

FOUNDATIONS FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD
EXCELLENCE
POLICIES and PROCEDURES
HANDBOOK

2024-2025

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Policies and Procedures Handbook

Welcome to Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence

The program's goals are to:

- Provide exceptional care for children ages 0-12 years of age, regardless of ability and/or background.
- Create a safe, happy, loving atmosphere so that each child can develop a positive self-image and a trusting, loving relationship with our staff.
- Provide a stimulating environment to encourage lifelong learning through curriculum, fieldtrips, community resources and family involvement.
- Encourage children to develop to their fullest potential: physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally.
- Promote independence and self-reliance for lifelong learning.

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence is licensed through the state of Indiana for both Grant St. Locations, DeCamp Ave. & Indiana Ave. Our Cleveland Rd. Location is Registered with the state of Indiana as a VCP ministry. The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Standards, National Accreditation Commission (NAC), and Level 4 Paths to Quality Indicators are used to guide expectations for the children and instructional practices.

Meet the Staff at Foundations on Grant:

Director: Ms. Winnie O'Connell

Assistant Director & Person in charge when director is not present: Heidi Davis

Meet the Staff at Foundations on DeCamp

Director: Ms. Tori McGrogan

Assistant Director & Person in charge when director is not present: Crystal Saiz

Meet the Staff at Foundations on Indiana

Director: Ms. Ashley Wallace

Assistant Director & Person in charge when director is not present: Leslie Zamudio

Meet the Staff at Foundations on Cleveland

Director: Christina Tirado

Person in charge when director is not in the building: Jennifer Fisher and Tricia Pendleton

IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence

Foundations Phone – (574) 501-4ECE

Foundation's Fax – (574) 222-1521

MISSION & BELIEF STATEMENTS

Vision: With the collaboration of the community, the families we serve and our professional, dedicated, loving staff, Foundation's for Early Childhood Excellence provides excellent care and developmentally appropriate learning for all children.

Mission Statement: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence is committed to providing exceptional early childhood educational experiences for all children, by helping them reach their fullest potential: physically, cognitively, socially and emotionally. Our professional, educated staff provide a safe and loving atmosphere so each child can develop a positive, healthy self-image. Through developmentally appropriate activities, children learn to confidently and independently explore their world and develop a lifelong eagerness to learn.

Program Philosophy: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence provides developmentally appropriate activities for children ages 0-12 years of age. Our professional staff implement Learning Beyond Paper Curriculum, NAEYC, NAC and Paths to Quality Standards for the State of Indiana. Emergent curriculum is developed as children's interests encourage growth in all areas of learning. The world is our classroom. Positive self-esteem, independence, and respect for others are

encouraged throughout our program. All families are encouraged to participate and share their values and beliefs within our program.

Outcome Statement: Each child is valued as an individual within the context of their family and community. Individual learning styles are supported through discovery learning that allows children to explore, investigate and problem solve individually and in small groups. Our curriculum is designed to build positive self-esteem and encourage respectful and responsible behavior in all children.

Locations: Foundations for Early Learning Excellence has five locations to serve you. The Grant St, DeCamp Ave., and Indiana Ave. location are licensed center centers located in Elkhart, Indiana. Our Cleveland Rd., South Bend location is a registered VCP ministry. We also have an infant and toddler program on Grant St that is under a childcare home license.

Hours of Care: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence has multiple locations with varying hours. Hours are subject to change based upon need and enrollment.

Grant St Center- 4:15am-5:30pm

Grant St. Home- 6:00am-5:30pm

DeCamp Ave Center- 4:30am-5:30pm

Indiana Ave Center- 7:00am-5:30pm

Cleveland Rd Ministry- 6:30am-5:30pm

Enrollment

Equal Educational Opportunity: It is the policy of the Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence not to discriminate in its education programs or educational activities based on sexual orientation, race, religion, color, national origin, marital status or disability. Students are educated in programs, which foster knowledge of, and respect and appreciation for, the historical and contemporary contributions of diverse cultural groups, as well as men and women, to society. Students who feel they have been discriminated against are encouraged to report it to our main office at (574) 501-4ECE.

