from windows, into an area that is deemed safe. For the infants, this could be the infant nap room. For the preschool and toddler children, this could be the basement school age room.
- All children will be accounted for by a head count.
- Teaching team will help children remain calm, as practiced in safety and fire drills.
- Once the area is deemed safe, the Director and lead teacher will advise that each class can resume back to their classroom.

## **Health Care Policy For Team Members and Children**

Please keep yourself and/or your child at home if you/he/she has:

- Severe cold and fever, sneezing, nose drainage, and coughing.
- Temperature of over 101 degrees in the morning.
- Conjunctivitis - an eye infection commonly referred to as “pink-eye.” The eye is generally red with some burning and yellowish discharge.
- Bronchitis. This can begin with hoarseness, cough, and a slight elevation in temperature. The cough may be dry and painful, but it gradually becomes productive.
- Rashes that you cannot identify or that have not been diagnosed by a physician.
- Impetigo. Begins as red pimples on the skin, which eventually become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area. When the blister breaks, the surface is raw and weeping. The lesions occur in moist areas of the body, such as: creases of the neck, groin, and under the arm.
- Diarrhea- watery or greenish bowel movements that look different and are much more frequent than normal.
- Vomiting - more than the usual “spitting up.”
- If you/they become really sick without obvious symptoms. In this case, the child may look or act differently. There may be an unusual paleness, tiredness, irritability, or lack of interest.
- With a contagious disease, you/your child must be kept home and XYLC needs to be notified. All parents will be notified once a contagious disease is reported. You/the child may return to school with a note from your physician.
  - Illnesses included: Measles, mumps, roseola, chicken pox.
  - If a doctor diagnoses an ear or throat infection, as an example, and the child is prescribed an antibiotic, the child may not be brought to the program until he/she has been on the medication for at least 24 hours.
  - Please call the program with diagnosis.

## **COVID 19 Safety Policies and Procedures**

During the time that COVID-19 is a potential health threat to the community, we will be practicing extra measures to ensure that all team members and children are healthy each day they are at XYLC. All team will take part in these measures:

- Daily health checks-at arrival and ongoing throughout the day.
- We will have limited adult and visitor exposure.
- Practice extra sanitation/cleaning procedures
- Practice increased hand washing
- Prepare and teach the children how to keep themselves and our childcare environment safe and healthy
- Practice social distancing whenever we are in areas where there is not proper ventilation
- Wear masks per state and CDC recommendations
- Follow all state, local and CDC recommendations

If you are exposed to a child, child's guardian or team member through contact tracing, follow the recommendations of your health care provider or Gallatin Health Department. If you do test positive, follow the recommendations of your health care provider and/or Gallatin Health Department.

The following are the guidelines we will follow in addition to the Gallatin Health Department recommendations. These guidelines can change as more information is available about COVID-19.

### **If someone is in contact with someone with COVID-19:**

- The Director will find out the timeline if exposure actually happened. Exposure means that within 48 hours of onset of symptoms, a person had at least 15 minutes of contact within 6 feet of distance of the person who tested positive.
- If definite exposure has taken place, that person should quarantine for at least 14 days from the time of exposure.
- As soon as this information is known, the Director will alert Gallatin Health Department. XYLC will follow all recommendations made by the Gallatin Health Department.
- The room that the person(s) who had exposure will be completely vacated. The room will be off limits for 24 hours or as long as feasible before disinfecting and sanitizing. The team and children will use another classroom while the current classroom is being cleaned.
- Families of those who have been in direct contact with the person who has been exposed will be communicated to by the Director and/or Gallatin Health Department.
- If someone has been exposed to someone who has been exposed (3rd party), there is no need to quarantine. Quarantine only is necessary if someone is directly exposed to the person who is positive.
- If any of the exposed people from XYLC start to have symptoms and/or test positive for COVID-19, if it is recommended by the Gallatin Health Department, we will close XYLC for at least 48 hours to do a deep clean of the building unless directed otherwise.

**If someone shows symptoms and/or tests positive for COVID-19:**

- If the person is a child and begins to show symptoms of COVID-19 at XYLC, remove the child immediately and place them in a room with minimal toys/furniture. All team members accompanying the child are required to wear proper PPE. The Director or lead teacher will notify the child's family immediately to come pick up the child asap. Signs and/or symptoms of COVID-19 are:
  - Shortness of breath
  - Cough
  - Fever >100.4 degrees Fahrenheit
  - Chills
  - Repeated shaking with chills
  - Muscle pain
  - Headache
  - Sore throat
  - New loss of taste or smell
- If a child is sent home with symptoms, they will need to monitor symptoms for at least 48 hours before returning to XYLC and/or follow their health care providers and the Gallatin Health departments recommendations. The Director will be in direct contact with the child's family to communicate when the child should return to XYLC.
- If the person is a team member, they need to be sent home immediately if symptoms begin at work. The team member is recommended to get a (rapid) test and remain home until results are given. If positive, he/she must remain home and quarantined for 14 days since onset of symptoms unless the Gallatin Health Department has directed otherwise. If negative, it is recommended to wait at least 24 hours and take another rapid test. If negative again, the team member may return to work.
- Parents and guardians of children who have been exposed to the confirmed positive child or team must be notified by the Director immediately.
- XYLC will close for 48 hours to properly disinfect and clean all areas.
- Anyone exposed to the confirmed positive person will be contacted by XYLC and the Gallatin Health Department. Anyone exposed should follow the recommendations by the health department before returning to XYLC.
- XYLC will work with the Gallatin Health Department to determine what procedures should be followed and when the program can resume operations.

Please remember that team, children and families health information is deemed confidential. All team members at XYLC are required to keep children and families health information confidential. It is not permitted to share with other families who a team, child or family member is that may have been exposed to COVID-19 or that tests positive. A team or family may wish to keep it confidential that they have been exposed or that they tested positive for COVID-19. In that case, the Director and the Gallatin

Health Department will not disclose who the individual is that tested positive or has possibly caused exposure when contacting those who may have been in contact through contact tracing. We want all the team, children and family members to feel that we hold high standards to their personal health history. We by law have to adhere to confidentiality practices, with the exception of being able to share this type of information with state licensing and the Gallatin Health Department.

