



North Star Child Care Center 2025 Parent Handbook

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**North Star Child Care Center's hours of operation are
6:30am-6:00pm.**

A copy of Iowa's Comm 204: Child Care Centers and Preschools Licensing Standards and Procedures Manual is available for review at the center. Parents may request to review this document at any time.

Table of Contents

<u>Welcome Families</u>3	<u>Care Plans for Children with Special Needs</u>
<u>Core Values, Beliefs, & Philosophy</u>4	<u>Immunizations</u>26
<u>Program Enrollment</u>4	<u>Inclement Weather</u>26
<u>Funding and Fee Information</u>6	<u>Injuries</u>26
<u>Nutrition and Meal Time</u>9	<u>Medication Procedures</u>26
<u>Parent and Staff Communication</u>10	<u>Physicals</u>27
<u>Child Assessment and Screening</u>12	<u>Non-Center Activities</u>27
<u>Supervision</u>13	<u>Technology</u>28
<u>Field Trips</u>17	<u>Bullying Prevention</u>28
<u>Safe Sleep</u>17	<u>Abuse</u>29
<u>Attendance Policy</u>18	<u>Playground Equipment Stability and</u>
<u>Authorized Pick Up</u>19	<u>Inspection</u>29
<u>Visitors</u>19	<u>Smoke Free Environment</u>30
<u>Shoe-Free Policy</u>20	<u>Privacy Policy</u>30
<u>Strangulation Prevention</u>20	<u>Classroom Grouping and Transitions</u>30
<u>PBIS Mission Statement</u>20	<u>Toilet Training</u>30
<u>Implementation of PBIS</u>20	<u>Infant/Toddler Program (0-24 months)</u>31
<u>Discipline</u>21	<u>Toddler Program (2-3 years)</u>31
<u>Aggressive Behavior</u>22	<u>Preschool Program (3-5 years)</u>31
<u>Biting</u>22	<u>School Age Program (K-5th Grade)</u>32
<u>Hand Washing</u>23	<u>Staff Orientation & Training</u>32
<u>Illness</u>24	<u>Reporting Child Abuse</u>33
<u>Exclusion from the Center Due To Illness</u>24	<u>Emergency Response Procedures</u>33

Welcome Families!

We know choosing the right childcare center is a big decision, and we're thrilled to have you as part of our family! Our center was created to provide a warm, loving, and engaging place where children can learn, grow, and have fun every day. We are here to support not just your little one but your whole family, making sure you feel confident that the child care center is the right fit for you. We are proud to announce that Reach For your Potential (RFYP) Childcare Center is now North Star Child Care Center. This new name reflects our mission to guide children toward their brightest potential, together with our families and community.

The North Star Child Care Center's mission is to foster a love for learning, promote social-emotional growth, and ensure consistency of care by valuing and supporting our dedicated staff. The purpose of North Star Child Care Center is to create a high-quality, reliable, and developmentally appropriate learning environment that supports children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. By prioritizing the needs of working families, we aim to provide a stable and affordable childcare solution that aligns with North Star's commitment to community and workforce support.

This Parent Handbook is your go-to guide for everything you need to know about our center! Inside, you'll find important details about our policies, programs, and daily routines. We want every family to feel welcome at North Star Child Care Center, and we proudly embrace diversity, ensuring that all children and families are treated with kindness, respect, and inclusion.

Prior to the official opening of North Star Child Care Center, we will host an open house for families to tour the facility and meet our staff. The date of the open house will be shared as construction nears completion. While we are currently planning to open in March 2026, this timeline may change depending on construction progress. We will keep enrolled families informed with regular updates via Brightwheel and/or the [RFYP website](#). Please note that North Star is not yet enrolled with Iowa Child Care Assistance (CCA), but we do intend to participate and will notify families once our enrollment has been approved.

Families wishing to enroll their child(ren) at the North Star Child Care Center for this fall are asked to complete all required enrollment forms through the Brightwheel website. If there are no openings available in your child(ren)'s age group, they may be added to our waiting list. To complete the enrollment process, please visit [Brightwheel Enrollment](#). If you have any questions, please contact us at childcare.center@rfyp.org.

At North Star Child Care Center, we're more than just a childcare provider, we're your partner in your child's early learning journey. We can't wait to watch them learn, play, and grow with us!

Sincerely,

Our Core Values, Beliefs, & Philosophy

Core Values

- **Safe & Nurturing Environment:** We prioritize creating a space where children feel safe, valued, and encouraged to express themselves. Emotional security and well-being are foundational to all learning experiences.
- **Consistency & Reliability:** We provide dependable care for families by maintaining a stable team of teachers through recognition and professional growth opportunities, ensuring children receive the consistency they need to thrive.
- **Partnership with Families:** We value open communication and collaboration with parents, recognizing them as a child's first teacher and encouraging strong family engagement.
- **Inclusive & Diverse Learning:** We embrace diversity and create an inclusive environment that respects all backgrounds, abilities, and perspectives. Our teaching promotes empathy, kindness, and respect for others.

Beliefs

- **Child-Centered Approach:** We believe every child is unique and learns best through play, exploration, and positive relationships. Children grow optimally when learning experiences respect their individual pace and style.
- **Lifelong Learning for Educators:** We believe that educators' continuous professional development enhances the quality of care and ensures our staff stays informed about the latest best practices in early childhood education.

Philosophy

- **Play-Based & Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum:** Our philosophy emphasizes hands-on learning, creativity, and problem-solving. We prepare children for future academic success while ensuring they enjoy meaningful early childhood experiences.

Program Enrollment

Children are eligible for admission at 8 weeks of age through 5th grade, with the applicable immunizations.

The admissions process begins with a tour of our center. Children are enrolled on a first-come, first-served basis, with placement determined by the availability of space in the most developmentally appropriate class. Enrollment is open to all families; however, RFYP employees have first access to enrollment. Children who already have siblings enrolled at the Center will have second priority. Children are placed on a waiting list if there is no availability in the most appropriate class.

Before your child starts their first day, we will schedule a Parent Orientation in your child's classroom. Please bring or upload the following items:

- Signed Parent Handbook, updated annually (signed via Brightwheel)
- Student and Guardian Information Form (via Brightwheel)
- Pick Up Information (via Brightwheel)
- Parental Emergency Medical Consent Form (via Brightwheel)
- Consent and Release Form (via Brightwheel)
- Proof of physical exam for children ages 0-Pre-K, Health Statement for Elementary aged children, updated annually (upload to Brightwheel)
- Physical examination for children not yet enrolled in kindergarten must be submitted at enrollment but no later than within four weeks of admission, with date no more than 12 months prior to first day and repeated annually [Iowa Department of Human Services](#)
- Certificate of Immunization Form from the State of Iowa (to be updated as immunizations occur). Must be signed by a healthcare professional (upload to Brightwheel)
- The Tuition Agreement for the applicable year must be signed by the parent(s) or guardian(s) before their first day (via Brightwheel)
- CACFP Food Enrollment and Eligibility Forms (uploaded to Brightwheel)
- Other forms as needed:
 - Safe Sleep Form (for children under 2 years old via Brightwheel)
 - Additional Information Form for Infants (for infants under 15 months via Brightwheel)
 - Daily Medication Authorization Form (available upon request via Brightwheel)
 - Topical Products (Non-Medication) Form (available upon request via Brightwheel)
 - Diet Modification Form (available upon request via Brightwheel)
 - Action Plans associated with allergies, diabetes, seizures, etc. (available upon request)
 - Certificate of Immunization Exemption Form (available upon request via Brightwheel)
 - Care Plan for Children with Special Needs Form (available upon request)

When you bring your child(ren) on their first day, remember to bring:

All children:

- At least 2 extra sets of clothes – Clearly labeled with first and last name
- Blanket to be kept at the center for naptime (1 year and up) – Will be washed at the center weekly
- Any comfort items such as a stuffed animal for naptime (1 year and up)
- Sunscreen (May – August) – Optional
- Swimsuit for water play days (June – August)
- Water bottle/sippy cup – No Contigo water bottles or others that have multiple parts
- Boots, snowpants, hat, gloves (November – March)
- *Please label all personal items
- *Blankets will be washed at the center weekly
- *Water bottles will be sanitized weekly
- *Baby bottles will be sanitized after each use

For infants and toddlers only:

- Diapers and wipes – Clearly labeled with first and last name
- Sleep sack – Clearly labeled with first and last name
- Baby bottles (at least 2) – Will be sanitized after each use

- Breast milk/Formula/Baby Food and Cereal – Clearly labeled with first and last name
- Diaper Rash Cream or Medication – Medication Sheet Form needed if prescribed, Topical Products (Non-Medication) Form needed when not prescribed

Funding and Fee Information

Tuition is due the 1st working day of each month. If tuition is not paid by the 5th working day of the month, a \$40 late fee will be assessed plus \$10 for each delinquent day following. If you have a problem with your payment, please talk to the Director. We will make every effort to accommodate special circumstances, however, we will request that you not bring your child to North Star Child Care Center until payment is made. If tuition and the delinquency fees are not paid by the 10th of the month, you may be asked to withdraw your child from the Center. If there are circumstances affecting your ability to pay tuition, you may bring the matter before the North Star Child Care Center Director and Executive Director for consideration.

Example of late fees:

- 1st working day - tuition due
- 5th working day - tuition + \$40 late fee
- Each working day - add an additional \$10 late fee

Tuition and Fees

1. Deposit: \$500 due at time of enrollment for each child. DEPOSITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE. This deposit will be applied to your child’s last month’s tuition if written notice is provided to the Director with 30-day notice prior to withdrawal. If you choose not to attend your deposit will be forfeited. Deposits are non-transferable to other children.
2. Prorating: Prorating tuition charges for the first and last months of childcare can be arranged.
3. Application Fee: \$50 due at time of application.
4. RFYP Employees: Receive 30% discount on childcare costs.
5. Monthly Tuition for September 1, 2025 - December 31, 2025 :

Age	Monthly Cost
8 weeks - 23 months	\$1,520.48
Two years	\$1,428.48
Three years	\$1,315.60
Four years & Five years	\$1,237.60

Wrap Around Care	Age	Cost
Before and/or after school	Pre-K	\$615 per month
Before and/or after school	Kindergarten – 5 th Grade	\$415 per month
Before school only	All Ages	\$100 per month
No school days	Pre-K	\$60 per day
No school days	Kindergarten – 5 th Grade	\$45 per day

Extended Hours (all ages)	Cost per Child
Planned/prearranged extended hours (after 6:10pm)	\$10 per day

Unplanned extended hours (after 6:10pm)	\$15 per day
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- The cost of unplanned extended hours applies when notice is given to the center with less than 72 hours' notice.
- Weekly summer camp tuition will be announced each April.
- A 12% discount on the rate for the older child is applied when multiple children from the same family are enrolled. The sibling discount does not apply to the wrap around care for all ages.

