
First Years Children's Center

FAMILY HANDBOOK



WELCOME

Welcome, we're so glad you're here.

Thank you for choosing our center to be part of your child's first years. We know how much trust it takes to leave your child in someone else's care, and we recognize that you chose us to be part of your family's journey!

Our goal is to create a warm, safe, and welcoming space where children feel comfortable exploring their interests, and building friendships.

We believe children learn best through play, curiosity, and hands-on experiences. Our teachers work alongside children—guiding, and encouraging them as they grow and discover the world around them. Every child is unique, and we do our best to support their individual strengths, and development.

We believe in keeping communication simple and clear so you always know how your child's day is going. From daily reports delivered straight to your phone, to quick conversations at drop-off and pick-up, we're here to share moments, answer questions, and support your family along the way.

This handbook is here to give you an overview of how our center runs and what you can expect day to day.

We're excited to get to know your family and to have you as part of our community!

Warmly,
Emily Criss
Executive Director

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ABOUT US

Mission

Our mission is to inspire a lifelong love of learning by providing a child-centered environment rooted in exploration, creativity, and connection. Through emergent, play-based experiences, we support each child's growth as curious, engaged learners—while making their first educational experience both meaningful and memorable.

Vision

We envision a child care community where children are empowered to learn through project-based experiences and child-led exploration. Guided by a Reggio-inspired emergent curriculum, we nurture curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking, allowing each child's interests to shape meaningful learning. Our goal is to cultivate confident, capable learners in an environment that values discovery, and a deep sense of belonging.

Hours of Operation

Child care services are provided from 6:30am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday.

Holidays

We are closed for certain holidays:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, President's Day, Memorial Day, Juneteenth, 3rd and 4th of July (*will vary annually*), Labor Day, Veteran's Day, Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

Admission & Enrollment

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children from 4 weeks to 6 years of age.

A registration fee of \$75 is due at the time of enrollment. This fee is one time, non-refundable.

A two-week, non-refundable tuition deposit is required for each child enrolled. This deposit will be held without interest and will represent tuition payment for the first two weeks of the child's enrollment.

All admission and enrollment forms must be completed, and first tuition payment with registration fee paid prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Inclusion

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

Non-Discrimination

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

Language Barriers

To accommodate language barriers, our center will utilize available technology, including Google speech tools and translation applications, to assist in communication with families who do not speak English as their first language. These tools may be used for written communication such as emails, newsletters, forms, and daily updates, as well as for verbal communication when appropriate. Additionally, we have staff members who speak Spanish and American Sign Language (ASL) and are available to help translate and support communication with families.

Confidentiality

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

Photography and Video

Often children enrolled in the program are photographed and/or videoed for the program's internal and/or external use.

Photographing and occasionally videotaping children and using this in the classroom supports children's sense of belonging, encourages learning, and teaches reflection. Capturing impromptu daytime moments and memories helps children reflect on and share their experiences with their families, which furthers the home-school connection.

It is our policy upon enrollment to provide each family with a Photo Release Permission Form to approve or not approve taking photographs or videos of the enrolled child/children, and whether those photos or videos can be shared for use internally or externally, with other families, or online with social media, our website, and grant applications.

Staff Qualifications

Our staff are hired in compliance with the state requirements and qualifications as a base minimum. All center licensed care providers must have, or are actively working towards, a high school diploma or GED. The 30 Hour Basic Training is to be completed within the first 90 days of employment for all staff. Caregivers participate in ongoing training in the areas of child growth and development, healthy and safe environments, developmentally appropriate practices, guidance, family relationships, cultural and individual diversity, and professionalism.

