

Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.)

Family Handbook

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Center Director/Owner

This handbook is intended to familiarize families with current Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.) policy, practices, and standards. An electronic copy (PDF) of the handbook is available on our website at www.NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com. Print copies are available upon request. N.W.C.K.A. reserves the right to revise its policies, practices, and standards as deemed appropriate by the Director. Families will be notified of updates to the handbook.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Welcome Message

Welcome to Nurture with Care Kids Academy!

We are delighted you chose our Center for your child's early education and care. At Nurture with Care Kids Academy, we are dedicated to providing a nurturing, safe, and stimulating environment where your child can grow academically and socially.

We understand that selecting a childcare center is a significant decision, and we are honored that you have entrusted us with caring for your precious little one. Our comprehensive programs are designed to meet the diverse needs of all children, ensuring they receive the individual attention and support they need to thrive.

Thank you for joining the Nurture with Care Kids Academy family. We look forward to a wonderful and enriching experience with you and your child.

1.2 Mission Statement

At N.W.C.K.A., our mission is to provide a safe and stimulating environment for children to explore, learn, and flourish. We aim to foster a love for learning and nurturing essential social and emotional skills that form the basis for well-rounded child development. Our motto is **"Guiding Tiny Steps Into a Bright Future."**

1.3 Philosophy

Our philosophy is rooted in the belief that children are natural learners, and the early years are crucial for building a strong foundation. We embrace a child-centered approach, respecting each child's pace and interests and guiding them to become independent thinkers and confident individuals. Communication and collaboration with families are essential to our philosophy. We encourage you to actively participate in your child's educational journey and share any questions or concerns. We can create a partnership that fosters your child's growth and development.

1.4 History

N.W.C.K.A. opened in September 2023 with two classrooms: toddlers and preschoolers. Just four months later, we added a young toddler's classroom with a capacity of six children. In Jan 2026, we received a license to serve school-age children. Our Center is licensed for 35 children, 12 months to 7 years.

2 General Center Information

2.1 Administration

Center Director: Nidhi Gupta

Email: Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com

Center Phone # 360-682-8920

2.2 Center Information

Location: 1162 SW Fort Nugent Ave, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Our DCYF Provider ID: 2175196

Our SSPS ID: 587902

2.3 Hours of Operation

Our Center's regular hours of operation are 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM, seven days a week (Monday through Sunday). Weekend programming follows the same schedule, structure, and policies as weekdays. Based on weekend enrollment, N.W.C.K.A. will open the necessary classrooms and staff them appropriately in accordance with WAC 110-300-0356 staff-to-child ratio and group size requirements.

2.4 Programs Offered

- Young Toddlers
- Toddlers
- Preschool
- School-age

N.W.C.K.A. offers both full-time (5 days/week) and part-time (3 days/week or 2 days/week or M-F all mornings or M-F all afternoons), and weekend enrollment options. Part-time schedules follow a Monday-Wednesday-Friday or Tuesday-Thursday pattern. Weekend enrollment may include Saturday only, Sunday only, or both days.

2.5 Teacher-Student Ratio

At N.W.C.K.A., we maintain the following staff-to-child ratios in our classrooms:

- Young Toddlers: One staff for every seven children
- Toddlers: One staff for every seven children
- Preschool: One staff for every ten children

2.6 Licensing

N.W.C.K.A. is licensed for 35 children.

2.7 Staff Qualifications

All staff at N.W.C.K.A., regardless of position, meet the following requirements:

- **Mandatory Clearances:** A cleared background check and a negative TB test.
- **Pre-Employment Training and Permits:** HIV/AIDS (bloodborne pathogens) training and a valid food handler's permit.
- **Education:** A high school diploma or higher degree.
- **STARS Training:** 30 hours of STARS training (Child Care Basics) within the first 90 days of employment.
- **Continuing Education:** Employees continuing beyond their first year is required to complete 10 hours of approved continuing education annually.
- **First Aid and CPR:** Certification in pediatric First Aid and CPR within 90 days of hire.
- **Physical Requirements:** Able to lift at least 40 pounds as part of their regular duties.

3 Enrollment and Admission

3.1 Enrollment Process

At Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.), we strive to make the enrollment process smooth and transparent. Please follow these steps to complete your child's enrollment:

Step 1: Complete the Online Intake Form

Complete the online Intake Form by clicking on "Enroll Now" button on our website <https://nurturewithcarekidsacademy.com/>

Step 2: Schedule a Tour

Visit our center to meet our staff, see the classrooms, and learn about our programs. To book the tour online, use the link <https://calendly.com/nurturewithcarekidsacademy-info/parent-tour>

Step 3: Submit Enrollment Documents

After your tour, N.W.C.K.A. will send you a request for enrollment documents through HiMama. Alternatively, you can collect a paper copy from the center. You may return the completed documents via HiMama, email, or by delivering a paper copy to the center.

Step 4: Pay Registration Fees and Tuition

To secure your child's spot, a non-refundable registration fee and two weeks of tuition must be paid in advance. Once documents are received (Step 3) and payment is made (Step 4), your child's enrollment will be confirmed. Payment may be made by cash, check, direct debit, Zelle, or Venmo.

Important Notes:

- Enrollment is based on spot availability and completion of all four steps on a first-come, first-served basis.
- If no spots are available, your child will be placed on a waitlist.
- N.W.C.K.A. reserves the right to deny or discontinue enrollment at its discretion to ensure safety, well-being, and alignment with the center's policies and values.

The required enrollment documents are:

1. Child Care Agreement
2. Registration Form
3. Permission Authorization
4. Certificate of Immunization Form
5. Parent Handbook Policies/Agreement Form
6. Child History (including health history)
7. Medical Information Form/Consent to Medical Care Form
8. Pre-Authorized Debit Agreement
9. Disaster Release Form

Disclaimer:

Nurture with Care Kids Academy reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to make all final decisions regarding admission, placement, continued enrollment, and termination of services. Decisions may be based on factors including, but not limited to, the safety and well-being of the child, other children, families, and staff; adherence to center policies; and the ability of the center to meet the child's developmental needs.

In cases of withdrawal or termination initiated by the center, fees already paid are non-refundable. By enrolling, families acknowledge and agree that the center's decisions in these matters are final.

3.2 Child and Family Adjustment Policy

To support a smooth transition for every child, we request that parents bring their child for a visit prior to enrollment. This visit helps the child and family become familiar with our environment, staff, and daily routines.

Each new enrollment begins with a **four-week trial period**. During this time, regular tuition fees apply. If, during or after this period, Nurture with Care Kids Academy determines that a child is not adjusting well, is not thriving in our environment, or that their continued enrollment presents safety, developmental, or behavioral concerns, we reserve the right to discontinue enrollment. If termination is initiated by the center without cause, any prepaid tuition for unused days will be refunded within 10 business days. Families will receive at least **one-week** written notice if enrollment will not continue past the trial period.

Grounds for Termination

Enrollment may also be terminated at any time if:

- A child's behavior or needs pose a risk to their own safety or the safety of others.
- Parents or guardians consistently fail to meet center policies and expectations (including, but not limited to, unpaid tuition, habitual late arrivals, or unsafe, inappropriate, or disruptive behavior by a parent, guardian, or family member in or around the center).

In all such cases, families will be notified promptly. **No refunds will be issued for terminated enrollment.**

This policy allows us to maintain a safe, nurturing, and productive environment for all children and staff.

3.3 Voluntary Disenrollment

If parents choose to withdraw their child from Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.), a **written two-week notice** is required. Tuition for the two-week notice period is due in full, regardless of whether the child attends during this time. This policy allows us to maintain stable staffing and classroom ratios.

Failure to provide a two-week written notice will result in full tuition for that period being charged to the family's account.

3.4 Updating Enrollment Records

Each fall, N.W.C.K.A. conducts an annual audit of all enrollment records. After this review, families will be notified if updates or additional documentation are required.

Ongoing Updates

Families are responsible for ensuring that critical records remain current throughout the year, including:

- **Emergency Contact and Medical Consent Forms:** These must be updated whenever there are changes to contact information, authorized pick-up persons, employment, or health insurance.
- **Medical Records:** Physical exams and immunization records must be kept up to date. Please request a copy of your child's most recent physical and immunization record during annual well-child visits and provide them to the center. Records may be submitted in person, by email, or sent directly from your child's physician.

For any updates, please contact the Director or Assistant Director promptly so that forms can be revised. Up-to-date records ensure that we can respond quickly and appropriately in case of an emergency.

3.5 Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a top priority for N.W.C.K.A. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason without the individual's prior written consent. Only first names will be used when discussing a child's activities and friends in the classroom. In situations regarding behavior problems and/or Incident/Accident Reports, the names of children involved will never be given to families.

3.6 Entrance to the Childcare Center

Each family member authorized to drop off a child at our Center will be assigned a unique 4-digit lock code for the main door entrance. For example, if both parents are expected to drop off their child, each parent will have a distinct 4-digit code. For security reasons, parents must not share their lock code with anyone, including other family members. Your unique lock code can be obtained from the Center Director on your first day. If you forget your code, you may ring the doorbell as a one-time exception. If there is no response to the doorbell within 5 minutes, please get in touch with the Center using the provided phone number.

4 Policies and Procedures

4.1 Illness

At N.W.C.K.A., we prioritize providing all children with a healthy, safe, and nurturing learning environment. To support this goal, we expect our employees to maintain their health to adequately care for and assist the children in our center. Our focus is to maintain a healthy and safe environment for all children. **Parents must complete family-administered health screenings daily in the Lillio App before the child is dropped off at our center. Staff members accepting the child verify this in the Lillio app before accepting the child.**

A child will be sent home as soon as possible if any of the following conditions are observed:

- The illness prevents the child from comfortably participating in activities, as determined by staff.
- The illness requires more care than staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.

