



Early Care and Education Center

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**PRESCHOOL HANDBOOK**

## **Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center Parent Handbook**

### **WELCOME**

Welcome to Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center (HIH). Choosing a child care center is a difficult task for any parent and we thank you for putting your trust in us. It is our goal to provide every child the love, nurturing and education s/he deserves.

For your child to have the best experience at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, your input is important. We must work as a team to enhance your child's growth and sense of well-being. Your questions and comments are always welcome, and in fact, are necessary for your child to receive the maximum benefit from our program. Your concerns will always be addressed with the utmost respect and your opinions will be valued. We look forward to your participation.

This handbook was designed to let you know about our basic policies and procedures. If you have any questions regarding this handbook, please do not hesitate to speak to the director or supervisor.

Once again, thank you for choosing Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center. We look forward to getting to know you and your child(ren).

### **PHILOSOPHY**

It is a well-known scientific fact that the primary years of life are the most crucial for brain development and learning. At Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, your child will gain practice in language, cognitive, fine and gross motor, social/emotional and self-help skills through Developmentally Appropriate Practices techniques and guidelines. These skills will help your child build his or her self-esteem and prepare him or her for future life skills. Each child is treated with respect and love and is offered a positive, non-pressured learning environment.

We at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center recognize the need for children to work and play at their own pace. We encourage individual growth while offering group activities that are age-appropriate. Our staff members possess a genuine love of children that is shown through their continuous displays of affection and understanding. We believe children learn best in a supportive atmosphere where success and self-esteem are nurtured and reinforced. We create a love for learning by instilling confidence in each child. We believe that through strengthening social and intellectual capabilities children will be better prepared for life. Our children are taught how to compare, infer, judge, reorganize and make decisions -- abilities that make a child safer in today's world. We offer a child-centered teaching technique, encouraging children to learn concepts and skills through self-discovery, while our teachers remain available to maintain the flow of the classroom and to assist children in their discoveries. We are dedicated to helping each child reach his or her full potential in a nurturing, creative environment. Your child's comforts, needs and safety are always our number one priority.

### **NON-DISCRIMINATION**

Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center enrolls children of any race, religion, disability, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to children at the center. We do not discriminate. A multi-cultural, anti-biased curriculum is offered.

### **OPEN DOOR POLICY**

Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center maintains an open-door policy. Parents are welcome to visit our day care at any time during business hours. You are welcome to observe our program for as long as you wish. We will continue with our normal schedule while you are present. If for any reason parental contact is forbidden with a child, Hand In Hand, Inc. must have a court order stating the same. Without this legal document, the Center has no alternative but to allow either parent to see or take the child.

## HOURS OF OPERATION

### Hours of operation

Hand In Hand Early Care & Education Center is open 6:30 am to 6:00 pm. The preschool hours are as follow:

#### **905 Barrington Parkway**

AM 4 year old preschool Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:15-11:15

PM 4 year old preschool Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 12:30-3:30

#### **3524 35<sup>th</sup> Ave.**

AM 4 year old preschool Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 8:30-11:15

PM 4 year old preschool Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday: 12:30-3:30

W/F 3 year old preschool Wednesday/Friday: 9-12

T/TH 3 year old preschool Tuesday/Thursday: 9-12

We will follow the Linn-Mar Community School District calendar for no school days, and weather-related cancelations and delays. A calendar of events will be sent home with your child at the beginning of the school year.

**You must sign IN and OUT on the secured entrance system.** This helps keep an accurate record of the times your child is attending and attendance in an emergency.

Office hours are from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday. If you would like to meet with a supervisor outside of office hours, please contact them directly.

## ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

We welcome children ages 3-5 years of age. All children must be potty trained in order to attend the program.

The Iowa State Licensing Standards mandate that parents must provide Hand In Hand with the following forms prior to the first day of attendance:

1. Physical report signed by a physician
2. Iowa Department of Public Health Immunization record. Signed by parent and physician.
3. Medical consent form
4. Registration form
5. Field trip authorization/Travel and Authorization
6. Photo release form
7. Permission to pick up form
8. Summation from parent handbook
9. Signed fee and payment agreement

All forms must be presented to the office before the first day of preschool.

### **Registration/Enrollment Fee**

At the time of enrollment, a non-refundable supplemental fee is required. If other arrangements for care are made and you choose not to use our services, your supplemental fee will not be refunded to you.

### **Tuition**

Program/Preschool fees for children attending Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center will be charged on a monthly basis. If openings are available in the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program and your child is 4 on or before September 15<sup>th</sup> there is no charge for 4-year-old preschool. If your child is not eligible for the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program or openings are not available, the monthly tuition is as follows.

4 year old preschool: \$250 per month

3 year old preschool: \$200 per month

### **Late Fees**

A late payment fee of \$10 **per day** will be assessed for payments received **after the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month for the month ahead**. Failure to keep your account current will result in termination of the program. In addition, your account will be turned into our collection agency. All accounts turned into collections will be assessed a 30% fee of the remaining balance on the account.

### **Returned Payments**

A charge of thirty dollars (\$30) will be assessed for any returned payments. This includes payments by check, and reoccurring payments made by credit card, checking account, or savings account payments. If a good faith effort is not made to restore your account to "current" status within 1 week, an additional ten dollars (\$10) per day late fee will be charged until payment is made. Please maintain communication between yourself and administrative staff at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center if payment schedules become difficult to maintain. This in no way absolves anyone from any part of payment, but perhaps further action can be avoided.