Temporary Holiday Schedule while at Our Redeemer Church (The Center will be closed on these days)

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Memorial Day
- Fourth of July
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Thursday and Friday
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

*If the holiday falls on a weekend, the Center will be closed the same days that the University of Iowa Business offices are closed. Parents will be notified ahead of time of any change in the holiday schedule.

***In the event that the Iowa City Community Schools are closed due to severe weather, Our Redeemer Church requires that North Star must also be closed on those days. This will not be the case when North Star is moved to the new location – the Center will remain open on snow days.**

Direct Debit/Payment

Your account will be directly debited for the monthly tuition cost via Brightwheel. Parents are required to sign up for automatic payments if you are choosing to pay via Brightwheel. Credit Cards are accepted on Brightwheel however there is a fee associated with this cost. Personal checks are not accepted.

RFYP Employees Only

Employees of RFYP will receive a 30% discount on tuition. All RFYP employees are required to have the remaining tuition balance deducted from their paycheck. Employees are required to use ADP to complete the benefit enrollment process for their child(ren) at the center. More details will be announced before opening.

Child Care Assistance (CCA)

Child Care Assistance or CCA is accepted at North Star. Children who have their tuition paid in part or in full by CCA will be eligible for attendance at North Star when we receive confirmation of their eligibility. Children that are approved for 1 CCA unit a day may attend the Childcare Center for up to five hours of care daily. Children that are approved for 2 CCA units a day are eligible to attend the Childcare Center for up to 10 hours a day. Families who are approved for at least 1 CCA will not be charged a deposit. Families are required to reapply for CCA yearly. If CCA eligibility lapses North Star will no longer be able to provide care unless ongoing private pay can be arranged. To apply for CCA or determine if you are eligible, visit <https://www.iowa.gov/how-do-i-apply-child-care-assistance>.

CCA Family Fees

The Child Care Assistance program requires some families to pay a copayment that is often referred to as “family fees.” Family fees will be treated as tuition, see tuition agreement above. Family fees for the previous two two-week billing periods will be due on the first of each month. These family fees are payable by Brightwheel via direct debit or other accepted payment methods. North Star will waive family fees for childcare center staff.

Late Pick Up

Our Center closes at 8:30pm. We request that you make every effort to pick up your child on time. When you are late, we face staffing and licensing issues. Please notify staff via telephone or Brightwheel if you intend to be late. Late fees will start to accrue at 8:30pm., but parents will not be charged until 8:35pm.

The late charge is \$1 per minute. For example, if you arrive at 8:32 p.m., you will not be charged. If you arrive at 8:35 p.m., you will be charged \$5 per child. If you arrive at 8:50 p.m., you will be charged \$20 per child. Late pick-up fees will be entered into Brightwheel and due with the following month’s tuition.

If your child is not picked up by 8:30pm and you cannot be contacted, the authorized person(s) on the Parental Emergency Medical/Dental Consent Form will be contacted to pick up your child. If the authorized person(s) cannot be reached, a staff member will remain with your child until you or an authorized person ultimately arrives to pick up your child. Late pick-up fee will be charged to the parent. In the event that staff cannot reach an authorized pick-up person by 9:00pm, law enforcement will be called. Reports will be made to HHS in accordance with Mandatory Reporting laws.

Withdrawal from Center

Please notify the Director of any plans you may have to withdraw your child from the Center. If you provide written notice at least 30 days prior to your child’s last day, your deposit will be applied to your child’s last month’s tuition. If there is failure to provide written notice of withdrawal at least 30 days prior to your child’s last day in attendance your deposit will be forfeited.

If your child has difficulty adjusting to our program or has ongoing difficulty within our Center, a conference between you, your child’s teacher and the Director will be arranged. Together we will work to develop a plan to address concerns and seek solutions. If a plan cannot be agreed upon, we may ask that you withdraw your child from the Center. We will provide you with referrals to other programs that may be more suitable for your child and you.

Additionally, we may ask that you withdraw your child from the Center in the unlikely event that any of the following situations arise:

- Failure to pay tuition and delinquency fees.
- Failure to follow North Star Child Care Center policies.
- Continual arrival or departure beyond regular hours of operation.

Initial communication regarding any of these situations will be sent via Brightwheel or email. If the center does not see improvement or resolution within an appropriate amount of time, we may ask that you withdraw your child.

On your child’s last day with the Center, we will return all personal items including, but not limited to, water bottles, blankets, and extra sets of clothing.

Tuition increases will be communicated 60 days in advance of the effective date.

Nutrition and Mealtimes

The center participates in the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). One of the goals of CACFP is to improve the diets of children. It also seeks to establish healthy lifetime food habits through appropriate health/nutrition education. A “cold” breakfast is served in the mornings until 7:30am, morning snack is provided at approximately 9:00am, lunch is served between 11:30am and 12:30pm, and afternoon snack is provided at approximately 3:00pm. For children receiving care after 6:00pm, the center will provide dinner at approximately 6:00pm. We will post menus in each program room.

Food and Meal Time Procedures

With the exception of infant foods (breast milk, formula, foods and cereals), we provide all food for children enrolled in programs; **food is not allowed to be brought from home to supplement mealtimes**, unless instructed by a doctor, with written documentation in your child’s file. All food provided by parents would be supplemented to meet CACFP guidelines. The food we provide is developmentally appropriate based on the needs of your child. We will follow all of the food preparation, service, and food storage guidelines of the CACFP program.

Infant Feeding (8 weeks-12 months unless otherwise discussed): Infants under one year of age are fed on demand. Infants that are unable to sit independently will be held and fed. Infants and toddlers are never fed by propping up a bottle or by being laid in a crib with a bottle. Infants nearing 6 months of age may be offered solid foods if the child is developmentally ready. As children can experience difficulty if solid foods are introduced prematurely, any change in the meal or nutrition patterns of infants must be discussed with and approved by the parent. Infants younger than 12 months are never given cow’s milk—only formula or breast milk provided by the parent. Breast milk should be labeled with the child’s full name and date that it was expressed. Unfinished or unrefrigerated breast milk or formula will be discarded after two hours.

When your child begins eating baby food, we ask that you provide the food along with your feeding instructions. The Center will provide bowls and eating utensils; however, you may wish to bring a special sippy cup for your child. When your child is ready for solid foods we will ask that you circle or highlight the menu items that you wish for us to feed to your child. Please communicate which method of introduction to solids that you would like us to try at the center. Hot food (over 110 degrees F.) is kept out of the reach of children.

Food Allergies and/or Special Feeding Needs

If your child has special feeding needs or food allergies, you will need to provide a doctor’s note detailing the allergy and/or feeding need; this form is maintained in your child’s file. We will make daily notes to be given to you recording how much and when your child ate. For your child’s safety, you will be required to authorize the center to visibly post any food allergies or special needs in the classroom for all our staff to see. If dietary modifications are required based on a child’s medical needs, North Star will modify or supplement the diet on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the parents and the child’s health care provider. Any meal brought by the parents must meet all the nutritional requirements for the intended meal. For any questions concerning meals brought from home please contact the Director. In addition, food will only be given at your child’s scheduled mealtimes.

Religious preferences may be made if a parent provides written instructions by completing the applicable form. Children with special dietary needs will need an Allergy Action Plan AND a Diet Modification Plan completed by the physician on file.

Peanut Conscious Center

To support a peanut-aware environment and reduce the risk of exposure for individuals with peanut allergies, we ask that all foods brought into the North Star building be selected with care. Please review the nutrition and allergy information on any products you bring to ensure they do not contain peanuts, peanut oil, peanut by-products, or come from equipment that also processes peanut products. If a product is found to contain peanuts, it will be promptly removed from the Center to help maintain a safe environment, and a reminder will be sent to all homes about our efforts to minimize peanut exposure.

Other Foods

On special occasions, we allow parents to bring prepackaged and labeled food items to the Center such as birthday cakes or cupcakes. However, we discourage parents from bringing food items that may present a choking hazard, such as hard candies, chewing gum, gumdrops, dried fruit, nuts, popcorn and potato chips. These items will be shared with age-appropriate children only. Please be sensitive to food allergies that some children in your child's classroom may have. Before bringing food items to the Center, please contact the Director or your child's teacher to learn if there are any food items that should not be brought into the Center.

Parent and Staff Communication

Parental Communication/Involvement

Communication is vital to the success of our program. North Star Child Care Center's primary mode of communication is Brightwheel messaging. Your child's teacher and the Director will be available to answer your questions or address any concerns you may have. In addition to your child's daily Brightwheel report you will receive a North Star Child Care Center Newsletter monthly.

We have an open-door policy and welcome you to visit your child's classroom throughout the day. Visiting your child's classroom will help you get to know your child's teacher and other children. You'll enjoy seeing what goes on during your child's day.

Parents as Volunteers

Volunteers are a vital part of our programs. A good program calls for many people working together, sharing their talents, knowledge, and energy so families receive the greatest benefit. Our parent volunteers benefit all the children because each child receives more individualized attention, learns to relate to a variety of adult personalities, and learns about different parts of their world from adults who have diverse experiences. We have many opportunities for you to volunteer in our program and we encourage you to volunteer. Some of these opportunities may include: accompanying the class on a field trip, preparing activities for the teachers, bringing individual talent into the classroom and sharing it with the children, etc.

Parent Communication Challenges

We serve many families from various cultures and backgrounds and we hope to have quality communication with all of our families. If there are any difficulties in accessing the information in Brightwheel or other forms of communication, we will make every effort to provide a translator. Please let us know the language you are most comfortable speaking or reading so that we can communicate for your child's success.

Parental Access

Parents shall have unlimited access to their children throughout the day while they are attending the North Star Child Care Center. However, in situations where parental contact is prohibited by court order, a copy of the applicable portion of the court order must be provided by the parent or custodian and made part of the child's file.

Sharing Events/Information

We know that parents love to hear "good news" about their child. At the end of the day, your child's teacher may share information via Brightwheel about an activity or event your child did that day; we hope that this will show you that your child enjoys being at the center and that we care about what your child is doing. **Please check your child's cubby daily and the location where your classroom teacher posts information (door, dry erase board, etc.). These areas will contain important information regarding your child, the center, and any upcoming events.**

Required Written Postings for Iowa Licensed Child Care Centers

Based on Iowa Administrative Code 441—109.2(4) and Comm 204, all licensed child care centers in Iowa must maintain the following written postings in clearly visible locations for staff, parents, and licensing review.