Inclusion: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence includes all children, including those with disabilities and unique learning needs. Modifications are made to the environment and staffing patterns in order to include children of all abilities. Staff members are aware of the identified needs of individual children and are trained to follow through on specific intervention plans. It is our belief that inclusion in our program will enrich the experience for teachers, students, other children and their families.

Admission and Fees Policy: Foundation's enrolls children on a first come, first-registered basis. All paperwork must be completed and submitted **before** your child can attend.

Tuition is charged according to age and number of hours scheduled for attendance. Rates are evaluated annually. Please see the Fee Schedule provided in your enrollment packet.

- Tuition is due on Monday, prior to care, via autopay to receive relevant discounts
- After thirty days accounts will incur a 5% interest fee on all unpaid balances
- Accounts sixty days past due will be sent for collections
- There is a \$35 service charge for any returned checks or debits due to insufficient funds
- Foundations accepts: ACH from bank account, credit card auto pay, cash, checks and credit cards for payment
- Transportation to/from specific schools is included in tuition
- Diapers/wipes are NOT included in tuition fees
- There is a \$1 per diaper charge for every diaper the center provides for your child
- All payments are non-refundable
- Children are reenrolled annually. The reenrollment fee is \$60 for children 0-5 (not attending Kindergarten in the Fall) and \$160 for children entering Kindergarten and older will be charged March 1st
- Non-payment of tuition can terminate enrollment.

CCDF/AHS Vouchers: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence accepts CCDF/AHS vouchers. It is expected that families clock their child in and out daily to avoid additional fees or charges.

CCDF families are expected to pay all registration and annual fees in place by the facility. All assigned “copays” are collected and due on Monday each week.

Late Pick-up Policy: Foundations Charges a late pick-up fee for children picked-up after the center closes. Families will be charged \$20 per child per 15 minutes after closing.

Vacation, Sick Leave, and Holiday Policy: Foundations allows for two weeks of vacation per year when the child is not in attendance and the family is not billed. Families are also allowed 2 additional weeks of ½ tuition, where the child does not attend, but the family is billed ½ billing rate. All vacation weeks need to be submitted with two week's notice.

Foundations bills out tuition on a weekly basis on Monday. Tuition is billed regardless of attendance due to illness or other circumstances.

Foundations is closed for holidays throughout the year. They include New Years Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and New Years Eve. If the holiday falls on a weekend Foundations will be closed on the prior or following day. Tuition does not change due to closure for a holiday.

Termination of Enrollment: Foundations requires a two-week, written notice if you plan to withdraw your child. You will be financially responsible for these two weeks should you need to withdraw immediately.

Foundations has the right to terminate care if payments are not received in a timely manner (see Tuition and Fees), the child is a threat to staff or children, repeated disciplinary problems, consistent schedule changes without prior approval and/or late pick-up or early drop-off without prior approval and failure to notify center of phone number changes on several occasions. (Foundations must always be able to reach a parent or person authorized to pick-up. Phone numbers must be updated as needed to ensure they are correct).

Who Works In our Program?

Executive Director: Jennifer Fisher, M.Ed.

The program director is designated as the program administrator and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Director of Operations: Tricia Pendleton, M.Ed.