### **Documentation and reporting procedures**

An accident log is kept on site. All accidents need to be recorded, signed off on by the lead teacher and family of the child involved. If medical attention is required, the Director or managing team member is required to submit a report to the appropriate local office of child care licensing department within 24 hours after the occurrence of an accident causing injury to a child which includes: the child being hospitalized, requiring ambulance transport or intervention, or physician treatment, or any fire in the facility when the services of the fire department were required. A copy of the report shall be provided to the parents of the children involved, and a copy retained on file at the day care facility.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Information contained in a child's record and team files shall be privileged and confidential. Unauthorized removal of records or unauthorized divulgence of parents, team or program's confidential information is strictly prohibited by XYLC and from Montana State Licensing. Violation of these rules is considered serious and will result in discharge without prior warning. All team and student observers must comply with these professional ethics at all times and never discuss children, families or team elsewhere. Observations made in the classroom and all information discussed at team meetings and at team training are to be kept in strict confidence. Student observers should use a "pseudonym" for children in their observation forms, journal entries, etc and the word "teacher" to describe any team.

We do not release information in a child's record to anyone without parental written consent. The child's parent or guardian shall, upon request, have access to his or her child's record.

### **Parent Interactions**

Many of you will become well acquainted with the parents of the children. We think this is great, but there are a few guidelines to which you must adhere:

- Be mindful when having conversations with families about their child to keep supervision on all the other children in your care.
- Refer all parent questions that you are unsure of to the Director.
- Try to keep in mind what information needs to be shared and how you can keep that information confidential from other families who may be nearby.
- Never talk to parents about other children.
- Feel free to share a child's highlight from the day with parents or caregivers and any other important information that the parent/caregiver requests.
- It is important to build relationships with families. Keep in mind that all families will have differences in how much they communicate and how it works best for them. We will have several communication points throughout the day, including:

- Drop off and pick up times
- HiMama
- Email
- An occasional text or phone call
- Try to keep your personal conversations to a minimum. We are providing a service to children and their families. We need to make sure that we are not over burdening them with our personal information.
- Stick to asking questions about how to best support the children in your care, what you are working on in the program with the children and anything you feel the family needs information about.
- When something needs to be communicated that will take more than a 2 to 5 minute conversation, the lead teacher or Director should be alerted to consider if a phone call or email is necessary to let the family know that a longer conversation needs to take place. This will allow the family to plan accordingly and also give time to get feedback on what will be important to highlight in the conversation. Things that may take more time to discuss could be:
  - Challenging behaviors
  - Injuries
  - Concerns about developmental progress, self care, and/or social behavior
  - Ongoing support and strategies that have been set in place with the family and teaching team member
- Families are always respected as the experts of their child. When we talk with parents about concerns we have, we look to them for advice and partnership rather than trying to label the behavior and give our personal opinions. We ask questions to help understand what the family may be experiencing and if they are, how they are handling it at home. Together the teacher and family should come up with solutions that will be best for the individual child while in care at XYLC. We never offer up advice unless a family member seeks it. Advice that is given should reflect developmentally appropriate practice.
- If ever a conversation seems uncomfortable, let the Director know.
- Another form of communication that will happen annually is parent and teacher conferences. The conferences will be set up between the lead teacher and each child's family. All team members in each classroom will work with each child on their individual goals. Documentation of work will happen over a period of time, of which will be shared at the parent and teacher conference. All the information shared will highlight progress over time from the child.
- Occasionally an individualized learning plan will need to be organized and in place. These plans will address but are not limited to: special needs, ongoing challenging behaviors, developmental delays and any other additional support a child may need. The learning plan will highlight when communication takes place, what will be communicated regularly and how and who is responsible for implementing the plan.

Relationships are built over time. Understanding how it works best for each individual family will naturally happen when we keep our conversations professional.



## **Child Abuse Policies**

### **Mandated Reporting**

- According to the law, public or private school teachers, educational administrators, guidance or family counselors as well as day care/childcare workers, are mandated reporters. Thus, it is the policy of our program to report any and all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect to the Child Protective Services immediately by telephone. A follow up in writing within 24 hours with the same information as reported by telephone is required to keep in XYLC records.
- Our school will offer full cooperation of its team during the investigation of the reported incident.

A team member should follow these regulations if abuse/neglect is suspected:

#### **Definitions:**

- Child Abuse is the non-accidental commission of any act by a caretaker that causes or creates a substantial risk of harm to a child's physical and emotional wellbeing, including sexual abuse.
- Child Neglect is the failure by a caretaker, either deliberately or through negligence, to take those actions necessary to provide a child with minimally adequate food, safety, clothing, shelter, medical care, supervision, or other essential care.
- Reasonable cause means that after examining all the facts in a particular situation, most people with similar training and experience would also suspect abuse and/or neglect.

### **Parental Child Abuse**

The following procedure has been established regarding the reporting and/or recording of suspected child abuse and neglect:

- Any team person that suspects a child has come to school abused or neglected, must report that information to the supervising lead teacher or Director.
- It is the responsibility of the supervising lead teacher or Director to contact CPS.

It is the policy of the program that there shall be no corporal punishment of children. No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliations or verbal abuse, including, but not limited to, the denial of food. It is the policy of XYLC that no one has unmonitored contact with the children at any time. Team members must be in sight/sound of each other at all times.

The following procedure has been established regarding the steps taken if a team member is suspected of abusing and/ or neglecting a child at XYLC:

- Whoever has reasonable cause to believe that a team member may have been abusive or neglectful to a child or children shall immediately notify their supervisor and/or Director.
- The Director will prepare, within 24 hours, but no later than 36 hours, a written report of the situation. The report shall include dates, times, names of all parties involved (adults and children), places, and description of the incident.

- The Director must immediately notify designee of XYPN. The XYPN designee will assess the situation and, if warranted, report the suspected abuse or neglect to DSS.
- The suspected or alleged team member shall immediately be removed from working directly with children until a written investigation has been completed and authorized to return as appropriate. The team member will be paid only after an unsubstantiated report is made.