Do Not Bring Your Child to the Center If They Have Experienced Any of the Following Symptoms in the Last 24 Hours (Please indicate this in the Lillio app):

- Temperature above 101°F (Refer to <https://app.leg.wa.gov/wac/default.aspx?cite=110-300-0205>)
- Sore throat
- Green nasal discharge
- Persistent crying
- Difficulty breathing and/or wheezing
- Cough
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Loss of taste or smell
- New onset of fever or severe headache
- Blood in stools not explainable by dietary change, medication, or hard stools
- Persistent abdominal pain (lasting more than two hours)

- Rash, until cleared by a physician as non-contagious
- Pink eye (conjunctivitis) until 24 hours after treatment initiation

Contagious Diseases Requiring a Doctor's Note Before Return:

- Tuberculosis: Until a healthcare provider confirms the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend childcare
- Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease: Until sores have dried and crusted, and the child is fever-free
- Chickenpox: Until all sores have dried and crusted (typically six days)
- Pertussis (Whooping Cough): Until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment are completed
- Mumps: Until nine days after symptom onset
- Hepatitis A virus: Until one week after illness onset
- Measles: Until four days after the rash onset
- Rubella: Until six days after the rash onset
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness requiring exclusion
- Herpes simplex: With uncontrollable drooling

Rationale:

These guidelines are based on standard public health recommendations to prevent the spread of infectious diseases in group settings such as childcare centers. We urge everyone to remain vigilant about symptoms that may indicate contagious illnesses to protect all children, especially those with compromised immune systems or underlying health conditions.

Suppose a child becomes ill while at N.W.C.K.A.; they will be removed from the classroom to limit exposure to others and wait in the office until a parent arrives. We ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as quickly as possible.

N.W.C.K.A. reserves the right to decide on exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to this policy require a written note from a licensed healthcare professional confirming that the child is not contagious. Additionally, please mark your child absent in the Lillio app whenever they are ill.

4.2 Medication Administration

All prescription and over-the-counter medications must be provided to a staff member in their original container, clearly labeled with the child's full name and birth date. This includes items such as diaper ointment. N.W.C.K.A. staff will not administer any medication without a completed and signed Medication Authorization Form. These forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or the Director/Assistant Director.

Prescription medications will only be administered at the Center if they cannot reasonably be given at home. For example, medications prescribed twice daily should be administered at home, while those prescribed three times daily may require a middle-of-the-day dose to be given at the Center.

Over-the-counter medications will only be administered under special circumstances and must be accompanied by a doctor's note indicating the start and end dates.

Each child must have a current physical and immunization record on file at N.W.C.K.A. Physicals must be updated annually, and immunization records must be updated whenever a new immunization is received. Updated records may be mailed or emailed directly to N.W.C.K.A. from your healthcare provider. Our email is Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com.

4.3 Safety and Emergency Procedures

4.3.1. Emergency Medical/Dental Procedure

Parents must complete and update an Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form as needed. This form contains essential contact information for parents and individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. It also allows N.W.C.K.A. staff to seek

emergency medical or dental care from authorized providers in case of serious injury. It is the parents' responsibility to keep this form up to date.

- If a child becomes ill or injured while at the Center, the Lead Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) using all available telephone numbers. If a parent cannot be reached, individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick-ups on the Emergency Contact and Parental Consent Form will be contacted.
- Children who are ill or seriously injured will remain under the supervision of the Director and/or Assistant Director until a parent arrives. The children will be placed in any available licensed classroom where they are isolated and can relax.

If the child requires immediate medical attention: In the event of a life-threatening emergency involving a child in our care, the following steps will be taken:

- One staff member will stay with the child and provide first aid as recommended by the American Red Cross, if necessary.
- The child's teacher or designated staff member will contact emergency medical services (911), describe the situation, provide the location and phone number, and remain on the line until instructed to hang up.
- The Director or owner will contact the parent or, if the parent is unavailable, the child's alternate emergency contact.

The emergency response team and/or parent will determine the appropriate transportation for necessary medical care. A staff member will stay with the child until the parent arrives.

- The Lead Teacher will complete an injury/illness report as soon as possible after the incident.
- The parent must sign the incident report, and copies will be provided upon request and kept on file at the Center.
- Emergency contact numbers are posted in each room and in the first aid kits:
 - FIRE, POLICE, MEDICAL: 911
 - LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENT: (360) 679-7350
 - Megaan Works, RN: (360) 678-8281

All staff members are trained in CPR, First Aid, and HIV/AIDS protocols.

4.3.2. Fire or Other Emergency Situations

Fire regulations and warning procedures are posted near the exits in each classroom. Monthly fire drills are conducted, with mandatory participation for all classrooms. In the event of a fire or other evacuation emergency, children and teachers will immediately exit the building and meet at the designated sidewalk location. Parents will be notified as soon as it is safe to do so. For the safety of all involved, we ask that parents refrain from picking up their children during an active emergency.

4.3.2.1 Fire Alarms

When the fire alarm sounds,

Children Should:

- Stop, remain silent
- Leave room in a silent single-line
- Go with staff to a designated area outside
- Remain standing quietly with staff
- Listen to staff's directions

Staff Should:

- Line children up
- Take sign-in sheet
- Exit the Center with children to designated area/ call 911

- Take role call of children
- Stay away from the building

The director or staff in charge will check the building before re-entering.

4.3.3. Weather-related closings

The Director and/or Assistant Director will monitor weather conditions and local news sources to decide if N.W.C.K.A. needs to close early or cancel care for the following day. We follow Oak Harbor Public Schools unless city guidance is stricter.

If the center must close early or cancel care, parents will be notified promptly through the HiMama (Lillio) app and, when necessary, by text message. **Parents are responsible for keeping their contact information current** and ensuring that at least one working phone number and email address are on file.

In the event of early closure, children must be picked up as soon as possible so that families and staff can travel home safely. **Tuition is not prorated or refunded for weather-related closures.** To stay informed, please ensure that:

1. You have downloaded the HiMama (Lillio) app on your mobile device.
2. All parents/guardians listed on your child's account are able to receive messages through HiMama (Lillio).

4.3.4. Power Failure and/or Internet Outage

In the event of a power outage, staff members and children will remain in the classroom and, if possible, continue with normal activities or proceed to the outdoor playground until power is restored. If power cannot be restored within 30 minutes, the Center will close, and parents will be contacted for immediate pick-up. If internet connectivity is available, communication will be conducted through the HiMama (Lillio) app. In the case of an internet outage, parents will be contacted by phone.

If parents are aware of power and internet outages in the area, they are asked to proactively call the Center or pick up their child, as contacting all parents sequentially may take time. Additionally, if there is a power outage before the Center opens, please do not bring your child to the Center if you are aware of the ongoing outage.

4.3.5. Missing Or Abducted Child

The Lead Teacher will immediately search the surrounding area in the event of a missing child. At the same time, another staff member contacts the Director and/or Assistant Director to assist with the search. If the child is not found within a reasonable amount of time (30 minutes), the Director and/or Assistant Director will notify the Police Department, the licenser, and the child's parents.

In the event of an abduction, the Lead Teacher must immediately contact the Director and/or Assistant Director, the Police Department, and the child's parents.

4.4 Tobacco Use

The use of cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products is strictly prohibited on N.W.C.K.A. premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas.

4.5 Curriculum

The curriculum at N.W.C.K.A. consists of a blend of child-initiated and teacher-directed activities designed to support and enrich children's physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development.

N.W.C.K.A. utilizes the Creative Curriculum framework, adapted and modified by the respective lead teacher in alignment with the HiMama system and the creative curriculum from Teaching Strategies. This curriculum is mapped to the Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines to ensure comprehensive and developmentally appropriate programming.

Each classroom features weekly lesson plans, which are posted for visibility. These plans encompass a range of activities aimed at fostering both individual growth and the development of the group. Lesson plans are flexible and may be adjusted to accommodate the evolving interests of the children.

Teachers observe each child's developmental progress, interests, and needs on an ongoing basis and use these observations to individualize activities within the classroom. When a planned activity does not match a child's current skill level, teachers modify materials, adjust expectations, or offer alternative approaches so that every child can participate meaningfully and be appropriately challenged. For example, during an art activity, a teacher may provide thicker crayons or hand-over-hand support for a child still developing fine motor control, while offering scissors and more complex materials to a child who is ready for an advanced challenge. These modifications are guided by the Creative Curriculum framework and informed by developmental observations documented through the Lillio (HiMama) platform. Teachers also incorporate family input about children's strengths, interests, and needs when planning individualized experiences (see Section 12, Assessments and Progress).

These individualized experiences take place within classroom environments organized into centers that include areas such as blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor activities, fine motor activities, and art. Outdoor play is an essential physical development component in morning and afternoon schedules. Daily "self-selection" or "free play" periods allow children to choose which center or activity to engage in, promoting creative expression and the development of critical social skills.

4.5.1 Our Commitment to Playful Learning

At N.W.C.K.A., we believe that play is the foundation of early learning. Young children learn best through active, hands-on experiences that allow them to explore, experiment, and discover.