### **Childcare State Assistance**

Hand In Hand, Inc. does accept child care assistance (CCA) from the Department of Human Services. Hand In Hand MUST receive an approval letter from the state prior to beginning care. At this time, your child will be placed on our provider portal with the Department of Human Services. Your child MUST be located under the correct Hand In Hand location at this time. Care will NOT begin until this has been accepted. Parents receiving CCA will also be required to sign a fee agreement, agreeing to be personally responsible for the payment of co-pays and FULL tuition, in the event they become ineligible to receive child care assistance. All CCA attendance forms MUST be signed by the parent no later than the 4<sup>th</sup> of every month. All co-pays are due no later than 7 days after the statement is received. In addition, your child may not miss more than 4 days of attendance with Hand In Hand, per month. If your child has more than 4 absents per month, your child may be terminated from our program immediately.

### **Dismissal/Late Pick Up Charges**

Dismissal is scheduled for 12:00 for the 3 year old preschool, 11:15 for AM 4 year old preschool and 3:30 for PM 4 year old preschool. Please be prompt. There will be an initial charge of ten dollars (\$10.00) for pick-ups after 11:15a.m./12:00 p.m./or 3:30 p.m. For pick-ups after 11:17 a.m./12:02 p.m./3:32 p.m., a charge of five dollars (\$5) per minute, up to (15) minutes will be assessed. After (15) minutes, the charge will be increased to ten dollars (\$10) per minute will be assessed, up to one (1) hour. After one (1) hour, if attempts to reach the parent and/or emergency contact by telephone fails, and there is no notification to Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center by the parent concerning lateness, local authorities will be called.

If a late charge is assessed more than four (4) times during a 9 month period, or if there is one instance of extreme lateness, services provided by Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center and the family will be considered for termination.

## **COMMUNICATION**

Communication is very important to Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center. When a new child is accepted into Hand In Hand Early Care & Education Center, Inc, we like to be sure that we can share openly any concerns or questions that may arise. It is important that there is a similar child care philosophy between us. We welcome questions, feedback, or discussions of any kind that are oriented towards a positive outcome for the children. Sensitive issues will be discussed in private either by telephone or conference. We ask that all parents refrain from contacting staff, supervisors, or directors through social media to discuss issues or concerns. Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center publishes a monthly newsletter that will explain events that will be happening during that month and any other pertinent or fun information that may be of interest to you. You are always welcome to contribute to our newsletter. You are encouraged to call at any time. When you call during the day, please be aware that we are busy with the children and may not be able to answer the phone. If you would leave a voicemail, we will call you back as soon as possible. We are looking forward to a terrific relationship with you and your child.

Other forms of communication you will find throughout Hand In Hand-

- Website at [www.handinhandinc.com](http://www.handinhandinc.com)
- E-mail (please make sure we have an updated address for your family) [hih@handinhandinc.com](mailto:hih@handinhandinc.com)
- Flyers on the parent boards

- Signs posted throughout the center
- Weekly/Monthly Newsletter
- Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/HandInHandInc/>

## **ABSENTEEISM AND HOLIDAYS**

### **Inclement Weather**

All Hand In Hand Preschool programs will follow the Linn Mar Community Schools calendar. As staff must be compensated, snow days **will** be counted as absenteeism days. In the event that Linn Mar closes for weather related emergencies, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center will not have classes. If we are able to offer “make-up” days, we will let you know as soon as possible of those days.

There are occasions when, due to circumstances beyond our control (weather conditions, loss of power, building emergency), we will have to close early, delay opening, or close altogether. There are also times during the day when your child becomes ill at school and will need to be sent home. It is important for families to have a “Plan B” when those occasions arise. We realize that it is difficult for working families to juggle work schedules and conflicts. However, we also recognize that the safety, well-being and health of many children and families rest in our hands. We do not make decisions to close lightly and we expect cooperation when these occasions arise. We hope that families consider finding an alternate arrangement for these occasions.

### **Pandemic Closures/Delays**

In the event of a pandemic, Hand In Hand will follow Linn-Mar Community School District policies on limited classes, shortened classes, or closures.

### **Holidays**

As full-time employees are paid for the holidays listed below, parents are responsible for payment of such holidays. The following are paid holidays at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center.

<i>New Year’s Day</i>	<i>Labor Day</i>	<i>Christmas Eve Day</i>
<i>Christmas Day</i>	<i>Thanksgiving and day after</i>	
<i>Memorial Day</i>		
<i>New Year’s Eve Day</i>		

When a holiday (listed above) falls on a Saturday, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center will be closed the preceding Friday with pay. When a holiday falls on a Sunday, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center will be closed the following Monday with pay. If the Christmas holiday and New Year’s holidays are on a Saturday and Sunday we will be closed the Friday prior to and the Monday following the holiday.

### **Holiday Celebrations**

If any family objects to the celebration or recognition of religious or other holidays, please communicate this to the supervisor prior to the holiday (preferably at registration). We will work with you to the best of our ability to establish proper arrangements out of respect to you and your family’s wishes.

### **Attendance**

If your child is going to be absent from preschool, please notify the office as soon as possible.

### **Arrival**

Students may not arrive in the classroom earlier than the time preschool starts. If you arrive early, a parent or guardian may wait with the student until the teachers open the doors at the start of the preschool time.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

If your child is being transported by Hand In Hand, Inc. for Preschool from an In Home Child Care Center there are a few things that will need to be shared with your child care provider.