### **Policy on Releasing Children**

Only the authorized parent(s) or others identified by the parents can pick up a child. A signed form is on file in the child's folder listing other authorized persons. Check on the attendance record if an alternative person will be picking the child up (where this should be recorded). Under no circumstances can a child be released to anyone not on the signed form or that has been requested by the legal guardian of the child. Ask for identification if you do not know the person or have never met them.

### **Referral/Termination Policy of XYLC**

#### **Referral Meeting with Parent(s)**

Referrals happen when there is a concern for a child's development or behavior that does not match what is appropriate for his/her age. Parents will be notified of the situation and of all ongoing developments by either the lead teacher or the Director. Direct referral recommendations will happen only after XYLC team members have worked ongoing with the child and his/her family for a period of 3 months or more. During that period of time there will be ongoing observations, positive behavior guidance, modified development plans and environment changes to support the child's development and behavior. Communication with team members and family of the child will be ongoing to provide consistency and to get feedback. If all resources that XYLC and team have are exhausted and there is still concern, an official parent teacher conference will be scheduled. A parent conference will be scheduled as soon as possible to discuss the concerns and reasons why referral of care is being considered.

Parents will be given in writing:

- The reason(s) for recommending additional services.
- A brief summary of XYLC's observations related to the referral
- Any efforts XYLC team made to accommodate the child's needs.

The Director or lead teacher will also provide the parents with specific referrals in addition to or from the list of community resources and services. XYLC will offer referrals to parents for evaluations, diagnostic and therapeutic services. It is the parent's responsibility to share pertinent information with teachers at XYLC, to follow through on the referral recommendation, and to request additional conferences with the teachers as they feel this is needed. We will work collaboratively with support services to implement a plan to meet the child's developmental needs both at XYLC and at home including consultation and education training if needed.

## **Suspension and Termination of Enrollment Policy**

Termination is always a last resort action which is carried out only when the Director and teachers feel that such action is in the best interest of the child or the other children enrolled. If XYLC is unable to meet the needs of the child and/or family, every effort will be made to refer the parent to a more appropriate program for their child. The circumstances under which a child may be terminated are explained below.

- The child exhibits extremely aggressive behavior which endangers other children and/or team members.
- The child's health and safety at XYLC cannot be assured due to circumstances such as impulsive, risk taking behavior.
- Unwillingness of the parent(s) to work with XYLC in the management of their child's behavior, and/or refusal to follow the program's recommendations for outside support services.
- The child's developmental needs are not being met at XYLC due to general immaturity. Behavior indicative of a child's immaturity may include severe ongoing separation issues, excessive need for teacher attention, and inability to function independently or with the group.
- The child has individual special needs which require accommodations causing an undue burden on XYLC. Accommodations related to the toileting needs of a child with a documented disability shall not be considered an undue burden.
- If suspension or termination is due to the child's behavior, we will give specific examples, and let parents know whether we will accept the child back if he/she receives counseling, seeks medical attention, or some other change occurs. Parents will receive a written explanation of the reasons why, and the circumstances under which the child may return. Recommendations for return will be made by the support of referral services.
- We will prepare the child being terminated with sensitivity and consideration of their developmental ability. Children in the program will be informed in an age appropriate manner that the child will be attending another school.
- Nonpayment of tuition.
- Continued lateness of parents dropping off and picking up their child.
- Parent's display of inappropriate behavior towards team members or children. May include: disrespectful language, disregarding program policies, verbal and/or physical harassment or any unlawful behavior.
- Falsifying information on child enrollment forms or any other required form required for enrollment.

**Documentation is key to being able to see the whole picture. A plan to document behaviors, interactions, et. will be set up by the lead teacher in collaboration with the Director.**

## **Supervision Policy**

Supervision is defined as being responsible for direct care, protection, supervision, and guidance of children through active involvement or direct observation.

No child will be left unsupervised while attending the program. At least two team members will always be available at any one time, unless the numbers and ratios are low enough for one team

member . The Lead Child Care Specialist and team members will regularly count children on a scheduled basis, at every transition time and whenever leaving one area and arriving at another to confirm the safe whereabouts of every child at all times.

All emergency problems will be reported to the Director.

### **Nutrition Policy**

We try to promote a healthy attitude toward food. We teach children about good food choices. We encourage children to explore new tastes. We often involve children in snack preparation. We ask parents to join in our efforts to promote good eating habits and good food choices with any food coming into the program, such as lunch brought from home, birthday treats, or at holiday parties. The program has a list of nutritional information in the parent resource area. The team ensures that foods are not served to children beyond their recommended date of use. All food must be cut into bite size pieces (grapes in half, apples sliced, cheese cut in pieces etc.) to infants.

Teachers at XYLC need to become familiarized with appropriate food portions for each age group. This information is located in the parent resource area.

Under no circumstances should the children be left unattended while eating!

### **Tooth Brushing Policy**

Oral health is included in our curriculum. The preschool age group will brush their teeth daily after lunch. A toothbrush and toothpaste is provided by the program. The teacher is responsible to help the children who can't put the toothpaste on their tooth brush and encourage those who can to do it on their own. Teeth brushing materials will be stored away from children to access when not using, to keep those items from being touched and contaminated with germs.

### **Food Handling And Serving Policy**

#### **Drinking Water:**

- Safe drinking water will be accessible to children who can serve themselves and offered between meals to all children, while indoors and outdoors.
- Drinking water will be dispensed by a personal water bottle.
- Caregivers will offer water to children more frequently when the temperature is above 80 degrees F.

#### **Food Safety/Dishes, Utensils and Surfaces:**

- No one with signs of illness (including vomiting, diarrhea, open infectious skin sores), or who is known to be infected with bacteria or viruses that can be carried in food, will be responsible for food handling.
- Those who prepare food will not change diapers in between food prep and vice-versa.
- Refrigerators will be maintained at a temperature below 40 degrees F, and freezers will be maintained below 0 degrees F.