How Children Learn Through Play:

Through play, children develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills, build social and emotional competence, strengthen language and communication abilities, enhance physical coordination and motor skills, and express creativity and imagination. Play allows children to make sense of the world around them, practice new skills, and build confidence in their abilities.

How Play Is Incorporated Into Every Learning Experience:

At N.W.C.K.A., play is woven into every part of our day. Learning centers are designed to encourage exploration and discovery through blocks, dramatic play, art, sensory activities, and more. Teachers guide learning through playful interactions, open-ended questions, and child-led activities. Outdoor play provides opportunities for physical development, social interaction, and nature exploration. Even routine activities like mealtimes and transitions incorporate playful learning moments. Our curriculum balances child-initiated free play with teacher-guided play experiences, ensuring that every child has opportunities to learn through joyful, meaningful play.

4.6 Behavior and Discipline

Every adult caring for children is responsible for guiding, correcting, and socializing children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions are often called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach them responsibility, and help them make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are

at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's misbehavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions acknowledging the child's efforts and progress will likely encourage healthy development, whether slow or small. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation, and a good understanding of the child. N.W.C.K.A. staff will use only positive guidance techniques.

Prohibited Practices

The following practices are strictly prohibited at N.W.C.K.A. and will result in immediate disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment:

Physical Punishment: Staff shall never use physical punishment of any kind. This includes, but is not limited to: shaking, hitting, spanking, slapping, jerking, squeezing, kicking, biting, pinching, excessive tickling, and pulling of arms, hair, or ears. Staff shall not require children to remain inactive for long periods of time as a form of discipline.

Psychological Abuse: Staff shall never use psychological abuse or emotionally harmful practices. This includes, but is not limited to: shaming, name-calling, ridiculing, humiliation, sarcasm, cursing at, making threats, or frightening children. Staff shall not ostracize children, withhold affection, or use seclusion as a consequence.

Coercion: Staff shall never use coercion to control children's behavior. This includes, but is not limited to: rough handling such as shoving, pulling, pushing, or grasping; physical restraint such as forcing children to sit, lie down, or stay in one place; and physically forcing a child to perform an action such as eating or cleaning up.

Any staff member who witnesses a prohibited practice must report it immediately to the Director. Failure to report is also a violation of this policy.

At Nurture with Care Kids Academy, the safety and well-being of all children and staff is our top priority. When a child displays aggressive or harmful behaviors—such as hitting, kicking, biting, spitting, or other forms of physical aggression toward teachers, staff, or other children—staff will respond with calm, supportive guidance to address the behavior while preserving the child's dignity.

If a child repeatedly displays such behaviors, the center will implement a Behavior Support Plan in collaboration with the family, following the steps outlined in Section 4.8 (Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy). Our goal is always to support the child in developing safe, appropriate behaviors while keeping them enrolled in the program.

All interactions between staff and children are expected to be safe, respectful, and nurturing.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:

4.6.1 "Am I..."

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open-ended questions?
- Encouraging problem-solving?
- Respecting children's choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children – not at them?

- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child's eye level?

4.6.2 Reasons for Misbehavior

If teachers understand why children misbehave, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children misbehave.

- Children want to test whether the teacher will enforce rules.
- They experience different sets of expectations between school and home.
- A child does not understand the rules or are held to expectations beyond their developmental levels.
- They want to assert themselves and their independence.
- They feel ill, bored, hungry, or sleepy.
- They lack accurate information and prior experience.
- They have been previously "rewarded" with adult attention for their misbehavior.

4.6.3 Preventing Misbehavior

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent entirely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected. However, caregivers can take many positive steps to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules. (e.g., walking feet; gentle touches)
- Make sure the environment is safe and worry-free.
- Show interest in the child's activities. (e.g., participating in activities with the children so they stay interested in more extended periods)
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices. (e.g., "You may pick up the blocks or art center.")
- Focus on the desired behavior rather than the one to be avoided. (e.g., "Ashley, please use gentle touches with your friends.")
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible, and cooperative.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right. (e.g., "Joey is playing so nicely. I like it when you keep the blocks on the table.")
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example. (e.g., using a quiet voice when children should be calm)
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

4.6.4 Responding to Misbehavior

Below are strategies N.W.C.K.A. staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. However, remember that it's always a good idea if rules are explained thoroughly and clearly before misbehavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

4.6.4.1 Redirection

This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Kate, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time, and it's now Logan's turn."

4.6.4.2 Logical consequences

These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the result are directly related. For example, Andrew is standing on

his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt, making him sad.

4.6.4.3 Participate in the solution

If a child damages something, they must help fix it or clean it up. If a child causes someone distress, they should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Brandon very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better."

4.6.4.4 Natural consequences

Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is also called learning the hard way. For example, after reading, Laura does not return her books to her school bag. One day, she loses a book and must find a way to replace it. Only use natural consequences when they do not endanger the child's health or safety.

4.6.4.5 Co-Regulation and the Comfort Corner

Young children do not yet possess the skills to self-regulate on their own. They need the calm, active partnership of a regulated adult to help them through big feelings. When a child becomes overwhelmed or engages in unsafe behavior, a staff member will stay with the child, offer comfort, and actively guide them through the moment using co-regulation strategies.

Each classroom has a designated Comfort Corner—a cozy, inviting space equipped with calming tools such as soft items, sensory bottles, feelings charts, and books about emotions. When a child needs support, a staff member will accompany the child to the Comfort Corner and remain present with them, using techniques such as:

- Sitting at the child's level, using a calm and gentle voice
- Naming the child's emotions ("I can see you are feeling really frustrated")
- Offering deep breathing or counting together
- Providing physical comfort such as a gentle hand on the back, if the child is receptive
- Helping the child identify what happened and what they can try next time

The Comfort Corner is never used as a punishment, a timeout, or a place where children are sent to sit alone. Children are never required to "think about what they did." A staff member is always present and actively engaged with the child throughout the process. For example:

"Hannah, I can see you're really upset right now. Let's go to the Comfort Corner together. I'll sit with you and we can take some deep breaths until you feel ready to go back and play."

Once the child has calmed with adult support, the staff member will have a brief, age-appropriate conversation about what happened and help the child practice a different response.

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior, the following will take place:

1. Staff will report the behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director and/or Assistant Director(s).
2. The Director and/or Assistant Director will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a Behavior Support Plan.
3. The Behavior Support Plan will be discussed with the parents and then put into practice. If the child's behavior presents an immediate safety concern on a given day, the Director and/or Assistant Director may contact the family for an early pickup as a temporary measure while the plan is being developed or adjusted.

4. The Director and/or Assistant Director, Lead Teacher and Assistant Teachers, and parents will evaluate the Behavior Support Plan regularly. If needed, adjustments will be made.
5. If challenges continue, the Director may seek additional support from an early childhood consultant, behavioral coach, mental health consultant, or other community resources as outlined in Section 4.8.

If a child's behavior poses an immediate safety threat to themselves, other children, or staff, the Director and/or Assistant Director will be contacted immediately and will come to the classroom to provide support. The program will follow the steps outlined in Section 4.8 (Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy) before any exclusionary measure is considered.

4.6.5 Useful Phrases

The following phrases are useful when problem-solving with children.

Instead of "No" or "Don't"

Say, "Please stop," "I don't like that," "That's not OK", or "That is not a choice."

Instead of "That's not nice."

Say, "That's not OK," "Please use gentle touches," or "That hurts Jordan."

Instead of "No running."

Say, "I need you to use your walking feet" or "You may run when we go outside."

Instead of "Stop crying."

Say, "It's okay to feel upset. I'm right here with you. Can you tell me what happened?"

Instead of "Can you put away your toys?" (If it is not a choice, do not pose it as a question)

Say, "You may help me pick up the blocks or help Alyssa pick up the puzzles."

Instead of "I said yes" (when a child tells you "no")

Say, "No is not a choice, I need you to..."

4.6.6 Rules

- No hitting, kicking, biting, etc.
- Be respectful of other people's feelings.
- No name-calling.
- No running or yelling inside.
- No throwing of toys or hitting with toys.
- No personal toys will be allowed inside the Center from home.
- The Nurture with Care Kids Academy cannot be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken toys.
- For safety, please ensure children do not bring pens, money, make-up, nail polish, sharp objects, hard candy, gum, toy guns (or any violent material), or marbles from home. These are all things that can choke or hurt small children.
- We do not accept toys from home. If they are lost or stolen, we are not responsible for them. Please check your child before dropping off and make sure she/he doesn't have any toys from home.

4.6.7 Biting Policy

Biting often occurs between the ages of one and three years, and while it may be age-appropriate, it is considered unsafe behavior in a childcare environment. Children may bite for various reasons, including teething, sensory exploration, seeking attention, imitation, frustration, or stress. It is

essential to approach biting without blaming children, parents, or teachers. When a child consistently exhibits biting behavior or other forms of aggression, staff will work with the family to develop a Behavior Support Plan following the steps in Section 4.8 (Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy). Suspension is used only as a last resort after all other interventions have been attempted and documented.

At N.W.C.K.A., we implement various strategies to prevent and address biting behavior. The following process is followed when a child bites:

- The biting child is stopped and firmly told, "Stop biting. Biting hurts." Teachers must remain calm and avoid displaying anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending on the motive behind the bite, this separation may involve redirection or addressing the child's needs. Minimal attention is given to the biting child to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid is provided to the child who was bitten. The bite area is washed with soap and water, and a cold compress is applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage is used if necessary.