1. Please let your childcare provider know that the Hand In Hand bus will arrive between 7:45 and 8:55 am. After the first few weeks of school the time should not vary but will remain within 5 minutes daily. If your child will not

be attending Preschool for the day please notify Hand In Hand, Inc. by or before 7:30 a.m. If a call is not made a \$10 late charge will apply.

2. We ask that your childcare provider please have your child ready when the Hand In Hand vehicle arrives. The driver will honk the horn one time, if your child is not ready shortly after this, the vehicle will proceed to the next stop. The childcare provider can always wave a friendly hello to let the driver know that the child is coming. The driver is not allowed to leave the children in the vehicle unattended at any time.
3. If your child shall become ill and not need transportation for the day, we ask that you please call before 7:30 am. If your child shall become ill while attending Hand In Hand, we ask that you please pick up your child promptly. Your child will not be transported if they are ill.
4. We ask that you please let your childcare provider know that your child will be arriving back to child care between 11:30 and 12:45 pm. Please be waiting for the child to arrive at the childcare home. Again, the driver is not allowed to leave any child unattended in the vehicle at any time; therefore, the driver will not be walking the child to the door. We ask that you be waiting in visible site of the driver to ensure the driver that someone is home and waiting.
5. If your child is receiving transportation by Hand In Hand and you have communication for the teacher or administrator, please place communication in a bag or envelope and have your child care provider give to the driver. The teacher and assistant will not be checking your child's bag for communication.

**At any time, if the childcare provider is unwilling to adhere to the above policies, we will notify the parent. If the situation is unresolved, we will no longer be able to offer transportation for your child.**

## **CURRICULUM**

We will introduce your child to themes and projects that enhance intellectual, social, physical, and emotional development. Each child will experience the current theme or project using a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate. Teachers will facilitate hands-on learning experiences with a variety of engaging educational activities. In addition to our regular curriculum, we will celebrate all the regular holidays as well as your child's birthday. All lesson plans can be found posted on the parent board outside the classroom.

You will find a well-rounded variety of activities where your child can learn their alphabet, recognize colors and shapes, count, learn sequencing and sorting patterns, practice writing their names and small words. They will develop language skills and learn to socialize with their peers in group situations.

Children will develop their fine motor skills through creative age appropriate explorative play mediums such as: Play-Dough, sand and water tables, and various construction blocks. Their gross motor skills will be developed through exercising, obstacle courses, dancing and playing games, such as follow the leader. They will learn to express themselves with music, finger plays, dance and dramatic display.

Hand In Hand implements *Creative Curriculum*, *Jolly Phonics*, and *Everyday Mathematics*. *Creative Curriculum* is a combination of teacher directed learning and child-directed activities with a focus on different learning style and building on children's strengths and their interests. Our program philosophy is supported by research. *Creative Curriculum* matches well with our beliefs regarding child development and the infusion of play into the curriculum. *Creative Curriculum Objectives* guide us in planning for all children. We are able to discern their current level and move them forward. Lesson plans designed from CC allow the teacher to plan for individual needs.

### **Child Assessment**

Our teachers perform on-going assessments of the children. We believe that the assessment should be developmentally appropriate and take place in the natural setting of the classroom. We use these assessments to change/adapt our teaching in order to benefit all the children in the class. The different forms of assessments we perform are anecdotal observations, and an evaluation developed by Hand In Hand which evaluates all aspects of the preschool experience. These forms are provided to the parents twice a year during conferences.

### **Outdoor Play**

Outdoor play is part of the early childhood curriculum. During the winter, your child needs a coat, hat, and gloves. We will go outside every day except in the following cases:

- Orange or Red Air days (Yellow days we will limit outside time to 15 minutes)
- Temperatures above 99° (Temperatures between 90-99° we will limit outside time to 15 minutes)
- Temperatures under 0° (Temperatures between 0-32° we will limit outside time to 15 minutes)
- During active precipitation

### **Typical Day**

**Arrival/DAP (Developmentally Appropriate Practices):** Staff assists children in making the transition from home to school. Each child independently selects from several manipulative sets out for that day by the teacher which help develop fine motor skills.

**Circle Time:** Language skills and readiness skills are emphasized as children and teachers plan together for the day's activities. 3-year-old classes will learn and master such concepts as colors, shapes, and numbers. 4-5-year-old classes will revisit the above, along with a letter of the week, and Kindergarten readiness skills.

**Center Time:** Children choose from activities provided and planned for in each of the classroom centers: dramatic play, blocks, table toys, art, science, writing, sensory table, and library. Learning is child-centered and facilitated by the Early Childhood Staff through children's play and their natural interests.

**Snack:** Snack time encourages self-help skills, good manners, social interaction with peers, and language and communication.

**Music/Movement:** Large motor skills are enhanced through music as well as physical activities enjoyed both in the classroom and outdoors.

**Story Times:** Pre-reading skills are developed as the teacher reads books to children in large and small groups, emphasizing language and listening skills and encouraging active participation through the use of creative dramatics.

**Outside Time:** Weather permitting the children goes outside for structured and unstructured large motor activities. This time also allows for social interaction with peers.

**Dismissal:** Children are encouraged to develop independence in the area of self-help skills.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips provide many and varied experiences for young children. On field trip days, the students and teachers will meet at the designated field trip location. Once the field trip is over, the students are dismissed for day. There will be no school at the Hand In Hand location on a field trip day. There will be NO TRANSPORTATION provided on field trip days. Parents/guardians will drive their student to the field trip location and stay with their child during the field trip. Most field trips last between 45 minutes-1.5 hours.