- All food stored in the refrigerator except fresh, whole fruits and vegetables will be covered, wrapped, or protected from contamination.
- Food preparation, storage and services areas and equipment will be kept clean, sanitary, and will conform to national guidelines.
- Foods that do not require refrigerated storage will be kept at least 6 inches above the floor in clean, dry, well ventilated storerooms or other approved areas. Storage will facilitate easy cleaning.
- Containers will be of types that protect food from rodents and insects. Dry, bulk foods (cereals) which are not in their original, unopened containers will be stored off the floor in clean metal, glass, or food-grade plastic containers with tight-fitting covers. These containers will be labeled and dated.
- Medications requiring refrigeration will be stored as specified in Medication Policy.
- Cutting boards will be made of nonporous material and will be scrubbed with hot water and detergent and disinfected with bleach/water solution made of 1 teaspoon of household bleach to one quart of water between uses for different foods. Boards with crevices and cuts will not be used.
- A dishwasher will be used to wash dishes and food service utensils whenever possible. If dishes and utensils are washed by hand, the following procedure will be followed:
  - Use a dish rack with a drain board for drying. Where possible, cloth that can be laundered will be used instead of sponges. If a sponge is used during dishwashing, it must be cleaned and disinfected between uses by being squeezed out in a bleach solution according to the instructions on the bleach container.
  - Immerse the dishes and utensils for at least one minute in a solution of bleach water that contains 1½ tablespoons of bleach for each gallon of hot tap water that is at least 75 degrees F.
- Food that has been served and not eaten from individual plates, containers and family-style serving bowls will be discarded.
- Containers which hold organic material (food, soiled tissues) shall be covered with a tight-fitting lid. These containers will be closed after each use except when children are participating in clean up. Garbage/trash will be removed from the facility daily.

### **Food Brought from Home**

At XYLC, food will be brought from home under the following conditions: (for special occasions, for lunch, for special snacks).

- Perishable food brought from home to be shared with other children must be store bought and in its original package. Baked goods may be made at home if they are fully cooked, do not require refrigeration and were made with freshly purchased ingredients.
- Lunch and snack foods brought from home will meet with the guidelines of the Child and Adult Care Food program for the types of foods and portion sizes. They will be prepared and transported in a sanitary fashion, including maintenance of

safe food temperatures for perishable items. Food that is not at a safe temperature when it arrives will be discarded.

- Children will not be allowed to share food provided by the child's family unless the food is intended for sharing with all of the children.
- Leftover food will be discarded. The only food that may be returned to the family is food from the child's lunch, which will be kept in the child's lunch bag.

### **Traffic/Pedestrian Safety**

Motor vehicle related injuries are the greatest threat to a child's life. To reduce the chances of injury, the following policies and procedures are provided to all parents and team:

- There is a safe drop off and pick up location for children arriving and leaving.
- Parents or designated adults must accompany the children into XYLC at arrival time and notify teachers of the child's arrival. Same procedures at pick-up times. Parents must sign in and out daily.

The children will learn pedestrian safety by role modeling and verbal reinforcement. Teachers will demonstrate to children to cross at the corner, when traffic signals indicate it is safe to cross, and to look both ways before crossing.

Designated team members will supervise the front of the line and the end of the line. Children will be counted on a regular basis as teachers require.

Parents are advised to follow State Law requirements on appropriate car seat and seat belt laws for children and adults. No child will be left alone in a vehicle unsupervised by an adult. Parents will provide arrival and departure information (drop-off/pick-up by car, supervised walk, other) in the enrollment forms.

### **Field Trips**

We have a great location to take walking field trips. Occasionally, the older children may take the city bus for a field trip experience. Field trips can be a great extension to project work. It can also be a great opportunity to get out in the community. All field trips require Director approval. In addition, these steps will be followed:

- An announcement is sent to the parents letting them know when, where, how long and what the child will need in order to participate in the field trip.
- If the field trip includes taking the city bus, written permission will be given by all children's families.
- Children will be prepared on what is expected of them, where and what they will be doing on the trip and given an overview of all safety precautions.
- An emergency kit, with emergency contact information will be prepared and taken on all trips away from XYLC.
- At least two team members need to attend and supervise the field trip. Parents can be invited ahead of time to chaperone.
- An attendance record of all children and team will be taken by the lead teacher. Children will be accounted for throughout the trip to ensure all children are in the safety of the group.

## **Environmental Health and Pest Control Policy**

The XYLC facility and outdoor play areas are entirely smoke free. No smoking is permitted in the presence of children.

The program maintains facilities so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests and poisonous plants.

Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children.

## **Pet Policy**

The lead teacher and/or the Director will be responsible for checking the appropriate care instructions for pets both indoor and out. All animals requiring immunizations will require proof of immunizations and be in good health and free of any diseases which can be transmitted to humans. Children and team members will follow proper hand washing after feeding or handling pets. No reptiles are allowed in the program due to the risk of salmonella infections. Program team must make sure that any child who is allergic to a type of animal is not exposed to that animal. Any pet or animal must be a friendly companion of the children.

## **Transitions In/Out of XYLC**

Transitions work better when we know what to expect. By planning transitions, we can help children adjust to new settings and approach new experiences in a positive way.

Transitions happen when:

- Children enter a program for the very first time
- Children move from one classroom to another
- Children go from preschool to kindergarten
- Children move to a different community
- Children attend more than one program

The teachers welcome new children and parents into the program in the following ways:

- Registration and a tour of XYLC – parent and child
- Information obtained on each child included on the enrollment forms - (special interests, activities, temperament, check list, etc.) Forms are updated as needed

Ongoing communication includes:

- Daily greeting and good-bye of all children and parents
- Daily sign in and out
- HiMama
- Weekly or, if needed, daily discussion with parents on child's progress/concerns
- Message Board- special place to leave messages for children.

When a child is leaving the program it is the team's responsibility to make it a positive experience. Depending on the child and the situation, the teachers need to keep the last goodbyes brief, positive and appropriate. After the child is gone the teacher needs to explain briefly to the other children that that child will not be returning and not go into details or carry it on.

## **Facility Cleaning Routines**

The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.

- When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and cleaned asap.
- When surfaces are soiled by body fluids or other potentially infectious material, they will be disinfected after they are cleaned with soap and water to remove all organic material. Surfaces will be disinfected using a (non-toxic) solution of 1.4 cup of household bleach to one gallon of tap water (or 1 tablespoon of household bleach to one quart of water), made fresh daily.
- To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy and then will be allowed to air dry.

Routine cleaning of the facility will be supervised by the lead teacher according to the schedule and procedures.