It is crucial to understand the underlying reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers will collaborate with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and observe patterns to identify potential triggers, such as communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, oral stimulation needs, or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff will develop prevention strategies and teach replacement behaviors. The steps taken by the teacher include:

1. **Examining the Context:** The teacher will analyze the context in which the biting occurs, looking for patterns and asking questions such as:
 - Was the space too crowded?
 - Were there too few toys?
 - Was there too little to do or too much waiting?
 - Was the child receiving sufficient attention and care at other times?
2. **Environmental Adjustments:** The teacher will modify the environment, routines, or activities if necessary.
3. **Conflict Resolution:** The teacher will work with the child to address conflicts and frustrations more appropriately.
4. **Observation:** The teacher will observe the child to understand why and when they will likely bite.
5. **Preventative Measures:** The teacher will identify children at higher risk of being bitten and take steps to reduce their likelihood of being bitten.
6. **Collaboration:** The teacher, parent, Director, and/or Assistant Director will meet regularly to create an action plan and monitor progress.
7. **Additional Support:** If biting continues, the teacher will closely observe the group and collaborate with parents to explore additional resources, including having a shadowing staff member to support the biting child.

All information regarding biting incidents is kept confidential. Parents are not informed of the identities of the children involved. Biting incidents are documented on an Incident/Accident Report, which must be completed and signed by both a teacher and the parent. A copy is provided to the parent, and the original is kept in the child's permanent enrollment file in the office.

4.6.8 Removal of a child from the classroom

Children remain in their assigned classrooms at all times, except in situations where removal is absolutely necessary for safety reasons. **Because we must maintain state-mandated staff-to-child ratios, we do not have extra staff available to provide one-on-one care or supervision. Our center does not provide individual, dedicated one-on-one care for any child.**

In rare circumstances where a child's behavior escalates and cannot be safely managed within the classroom, the teacher must first call the office and speak directly with the Director and/or

Assistant Director. The office is not a licensed child care space. For the safety and compliance of the program, no child may be placed in the office at any time. The Director and/or Assistant Director will assist in calming the child and provide temporary support so that classroom safety and learning can continue.

If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, to other children, or to staff, the Director and/or Assistant Director must be notified immediately so that appropriate action can be taken to ensure everyone's safety.

4.7 Violent Play

Our programs are designed to minimize competitive behavior, as competition among young children can often lead to negative behaviors and reduced social acceptance. Bullying is not acceptable at our center. When a child engages in bullying behavior, staff will intervene immediately using positive guidance strategies such as redirection, conflict resolution, and co-regulation. If the behavior persists, staff will follow the steps in Section 4.8 (Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy) to develop a plan with the family. We are dedicated to guiding children in developing appropriate and respectful ways to interact with each other.

4.8 Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy

At Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.), our goal is to support every child's success through positive guidance and strong partnerships with families. Our program does not suspend or expel children for minor or developmentally typical behaviors, and we always prioritize keeping the child enrolled with appropriate support. Suspension is limited to situations involving immediate safety concerns after other interventions have been attempted. Expulsion is considered a last resort and only occurs after all other supports have been attempted and documented. We will be following the steps below.

1. Guidance First

Teachers use positive guidance strategies such as redirection, co-regulation, and logical consequences. Staff document the child's behavior and the strategies applied.

2. Documentation of Strategies

Each incident is recorded on an Incident/Accident Report.

Staff maintain a written record of all strategies attempted and the child's response.

3. Parent Communication

Parents are notified of each incident.

Regular parent conferences are scheduled to review progress. Meetings may be monthly for up to six months or more frequent (e.g., weekly) if needed.

A Behavior Support Plan is created in collaboration with parents, including goals, strategies, and supports.

4. Additional Support

If challenges continue, the Director may seek help from:

- An early childhood consultant
- A behavioral coach and mental health consultant
- Other community resources

5. Suspension (Limited Use)

N.W.C.K.A. limits the use of suspension and does not suspend children for minor or developmentally typical behaviors. A short-term suspension (up to three days) may only be used when:

- The child's behavior poses an immediate and ongoing safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff, AND
- A Behavior Support Plan is already in place and has been followed, AND
- The Director has determined that a brief period away from the program is necessary to allow the program and family to coordinate additional supports.

During any suspension period, the Director will maintain communication with the family and schedule a re-entry meeting before the child returns. The Behavior Support Plan will be reviewed and adjusted as part of the re-entry process. The goal of any suspension is to facilitate additional support — not to punish the child.

6. Aggressive and Unsafe Behavior

Expulsion may be considered if a child demonstrates ongoing aggressive or unsafe behaviors, such as:

- Repeated bullying or intimidation of other children.
- Destructive behavior (e.g., throwing furniture, breaking toys/equipment, or damaging property in ways that endanger others).
- Extreme defiance — refusing all directions in a way that disrupts the group and makes it unsafe for others.
- Chronic biting or aggressive outbursts that continue despite interventions and put others at risk.
- Self-harming behaviors (e.g., head-banging, attempting to injure oneself with objects) that require specialized support beyond the center's resources.

7. Final Steps Before Expulsion

Before considering expulsion:

- Parents receive a written notice of concerns.
- The Behavior Support Plan is reviewed and adjusted as needed.
- A final meeting with the Director is held to discuss progress, additional referrals, and options.

8. Expulsion (Last Resort)

Expulsion will only be considered if:

- The child's behavior poses an immediate safety risk to themselves, other children, or staff, and
- All support strategies have been tried and carefully documented.

If expulsion occurs:

- Parents receive a final written notice stating the reasons.
- A list of resources and referrals is provided to help support the child and family.

9. Staff Training & Development

All staff receive annual training in:

- Positive Child Guidance
- Supporting Children with Challenging Behaviors
- Trauma-Informed Care
- Inclusive practices

This training occurs during annual in-service day. New staff complete these trainings within 30 days of hire.

4.9 Non-discrimination

N.W.C.K.A. does not discriminate based on race, creed, color, national origin, sex, honorably discharged veteran or military status, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, or ability. For the purposes of this chapter, "sex" means gender and "sexual orientation" means heterosexuality, homosexuality, bisexuality, and gender expression or identity, also referred to as SOGIE, and includes all persons who identify as LGBTQIA+; and comply with the requirements of the WLAD, chapter 49.60 RCW, and the ADA.

4.10 Religion and Rules

At N.W.C.K.A., we do not practice or promote any specific religion, and we respect all religious beliefs and traditions. Throughout the school year, we celebrate holidays from various cultures and religions around the world. Discussions about religious holidays will be conducted in an inclusive manner and will be noted in our monthly schedules.

4.11 Consistent Care Policy

At Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.), we prioritize consistent care to foster stable and nurturing environments for our children. Each child is assigned a primary teacher to build long-term, trusting relationships, ensuring they feel secure and supported. For part-time children, the primary teacher will be assigned based on the days the child is scheduled to attend. We make every effort to ensure part-time children experience the same consistency and relationship-building as full-time children. We maintain stable groups and communicate any changes in advance to minimize disruptions.

To facilitate smooth transitions and consistent care, we kindly ask that parents notify us of any late drop-offs. Notifications can be made through the HiMama app or by calling our center. Please note that the cut-off time for drop-off is 9:30 AM. If notice is not received by this time, N.W.C.K.A. reserves the right to deny service for the day.

Our staff participates in ongoing training to stay current with best practices, and we value open communication with parents and address any concerns promptly. By implementing these practices and maintaining clear communication, we strive to create a consistent, supportive, and loving environment where every child can thrive.

5 Daily Schedule and Activities

The Lead Teacher and Assistant Teacher collaborate to create a daily schedule and plan activities that cater to each child's developmental needs and abilities. All staff members are responsible for implementing the schedule and activities, which balance active and quiet times, large and small group activities, individual tasks, gross and fine motor activities, indoor and outdoor play, self-directed choices, and teacher-led instruction.

Consistency in daily routines is essential for the well-being and stability of children and the classroom environment. Children thrive on predictable routines, including arrivals and departures, meals and snacks, resting/naps, personal care (e.g., diapering/toileting, hand washing), and transitions.

Lesson plans and daily schedules must be posted in classrooms and always visible. Staff must ensure that children do not access unlicensed areas. Each classroom also has designated opening, nap-time, closing, and weekly cleaning tasks. Staff are expected to familiarize themselves with specific duties.

5.1 Arrival and Departure

5.1.1 Arrival

N.W.C.K.A. operates from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM, seven days a week, with core learning hours from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Late arrivals after 9:30 AM may be refused entry unless prior notification is provided. We encourage parents to notify us via text message to the center phone or through the HiMama (Lillio) app if their child will be delayed and unable to arrive before 9:30 AM.

Our staff checks children in and out of the classroom using the HiMama app, ensuring it is consistently updated with each child's presence at our Center. Attendance is verified when children are taken to and from the playground to maintain accurate records. We kindly ask parents to ensure their child is checked in using the HiMama app when dropping off and checked out when picking up. Additionally, parents must complete the self-screening of their child through the family-administered health screening section in the HiMama app before drop-off. If this is not completed, entry will be refused.

Parents must accompany their child into the Center and to their classroom, and we encourage a brief conversation with the classroom teacher. Sharing information such as the child's temperament that day, how they slept, or if they have eaten that morning is appreciated, as it helps ensure we provide the best care.