## **PARENTS**

Parents are the most important people in the lives of children. Close ties between home and school are important for all children. These are some ways parents are involved in our program:

**Newsletters:** Short newsletters keep parents in touch with experiences the children are having, and are an effective way to keep people informed of our activities.

**Projects:** We want the parents to be involved in our on-going projects- whether by helping with research, field trips, or support.

**Programs:** We will offer 2 formal programs throughout the year. A winter program in the month of December, and a spring/graduation program at the end of the year. We will also offer several activities throughout the year in which parents are invited to attend.

## **STAFFING**

We maintain an excellent staff with an up-beat positive attitude in our facility. We meet and exceed all requirements held

by the Department of Human Services. We also meet and exceed all the staff to child ratios required by the state. Our staff members will undergo a thorough training to prepare them for their respected positions. Applicants are carefully screened through a complete background and criminal records check. Only the most talented, energetic, enthusiastic, and patient applicants are chosen as a part of the Hand In Hand staff.

### **Staff Training/Certifications**

All Hand In Hand staff will meet and exceed the Department of Human Service guidelines for employment. Continuing education and training is the key to Hand In Hand's successful program and employees.

All staff working directly with children, including the Director and Co-Director, shall complete the required training per calendar year as mandated by The Department of Human Services. The training shall be in areas relevant to the care of young children. It may consist of workshop/seminars conducted by recognized professionals in the field, professional conferences, and/or courses at an approved accredited institution of higher education.

Documentation of the individual training plan and completion of the required training shall be kept in the individual staff records and be available for review by The Department of Human Services during licensing and/or monitoring visits.

Prior to employment all staff members are required to have a background check performed by Hand In Hand.

All preschool teachers have completed Early Childhood Education classes and/or hold a current Iowa Teaching License in Early Childhood Education.

### **TOILET TRAINING**

In order to attend the preschool program at Hand in Hand your child/ren must be potty trained and in underwear before starting the Preschool program. We do not have the facilities in the classroom to appropriately change diapers/pull ups.

### **BEHAVIOR/DISCIPLINE**

When a child is facing challenges in the classroom or play area setting, including, but not limited to, treating others or equipment with respect or following direction, developmentally appropriate guidance techniques are used. These techniques are as follows:

\*Positive Reinforcement: The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.

\*Redirection: The child is redirected to another activity and given the opportunity to try again at another, more suitable time.

\*"If ..... then statements: A statement in which the child is encouraged to accomplish one task before moving on to something else.

\*Take a Break: The child is separated from the group for a child regulated period of time. This technique is used only when a child is exhibiting temper tantrum type behavior or hurting themselves, staff, others, or equipment. When the child shows that he/she is ready to demonstrate acceptable behavior, the child is encouraged to join the rest of the group and try again.

If a child does not respond to these methods and is a danger or major disruption to the program; himself/herself; other children; staff or property, HIH reserves the right to send the child home for the day or to terminate services.

In the event behavior continues, HIH will work with the parents to come up with a plan. This plan may include asking the parents to utilize outside resources. Through these resources, teamwork between teachers and parents, and open communication it is our goal to eliminate the negative behavior.

In the event that the behavior results in hurting themselves, others, or harming property an incident report will be filled out. This form will be signed by the parents, teachers, and supervisor.



## **Steps for Addressing Problem Behaviors**

1. The behaviors of children shall be addressed by the classroom staff as outlined by our Behavior/Discipline Policy. This could include positive reinforcement for any appropriate behavior, redirection, reminders of classroom rules, modifying the classroom environment, or the teacher may respectfully help the child gain control when necessary. Classroom staff shall observe all children and document these behaviors to help ascertain any patterns or precipitating factors of the problem behavior. At no time shall the staff use shaming, the withholding of food, or physical punishment of any kind.
2. When a child exhibits a problem on a continual basis that is not resolved through the appropriate behavior management strategies, the classroom staff will meet with the center supervisor to document the problem behavior and ask for further guidance.
3. If the behavior problem is still not resolved, the supervisor will request a meeting with the child's parent(s), to discuss the problem behavior. The Director and/or Supervisor, Parent(s), and Teaching staff will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the problem behavior. During this process, the teaching staff will keep the Director/Supervisor and Parent(s) informed of the progress in resolving the problem. Observations will be documented, and a copy will be given to the Parent(s) as well as placed in the child's file. If a child's behavior results in the injury of another child or staff member, that child's parent(s) will be notified as soon as possible and written documentation will be given and placed in the child's file.
4. If the center staff feel that they need further assistance in resolving the behavior problem, the program may, with parental permission, request the assistance of an outside agency. If the center staff feels the behavior may result in a special need, the program may, with parental permission, refer the child for an evaluation. If the parental permission is refused, and the problem behavior continues, the continued enrollment of the child will be reconsidered with the provisions of #6 listed below.
5. If the results of an outside evaluation suggest the need for accommodations of special needs, the program will provide these or other appropriate accommodations as long as they are not an undue hardship on the program as outlined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In some cases, certain adaptations to our program may be impossible (an additional teacher at the cost of the family, for example) and we may recommend a different placement for the child. Please know that wherever possible, we will draw upon all resources to meet the child's needs.
6. If behavior problems continue, it may be necessary to place your child on an "Action Plan" due to the safety of the other children and staff within the classrooms and themselves. An Action Plan will consist of 3 opportunities for your child's behavior to improve.

During the 1<sup>st</sup> Incident after being placed on the action plan- The parents will be notified, and the child will be sent home for the rest of the day.

