



Parent Policy Handbook 2023-2024

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WELCOME

We're honored that you've chosen us to care for your child during their early years. What we offer your family is much more than a babysitting service. We are a loving, respectful, child-led, play-centered, home-like environment designed for your child to learn as they play and grow. We see children as very capable, integral members of our group, whose uniqueness is valued and encouraged through our goal of meeting each of their individual needs. Thank you for trusting and partnering with us to empower them to be their best selves. I see it as an absolute privilege to be chosen as your child's playcare teacher!

Abundant Wonder Playcare (Christy Muir) is licensed through the OKDHS Childcare Services to care for up to 7 children. ***Our compliance file can be found in the front of the AW file cabinet drawer. The file is red and labeled "Licensing Compliance"; please feel free to request to review this file at your discretion.*

Being an OKDHS-licensed child care facility & a professional business; it's important that we follow a variety of policies that are written to keep your child safe, to provide them with high-quality care, & to comply with all OKDHS regulations. We take this responsibility very seriously. In these handbook pages, you will find the financial terms of this contract and details of our policies. If you thoroughly read, respect, understand & follow our policies we can all have a successful relationship that will allow us to provide your family with an exceptional experience.

PHILOSOPHY

In addition to her previously acquired knowledge and practices, Christy invested in being mentored by internationally known speaker/author/play warrior, Denita Dinger, through a 5-month journey called "The Art of Empowering Children." It was a deep-dive into why and how play is so essential for lifelong learning. This journey was the nudge Christy needed to expand on her belief of the importance of play and make adjustments to provide an even better program for the children that attend Abundant Wonder.

At Abundant Wonder child-led play is recognized and honored as the foundation for all academics to build upon. At the forefront is empowering young children to have confidence in their independence. Relationships and the environment here are the key to providing young children the opportunities and security they need to lead their learning. This is a place where the proof of learning will most often be on a child's hands, arms, feet and clothes and in their hearts and minds; rarely in a form that can be carried home in their hands. Learning and play blend and emerge, the way each child learns looks different every day. The children lead their learning with their natural, random whims and interests.

The Whole Child:

The idea of considering the whole child means looking at all the ways your child is developing and growing and paying attention to all of them. We can't focus on one area at the expense of the others.

Currently there is a lot of emphasis placed on making sure children are ready for kindergarten. That focus, however, misinterprets cognitive development and overlooks the importance of empowering and fostering independence and developing the whole child. When we focus on the whole child, all aspects of development are held in high regard and recognized as a valuable part of kindergarten readiness. Focusing on the whole child also gives children opportunities for practicing life-long skills, skills they will need long after their kindergarten days are over.

My goal is to assist your child in creating a strong foundation for all future academics to rest upon, not just preparing them for kindergarten. By paying attention to the whole child, I am giving your child ample opportunity to engineer the strongest, sturdiest foundation possible. This foundation, where minds and bodies are ready, is what ultimately leads to long-term school success. This strong foundation is not built upon meaningless rote learning, memorization, worksheets, flashcards and drills. A strong foundation is built upon relevant, meaningful and authentic experiences. Those kinds of experiences are found in child-led play in a well-structured environment like Abundant Wonder.

Math & Science

Can a child learn math and science through child-led play? Yes!

Play is loaded with opportunities for counting, comparing and contrasting, patterning, measuring and deciphering. Children are natural scientists. Anytime they discover something new, they will, if given the freedom of time, do it

again...and again...and again. Just to see if the results are the same. Take a toddler for example: They are not dropping their cup of milk onto the floor just for fun. They are doing some serious work and testing a theory. Will that cup drop all the way to the ground every single time they let go of it?

Literacy & Writing

Can children learn how to write through child-led play? Most definitely!

To sum it up briefly: A child begins preparing for writing when they are an infant. When they are able to roll over, they are using their core muscles. Core muscles are...well, for lack of a better word, at the core of handwriting. Our bodies develop from the inside out. So, first the core muscles must be strong and coordinated, then the shoulders and back, then the biceps, then the forearms and then, and only then, can we expect a child to be strong and coordinated with a crayon in hand. Handwriting does NOT begin when we place a writing tool in a child's hand. It begins at infancy. Prewriting at Abundant Wonder looks like "just" play...with every single movement a child makes: playing with the parachute, climbing up the slide and tire hill, balancing, pulling/pushing heavy rocks or boxes, playing with shaving cream, dumping and pouring, scooping, squeezing and shoveling, painting and yes...writing.

Can children learn literacy skills through child-led play? Of course!

The very base for literacy skills is a simple love of books. Story time is a special time that can sometimes happen several times throughout our day. It all depends on the interest and leadership of the children. Children need real experiences to attach words to which creates interest in words. This in turn, will grow, and soon, they will be asking how to "make" that word. From there the interest in letters will be born. A natural, meaningful progression which leads to reading AND writing in their own time with joy!

Mess Making

Making a mess taps into children's innate curiosity about the world around them and their strong desire to explore and find out more. Messy play is characterized by risk taking, trying new things, building confidence and experimenting. Experiences like this strengthen a child's interest in learning more. Messy play is important to the development of the whole child and that is why it is supported here. Children often get lost in their imagination when engaged in messy play...imagination is the root of solving problems. Imaginations are highly respected and valued here, therefore...bring on the messy play!

If your child's clothing gets stained at school, you have your first official school outfit. I don't care if they wear it every single day. I care more that your child is truly free to explore as they see fit in clothing they do not need to worry about. Play is also emotionally messy. Children will be allowed to explore their emotions while at playcare. Play involves opportunities for children to fail, struggle, experience disappointment, be patient and all sorts of emotionally messy things. Children need to know that those feelings are okay, and they need to learn how to manage life's less-than-perfect moments in socially acceptable ways. Executive function is also developed through this type of "messy", child-led play. Executive function involves things like: decision making, impulse control, switching between tasks, planning and using information. Executive function is an indicator of school readiness.