We understand that separating from a parent can be challenging for some children, which is developmentally normal. Here are some tips to facilitate a smoother drop-off:

- **Establish a consistent routine:** Whether it's a quick kiss and hug or helping your child put their belongings away, maintaining the same routine each day provides predictability, reducing stress and uncertainty for your child.
- **Separate once:** Repeatedly coming back into the classroom can increase a child's stress during separation. It's best to say goodbye once and leave, as lingering can make it harder for your child.
- **Be reliable:** Return when promised. Children picked up later than expected may find separating more difficult in the future. Communicate pick-up times in terms they understand, such as "after snack" or "after nap time."

5.1.2 Departure

N.W.C.K.A. closes at 6:00 PM daily. If you anticipate being late for pick-up, please notify us immediately. Please ensure you say goodbye to your child's teachers when departing so they are aware you are leaving. Once you have reunited with your child and are departing, N.W.C.K.A. is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not allow your child to run ahead of you inside or outside the building.

If someone unfamiliar with our staff will be picking up your child, you must inform your child's teacher in advance. This individual must be listed on the Emergency Contact and Parent Consent form. Remind the authorized person to bring identification, such as a driver's license, to verify their identity and ensure your child's safety. Even if the person has picked up your child previously, they may still be asked to provide identification if they are unfamiliar with the current staff member in charge. Children will not be allowed to leave the Center without proper identification verification.

5.1.3 Attendance

For extended absences of more than 2-3 scheduled days, please notify the Center in writing or through the Lillio App with the start date of the absence and the anticipated date of return. At the discretion of the Center Director, a child may be disenrolled if they miss two consecutive weeks of their scheduled days without any notice or communication from the family. For policies regarding extended absences exceeding two weeks, please refer to the Extended Absences section under [Holidays and Vacations](#).

5.2 Late Pickup

N.W.C.K.A. charges a late fee of \$1.00 per minute past 6:00 PM, including days with early release notifications. After three instances of late pick-ups, enrollment may be reviewed and potentially canceled. We will provide written warning after 2nd late pickup, and termination notice after 3rd late pickup. If a child is not picked up by 6:00 PM, we contact the parents at all available numbers. If parents cannot be reached, we contact authorized pick-up people. Child Protective Services (CPS) will be called if no contact is made within one hour.

5.3 Daily Schedule

Teachers collaborate to create a daily schedule and plan activities tailored to meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The schedule is designed to provide a balanced mix of active and quiet times, group and individual activities, fine and gross motor activities, indoor and outdoor play, as well as opportunities for both self-selected and teacher-directed engagement. Consistency from day to day is essential for the overall well-being of the children and helps maintain a positive classroom environment. Children thrive on predictable routines! Whenever possible, routines for arrivals, departures, meals, snacks, rest or nap times, personal care routines such as diapering, toileting, and hand washing, as well as transitions, will be consistently maintained to provide a sense of security and structure for each child.

5.4 Free Play

"Free play" refers to child-initiated activities, free choice, and self-selection and must be incorporated into both the morning and afternoon schedules. Teachers are expected to actively engage with children during free play by asking questions about their activities, participating in pretend play, reading books when prompted, and encouraging children to explore new activities or try different toys.

5.5 Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon sessions. While the outdoor learning environment may be less structured than indoors, staff members are expected to actively engage with children during activities. Staff must maintain active supervision, ensuring they watch children from all angles and remain attentive. Staff should avoid sitting in one area and conversing with each other, as this could lead to lapses in supervision. If it is necessary to leave for a quick bathroom break or any other reason, staff must communicate with their teammate to maintain appropriate supervision ratios.

Outdoor play allows children to run, jump, climb, and use their bodies in ways that may not be possible indoors. It also facilitates significant social interaction, allowing children to select their playmates and engage in more child-directed activities than teacher-directed ones.

Children will go outside year-round, including during winter months and during light rain or drizzle. Playing outside in varied weather conditions is a normal and developmentally beneficial part of our daily program in the Pacific Northwest.

N.W.C.K.A. provides rain jackets for all children to wear during outdoor play in rainy or drizzly conditions. We ask that families also provide rain boots and additional weather-appropriate clothing as needed. All items should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Outdoor play will be moved indoors during heavy rain, thunderstorms, lightning, hail, extreme cold (wind chill below 25 degrees F), extreme heat (heat index above 90 degrees F), or poor air quality (AQI above 100). When outdoor play is canceled due to weather, indoor gross motor activities are provided to meet daily active play requirements. The Director makes the final determination on whether outdoor conditions are safe for play.

Per WAC rule 110-300-0360, infants and toddlers must have at least 20 minutes of active outdoor play for every three hours of programming, while preschoolers and older children must have 30 minutes every three hours.

Parents must provide appropriate clothing and outerwear for their children based on weather conditions (e.g., coats, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's name. While N.W.C.K.A. has a limited supply of extra hats and mittens, they may not be sufficient for all children. During colder months, each child must arrive with suitable outerwear. If you have questions about appropriate clothing for the weather, please speak with your child's teacher.

5.6 Active Supervision Policy

Active supervision is the focused, intentional, and continual observation of all children by staff to ensure safety during all activities. At N.W.C.K.A., we practice active supervision in all indoor and outdoor learning environments.

Active Supervision Expectations by Age:

Young Toddlers (12-24 months):

- Staff remain within arm's reach during high-risk activities (climbing, water play)
- Constant visual supervision with frequent physical proximity
- Staff position themselves to see all children at all times
- Heightened awareness during transitions and outdoor play

Toddlers (2-3 years):

- Staff maintain close proximity and constant visual supervision
- Staff actively engage with children during play and routines
- Staff position themselves strategically to monitor all areas
- Increased supervision during outdoor play, mealtimes, and transitions

Preschool (3-5+ years):

- Staff maintain constant visual supervision of all children
- Staff circulate throughout learning areas and outdoor spaces
- Staff anticipate children's actions and redirect unsafe behavior
- Staff engage with children while scanning the environment continuously

All Staff Are Expected To:

- Know the number of children in their care at all times
- Position themselves to see and hear all children
- Scan the environment continuously for hazards
- Anticipate and prevent unsafe situations before they occur
- Communicate with co-teachers during transitions and when leaving an area

5.7 Nap/Rest Time

All children are provided with a regularly scheduled nap or rest time. While children are not forced to sleep, they may be encouraged to lie quietly. No pick-ups or drop-offs are allowed during nap time, which occurs between 12 PM and 2 PM to minimize disruptions. The duration of rest varies based on each child's needs, with no strict rule on the maximum time a child should rest. Children who are unable to sleep will be offered alternative quiet activities.

5.8 Play Clothes

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes that allow them to move freely and participate fully in all activities at N.W.C.K.A. Avoid wearing clothing with safety pins and dress longer than knee-length for safety reasons. Ensure your child wears closed-toe shoes, such as tennis shoes; open-toe shoes, sandals, and Crocs are prohibited. Since playtime is often active and messy, comfortable and washable clothes are highly recommended. Outdoor play is a daily and essential part of our curriculum, so children should dress appropriately for indoor and outdoor activities. Please provide a jacket or light outerwear based on changing weather conditions. During rainy months, please send your child with rain boots or waterproof footwear. The center provides rain jackets for all children; however, families are encouraged to provide additional rain gear such as rain pants for added comfort.

Occasionally, children may get their clothes wet or have toileting accidents. In such cases, it is best to change them into a complete extra set of clothing that you have provided. Your child's teacher will request a full change of clothes, including underwear, to be kept at the Center and replenished as needed. Please label all clothing items clearly to avoid confusion. For health reasons, any soiled underwear may be disposed of. If your child's clothing or other personal items are missing, please notify the teacher so that we can assist in locating them.

5.9 Items from Home

Toys, stuffed animals, or other items from home may occasionally help your child feel more comfortable at school. However, sharing special "treasures" can sometimes be challenging for young children. We kindly ask that any items brought from home be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival. To prevent issues, please do not bring toys or special items from home that may become lost or stolen. Clearly label all belongings brought from home to avoid mix-ups. We strongly recommend that valuable items, such as iPods or handheld gaming systems, be kept at home. N.W.C.K.A. is not responsible for any lost, stolen, or damaged items.

5.10 Toddler Program Information

The following guidelines apply specifically to the young toddler and toddler program rooms:

- Parents must provide diapers, wipes, diaper creams, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and stuffed toys for rest time. All items should be clearly labeled with the child's name.
- Pacifiers may be used during rest time. During other times of the day, they will be stored in a child's cubby or diaper bag to minimize the spread of illness.
- We recommend introducing all new foods at home first, as a child may have an allergic reaction to foods they have not previously consumed. Please consult with parents before introducing any new foods.
- Upon arrival, staff will ask parents when the child's last diaper change occurred. Diapers are checked every two hours and changed as needed. Parents must supply disposable diapers and wipes, as cloth diapers are not accepted.
- Disposable diapers are placed in a covered, plastic-lined waste container and disposed of daily by N.W.C.K.A. staff. There is no additional charge for diaper disposal. Soiled clothing

will be placed in a plastic bag and sent home. Parents are reminded to label all personal items.

5.11 Field Trips

N.W.C.K.A. does not conduct off-site field trips and doesn't offer transportation services. In the case of in-house events involving external organizers or performers, their identities will be thoroughly verified before they can enter the classrooms.

6 Health Policies

6.1 Hand Washing and Hygiene

Staff members must wash their hands at least at the following times:

- Upon arriving at the Center
- After each diaper change
- After each bathroom visit
- After assisting a child with using the toilet
- After wiping a nose or coming into contact with saliva or any other bodily fluid (including stool, urine, drool, blood, and mucus)
- Before preparing meals
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after using the sensory table
- After removing gloves
- After using the restroom
- After returning to the Center from a break
- After coming indoors from the playground

Frequent handwashing with soap and warm running water for at least 20 seconds is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses such as diarrhea, the flu, and conjunctivitis (pink eye).