Typical college completed certifications are as follows:

Position Title	Education/Certification
Lead Teacher	30 Hour Basic*, Initial ECE Certificate, Short ECE Certificate Specialization
Teacher Assistant	30 Hours Basic, EQUEL,& PACE State Trainings

**Any arrangement between families and our caregivers outside the program and services we offer is a private matter, and not connected or sanctioned by First Years Children's Center (i.e. babysitting, pickup, drop off, etc.).*

Child to Staff Ratios

We follow state standards for child to staff ratios, but we try to maintain a lower ratio when possible:

Classroom	FYCC Ratio	State Ratio	Outdoor Ratio	Maximum Class Size
Infant 1	1:3	<u>1:4</u>	<u>1:4</u>	<u>7</u>
Infant 2	1:4	1:4	<u>1:4</u>	<u>5</u>
Toddler 1	1:5	1:7	<u>1:7</u>	<u>9</u>
Toddler 2	1:6	1:7	<u>1:7</u>	<u>12</u>
Toddler 3	1:6	1:7	<u>1:7</u>	<u>12</u>
Preschool 1	1:8	1:10	<u>1:10</u>	<u>18</u>
Preschool 2	1:10	1:10	<u>1:10</u>	<u>20</u>
Pre-k	1:10	1:10	<u>1:10</u>	<u>20</u>

Communication & Family Partnership

Tadpoles App. Daily notes from teaching staff will keep you informed about your child's activities, naps, snacks and meals, diaper changes/potty learning, and daily experiences at the center. Daily reports will be sent either to your email or the Parents Tadpoles App. Tadpoles is also used to send out party invites, occasional photos/videos, center announcements, as well as any unscheduled closures or rare incidents (i.e. phones or internet are down).

Classroom Bulletin Boards Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide classroom news, upcoming center events, holiday closing dates, local Island events, monthly announcements, etc.

Classroom Newsletters Monthly newsletters provide classroom news, events, announcements, etc. These newsletters are emailed out at the beginning of each month via Tadpoles.

CURRICULA AND LEARNING

Learning Environment

We provide a rich learning environment with an emergent curriculum tailored to each classroom's developmental needs. We believe learning happens through play, with hands-on exploration guided by children's interests.

Our program supports both social-emotional and cognitive growth, helping children build skills in self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, creativity, problem-solving, independence, and responsibility. We encourage openness to differences and support children in learning to communicate, collaborate, and build positive relationships.

Curricula & Assessment

Our early childhood curriculum supports learning through natural curiosity. We believe children learn best through hands-on, developmentally appropriate activities that promote cognitive, fine and gross motor, social, and emotional skill growth.

Teachers create engaging activities that encourage creativity, problem-solving, independence, and peer interaction while supporting each child's individual learning style and developmental needs. We recognize that every child is unique, develops at their own pace, and has individual strengths and needs. Our curriculum is flexible and adapted to support each child's developmental level, learning style, interests, and social-emotional needs to help them succeed and thrive.

Dual Language Classrooms

A few of our classrooms are multicultural learning environments where children will have the exciting opportunity to learn from multilingual teachers. Through daily exposure to different languages, students naturally develop listening, speaking, and cultural awareness skills in a fun and engaging way. Language learning is woven into classroom activities, songs, stories, and conversations helping children build confidence

while expanding their understanding of the world. This enriching environment fosters curiosity, celebrates diversity, and empowers children to respect different cultures and perspectives.

Developmental Screening

Children participate in developmental screenings every two months using the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention developmental screening tool. If potential developmental delays or social-emotional concerns are identified, staff administer the Ages and Stages Questionnaires appropriate to the child's age for further screening and evaluation.

Informal Assessments

Teachers conduct ongoing informal assessments through daily observations and interactions with children. These assessments help monitor developmental progress, peer interactions, physical abilities, language development, and cognitive growth. Information gathered from observations is used to guide classroom activities, support individualized learning, and adapt experiences to meet each child's unique strengths and needs.

Outings and Field Trips

Weather permitting; we conduct supervised outdoor play through out the day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in walking trips and school bus rides are included in the enrollment package. From time to time, there will be field trips to parks, playgrounds, beaches, library, etc.

The safety of children and staff will be guarded in all activities of child care programs. Proper safety seat belts and the correct use of them are critically important during travel to/from First Years while on field trips.

Children as young as infants can go for walks in our strollers, but children under 2 years old are prohibited from going on field trips or outings if bus transportation is needed.

School Bus

Our school bus is capable of transporting 14 children, ages 2 and up. It is fully equipped with 5 point harness seatbelts.