2<sup>nd</sup> Incident- The parents will be called, and the child will be sent home for the day and will not be able to attend for an additional day.

3<sup>rd</sup> Incident- The parents will be notified, and the child will be asked to leave the program at Hand In Hand permanently.

Our goal is to make Hand In Hand a safe environment for all children and staff to be in, it is not our goal for any child to leave the Hand In Hand program.

7. If at any time Hand In Hand deems it necessary, a child may be asked to leave the Hand In Hand program immediately if the child is a severe threat towards themselves or others. Written documentation of all the steps above will be provided to the parent(s) and placed in the child's file.

## **Biting Policy**

The center's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs. A child biting other children is one of the most common and most difficult behaviors in group childcare. It can occur without warning, it is difficult to defend against, and provokes strong emotional responses in the biter, the victim, the parents, and the caregivers. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common

between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at the center is our primary concern. For many toddlers, the biting stage is just a passing problem. Toddlers bite for many different reasons. Some may bite due to the inability to communicate with their peers. Some may bite for peer or adult attention. Some toddlers are just impulsive and do not have a lot of self control. They may also discover that biting is a way to cause the other child to drop what they are holding so the biter can pick it up. However, the toddler will experience disapproval of the adults nearby and eventually learn other ways of gaining possession of objects or expressing difficult feelings. For other children, biting is a persistent and chronic problem. They may bite for a variety of reasons such as: teething, frustration, boredom, inadequate language skills, stress or change in the environment, feeling threatened, or to feel a sense of power.

At all times Hand In Hand will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. All Hand In Hand staff members will maintain close and constant supervision of the biting children at all times.

The following steps will be taken when a bite occurs:

For the Biter:

- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No bite!" "Biting hurts our friends."
- Staff will avoid an immediate response and the child will be removed with no emotion. All caring attentions should be focused on the victim.
- The biter should not be allowed to return to immediate play.
- The biter should be talked to on a level in which the child can understand. " I can see that you wanted to play with the ball, but I cannot let you hurt my friends. We do not bite our friends."
- Redirect the child to a different play area.
- An incident report must be written to notify the parents of the biter.
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

For the victim:

- Separate the victim from the biter
- Comfort the child
- Wash the bite out with soap and water
- Write an accident report to notify the parents of the bite
- Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.

If the biting continues with the same children:

- The staff and the director/supervisor will meet on a day to day basis for advice, support, and further planning.
- The staff shall complete a chart of every occurrence, including attempts and successes. The chart must indicate the location, time, participants, behavior, circumstances, and staff who are present.
- The staff will let the parents know that there is a problem and what we are doing to deal with the problem.
- All staff must keep a constant eye on the children who tend to bite. This will help to stop the biting before it occurs.
- At the time of an attempted bite the staff member shall teach non-biting responses to reinforce positive behaviors.

- The staff shall shadow the children who tend to be bitten.
- The staff shall teach responses to potential victims “no, don’t bite me”

The staff at Hand In Hand will work together as partners with the parents of both the biter and the victim. If needed Hand In Hand will meet with the parents of the biter to develop a written plan of action. At any time, Hand In Hand may consider an “early transition” to the next room for a change in environment. If necessary, Hand In Hand will prepare the parents of the biter of the possibility of being removed from the center. If it is deemed necessary and in the best interest of the child, center, and/or other children, Hand In Hand may terminate the child for the duration of the biting stage. Written warnings will be given to notify the parents before this action will be taken. This action will be deemed as the last possible solution to the biting problem.

## **MEALS AND SNACKS**

### **Special Diets**

If a child has a particular dietary need, substantiated by a medical evaluation, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center must be so informed in writing and given a Dietary Modification form to be completed by your child’s physician. Substitute meals or snacks may need to be brought from home. Food allergies must be disclosed to Hand In Hand. Inc on the enrollment/registration form and/or verbally if the allergy suddenly appears in the child’s diet after enrollment. At the time of enrollment or any time during care, if your child has or develops a food allergy, you will be asked to complete an “Food Allergy Plan” completed by your child’s physician.

If your child is bringing in food from home due to dietary needs or religion, we ask that it still follow the guidelines set in place by the Department of Human Services by bringing in healthy foods from each food group.

### **Snack Share**

Each child will receive a “snack calendar” at the first of each month, students will be asked to bring a snack for his/her entire class approximately once a month. Along with the snack calendar will be a form that you must return 1 week prior to your designated child’s snack day stating what your child is bringing for snack. The class size will determine how often your child is responsible to bring snack. You will receive a “healthy snack guide” at the beginning of the school year with snack suggestions. All snacks must be provided in prepackaged, unopened original packages. Snack must be provided from 2 different food groups. Please ensure that all snacks have an ingredient label. There are many children throughout our center with food allergies - please speak with a classroom teacher about these before bringing a treat from home.

### **Birthdays**

Birthdays are a special day for the children. If your child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate his/her “half-birthday” during the preschool year. The teacher will set a time for the birthday celebration and when the child is able to bring birthday treats. We ask that birthday treats be commercially prepared packaged foods in factory sealed containers. Please ensure that all snacks have an ingredient label. There are many children throughout our center with food allergies - please speak with a classroom teacher about these before bringing a treat from home.

## **AUTHORIZED PICK UP**

If at any time it is apparent that the parent/guardian is clearly under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the authorities will be notified immediately during your child’s departure from Hand In Hand.

No child will be released to anyone unauthorized on the child’s enrollment/registration form to pick up the child from Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center.

