



# Nurture with Care Kids Academy

(N.W.C.K.A.)

*“Guiding Tiny Steps Into a Bright Future”*

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## FAMILY HANDBOOK

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### Midway Location

421 NE Midway Blvd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

Phone: 360-682-8920 • Email: [Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com](mailto:Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com)

### Nidhi Gupta

*Center Director / Owner*

**Effective upon licensing approval**

## About this Handbook

This handbook is intended to familiarize families with current Nurture with Care Kids Academy (N.W.C.K.A.) policy, practices, and standards at our **Midway location at 421 NE Midway Blvd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277**. An electronic copy (PDF) of the handbook is available on our website at [www.NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com](http://www.NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com). Print copies are available upon request. Revised August 2026. 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.

**Three locations under one program.** Nurture with Care Kids Academy operates three licensed Oak Harbor locations: our original Fort Nugent site at 1162 SW Fort Nugent Ave (in operation since September 2023), our View Ridge site at 1117 View Ridge Dr (opened October 2024), and our Midway site at 421 NE Midway Blvd (opening date to be confirmed upon licensing approval). This handbook applies specifically to families enrolled at the Midway location. Each location is separately licensed by DCYF and has its own handbook.

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# 1. Introduction

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## 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. Together, 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 at 1162 SW Fort Nugent Ave, Oak Harbor, with two classrooms serving toddlers and preschoolers. Four months later, we added a young toddler classroom with a capacity of six children. In October 2024, we opened our second Oak Harbor location at 1117 View Ridge Dr. In January 2026, we received a license to serve school-age children at our Fort Nugent location. That location is licensed for 35 children and continues to operate under its own handbook.

**N.W.C.K.A. is opening a third Oak Harbor location at 421 NE Midway Blvd.** This handbook applies specifically to the **Midway location**, which is licensed to serve up to **55 children, birth through 13 years of age**, across four classrooms — including an **infant program**, which is a new addition to the N.W.C.K.A. family of programs.

## 2. General Center Information

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### 2.1 Administration

**Center Director:** Nidhi Gupta

**Email:** Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com

**Center Phone:** 360-682-8920

### 2.2 Center Information

**Location:** 421 NE Midway Blvd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277

**DCYF Provider ID:** *To be assigned upon licensure*

**SSPS ID:** *To be assigned upon licensure*

*These identifiers will be added to this handbook once issued by DCYF.*

### 2.3 Hours of Operation

Our Center's regular hours of operation are **6:00 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 and WAC 110-300-0357 staff-to-child ratio and group size requirements.

**Early Drop-Off (6:00 AM – 7:00 AM). Standard tuition covers 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM.** For families who need care before 7:00 AM, the Center offers an optional Early Drop-Off add-on from 6:00 AM to 7:00 AM. This is a separate, optional service with its own fee. For current Early Drop-Off pricing, please check our rate sheet or contact the Center Director by email or phone. Families who need early drop-off opt into it at enrollment. Early Drop-Off is available at the Midway location only and is not part of standard tuition.

### 2.4 Programs Offered

The Midway location operates four classrooms:

- **Classroom 1 — Infants** (birth through 11 months)
- **Classroom 2 — Mixed-Age Toddler** (12 through 36 months)
- **Classroom 3 — Preschool** (30 months through 6 years, not yet attending kindergarten or elementary school)
- **Classroom 4 — Pre-K / School-Age.** Pre-K (children ages 4–5 who are not yet attending kindergarten) is served during standard program hours. School-Age care (children in kindergarten through 13 years of age) is offered during hours when school-age children are not in elementary school, including before school, after school, on school district non-attendance days (teacher in-service days, early release days, and school holidays), and during winter, spring, and summer breaks.

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N.W.C.K.A. offers both full-time (5 days/week) and part-time enrollment options (3 days/week, 2 days/week, M–F mornings only, M–F afternoons only), as well as weekend-only enrollment. Part-time weekday 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 staff-to-child ratios that meet or exceed Washington State requirements under WAC 110-300-0356 and WAC 110-300-0357:

- **Infants:** 1 staff for every 4 children (1:4); maximum group size 8.
- **Mixed-Age Toddler (12–36 months):** This room is licensed for up to 15 children. The staff-to-child ratio is 1 staff for every 7 children (1:7), maintained based on the children present. For example, a classroom with 15 children present requires 3 staff, and a classroom with 14 children present requires 2 staff. When younger children are present, a tighter ratio may apply based on the youngest child in the group, in accordance with WAC 110-300-0356 and WAC 110-300-0357.
- **Preschool:** 1 staff for every 10 children (1:10); maximum group size 20.
- **Pre-K / School-Age (Classroom 4):** The total number of children in Classroom 4 at any given time will not exceed the room's licensed capacity of 12. N.W.C.K.A. maintains a staff-to-child ratio of 1:10 in Classroom 4 whenever school-age children are present, regardless of the mix of Pre-K and School-Age children in the room. This exceeds the WAC 110-300-0357 minimum of 1:12 for school-age care at the Classroom 4 capacity of 12; we staff 1:10 as a deliberate quality decision to give school-age children more individualized attention.

## 2.6 Licensing

The Midway location is licensed by the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) for **55 children, birth through 13 years of age**, distributed as follows:

| Classroom                        | Age Range                                 | Licensed Capacity |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Classroom 1 — Infants            | Birth – 11 months                         | 8                 |
| Classroom 2 — Mixed-Age Toddler  | 12 – 36 months                            | 15                |
| Classroom 3 — Preschool          | 30 months – 6 years (not in K/elementary) | 20                |
| Classroom 4 — Pre-K / School-Age | Pre-K 4–5 (AM) / School-Age 5–13 (PM)     | 12                |
| Total Licensed Capacity          |                                           | 55                |

The Center's overall licensed capacity is 55 children at any given time. This includes children in classrooms and any children waiting on the playground or in indoor/outdoor common areas for parent pick-up. At no time will the total number of children on the premises exceed 55.

## 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. Bloodborne Pathogens training is completed annually thereafter, in accordance with Washington State Labor & Industries requirements.
- **Education:** A high school diploma or higher degree.
- **STARS Training:** 30 hours of STARS training (Child Care Basics).
- **Continuing Education:** Employees continuing beyond their first year are required to complete 10 hours of approved continuing education annually.
- **First Aid and CPR:** Certification in pediatric First Aid and CPR.
- **Infant-Room Staff:** Staff assigned to the Infant classroom complete additional Safe Sleep / Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) prevention training and infant-specific feeding and diapering training prior to working unsupervised with infants.
- **Physical Requirements:** Able to lift at least 40 pounds as part of their regular duties.
- **Optional EQEL Training:** Staff are encouraged to complete Early Quality Early Learning (EQEL) training in accordance with WAC 110-300-0107(1).