## **Toys/Classroom Materials Care Policy**

The lead teacher will be responsible for checking that all toys receive appropriate care and meet the following guidelines:

- The lead teacher will check toys accessible to children under four years of age using a small object tester and a ruler. Objects are prohibited that have removable parts, or a diameter of less than 1¼ inch and a length of less than 2¼ inches, or are small enough to fit completely in a child's mouth. No latex balloons, plastic bags, and styrofoam objects can be accessible to children under three years of age.
- Children in diapers will have only washable toys.
- All toys that are mouthed during the course of the day will be set aside in an inaccessible container before another child plays with the toy. Mouthed toys will be washed and disinfected.
- Toys must be washed and disinfected by hand or by washing in a dishwasher.
- Cloth toys for children who are still mouthing toys will be limited to use by only one child and cleaned in a washing machine and dried in a clothes dryer.
- Toys used by children who do not put these objects in their mouths will be cleaned at least weekly and when obviously soiled. Soap or detergent and water followed by clear water rinsing and air drying will be used.
- All materials will be sanitized at the end of each day.
- Water tables where more than one child plays in the same water will not be used unless the container and toys are disinfected before each use of the table. The children are required to wash their hands before they use the table. Team members supervise the water play closely to be sure no child drinks the water or has any contact between body fluids (from the child's nose, mouth, eye) and the water in the water table.
- No are toys allowed that have sharp edges, are coated with lead paint, have breakable glass, screws that have unthreaded, or that present risks of injury from common use.
- Toys that are contaminated by bodily secretions or excretions or placed in the mouth will be washed by hand using water and detergent, then rinsed, sanitized and air dried before another child can use it.



## **General Child Growth and Development**

### **Assessment**

Throughout the year, we will be busy overseeing children and documenting his/her progress. As teachers, our knowledge of each child helps us to plan appropriately and to tailor that to meet each child's strengths, needs and interests.

Assessment is defined as the process of observing, recording and documenting what children do, know and understand. All information collected is held in a confidential manner.

We use these steps in our assessment process:

- Collect facts; all information will be secured in the file folder.
- Analyze and evaluate the collected data on a weekly basis.
- Use what we learn to plan activities that are meaningful and relevant to the child's interests and developmental needs
- Communicate ongoing with team about meeting each child's needs through assessment
- Use Montana Learning Standards as a basis of what children can do at different stages of their development
- Organize all information about a child to be shared with their family at parent teacher conferences
- Communicate ongoing with each child's family about what the child is working on while they develop new skills

Under the direction and supervision of the lead Child Care Specialist, all team members at XYLC are involved in the assessment of children and will receive ongoing training and teaching resources to support their understanding.

Assessment information includes:

- Results shared with parents during parent/teacher conferences and included in comments on child's progress reports.
- Guidelines on how to observe children.
- Child portfolios – tools may include checklists, social inventory, anecdotal records, progress reports, samples of work, drawing, paintings, writing, stories, block building, etc.
- Daily classroom discussions.
- Project work – documentation panels.
- Weekly communication with parents in order to share information informally with parents on a weekly basis.
- Progress reports/daily reports

Parents sign a consent form for pictures to stay in the classroom or to be posted on the HiMama app. There is absolutely no exception of other uses outside the program unless given permission.

### **Child Behavior Guidance Policy**

At XYLC, we understand that working with children and challenging behaviors can be overwhelming. We have established some guidelines on how all team members at XYLC can be

consistent with how children are treated and the messages we send to children around guidance and discipline. We take a more proactive approach at XYLC. We work daily on helping children to learn and utilize skills that help them understand how to make good choices, understand and control their feelings and behavior and learn how to cooperate with their peers and in group activities. The early childhood years are the years that children are learning the skills to manage themselves and get along with others.

Here are some common techniques we use in the classrooms:

- We try to arrange the environment to avoid problem situations.
- We tailor our expectations to fit the development levels of the children to minimize frustrations and inappropriate behavior.
- Teachers receive ongoing team training in the area of positive approaches to discipline and strategies to use with challenging behaviors.
- Children participate in establishing school rules and policies as appropriate. These rules are posted at XYLC.
- We encourage children to develop their own control, autonomy, management of feelings, problem solving, and find their own rewards in cooperative social behavior. The underlying goal of all discipline at the program is to help children develop inner self-controls to replace adult-maintained external controls.
- Whenever a conflict arises we support children in finding their own solutions, while also promoting the development of self-control and empathy within each individual child.
- Teachers set clear, consistent limits and strive to develop close, nurturing relationships with all children enrolled. We avoid the use of the words “no” and “don’t” unless a child is in danger, and even then follow it with a reason, such as “that isn’t safe” or “I can’t let you hit Susan with the block because it hurts her.”
- School rules mostly relate to health and safety. Teachers avoid ultimatums that force power struggles.
- Our approach to behavior guidance (discipline) is based on the acceptance of a wide range of children’s feelings and the encouragement of self control.
- Respect for each other and the environment are emphasized through the development of social skills such as turn-taking, helping and cooperation.
- Children are encouraged, individually and as a group, to generate possible solutions to conflicts, to predict various outcomes, and to choose alternative behaviors.
- We seek to balance the needs of the child for autonomy and individual attention, with the needs of the group for the consistent expectations which embrace a sense of fairness.
- We work as a team with other teachers and with parents. Parents are encouraged to discuss any questions regarding classroom and behavior management with the lead teacher, teacher and/or Director.
- We analyze possible reasons for the behavior problems and make whatever adjustments in the environment that we can.
- We offer choices, try to redirect activity, point out natural or logical consequences of different behaviors, to help the child individually or in a group to problem solve.
- We give hugs and words of encouragement!

The following general behavior management strategies are frequently used at XYLC:

- Positive statements are made which tell the child the correct thing to do. For example: “Turn the pages carefully,” rather than “Don’t tear the book!”
- Positive redirection is used to clarify when and where a certain behavior is acceptable. i.e., “Save your running until we go outside” instead of “No running inside!”
- Feelings are validated, and children are guided to socially acceptable means of expressing anger and frustration, such as using words, tearing newspaper, sensory play and/or taking some alone time to calm down.
- The “deed” is separated from the “doer,” relaying the message that “I like and accept you unconditionally but I do not like what you did.”
- Behavior we want to see continued is reinforced. Examples of positive reinforcers include a smile, hugs, “thank you,” and other words of encouragement.