1. Current License Certificate
 - Must be posted in a prominent and easily visible location, typically near the main entrance. Shows the specific premises approved, capacity, and license status. (441 IAC 109.2(4)(a))
2. Notice of Communicable Disease Exposure
 - Must be posted immediately when a child or staff member has been exposed to a communicable disease. (441 IAC 109.2(4)(b))
3. Notice of Licensing Action
 - If the Department denies, suspends, revokes, or places a license on provisional status, the official notice must be posted in the same visible area as the license. (441 IAC 109.2(4)(c))
4. 4. Mandatory Reporter Requirements
 - A written notice explaining child and dependent adult abuse reporting requirements must be displayed where both staff and parents can read it. (441 IAC 109.2(4)(d))
5. Availability of Comm. 204 (Licensing Standards)
 - A notice that the publication 'Child Care Centers and Preschools Licensing Standards and Procedures' (Comm. 204) is available for review. Must include the name, address, and phone number of the assigned DHS child care consultant. (441 IAC 109.2(4)(e))
6. Emergency Numbers and Procedures
 - Emergency phone numbers (fire, police, poison control, etc.) and procedures must be posted by each telephone and in all activity areas. (441 IAC 109.10(3))
7. Daily Schedule and Weekly Menu
 - The current day's schedule and weekly food menu must be visibly posted for parents and licensing review. (441 IAC 109.11(2) & 109.12(2))

Accommodations

Should your child require accommodations, please discuss them with the Director in advance of enrollment (or when they arise, if after enrollment) so that you and the Center are confident that we will be able to meet your child's accommodations.

Parent Complaint Procedure

If you disagree with an event or the general practices of your child's classroom or the center, please voice your complaint first to the teacher involved whenever practical. If your complaint is not resolved satisfactorily at this level (or if there is no teacher involved), your complaint should be escalated to the Childcare Center Director. If your complaint is still not resolved at this level, you may request a meeting with the Childcare Center Director and the RFYP Executive Director.

Children Under Two Years

For each child under two years of age, the Center must make daily written record and provide to the parent(s) at the end of the day containing: time periods child slept, amount of food consumed and eating times, time and irregularities in elimination process, general disposition, and general summary of activities.

Child Assessments and Screenings

Our teachers continually observe children to make sure that our teaching and our classrooms are best meeting children's learning needs. Some of our observations are informal—we notice something about your child while they are playing, and we use that information to help us in planning future activities. Some of our observations are formal—we have specific questions about your child's development that we answer using assessment tools so that we can create individualized learning goals for your child. If you have any questions or concerns about how our assessments or screenings will meet your child's needs, please feel free to speak with your child's teacher or the Childcare Center Director at any time.

Purpose and Use of Assessments

Within 60 days of enrollment, the Childcare Center Director or Assistant Director will complete a developmental screening for your child using the Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ), a research-based tool designed to help identify your child's strengths and areas where additional support may be needed. This assessment will be completed at least annually thereafter to help us support your child's ongoing growth and development.

We also continually assess your child to determine if our classrooms and curriculum are helping them develop and grow. We use assessment information to make changes in our teaching, as well as find other resources and/or agencies that can help us meet your child's learning needs. Specifically, we use assessments to:

- a. Identify your child's needs and special interests that can be incorporated into daily plans;
- b. Gather information on all areas of your child's development and learning, including cognitive skills, language, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, health, and physical development (including self-help skills);
- c. Improve our curriculum by making changes in the lesson plans, routines, and environment;
- d. Plan the overall improvement of the classroom program;
- e. Arrange for outside developmental screenings if you or the teachers have any concerns.

Assessment and Screening Procedures

Our lead teachers primarily assess your child during the classroom day, during the normal routine. We observe your child playing and interacting with materials and other children and record these observations to determine how well their learning is progressing. Sometimes, outside agencies will work with your child outside the classroom for some assessments—like vision and hearing screenings. When this happens, you will be informed in advance, and a classroom teacher will always be present.

Policies

Supervision

Caregivers/Teachers must provide active supervision of all children by sight and hearing, at all times. This includes resting/sleeping, eating, diapering, outdoors, and using the bathroom (as age appropriate). Active supervision means that the caregiver is giving the children focused, intentional attention and supervision by positioning themselves so they can see, hear, count and listen to the children at all times. Active supervision also requires the caregiver to be engaging with the children, at their level, during all activities in order to provide encouragement, enrichment and care.

Staff will be trained on procedures for safety and supervision (including indoors/outdoors). Active supervision will be promoted (no cell phones, spacing out staff, etc.) both indoors and outdoors, as well as during areas of high need such as transitions (diapering, meals, rest time, etc.). Staff will account for all children with a name – to-face recognition. Procedures will be reviewed with staff and children on supervision upon leaving the center for field trips and transportation of children. If going on field trips, all children and staff may be asked to wear a certain color (or center t-shirt). If children are present around water, “touch supervision” will be enforced.

Staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times in accordance with state licensing requirements. The following ratios apply:

North Star Room Color	Age of Children	Minimum Ratio of Staff to Children
Blue/Red/Orange	Infants and toddlers under two years	1 staff to every 4 children
Green	Two years	1 staff to every 7 children
Yellow	Three years	1 staff to every 10 children
Indigo	Four years	1 staff to every 12 children
Violet	Five years to twelve years	1 staff to every 15 children

- Combinations of age groupings for children four years of age and older may be allowed and may have staff ratio determined on the age of the majority of the children in the group.
- Combinations of age groupings for children three, four, and five years of age may be allowed with a ratio of one staff member to every 12 children.
- Children between 18 months and three years of age may be combined, if appropriate to the developmental needs of the child. If a child under two years of age is in a combined age group, the staff ratio of one to seven will be maintained. Otherwise, staff ratio may be determined by the age of the majority of the children in the group.

- Combinations of age groupings for children five years of age and older must have a ratio consistent with the age of majority.
- Every child-occupied program room must have supervision present in the room. Brief absences of a staff member may be allowed for no more than five minutes when another staff person is present. Brief absences do not include completing routine or anticipated tasks.
- When more than eight children are present on the licensed premises, at least two staff members shall be present.
- For a period of two hours or less at the beginning and end of the center's hours of operation, one staff member may care for eight or fewer children, provided no more than four of the children are under two years of age and there are no more than eight children in the center.

Additionally, teachers will ensure that they abide by the following general supervision policies:

- Set up the classroom and position themselves appropriately to be able to supervise all children in a room.
- Recognize when children are hurt or in potentially dangerous situations and intervene.
- Sufficiently document and report behaviors and injuries to families and administration.
- Provide positive reinforcement and redirection should an unwanted behavior or situation arise.
- Know where the exits are in case of an emergency, and monitor those exits to see who is coming and going.
- Position themselves during outdoor play to be directly near children who are climbing on playground equipment.
- Have their walkie on their person with the volume turned up to listen for and relay important information.
- Are communicating with each other verbally or over the walkie if a child is traveling from one room to another. When a child is in the hallway, at least one staff member must have eyes on the child at all times.

Rest Time Supervision

We understand that some parents prefer their child not nap during the day. However, rest time is an important part of our daily routine. Even if they do not fall asleep, having a quiet period to relax, whether by lying down or engaging in calm activities, can help them recharge. We never force children to sleep, but we do encourage them to rest quietly for a short time. If your child typically does not nap, we welcome you to suggest quiet play options they might enjoy during this time.

Children's safety during rest time is a top priority at North Star Child Care Center. Teachers are expected to conduct regular sleep checks throughout the rest period. These checks involve observing each child to ensure the following:

- The child's chest is rising and falling.
- Skin tone appears normal.
- There are no obstructions to the child's airway.

The room should remain lit enough for staff to clearly observe each child's condition. Staff are not permitted to rest or lie down with children. During rest time, staff may engage in quiet tasks such as:

- Recording observations in Brightwheel.
- Cleaning and preparing materials for upcoming activities.
- Reading or completing administrative work.

For children under 2 years old, required staff-to-child ratios must be maintained at all times. For children age 2 and older, one staff member may supervise a napping group for up to one hour, provided ratios and safety guidelines are followed.

Supervision During Mealtimes

Staff are expected to remain fully engaged with children during all meals and snacks. They should either sit or stand at the table with the children to monitor for safety and encourage appropriate eating habits.

During mealtimes, staff should not:

- Use phones or reply to parent messages.
- Clean up toys or begin preparing for the next activity.

Children should be observed closely to prevent choking hazards such as eating too quickly or placing too much food in their mouth at once. In the event of a choking incident, trained staff will administer first aid and alert administrative staff using the walkie system.

Supervision During Diapering and Toileting

Staff are expected to maintain close supervision during all diapering and toileting routines to ensure safety and promote hygiene.

During diaper changes:

- Staff must keep at least one hand on the child at all times while they are on the changing table.
- Staff must keep all diapering and cleaning supplies out of reach of children.
- Children should be closely monitored to prevent them from mouthing any items.

Toileting supervision includes the following:

- Children under 5 years must be accompanied into the bathroom to support appropriate hygiene practices.
- Staff should be within hearing distance when school-age children use the restroom independently.
- If a child is sent to the bathroom while a staff member is stationed nearby, one of the supervising adults must maintain visual contact with the child during their walk down the hallway.

Outdoor Supervision

Children must be closely supervised during outdoor play to ensure safety and prevent unauthorized exits from the outdoor space.

- At least one staff member should be stationed near the gate or perimeter.
- Staff must remain mobile and attentive—sitting or standing in one place, especially while distracted, is not permitted.
- If a play structure is in use, at least one staff member must be positioned next to it to assist if a child slips or falls.
- Face-to-name checks are performed regularly to confirm all children are present and accounted for.

Supervision During Water Play and Swimming

Staff supervision during any water activity, whether swimming or sensory based, is focused and uninterrupted. Multitasking or distractions are not permitted while children are participating in water activities.

Only school-age children may participate in swimming or activities involving large bodies of water. When school-age children are swimming:

- A minimum 1:6 staff-to-child ratio will be maintained.
- At least one staff member must be in the water at all times.
- Regular face-to-name checks are required.

Children ages 1 to 5 years may participate in water play activities such as sprinklers, splash pads, or sensory tables. During these activities:

- Staff must be within arm's reach of all participating children.
- Staff must always remain actively engaged and attentive.