## 3. Enrollment and Admission

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### 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 the **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, you can download the enrollment forms from our website, or we can send them to you by email, or you can collect a paper copy from the center. You may submit the completed forms by email to [Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com](mailto:Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com), 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, Venmo, Zelle, or online using ACH.

#### **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:

- Form 1: Enrollment Registration (basic child and family information)
- Form 2: Child Health History (medical and health information)
- Form 3: Emergency Consent & Disaster (emergency contacts and consent)
- Form 4: Parent Handbook Acknowledgment (acknowledgment of policies and procedures)
- Form 5: Medication Authorization (authorization for medication administration)
- Certificate of Immunization Status (CIS): current immunization record, or Certificate of Exemption if applicable, prior to first day of care per WAC 246-105-080
- Individual Health or Care Plan (if applicable): For any child with a diagnosed medical condition, allergy, developmental delay, or other special need, a written Individual Care Plan developed in consultation with the child's health care provider per WAC 110-300-0300

#### **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. In cases of withdrawal or termination initiated by the center for cause, fees already paid are non-refundable. Refund policy for termination without cause is described in Section 3.2. 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 or is not thriving in our environment, we may discuss alternatives with the family and, where appropriate, discontinue enrollment. For any concern related to a child's behavior, the Center will first work with the family to create and put in place a Behavior Support Plan following the steps in Section 4.8 (Preventing Suspension and Expulsion Policy) before any decision to discontinue enrollment is made. A behavior support plan is developed for every child whose challenging behavior

persists, including children in the trial period, and the Center does not disenroll a child for behavior without first implementing this plan, except where a child's behavior poses an immediate and serious safety risk as described in Section 4.8. 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. **Where enrollment is terminated for cause (safety risk or policy violation), no refunds will be issued. Where enrollment ends without cause as described in the Trial Period section above, prepaid tuition for unused days will be refunded within 10 business days.**

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 are updated whenever there are changes to contact information, authorized pick-up persons, employment, or health insurance.
- **Medical Records:** Immunization records are kept current per WAC 246-105-080. The date of your child's most recent physical exam is recorded in the child's file per WAC 110-300-0460. Please provide the center with updates whenever a new physical, dental exam, or immunization occurs. Records may be submitted in person, by email, or sent directly from your child's physician.

Each classroom maintains a Grab-N-Go emergency backpack containing printed copies of each child's emergency contact information, health record, current immunization record, Individual Care Plan (where applicable), medication administration records, rescue medications, and other critical items, per

WAC 110-300-0460(3) and 110-300-0470(2)(vi). The complete Grab-N-Go inventory is maintained in the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Records are updated within one business day of any change to ensure that critical child information remains accessible even when electronic systems may not be functional.

### 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.

Child records, including health records, enrollment forms, immunization records, and any Individual Health/Care Plans, are maintained in secure, restricted-access files at the Center. Access to a child's records is limited to: the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s); Center administrators and staff with a legitimate need to know for the direct care of the child; DCYF licensors and other authorized state or local health, safety, and law enforcement officials acting in their official capacity; and any person authorized in writing by the parent or legal guardian. All access is documented. Records are retained and destroyed in accordance with WAC 110-300-0465.

### 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. To keep the Center secure, please do not tailgate or follow another person through the door. If a family is leaving as you arrive, wait for them to come out and let the door close fully, then enter using your own code.

## 4. Policies and Procedures

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### 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 (HiMama) 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 WAC 110-300-0205)
- Sore throat with fever or swollen glands
- Green nasal discharge
- Persistent crying
- Difficulty breathing or wheezing not managed by prescribed inhaler
- Persistent uncontrolled crying
- Diarrhea (two or more loose stools within four hours) or vomiting (two or more episodes within 24 hours)
- 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.

If a child becomes ill while at N.W.C.K.A., they will be moved to a designated quiet, supervised area within licensed program space to limit exposure to others until a parent or authorized adult arrives for pickup. The child will be always supervised by a staff member. 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 may be administered with the parent or legal guardian's written authorization on the Center's Medication Authorization Form, provided the medication is in the original manufacturer's container, labeled with the child's name, and within the manufacturer's expiration date. See the Health Policy for full medication administration requirements, including staff training under WAC 110-300-0215(2).

Each child must have a current immunization record on file at N.W.C.K.A. per WAC 246-105-080. The date of the child's most recent physical exam and, where applicable, dental exam is recorded in the child's file per WAC 110-300-0460. Families are encouraged to provide updates whenever a new physical, dental exam, or immunization occurs. Updated records may be mailed or emailed directly to N.W.C.K.A. from your healthcare provider. Our email is [Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com](mailto:Info@NurtureWithCareKidsAcademy.com).

## **4.3 Safety and Emergency Procedures**

This section provides a summary of safety and emergency procedures for families. For the full DCYF-approved Emergency Preparedness Plan, please see the plan attached to this Handbook or request a copy from the Center Director. In the event of any conflict between this summary and the current DCYF-approved Emergency Preparedness Plan, the Emergency Preparedness Plan controls.

### **4.3.1 Emergency Evacuation Locations**

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, our on-site assembly point is the Midway parking lot at 421 NE Midway Blvd (west side of the building). If the Center becomes unsafe, children walk with staff to our off-site alternate location, Harborstone Credit Union at 315 NE Midway Blvd, Oak Harbor, WA 98277 (the adjacent building on the south side). Staff personal vehicles are not used for evacuation transport. Parents will be notified through the Lillio (HiMama) app as soon as safe to do so.

### **4.3.2 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
- Susan Cooper, RN (CCHC): (573) 230-5756

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

After any emergency, the Center notifies all families through the Lillio (HiMama) app within 30 minutes of the emergency ending. If Lillio is unavailable, the Director/Designee calls each family directly. A notice is also posted at the Center entrance and (if applicable) at the alternate evacuation location. See the full Emergency Preparedness Plan for details.

#### **4.3.3 Out-of-Area Contact**

After a major disaster, if local phone lines are down, parents may reach the Center's out-of-area contact for status updates: Ayushi Batwara, 510-737-9391. Families are also asked to provide their own out-of-area emergency contact at enrollment.

#### **4.3.4 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 our **designated assembly point in the parking lot at 421 NE Midway Blvd.** The parking lot is easily accessible from all classroom exits and provides clear visibility for staff to take roll call and account for every child. 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.