6.1.1 How to wash your hands most effectively

- Use soap and warm running water (between 60 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Rub hands vigorously for at least 20 seconds (consider singing the "ABCs" as a timer).
- Wash all surfaces, including the backs of hands, wrists, and under fingernails, keeping fingers pointed toward the sink drain.
- Rinse hands thoroughly under running water.
- Dry hands with a disposable towel.
- Use the paper towel to turn off the water.

6.1.2 Hand Sanitizers

While handwashing with soap and water is preferred, alcohol-based hand sanitizers containing at least 60% alcohol may be used temporarily when soap and water are not readily available.

6.2 Cleaning/Disinfecting Procedures

- The bathroom and changing areas must be cleaned and disinfected daily. Tables and chairs should be cleaned using a three-step cleaning process.
- Equipment will be cleaned and disinfected daily.
- Toilet training equipment must be cleaned and disinfected after each use.
- All childcare areas will be thoroughly cleaned daily.

- Children will use separate cups for drinking and individual towelettes for hand washing.

6.3 Notice of Exposure & Reporting Disease

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted at the front entrance or on the door of your child's classroom. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a contagious disease, please notify the Director immediately.

The Director will inform the health department if a child is reported to have a contagious disease.

6.4 Documentation of Health Incidents

Whenever a parent is contacted regarding an ill child or symptoms of illness, staff members must complete a Health Incident Form. A copy of the form should be provided to the parent, and the original must be given to the Director and/or Assistant Director, who will place it in the child's permanent file. Any infectious illnesses in the Center will be communicated to parents via a notice on the classroom door explaining the illness.

6.5 Documentation of Other Incidents

Teachers must document incidents as they occur to address them promptly and communicate with parents if necessary. Incident documentation must be completed immediately to ensure compliance.

6.6 Documentation of Allergies

A child with allergies must have an Allergy Action Plan displayed prominently in the classroom. If the allergy is food-related, an Allergy Action Plan must also be posted in the kitchen area. All staff members working in the classroom of a child with allergies must review and familiarize themselves with the Allergy Action Plan to ensure they understand the emergency procedures in case of an allergic reaction. Any allergic reactions must be documented using a Health Incident Form.

6.7 Documentation of Special Health Care Needs

An Emergency Care Plan must be on file for any child or staff member with special health care needs, such as seizures. A copy of the Emergency Care Plan must be kept in the classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom are required to familiarize themselves with the plan to ensure preparedness in case of an emergency. If necessary, staff will receive specific training related to a child's or staff member's healthcare needs.

6.8 Sunscreen & Insect Repellent

Between March and October, families may provide sunscreen for their children for outdoor activities. A permission slip must be on file before sunscreen can be applied. Sunscreen must be SPF 15 or higher and will be applied by classroom teachers throughout the day. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at N.W.C.K.A., as staff are not permitted to do so.

7 Safety Policies

7.1 Safety Procedures

7.1.1 Injury Prevention

- Indoor areas will be inspected daily for safety hazards using a checklist.
- Outdoor areas will be inspected daily for safety hazards.
- Equipment and supplies will be inspected daily for potential safety issues.
- Any identified safety hazards will be promptly repaired or removed.
- Minor emergencies will be treated and documented. A first aid kit is available at all times. Parents will be notified of any incidents when picking up their child.

7.2 Child Physical Restraint Policy

Physical restraint is used only when necessary and after applying positive guidance techniques. It may be used if a child's safety or the safety of others is at risk. Restraint must:

- Be limited to holding the child as gently as possible.
- Be applied for the minimum amount of time necessary to control the situation.
- Be developmentally appropriate.
- Be performed only by trained early learning providers.
- Physical restraint methods such as bonds, ties, blankets, straps, car seats, highchairs, activity saucers, or heavy weights (including an adult sitting on a child) are strictly prohibited.

If physical restraint is used, staff will:

1. Report the incident.
2. Assess the situation to ensure the use and application of restraint were appropriate.
3. Document the incident in the child's file, including details such as date, time, staff involved, duration, and events before, during, and after the restraint.
4. Develop a written plan in consultation with the child's primary care or mental health provider and parents/guardians to address underlying issues and reduce the need for further restraint if:
 - Physical restraint has been used more than once.
 - A plan is not already in place.
5. Notify the department when a written plan is created.

Our goal is to provide children with positive guidance. Parents will be notified if a child does not respond to these efforts, and a plan will be developed in collaboration. If a child's continued behavior poses a risk of physical harm to themselves, peers, or staff, or if Center property is damaged, the parent may be asked to withdraw the child. Withdrawal may also be requested for children exhibiting persistent, verbally abusive behavior.

All staff and volunteers will receive training on guidance and discipline policies and practices.

7.3 Weapons

N.W.C.K.A. does not permit or tolerate the possession, display, or use of weapons on our center premises, including vehicles, during events, or off-site activities if it directly affects Center management and order. Violations by children or enrolled families may result in expulsion or other disciplinary actions. Weapons will be confiscated and reported to law enforcement as required by law.

Weapons include, but are not limited to, knives, firearms, explosives, fireworks, chemicals, and any

object used to cause harm. Lesser sanctions may be applied by the administration based on incident circumstances. Guidelines for discipline are:

1. Suspension for three to five days for possession of a weapon.
2. Suspension for five to ten days for displaying a weapon.
3. Suspension with expulsion recommendation for threatening or harmful weapon use.

7.4 Documentation of Accidents/Incidents

Staff must document all accidents and incidents using an Accident/Incident Report. Biting incidents should be documented as accidents. If a bite breaks a child's skin, a report must be completed for both children involved. Detailed accounts of the incident must be provided without naming other children. Parents must be notified immediately of severe injuries and should sign the report the same day. Copies are available upon request, and reports will be kept in the child's permanent file.

7.5 Mandatory child abuse reporters

All N.W.C.K.A. staff are mandatory reporters of child abuse and must report suspected cases of abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or law enforcement. Refer to <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/safety/report-abuse> for more information. This is as per [RCW 26-44-020](#).

7.6 Access Policy

Only staff members, substitutes, subcontracted staff, and approved volunteers with background checks and childcare approvals may have unrestricted access to children. Unapproved persons must be under direct staff supervision and cannot assume childcare duties. The lead teacher or their delegate will monitor non-agency individuals on the premises.

Staff must verify the purpose of any unfamiliar person on-site. Non-agency personnel (e.g., maintenance staff) will be monitored by paid staff and cannot interact with children.

7.7 Affidavit Policy

N.W.C.K.A. staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits for families dealing with legal matters. Our primary focus remains on providing quality care and meeting children's needs during difficult times.

8 Meals and Nutrition

8.1 Meal Policies

N.W.C.K.A. provides all meals and snacks for enrolled children, including:

- **Breakfast** (served in the morning)
- **Lunch** (served midday)
- **Afternoon snack**
- **Evening snack** (for children in care past 5:00 PM)

School-age children follow a different schedule on school days. Because they eat breakfast and lunch at school, they receive an afternoon snack and an evening snack only. On non-school days, including summer, winter and spring break, teacher in-service days, and snow days, they receive all meals and snacks.

All meals and snacks meet USDA nutritional guidelines through our participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Menus are posted in each classroom and available upon

request. When menu changes occur due to supply availability or other circumstances, families are notified through the Lillio (HiMama) app prior to the change taking effect.

Parents are not required to send food with their child unless the child has specific dietary needs or allergies that cannot be accommodated by our menu. If you choose to send food from home, all items must arrive ready to eat and clearly labeled with your child's name. For children with known food allergies, staff will contact the family directly before serving any substitute item.

While preparing and serving meals, staff must wear gloves. For safety and allergy concerns, staff are strictly prohibited from sharing their food or drinks with children. Candy and soda are not permitted.

Some meals and snacks provided by N.W.C.K.A. may contain peanuts or tree nuts. Please notify the Director immediately if your child has a nut allergy so appropriate accommodations can be made.

8.2 Food Allergies

Children may bring special treats to celebrate birthdays or holidays. Due to food allergies and dietary restrictions, we recommend that treats be store-bought and in their original packaging. If your child has a food allergy, please complete a Food Allergy Action Plan form available in the office. This form will be posted in your child's classroom and food preparation areas. If medication for an allergic reaction is required, the Food Allergy Action Plan must be signed by a physician.

9 Communication and Parental Involvement

9.1 Communication Methods

We encourage parents to communicate regularly with our center staff using the Lillio (also known as HiMama) app. In exceptional cases, communication via email, text message, or a phone call to the center's main line is also acceptable. To keep families informed and involved, we provide a monthly newsletter at the beginning of each month outlining our high-level plans, including upcoming family events designed to enhance family engagement. We are committed to continuously gathering and reflecting on feedback to improve our communication practices.

N.W.C.K.A. welcomes and encourages ongoing feedback from families. We believe that open communication strengthens our partnership and improves the quality of our program. Families may share questions, concerns, suggestions, or feedback at any time through:

- Daily conversations with teachers at drop-off and pick-up
- Messages through the Lillio (HiMama) app
- Email or phone calls to the Director
- Scheduled meetings or conferences upon request
- Anonymous suggestion box located near the entrance

We review family feedback regularly and use it to make improvements to our program. Families are always welcome to speak with the Director about any questions or concerns. Our open-door policy means families can visit the center and observe their child's classroom at any time (except during rest time).