Transportation Supervision

- North Star Child Care Center currently owns and operates three passenger vans.
- North Star Child Care Center does not transport children under 3 years of age.
- North Star Child Care Center's vehicles are used to transport children to and from school.
- The students who ride the vehicles to North Star Child Care Center after school are the responsibility of North Star Child Care Center as soon as school releases the children for the day. The students will meet a North Star Child Care Center vehicle at a designated location.
- North Star Child Care Center does not offer transportation to and from summer school.
- North Star Child Care Center vehicles are used to transport children on field trips.
- Mandated staff to child ratios will be maintained whenever children are being transported for field trips.
- Two staff will be present in the vehicle when transporting children.
- Any driver who transports children for North Star Child Care Center will be at least 21 years of age and will have:
 - A valid driver's license that authorizes the driver to operate the vehicle being driven.
 - No record of substance abuse or conviction for crimes of violence or child abuse.
 - No alcohol or other drugs associated with impaired ability to drive within 12 hours prior to transporting children. Drivers will ensure that any prescription drugs taken will not impair their ability to drive.
 - No criminal record of crimes against or involving children, child neglect or abuse, or any crime of violence.
- Supervision during transportation should be maintained at all times in and out of the vehicle. No child should be left unattended in or around the vehicle at any time. Caregivers must conduct a face-to-name count prior to leaving, when the destination is reached and throughout the time in another location. Active supervision is very important to always ensure safety of all children.
- A child will be transported only if the child is fastened in an approved developmentally appropriate safety seat, seat belt, or harness appropriate to the child's age and/or weight, and the restraint is installed and used in accordance with the manufacturers' instructions for the car seat and the motor vehicle.
- Each child must have an individual seat belt and be positioned in the vehicle in accordance with the requirements for the safe use of airbags in the back seat.
- Children under 7 years of age will use car safety seats. Children over 7 years of age may use a booster seat if requested by their parents.
- Children, as both passengers and pedestrians, will be instructed in safe transportation behavior with terms and concepts appropriate for their age and stage of development. The following safety rules apply to children using North Star Child Care Center's vehicles for transportation:
 - Children should be at their designated pick-up location within ten minutes of dismissal from

school.

- Children are to stay off the roadway at all times when waiting for the vehicle to arrive.
 - When boarding or leaving the vehicle, children must wait for a signal from the driver that it is safe to do so.
 - Children should never walk in front of or behind the vehicle without an adult.
 - Children are to line up to load and unload the vehicle in a mannerly fashion.
 - Children should immediately find a seat on the vehicle and put on the seat belt or ask for help with the seat belt if needed. Failure of the child to keep their seat belt on while the vehicle is moving will result in the vehicle stopping until the child is safely secured again.
 - Eating, drinking, or gum chewing is not permitted in the vehicle.
 - Children must conduct themselves in an acceptable manner at all times. Fighting, yelling, using vulgar language, acting rudely or abusively, damaging the vehicle or any other abusive behaviors are not permitted.
 - Children are to wait until the vehicle comes to a complete stop before taking off their seat belts.
- If a student is behaving in such a way that it is an immediate threat to themselves or to other riders in the vehicle, the student may be suspended from using North Star Child Care Center transportation, therefore forgoing their opportunities to attend field trips.

Field Trips

- Field trips for 3-12 year olds will be scheduled throughout the year. (Examples of field trips include visits to parks, museums, libraries, grocery stores, and other establishments that provide educational fun and educational tours).
- Parents will be notified of the dates in advance by newsletters, sign-up sheets, and Brightwheel messages.
- A Release Authorizations Form is signed at the time of registration for all children and applies to all field trips. This form must be updated at least yearly by the parent(s). In addition, the Center will always provide a specified physical permission slip to be filled out prior to the field trip.
- Transportation will be provided by the Center.
- Booster seats (without backs) will be provided by the Center.
- Additional staff and parent volunteers will accompany the children on field trips. We encourage you to join your child on these special days.
- North Star Child Care Center will not provide alternative care if you opt out of the field trip.
- North Star Child Care Center may require children be in attendance by a specified time on days with scheduled field trips.

Safe Sleep

All staff, substitute staff, and volunteers at North Star Child Care Center follow the safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Consumer Products Safety Commission (CPSC) for infants to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death (SIDS). SIDS is the sudden death of an infant under 1 year of age, which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation. All staff and North Star Child Care Center families will be required to review and sign an acknowledgement of this policy. A copy will be placed in each child and employee's file.

Cribs

- Infants will be placed on a firm mattress, with a tight fitted sheet, in a crib that meets the CPSC federal requirements CFR 1219 for full-size cribs and CFR 1220 for non-full size cribs.
- Cribs are cleaned and sanitized at least weekly, along with bedding.
- No toys, soft objects, stuffed animals, pillows, bumper pads, blankets, quilts, sheepskins or loose

bedding will be in the crib or draped over the crib.

- Devices such as wedges or infant positioners will not be used. The AAP has found no evidence that these devices are safe and their use may increase the risk of suffocation.
- Cribs will be observed to be in working order at all times and staff will immediately cease use of any crib with broken parts and notify administrators. Manufacturer's certificates for cribs are filed in the office for use as needed.
- All cribs must be labeled with the child's name and notes on abilities so that any float staff is fully aware of the child's safe sleep needs.

Environment

- Sleeping areas will be ventilated and at a temperature that is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult (68-72 degrees Fahrenheit).
- No crib toys, mobiles, or musical/night light crib attachments will be used in the crib.
- All hazards such as a bib, hood, etc., will be removed before placing the infant in the crib to remove strangulation hazards.
- Infants may use a pacifier during sleep with parent permission. It may not be attached to the infant's clothing by a string, cord, or other attaching mechanism that might be a strangulation risk.
- If the infant falls asleep anyplace other than a crib (i.e.: bouncy chair, while being held, or arrives to care asleep in a car seat) the infant will be moved to a crib immediately.
- If extra warmth is needed, sleep sacks will be used as an alternative to blankets.

Other Safe Sleep Policies

- Only one infant will be placed in a crib to sleep.
- Infants (children under 12 months of age) will always be put to sleep on their backs..
- The center cannot place infants in another position (inclined, on stomach, etc.) without a waiver from the child's primary care physician requiring as such for medical need. It must be signed and dated with an expiration date and details on how to sleep the child in the alternate position.
- Sleeping infants will be actively observed by sight and sound. Staff must maintain enough light in the room to observe the skin color of all infants in their care, not wear any headphones or anything that could block hearing the children, and will conduct active sleep checks regularly.
- Infants under 4 months of age will be gently rolled back to the supine position if they roll over in their sleep.
- When infants are 4 months of age AND able to comfortably roll back and forth from front to back, the infant will still be placed on their back for sleep and then allowed to assume a preferred sleep position if they move to it on their own.
- North Star Child Care Center will not swaddle infants unless provided a signed doctor's note.
- Awake infants will have supervised "tummy time" several times daily to help strengthen their muscles and develop normally.
- Our childcare program is smoke free, and smoking is not allowed in Iowa childcare businesses.

Attendance Policy

Good attendance is required for all early childhood programming. It is important for your child to attend each day to be part of the routines and learning activities that are incorporated into the schedule. We ask that your child have at least 85% attendance each month (which is approximately 3 absences or fewer per month).

The center prides itself in providing quality learning experiences for each child in our program. Classrooms have established consistent daily routines, and often this routine becomes disrupted when children arrive during

an activity. If your child's program has specific set hours you should attend during those set hours. If your child is enrolled in full-day programs you are strongly encouraged to have your child at the center by 9:00 AM.

If your child is going to be absent or be late, we require that you contact the center within an hour of your child's scheduled arrival time and communicate the reason with your child's Teacher, the Assistant Director, or the Director. If the Childcare Center receives no communication about your child's absence or being late, the Assistant Director, Director, or the On-site Supervisor will contact you via phone and Brightwheel. If there continues to be no response, staff may contact the child's listed emergency contact(s) and/or law enforcement.

If for any reason you are unable to cooperate with our attendance policy, please speak with the Childcare Center Director. Some exceptions can be made such as; long-term illnesses, surgery, vacations, appointments etc. Attendance will be reviewed each month, and if your child's attendance becomes a concern they may be unenrolled from the program.

Child Check-In/Check Out

1. In order to provide a safe, secure environment for your children, your child must be checked in and checked out via the Brightwheel app station at the reception desk or via your phone using the classroom QR codes every time. Brightwheel will record the timestamp and the person who is dropping them off and picking them up.
2. Once you have checked your child in or out via the Brightwheel system, always ensure to make contact with a teacher before leaving to ensure the transfer of responsibility has been acknowledged and accepted by the teacher.

Attendance records are a requirement by the State's licensing regulations, and this helps to ensure all staff have current, up-to-the-minute attendance lists.

Please remember to still utilize this sign in/out procedure when you pick up from the playground and make contact with your child's teacher before leaving with your child.

Authorized Pick Up

To ensure your child's safety, the Director and teachers will keep the names, addresses, and phone numbers of those persons authorized to pick up your child with the group at all times. This information is obtained from the Parental Emergency Medical/Dental Consent Form that lists those persons authorized to pick up your child. If this information changes, you will be asked to update the section on this form. If you know ahead of time that the authorized person will be picking up your child instead of you, please notify the Childcare Center Director ahead of time via Brightwheel.

Shall another adult pick up your child who is not listed as an authorized pick up person list, parent(s) must either add the person to the authorized list prior to pick up and call or send a message in Brightwheel listing the person's first and last name and time of pick up. The person's photo ID will be checked by the On-site Supervisor before the child(ren) is allowed to leave with that person.

Please inform the Center Director of any custody issues involving your child.

Visitors

The center maintains a safe and secure environment for all children by controlling access to the premises. Only

authorized individuals are permitted on the property. All visitors, including parents, volunteers, and maintenance personnel, must check in with the director or designated staff member upon arrival, sign the visitor log, and wear a visitor badge while on-site.

Individuals who have not completed required background record checks are not permitted to have unsupervised access to children at any time. Such visitors must remain under direct supervision of a cleared staff member while on the premises. Staff are responsible for monitoring all visitors to ensure compliance with this policy. Unauthorized individuals will be asked to leave the property immediately.

Shoe-Free Policy (Infant/Blue Room only)

We ask that all parents, teachers/staff, and children entering the Infant/Blue room be shoe-free. We want to provide a clean, safe, and healthy environment in the Infant/Blue Room. Infants spend much of their time exploring on the floor, so it is best that these areas be kept as clean as possible. Therefore, we take this action to prevent outside contaminants from being brought into the room and spread onto the floor. We ask that teachers, staff, and children remove their shoes every day before entering the room and that parents and adults either remove their shoes or wear a shoe covering.