### ***Fire Alarms***

When the fire alarm sounds,

#### **Children should:**

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

#### **Staff should:**

- Line children up
- Take the sign-in sheet
- Exit the Center with children to the designated assembly area / call 911
- Take roll call of children
- Stay away from the building

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

### **4.3.5 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:

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

#### **4.3.6 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 the outage is extended or if temperature becomes unsafe for children, the Center will close and parents will be contacted for pick-up. Specific decision criteria are in the Emergency Preparedness Plan, which controls per Section 4.3. 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.

#### **4.3.7 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. The Director/Designee immediately calls 911 and provides the child's name, age, physical and clothing description, medical status if appropriate, time and location last seen, and person with whom the child was last seen. Simultaneously, the Center's Missing Child procedure in the Emergency Preparedness Plan is initiated, which includes notifying the licenser, Child Protective Services, and the child's parents. Do not wait to call 911.

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 Prohibited Substances**

In accordance with WAC 110-300-0420, the following substances are prohibited on the licensed premises – indoors, in outdoor play areas, in parking areas, and in any vehicle used to transport children:

- Tobacco products of any kind, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, smokeless tobacco, chewing tobacco, and any other tobacco-derived product.
- Vaping devices, e-cigarettes, and vapor products, whether or not they contain nicotine.
- Cannabis (marijuana) in any form (smoked, vaped, edibles, tinctures, oils, or topicals), including for medical use.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Any illegal or controlled substance.

This prohibition applies to all staff, families, visitors, contractors, and any other person on the premises at all times when children are present. Use of any prohibited substance in violation of this policy may result in immediate removal from the premises, notification of law enforcement where applicable, and – for enrolled families – termination of enrollment services under Section 3.2. Where a Center employee

is found in violation, disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment will follow, per the Staff policies.

## **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.

Classroom environments are 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., 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.

### **4.5.2 Infant and Toddler Development**

For children in the Infant (birth – 11 months) and Mixed-Age Toddler (12-36 months) classrooms, our curriculum specifically supports development in the four domains identified by WAC 110-300-0296:

- Language development: as per WAC 110-300-0315(1), staff engage infants and toddlers in frequent, responsive language exchanges throughout the day – e.g., narrating routines, reading books daily, singing songs, and responding to babbling and early words
- Motor development: Daily opportunities are provided for large-motor activity (crawling, walking) and fine-motor activity (grasping, stacking, scribbling) matched to each child's stage
- Cognitive development: Children explore cause-and-effect toys, object permanence activities, sorting, and problem-solving experiences appropriate to their emerging skills.
- Social and emotional development: Staff support emotion recognition, self-regulation, and early empathy through everyday interactions.

### **4.5.3 Dual Language Learning**

N.W.C.K.A. welcomes and supports children whose home language is not English. In accordance with WAC 110-300-0315(2)(e):

- At enrollment, families are asked which languages are spoken in the child's home. This information is used to plan supportive language experiences for the child.
- Staff acknowledge and value the child's home language as a strength, and where possible incorporate greetings, songs, books, and labels in the child's home language into the classroom.
- Staff communicate with families about the child's language development in both English and the home language, using translated written materials or interpretation services where needed.
- Where a Center staff member speaks the child's home language, that staff member is intentionally paired with the child during the transition period, when developmentally beneficial

## 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. 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.

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. Here are some 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 is 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 for 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.

### ***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."

### ***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.

### ***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."

### ***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.

### ***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 a supportive strategy – never a punishment. When physical separation is used, in accordance with WAC 110-300-0331(4): a child is separated only for the shortest time necessary to

help the child regain calm, staff remain with the child or in continuous visual or auditory contact, a child is never separated in a locked or confined area, and a child is never denied use of the bathroom, food, water, or contact with staff. 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:

- Staff will report the behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director and/or Assistant Director(s).
- The Director and/or Assistant Director will observe the child and meet with the Lead Teacher to develop a Behavior Support Plan.
- 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.
- The Director, Lead Teacher, Assistant Teachers, and parents will evaluate the Behavior Support Plan regularly. If needed, adjustments will be made.
- 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 Prohibited Discipline Practices**

In accordance with WAC 110-300-0331, N.W.C.K.A. staff, volunteers, and any other adult in the Center are strictly prohibited from using any of the following with any child in care:

- Corporal punishment of any kind, including but not limited to hitting, spanking, slapping, shaking, kicking, biting, or pinching.
- Verbal abuse, threats, derogatory remarks, name-calling, cursing, humiliation, or belittling.
- Withholding or forcing food, rest, use of the bathroom, or physical activity.
- Confining a child in a closed, locked, or dark space (including closets, boxes, or restraining devices).
- Physical restraint except in accordance with WAC 110-300-0335 and Section 7.2 of this Handbook.
- Use of physical exercise as punishment.
- Group discipline for the actions of an individual child.
- Discipline related to toileting accidents, food refusal, or other developmental behaviors.

Any staff member observed using or condoning a prohibited practice is subject to immediate disciplinary action up to and including termination, and where required by law, will be reported to DCYF Licensing and Child Protective Services.

#### 4.6.6 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..."

#### 4.6.7 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.

#### 4.6.8 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:

- **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?
- **Environmental Adjustments:** The teacher will modify the environment, routines, or activities if necessary.
- **Conflict Resolution:** The teacher will work with the child to address conflicts and frustrations more appropriately.
- **Observation:** The teacher will observe the child to understand why and when they will likely bite.
- **Preventative Measures:** The teacher will identify children at higher risk of being bitten and take steps to reduce their likelihood of being bitten.
- **Collaboration:** The teacher, parent, Director, and/or Assistant Director will meet regularly to create an action plan and monitor progress.
- **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.

#### 4.6.9 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.

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. As per WAC 110-300-0331(5), the removal of a child will be brief, supervised, in licensed space, and documented; the child will return to their classroom as soon as they are able.

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.

### **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.

### **Documentation**

Each incident is recorded on an Incident/Accident Report. Staff maintain a written record of all strategies attempted and the child's response.

In addition, written records of strategies taken to keep the child successfully enrolled are maintained, which include the Behavior Support Plan, records of environmental changes made, records of staffing accommodations, and records of referrals offered.

## **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. Parent(s) and guardian(s) receive a copy of all documentation.

## **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, including Island County Public Health Family Resource line, Whidbey Health Pediatric Services, Washington State Early Support for Infants and Toddlers (ESIT), Child Find through Oak Harbor Public Schools, and Child Care Aware of Washington family navigation services

## **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.

## **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.

## **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.

### **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, families will be given at least two weeks' written notice unless the behavior poses an immediate and serious safety risk requiring earlier disenrollment. The Director will provide referrals to alternative programs and community supports when possible.

## **4.9 Non-discrimination**

Nurture with Care Kids Academy welcomes and serves children and families from all backgrounds. We do not discriminate in admission, employment, or program operations on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, military or veteran status, or any other characteristic protected by law.