9.2 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are typically offered whenever your child transitions to a new classroom and at least twice per year. The purpose of these conferences is to provide insights into your child's development both at the Center and at home. During these meetings, we will discuss your child's progress, achievements, and any developmental goals you have for them.

Parents are encouraged to request additional conferences at any time if they have concerns or wish to discuss their child's development further.

9.3 Daily Sheets

We use the Lillio app to enter daily activities such as toileting, meals, naps, etc.

9.4 Parent Participation

Parent participation is highly encouraged in our program, and we offer various opportunities for you to contribute and enhance your child's experience at N.W.C.K.A., such as:

- Leading or assisting with special projects (e.g., sewing, carpentry, cooking, etc.)
- Helping with the construction or collection of materials for art projects, dramatic play props, and more
- Informing teachers at least one day in advance if you wish to join your child for lunch or snacks
- Volunteering in your child's classroom

We value your involvement and believe it enriches both your child's and the community's learning experience.

9.5 Program Evaluations

N.W.C.K.A. invites parents to complete an annual program evaluation. Our staff uses the feedback gathered from these anonymous surveys to set goals and enhance our overall quality of care. As parents' perspectives often differ from those of teachers, your input is essential to our program's success and ensuring our families' satisfaction.

9.6 Transition Policy

At Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.), we are committed to supporting children and families during all major transitions: entering our program, moving between classrooms, and preparing for kindergarten or another program.

Transition Into the Program

- **Family Orientation:** Before enrollment begins, families are invited to tour the center, meet staff, and discuss their child's needs and routines.
- **Gradual Start:** When appropriate, children may begin with shortened days to help them adjust gradually to a new environment.
- **Individualized Support:** Teachers partner with parents to understand each child's preferences, comfort items, and prior experiences to ease their adjustment.

Transitions Within the Program

- **Portfolio Documentation:** Each child has a permanent assessment portfolio that moves with them between classrooms. Portfolios may include photographs, artwork, assessment records, and parent-teacher conference notes. These records remain confidential and are not shared outside of N.W.C.K.A. without written parental consent.
- **Classroom Visits:** Prior to a classroom change, the child will visit their new classroom at least five times to become familiar with teachers and peers.
- **Family Communication:** Families will be notified one month in advance of transitions between classrooms and will be given opportunities to discuss the process with teachers.

Transition to Kindergarten or another early learning Program

- **Preparation and Information:** During the year before kindergarten, families receive guidance on kindergarten readiness, local school registration timelines, and orientation opportunities.
- **Portfolio Handover:** When a child leaves N.W.C.K.A., their assessment portfolio is given to the family to support a smooth handoff to their new early learning program or school.
- **Support and Resources:** Teachers and director will connect families to community or school district resources.

9.7 Questions/Concerns

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher most directly involved. If the concern is unresolved, the center director, Nidhi Gupta, can be reached at 360-682-8920 or by email at Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com. The Director is available to assist parents and staff in resolving concerns.

9.8 Community Resources for Families

N.W.C.K.A. is committed to connecting families with local resources that support their well-being. Below is a list of community resources available to families in our area:

Health & Medical Services

- **Island Hospital - (360) 678-2151**
1211 24th Street, Anacortes, WA 98221
www.islandhospital.org
Full-service hospital with pediatric care
- **WhidbeyHealth Medical Center - (360) 678-5151**
101 N Main Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
www.whidbeyhealth.org
Primary care, pediatrics, and urgent care

Food Security & Nutrition

- **Good Cheer Food Bank - Oak Harbor - (360) 675-3888**
1625 E Whidbey Ave, Oak Harbor, WA 98277
www.goodcheer.org
Free groceries for families in need
- **WIC (Women, Infants & Children) - Island County - (360) 679-7350**
Island County Health Department
Nutrition assistance for pregnant women and children under 5

Family Support & Counseling

- **Compass Health - (360) 675-8811**
490 NE Midway Blvd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277
www.compasshealth.org
Mental health services for children and families
- **Military OneSource (for military families) - 1-800-342-9647**
www.militaryonesource.mil
24/7 counseling, financial support, and family services

Child Development & Special Needs

- **NW Regional ESD 189 - Early Childhood Services - (360) 299-4000**
1601 R Avenue, Anacortes, WA 98221
www.nwesd.org
Early intervention and developmental screening services
- **Island County Human Services - (360) 678-7880**
Developmental disabilities and family support services

Library & Educational Resources

- **Sno-Isle Libraries - Oak Harbor Branch - (360) 675-5115**
1000 SE Regatta Dr, Oak Harbor, WA 98277
www.sno-isle.org
Free library programs, story times, and educational resources

Recreation & Community Programs

- **Oak Harbor Parks & Recreation - (360) 279-4530**
865 SE Barrington Dr, Oak Harbor, WA 98277
Youth sports, activities, and community events

Emergency & Crisis Support

- Island County Crisis Line - (360) 679-7373 (24 hours)
- Child Protective Services - 1-866-END-HARM (1-866-363-4276)
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 988

Families are encouraged to reach out to the Director for additional resource referrals or assistance connecting with community services.

10 Fees and Billing

10.1 Registration Fees

A \$100.00 non-refundable registration fee and two weeks of tuition are due upon registration. When you enroll your child at the Center, you are reserving a space for your child on your scheduled days. It is your child's space as long as you pay tuition, even if your child does not attend on a scheduled day. If your child is absent from the Center for any reason, including illness or vacation, you must continue to pay tuition to maintain their space.

Part-Time Enrollment: Part-time families pay tuition based on their scheduled days. Tuition is due regardless of attendance on scheduled days.

All enrollment forms must be completed and turned in before your child's first day at the Center. For more information about the enrollment process, refer to the Enrollment Process earlier in this document.

10.1.1 Pre-Enrollment Cancellation

Once the registration fee and advance tuition are paid, the child's spot is reserved. The \$100 registration fee is non-refundable under any circumstances. If a family cancels before their scheduled start date with at least two weeks of written notice, the advance tuition will be refunded. If a family cancels with less than two weeks of written notice, the advance tuition is also non-refundable.

Two-week notice clarification: A two-week notice means 14 or more calendar days before the scheduled start date. Calendar days are counted from the date written notice is received. The start date is not counted. For example, if a child's start date is October 1, written notice received on September 17 or earlier is considered two weeks' notice. Notice received on September 18 or later is less than two weeks' notice.

This policy reflects the cost of holding a spot, turning away other families, and staffing preparation. By paying the registration fee and advance tuition, families acknowledge and agree to this policy.

10.2 Part-Time Enrollment

N.W.C.K.A. offers part-time enrollment for families who need care on fewer than five days per week. Part-time options, subject to availability, include:

- **2 days/week (Tue, Thu)**
- **3 days/week (Mon, Wed, Fri)**
- **All 5 days Morning only**
- **All 5 days Afternoon only**
- **Weekend only (Saturday, Sunday, or both)**

Weekend enrollment follows the same part-time policies as weekday enrollment, including consistent schedule requirements, tuition obligations, and absence policies.

Part-Time Policies:

- **Consistent Schedule Required:** Part-time families must select a specific part-time schedule that will remain consistent each week.
- **Tuition:** Part-time tuition is based on the option that you select. Tuition rates are available from the Director upon request.
- **Schedule Changes:** Changes to part-time schedules require at least two weeks' written notice and Director approval. Schedule changes are subject to availability and cannot be guaranteed.
- **Additional Days:** Part-time families may request additional days on a drop-in basis, subject to availability and applicable drop-in rates. Requests must be made at least 24 hours in advance.
- **Conversion to Full-Time:** Part-time families wishing to convert to full-time enrollment must submit a written request to the Director. Conversion is subject to availability.
- **Absences:** Tuition is due for all scheduled days, regardless of attendance. There is no credit or makeup for missed days.
- **Holidays:** If a holiday falls on a scheduled part-time day, tuition is not adjusted. Part-time tuition rates already account for center holidays.

10.3 Tuition and Payment Policies

10.3.1 Automatic Payments

Parents are encouraged to make childcare payments electronically with a checking or savings account. A Direct Debit Authorization form must be completed in the Lillio app before or on a child's first day at the Center. If parents cannot make electronic payments, special arrangements must be discussed with the Director. Payments cannot be made with a credit or debit card now. We follow a bi-weekly fee schedule for non-subsidized kids. An invoice is issued on Monday, and payments are withdrawn on Tuesday for the upcoming two weeks of care. Part-time tuition is

invoiced on the same bi-weekly schedule. If a holiday falls on a Tuesday, payments will be withdrawn from your checking or savings account on the next business day.

Alternative Payment Methods

In addition to direct debit, families may also pay tuition using the following methods:

1. **Zelle:** Search for phone number 408-609-2741 (recipient name: Ashish Batwara).
2. **Venmo:** Search for phone number 408-609-2741 (display name: Nurture with Care Kids Academy).

When paying via Zelle or Venmo, **please include your child's name and the invoice dates in the payment memo.** Payments must be submitted by the due date to avoid late fees. Families are responsible for confirming they are sending to the correct recipient before submitting payment.

10.3.2 Payment Penalties

1. The late payment fee is \$10 per day. If fees remain unpaid after three days, your child will not be admitted until ALL fees are paid in full.
2. The penalty for returned checks (due to insufficient funds or other reasons) is \$50 plus any bank costs we incurred. Cash payment is required for returned checks. After the second returned check, you may be put on a cash-only basis. After a third attempt to collect payment, if unsuccessful, we will automatically terminate the contract.
3. Repeated incidents of returned checks or insufficient funds notices could result in the termination of childcare services. If a family has trouble making tuition payments, a payment plan should be discussed with the Director. The Center reserves the right to adjust tuition at any time. No post-dated checks are accepted.
4. Late pick-up fees are \$1 for every minute you are late. You must pay the teacher on duty by cash when picking up.