Strangulation Prevention

Strangulation hazards are monitored by ensuring there are no blind cords accessible, handles in the play area, strings on hoods, and not allowing strings or ribbons on pacifiers. Ties, scarves, necklaces, and boas are not allowed in classrooms for children under 3 years. For children 3 years and above, children must be closely supervised with these center items. If curtains are in the room, any cords must be tied down. Drawstrings on clothing garments should not extend more than 3 inches. There should be no knots or free ends, and should be sewn into the back of the garment at the midpoint to ensure it cannot be completely pulled out of one side by the child. Parents will be asked to remove hood and neck strings from clothing as needed to fit this policy. Any strings and cords long enough to encircle a child's neck are not allowed. Staff with lanyards will be using the breakaway type. Children should never be allowed to wear lanyards.

PBIS Mission Statement

We are committed to utilizing the best practices of the Teaching Pyramid Model to create positive, safe, and effective learning environments. The center is committed to using Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) as our method of guidance and approach towards challenging behaviors.

Implementing PBIS

Through our use of the Teaching Pyramid Model, the center works to build strong, caring, supportive, and responsive relationships with families and their children. Our programs teach a consistent set of expectations and rules through the use of predictable and consistent schedules, routines, and transitions. Each program teaches social and emotional skills individually, in small groups, and in large groups using educationally and developmentally appropriate materials. Our children are acknowledged for positive behavior throughout programs, helping them to develop critical skills needed for sharing, taking turns, building friendships, coping with emotions, being resilient, and prepared in a rapidly changing world.

When needed, the center will create individualized interventions to assist children in their success at program. Some interventions may require the assistance of outside staff, or agencies, which will partner with our team to determine optimum success for our students.

We continue to promote the Teaching Pyramid Model through continuing support and growth of PBIS skills with our staff. Each staff is trained on this intervention at hire and at least annually. We believe that through PBIS based environments, children will be intrinsically motivated to practice prosocial behaviors and become leaders within our community. We wish to instill confidence, resilience, and courage in all of our children, and we strongly believe that PBIS is the method to achieve our goal.

Discipline

North Star Child Care Center staff will create a positive, supportive environment that promotes positive social and emotional growth for all of the children in our care. Teachers will focus on communication and connection in order to direct any disciplinary needs within the classroom. Lead teachers will prioritize social and emotional learning, as well as lead the classroom with concise, clear expectations that are geared towards increasing the child's ability to self-regulate, become more responsible for themselves, and understand how to effectively communicate and interact with their peers and trusted adults.

The goal of discipline and guidance is not only to eliminate inappropriate behavior but to encourage appropriate behavior by using positive guidance, redirection and setting clear- cut limits. Our goal is to guide the children and to help them learn to develop appropriate social skills.

In order to accomplish these goals, the following strategies will be utilized:

- Children who are able to understand language and logic will learn the consequences and effects their actions and words may have on themselves and others through research based social and emotional learning and through communication with caregivers.
- Children will be provided with logical, developmentally appropriate consequences, and food or outside time will NEVER be used in disciplinary practices.
 - For example, if “Child” won’t stop throwing blocks at their classmates, a logical consequence would be that “Child” has to choose a different center to play in until they return to baseline. “Child” will not be told “if you keep throwing blocks, you will have to sit out for the first 10 minutes we play outside.”
- Teachers will explicitly teach play skills for each classroom in order to help children communicate and effectively interact with each other. All staff will engage in children’s play and model desired behaviors and interactions as well.
- Problem solving skills and relationship building skills will be explicitly taught and modeled with increasing complexity as age appropriate in order to help the children build positive relationships with themselves, their peers, and their caregivers.
- All staff will put relationship building and communication with the children in their care at the forefront of their day.
- Staff will utilize knowledge in child development and individual child growth to properly assist the children in our care with appropriate progression of skills building and self-regulation.
- Staff will utilize their PBIS Training and the Teaching Pyramid Model when presented with challenging behaviors. Staff will receive training annually alongside regular coaching opportunities from administrative staff.
- If challenging behavior persists, causes harm to self or others, causes damage to property, or causes alarm to caregivers, an incident report will be created. The incident report must be completed within 24 hours, but behavior reports are best completed as soon as the caregiver is able so that the information is fresh in the mind. Incident reports should include who was involved (maintaining confidentiality), what

was happening in the classroom, what the child did, and how the teacher responded/what happened afterwards.

- Example: The class was participating in circle time. “Child” was running around the classroom. The teacher went up to “child” and reminded them of expectations to sit and participate. “Child” then threw a block and yelled at the teacher. The teacher talked to them about their feelings and asked them to choose calming down with a book or utilizing a sensory toy. They chose a sensory toy and rejoined the group after five minutes.
- If challenging behavior continues to disrupt the safety of the classroom, the child themselves, or others, the guardians, teacher, and administrator will meet to discuss options and ways to further support the classroom and the child.
 - A behavior support plan may be created and implemented with the input of administrators, the lead teacher of the classroom, and the guardians of the child in order to create a consistent, concise plan to further support the child’s development and progress.
 - If a persistent concern regarding safety and wellbeing exists, the Director will meet with the child’s guardian(s) to discuss further action, which may include suspension or expulsion from the program.

North Star explicitly prohibits the use of corporal punishment, physical punishment, and any form of humiliation as discipline. Any use of those methods will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination for the staff.

Aggressive Behavior

One of our goals at North Star Child Care Center is that your children learn self-control, cooperation and consideration of others in a gentle, loving, and learning environment.

A serious aggressive disciplinary problem is defined as one where a child is hampering the day-to-day operation in the classroom by:

- Requiring constant one-on-one attention that prevents the staff from caring for other children
- Inflicting physical or emotional harm on themselves, other children, or staff members
- Continued elopement

If your child continues to impede the quality of care and supervision of other students, the child may be sent home for the day. If the child is not able to adjust to the classroom setting once they return to the Center, the Director will notify the parent(s) of the situation via phone or Brightwheel to request a meeting to discuss possible solutions to the problem. Staff will work closely with the parents or guardians to set up action plans that will encourage positive behavior, as outlined in PBIS. If the child’s behavior does not improve, the Director may suspend the child from the Center. Before a final decision is made on dismissal, the Director will discuss the situation with the RFYP Executive Director.

Biting

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between 12 and 24 months of age. The safety of the children at the Center is our primary concern. The Center's biting policy addresses these actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs:

Children

1. The staff will stay calm and will not overreact with the children while correcting the offending child.

If another staff member is not present in the room, the teacher will call for assistance to cover while the teacher moves the bitten child to an adequate location to administer first aid to any wound(s) that may occur. The bitten child will be comforted and consoled while the bitten area is washed with soap and water. If necessary, ice is applied to reduce any swelling or bruising.

2. A separate Incident Report will be filled out for both children in your child's Brightwheel account. In order to protect confidentiality, the "biter's" parents will not know the identity of the child that was bitten; the "bitten" child's parents will not know the identity of the biter.
3. If biting becomes a well-documented pattern of behavior, a behavior plan will be written in collaboration with the Director, the child's teacher, and the child's parents/guardians. The behavior plan will be put into action once approved by the child's parent(s). One copy of the behavior plan will be provided to the parent(s) and another maintained in the child's file. If the child continues to bite another child, we will ask for help from an Area Education Agency requesting and retaining any written recommendations.
4. If the biting continues, the offending child's parent(s) will be notified in writing that their child could be dismissed from North Star Child Care Center's care. Before a final decision is made, the Director will discuss the situation with the RFYP Executive Director.

Staff

This same policy, where applicable, will be followed if a staff member is bitten by a child.

Hand Washing

Staff will assist children with hand washing in order to maintain good personal hygiene and to prevent or minimize the spread of illness or disease. For children 3 years and older, hand sanitizer may be used when there is no access to soap and water.

Children's hands will be washed at the following times:

- Upon arrival to the Center
- After returning from outside
- Before and after sensory play
- Before and after eating
- After toileting or diaper changing
- After contact is made with any bodily fluid

Staff will wash their hands at the following times:

- Upon arrival at the Center
- Immediately before and after eating or participating in food service activities
- Before and after diapering or toileting a child
- Before leaving the restroom either with a child or by themselves
- Before and after administering non-emergency first-aid to a child
- After handling animals or cleaning animal cages
- Before and after feeding infants
- After removing disposable gloves
- Before administering medication
- Anytime contact is made with bodily fluids
- After cleaning or handling garbage
- After handling an ill child

The Required method for handwashing is as follows:

- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds using warm water and soap.
- Wash between fingers and back of hands and wrists.
- Rinse hands well under running water and dry thoroughly with a clean paper towel.
- Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands. This helps prevent acquiring new germs on already clean hands.

Exposure to Blood or Other Body Fluids

- Disposable gloves shall be worn by staff when diapering or when contact with blood or other body fluids are possible, and when cleaning contaminated surfaces.
- Spills of urine, feces, vomit or blood shall be cleaned immediately from the surfaces with soap and water, and then the surfaces shall be disinfected.
- Any blood-contaminated material or soiled diapers shall be disposed of in a double layer bag with a secure tie.

Illness

Children do become ill, and at times that may not be convenient for parents. It is highly recommended that parents have a plan in place for “sick” child care in case your child does become ill. This may help minimize the stress that parents often feel when a child is ill. If your child appears ill at home, please do not bring your child to the Center.

The teacher will assess your child’s health upon arrival at the Center. If a child is suspected of being ill or becomes ill later in the day, the child will be isolated from the group and you will be contacted to pick up your child immediately. If you are unable to pick up your child, the Director will contact the person who is authorized to pick up your child. Families are expected to pick up their ill child within 1 hour of being notified.

If a child becomes seriously ill and parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, The Center will seek emergency care for the child. If the child’s illness is life threatening, 911 will be called. Parents will be responsible for all medical costs incurred.

Mildly Ill Child

Mildly ill children who can participate normally in the Center’s activities may remain at the Center. This may include children with colds, mild ear infections, or children who are teething.

Communicable Disease

If there is an incidence of a communicable disease, notices will be sent via Brightwheel as a message. The notice will include the communicable condition, the symptoms associated with the condition and the period of communicability. The North Star Child Care Center Director may lower the threshold for exclusion when there is a confirmed case of a communicable disease, to lower the spread throughout the center.