Risk Taking

Risk taking is encouraged at Abundant Wonder. Risk looks different to each child, and each child's uniqueness will be respected and the development of the whole child taken into consideration as each risky moment is assessed and managed by the child. Let's face it, life is full of risk. The skill of risk assessment is a valuable, life-long skill. I haven't met a child who doesn't have the goal of building a tower to the ceiling. It's important to know how to do that safely.

- What Does Risk Look Like: For some children, risk is walking with scissors, for another, it is climbing up the slide or the ladder. Children's risk taking will be supported in order to give them the valuable life-long skill of risk assessment and management.
- Solving Problems Can Involve Risk: Children have permission to stand on a chair or even the ladder in order to solve a problem. The pre-requisite? Tell me their plan. I encourage planning ahead when it comes to taking risks. When a child is planning on stepping on a chair in order to reach something, they know they must let me know (this is part of our structure here). I will then say "What is your plan?" After hearing their plan (which reassures me that they have thought this through and are not acting on impulse...which helps with a child's development of self-control and self-regulation), I will then approve and empowered they will be!

FINANCIAL TERMS

1. **Prior to Care:** A one-time, non-refundable Registration Fee of \$100.00 (per child) is required upon enrollment. Your child's enrollment is not guaranteed until you have returned the signed Contract Agreement plus Registration Fee. Certain other policies apply if needing to hold a space for longer than one week.
 - a. Prior to the start date of care the following must be received by Abundant Wonder Playcare for each child:
 - i. Signed Parent/Caregiver Contract (found on our website)
 - ii. Registration Fee
 - iii. Both OKDHS-created forms (found on our website)
 - iv. All About Me forms - both child and adult versions (found on our website)
 - v. Immunization Record/Exemption Certificate (on or before first day of care)

2. **Monthly Tuition:** ***Hours of Operation: Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.*
 - a. Your child's monthly tuition is due on the 1st day of each month no later than 11:59pm, in advance of care being provided. Brightwheel Automatic Invoice Payments are preferred. Checks are to be written to **Christy Muir**. We do not accept cash payments.
 - b. Tuition is due regardless of your child's attendance and includes all listed days closed, vacation days, personal days and sick days - these are paid days. There are no refunds, credits or deductions for any days your child is absent, for any reason.
 - c. Tuition automatically increases up to 3% each September. Courtesy reminders will be sent out each July.
 - d. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Monthly Tuition policy.**

3. **Overtime Fee:**
 - a. A fee of \$15.00 per (any portion of) 15 minutes per child will apply if a child remains in care after 5:00pm. The time will be based upon when the parent clocks their child out. The overtime fees are due and payable upon pickup or prior to the start of the next day's care, unless otherwise stated.
 - b. If your child is not picked up by the time our family needs to leave for an after-hours event, this fee is doubled (\$30/any portion of 15 min) and you will pick them up at the event. We will not be late to our after-hours personal commitments.
 - c. Overtime fees are also subject to late payment fees.
 - d. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Overtime Fee policy.**

4. **Late Payments:** Your tuition payment to us is our paycheck so please do not put us in a position to ask to be paid; take your responsibility seriously and pay us on time.
 - a. We recommend utilizing the "auto-pay" feature on Brightwheel to best prevent late payments.
 - b. If you pay by check and your child will be absent on your tuition due date, please remit the tuition check on your child's last day of attendance, before the due date.
 - c. Payments are considered late if not paid by the due date at 11:59pm.
 - d. A late fee of \$25 per day (including weekend days) will be charged on monthly tuition as well as any other late or overtime fees incurred.
 - i. "No Pay, No Play" - Your child may not attend after 3 business days of nonpayment. No exceptions.
 - ii. This contract is immediately terminated after 1 week of nonpayment. Collection proceedings will then begin and you will be responsible for all tuition fees, late fees, collection fees, legal fees, and related loss of income.
 - e. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Late Payments policy.**

5. **Returned Checks:** A returned check fee of \$50 will be charged on all returned checks/payments. Parents are also responsible for any other costs incurred as a result of the check/payment being returned. In this event, late fees will apply since your payment will be considered late as it did not clear the bank.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