Transitions

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

Transition From Home to Center

Prior to your child's first day, you will have an opportunity to tour the center, meet with your child's teachers, and communicate any anticipated concerns. First Years offers a

“slow start” where your child can come part days to ease into the child care routine. This can be worked out on a case by case basis depending on each child’s needs.

Transition Between Classrooms

Children are transitioned to the next classroom based on age, developmental readiness, state licensing requirements, and space availability. During the transition, current and future teachers will introduce your child into the new program with a week long transition time where they will start their day in their current classroom, and then visit the next classroom later in the morning.

Transition to Elementary School

We will provide you with information on local schools, parent nights, open enrollment periods, what to expect, and children’s books on how to talk to your child about going to elementary school. Prior to children leaving for kindergarten, FYCC hosts a Pre-k Graduation ceremony and party after hours for families and friends to celebrate moving on to the next big adventure!

Electronic Media

Our normal daily routine does not include electronic media (television/TV, video, DVD) viewing and computer use but from time-to-time, we may use a television show without advertisements as a teaching aid and discussion stimulator. All Electronic Media will be screened prior to use and will consist of non-violent and high-quality educational material. Our focus is to provide your child a positive experience with increased understanding of the world. Electronic Media will be offered only as a free choice, used to meet a developmental goal, and limited to no more than minutes per week per child.

Celebrations

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

Rest Time

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Caregivers/teachers directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants. Required state training on how to properly put infants safely to sleep is completed by *all* employees annually.

After lunch, toddlers through pre-k can participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities, or outside play time.

Toilet Learning

The most important factor in making the toilet learning experience successful and as low-stress as possible is a family/teacher partnership that supports the child. Research indicates that children cannot successfully learn how to use the toilet until they are physically, psychologically, and emotionally ready. Many pediatricians say that most children under 24 months of age are not physically capable of regulating bladder and

bowel muscles. Most positive toilet training occurs only after children show signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions and when they demonstrate an interest or curiosity in the process. We are committed to working with you to make sure that toilet learning is carried out in a manner that is consistent with your child's physical and emotional abilities and your family's concerns.

GUIDANCE

General Procedure

First Years is committed to each student's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all students have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with people in the school community.

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

Challenging Behavior

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self control and kindness.

Each student at First Years has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying.

Physical Restraint

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

Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families

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

Parent/Guardian Policy

We expect all parents and guardians to contribute to a respectful and safe environment for everyone in our community. Any parent or guardian who displays aggressive, threatening, or inappropriate behavior—including the use of offensive or abusive language—toward staff, children, or others will be asked to leave the premises immediately.

Such behavior may result in further action, including but not limited to:

- Suspension or termination of the family's enrollment
- Immediate expulsion of the child from the program
- Permanent termination of the center's relationship with the family

The center reserves the right to refuse continued services to any family whose conduct compromises the safety, well-being, or positive atmosphere of the program.

Child Expulsion Policy

In accordance with the Washington Administrative Code, First Years Children's Center is committed to supporting children's social, emotional, and behavioral development while maintaining a safe environment for all children and staff. Expulsion is considered only after reasonable efforts have been made to support the child and family, except in cases involving immediate safety risks.

A child may be subject to expulsion under the following circumstances:

- If a child exhibits behavior that presents a serious and ongoing safety concern for themselves, other children, or staff.
- If a child receives multiple incident reports related to safety concerns, the child's guardian may be required to attend a meeting with the child's teacher, program supervisor, and/or Center Director. During this meeting, staff will collaborate with the family to develop reasonable modifications and strategies to support the child's behavior.
- The Center may provide families with information about community resources and services that may assist in addressing the child's behavioral needs.
- Guardians will receive written documentation, including incident reports that outline the child's behaviors and the strategies implemented by staff during incidents.
- Guardians are expected to actively participate in supporting their child by following through with recommended strategies and seeking appropriate

resources when necessary. A lack of participation or follow-through may result in expulsion from the program.