Exclusion from the Center Due to Illness

We wish to provide a healthy environment for all children and staff at North Star Child Care Center. Children may be excluded from care until the symptoms or conditions listed below are resolved, until the child’s doctor has evaluated the child and determined the child can return to the Center, or at the discretion of the Director.

Activities Participation

Any illness that prevents your child from participating comfortably in activities.

Vomiting

Child may not return until it has been determined that vomiting is due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration. Child may return when vomiting has not recurred for 24 hours.

Diarrhea (three loose or watery stools per day; three or more “blowouts” per day for infants)

Child may not return until diarrhea has not reoccurred for 24 hours.

Fever of 100.4 degrees or above

Child may not return until the child has been fever free for a period of 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications.

Skin rash associated with other signs of illness, fever or change in behavior

Child may not return until the illness has been determined not to be communicable.

Evidence of head lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, etc.

Child will be sent home from the Center and may not return until 24 hours after treatment has begun.

Respiratory illnesses such as influenza, RSV, COVID

Child may not return until they have been fever free for a period of 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications and 24 hours after respiratory symptoms have greatly improved.

Strep Throat

Child may return 24 hours after starting antibiotics and in accordance with all other exclusion criteria.

Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD)

Child may not return until they are fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medications and sores are scabbed over or covered. For infants, excessive drooling with mouth sores is also cause for exclusion.

Whooping cough or other specific contagious infection

Child may not return until evaluated by a doctor and determined that the child can return to the Center.

Measles, Chicken Pox or Rubella

Child may not return until 6 days after the rash appears.

Hepatitis A Virus Infection

Child may not return until 1 week after onset of illness or until after immune serum globulin has been given to appropriate children and staff in the program as directed by the Iowa Department of Public Health.

Evidence of severe illness such as lethargy, unusual sleepiness, prolonged crying, obvious discomfort, difficulty breathing, uncontrollable coughing, wheezing or poor appetite

Child may not return until symptoms have resolved.

Mouth sores or ulcers with drooling

Child may not return until the child's doctor or local Health Department authority states the child is non-infectious.

A quiet area with supervision will be provided for a mildly ill or injured child. Parents will be notified.

Care Plans for Children with Special Health Needs: Children with special health care needs could have a variety of different problems ranging from asthma, diabetes, cerebral palsy, bleeding disorders, metabolic problems, cystic fibrosis, sickle cell disease, seizure disorder, sensory disorders, autism, severe allergy, immune deficiencies, or many other conditions. Some of these conditions require daily treatments and some only require observation for signs of impending illness and ability to respond in a timely manner.

The center will collaborate with families and medical providers to implement the strategies to provide a safe and healthy environment for all children with special health needs while simultaneously supporting and partnering with families. Families should have their medical provider fill out the “Care Plan for Children with Special Health Care Needs” form. Staff will be trained on any procedures, skills, modifications, adaptations, or observations required to care for a child with special health needs noted in the form. The form should be updated after any hospitalizations, changes in medical status, or at least annually. If a child in care has a special medical management procedure in place a staff trained in the procedure will be on-site whenever the child is present in order to assure that the child’s needs are being met.

Immunizations

- Every child must have a State of Iowa issued Certificate of Immunization Form completed by their doctor and turned into the Center at enrollment.
- Medical exemption for immunizations must be completed by the following: MD, DO, PA, or ARNP.
- Whenever your child has received a new immunization, please have your doctor’s office print out a new/updated Certificate of Immunization Form for the Center.

Inclement Weather

All closings of the Center, for any reason, will be made at the discretion of the Childcare Center Director. Should the Director choose to close the Center, a Brightwheel alert will be sent to parents.

The goal remains to provide the families with a safe and reliable source for childcare, complemented with prompt and proper communication to allow families to make the appropriate decision/accommodations for themselves and their children.

Injuries

1. An Incident Report is prepared within 24 hours of each accident involving a child and will be documented in Brightwheel. If the injury was caused by another child, a separate incident report will be made for the child who caused the incident. Confidentiality will be maintained.
2. Minor injuries will be handled by staff who have received emergency first aid training.
3. If a serious injury occurs, 911 will be called, and the child will be transported to the Iowa City hospital of their parents’ choice by ambulance or emergency vehicle at parents’ expense. Parents will be notified immediately and asked to meet their child at the hospital.
4. Serious injuries are also reported to HHS within 24 hours of the incident.

Medications and Procedures

Administering Medications

1. North Star Child Care Center will administer medication to children for whom a plan has been made and approved by the Director.
2. Medication given to the center must be in its original container with all labels intact.
3. If a liquid oral medication is to be administered at the Center, the parent must provide an appropriate measuring device that has clearly marked measurements (medicine cup, dropper, syringe, or medicine sip vial).
4. Parents must complete and sign a Medication Authorization Form authorizing staff to administer medication to the child. Forms are provided by the Center.
5. The parent must give the signed form with specific dosing along with the medication directly to the child's teacher. Properly trained staff will be the only person(s) authorized to administer medication to the child.
6. All medications will be stored so they are inaccessible to children and non-Center personnel.
7. Medications that require refrigeration will be stored in a locked container in the refrigerator.
8. Medications that do not require refrigeration will be kept in a locked container and stored in an area inaccessible to children and non-Center personnel.
9. Nonprescription medications, diapering ointments and sunscreens (labeled by the child's parent with the child's name) will be stored out of reach of children.

Medication Log

1. As long as the authorization to administer medication is in effect, a notation will be made on the child's daily report and the medication chart indicating the name of the medicine, date, time, dosage given or applied, and the initials of the person who administered the medication or the reason the medication was not administered.
2. Medications will only be administered throughout the duration of the prescription.
3. Medications will only be administered with a current authorization signed by a parent.
4. Staff will also make a notation on the medication chart if:
 - a. A child is absent from the Center on a day the medication is to be administered.
 - b. A parent picks up a child early and the medication cannot be administered
 - c. A parent forgets to bring the medication; therefore, no medication is available to administer
 - d. The child experiences side effects or negative reactions to the medication

Physicals

- Every child must have a Health Statement and Physical Assessment Form completed by their doctor and turned in at enrollment.
- The date of the Health Statement and Physical Assessment Form must not be more than 12 months prior to the first day of attendance at the Center.
- The Health Statement and Physical Assessment Form must include past health history, status of present health, including allergies, medications, and acute or chronic conditions.
- After enrolling in the Center, every child must have a Health Statement and Physical Assessment Form completed by a licensed doctor on an annual basis and be turned into the Center Director every January. This assessment form should include any changes in the child's health.

Non-Center Activities

- If your child participates in offsite non-Center activities such as half day preschool, gymnastics, speech classes, doctor's appointments, playgroups, etc., parents will be responsible for transporting your child to and from these activities.

- If your child participates in any activity on a regular basis, please provide your child’s teacher and Center Director with your child’s schedule and whether or not your child will be returning to the Center following the activity. This will ensure that we stay within the teacher-to-child ratios required by the state licensing guidelines.
- Our center will not assume responsibility for the child once they leave our care. Upon return to our center a child must be signed in and taken to their classroom at which point we will resume responsibility for the child.
- If your child has special teachers coming to the Center, such as speech, play therapy, etc., we will provide space for them to work with your child. Please provide a written schedule for your child’s teacher.

Technology

At North Star Child Care Center, we believe technology can be a valuable educational tool when used appropriately and in moderation. School-age children may occasionally use technology such as computers during scheduled times for educational games or creative projects, or research activities. Technology will never take the place of hands-on learning, social interaction, or physical activity. Personal devices from home are not allowed at the Center. To ensure safe and developmentally appropriate use:

- Staff actively supervise all technology use.
- Only pre-approved, age-appropriate content is accessible.
 - Staff are responsible for selecting and monitoring digital materials and setting all parental controls.
- Technology use is limited to 15 minutes per day and will only be offered during scheduled enrichment times.
- Devices are stored securely when not in use in a locked cabinet or office.
- Children under 2 years of age will not have access to screen time.

Families are informed of our technology practices at enrollment and through ongoing communication such as newsletters and our parent handbook. We aim to maintain transparency and ensure families are comfortable with how technology is integrated into our program.

Bullying Prevention

North Star Child Care Center is dedicated to providing a safe, inclusive, and respectful environment for every child. We define bullying as repeated, intentional behaviors, verbal, physical, or relational, that cause harm or distress to another child. This includes name-calling, exclusion, intimidation, threats, and physical aggression. Bullying of any kind is strictly against our policy. If bullying occurs, we follow a clear protocol:

- The incident is immediately addressed by staff.
- The behavior is documented in an Incident Report (who, what, when, where, how it affected the child/children involved).
- Administration and the families of all children involved are notified.
- A plan is developed to address and prevent further incidents.

Expectations of Staff

- Promote positive peer interactions and model respectful behavior.
- Intervene and report any bullying concerns to the On-Site Supervisor without delay.
- Participate in bullying prevention training upon hire and annually.

Expectations of Families

- Support respectful behavior and open communication at home.
- Notify staff of any bullying concerns.
- Work collaboratively with the center to resolve issues if your child is involved.

Expectations of Children

- Treat others with kindness and respect.
- Report bullying to a trusted adult immediately.
- Participate in group discussions and activities that build empathy and community.

Our bullying prevention policy is reviewed with families during enrollment, shared in our parent handbook, and discussed with children through age-appropriate classroom activities.

Abuse

In the unlikely event that you suspect a caregiver of abusing or neglecting your child, please report those suspicions immediately to the Childcare Center Director. The Director will promptly investigate the allegation, involving the Police and/or Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as necessary. While investigating suspicions, the Director may suspend the caregiver during this period of investigation.

When the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) receives a report of suspected abuse against a center employee, the center communicates directly with the HHS investigator and makes all appropriate records and policy manuals available for review. During the investigation:

- The center will take immediate action to assure the health and safety of the child involved in the report. This shall be accomplished in a manner that would cause as little disruption to the child as possible.
- Efforts will be made to place the implicated staff within a supervised setting that does not bring them in contact with children. If an appropriate setting cannot be arranged, the implicated staff may be suspended until the outcome of the case has been issued.
- Where dismissal or removal of the implicated staff is not necessary in order to protect children, the center will, as appropriate; increase supervision over the staff, provide instruction and/or technical support, initiate appropriate disciplinary action, and/or provide appropriate training.

If the child abuse report is unfounded, the staff may be reinstated in the job duties they held prior to the abuse report and under the same level of supervision. The report/information will be removed from the employee's record. If the child abuse report is founded, they will be terminated from the agency in accordance with the center's Personnel Policies.