## **4.10 Religion and Rules**

Nurture with Care Kids Academy is a non-religious program. While we do not provide religious instruction, we respect and honor the religious traditions, cultural celebrations, and personal beliefs of all enrolled families. Families are welcome to share traditions important to them with our teachers, and the center will make reasonable accommodations for religious observances when possible.

## **4.11 Consistent Care Policy**

To support each child's sense of security and attachment, N.W.C.K.A. assigns each child to a primary classroom with consistent Lead and Assistant Teachers. Children are not rotated between classrooms outside of planned classroom transitions. Daily routines, sleep schedules, and care practices are kept as consistent as possible across staff. Staff regularly communicate with one another about each child's needs to maintain continuity of care.

## **4.12 Care for Children with Special or Health Needs**

N.W.C.K.A. is a place of public accommodation and welcomes children with disabilities, developmental delays, medical conditions, and other special or health needs. We do not discriminate on the basis of ability.

When a child with special or health needs is enrolled or identified, the Center notifies DCYF and works with the family to develop an Individual Care Plan (ICP) per WAC 110-300-0300 in consultation with the family and the child's health care provider. The ICP is signed by the parent or guardian, is kept in the child's file, is available for department review, is updated annually or when there is a change in the child's needs, and includes written permission for any visiting health professional who may provide services to the child at the Center.

**ICP Content.** Each ICP includes:

- The child's diagnosis, if known
- Contact information for the child's primary health care provider and any relevant specialists
- A list of medications to be administered at scheduled times or during an emergency, along with descriptions of symptoms that would trigger emergency medication
- Directions on how to administer each medication
- Allergies
- Food allergy and dietary needs, developed pursuant to WAC 110-300-0186
- Activity, behavioral, or environmental modifications for the child
- Known symptoms and triggers
- Emergency response plans and procedures to perform
- Suggested special skills training and education for staff, including any specific pediatric first aid and CPR needed for special health care needs

**Supporting Documentation.** The Center requires supporting documentation of the child's special needs provided by the child's licensed or certified physician or physician's assistant, mental health professional, education professional, social worker (with a bachelor's degree or higher and specialization in the child's needs), or registered nurse or advanced registered nurse practitioner.

**Integration with Other Plans.** The Center's written plan and documentation for accommodations is informed by any existing Individual Education Plan (IEP), Individual Health Plan (IHP), 504 Plan, or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP). Families with a child who has an existing plan of any kind are asked to share it with the Center Director so that goals can be supported in the child care setting.

**Staff Training and Verification.** Staff involved with a particular child are trained on implementing that child's ICP; the Center maintains verification of this training in the child's file.

**Additional Supports.** The Center provides indoor learning space that is accessible and adaptable for the child (WAC 110-300-0130(2)); adaptive materials, equipment, and toys that allow full participation (WAC 110-300-0150(1)(g)); individualized curriculum (WAC 110-300-0305(2)(c)); adapted daily schedule and routines including outdoor play time (WAC 110-300-0360(2)); and coordination as authorized in writing by the family with the child's medical, developmental, therapeutic, or educational providers.

## 5. Daily Schedule and Activities

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### 5.1 Arrival and Departure

#### 5.1.1 Arrival

Please drop your child off no later than 9:30 AM. Any child not signed in by 9:30 AM may not be accepted for that day, as arrivals after this time disrupt classroom routines, meal service, and outdoor play. If you know you will be late, please contact the Center Director in advance so we can plan for your child's arrival.

Each family is unique, and so is their daily morning routine. While arrival times may vary, the following tips help create a positive and successful arrival experience for both you and your child:

- **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.

For any planned time off, such as a vacation or a day you know in advance your child will not attend, please mark your child absent in the Lillio App as early as you can. Advance notice helps us plan staffing for the day and may free up a spot for a drop-in family. Marking a planned absence does not change your tuition obligation; tuition continues during absences as described in our Registration Fees and Tuition policies.

## 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 the 2nd late pickup, and a termination notice after the 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.

**School-Age Children:** For school-age children enrolled in our after-school program (Classroom 4), the standard 9:30 AM drop-off cut-off does not apply. School-age children are dropped off after their school day ends. Families must inform the Center Director in advance of the expected after-school arrival

window so staff can plan for appropriate supervision. The same applies to children enrolled in our Transitional Kindergarten (TTK) Wraparound program, who attend public Transitional Kindergarten for part of the day and join Classroom 4 before and/or after their TTK class. Families using TTK Wraparound must share their child's TTK schedule with the Center Director so staff can plan supervision and ratios around the school day.

## 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.

### 5.3.1 Pre-K and School-Age Room (Classroom 4)

Classroom 4 serves two age groups at different times of the day. In the morning it is our Pre-K classroom for children ages 4 to 5. In the afternoon it becomes our School-Age room for children ages 5 to 13 who attend school during the day. The two groups are never in the room at the same time.

The room operates as the Pre-K classroom from 7:00 AM to 2:30 PM, serving children ages 4 to 5 at a ratio of one staff member for every ten children. At 2:30 PM the room transitions to School-Age care for children ages 5 to 13, with the staff-to-child ratio set by the youngest child present. As the room transitions, Pre-K children move to the playground for outdoor play with their teacher, where they remain supervised until their families arrive for pickup. This keeps the Pre-K children separate from the arriving School-Age group and gives them outdoor time at the end of their day. Pre-K children are signed out to their families from the playground before School-Age children are signed in.

When the room changes use, staff complete a reset so the space meets the requirements for the incoming age group. A second adult maintains supervision of any children present while the reset is completed; the same adult does not both supervise children and reset the room at the same time. The posted ratio and group-size sign is switched, the sign-in and sign-out roster for the incoming group is placed at the entrance, Pre-K materials are stored, and School-Age materials such as homework stations and books and activities for older children are set out.

## 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:

#### Infants (birth–11 months):

- Staff remain within arm's reach during all routines and play

- Sleeping infants are visually checked every 15 minutes and remain within line of sight at all times
- Staff position themselves to see all infants — both awake and sleeping — at all times
- Bottle-feeding is always held by a staff member (bottles are never propped)

#### **Toddlers (12–36 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

#### **Preschool (30 months–6 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

#### **School-Age (5–13 years):**

- Staff maintain visual and auditory supervision at all times
- Staff circulate among small-group and individual activities, including homework or quiet play areas
- Staff are aware of where each child is at all times during free-choice activities

#### **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

#### **Never-Unattended Activities**

Per WAC 110-300-0345, no infant or child in care is ever left unattended during diapering, bottle feeding, and tummy time. A staff member remains with the child throughout each of these activities, in physical contact or within arm's reach as appropriate to the activity. These activities represent a level of supervision even higher than active supervision, and they are non-negotiable

## **5.7 Nap/Rest Time**

All children are provided with a regularly scheduled nap or rest time between 12 PM and 2 PM to minimize disruptions. Children are never forced to sleep, and children who do not demonstrate a need for rest are not required to remain on their mat or cot. Instead, they are offered quiet alternative activities — such as looking at books, drawing, puzzles, or other low-key options — in the same room, at a location that allows resting children to sleep undisturbed. No pick-ups or drop-offs occur during nap time. The duration of rest varies based on each child's needs. Infants follow their own individual sleep

schedules based on their needs and family routines, in accordance with our Safe Sleep Policy (see Section 5.12).