In the event staff does not know or recognize the adult picking up the child, picture identification **will be required before the child is released to anyone.** We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause, however, in the interest of safety, this policy will be enforced every time.

### **Legal Custody**

Hand In Hand cannot refuse to release a child to a child’s parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody of

the child. If you are experiencing custody difficulties we strongly urge you to keep the center director fully advised of circumstances that affect your child and their drop-off and pick-up routines at the center. Divorced or legally separated parents are required to provide copy of custody documentation. Parent records will be kept confidential, in the child's file.

### **Access Policy**

Hand In Hand has a secured entrance. We ask that all parents/guardians register with the front desk to gain access to the building. If a non-registered person will be picking up for the day, we ask that they stop at the front office with a valid photo id.

1. Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care **shall not** have **"unrestricted access"** to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.

**"Unrestricted access" means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.**

2. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct **"supervision"** and **"monitoring"** of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any childcare responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to a conflict of interest with the person.

**"Supervision"** means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly.

**"Monitoring"** means to be in charge of ensuring proper conduct of others.

3. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason, they will contact their Site Supervisor or another management staff to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation staff will follow the "intruder in the center" procedures. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc. will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on premise.

## **HEALTH & SAFETY**

**\*\*Please note that Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center is a smoke free zone. This is including the outside premises of Hand In Hand.**

### **First Aid**

Minor bumps and scratches are inevitable. Our staff makes every effort to keep the children safe through supervision and childproofing. Minor injuries receive appropriate first aid immediately. However, HIH is legally limited in the scope of first aid that can be provided. For example, staff are limited to the use of soap, water, and Band-Aids and are not permitted to use any non-prescription medications.

### **Accident Report**

An accident report will be completed including a detailed explanation of the accident and injury and signed by teacher, supervisor and parent. A copy will then be kept on file.

### **Immunizations**

State Regulations require that each child have a health statement, which includes a record of up-to-date immunization with a signature from the child's medical care giver. Each time your child receives a new immunization, we must receive a copy. Your child's health care summary must be complete at the time of enrollment.

### **Communicable Disease**

In the event a child contracts a communicable disease and exposes the other children, notices of such exposure will be posted for parent's awareness. If your child becomes sick, or is diagnosed while at home we ask that you notify us immediately so we can post the illness. Your child's name will be kept private. Examples would be: Strep throat, measles,

mumps, chicken pox, diarrhea, scarlet fever, pinworms, viral infections, impetigo, hand foot and mouth, RSV, etc.

### **Emergency Care**

Each classroom is well stocked with the proper first aid materials and minor first aid treatment. In the event the class is participating in outdoor play or on a field trip, each class will carry its own first aid kit. In the event of a medical emergency, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center will immediately secure the necessary care by phoning emergency medical personnel and then the parent or emergency contact will be notified as soon as possible. If it is determined by emergency medical personnel that ambulance/hospitalization is required, emergency personnel will transport the child to the hospital and the child's parent will immediately be notified of such action. The child will be accompanied by a Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center staff member until the child's parent and/or emergency contact arrives at the hospital. Parents/Guardians are responsible for all costs involved in emergency medical treatment, including emergency transportation if required.

### **Illness Policy**

To prevent illness within Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, we ask that all children wash their hands upon arrival to their classroom. If you are intending that you will be staying with your child when dropping off and/or picking up, we ask that you also wash your hands upon entering your child's classroom. As with all the children, all staff are required to wash their hands upon entering a classroom. This policy is enforced in hopes of keeping our illness rate at a minimum.

A child who is not feeling well cannot participate in our day together in a meaningful way, needs the T.L.C. of home. Although not true in every circumstance, we have discovered that in most cases, a child who complains of a "tummy ache" in the morning really is not well. Often this marks the beginning of an illness. We will do our part to help prevent the spread of illness through careful sanitation procedures. We expect families to do their part as well.

Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center reserves the right to temporarily deny any child admittance to the center for reasons of obvious illness, or to request early departure should symptoms become apparent during the course of the day. This is to ensure the continued good health of everyone at the center.

Children will be visually screened as they arrive at the facility. If a child exhibits signs of illness, it will be determined if the symptoms indicate the need for exclusion from the program until remedied. If so, it is expected that the child return home **immediately**. If other alternative arrangements need to be made for the child for the day, it is expected that the parent of the child make those arrangements. The child will not be allowed to stay at the center when ill.

We understand the complexities of managing work schedules and the difficulties of getting off of work to arrange for care for your child. Please know that we are empathetic to families' situations and we do not make the decision to exclude a child lightly. However, if your child is ill, we do not have the proper facilities to care for him or her and s/he needs to be sent home. As inconvenient as that can be, we are acting on the best interests of the child and the program at large. We thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Your child will not be allowed to attend Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center if he or she has an illness that is contagious (common cold excluded) or exhibits symptoms of illness within a **seventy-two (72) hour period** prior to child's admittance back to school. If your child is unable to participate in the normal activities of the daily schedule, then your child must stay home. Your child must be fever free (without fever reducing medications) before returning to Hand In Hand.

In the event that a family member or person with whom the child resides is tested for COVID-19 we will require the child to be quarantined until a negative test is received.

### **Symptoms of Illness**

**(include but not limited to):**

1. Fever of 100 degrees F (taken externally) or higher **or**
2. Diarrhea (three or more watery stools within 24 hours) **or**
3. Vomiting on one or more occasions during the past 24 hours **or**
4. A draining rash **or**
5. Eye discharge or conjunctivitis or pinkeye **or**
6. Lice or Nits **or**
7. Too tired or ill to participate in normal activities **or**

8. Displays difficulty breathing (wheezing) or rapid respirations **or**
9. Continuous complaints of pain **or**
10. Persistent, thick green/yellow discharge from the nose

In the event your child vomits or develops (at least two instances of) loose stool during the day, your child will not be allowed to attend the following day, so we can be reasonably assured that the child is free of illness.