Playground Equipment Stability and Inspection

Our outdoor playground includes equipment that is properly installed, maintained, and age-appropriate. Staff are trained on playground safety measures upon hire and reviewed annually. All equipment is safely anchored and installed to manufacturer's directions. Fall surfacing is maintained according to *Caring For Our Children* Appendix Z standards. Daily checks for a safe play space are completed before children enter the space and weekly routine inspections completed to look for missing or broken parts, protrusions, rust and chipping paint, sharp edges, cracks, wear, debris, garbage, insect nests, fall surfacing depth, stability of handholds, and stability of non-anchored large play equipment (if applicable). If there are any safety hazards present, the playground space may be closed off until it is repaired or hazards removed.

Smoke-Free Environment

North Star Child Care Center is a smoke-free environment, including vaping and electronic cigarettes. Smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building or outside within 30 feet of the building, playground, or any community location where children are present. Smoking is not permitted in an employee's vehicle while at work or any vehicles used to transport children. Childcare Center staff are prohibited from wearing clothing that smells of smoke while working.

Privacy Policy

The center places a high priority on protecting your privacy. This privacy policy was created in order to demonstrate the center's firm commitment to the privacy of our families and explains what types of information is collected and how this information is used.

Families that participate in our programs provide us with contact information (such as name and e-mail address), medical contacts, and other pertinent information. Through the course of services, we may also collect information on: child wellness, program attendance data, child development assessments, and general household and family information.

The center uses your personal information to provide you with personalized service and to continuously improve our programs. Some of our credential and funding agencies require that we enter your personal information in online data collection systems. The center does not sell or rent email addresses or other contact information to anyone outside the organization. We may amend this privacy policy from time to time; please review it at least annually.

Program Activities

Classroom Groupings and Transitions

North Star Child Care Center classrooms are typically divided by age. We also know that each child is an individual who develops at an individual rate. The transition to another classroom does not always occur on a child's birthday, but rather when the child shows developmental readiness and the team agrees it is in the child's best interest. No child will be transitioned from one classroom or another outside of their birthday without parental consultation. Parents are encouraged to visit their child's new classroom and meet their new teachers. Some children take more time to feel comfortable with the new settings and slightly different routines. If a child is having a difficult time transitioning to the new class, the parents and teachers will work together to individualize the process.

Toilet Training

North Star Child Care Center assists with teaching children how and when to use the toilet. Toilet learning/training when initiated will follow a prescribed, sequential plan that is developed and coordinated with the parents' plan for implementation at home. Generally, the Center will start working with children at the age of two, but we recognize that all children develop at their own rate. When a child demonstrates the ability to remain dry for two hours we will consider beginning to toilet train. The ability to remain dry for two hours typically indicates that their bladder muscles are fully developed, and the child is capable of holding and letting go. A North Star Child Care Center teacher will then discuss potty training with the parents of the child before implementing the following.

Toilet Training Policy

- Once parents have approved the toilet training process, we ask that their child comes to the Center in underwear and remain in them during awake times.
- Children need to come to the center in clothes that can be pulled down and up easily. Bibs, belts, and onesies are not practical clothes for toilet training.
- We will make an effort to have the child sit on the toilet and attempt to go every half hour.
- Parents need to supply the center with 5 complete outfits. This means 5 underwear, 5 pants, 5 pairs of socks, and an extra pair of shoes (shoes similar to crocs work well).
- While training we will still need wipes and diapers. We will put a diaper on your child for nap time for several days in a row. Your child's teacher will let you know when the diaper is no longer necessary.
- Accidents are common therefore we do not believe in disciplining children when this occurs.
- Due to licensing requirements, we are unable to rinse soiled clothing. We will empty training pants into the toilet, but we must handle the clothing as little as possible. The soiled clothing will be placed in a leak-proof bag and given to you at the end of the day.

Our Infant/Toddler Program (0 – 24 months)

North Star Child Care Center provides a developmentally appropriate curriculum via Lillio Learning and/or the Teacher for the children enrolled in our program. The curriculum focuses on five main areas of child development:

1. Language/Literacy Skills
2. Mathematics and Science
3. Creative Arts and Music
4. Large/Fine Motor Skills
5. Social Skills, Creativity, and Self-Expression

Classrooms will post their lesson plans and daily activities outside of the classroom.

Toddler Program (2 years to 3 years)

The transition to another classroom does not always occur on a child's birthday but rather when the child shows developmental readiness, and the team agrees it is in the child's best interest. No child will be transitioned to another classroom outside of their birthday without parental consultation. Parents are encouraged to visit their child's new classroom and meet their new teachers. Some children take more time to feel comfortable with the new setting and slightly different routines. If a child is having difficulty transitioning, parents and teachers will work together to individualize the process.

Our Preschool Program (4 years and 5 years)

Specific Pre-Kindergarten skills are incorporated into the daily activities planned for your child. Activities are age-appropriate and designed to challenge children to learn new things. They will be offered learning experiences that encourage excitement about learning while also fostering social skills.

We recognize that all children develop at their own pace, and we strive to offer activities that provide both challenge and success for all children. They will be in a positive environment that nurtures confidence, self-help skills, and self-esteem.

Our School Age Program (Kindergarten – 5th grade)

Typical Daily North Star Child Care Center classrooms are typically divided by age. However, we acknowledge that each child develops at their own pace. Classroom transitions occur when children demonstrate readiness rather than strictly by age. Parents are encouraged to engage in their child's transition process by visiting their new classroom and meeting the new teaching staff. If a child experiences challenges adjusting to the new classroom environment, parents and teachers will collaborate to create an individualized transition plan.

Staff Orientation and Training

All members of our staff are required to have state and federal background checks and the following training:

- Certification in Adult, Child, and Infant CPR
- Certification in Child and Adult First Aid
- 2 hours of Iowa's training for Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse
- 1 hour training in Universal Precautions and infectious disease control
- 12 hours of Iowa's Essentials trainings

Upon employment, staff are provided with the most recently updated copies of the North Star Child Care Center Employee Handbook and the North Star Child Care Center Parent Handbook.

New staff must participate in an orientation where the Director will review all the policies and emergency procedures contained in the North Star Child Care Center Employee Handbook. Emergency plans for fire and tornado are reviewed and practiced on a monthly basis. Staff are informed of any policy changes and provided with a printed copy of the policy change. Current staff are required to annually review the policies set out in the North Star Child Care Center Employee and Parent Handbook.

In Iowa, directors of licensed child care centers must meet qualification requirements through a 100-point system outlined by the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. Points are earned in three categories: education, experience, and child development–related training, with at least two categories represented in the total. No more than 75 points may come from any single category, and at least 20 points must be earned through experience. Education points are based on the level and field of study, such as earning the highest points for a bachelor's degree or higher in early childhood or elementary education. Experience points are awarded for time spent working in child care or preschool settings, and training points are based on approved child development–related training hours completed within the past five years.

An on-site supervisor must earn **75 points** from a combination of three categories: education, experience, and child-development-related training. They must use at least **two of the three categories**, and **no more than 50 points** may come from any one category. At least **10 points** must come from the experience category. Also, any points claimed for training in the “child-development-related training” category must have been completed within the **past five years**.

All child care center staff are required to complete approved training to ensure the health, safety, and development of children in their care. Staff working 20 hours or more per week must complete 10 contact hours of approved training during their first year of employment and 6 hours annually thereafter. Those working less than 20 hours per week must complete 5 contact hours in their first year and 4 hours each year after, with at least two hours

completed in a group setting. Training must cover essential areas such as child growth and development, safety and health practices, social and emotional support, family relationships, and program management. Staff are also required to maintain current certification in mandatory child and dependent adult abuse reporter training, CPR and first aid, and universal precautions. All training must be documented and tracked in the Iowa Professional Workforce Registry (i-PoWeR) to verify compliance with state licensing requirements.

Staff receive training through certified training programs, self-study training materials, and in-service training.

Reporting Child Abuse

Child abuse is defined in Iowa Code Section 232.68 as one or more of the following six categories:

- Physical Abuse
- Denial of Critical Care
- Sexual Abuse
- Mental Injury
- Child Prostitution
- Presence of Illegal Drugs

The law requires childcare providers to report signs of child abuse or neglect to The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services-Child Protective Services. Our staff are required to take Iowa's Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse training which educates childcare providers on how to recognize and report abuse and neglect.

Emergency Plans/Procedures

Emergency procedures are set out in the Employee Handbook and reviewed with staff at the time of orientation and on an annual basis. Staff undergo fire and tornado emergency procedure training on a monthly basis. Records of fire and tornado drills are maintained by the Director. The Director will check exits on a daily basis to ensure that all exits are unobstructed. In the event that an evacuation of the premises is necessary, the children will walk, be carried, or safely transported in an North Star/RFYP vehicle to City High. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the alternate pick-up site.

Children and staff may return to the center when fire officials have determined it is safe to do so.

Fire

Monthly fire drills are required and are utilized by North Star Child Care Center to train the employees and children how to respond quickly to a fire in an organized fashion. Fire escape routes are posted in every room with clearly marked maps. In case of a fire/fire drill all North Star Child Care Center children will be escorted to the row of trees/bushes on the south side of the building, just beyond the parking lot.

Indirect care employees are assigned to help specific classrooms that have non-mobile children to evacuate the building. An administrator will ensure that all children are accounted for by conducting a name-to-face check.

When the fire alarm rings, the teachers in each room will gather the children together, along with the attendance sheets, first aid backpack, and emergency medications. They will then check the door to the

hallway. If the door is not hot, the caregivers will then check the designated escape route for fire. If the route is clear, the caregivers will quickly escort the children to the designated outside meeting area. With the aid of the fire suppression system (sprinklers), North Star staff and children will have added time to safely exit the building.

In the event of a fire 911 will be called, and employees will be given further directions by the fire department or the Childcare Center Director on where to take the children. In all emergency situations, the Director or On-Site Supervisor will be responsible for the emergency bag containing a list of children and emergency phone numbers, first aid kit, cell phone, and flashlights. The Director will use the enrollment information to contact parents in the event that they are unable to return to the building. If able to connect to Brightwheel we will send a notification via Brightwheel messages. If an evacuation of the premises is necessary, the children will walk, be carried, or safely transported in a North Star/RFYP vehicle to City High. Parents will be contacted and made aware of the alternate pick-up site.

Children and staff may return to the North Star Child Care Center building when fire officials have determined it is safe to do so.