- In situations involving significant behavioral incidents, guardians may be required to pick up their child immediately.
- If reasonable modifications and interventions do not successfully reduce or eliminate the safety concern, the child may be expelled from the program.
- If a family declines or refuses to participate in required meetings with the child's teacher, program supervisor, and/or Center Director, this may result in immediate expulsion.
- In most cases, families will be provided with up to a 30-day notice to secure alternative childcare arrangements. However, in extreme circumstances involving immediate safety concerns, expulsion may take effect immediately.

TUITION AND FEES

All payment and fee processing will be completed and posted by the 25th of every month. If you have a question or concern regarding a payment or fee, please contact the Director of Family Engagement.

Tuition Rates

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

Tuition Deposit

A Tuition Deposit equal to two weeks of care is required at the time registration is confirmed. This deposit is applied to the first two weeks of the first month care is provided.

Add a Day

Requests can be made to add a day for those who are enrolled 3 or 4 days a week. If approved, a fee of \$100 will be charged to your account for each extra day of care, regardless of the classroom, and will need to be paid prior to attending the extra day.

Trade Day

For families enrolled 3 or 4 days per week, if your child misses a scheduled day, you may request a trade day on a day your child does not normally attend. Trade days are subject to availability and must be approved by a director. Requests are limited to one trade day per month. Trade days will not be granted for holidays, center closures, or inclement weather days.

Payment

Tuition payments are due on the 1st of every month. Accommodations can be extended to the 15th of the month with prior arrangement. Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control.

Methods of Payment

Several methods of payment are available for families' convenience. Families can pay by automatic electronic funds transfer (the preferred method), or cash, check, money order, and Venmo. To set up automatic reoccurring payments, please contact the Director of Family Engagement.

Late Payment Charges

Late payments create significant challenges for our program. As a result, families may not carry a balance exceeding one month of tuition.

If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a \$75 late fee will be added to your next tuition payment for each week the balance remains unpaid. Repeated late payments may require your family to enroll in automatic bank draft or credit card payments.

All payments received will be applied to the oldest outstanding charges first. Late fees may continue to apply if the account balance is not paid in full by the next tuition due date.

Failure to make childcare payments may result in termination of childcare services once the account becomes more than one month past due.

Accounts that remain unpaid for more than 45 business days may be referred to small claims court and/or turned over to a third-party collections agency for recovery. Families will be responsible for any expenses associated with these actions, including court costs, attorney fees, and collection fees.

Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic debits) or credit card transactions will be charged a fee of \$35. This charge may be collected electronically.

Late Pick-up Fees

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per minute will be assessed beginning at 6:00PM and will be due when posted. Repeated late pick up may result in child care services being terminated.

Other Fees

- From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity or trip.
- Families contract for a specific weekly schedule as completed on the *Enrollment Agreement* Form. Payment for this contracted schedule is required every month year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary every other week all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather, infectious disease, or weather-related or environmental issues.

ATTENDANCE AND WITHDRAWAL

Absence

If your child is going to be absent or arrive late/picked up early, please call or text us.

Withdrawal

A minimum of 30 days written notice is required for withdrawing a child from the program. Failure to give 30 days will still result in being billed for the final 30 days.

Closing Due to Extreme Weather

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, ice, storms, floods, tornadoes, earthquakes, loss of power, loss of water, loss of HVAC) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced on Tadpoles emergency texts and emails.

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

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

General Procedure

We open at 6:30AM. Please do not drop-off your child prior to the opening. Parents are expected to accompany their children and sign them in on the iPads at the front desk.

We close at 6:00PM. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as "Anytime Pickup" and "Emergency Release" contacts. If you want a person who is not identified as an Anytime or Emergency contact to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing/texting. Your child will not be released without prior authorization.

The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

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

Right to Refuse Child Release

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

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

What to Bring

What children need to bring will vary by classroom and age group. During classroom transitions, you will receive a transition packet outlining the items required for your child's new class. This may include extra clothing, nap supplies, and diapering or bathroom accommodations.

Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, crib sheet, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Sheets and soiled clothing will be sent home on an as-needed basis for laundering and return to the center.

Cubbies

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

Lost & Found

You can look for lost items and bring found items to the front desk. Please note that we are not responsible for lost personal property.