The program director is designated as the program administrator and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Program Director, DeCamp Ave.: Victoria McGrogan, MSW

The program director is designated as the program administrator and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Assistant Director, DeCamp Ave: Crystal Saiz

The assistant director is designated as the program administrator in the director's absence and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The assistant director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Program Director, Grant St: Winnie O'Connell, A.A.S

The program director is designated as the program administrator and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Assistant Director, Grant St: Heidi Davis, A.A.S

The assistant director is designated as the program administrator in the director's absence and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The assistant director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Program Director, Indiana Ave: Ashley Wallace

The program director is designated as the program administrator and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Assistant Director, Indiana Ave: Leslie Zamudio

The assistant director is designated as the program administrator in the director's absence and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The assistant director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Program Director Cleveland Rd: Christina Tirado, A.A.S

The program director is designated as the program administrator and is responsible for supervising the child care program. The director meets all qualifications described in Indiana Child Care Licensing Requirements, NAC and the NAEYC Program Standards.

Teachers: Our full-time teachers take pride in their educational credentials. The teachers either hold a degree in the field of education or are enrolled in an accredited college/university and in the process of earning that degree.

Teacher Assistant: A full-time teacher assistant in the classroom carries out activities under the teacher's supervision. The teacher assistant will have specialized training in early childhood education. All will be working toward or maintaining a CDA or the equivalent. All staff will be a minimum of 18 years old, however, may be under 21 if they are qualified and meet the educational requirements.

Support Staff: Our cook prepares meals for the program that are balanced and in compliance with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Foundations serves: breakfast, lunch, and two snacks daily (depending on hours of operatio).

Program Description

Infant & Toddlers Area: Infants and toddlers have their own personalized program geared just for them! Exploration and discovery provide fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, whole language, art, music, literacy, and social/emotional development for infant's ages 0-11 months and toddlers' ages 12-23 months. Group size for infants: 4:1 (four infants with one teacher). Group size for toddlers is: 5:1 (five toddlers with one teacher)

Two's Area: Exploration and discovery provide fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, whole language, art, music, literacy, and social/emotional development for our two-year-olds. Group size: 5:1 (5 two-year olds with one teacher)

Three's Area: Exploration and discovery provide fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, art, music, dance, whole language, literacy, pre-reading, math, social studies, science, health and safety, social and emotional development for three-year-olds. The curriculum is designed to build positive self-esteem and encourage respectful and responsible behavior in all children. Group size: 10:1 (10 three-year olds with one teacher)

Four/Fives: Exploration and discovery provides fine motor, gross motor, cognitive, art, music, dance, whole language, literacy, pre-reading, math, social studies, science, health and safety, social and emotional development for 4- & 5-year-olds. The curriculum is designed to build positive self-esteem and encourage respectful and responsible behavior in all children. Group size: 12:1 (12 four/five-year-olds with one teacher).

School-Age Program (SAP)/Before & After-School/Summer Fun Camp: Our program for school-aged children provides hands-on experiences for children to develop to their fullest potential: cognitively, emotionally, and socially. The curriculum is designed to build positive self-esteem and encourage respectful and responsible behavior in all children. Opportunities for our children to make a difference in the lives of others are evident in our community connectedness. Group size: 15:1 (15 school-agers with one teacher)

All moves to the next classroom are dependent upon space availability.

Playground: The spacious playgrounds encourage balance, coordination, climbing, creative-play, gardening, woodworking, and team sports to maximize physical health as the children grow and develop.

Substitutes: Foundations employs qualified substitute teachers in the event of a staff member's illness or absence. The substitute teachers all have an education in early childhood practices, have been drug tested, TB tested, received a criminal background check, fingerprinted, completed CPR, First Aid and Universal Precautions training, as well as been orientated to the programs policies and procedures.

Daily Activities: A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Listening is balanced with talking, group activities with solitary time, indoor time with outdoor time, quiet play with noisy play, child directed activities with teacher facilitated activities, etc. The teaching team meets weekly to discuss and review student observations and anecdotal notes enabling them to plan for instruction. Each child will engage in the following types of activities every day:

- Large and Small Group Activities
- Self-initiated Play
- Learning Center Activities: Art, Science, Writing Table, Manipulatives, Book Center, Blocks, Dramatic Play, Computers, Sensory, Listening Center
- Story Time
- Individual Activities
- Outdoor Activities
- Music and Movement
-

Lesson plans for each week are available in the classroom showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule. Infant and Toddler schedules are determined by the children themselves. Staff consider the child's needs in determining the child's schedule. Infant and toddler schedules can be adjusted daily to meet the needs of each individual child. This includes feeding and sleeping schedules. Daily notes for infants, toddlers, 2's & preschoolers will be communicated via our Parent Communication App, Procure. Parents can access Procure via either Android or Apple mobile devices and downloading via the app store, or online by visiting www.procareconnect.com.