1. **Arrivals & Departures:** ***Caregiver will utilize the Brightwheel app on a phone/tablet to clock-in and clock-out each child every day. OKDHS licensing, food program & tax records require us to maintain this log.*
 - a. ***If someone else is dropping off or picking up your child, please notify us before they arrive. Also, make sure they have their ID ready and are familiar with our arrival & departure routines before they arrive.*
2. **Arrival Expectations:**
 - a. Parents being brief, confident & consistent will make it a much more pleasant experience for your child. A long farewell is generally more traumatic for your child. Furthermore, some children go through a short phase of separation anxiety at different stages of development. Nearly all children will “test boundaries” during this time; this is developmentally normal & will not be resolved by prolonging your departure or by trying to sneak away. When your child is having a problem separating, it gets worse the longer you are here. 99% of the time, they will be just fine the minute you leave. However, If separation is excessively difficult for you or your child, I have a phased plan that helps us work together to ease the transition.
 - b. Just as brief goodbyes are important, it’s also important that you plan enough time when dropping-off. Please make sure you have enough time to give them a proper farewell. Developing a good-bye routine is comforting and helpful.
 - c. ***If your child does not arrive by 9:00am and we have not heard from you, we will call or text you to confirm plans for arrival. This is to help minimize instances of children being left in cars or other dangers.*
 - d. **Early Arrivals:** You must make arrangements no less than 24 hours in advance if you will need to bring your child BEFORE 7:30am. If you arrive early without our prior approval, we will not open the door.
 - e. **Late Arrivals:** Arriving AFTER 9:00am is okay, however AM Snack is served promptly at 9am. Also, we will NOT wait for late arrivals if we have an outing planned.
 - f. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Arrival Expectation policy.**
3. **Departures:**
 - a. Please do not send someone else to pick-up your child unless you have given us prior written consent.
 - i. Separated/divorced parents – you must **both** give your written consent if you have joint custody. Please do not put us in the position of having to deny pick-up to someone you have approved unless the other parent has also approved.
 - b. ***Your pick-up contacts will be asked to show picture ID.*
 - c. ***We will not release your child to anyone, even parents, who are under the apparent influence of drugs or alcohol or an individual who poses a safety risk regardless of parental permission.*
 - d. Parents who are separated or divorced: if there is a court order keeping one parent or guardian away from your child we must have a copy of the order to that effect in our files. Otherwise, we cannot prevent the non-custodial parent or guardian from picking up.
 - e. **Early Departures:**
 - i. If leaving early is needed, please consider picking up before nap (around 1:30pm) instead of during.
 - ii. **Naptime departures are highly discouraged.** They not only disrupt your child’s routine and much needed rest/sleep, it potentially disrupts other children as well.
 1. Special instructions will be given if a naptime (2p-4p) pick-up is necessary.
 2. Excessive naptime pick-ups may result in termination of contract due to the lack of respect shown to the children in our care.
 - f. **Overtime Departures:**
 1. See Overtime Fees (above)
 2. Please keep in mind that our family may have plans after hours.
 3. Repeated late departures are grounds for termination.
 4. In the event that a parent cannot be contacted, it is our policy to call emergency contacts

listed on the Child Information Form should a child remain in care after 5:00pm.

- a. If parents cannot be reached and/or alternate arrangements for pick-up can't be made, we will reluctantly call OKDHS.

- ii. Please indicate on the contract that you understand this Departures policy.

4. ****Holidays/Closed Days (scheduled):** We close for regularly scheduled breaks throughout the year.

- a. Please refer to our website (Parent Packet page), Band group calendar, Parent Communication wall, wall to the right of the entry door and on the fence gate for a list of holidays/vacations/closed days.
- b. Reminders will also be posted in Band, on the door and on the gate about a week prior to closures.

5. **Personal Days:** We may need to take up to 10 personal days throughout the year.

- a. This gives us the opportunity to attend regular doctor visits or get personal, weekday-only business done.
- b. Rest assured, we do everything in our power to not have to close for these instances.
- c. Full tuition payments are required on the regular due date and are subject to late fees.

6. **Vacations**

- a. **Your Vacation:** When requested, any parent who gives a full 30 days' written notice of *temporary withdrawal for vacation* will have their child's tuition reduced by 50% for the period of time of withdrawal up to a total of two weeks (10 days) per calendar year. These days can be spread out throughout the year as long as 30 days' notice is given each instance and it is a total of no more than 10 days.
- b. **Our Vacation:** We will occasionally take a vacation of up to 1-2 weeks during the year or a total of 10 days throughout the year. At least one week's notice will be given in each instance.
 - i. Full tuition payments are required on the regular due date and are subject to late fees.
- c. Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Vacations policy.

GENERAL HOUSEKEEPING

1. **Communication from you:** Christy can be reached via text, phone or email during regular business hours (M-F 7:30am-5:00pm). All non-urgent concerns, calls, texts, or emails received after business hours will be addressed on the next business day. Thank you for respecting personal time with our family.
 - a. Texting (best method) 405-476-0713:
 - i. If you use texting as your method of contacting us, we will confirm that we received your text by replying as quickly as possible during business hours. If we do not, you should assume that we did NOT receive it & you should call us.
 - b. Phone (same number as above):
 - i. If calling during business hours, keep in mind that I will likely be engaged with the children and may not be able to take your call. In general, the best time for me to talk without interruption is during nap time.
 - ii. If you expect a return call, please be sure to leave a message as to what you're calling about.
 - c. Email is abundantwonderplaycare@gmail.com. I will respond as quickly as possible.
2. **Communication to you:** It is our goal to keep the lines of communication as open as possible and will contact you as needed.
 - a. Our most common form of communication with individual parents is texting. Texting also allows us to have conversations that are best kept between adults.
 - b. We acknowledge that there are some things best discussed verbally, in person or over the phone. For those occasions, we will typically set up a conference at a time in which children can be out of earshot.
 - c. Other forms of communication will also be used to keep parents as updated as possible of general goings-on. These include:
 - i. AW Band group - photo sharing, announcements & calendar events.
 - ii. Smore - Monthly newsletters
 - iii. Email - via abundantwonderplaycare@gmail.com
 - iv. Please make sure you have your Band notifications on and our email in your contacts so you have a better chance of getting all the communications.
3. **Daily Routine:**
 - a. Please bring your child to playcare each day fully dressed & ready to participate.
 - i. This includes being well-rested.
 - ii. I highly encourage parents to allow their children the freedom to choose their clothing and dress themselves for the day.
 1. Therefore, please provide appropriate choices for your children to choose from.
 - a. Choices that can get messy without concern ("Dress for mess equals less stress."), allow for easy, non-restrictive movement and are weather appropriate (fresh diaper, if applicable).
 - iii. Shoes should be appropriate & safe for outdoor play.
 1. We encourage pollinators, therefore we frequently have bees working on the clover in our yard. Please provide shoe choices that will help prevent accidental stings from bees being stepped on.
 2. To empower children in putting their own shoes on, we recommend Velcro or slip on shoes that do not slip off.
 3. Please NO rain/snow boots when an outing is planned. They are cumbersome when getting into/out of the van and walking to/from location.
 - b. Please be familiar with our daily schedule regarding activities, meal/snack times, nap times, etc. It's impossible for us to maintain a separate schedule for each child – for example, feeding or napping your child outside of scheduled times.
 - c. Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Daily Routine policy.