NUTRITION

FYCC is a peanut- and tree nut-free center. Please do not bring peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts, or any products containing peanuts or tree nuts into the facility. If your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions, please notify us immediately. To help

protect children with food allergies, food brought from home may not be shared with other children.

Any food your child does not eat at lunchtime will be returned in their lunch box so you can monitor how much they have eaten.

Breakfast

Breakfast is available daily from 6:30 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. We offer a variety of fruits, muffins, pancakes, waffles, cereals, juice, and milk. Please arrive before that time if your child will be eating breakfast at the center.

Lunch

A nutritious lunch is served in each classroom every day. State guidelines require our lunch menu to vary daily and not repeat within a two-week period.

Lunch menus are posted for your reference, and copies are emailed out via Tadpoles weekly. Please inform us of any dietary restrictions your child may have. Families of children with special dietary needs must provide appropriate substitute foods, as FYCC does not provide meal substitutions.

Children may eat lunches provided by the center or bring a lunch from home. There is no tuition credit for children who bring their own lunch.

Snacks

Throughout the day, we provide three to four nutritious snacks. Snacks typically include a fruit or vegetable along with a grain, starch, or dairy item. Water or milk is served with each snack.

Food Prepared for or at the Center

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

Food Allergies

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy will be required to have an action care plan for emergencies completed by a physician.

Meal Time

At meal time, tables are set with plates and flatware, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can help themselves. Everyone sits at the tables, except

infants who sit in high chairs. Children are encouraged to serve themselves from food passed around each table. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged.

All caregivers are trained in first-aid for choking and are present at all meals.

Infant Feedings

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 2-3 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Breastfeeding is supported by providing a place for nursing mothers to feed their babies. Expressed breast milk may be brought from home if frozen or kept cold during transit. All breast milk and formula shall be returned to the child’s home or discarded at the end of each day. Previously frozen, thawed breast milk must be used within 24 hours. Bottles must be clearly labeled with the child’s name and the date the milk was expressed. Frozen breast milk must be dated and may be kept in the freezer for up to days.
- Breast milk and formula brought from home must be dated and labeled with the child’s name.
- Labels on all milk/formula containers should be resistant to loss of the name and date/time when washing and handling.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family.

Children 24 Months and Older

- No child shall go more than 2 hours without a meal or snack being provided.
- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
- Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include: hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

HEALTH

Immunizations

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

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are required to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Physicals

To ensure that our records remain accurate and up to date, FYCC requires families to review and confirm their child's medical information annually. Parents or guardians will be asked each year to verify or update the name and contact information of their child's current physician and dentist, as well as provide the date of their child's most recent well-child examination doctor's visit.

It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to notify FYCC promptly of any changes to their child's healthcare provider, medical conditions, allergies, or other health-related information throughout the year.

Illness

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. This is not an all-inclusive list. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but they will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

Exclusion Policy

A child will be excluded from care if any of the following symptoms or conditions are observed at home or at the center:

- Fever of 100.0°F or higher (temporal reading)
- Complaints of or signs of ear pain
- Headache pain that prevents participation in daily activities
- Sore throat
- White patches or residue in the mouth that do not go away
- Labored breathing or wheezing
- Fatigue that prevents participation in daily activities
- Excessive coughing that interferes with normal activities
- Vomiting on two or more occasions and/or diarrhea on three or more occasions within a 24-hour period, or a combination of both (for example, two episodes of diarrhea and one episode of vomiting)
- Blood in stool
- Eye discharge that continues after wiping, accompanied by redness, swelling, or eye pain
 - If diagnosed with bacterial conjunctivitis (pink eye), children may return after 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
 - If antibiotics are not prescribed, a doctor's note stating when the child may return is required.

- Open or oozing sores, or excessive drooling associated with mouth sores
- Suspected communicable skin infections or rashes
 - If diagnosed, the child may return after 24 hours of treatment or with a doctor's note clearing them to return.
- Any rash that has not been evaluated by a medical professional to rule out a communicable disease
- Lice or nits
 - Children must complete treatment and be completely free of lice **and** nits before returning.

A note from a licensed healthcare provider is required for any child returning before the recommended exclusion period.