Continuity of Care: Foundations understands that children learn best when they are with the same staff for extended periods of time. Foundations will do everything possible to encourage infants, toddlers and twos to maintain the same educators for nine months or longer. A consistent daily schedule is planned to offer a balance of learning activities. Learning is both formal and informal.

Field Trips: Children in our SAP (school-age program) enjoy many fun and educational field trips during school breaks and summer vacation. All children transported by Foundations will have a completed "Transportation Form" on file. Parents and adult relatives are invited to chaperone on all field trips. All policies and procedures in this handbook will be in effect while on a field trip. Foundations greatly appreciates chaperones, however; the center does not cover the entrance fee to field trip activities for chaperones.

We use school vehicles, teacher's cars and/or parents to provide transportation on these trips. If your child's class is scheduled to go on a field trip and you do not want your child to attend, you may need to make other arrangements for that day or period the class will be gone from the building.

A notice posting the dates, time of departure, time of return, and the destination location will be given at least 48 hours (about 2 days) before the field trip. Each child will be assigned to an adult in a small group for every part of the trip.

A first aid kit, emergency contact information, and emergency transport authorization information for the children in the group will be taken on all trips. Children will be counted every 15 minutes during a field trip. Children may only use a public restroom if they are accompanied by a staff member. Children will never be left alone in a vehicle or unsupervised by an adult. At least one staff member on the trip will always have a cell phone available.

Curriculum: Our curriculum is a flexible framework based upon the needs of the group and individual children. Foundations believes that our curriculum should be able to reflect the values, beliefs, and experiences of families within our program. Foundations uses both Accreditation and Paths to Quality Standards to provide a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate curriculum for ages 0 through 12 years of age. In addition, suggestions for modifications and adaptations are an integral part of each curriculum.

Curriculum emerges as the children explore various themes and topics and bring their experiences to the classroom. Children are encouraged to investigate, create and develop ideas, formulate answers and predict results. Collaboratively, our curriculum reflects our vision, mission, philosophy, and program goals. This program's policy is that the curriculum content and instructional materials utilized reflect the culture and diversity present in the community. One of the objectives of the curriculum and teaching strategies is to reduce stereotyping and to eliminate bias based on sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, and physical disability. The curriculum fosters respect and appreciation for the cultural diversity found in our country and an awareness of the rights, duties, and responsibilities of everyone as a member of a multicultural, nonsexist society.

ASSESSMENT OF GROWTH & PROGRESS

Authentic Assessment Plan: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence evaluates and keeps track of each child's development, learning and progress on an ongoing, comprehensive and authentic basis. Teachers are trained in assessment in their college coursework, during orientation, as well as through on-going staff training and workshops.

Authentic Assessment means evaluating children's growth through their daily activities; instead of using something that is not part of their regular routine, such as standardized tests. Teachers and programs choose authentic assessment because they believe that everyday experiences most accurately reflect what children have learned and the progress that they have made.

Child Portfolios: Child Portfolios are a planned collection of "documentation" about each child's learning and development. Documentation in each child's portfolio is evidence of a child's experiences and learning; and includes:

- 1) Photos of the child's experiences and photos of the child in action,
- 2) Observations of the child's learning experiences at Foundations and
- 3) Work samples that the child has created.