4. **Permission to Photograph:** By signing the contract, I grant permission for my child to be photographed and videoed during normal AW hours: while participating in activities, playing, on field trips/outings or during classes. And for these photographs/videos to be used to share with all current parents in our Band group, on our picture wall, and used in promoting Abundant Wonder, either in print or on the Internet. Promotional-use pictures/videos (except whole-group photos taken on picture days) will omit children's full face. I understand that there will be no payment for me or my child's participation in this release. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Permission to Photograph policy.**
5. **Open Door Policy:** You are welcome to visit us anytime your child is present to observe or participate in our activities. As a safety measure, we have our entrance/garage door closed after the last child has arrived (by 9:00am) through the end of nap (around 4:00pm). We are happy to open it for you; all you need to do is text Christy. You are also free to call or text at any time to check on your child and we will respond asap.
6. **Toilet Mastery:** Potty practice is a big developmental step in each child's life & it needs to be handled properly in order to make it a pleasant and successful time for all involved. AW has a method of toilet mastery in place that has worked well for many children in our care. Prior to making any potty training decision, we require each parent to reach out to us first so we can send you our Potty Mastery document. We also require that parents and other caregivers read the toilet training book titled Oh Crap! Potty Training by Jamie Glowacki (disclaimer: there are a few points in this book we do not subscribe to but the basic plan works really well). Because of our disclaimer, we ask that you please do not initiate potty practice with your child unless you have talked to us about it first. We will work with you - but not for you. We will not offer treats or incentives for pottyng and discourage it at home too. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Toilet Mastery policy.**
7. **Meals & Snacks:** We are committed to providing our AW children the best possible meals in an effort to encourage better health, expanded palates, and a respectful relationship with food as a foundation for accomplishing everything they hope and dream.
 - a. It is our goal to serve the most nutritious and seasonal meals possible including many organic, seasonal, local, and whole grain ingredients.
 - b. Water is available to the children at all times via stainless steel water bottles.
 - i. Please do not send sippy cups/dishes to playcare.
 - c. Abundant Wonder is enrolled in the federal child care food program. As such, we provide all food & drink and are required to follow a pre-planned menu.
 - d. We make most of the components ourselves instead of relying on pre-made items so we have more control over the salt, sugar and oil levels in the food. We very rarely use white potatoes (fries and tater tots). We serve a wide variety of fruits and vegetables throughout the week. We use many whole grain options for our grain components. And we use a variety of meat alternatives making our menu plant-based. Some snacks include cocoa and are sweetened with dates which means they are a sweet treat AND healthy!
 - e. The meal/snack schedule below will be followed with the option of additional snacks as needed. If your child will not arrive in time for our scheduled meals, please make sure they are completely fed **before** walking in the door (for example, do not walk in the door while your child is still eating/chewing breakfast). The seasonal menu will be posted on the parent communication wall and via our Band group.
 - i. AM Snack: served 9:00 a.m. – completed by 9:30 a.m.
Lunch: served 12:30 p.m. – completed by 1:00 p.m.
PM Snack: served 4:00 p.m. – completed by 4:30 p.m.
 - f. We loosely follow the Division of Responsibility (Ellyn Satter) method of food consumption. Please research what this is and understand. We encourage and trust your child to make their own food choices. As with anything else, please let us know of any questions.
 - g. We practice Family-Style or Buffet-Style serving which helps children be more in control of their food while also helping teach/model life skills and manners.

- h. Please do not send food, drinks, or candy from home unless you are sending enough for the entire group, as in a party situation. Please ask about any allergies prior to bringing treats.
- i. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Meals & Snacks policy.**

8. **Birthdays:**

- a. We take some time (usually snacktime) on each child's birthday to celebrate them on their special day. Some guidelines for you to keep in mind:
 - i. If you wish to bring a special treat for your child's birthday, please let me know at least 24 hours in advance. This helps us know how to proceed with food prep and gives us an opportunity to discuss any food allergies needing consideration.
 - ii. If your child will not be here on their actual birthday, we can celebrate the day before or the day after. Please give advance notice.
- b. While we appreciate the invitations/inclusion, Will and I do not attend birthday parties of currently enrolled children. We dislike missing out on that special time but we have to be realistic and consider feelings.
 - i. We have many responsibilities on weekends between our own family/home and Abundant Wonder preparations.
 - ii. We do not want anyone's feelings hurt if we can make it to one child's party and not another.
 - iii. This is part of why we like to also celebrate birthdays here at playcare.