- **COVID-19:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours and symptoms must be improving.
- **Croup:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours and able to participate in normal activities.
- **Ear Infection:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours and able to participate in normal activities.
- **Fifth Disease:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours.
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours and able to participate in normal activities. Sores may still be present, and the child may stay if they are not open or oozing.
- **Influenza:** Child must be fever-free and symptom-free for 24 hours and able to participate in daily activities.
- **Pink Eye (Bacterial):** Child may return after 24 hours on antibiotics.
- **Pink Eye (Viral):** A doctor's note clearing the child to return on a specified date is required.
- **Ringworm:** Child may return 24 hours after treatment begins.
- **RSV:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours and able to participate in normal activities.
- **Roseola:** Child must be fever-free for 24 hours.
- **Strep Throat:** Child may return after 24 hours of treatment, provided they are fever-free and able to participate in normal activities.
- **Thrush:** Child may return after 24 hours of treatment.

Please consult your child's healthcare provider regarding exclusion guidelines for illnesses not specifically listed in this policy. Additional exclusion procedures may be implemented during outbreaks of infectious diseases within the center.

Employee Exclusion

Employees who do not have direct contact with children or items handled by children pose a lower risk of spreading illness to children. However, staff members may still spread illness to coworkers. For this reason, staff members are expected to follow the same exclusion guidelines outlined above for children.

We ask that families notify the center if their child is diagnosed with a contagious illness so we can appropriately inform other families of illnesses circulating within the program.

Allergies Prevention

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

Medications

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

- **Prescription medications** require a note signed by the family and a written order from the child's physician. The prescription label on the medication meets this requirement. The medication must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and the name and phone number of the physician. All medications must be in the original container (you may request pharmacies to fill your prescription in two labeled bottles). Please specify the dosage and time(s) to be administered for each medication.
- **Non-prescription medications** require written permission and instructions signed by the child's parent or guardian. The written permission must include your child's name, dosage, current date, frequency, and all medications must be in the original container.
- **Non-prescription topical ointments** (e.g., diaper cream or sunscreen) require a note signed by a parent or guardian, specifying frequency as well as the length of time the authorization is valid which cannot exceed 12 months.

SAFETY

Clothing

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

One particular aspect of concern is the risk associated with children's clothing that may become entangled with climbing or sliding equipment that could lead to choking or other

serious harm. All drawstrings from children's clothes should be removed as a precaution.

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

Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play

Outdoor play will not occur if the outside temperature is greater than 90°F; temps will be evaluated case by case when they are lower than 45°F. Additionally, outdoor play will be cancelled if the air quality rating is low.

Injuries

First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an accident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit.

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

Children who sustain what could be considered a major medical injury (at FYCC or outside of care) will need a note clearing the child to return to school, and list out any side effects or restrictions. If the child will not be able to keep up with daily school schedules and routines, or if it seems as though FYCC will not be able to accommodate the restrictions, the child will need to wait to return until fully cleared by a doctor.

Biting

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

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

Incident write ups will be given to the family of the child who was bitten and the child who bit's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

Smoking

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

Prohibited Substances

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

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

Dangerous Weapons

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

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

Child Custody

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

Without a custody agreement, we are not able to prevent the release of your child to a parent.

Suspected Child Abuse

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

Emergencies

Lost or Missing Child

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost or separated from a group, all available staff will search for the child, and family and the police will be notified.

Fire Safety

Our center is fully equipped with a fire drill plan.

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

Emergency Transportation

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

CENTER POLICIES

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed annually and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.

Family Activities

FAMILY ACTIVITIES

We encourage families to attend and plan ahead for our annual events:

- Spring and Fall Child Portraits
- Summer Family BBQ and Carnival
- Halloween Trick or Treat Night
- Holiday Hot Cocoa Night
- Scholastic Book Orders
- Pre-K graduation

Family Handbook Acknowledgement

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

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

Thank you for acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care, including the Photo Release Permission Form, which must be completed and returned.

I have received the First Years Children's Center Family Handbook. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself with the Family Handbook and to ask center directors for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the First Years Children's Center Family Handbook that I do not understand.

Print name

Date

Signature