To go along with each photo and work sample, the teacher writes a note describing what was happening with the child at the time the photo or the work sample was made. Teachers collect specific pieces of documentation over several months in four categories: favorites, friends, family, and developmental milestones. These four categories show teachers and family members what children's interests and strengths are.

Developmental Milestones document children's growth and development in seven areas:

- 1) Thinking, Reasoning and Problem-solving;
- 2) Social & Emotional Development;
- 3) Language and Communication;
- 4) Gross-motor Development;
- 5) Fine-motor Development;
- 6) Reading and Writing Development;

7) Physical Growth and Health (including self-help skills)

Documenting developmental milestones helps teachers look at children's performance in relation to age-appropriate expectations and the program's curricular goals. Developmental milestones are included in a child's portfolio.

A Developmental Continuum Assessment Form is completed two times per year, and within three months of a new child starting. Twice each year the teachers pull together what they have collected and prepare a report/form entitled the "Creative Curriculum Child Progress and Planning Report" that evaluates the child's progress and accomplishments. The Child Progress and Planning Report and the individual child portfolio are shared with the child's family during parent teacher conferences. The teachers and family members conference two times per year to set goals and make plans to support each child's growth both at home and at Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence.

All information the facility collects on your child is kept strictly confidential. Information is shared with appropriate staff members to best plan for your child's success.

The information gathered from assessments is used in the following ways:

- To provide information about children's needs, interests, and abilities to intentionally plan developmentally appropriate experiences and instruction;
- To provide information to parents about their children's developmental milestones and progress;
- To indicate possible areas that require additional assessment.

Parent/ Teacher Conferences: Parent/teacher conferences are offered twice per year, once during November/December and once during April/May. These conferences are thirty minutes long and held during the day and evening to accommodate parent schedules. Teachers share with families the child's adjustment to school, overall development and learning including the child's portfolio and the learning and development checklist, peer relationships, school involvement including favorites and friends and will answer parent questions.

Should the teacher or family feel developmental screening or referral for diagnostic assessment is needed, the teacher will assist the family through this process. The family is encouraged to advocate for services for their child and be actively involved in the eligibility process. In addition, the program will provide families with information about program and services from other organizations, such as First Steps, Elkhart County PACE program, Joint Services, CAPS, Oaklawn, medical professionals, etc.

If parents want to have a conference at a time other than the scheduled conference times, please arrange with your child's teacher or contact your child's director.

Families may request a copy of their child's assessment in a different language to aid in the understanding of the evaluation process and aid in goal-planning and program expectation.

Program Planning and Improvement: The Creative Curriculum Child Progress and Planning Report coupled with the Parent/Teacher Conference helps Foundation's partner with parents to formulate the best program for the child. It is a goal of our program to work with families to create a learning framework that will reflect the values, beliefs, and experiences of each child's home learning environment. Through this partnership, the teachers can improve curriculum and adapt practices and the environment to each child's specific needs. Parent/Teacher Conferences also provide the program with valuable feedback on the program and ways to improve early childhood experiences.

Teachers meet once per week to interpret and use assessment results to align curriculum and teaching practices to the interests and needs of the children. The results obtained from the assessments and additional information received during the week, should be utilized to design goals for individual children as well as to guide curriculum planning and monitor progress of both the children and climate of the classroom.

Arrival & Departure of Children: Each child should be escorted into his/her classroom. This is to ensure that each teacher is aware of your child's arrival. This ensures that your child is always accounted for and for your child's safety.

When arriving and departing please do not allow your vehicle to idle. This creates fumes that come into the building when the doors open and cause unnecessary air pollution.

CHILDREN ARE NOT PERMITTED TO ENTER THE BUILDING ALONE!!

When picking up your child, please be sure to come into the classroom and make eye contact with the staff, we need to know when you are departing with your child. Once you have taken your child from the room, please keep him/her safely with you in the building. Please do not allow your child/children to wander the building unsupervised. Children will not be permitted to leave the building without an adult.