If a class is on a field trip when an actual fire occurs, then an employee at the center would be designated to find or notify the group and keep them in a safe place until it is safe to return to the center. If it does not become safe for the group to return to the center, parents will be asked to meet the group at their current location and take their children home.

Tornado

Monthly tornado drills are required and are utilized by North Star Child Care Center to train the employees and children how to respond quickly to a tornado in an organized fashion. Designated safe areas are posted in every classroom with a clearly marked map. Indirect care employees are assigned to help specific classrooms that have non-mobile children or children using adaptive equipment to move to their designated safe area. An administrator will check every classroom to make sure all children arrive in their areas safely.

The designated safe area at the center is the cafeteria located at the lower level.

In the case of a tornado drill, the teachers are to take the children, along with their classroom attendance sheets, first aid backpacks, emergency medications, and emergency contact info to the designated safe area. Staff and students will assume the “turtle position”. The Director or On-Site Supervisor will have their own first aid backpack, an attendance list, flashlights, weather radio, and an emergency kit. The Director or On-Site Supervisor will conduct a name to face check.

In the event of an actual tornado (alerted by city sirens, alarms, radio, computer), the above procedures will be followed. In addition, the Director and/or On-Site Supervisor will have access to a cell phone to listen to the latest news and weather alerts. The staff and children will remain in the tornado shelter until the “All Clear” signal has been given. If there is structural damage to the building, the Director and/or On-Site supervisor will call 911 and then determine if it is safe to exit the building. If it is necessary to leave, staff will follow the evacuation guidelines as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire.

If a class is on the playground when lightning is sighted, or the city sirens initiate a tornado warning/severe weather, teachers will bring the children inside to their classrooms or designated safe area.

Tornado drills will be conducted once a month at different times of the day to ensure that all children and staff are familiar with the emergency procedure. Designated staff from each room will be responsible for taking attendance lists, emergency contact lists, and the first aid backpack with them. The staff in charge of the infants will take the infants into the tornado shelter, the cafeteria. The staff for the remaining rooms will lead the children into the tornado shelter, the cafeteria, where the children will assume the “turtle” position on the floor.

Bomb Threat

The Emergency Plan for Fire will be followed. The Director/staff will call 911 and inform the emergency personnel that a bomb threat has been received. The Director and/or On-Site Supervisor will follow any additional instructions provided by the emergency personnel at the time of the call. Staff and children will return to the building once the search has ceased and the building has been declared safe. If it is necessary to evacuate the premises, the evacuation procedures as set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire will be followed.

Chemical Spill

In the event a toxic spill in or near the center is witnessed by the Director or staff, 911 will be called immediately. Staff and children will cooperate with official personnel.

Staff and children will be taken into the center to a safe location determined by official personnel and the Director and/or On-Site Supervisor. Staff and children will remain at the designated location until the “All-Clear” is given by officials. If evacuation is necessary, staff will follow the evacuation guidelines set out in the Emergency Plan for Fire.

Earthquake or Structural Damage

In the event of an earthquake, North Star employees will take the children to the doorways of their classrooms, since these are the most structurally sound points in the building. Any doorway, including closets, is appropriate. An adult should remain with the children in each doorway. Employees may also instruct the children to crawl under the tables in the class or dining rooms to protect them from falling debris.

Children will be asked to squat in the doorways and hold onto the doorframe or each other. For children under the age of one, the evacuation crib will be moved to the doorway and employees will sit under the doorway next to the crib with the children. The adult should use encouraging words and remind the children to hang on even if objects would fall around them.

For children outside the building, staff will instruct the children to move away from the building and sit down together with staff.

After the movement of the building and ground stops, the Director/On-Site Supervisor will perform a name to face attendance check. Structural damage will be assessed by official personnel and/or the Director or On-Site Supervisor before children are allowed to remain in or re-enter the building.

Children will be escorted outside to a safe area, either in the playground or parking lot and remain outside until the building is checked for safety and stability. If transportation to a city designated safe area is necessary, we will use the center vehicles to transport the children and employees.

Flood

In the event of a flood, either internal or external, the North Star Child Care Center will be evacuated until such time that the building is safe to occupy. If parts of the building are safe to occupy, we will continue to provide care to as many children as possible.

Power Outage

Designated staff from each room will be responsible for taking attendance lists, emergency phone lists, and first aid backpacks as they exit the rooms and lead children into the Indigo Room (previously called the sanctuary). The Director and/or On-Site Supervisor will be responsible for the emergency bag and additional flashlights. The Director and/or On-Site Supervisor will coordinate with the RFYP office to inform the power company of the outage. If it has been determined that the power outage will interfere with continued operation of the Center, parents will be contacted to pick up their children once the severe weather has passed.

Medical/Dental Emergencies

Before a child's first day in attendance at the Center, a Parental Emergency Medical/Dental Consent Form must be completed and signed by the parents. This form will specify where emergency medical and dental health care should be obtained. It is the parent's responsibility to update this information as necessary. All medical/dental emergencies require that the parents be notified.

Upon enrollment or diagnosis, children who have special health care needs such as food allergies, seizures, or asthma must have an emergency action plan completed by their healthcare provider on file. The action plan will be updated at least annually.

A first-aid kit is located in each classroom area, the Assistant Director's office, and the Director's office. This kit contains: disposable gloves, scissors, tweezers, insect sting treatment, antiseptic ointment, thermometer, Band-Aid's in assorted sizes, triangular bandages, sterile gauze pads, small plastic or metal splints, eye dressing, cold pack, alcohol wipes or antiseptic, syrup of ipecac and poison control number. In addition, each room is equipped with a walkie talkie to enable immediate contact with other classrooms and request access to a telephone.

For all incidents involving blood or bodily fluids, disposable gloves will be used. Please let the Director and your child's teacher know if your child is allergic to latex.

North Star employees are trained in First Aid and CPR. If a child becomes seriously ill the following steps will be taken:

1. An employee will assess the symptoms based on the emergency action plan.
2. First aid will be administered as stated in the plan.
3. If the action calls for administering emergency medication a supervisor will notify a parent or guardian. If a parent cannot be reached a designated emergency contact person will be called
4. If the action plan requires life-saving medication, 911 will be called immediately.
5. A supervisor will remain with the child and provide care until EMS arrives.
6. A teacher or supervisor will complete an illness report about the illness and the care given.

Your signature on the Parental Emergency Medical/Dental Consent Form gives the EMS and the hospital permission to care for your child. This form must be physically signed before your child's first day at the center.

During a medical emergency that requires an immediate response, the following emergency procedures will be utilized:

1. First aid will be administered and EMS will be called if needed (911). The Director or On-Site Supervisor will remain with the child and staff performing first aid.
2. A parent/legal guardian will be called by a staff member not currently attending to the medical emergency. If a parent cannot be reached a designated emergency contact person will be called.
3. If it is necessary for the child to be transported to a local hospital via ambulance an employee will ride with the child, if allowed to do so. If they are not allowed to ride in the ambulance a staff member will meet the child at the hospital and remain with them until a parent or guardian arrives.
4. We will share with the medical personnel the contact information of the doctor, dentist, and hospital provided by the parent at registration including permission to obtain medical care.

Lost or Abducted Child

Missing Child

It is the expectation of all North Star staff to uphold all supervision policies laid out in the handbook in order to reduce the risk of a missing child. Additional safety measures include:

- School age children wear a center shirt when going on field trips.
- Frequent reminders to older children that they must always be able to see at least one adult when they are at the center, outside, or off-campus.
- Face-to-name checks before and after transitions and regularly while in the classroom, on the playground, and during field trips.
- Having monthly missing child drills so that staff can practice what to do in the case of an actual event.

If a child goes missing and the teacher is unable to locate them in the classroom, the following procedure will be put into effect immediately. If the director is not on site, the On-Site Supervisor on duty will perform all the following Director roles.

Procedure:

1. Staff will alert the Director immediately of a lost child.
2. The Director will alert staff via the walkie that a child is missing. All staff will close their classroom doors and report back via walkie that they've checked their room for the child.
3. The Director will notify the main RFYP office staff to assist with the search, while also gathering a team of staff members who are not currently in class ratio. The Director will also gather a first aid kit and emergency contact information for the missing child.
4. The Director will write down the time, split up the search team and give everyone a time for the initial search to report back to the office.
5. If the child is not found in the initial search, the Director will notify the police via 911 first, and the guardians of the child second. The search team will conduct a second search and report back to the Director.
6. The Director will then document and gather all information possible - child's description, what they are wearing, when they went missing and all other relevant information.
7. The Director and staff will work with the police on further investigation procedures.
8. A major incident report will be filed with HHS and staff follow-up will include a thorough review of all procedures and policies to seek recommendations for ensuring a repeated incident is less likely. All

incident reports are kept on file according to HHS policies.

Abducted Child

Childcare Center has a policy that requires employees to report unfamiliar individuals that seem to be watching the program or asking about certain children that attend. If we notice those individuals in a vehicle, we bring the children inside, lock the doors and call the police. In the event of abduction from either the center, the playground, or a field trip, 911 will be called by an employee and given a description of the abductor, if available, and a description of the child. Employees are also instructed to attempt to get a description of the vehicle, license plate number and the direction the vehicle appears to be heading. The parents will be notified after staff alert 911. The Director/administration would also notify the HHS Licensing Consultant of the abduction.

Intoxicated or Substance-Impaired Parents

Staff will immediately alert the Director and/or On-Site Supervisor if they suspect a parent is intoxicated or substance-impaired. The Director/staff will talk to the parent about the danger of taking a child and/or operating a vehicle while intoxicated or substance-impaired and ask the parent if there is another adult who can be contacted to pick up the child. The Director/staff will focus on the welfare of the child. If the parent demands to take the child while in such condition, the Director/staff must legally release the child to the authorized parent(s). Director/staff shall escort the parent and child to the parking lot to get the license plate number, a detailed description of the vehicle and the direction of travel. Director/staff will call 911 with this information. The Director/staff must act in their role as a mandatory reporter and file a child abuse report first to the police and then to HHS.

Lockdown

In an effort to protect all of the children that utilize the North Star program, we have a plan in place to reduce the chance of children being removed from the center without authorization or from being harmed by an intruder. In any instance when we feel the safety of children is in question, the employees would be notified via walkie talkie that Lockdown is now in effect.

The following steps are followed during a Lockdown:

1. All children must leave the playground areas and return to the safety of the building.
2. During this time, staff will ensure that all children are accounted for and that the room doors are locked.
3. The Police Department will be contacted.
4. An administrator will supervise the admittance of anyone entering the building.
5. Parents will be notified via Brightwheel as soon as the situation allows.