10.4 Financial Agreement

Upon enrollment and any changes to tuition, families are provided with a Fee Policy & Financial Agreement. This agreement should be carefully reviewed and checked for errors. A rate increase of 3% will be applied each year on September 1 for all tuition rates, including full-time and part-time rates. Parents are responsible for tuition even if the child is absent for whatever reason.

11 Holidays and Vacations

11.1 Holidays

N.W.C.K.A. will be closed on the following holidays (dates may vary or be posted accordingly).

- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- President's Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day (4th of July)
- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- The Day After Thanksgiving

- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

If a holiday falls on a weekend, N.W.C.K.A. will be closed on that day. When a holiday creates a long weekend (e.g., a Friday or Monday holiday adjacent to the weekend), the Center will also be closed on the adjoining Saturday and Sunday. Families will receive a few weeks' notice of all closings. Families will be given one month's notice in the event of additional closings. We will close our Center one day every four months for staff development.

Additionally, we may decide to close during the last two weeks of December, covering Christmas and the New Year. We will provide at least 30 days' notice to parents if we decide to do this.

11.2 Staff Development Days

N.W.C.K.A. will be closed three days each calendar year for our staff to meet for 8 hours to participate in training and enhance our team members' mental and physical support. These days will be announced and typically scheduled near a holiday to limit family disruption.

In addition, we will close our Center one hour early per month for regular staff meetings. The day and time will be communicated in advance through the HiMama app.

11.3 Extended Absences (Medical or Non-Medical)

An extended absence is defined as any absence exceeding two consecutive weeks of a child's scheduled days. Extended absences require **written notification** to the Director as early as possible (ideally 30 days in advance when foreseeable).

Option 1 — Hold Spot with Continued Tuition: Families may maintain their child's enrollment and guaranteed spot by continuing to pay full tuition during the absence. This is the default option.

Option 2 — Reduced Hold Fee: At the Director's discretion and with prior written approval, families experiencing a qualifying extended absence (e.g., planned medical procedure, military deployment, or family emergency) may pay a reduced hold fee of 50% of their regular tuition to reserve their child's spot. The hold fee may apply for a maximum of four (4) consecutive weeks. After four weeks, full tuition resumes or the family may choose to voluntarily disenroll.

Option 3 — Voluntary Disenrollment and Priority Re-enrollment: Families who do not wish to pay tuition or the hold fee during an extended absence may voluntarily disenroll. A two-week written notice and associated tuition still apply per our Voluntary Disenrollment policy. The family will receive priority placement on the waitlist for re-enrollment, subject to availability.

Important: No credits, refunds, or makeup days are provided for any absences, including illness, vacation, or medical leave. A child's spot is only guaranteed while tuition or an approved hold fee is being paid. If tuition or the approved hold fee is not received for two consecutive billing cycles without communication, enrollment will be terminated per our attendance policy.

12 Assessments and Progress

12.1 Child Screening

N.W.C.K.A. ensures that all enrolled children aged 12 months through 6 years are screened with a valid and reliable developmental screening tool that is aligned with WaKIDS. In this section, we specify how families/caregivers have access to the written developmental screening policy.

- **Screening Tool:** We will use the *Ages & Stages Questionnaires, Third Edition (ASQ-3)* for all children.
- **Screening Timeline:** All children will be screened within 45 calendar days of their first attendance at the program.
- **Annual Re-Screening:** All enrolled children will be re-screened annually close to their enrollment anniversary.
- **Home Language:** The program will conduct screenings in the child's home language, using bilingual staff, translated forms, or interpreters as needed.
- **Sharing Results:** Screening results will always be communicated to families in their preferred home language using translated forms, bilingual staff, or interpreter services to ensure full understanding. Results will be reviewed with families within 10 calendar days of completion, including during parent-teacher conferences or scheduled meetings.

The ASQ-3 tool assesses developmental progress in areas such as communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving, and personal-social skills. This process ensures early identification of developmental needs and supports collaboration with families to promote each child's growth.

12.2 Ongoing Assessment

We conduct formal assessments at least three times per year (fall, winter, spring) for all enrolled children. Teachers observe children during play and daily routines, recording developmental progress. Documentation is added to each child's portfolio, which may include photos, work samples, and observation notes. We use WaKids aligned in house assessment Tool.

Families are partners in assessment. Parent observations and goals are included in assessment forms. Results will be provided to families in their preferred home language using translated forms, bilingual staff, or interpreters within 20 calendar days.

Families are essential partners in assessing their child's development and learning. We value your observations and insights about your child. Families contribute to assessment in the following ways:

- Completing developmental questionnaires and screening tools (such as ASQ-3)
 - Sharing observations about their child's skills, interests, and behaviors at home
 - Participating in parent-teacher conferences to discuss progress and set goals
 - Providing input on their child's strengths, needs, and developmental history
 - Communicating changes in routines, health, or family circumstances that may affect their child
- Teachers incorporate family input into assessment records and use this information when planning individualized learning experiences. We encourage families to share their perspective—your knowledge of your child is invaluable to supporting their growth.

Teachers use assessment results to create individualized learning goals for each child. Lesson plans and classroom activities are adjusted to reflect children's needs, strengths, and interests.

We share written questionnaires with families/caregivers to learn about each child's strengths and needs.

All assessment data is kept confidential in each child's file. Information is shared only with families and, when necessary, with specialists or agencies, with parent consent.

Teachers and program leadership use assessment data to continuously improve our program. Assessment results are reviewed regularly to:

- Identify areas where curriculum or classroom activities can be strengthened.
- Adjust lesson plans and learning experiences to better meet children's developmental needs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies and make improvements.
- Inform professional development priorities for staff.
- Guide decisions about materials, equipment, and classroom environments.

By analyzing assessment trends across the program, leadership identifies opportunities to enhance the quality of care and education for all children.

12.3 Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are typically offered at least twice yearly or each time your child transitions classrooms. The parent-teacher conference aims to gain insight into your child's development in the Center and home settings. During conferences, your child's development and any goals you may have for your child will be discussed. Parents are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

At N.W.C.K.A., we value strong partnerships with families and are committed to supporting them through ongoing communication, collaboration, and goal-setting.

To ensure that conferences and family engagement planning are meaningful, formal parent-teacher conferences, written developmental goals, and participation in the Family Engagement Action Plan will begin once a child has been enrolled for at least six consecutive months. For children enrolled for shorter periods (less than six months), teachers will provide regular informal updates and written progress notes as needed rather than formal conferences. This ensures that significant time is spent with the child before creating long-term plans.

Family Engagement Action Plan

Each year, the Director and Lead Teachers, with input from families who have been enrolled at least six months, will develop and update a Family Engagement Action Plan. This plan identifies **specific goals** for strengthening family partnerships, communication, and support. Goals are reviewed annually and adjusted based on family feedback and community needs.

Parent-Teacher Conferences and Progress Documentation

For families who meet the 6-month threshold, Lead Teachers will schedule **at least two formal parent-teacher conferences per year**. These meetings focus on: A child's developmental progress at school and at home, goals for continued growth and support, addressing any questions or concerns families may have

A copy of the conference summary and child development progress will be placed in the child's permanent file. Conference dates and family goals are recorded in our Family Engagement Action Plan to track progress. Families may request additional conferences at any time.

Supporting Family Engagement Goals

Beyond conferences, for families enrolled at least six months, the following strategies may be used to strengthen and support families:

- **Family Events:** Hosting events to build community and provide resources.
- **Communication Tools:** Regular newsletters (including translations if needed) and classroom updates through the HiMama app.
- **Resource Referrals:** Providing families with information about local services, parent education classes, and community resources.
- **Follow-up and Reflection:** At the end of the year, we reflect on completed goals with input from families and adjust strategies as needed.

13 Miscellaneous

13.1 Photographing Children

At N.W.C.K.A., we respect your privacy and choice when photographing your child. As such, you can opt in or out of having your child photographed in the registration form. We can use the classroom group pictures (may include your child) on our website and social media as necessary. While the building has video cameras, we do not have video cameras in the classrooms. The video cameras in the surroundings at the Center are used for the child's safety. Please see our Site Director if you have other questions. Also, we do not video-record classrooms unless needed for the submission for Early Achievers recognition, Educational purposes, and teacher reflection. Parents need permission from the center director to take photos of their children. We do not allow parents to take photos of others' children.

13.2 Celebrations and Parties

We celebrate all major holidays, making crafts and enjoying treats. There will be a sign-up sheet to bring something to share. Please let us know if you have special plans so we can arrange the time. All treats must be prepackaged from the store.

13.3 Right to Inspect

Parents are welcome to our childcare. You have the right to inspect any room used by your child. We do ask that you not come during rest time as that is a distraction to the children. Please request an appointment with the center director for the visit.

13.4 Abuse/ damage of toys, books, etc.

As we are teaching our children to be respectful and responsible, we also require that we use/play/handle center belongings such as toys, books, furniture, etc. with care. It is the parents' responsibility if a child breaks, cuts, or mishandles center-provided learning material. Parents may be responsible for replacement costs if a child intentionally damages center property. We request that parents also talk to the child about their responsibilities and why it is important to share in the classroom.