9. **Supplies:** There are certain items that each child will need to have each day. We request that you bring them to have on hand. Please NO diaper bags/backpacks. Below is a general list of items we require. If your child has specific requirements, please include those and let me know.

a. **Every Child:**

- i. **Size and weather appropriate complete change of clothes** (at least 1 set). These will be stored here. Remember to switch and replace as necessary.
- ii. Year round: **rain boots**. We ask that parents provide rain boots that fit your child. These stay here to be used in conjunction with our AW rain suits which enables us to play outside as much as possible, even on dreary, wet days.
- iii. Summer: **swim suit** (long sleeve swim shirts and detached bottoms are easiest for children to dress themselves and use the toilet), closed toe and sides **water shoes** (there are styles that are exceptionally perfect for the children to put on and take off themselves) and **sunscreen** (non-aerosol). These items stay here to use as necessary.
- iv. Winter: **coat** (brought back and forth). We have an AW set of hats and mittens that stay here for use as needed so you don't have to worry about those.

b. **Diaper Wearers (in addition to items for every child):**

- i. Diapers (cloth diapers welcomed with specific requirements)
 - 1. Cloth Diaper Requirements:
 - a. Parents supply own soiled diaper container with lid (no wet-bags) which will be sent home daily; to be returned clean, the following day. (previously-unused 2.5 gallon paint cans work well)
 - a. Per OKDHS rules, we are not allowed to rinse diapers but we can and will shake solid waste into the toilet before placing in container.
- ii. Wipes
- iii. Optional: Diaper rash cream/ointment of your choice (especially if your child is prone to rashes). Must be contained in original packaging with your child's name written on it and an OKDHS medicine form must be on file.

9. **Transportation/Activities:**

- a. Abundant Wonder Playcare will not transport to and from school. If you require care after morning

- pre-k, you will be responsible for arranging vehicular transportation from school to AW before lunch.
- b. We occasionally go on outings to enrich the children's experiences. These outings typically relate to what the children are interested in at the time. Notification will be given at least a day before the outing.
 - c. ***All children are required to be secured in an appropriate child safety seat based on their age, height and weight while in a vehicle.* We take this very seriously and will assure they are in the proper car safety seat or device. Christy attended a full-day training on car seat safety. We use our own seats/devices (purchased new) to ensure they are not expired, haven't been in an accident, and fit in our van properly. We support extended rear-facing if parents prefer their child to rear-face past the age of 2, please let us know. ***We meet or exceed all current child safety seat laws.*

10. Miscellaneous:

- a. Abundant Wonder Playcare will repair or replace broken equipment & toys due to normal wear and tear. However, should your child purposely damage or break equipment or toys, or damage our home or personal belongings they will be replaced or repaired to the original condition at the cost of the parents.
- b. Please do not allow your child to bring toys, jewelry or bags to playcare. Your child is unlikely to want to share them, there is no way we can keep track of them, and we can't guarantee the items will make it back home with your child.
 - i. If you allow your child to have these items in the car, please have them leave them there before entering.
 - ii. ONLY comfort items and naptime/sleep 'sleep friends' permitted. These will be stored in the 'cot cabinet' with their designated blanket and are kept here if at all possible. ALL other toys/bags/items need to stay home or in the car.
- c. This contract is subject to annual review and renewal each August to be active in September.
- d. Lack of enforcement of a certain policy at any time does not indicate that the particular policy is no longer in effect.
- e. We have 3 dogs, Trixie, Candi & Jovee. They are all really good with the children though we do keep them in their crates most of the day so they aren't underfoot. Trixie (oldest) is very mellow and generally likes to watch the kiddos play. Candi (middle) is more high-strung so she tends to prefer to stay in the other parts of the house. Jovee (youngest) is very young and loves greeting the children in the mornings. She is very gentle yet larger and doesn't know her size or strength, therefore is highly monitored around the children.

11. Withdrawal/Expulsion:

- a. Parents agree that a minimum notice of 1 full month (no pro-rating) will be given for permanent withdrawal of any child from care or agree to pay 1 full month tuition (no pro-rating) in lieu of giving notice. This notice must be in writing. No exceptions will be made.
 - i. Please be aware that in most circumstances, children bond quickly with each other and caregivers. When permanently withdrawing, please bring your child for the full remaining days to aid your child, other children and us in the farewell and closure process. We typically do a little something special on a child's last day to further aid in farewells.
- b. We reserve the right to immediate expulsion for the following, non-exhaustive list of reasons: your child's destructive, uncontrollable, or violent behavior; late payment or nonpayment of tuition or other fees; habitual disregard for our policies; providing false information on enrollment forms; disrespect to our family, our home, or our neighborhood; or if your child's care becomes unusually time-consuming as to disrupt the care of the other children. Any tuition or fees paid will not be refunded. Parents will be responsible for any outstanding amounts due and these are subject to late fees.
- c. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Withdrawal/Expulsion policy.**