## **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 dresses 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 Mixed-Age Toddler program (12–36 months):

- 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. The pacifier is placed in a storage container between uses. Parents take pacifiers home for cleaning daily.
- 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.

## 5.12 Infant Program Information

Our Midway location offers a dedicated infant classroom (Classroom 1) for children from birth through 11 months of age. The infant program is staffed by qualified educators with additional training in infant care, safe sleep practices, and SUID prevention. The following policies apply specifically to families enrolled in the Infant program.

### 5.12.1 Safe Sleep Policy

In accordance with WAC 110-300-0291 and American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, the following safe sleep practices are followed in our Infant classroom:

- **Back to Sleep:** Infants are always placed on their backs to sleep, unless there is a written, signed, and dated waiver from BOTH the parent or legal guardian AND the child's licensed health care provider.
- **Crib Environment:** Each infant has their own individually labeled crib that meets current federal safety standards. Cribs contain only a fitted sheet — no pillows, blankets, soft toys, bumper pads, sleep positioners, or loose bedding of any kind.
- **Sleep Sacks:** If families prefer their infant be swaddled or wear a sleep sack, this must be requested in writing and only sleep sacks that allow free leg and hip movement are permitted. Swaddling is discontinued as soon as an infant shows signs of rolling.
- **Sleep Checks:** Staff visually check sleeping infants at least every 15 minutes, noting breathing, skin color, and sleep position. Sleep checks are documented in the Lillio app.
- **Line of Sight:** Sleeping infants are always within line of sight of a staff member.
- **Room Temperature:** The infant room is kept between 68°F and 72°F and is not overheated.
- **No Sleeping in Equipment:** Infants do not sleep in swings, bouncers, car seats, or other equipment. An infant who falls asleep in such equipment is moved to their crib.
- **No Head Coverings:** Hats and head coverings are removed before placing an infant down to sleep.
- **Crib Spacing (WAC 110-300-0290(3)):** Cribs arranged side by side are at least 30 inches apart. Cribs placed end-to-end that are closer than 30 inches have a moisture-resistant, easily cleanable solid barrier between them.
- **Transition to Other Sleep Equipment (WAC 110-300-0290(5)(6)):** Before transitioning an infant from crib to other sleep equipment, the Center consults with the child's parent or

guardian. Infants who are able to climb out of their crib are transitioned to developmentally appropriate sleep equipment. If a parent does not agree with transitioning, the Center and parent cocreate a transition plan.

### 5.12.2 Bottle Feeding and Breast Milk Handling

Families provide bottles, formula, and/or breast milk for their infant each day. Staff follow these procedures:

- **Labeling:** Parents provide bottles pre-labeled with the child's full first and last name and the date the contents were prepared or expressed. Breast milk must also be labeled with the date it was expressed. Staff verify labels upon receipt at drop-off; any unlabeled or improperly labeled bottle is returned to the parent for labeling before it can be accepted for storage or feeding. **Refrigeration:** Bottles are refrigerated upon arrival. Breast milk is stored at the back of the refrigerator, away from the door.
- **Warming and Temperature Testing:** Bottles are warmed in a bottle warmer or a cup of warm running water for no more than five minutes. Microwaves are never used to warm bottles or breast milk. Before serving, a staff member tests the temperature of the milk by placing a small drop on the inside of their wrist; the milk must feel warm — not hot — before it is offered to the infant. **Feeding Position:** Infants are always held while bottle-feeding. Bottles are never propped, and infants are never put to sleep with a bottle.
- **No Additions to Bottles (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(g)):** Nothing (food, medication, sweeteners) is added to the contents of a bottle unless the child's health care provider gives written consent.
- **Discarding Leftovers:** Any breast milk or formula remaining in a bottle after a feeding is discarded — it is not saved for a later feeding.

#### Breast Milk Handling (WAC 110-300-0281)

- Breast milk is stored in the back of the refrigerator, away from the door, at 40°F or below. Frozen breast milk is stored in the freezer.
- Refrigerated breast milk not consumed within 48 hours of expression is discarded or sent home.
- Frozen breast milk is thawed in the refrigerator or under cool running water. Once thawed, it is used within 24 hours. Thawed breast milk is never refrozen.
- Breast milk is never microwaved. Warming is done in warm running water for no more than five minutes.
- Any breast milk remaining in a bottle after a feeding is discarded and never saved for a later feeding.
- Breast milk is served only to the infant to whom it belongs. If breast milk is accidentally served to the wrong infant, the family of the receiving infant is notified as a potential exposure to bodily fluid, per DOH guidance.

### 5.12.3 Introducing Solid Foods

Solid foods are introduced based on each infant's developmental readiness and in consultation with the family. The following guidelines apply:

- **Introduce at Home First:** All new foods should be introduced at home for several days before being offered at the Center, to monitor for allergic reactions.

- **Written Communication:** Families complete an Infant Feeding Plan documenting which foods their infant has been introduced to and any known allergies or family preferences. This plan is updated as new foods are introduced.
- **Family-Provided Foods:** All infant foods (purees, cereals, finger foods) are provided by the family, clearly labeled, and stored according to package instructions.
- **Feeding Documentation:** Each feeding — including type and amount — is recorded in the Lillio app for family review.
- **Feeding on Hunger (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(b)):** Infants and toddlers are fed when hungry according to their nutritional and developmental needs, unless medically directed otherwise.
- **Cup Transition (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(e)):** Transition to a cup occurs when developmentally appropriate, in consultation with the family.
- **Self-Feeding (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(j)):** Older infants and toddlers are allowed to self-feed soft foods from developmentally appropriate eating equipment.
- **High Chair Use (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(k)):** When feeding solid foods or liquids from a cup, infants and toddlers who can sit up on their own are placed in high chairs or at a child-size table and chairs, and a staff member sits with and observes each child eating. High chairs used at the Center have a base wider than the seat, a safety device used each time a child is seated (to prevent climbing or sliding down), are free of cracks and tears, and have washable surfaces.
- **High Chair Time Limit (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(l)):** Infants and toddlers are not left more than 15 minutes in high chairs waiting for meal or snack time and are removed as soon as possible once they finish eating.
- **No Sharing (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(m)):** Infants and toddlers are not permitted to share the same dish or utensil.
- **Serving Container (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(n)):** Uneaten food is not served from the serving container after the intended meal.
- **No Styrofoam (WAC 110-300-0285(2)(o)):** Food is not served to infants or toddlers using polystyrene foam (styrofoam) cups, bowls, or plates.