### Guidance and Helping Children

- Try to state suggestions or directions in a positive way. Avoid “don’t.” Example: “The sand stays in the sandbox” rather than “don’t dump the sand on the floor.” Avoid “good boy,” good girl.”
- Speak directly to the child. Do not call across the room to a child. Use a tone of voice that reflects your confidence in your ability to guide the situation. It is important to help a child feel confident and reassured, rather than threatened.
- Give a child a choice only when you intend to leave it up to him. A good amount of choices is two to three, of which all support what you are trying to get the child to do.
- Avoid motivating a child by making comparisons between one child and another. This encourages competitive feelings and may cause the child to feel less respect for him/herself.
- Redirect the child from undesirable behavior. Try to keep your suggestions related to the child’s motives and interests.
- Help children understand why you are asking something of them. For example, you may say, “Put away the puzzle if you are finished because the pieces may get lost.”
- Encourage independence. Give the child a minimum of help, to encourage them to do things they are capable of but give help when you feel it is needed.
- Observe professional ethics- we need to discuss children’s behavior in order to understand them. It is important that we keep our conversations confidential.
- Avoid artificiality. Avoid talking “down” to a child or telling them things that are not true.
- Be yourself, enjoy yourself.

Sometimes a child may display individual needs that are beyond the scope of our program and/or the expertise of the teachers. If the child’s teacher and the Director feel that s/he would benefit from additional services, they will notify the parents and make recommendations. Behavioral problems that result in injury to other children or adults or require excessive one-on-one teaming to prevent frequent disruptions of the group routines are responded to as outlined in the referral and termination policy.

## **General Health and Safety Guidelines**

All team members must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies or special medical conditions.

Under the supervision of the supervising lead teacher, all team members must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children at regular intervals, especially during periods of transition.

- Be alert to all possible hazards to the safety and health of the children (climbing on splintered fences, wet clothes, running with scissors). Avoid turning your back on the group when helping one child.
- Teachers need to distribute themselves throughout the preschool and playground rather than grouping together. Your attention and concerns need to be on the children; observing, guiding, encouraging creative efforts, problem solving, and attempts at friendship.

### Limits to Ensure Safety and Growth

- Running outside only- unless it is a supervised activity.
- We provide activities and guidance to help children practice safe and healthy habits, such as proper handwashing.
- Physical contact is important. Children need a lap to sit on or a hand to hold. However, avoid “carrying” a child around. Encourage independence, but not at the expense of affection.
- Teachers provide children with opportunities to develop the classroom community through participation in decision making about classroom rules, plans and activities. All rules follow under “Be SAFE, BE KIND, and BE HEALTHY” Examples include:
  - We must wash our hands many times at school, especially after using the toilet and before eating
  - To be safe, all four legs of the chair must be on the floor
  - We need to eat a variety of food to be healthy
  - We use our words - hands are not for pushing or hitting- hitting hurts and is not safe or kind
- Limits set on Playground
  - Children must be accompanied by a teacher.
  - No walking or running down the slide. No toys up or down the slide.
  - Sand toys are only to be used in the sandbox. Avoid small toys near climbing areas.
  - Before leaving, children help to clean up all toys or any litter outside.
  - No climbing on fences.
  - One team member supervises each piece of play equipment so all areas of the playground have supervision.
  - Check the playground and be sure all children are accounted for.

### Guidelines for Each Classroom Area

- Children are to put away materials after use with teacher supervision and assistance.
- Scissors are to be used while seated.
- All children will be seated while eating.

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Push in chairs after use.
- Keep the floor clear of litter.
- Smocks are to be used for painting.
- Encourage children to help keep the classroom clean and safe
- Keep doorways clear to avoid traffic problems; encourage children to play in the middle of the room.

### **Daily Transitions Throughout the Day**

The program provides opportunities for individual, small group and large group activities and experiences throughout the day. The daily schedule is planned and children become familiar with the general daily schedule. A poster illustrating each time of the day and the corresponding activity is posted. The daily schedule is consistent but flexible to the individual and group needs. The classroom teachers help children prepare for changes in the daily schedule by giving children the five minute cleanup time warning and also gather the group together using various games, songs and exercises to make transition times both fun and organized. Transitions are in the in-between times when children are moving from one activity to the next. Waiting time can be a source of difficulty for some children. Teachers need to be aware of individual differences and provide support and encouragement as needed. Children also serve as mentors and are encouraged to help one another. Making routines comfortable for children and using these as learning times can greatly enhance the daily schedule.

### **Asking Open-Ended Questions:**

A question like “What color is that block?” evokes a one-word answer, but an open-ended question “Tell me about the blocks you are using,” encourages a child to describe the blocks or explain what he/she is doing. There is no right or wrong answer here. An answer to an open-ended question gives us a window into what that child is thinking and feeling. And the response is sometimes wonderfully creative. In explaining or describing, children also use language more fully when asked open ended questions. At XYLC, we try to think of good questions to ask children. Some examples are:

- Tell me about your picture.
- What else can you do with the play-dough?
- What could you use to make the tower stand up?
- What do you think would happen if \_\_\_\_\_?
- Is there another way to \_\_\_\_\_?

When we ask open-ended questions, children reap great benefits as they think through their responses to express what they want to say. And with their answers, we find out more about what they think and feel.

### **Fostering Tolerance and Respect**

Children are born without biases for people of various race, culture, gender, ability, and/or other.. As parents and teachers, we need to take positive action if children are to grow up being comfortable with who they are and respectful of others.

We want to work with you to create a program that helps to counter society's message of bias and reflects the background and experiences of all the children and families. To begin with, we choose books, dolls and pictures on the wall, with an eye to finding balance and showing children what they see too little of elsewhere. We're committed to helping children grow up confident of their own identity, respectful of other people, and aware of the visible and invisible diversity of their community and the world. We can only do this by working closely with our families, hearing your perspectives, and finding out more about the background and experiences that each child brings to the program.