WELLNESS POLICIES

1. *****General Illness Policy:*** Minimizing children's exposure to illness is a responsibility we all share. *****We will not provide care for children who are ill.*** Please understand this policy thoroughly so that you will know the symptoms for which your child cannot attend AW.
 - a. In any environment in which people have contact with others, there comes the risk of illness. While we will always take precautions, as outlined in this handbook, to help prevent the spread of any illness, risk can never be entirely eliminated. By signing this contract and your child's attendance at AW, the responsibility for that risk falls to you, the parents.
 - b. Parents agree that a child who is ill (eg. fever, infection, diarrhea, vomiting, communicable disease, or any other type of illness that may be passed on to others, with the exception of the common cold) will be kept at home to protect the well-being of children in our care and our family.
 - c. The parents further agree that should a child become ill while in care, immediate arrangements will be made to remove the child from AW within 1 hour of initial notification.
 - d. We will initially text to inform parents. If we do not receive a response within 10 minutes, we will call. If we reach the parents' voicemail, and do not receive a call or text back within 10 minutes after the call, we will begin calling contacts on the emergency phone call list.
 - e. To clarify, a fever is defined as "any temperature above normal". A child needs to stay home (or parent called to pick the child up) if they have a temperature of 100.4 or above and/or if a child has 2 or more loose (diarrhea) stools/day or any vomiting. Please note that this is also the policy of Norman Public Schools, "The Good Health Handbook" (distributed by the Oklahoma State Department of Health) as well as many other well respected entities.
 - i. Children will not be allowed to return to playcare until they have been symptom free without the aid of fever reducing medications AND eating normally for at least 24 hours (48 hours during pandemic, see below). In some cases, a note from a doctor may be necessary but does not override our final decision.
 - ii. If you are contacted to pick your child up from care due to fever, diarrhea, or vomiting... they automatically **MAY NOT RETURN** any time during the following day of care regardless of how they are feeling..
 - f. Parents agree that a child who has obtained vaccinations will be kept at home for at least 24 hours after the vaccine is administered. We strongly encourage immunization appointments to be set Friday afternoons when at all possible. While most children do not have adverse reactions, many do have slight discomfort/fevers/feelings of unease within the first 24 hours requiring more one-on-one attention than is possible in group care.
 - g. *****It is my sincere hope that you appreciate these efforts to keep every child in our care as well as possible in a group setting. Please respect this illness policy and have consideration for your child, other children in care and their parents. If a child is not well enough to go outside to play or attend elementary school, they are not well enough to attend playcare. If a child is exceptionally fussy or obviously does not feel well at any point upon return to AW, parents will be called to pick the child up.***
 - h. Giving your child fever-reducing medication before playcare in order to mask the fever, not notifying us of your child's symptoms of illness, or any other attempt to hide an illness is grounds for immediate termination.
 - i. *****Medication, including over-the-counter and ointments, must be provided by the parent/guardian in the original container and clearly labeled with the child's name and instructions.***
 - i. If medication is to be administered once or twice daily, please make plans to administer at home before/after playcare.

- ii. Medication must be accompanied with written dated permission using required OKDHS Medication Permission form signed by the parent giving the exact dosage and times to be administered. This includes OTC diaper rash treatments.
- iii. Each dosage administered is recorded by the caregiver and the record is readily available to parents.
- iv. All medications are properly stored out of children's reach and away from food.
- v. There are special regulations regarding injections per OKDHS requirements.
- j. Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this illness policy.

2. **Our Illnesses:** In general, our family stays fairly healthy.

- a. In the event one of our children becomes sick, they are 'quarantined' away from the playcare children and toys. They are not allowed to enter the playroom or play with the children outside.
- b. The adults (Christy, Will, any assistants or substitutes) will follow the same illness policy as is required of parents so as to do everything possible to keep others well.
 - i. If we can stay open (with help from assistants/substitutes) we will. However, it is your responsibility to have a back-up plan in place for the rare occasions we can't remain open.
 - ii. We do not put a limit on our 'closed for illness' days. They are not included in our vacation or personal days.
 - iii. Full tuition payments are required on the regular due date and are subject to late fees.
- c. We all take this very seriously as we know that sick kiddos or a closed playcare means a parent has to stay home from work and possibly won't get paid.

3. **Germ Prevention & Pandemics:** With the appearance of Covid-19, we felt the need to add pandemic specific policies to this section. Please note the instances in which policies will apply..

- a. Ongoing germ prevention at home (regardless of pandemic):
 - i. We encourage you to help your children make PROPER hand washing a habit. Singing the ABC song at a normal (not sped up) pace helps them know they are washing for long enough to kill germs. Make sure they do NOT rinse soap off before rubbing, are rubbing soap all over their hands the whole time they are singing and rinsing thoroughly once the song is complete.
 - ii. Please model and teach your child how to effectively cover their coughs and sneezes with their elbows (or alternatively into the inside of their shirt), NOT hands while also turning away from people and food.
- b. Ongoing germ prevention at AW:
 - i. Regardless of pandemic:
 - 1. All children will wash hands immediately upon arrival. They will also wash hands throughout the day: after toileting, after playing outside, before and after eating, etc.
 - 2. If coughs are present during a typical 'illness season', masks will be worn by caregivers when physical distancing cannot be maintained.
 - 3. Also If coughs are present during a typical 'illness season', children will wear masks when inside, except when eating and sleeping.
 - 4. If a child has an excessively runny nose or cough during the day, parents will be called to pick the child up
 - 5. All surfaces will be sanitized regularly.
 - ii. During pandemic:
 - 1. No one will be allowed in AW areas except children, staff, masked OKDHS Licensing staff and necessary & masked repair personnel that will be in the areas in use by staff or children.
 - 2. No outside items brought in without prior discussion and permission.