Our staff take attendance throughout the day. Each time children transition from one location to another, i.e. indoors to outdoors, the teacher will be responsible for counting the number of children whenever leaving one area and when arriving at another to always confirm the safe whereabouts of every child.

Other than parents or legal guardian, only persons with prior written authorization will be allowed to pick-up a child from our program. Anyone who is unfamiliar to teaching staff, including authorized individuals, will be asked to present their keycard or a photo ID before a child is released to them.

If your child rides the Head Start bus to/from our program, a staff member will assist the child on/off the bus.

Transportation

Before and After School Transportation: Foundations in Elkhart will offer transportation to our students enrolled in the school-age program (SAP). There is no additional transportation charge. Foundations transports to a select number of schools within Elkhart. The safe transportation of your child is our priority. For this reason, children demonstrating negative or unsafe behaviors may lose their bus riding privilege.

Peaceful Conflict Resolution Policy for Children:

Child Guidance and Discipline: Our curriculum is designed to build positive self-esteem in all children. Respectful behavior towards others and others' property is a responsibility we teach children as they continue to learn self-controlled behavior. Our teachers use positive guidance, redirection, and planning to prevent behavior problems. Acceptable behavior is encouraged through positive verbal feedback. We tell the children all the things they CAN DO, rather than the endless lists of DON'TS.

Physical aggression toward children and staff is unacceptable. Children are encouraged to use their words to express their anger or frustration. Each classroom is equipped with a "Feelings" book or board for children having difficulty expressing themselves verbally. Our teachers will intervene immediately when a child becomes physically aggressive to protect everyone and encourage more acceptable behavior. No child will be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child or others. Our teachers do not:

- Speak in abusive or harsh tones, nor make threats or derogatory remarks
- Use physical punishment, including spanking, hitting, or shaking.
- Use any punishment that would humiliate, frighten, or subject a child to neglect.
- Withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline

We use discipline that is consistent, clear and understandable to the children.

When a child's challenging behavior is preventing him/her or other children from participating in the program and requiring excessive one-on-one attention from the staff, the parent will be informed and need to work with the staff to create a behavior modification plan. Together with the parents, we work through a plan and hopefully reduce the negative behavior and replace it with positive behavior. If after this program is implemented, we do not make progress with your child, we will request that you seek outside services for a formal behavioral and/or developmental evaluation. As stated previously (under Support Services) in this handbook, we will work with outside agencies to provide the best early childhood program for your child, with reasonable accommodations. The safety and well-being of all children in the

classroom is a concern for the program too. At no time is violent behavior, spitting at people, or fleeing the building ever considered acceptable. Children exhibiting those types of behaviors may be terminated, immediately.

Steps Staff Take for Challenging Behavior: Staff will communicate with the aggressive child using the least number of words and very little attention is given to the child's negative behavior. Any attention will reinforce a behavior- negative or positive.

- Staff reminds the child that the behavior is inappropriate and unacceptable. If the child has hurt another child, the teacher will take care of the injured child first and have the aggressive child sit quietly away from the group. Once the aggressive child has gained control and calmed down, he/she is encouraged to use his/her words, comfort the injured child and make amends.
- Staff redirects the child to a new activity and moves closer to them to keep them close to encouraging self-controlled behavior.
- If the negative behavior continues, the teacher engages the child in solo activities which allows the child to express his/her needs with close teacher supervision. A simple choice of two activities is helpful for most children.
- If the negative behavior continues after two redirections, the teacher sits quietly with the child until the child gains control of his/her behavior.
- Any time the child returns to an activity and demonstrates positive behavior, the staff provides verbal reinforcement.
- As a last resort, Foundations reserves the right to withdraw your child from the program.

Anti-Bullying Policy: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence believes that all students have a right to a safe and healthy school environment. The district, schools, and community have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. A student shall not intimidate, harass, or bully another student through words or actions. Such behavior includes direct physical contact (i.e. such as hitting or shoving; verbal assaults, such as teasing or name-calling), social isolation or manipulation.