#### 5.12.4 Infant Diapering

Infant and toddler diapering follows the requirements of WAC 110-300-0221.

**Diapering Area.** The Center has designated diaper changing areas in each classroom serving children who require diapering, including a stand-up diapering option. Each diapering area:

- Is separate from areas where food is stored, prepared, or served
- Has a handwashing sink with hot and cold running water, not used for food preparation and clean-up, within arm's reach of the diaper changing station
- Has a sturdy, washable mat or surface with a moisture-resistant surface that is cleanable, large enough to prevent contamination of the area underneath, and not torn or repaired with tape

- Is surrounded by moisture-resistant, washable material extending at least two feet horizontally or vertically from the diaper changing station and handwashing area
- Is uncluttered and not used for storage of items not used in diapering
- Does not use safety belts (they are neither cleanable nor safe)
- Has an easily viewable diaper changing procedure posted at the station
- Prevents viewing of a partially or fully undressed child by members of the public not on the licensed premises

**Diaper Disposal.** Soiled diapers and diapering supplies are disposed of in a designated container that is hands-free (foot-pedal or motion-activated), covered with a lid to prevent cross contamination, and located within arm's length of the diaper changing area.

**Diapering Procedure.** Diapers are checked at least every two hours and changed as soon as they are wet or soiled. Staff follow each step of the posted diapering procedure, and never leave a child unattended on the diaper changing surface. After diapering, staff assist the child with hand-washing whenever developmentally appropriate. Diaper changing surfaces are cleaned and sanitized after each use using the three-step cleaning process. Families provide disposable diapers, wipes, and any diaper creams; cloth diapers are not accepted.

### 5.12.5 Tummy Time and Developmental Play

Awake infants receive supervised tummy time each day to support neck, shoulder, and core development. Floor time, reaching activities, and language-rich interactions are integrated into the daily routine. Infants are not left in equipment (swings, bouncers, car seats) for extended periods.

### 5.12.6 Daily Items for Infants

Families enrolled in the Infant program should send the following items daily, clearly labeled with the child's name:

- Enough labeled bottles for the day, plus one extra
- Formula or expressed breast milk for the day
- Diapers, wipes, and any diaper cream
- At least two complete changes of clothing
- Pacifier (if used)
- Any solid foods appropriate to the infant's feeding plan
- A sleep sack (if preferred)

### 5.12.7 Communication About Your Infant

Open daily communication is essential for caring for infants well. Staff document feedings, diaper changes, sleep, and developmental milestones in the Lillio (HiMama) app throughout the day. Families are encouraged to share information at drop-off about how their infant slept, when they last ate, and any changes in mood or health.

## 5.13 Overnight Care

N.W.C.K.A. does not provide overnight care. All children must be picked up by the Center's closing time of 6:00 PM.

## 6. Program Policies and Records Available for Review

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**Health Policy.** N.W.C.K.A. maintains a comprehensive Health Policy that is reviewed and approved by DCYF Licensing prior to initial license issuance and re-approved when updated. The Health Policy addresses illness exclusion and return criteria, medication administration and storage, handwashing and hand-sanitizer use, cleaning and disinfecting, communicable disease notification and reporting, medical emergencies, immunization tracking, dental hygiene, care for pets and animals, pest control, and care for children with special needs. A copy of the current, DCYF-approved Health Policy is attached to this Family Handbook, posted at the Center entrance, and available at the Director's office.

**Staff Policies.** N.W.C.K.A. maintains written Staff Policies covering staff qualifications, professional development requirements, expected conduct, supervision responsibilities, health and safety training, mandatory reporting, and other WAC 110-300-0110 requirements. A copy of the current Staff Policies is available for parent/guardian review at the Director's office upon request.

**Liability Insurance.** N.W.C.K.A. carries commercial general liability insurance meeting WAC 110-300-0425 requirements. A copy of the current Certificate of Liability Insurance is posted at the Center entrance per WAC 110-300-0505(2)(m) and available at the Director's office for review.

**Inspection Reports and Notices of Enforcement Actions.** DCYF licensing inspection reports and any Facility Licensing Compliance Agreements (FLCAs), probationary license notices, or notices of enforcement actions (if applicable) are posted at the Center entrance per WAC 110-300-0440 and 110-300-0443, and available at the Director's office for review.

**Menus.** Weekly menus are posted at the Center entrance and in each classroom, and made accessible to families through the Lillio (HiMama) app per WAC 110-300-0185.

**Emergency Preparedness Plan.** A copy of the current, DCYF-approved Emergency Preparedness Plan is attached to this Family Handbook and available at the Director's office.

**Consistent Care Policy.** N.W.C.K.A.'s consistent care approach is described in Section 4.11 of this handbook per WAC 110-300-0495.

## 7. Safety Policies

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### 7.1 Safety Procedures

#### 7.1.1 Injury Prevention

Staff conduct daily indoor and outdoor safety checks before children arrive in each space. Damaged or unsafe equipment is removed from use immediately and reported to the Director. Cleaning chemicals, medications, and other hazardous materials are stored in locked cabinets that are inaccessible to children. Sharp objects, choking hazards, and small parts are kept out of reach in classrooms serving children under three.

## 7.2 Child Physical Restraint Policy

N.W.C.K.A. maintains and follows a child restraint policy consistent with WAC 110-300-0335 and 110-300-0490.

**When physical restraint may be used.** Physical restraint may be used only when a child's immediate behavior poses an imminent risk of physical harm to the child, to another child, or to a staff member, and only when no less-restrictive intervention will safely address that risk. Physical restraint is never used as discipline, as a consequence, or for staff convenience.

**How physical restraint is used.** When restraint is required, staff use the minimum force and shortest duration necessary to keep the child and others safe. The restraint is appropriate to the child's developmental level, physical ability, size, and language skills; is directly related to the immediate safety concern; and is applied consistently, fairly, and in the least intrusive manner possible. Restraint is discontinued as soon as the immediate danger has passed.