3. Parents will text caregiver upon arrival. Caregiver will greet child and parents at the door and clock the child in for the day.
 4. Each child will be checked for fevers before being allowed in. This generally consists of caregiver giving the child a quick hug/greeting and feeling their face or neck while doing so. If child feels even slightly warm, caregiver will take their temperature with a thermometer.
 5. For departures from inside: Parent will text caregiver upon arrival. Caregiver will have child clean up any toys they are playing with. Then child and caregiver will greet parent at the door and clock the child out for the day.
For departures from outside: parents can enter backyard via the west gate to pick up their child.
- c. Pandemic specific policies: Some of these will have to be revisited and adjusted if another pandemic occurs or as new developments arise. They are all based on 2022 CDC recommendations and our AW community comfort levels.
- i. The less exposure to humans outside our own homes, the less risk of illness. It is expected that families will do everything they can to limit exposure, including wearing appropriate masks when in public spaces and practicing physical distancing.
 - ii. AW will be staying home. No outings unless outside and/or all children are fully vaccinated.
 - iii. Family/buffet-style meal serving will cease. Children will still have control over what and how much they eat. It will simply be caregiver asking and serving instead of the children.
 - iv. During a pandemic, any child sent home for any illness may not return until after 48 hours symptom-free without medication. Per general policy, any attempt to hide an illness will result in immediate termination. Remember that “just allergies” can actually be a more serious illness so we may request that your child be tested for ‘pandemic illness’.
 - v. Parents must inform the caregiver as soon as it is confirmed that you or a household family member was exposed to a confirmed ‘pandemic illness’ case and are in the process of being tested and/or quarantined so necessary arrangements to disinfect and clean can be made and other parents notified if needed.
 - vi. If a parent (or any other person living in their home) is quarantined the child needs to be quarantined as well, for at least 10 days. Child will not be allowed at AW until the household quarantine is over and child tests negative with a PCR test or rapid home test.
 - vii. If there is a confirmed case of “pandemic illness” among an AW child or staff member, we will immediately notify OKDHS Licensing and follow all CDC protocols for spread prevention.
 - viii. If an AW child is positive, we will likely be closed for at least 48 hours to sanitize appropriately. Child will be quarantined for a minimum of 10 days, be symptom-free, negative PCR test or rapid home test and follow general illness policy before returning to playcare.
 - ix. If your child is unable to attend due to quarantine, tuition is still required as stated in the financial section of this handbook.
 - x. In the event of an AW household member testing positive, we will follow CDC recommended quarantine, and likely be closed for 5 days, follow the same criteria as children and mask at all times for an additional 5 days. We will only reopen when we feel confident it is safe to do so.
 - xi. In the event we have to close due to “pandemic illness”: tuition will likely still be expected to a certain degree, to be determined depending on length of closure.
- a. Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Germ Prevention/Pandemic policy.

2. ****Disease Control Reporting Requirements:** The local or state health department Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH) is notified upon discovery of any case of hepatitis, meningitis, Shigellosis, Giardiasis, measles, rubella, whooping cough, tuberculosis, E coli O157:H7, Salmonellosis, or any Haemophilus influenza invasive disease in any person associated with the family child care home, per requirements as follows:
 - a. Promptly. The primary caregiver promptly notifies the local or OSDH of a known case in individuals associated with the family child care home, of:
 - i. Measles;
 - ii. meningococcal invasive disease; and
 - iii. an outbreak of two or more cases within the home of:
 1. COVID-19;
 2. influenza; or
 3. varicella (chicken pox).
 - b. Next business day. The primary caregiver notifies the local or OSDH by the next health department-business day of a known case in individuals associated with the family child care home, of:
 - i. Campylobacteriosis;
 - ii. cryptosporidiosis;
 - iii. E. coli O157:H7 or Shiga toxin-producing E. coli (STEC);
 - iv. Haemophilus influenzae invasive disease;
 - v. hepatitis A;
 - vi. mumps;
 - vii. rubella;
 - viii. salmonellosis;
 - ix. shigellosis;
 - x. tuberculosis; or
 - xi. whooping cough (pertussis).
 - c. OSDH guidelines. The primary caregiver follows all guidelines and recommendations per local or OSDH authorities.

3. ****Management of Injuries:** We will make every effort to keep your child safe and free from injury. We daily inspect indoor and outdoor play spaces and equipment for hazards and we supervise children at all times. We have properly maintained first aid kits in our home and vehicle. We will always have immediate access to a phone to call for emergency care if needed
 - a. In the event that your child is injured in a non-life-threatening way, we will assess and provide first aid.
 - i. If the injury is more serious (needs stitches, broken arm, etc.), we will notify you so you can transport your child to urgent care or doctor's office. If we are unable to contact you, we will attempt to call the people you have listed as your emergency contacts.
 - b. If immediate intervention is required, we are certified in infant, child, and adult CPR and First Aid and we will take appropriate action, including calling 911 and having your child transported to the nearest hospital.
 - i. We will then notify you of the emergency. If your child must be transported to the hospital, one of us will accompany them and remain until you have arrived, as long as one of us is able to leave while maintaining the appropriate caregiver ratio here at AW.
 - ii. An injury report form will be completed as soon after the incident as possible. We will give you a copy and keep the original report in your child's file.
 - c. We will notify OKDHS within 24 hours of any injury to a child requiring emergency medical attention.
 - d. All costs associated with injuries to your child will be your responsibility or that of your insurance.
 - e. In the event your child is hurt by one of the other children, or your child hurts one of the other children, you will be notified. However, to maintain confidentiality, we will not disclose the names of the children to either parental unit.
 - i. This is to ensure that no prejudice is created toward a very common and developmentally expected occurrence. Our children are learning about social situations and appropriate ways to act in a group. We will have and will adjust to the usual hiccups.

4. ****Emergency Procedures:** *Please also refer to our Disaster Policies and Procedures Manual*
- a. **Fire:** There is one fire extinguisher located in our home (on the kitchen counter). If there is a fire that cannot be extinguished quickly, the children will be evacuated immediately before calling 911.
 - i. Caregiver will guide the children out of the nearest and safest exit, staying below smoke. If necessary, older children will help with younger children. We will not have a backyard meeting place due to the existence of foliage surrounding the yard. If we must exit the house into the back yard we will continue through one of the gates to the front yard meeting place. Front yard meeting place is the sidewalk of the neighbor to the east of us. Caregiver or other representative will call 911 via cell phone or neighbor's phone. Caregiver or other representative will call to inform parents as soon as possible.
 - b. **Tornado:** In the event of a tornado watch or indication of imminent severe weather, emergency contacts will be used to request parents pick up their child prior to any severe weather occurrence (only if safe to do so). Any child not picked up by parents will follow our Severe Storm/Tornado warning plan if necessary.
 - i. We have a small storm shelter, registered with the city of Norman, to use in the event of a tornado warning. Upon news of tornado watch for our area, caregiver will quickly prepare the shelter. The staff will move all children to the shelter (located in the garage floor). All will remain in shelter until caregiver is certain of safety. Caregiver or other representative will call or text to inform parents as soon as possible.
 - c. **Flood:** We are not in a flood zone and our home sits on a hill so we are not required to have a plan for flooding.
 - d. **Power outage:** There are flashlights located in the emergency supplies bag in the playroom to use if needed. If the power remains out for some time, there are non-perishables located in the pantry that will be used to eat. OKDHS Licensing requires us to close if we are unable to maintain our home's temperature between 65 and 80 degrees F or if we do not have access to hot, running water.
 - e. **Inclement Weather/School Closings/Blizzard:** Abundant Wonder closes if Norman Public Schools close due to bad weather/snow/unsafe driving conditions (not extreme cold or school site power outages). We will monitor their closure decisions and encourage parents to also. We will notify everyone of closures as soon as we know. Full tuition payments are required on the regular due date and are subject to late fees.
***Abundant Wonder will close in the rare/improbable occurrence of a blizzard.*