### **Children's Friendships**

Enrollment in an early childhood program offers children social experiences that might not be available to them in relationships with adults or siblings. With many friends their own age, a child encounters lots of opportunities to negotiate and compromise. Children are encouraged to express opinions and ideas, as well as to respect others. Interaction with and acceptance by peers have long-term effects on a child's life. Young children develop social competence in three main areas:

- Initiating interactions
- Maintaining ongoing relationships
- Solving conflicts with other children.

While some children easily join a group at play, others have difficulty. As adults, we can help young children learn social strategies for entering playgroups or for talking to other children about what they want.

We want to encourage all our teachers to be observing children's social interactions. Look for opportunities when one child is comforting another, problem solving, playing and enjoying one another, helping another child etc. We also want the children to value the importance of helping one another and expressing their joy in being with one another.

### **Project Work**

"A project is an in-depth investigation of a topic worth learning more about. The investigation is usually undertaken by a small group of children, sometimes by a whole class, and occasionally by an individual child. The key feature of a project is that it is a research effort deliberately focused on finding answers to questions about a topic posed by the children, teachers, or parents." —Lilian Katz

The length of a project may vary from a couple of weeks to several months. Project work is only one aspect of the curriculum. There are many learning areas and activities where children are actively engaged. They include singing time, block building, dramatic play, group story time, snack time, and outdoor play to name a few.

"The extended time and in-depth nature of projects enables rich documentation of children's growth and development skills." —Katz

Documentation panels are developed, telling the story of the evolving project. With teacher narratives, photographs, conversations, and sample drawings, the history of the project becomes

alive. Children, teachers, parents, and visitors can see first hand what the children are learning and how the investigation is proceeding.

### **The Creative Process**

Children may work on drawings and paintings over many days and sometimes weeks. We focus on the process. Studio arts are a vital and vibrant part of our program. As children draw, paint, sculpt, and work with clay and wire, they begin to represent ideas and their understanding of the world. Each child has a portfolio that is kept in the classroom. Children are encouraged to revisit their work, make additions and corrections to the drawings and/ or paintings. Children's work remains at school and may not be sent home everyday. We ask for your support and understanding of this concept so children do not feel pressured to produce a piece of artwork. Our approach is not that of "make and take" practice. We work at slowing children down, helping them see details, and how things change over time. In the process, children think creatively, make decisions and problem solve.

- Young children learn by doing and need to be provided with many varied opportunities to explore and experiment with concepts through play and hands-on activities in the natural environment.
- Although children develop through a generally predictable sequence of steps and milestones, they may not proceed through these steps in the same way or at the same time. The younger the child, the greater their need for first-hand, sensory experiences.
- Through play experiences, children constantly refine their skill development and understanding. As teachers observe children's play and development, they can identify the signals for providing new stimulation and challenges.
- Activities, environment, and materials may need to be adapted to meet children's individual needs, including modifications for children with disabilities.
- Strategies for fostering learning in all curriculum areas include many, varied opportunities for children to:
  - PLAN: Children consider what they are going to do with the materials and how they are going to do it, to build a foundation for setting goals for themselves.
  - PLAY: Children use materials and make choices in ways that best suit their own personal curiosity, understanding, and experience joy in creating meaning for themselves.
  - REFLECT: Children recall/reflect on things that happened during their experiences; thereby reinforcing or questioning their understandings.
  - REVISIT: Children practice skills and replay their experiences over and over in many different ways and either confirm their understanding or adapt it based on new discoveries. As they explore, their understanding spirals, each new experience builds on previous learning.
  - CONNECT: Children, with the guidance of highly trained teachers, create linkages among disciplines and areas of skill development.

### **Preschool Curriculum**

Each classroom will be influenced by its teachers and what they have to offer to the children directly under their guidance and care. Curriculum includes but is not limited to:

- A daily schedule that provides continuity of care and predictability

- The environment acting as the third teacher which promotes independence, collaboration, fosters decision making and encourages imitative and involvement.
- A balance of active and quiet times.
- Reading books to children.
- Group activities like circle time.
- Being an active and engaged listener to children.
- Providing an ample amount of time for large gross activities both indoors and out.
- Sufficient time for children to select their own activities (freeplay).
- Planned activities based on the child's individual needs and collective needs of the whole group.
- Materials and activities that are meaningful and relevant to the children.
- Is based on children's interests.
- Supports positive interactions with peers and adults at XYLC.
- Positive behavior guidance.
- Health and safety routines, which are taught, practiced and used everyday.
- Based on that each child is an individual and is best understood in the context of their family and culture.

### **Infant and Toddler Curriculum and Care**

The infant is the curriculum. As a teacher we need to make sure we are able to read the infant's cues. We need to know when their needs need to be met. After their needs are met, we can provide an environment and materials to foster growth and development.

- Curriculum for ages under 2 need to be clear and predictable but also be open ended and constructive.
- Children at this age need tactile, visual cognitive and social stimuli and experiences.
- They need opportunities to collaborate, cooperate and exchange knowledge with each other.

Parents or guardians will provide written schedules of what the typical day looks like for the infant up to 2 years old. That schedule should be used as a guide to meet the needs of that infant. The schedule should be posted in a place that all caregivers can refer to.

### **Safe Sleep Policies**

- Infants are always laid to rest on their back
- Infants under 3 months can be swaddled with doctor permission, infants over 3 may not be swaddled
- Blankets are not allowable in cribs with sleeping infants. Each infant should have a sleeper blanket
- Nothing is allowed in the crib except a sheet covering the mattress pad. No bumpers, cozies, stuffies, blankets, et.
- Pacifiers are allowed
- Infants are only allowed to sleep in their assigned crib. Infants are not allowed to sleep in car seats, rockers, swings, et.



- Tummy time is important so infants can learn how to hold their head up, roll over, et. large muscle movement and to round out their head

#### Sleep Position

- Infants need to be place on their back when laid down to sleep until the age of 1
- If an infant is able to roll over on their on their own from back to side and side to back, they can sleep in the position they choose after they are laid down on their back

#### Sleep Environment

- The sleep area (crib)n needs to be clear of anything soft or loose. Only a crib sheet is allowed in the crib.
- Infants need a firm surface to sleep on (no sheep skin, soft mattress pads, et.)