### **Illness Reports**

In the event symptoms of illness become apparent during the course of the day, appropriate action will be taken. The child's parent will be notified and, in all circumstances, an Illness Report will be completed, a copy given to the parent, and a copy will be retained by the center. In the event that your child becomes ill during the day you will be expected to have your child picked up within **1 hour**.

### **Medication**

Any and all medications administered to children will be documented on the Medication Log for childcare form and retained in the center's files. There may not be any medications (fever reducers, creams, lotions, sunscreen, etc.) kept in your child's backpack or cubby at any time. All medications must be given to the staff and will be properly stored. All medications forms must be updated every 30 days.

### **Over-The-Counter Medication**

Over-the-counter medications must be in their **original container** with the manufacturer's label and directions for administration. The unused portion of the medication will be returned to the child's parent. Hand In Hand is not able to use 'homemade' medications or remedies for children per Department of Human Services.

Medication will be administered on an **infrequent, non-routine** basis with **written** permission and instruction by the parent, provided the instructions do not conflict with the directions on the manufacturer's label or physician's directions. Topical ointments (for sun or diaper rash, for example) will be applied as needed under written parental instruction **only**. The following is a list of acceptable non-prescription medication:

1. Antihistamines
2. Non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers
3. Decongestants
4. Anti-itching ointments or lotions, intended specifically to relieve itching
5. Diaper ointments and powders intended specifically for use when diapering
6. Sunscreen
7. Insect Repellent
8. Lotions
9. Chapstick

### **Prescription Medication**

Prescription medication must be in the **original container and labeled from the USA** with the child's complete name, the medication name, recommended dosage, time intervals for administration, method of administration, expiration date and the prescriber's name and license number. Any unused portion will be returned to the parent when no longer needed, or if needed overnight.

This medication will be administered **ONLY** upon **written** authorization of a parent/guardian stating that Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center may administer such medication, according to the prescribed directions. Any and all side effects to any medications **must be disclosed** to Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center prior to administration of such medication, whether or not symptoms of such side effects are present.

### **Sunscreen**

We do not put on sunscreen in our preschool program. Please apply sunscreen to your child prior to arrival at Hand in Hand.

### **Hand Washing**

Hands will be washed when entering a classroom, before and after meals, before and after bathroom use, after nose blowing or wiping, after handling an ill/injured child, before and after sensory play, and after outdoor play. In addition to this, staff will wash their hands upon entering a classroom, before and after food preparation and before and after

diapering each child.

### **Fire Drills/Tornado Drills**

Practice drills will be conducted a minimum of once monthly and recorded on sheets required by the State of Iowa. Evacuation diagrams will be posted on each wall near each exit.

### **First Aid Training**

We require our staff members to maintain a current CPR certificate, basic First Aid Training, and infectious disease control.

### **Reporting Child Abuse/Maltreatment**

In compliance with the Iowa Department of Human Services, regulations for operating a child day care, Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center is required to report IMMEDIATELY any reason to suspect child abuse/maltreatment. The center is also required to protect a child from any person/persons suspected of abuse/maltreatment while in care at the facility. (There is a copy of Iowa Dept. of Human Services regulations in the office that you are free to read at any time.)

### **Sign In & Out**

An attendance record will be kept in your child's classroom by the teacher. Please clock **your child in and out at the secured entrance system**. This will keep a record of your child's time of arrival and departure. In order to maintain open communication and in the interest of safety, we request that you physically take your child to his/her classroom and pick him/her up from the classroom each day. Please refrain from any cell phone usage during drop off and pick up times.

## **WHAT NOT TO BRING TO SCHOOL**

Hand In Hand Early Care & Education Center cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal possessions or clothing children bring to the center. We ask that all toys, dolls, purses, jewelry, balloons, games, money, valuables, sweets, soda and such **be left at home**. We engage in peaceful play (without toy weapons) and encourage sharing, therefore, objects from home are not welcome as they often create the kind of behavior we try to discourage. However, there are special "show and tell" or "share" days in each classroom when children can bring certain items to share with their classmates. Teachers will notify parents of these days. On these days, we still do not allow toy guns or toys representing violence of any kind. Please help us maintain harmony in our school by doing your part to follow this policy. PLEASE NOTE: Hand In Hand is NOT responsible for lost or stolen items.

Additionally, due to the nature of the daily activities scheduled at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, clothes designed for comfort, play and durability are expected. Part of maximizing your child's experience at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center includes his/her involvement in "messy" ("fun") activities. Your children should be dressed appropriately. We do use paint shirts; however, it is inevitable that clothes will get soiled. Please keep this in mind while dressing your child for the day. Please do not ask teachers to "make sure this doesn't get dirty." If you do not want an article of clothing to "get dirty" - do not let your child wear it into the building.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT**

All records provided regarding your child and family finances are confidential. We also ask that you respect this confidentiality by not asking staff to discuss your child or other children outside of the center. Employees of Hand In Hand, Inc. are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.