BEHAVIORAL POLICIES

1. **Behavioral Expectations:** We don't want our home to feel like an institution; we have certain expectations, yet we are not rigid. In a playcare home where there are always several children present and excited, it's important that expectations are respected to keep everyone safe. Sometimes at pick-up time, the children may get rowdier than usual because someone else is here. During this time, parents should take extra care to show your child that you respect us and our expectations by supporting them while you are here (even with older siblings).
 - a. Our ultimate rule is ALWAYS stay safe and be respectful of/with people and things.
 - i. During arrival and dismissal or other potentially hectic times of day, this includes:
 1. Treat everyone with respect and kindness.
 2. Keep hands and feet to yourself.
 3. Stay in the house or yard. No one is allowed outside without adult supervision, even when parents are on the property.
 4. Walking and moderate noise level only inside.
 5. Treat toys and other items with respect.
 - b. **Please indicate on the contract that you understand and agree to this Behavioral Expectations policy.**
2. ****Guidance:** Children's behavior is influenced by their overall development, their emotional and physical environment, their needs being met, and the relationship with their caregivers. Each child differs in terms of their activity level, sensory needs or sensitivity. Children learn, through respectful guidance and modeling, to develop socially acceptable and appropriate behavior as they grow to maturity.
 - a. **Purpose of this Policy:** This policy is the guideline that Abundant Wonder Playcare will follow to assist children in developing self-control, self-confidence, and sensitivity in their interactions with others. Guidance is required to prevent injury, and ensure a child's activities are not infringing on the rights of others. **Behavior (adult and child) at Abundant Wonder Playcare is expected to be based on mutual respect. Consequently, all rules and requests relate to respecting ourselves, each other, our home and contents within.**
 - b. **Guidance Strategies:** It is important that the caregiver 'sets the stage' for a positive atmosphere and maximum opportunities for desirable behavior. This will be done by:
 - i. Modeling respectful interactions by treating each child with the respect every person deserves;
 - ii. Explaining to the children what behavior will be acceptable and explaining the reason for the limits, doing so in a positive way;
 - iii. Focusing on what needs the child's behavior is conveying, instead of on the behavior alone (aka 'going upstream').
 - iv. Allowing the children time to respond to the expectations;
 - v. Reinforcing appropriate behavior;
 - vi. Being willing to listen and respond in a fair and supportive manner, and;
 - vii. Observing children in order to anticipate potential difficulties.
 - c. **Intervention Strategies:** One or more of the following strategies will be used to help create a positive climate and minimize problems in a supportive, rather than punitive way:
 - i. By establishing eye contact and calling the child's name in a calm controlled voice to gain a child's attention;
 - ii. By remaining near the child in situations where they may be losing self-control;
 - iii. Children will be gently encouraged to "take a break" until they feel they are able to maintain appropriate behavior. Here, "taking a break" means moving away from the trigger to do something else. It does NOT mean excluding from activities or peers;
 - iv. Children will be respectfully reminded of expectations;
 - v. Engaging the children in problem solving as needed;
 - vi. For younger children or children with limited attention span and verbal abilities, we

- will attempt to change the behavior by modeling correct behavior or redirecting the child;
- vii. Verbal and/or physical assistance will be shown by modeling problem solving if a child is discouraged or frustrated;
 - viii. Children will be offered choices in a non-threatening and non-punitive way to assist them in meeting expectations;
 - ix. We will clarify the possible outcomes of the behavior to the child;
 - x. If the child is unable to resolve a problem or take responsibility for their actions, they will be redirected to another activity, or in special circumstances, be limited in the use of a piece of equipment;
 - xi. The child could be removed from the situation in a positive way that ensures that the child still feels loved and respected. In such circumstances, we will be with the child practicing "time-in".
 - 1. this can be described as a time for caregiver and child to reconnect which often leads to a more peaceful rest of the day;
 - xii. When a child is ready, they will be provided an opportunity to make amends, yet not required to do so.
- d. Practices Which are Unacceptable: Abundant Wonder Playcare considers the following practices unacceptable and will not tolerate their use (and **strongly** discourage the use in the child's home):
- i. Corporal punishment ie. shoving, hitting, shaking, spanking.
 - ii. Harsh, belittling, or degrading treatment.
 - iii. Confinement, unsupervised separation from others, physical restraint as punishment.
 - iv. Depriving children of meals, snacks, rest or necessary use of the toilet as punishment.
- e. ***Child care providers are required by law to immediately report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Statewide Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline. Failure to report is a misdemeanor offense and upon conviction is punishable by law.*

****Policies/topics throughout the handbook that are in *dark blue italics* preceded by two asterisks are required by OKDHS Licensing. The actual policies may differ between child care providers but the topics must be included.**