**Who may restrain a child.** Only staff who have been trained in the Center's restraint policy and in the safe use of physical restraint may restrain a child. Training is provided annually to the Center Director, Assistant Director, Program Supervisor, Lead Teachers, and any other staff who directly care for children.

**Documentation.** Any incident of physical restraint is documented in the child's file within one business day. Documentation includes: the date, time, and duration of the restraint; the staff members involved; the events immediately before, during, and after the restraint; a description of the less-restrictive interventions that were attempted; and any injuries or property damage. The parent or guardian is notified verbally the same day and is provided a written copy of the incident report.

## 7.3 Weapons

Weapons of any kind are strictly prohibited on N.W.C.K.A. premises, including parking lots and outdoor play areas. 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.

## 7.4 Documentation of Accidents/Incidents

All accidents and incidents are documented on an Incident/Accident Report at the time they occur. The report includes the date, time, location, description of what happened, action taken, and signatures of the staff member and parent. A copy is provided to the parent, and the original is retained in the child's permanent file.

## 7.5 Mandatory Child Abuse Reporters

All N.W.C.K.A. staff are mandatory reporters under Washington State law. Staff are required to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect directly to Child Protective Services (1-866-END-HARM) and/or local law enforcement, without delay. Staff training in recognizing and reporting abuse is provided at hire and annually thereafter.

## 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

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## 8.1 Meal Policies

At our Midway location, N.W.C.K.A. provides breakfast, morning snack, lunch, afternoon snack, and (as needed) a late snack for enrolled children at no additional charge, in accordance with WAC 110-300-0180 and WAC 110-300-0185. Meals and snacks are planned to be nutritious and age-appropriate, and all whole fruits and vegetables are washed thoroughly under running water before they are prepared and served.

### Meal Schedule

- Breakfast: 8:00 – 8:30 AM
- Morning snack: 9:30 – 10:00 AM
- Lunch: 11:30 – 12:00 PM
- Afternoon Snack: 2:30 – 3:00 PM
- Late Snack: 5:00 – 5:30 PM (as needed for children in care past 5:00 PM)

### Menus

Weekly menus are posted at the Center entrance, in each classroom, and made accessible to all families through the Lillio (HiMama) app. When menu changes occur due to supply availability or other circumstances, families are notified through the Lillio app and posted menus are updated the same day.

### Allergies and special dietary needs

Parents are responsible for informing the Center of any food allergies or special dietary needs at enrollment and keeping that information current. For children with known food allergies, staff will contact the family directly before serving any substitute item. Some foods served 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.

## **Food from home**

Because the Center provides all meals and snacks, children do not need to bring food from home unless the Center has agreed to a specific dietary accommodation. Candy and soda are not permitted.

## **Safe food handling**

While warming or setting up food, staff wear gloves. For safety and allergy concerns, staff are strictly prohibited from sharing their own food or drinks with children

## **Infant Meals**

See Section 5.12 (Infant Program Information) for policies specific to bottle feeding, breast milk, and the introduction of solid foods in the Infant classroom.

## **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.

## **8.3 Daily Toothbrushing**

In accordance with WAC 110-300-0180(2), N.W.C.K.A. offers children an opportunity for developmentally appropriate tooth brushing at least once per day for children of an age at which tooth brushing is appropriate. Tooth brushing activities are safe, sanitary, and educational. Each child's toothbrush is individually labeled and stored in a way that prevents cross-contamination between toothbrushes. Parents or guardians who wish to opt their child out of the daily tooth brushing activity may do so by signing a written opt-out form available at the Center.

# **9. Communication and Parental Involvement**

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## **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 and observe their child's classroom at any time during hours of operation, in accordance with WAC 110-300-0085(4)(f). We ask that visits during nap/rest time (typically 12 PM – 2 PM) be brief and quiet to avoid disturbing sleeping children.

## 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. Infant families receive especially detailed daily logs in the app, including each feeding, diaper change, and sleep period.

## 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

**Regular Volunteers.** Parents who volunteer in the classroom on a regular and ongoing basis (more than occasionally, or in a role that involves direct child care) must, prior to volunteering, complete (a) tuberculosis testing showing a negative result, and (b) a portable background check clearance through DCYF's Background Check Central Unit (BCCU). Contact the Center Director for the application forms and BCCU instructions.

**Occasional volunteers** (e.g., reading a book at a class event under continuous staff supervision) do not require these clearances but are always under direct staff supervision and are not counted toward staff-to-child ratios

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 the Director will connect families to community or school district resources.
- Kindergarten Transition Plan (WAC 110-300-0065)

For children in the Preschool and Pre-K classrooms during the year before kindergarten entry, N.W.C.K.A. actively partners with families to prepare each child for a successful transition to kindergarten:

- **Spring Kindergarten Readiness Conference.** Each spring, families of children entering kindergarten in the fall are invited to a conference with their child's teacher to review the child's developmental progress across social-emotional, language, cognitive, and physical domains, and to discuss school-readiness goals.
- **Skill-Building Activities.** In the six months before kindergarten entry, the Preschool curriculum incorporates activities that mirror early kindergarten routines: sitting for extended circle time, following

multi-step directions, self-help skills, letter and number recognition, name writing, and quiet independent work.

- **Family Resources.** Families receive a kindergarten transition packet including information on Oak Harbor School District enrollment, kindergarten registration timelines, immunization requirements, and school district family engagement events.
- **School Visit / Communication.** Where possible, N.W.C.K.A. staff communicate with the receiving elementary school (with written parent permission) to share the child's strengths, learning style, and any developmental information that supports a smooth transition.
- **Summer Bridge Activities.** For children continuing at N.W.C.K.A. through the summer before kindergarten, additional literacy, math, and school-routine activities are integrated into the daily program

## 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](mailto: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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.compasshealth.org). Mental health services for children and families.
- **Military OneSource (for military families) — 1-800-342-9647.** [www.militaryonesource.mil](http://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](http://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](http://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**

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### **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.

### **10.2 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**

N.W.C.K.A. uses automatic billing via the Pre-Authorized Debit Agreement signed at enrollment. Tuition is billed on a biweekly or monthly schedule (as agreed at enrollment). Payment confirmations are issued through the Lillio (HiMama) app.

### **10.3.2 Payment Penalties**

Tuition not received by the due date is subject to a late payment fee. Accounts more than 14 days past due may result in suspension of care until the account is brought current. The Director may, at her sole discretion, work with families on a written payment plan to resolve overdue balances.

## **10.4 Financial Agreement**

By enrolling your child, you agree to the tuition and fees discussed at enrollment and to the payment policies in this handbook. Tuition rates are reviewed periodically; families will be given at least 30 days' written notice of any tuition rate change.