#### Supervision of a sleeping infant

- Infants should be checked in on visually to see that they are sleeping and a soft touch to the belly every 15 minutes
- Infants need to be checked on if they crying, infants should not cry no more than 10 minutes before they are checked in on (rocking, checking their physical needs, and/or gently touch or pats to sooth them)

#### Team member training

- All team members working with infants need to take infant essentials training.
- All team must follow safe sleep practices while working with infants

### **Infant Crying**

Crying is a way for infants to communicate their needs. After you have communicated with the infant's family and have had some time to get to know the infant, you will have a better understanding of what the infant is communicating to you. As you get to know the infant, you can ask yourself when the infant cries,

Is the child:

- in need a diaper change
- hungry
- too hot
- too cold
- twisted or pinched in their clothing
- overstimulated
- sleepy
- wanting your attention

If you have checked all the basics and the child is still crying, try to be creative in your attempts to soothe them.

- PURPLE crying typically happens when infants are age 2 weeks to 3 to 4 months of age.

The term PURPLE means:

- P- the amount of infant crying tends to increase every week until it reaches a peak, than starts to subside
- U-Some of crying comes and goes unexpectedly- it is spontaneous and has not rhyme or reason
- R-Some crying bouts are resistant to care and nurture
- P-When the infant cries, it looks as they are in pain
- L-Some of the crying bouts are long lasting
- E-The crying tends to more likely happen in the afternoon or evening

- The best thing a caregiver can do is stay calm and keep emotions in check, as calmness can be reassuring and is far more helpful to a crying child than the alternative.
- It is important to recognize that it is not your job to "fix" a child who is in the midst of PURPLE Crying.
- The crying has nothing to do with you as the caregiver. While your behavior does not trigger the increased crying of the child, it is important to respond to the crying sensitively and appropriately.
  - Colic is a condition or abnormality (different than PURPLE) more predictable
- What to do when you have exhausted ways in calming the infant down:
  - Go for a walk/stroller ride with the child outside in fresh air
  - Try singing to or listening to music with the child
  - Try different holding positions — side or belly may help with digestion issues
  - Try a baby swing (remember, the child should not be left in a swing for long, or allowed to fall asleep in a swing)
  - Try rocking in a rocking chair
  - Call someone for help
  - Have the child listen to and watch running water
  - Lay the child tummy down across your lap and gently pat their back
  - Run the vacuum cleaner, dryer, fan...
  - "Shush" the baby by making rhythmic sounds that mimic the womb sounds
  - Give the child something new to look at or hold
  - Offer the baby a pacifier, as sucking soothes some babies
  - Play some soothing nature sounds like a heartbeat, ocean waves, brook, rain...
  - Call the parent to get some ideas from them of what works to soothe their baby
- Tips to calm yourself:
  - Remind yourself that babies cry and it's okay
  - Don't take it personally
  - Take several deep breaths
  - Count to 10 (or 100)
  - Do something to take a break or distract you from the sound
  - Listen to relaxing music
  - Exercise or do some yoga
  - Call a friend or relative
- It's OK to let a child cry, but its NEVER OK to shake a baby.

## **Diapering**

- A sufficient supply of clean, dry diapers shall be available and diapers shall be changed as frequently as needed. Disposable diapers reusable diapers supplied by the child's family may be used.
- If non-disposable diapers are used, the family will provide diapers, a storage bag for soiled diapers and enough supply of diapers to get through the day. The caregiver will do their best to empty out bowel movements into the toilet. If a soiled diaper is loose and can not be emptied in the toilet, it should get wrapped in a grocery bag and then placed in the storage bag provided by the family.

- Diaper-changing surfaces shall be cleaned after each use by washing or by changing a pad or disposable sheeting and sanitized or covered for reuse.
- All toilet articles shall be specifically labeled for each infant and toddler. Each item must be separated and kept in a sanitary condition.
- Wet or soiled clothing shall be changed promptly. Spare clothing shall be available in the event that a child's clothing becomes wet or soiled and it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to care for the wet or soiled clothing. The clothing shall be placed in a sealed bag and returned to the parent or guardian.

### **Infant feeding**

A day's supply of formula or breast milk in nursing bottles or formula requiring no more preparation than dilution with water shall be provided by the parents, unless an alternative agreement is reached between the parents and XYLC ensuring that the infant's nutritional needs are sufficiently met. Bottles of formula or breast milk shall be clearly labeled with each infant's name and date and immediately refrigerated. After use bottles shall be thoroughly rinsed before returning to the parent at the end of the day. Special dietary foods required by infants and toddlers shall be prepared by the parents.

Bottles shall not be propped. Infants too young to sit in high chairs shall be held in a semi-sitting position for all bottle feedings.

- Infants and toddlers who use a bottle shall not be allowed to lie on their backs when drinking from the bottle.
- Older infants and toddlers shall be provided age appropriate feeding equipment when being fed. This includes safe high chairs, baby feeding tables, booster seats, and child-size tables and chairs. Use of these types of equipment must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and must be appropriate for the age of the child using the equipment.
- Infants six months of age or over who show a preference for holding their own bottles may do so provided an adult remains in the room and within observation of the infant.
- Bottles and spill-proof cups (sippy cups) must be taken from the infant or toddler when they have finished feeding, when the bottle or cup is empty, and while they are sleeping.

### **Additional Requirements**

For those working with infants, please make sure to go over infant requirements in the [center licensing rules and regulations](#).

Per state licensing, you are required to wear a smock when working with infants.

**Handbook Revision Policy**

All updates made to the Team Member Handbook will be made by the Director of XY Learning Center. Any proposed changes can be communicated to the Director. They will then go for review and consideration. Updates and changes will be tracked within the revision log below, for documentation and reference.

**REVISIONS**

Date/Author	Section	Description of Change
10/7/20 - Director of XYLC	All Sections	Initial Release

## Team Member Acknowledgement and Signature Page

I \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the XY Learning Center team member handbook page by page. I understand that I am responsible for upholding all the policies and procedures that the XYLC team member handbook goes over and describes. Failure to follow the policies and procedures in XYLC Team Member Handbook could result in written notices that will be placed in your employment file and/or ultimately end up having a termination in employment.

I \_\_\_\_\_, understand it is my responsibility to respect and follow all of XY Learning Center policies and procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Team Member signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date