Within Hand In Hand, Inc., confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of Hand In Hand on a "need to know" basis, in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about staff, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as we strive to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and health related information of anyone associated with Hand In Hand. Outside of the center, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided with a document detailing the information that is to be

shared outside of the center, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

## **PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

Hand In Hand Inc., requires the parents of enrolled children at all times, to behave in a manner consistent with decency, courtesy, and respect. One of the goals of Hand In Hand is to provide the most appropriate environment in which a child can grow, learn and develop. Achieving this ideal environment is not only the responsibility of the employees of Hand In Hand Inc., but is the responsibility of every parent or adult who enters the center. Parents are required to behave in a manner that fosters this ideal environment. Parents who violate the Parent Code of Conduct will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Please refer to the Policy on Parent's Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding disenrollment of the child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

### **Cursing/Profanity**

No parent or adult is permitted to curse or use other inappropriate language on agency property at any time, whether in the presence of a child or not. Such language is considered offensive by many people and will not be tolerated. If a parent or adult feels frustrated or angry, it is more appropriate to verbally express the frustration or anger using non-offensive language. At NO time shall inappropriate language be directed toward members of the staff.

### **Threatening of employees, children other parents or adults associated with Hand In Hand, Inc.**

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In today's society, Hand In Hand, Inc. cannot afford to sit by idly while threats are made. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior are appreciated, the agency will not assume the risk of a second chance. PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.

### **Physical/verbal punishment of your child or other children at Hand In Hand, Inc.**

While Hand In Hand does not support nor condone corporal punishment of children, such acts are not permitted in the child care facility. While verbal reprimands may be appropriate, it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures. Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Supervisor.

Furthermore, it is wholly inappropriate for one parent to seek out another parent to discuss their child's inappropriate behavior. All behavior concerns should be brought to the classroom teacher or supervisor's attention. At that point, the teacher and/or Supervisor will address the issue with the other parent. Although you may be curious as to the outcome of such a discussion, teachers and/or the Center Director are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you. All children enrolled in our agency have privacy rights and are further protected by our Confidentiality Policy. You may be assured that we will not discuss anything about your child with another parent or adult visiting the center.

### **Violations Of The Safety Policy**

Parents are required to follow all safety procedures at all times. These procedures are designed not as mere inconveniences, but to protect the welfare and best interest of the employees, children and associates of Hand In Hand. Please be particularly mindful of our entrance procedures. We all like to be polite. However, we need to be careful to not allow unauthorized individuals into the center. Holding the door open for the person following you may, in fact, be polite; however, that person may not be authorized to enter the premises. Security procedures are only as strong as the weakest person in our organizational chain. Be alert and mindful. Immediately report any breaches to the Center Supervisor.

### **Confrontational Interactions With Employees, Other Parents Or Associates Of Hand In Hand, Inc.**

While it is understood that parents will not always agree with the employees of Hand In Hand or the parents of the other children, it is expected that all disagreements be handled in a calm and respectful manner. Confrontational interactions are not an appropriate means by which to communicate a point and are strictly prohibited.

### **Violations Of The Confidentiality Policy**



Hand In Hand, Inc. takes very seriously the responsibility of maintaining the confidentiality of all persons associated with the agency. Parents must understand the implications of this responsibility. Parents need to recognize that the Confidentiality Policy not only applies to their child or family, but all children, families and employees associated with Hand In Hand, Inc. Any parent who shares any information considered to be confidential, pressures employees or other parents for information which is not necessary for them to know, will be considered to be in violation of the policy.

## **TERMINATION OF CONTRACT**

At least two (2) weeks advanced **written** notice is required when you wish to terminate services. Payment is due for the **FULL 2-week** notice period and is owed when notice is given, whether or not the child attends. **There will be no refund for early withdrawal.** Your account must be in good standing at these times. Earlier notice, if known, is always appreciated.

### **Termination of Contract by Center**

We reserve the right to terminate services any time, for any reason, without notice. It is the sole discretion of the owner/operator and director at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center as to the termination of a family's services. We will give two (2) weeks written notice prior to any policy or fee changes. Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center reserves the right to amend or change services, agreements, fees, schedules and handbooks at any time. Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center reserves the right to reevaluate any child's continued participation in the program at any time, for any reason, particularly if the child has needs that cannot best be met by the center, or that may be detrimental to the health or progress of other children. We also reserve the right to terminate services to any family whose parents/guardians are uncooperative in adherence to all policies, procedures, fee schedules, program requirements and amounts due. Any parent who avoids cooperation and positive communication with staff/administration may jeopardize their child's participation/enrollment status. We value and encourage positive communications with families. We will not tolerate yelling, threats or "making a scene" in front of the children for any reason. It is unfair to other children and families and is grounds for termination of services. This decision is at the sole discretion of the owner.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT & CONSENT

All children enrolled at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center are treated with love and respect and provided with the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of activities in a warm, safe and clean environment. Our most fundamental objective is to tend to the needs/desires of your child first and foremost in a developmentally appropriate way in an environment where each child feels valued, loved and supported.

I have read and I understand the above to be the policies and procedures of Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center. I agree, that by virtue of signing this copy, I have accepted these policies and procedures as a condition of my child's enrollment, registration and attendance at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center. I realize that failure to abide by any of the above policies and procedures may result in a reevaluation/renegotiation of my child's (or children's) arrangements with Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, including, but not limited to, termination of such arrangements by Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center. I also understand and agree to recognize and abide by any future amendments to this handbook. Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, Inc. reserves the right to add, delete or alter policies at any time for any reason. This signed copy will be kept in my file at Hand In Hand Early Care and Education Center, and I will have a copy at home for reference.

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Owner and/or Director: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Last Revised 8/10/17