## **10.5 Drop-In Care**

The Midway location offers drop-in care for families who need occasional care outside of a regular enrollment schedule, subject to availability. Drop-in care is offered at the Fort Nugent and Midway locations only. Availability is not guaranteed and depends on current openings within ratio and group-size limits.

**Private-Pay Rate.** Drop-in care is billed at our current drop-in rate, which includes a minimum number of billed hours per visit. Nap time (12:00 PM to 2:00 PM) is included in billed hours if it falls between drop-off and pickup. For current drop-in pricing, please check our rate sheet or contact the Center Director. Payment may be made online by credit or debit card, or by cash at drop-off. All online payments are final and non-refundable once processed.

**DSHS Subsidy.** Drop-in care may be available to families using a DSHS subsidy. The Midway SSPS provider number will be assigned by DSHS upon enrollment and communicated to subsidy families at that time. Families should apply through Washington Connection and speak with the Director to confirm coverage before booking.

**Booking and age groups.** Drop-in spots are requested at least 24 hours in advance and confirmed based on availability. Drop-in care is offered for all age groups served at the location, which may vary by location. Families should contact the Center Director or use our online booking to confirm availability for their child's age group.

## 10.6 Child Care Subsidies (DSHS and MCCYN)

N.W.C.K.A. accepts child care subsidies, including DSHS Working Connections Child Care (WCCC) and the Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood (MCCYN and MCCYN-PLUS) programs for eligible military families. Families using a subsidy should speak with the Director before enrollment to confirm coverage, copay, and any documentation required.

Families are responsible for any copay, for any tuition or fees not covered by their subsidy, and for keeping their subsidy authorization current. DSHS attendance is recorded through KinderConnect. A lapse, expiration, or reduction in a subsidy authorization that leaves a balance unpaid is treated the same as unpaid tuition under this handbook. The Early Drop-Off add-on, drop-in care above authorized hours, and other optional services are generally not covered by subsidy and remain the family's responsibility unless the subsidy authorization specifically covers them.

## 11. Holidays and Vacations

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### 11.1 Holidays

N.W.C.K.A. is closed on the following holidays. If a holiday falls on a weekend, the Center will be closed on that day. When a holiday creates a long weekend (e.g., a Monday or Friday federal holiday), the Center will also be closed on the adjoining Saturday and Sunday. Weekend-enrolled families should assume closure on any weekend that includes or adjoins a listed holiday.

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Presidents' Day
- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day

- Labor Day
- Veterans Day
- Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after
- Christmas Eve and Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve

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. Tuition is not adjusted for center holidays.

## 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 are typically scheduled near a holiday to limit family disruption. Families receive at least 30 days' advance notice of any Staff Development Day closure through the Lillio (HiMama) app and the Center's monthly newsletter. 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

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## 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.

**Infants:** Infants under 12 months are observed using developmentally appropriate observation tools. Formal ASQ-3 screening begins after the infant's first birthday, in alignment with the tool's validated age range.

## 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 a WaKIDS-aligned in-house assessment tool.

Ongoing informal observation and documentation is conducted for every child who has attended the program for at least 90 calendar days. For each of these children, teachers collect dated observations and work samples throughout the year and keep them in the child's portfolio. In addition, a WaKIDS or WaKIDS-aligned formal assessment is conducted for every child who has attended the program for at least 90 calendar days, and the dates of each assessment are recorded in the child's file. At least one Lead Teacher per classroom is trained and reliable on the WaKIDS-aligned assessment tool the program uses, or holds documented training in that tool that meets its requirements.

Families are partners in assessment. Parent observations and goals are included in assessment forms. Each child's formal assessment results and informal observation and documentation are shared with their family at least three times per year, following each formal assessment period (fall, winter, and spring), through a conference, written summary, or the Lillio (HiMama) app. 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.

Program leaders provide job-embedded professional development for lead teaching staff to improve curriculum and teacher-child interactions. This support is grounded in day-to-day teaching practice and may include mentoring, one-on-one coaching, feedback from classroom observations, peer learning groups, and in-service trainings with follow-up support. At least one lead teacher per classroom receives this job-embedded support at least three times per year, and program leaders aim to provide it monthly. Records of this support, including teacher names and dates, are kept on file.

## **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, and 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**

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### **13.1 Photographing Children**

At N.W.C.K.A., we respect your privacy and choice when it comes to photographs of your child. You may opt in or out of having your child photographed on the registration form. Group classroom photos may be used on our website and social media as appropriate, in accordance with the opt-in selections on file.

To protect children's privacy, staff may use only designated center devices to take photos or videos; personal devices are strictly prohibited in classrooms. Photos and videos may also be used for Early Achievers documentation, educational planning, and teacher reflection.

The building has video cameras in non-classroom areas (such as parking lot, entrance, hallways, and other common spaces) to support the safety and security of children, families, and staff. Footage from these cameras is used only for safety and security purposes.

Parents need permission from the Center Director to take photos at the Center, and may photograph only their own child. Photographing other children or families is not permitted. Please refrain from posting any image taken inside the Center to social media without written consent.

### **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 at our childcare center. In accordance with WAC 110-300-0085(4)(f), you have the right to access and inspect any licensed portion of the program at any time during hours of operation. We ask that visits during rest time (typically 12 PM – 2 PM) be brief and quiet to avoid disturbing sleeping children. An appointment with the Center Director is not required to visit, but you may schedule one if you'd like to speak with the Director during your 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 with, and 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.

### **13.5 Where to Find Additional Policies and Records**

The following documents are available for parent or guardian review at all times during hours of operation. Copies are maintained at the Center in the Director's office, and posted at the Center entrance where required by WAC 110-300-0505:

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- Health Policy (WAC 110-300-0500) — DCYF-approved. Posted at Center entrance and available on request.
- Staff Policies (WAC 110-300-0110) — Available on request.
- Current weekly menu (WAC 110-300-0185) — Posted at Center entrance and in each classroom; also accessible in the Lillio app.
- Certificate of Liability Insurance (WAC 110-300-0425 and 0505(2)(m)) — Posted at Center entrance.

- Current DCYF license and most recent inspection reports (WAC 110-300-0440) — Posted at Center entrance.
- Emergency Preparedness Plan (WAC 110-300-0470) — Available on request; evacuation floor plan posted in each licensed room.
- Family Handbook (this document) — Provided to every family at enrollment and available on request

## Family Acknowledgment

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I, the undersigned parent or legal guardian, acknowledge that I have received, read, and understood the Nurture with Care Kids Academy Family Handbook (Midway Location). I agree to abide by all policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. I understand that N.W.C.K.A. reserves the right to revise its policies, practices, and standards as deemed appropriate, and that I will be notified of any updates.

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Please return this signed page to the Center Director.*