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence expects students and/or staff to immediately report incidents of bullying to the director or designee. Staff who witness such acts take immediate steps to intervene when safe to do so. Each complaint of bullying should be promptly investigated. This policy applies to students on school grounds, while traveling to and from school or a school-sponsored activity, during the lunch period, whether on or off campus, and during a school-sponsored activity.

To ensure bullying does not occur on school campuses, Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence will provide staff development training in bullying prevention and cultivate acceptance and understanding in all students and staff to build each school's capacity to maintain a safe and healthy learning environment

Teachers should discuss this policy with their students in age-appropriate ways and should assure them that they need not endure any form of bullying. Students who bully are in violation of this policy and are subject to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

Suspension/Expulsion Policy: Unfortunately, there are sometimes reasons we must expel a child from our program. The goal of this policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension and expulsion. We will do everything possible to work with the family of the child(ren) to prevent this policy from being enforced. Exclusionary measures are not considered until all other possible interventions have been exhausted, and there is agreement that exclusion is in the best interest of the child. In the event of exclusion, the administration will assist the family in accessing services and an alternative placement. The following are reasons we may have to expel or suspend a child from this center. Foundations always complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself.

- Parent threatens physical or intimidating actions toward staff members.
- Parent exhibits verbal abuse to staff in front of enrolled children.
- Child leaves the building or confines of the playground.

PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION

- Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's immunization records.
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
- Verbal abuse to staff.
- CCDF families fail to record the attendance of their children in the POS machine per contract
- Defamation of program
- Other (explanation will be provided)

CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION

- Failure of child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
- Uncontrollable tantrums/ angry outbursts.
- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children.
- Excessive biting.
- Other (explanation will be provided)

SCHEDULE OF EXPULSION

If after the remedial actions above have not worked:

- The child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion.
- The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion period.
- The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required for the child or parent to return to the center.
- The parent/guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows the parent sufficient time to seek alternate arrangements (approximately one to two weeks' notice depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety).
- Failure of the child/parent to satisfy the terms of the plan may result in permanent expulsion from the center.

PROACTIVE ACTIONS THAT CAN BE TAKEN IN ORDER TO PREVENT EXPULSION

- Staff will try to redirect children from negative behavior.
- Staff will reassess the classroom environment, appropriate activities, supervision.
- Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.
- Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.
- Staff will consistently apply consequences for rules.
- Child will be given verbal warnings.
- Child will be given time to regain control.
- Child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.
- Parent/guardian will be notified of disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion via Procure.
- The director, classroom staff and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss how to promote positive behaviors.
- The parents will be given literature or other resources regarding methods of improving behavior.
- Recommendation of evaluation by outside professional.

- Recommendation of evaluation by local school district child study team.

Snacks, Foods & Nutrition

Attitudes about food develop early in life. The food children eat affects their wellbeing, their physical growth, their ability to learn, and their overall behavior. We have an opportunity to help children learn about foods, to enjoy a variety of foods from their own culture and others, and to help them begin to appreciate their bodies need to be strong, flexible, and healthy. Prior to serving any fresh fruit or vegetable, the staff thoroughly wash all items before eating. Eating moderately, eating a variety of foods, and eating in a relaxed atmosphere are healthy habits for young children to form.

Meals and snacks are at regularly scheduled times, two hours apart and not more than three hours apart. See daily schedule. All food is prepared, served, and stored in accordance with the U.S. Department of Agriculture Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) guidelines. Staff do not microwave plastic or Styrofoam containers, bags, or wraps when microwaving children's food. Snacks and meals brought from home must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers. Clean, sanitary drinking water is available to children throughout the day. Staff discard any foods with expired dates. Staff will also discard breastmilk within one hour or refrigerate immediately and discard unused formula within two hours. Foods that are hotter than 110 degrees Fahrenheit are kept out of children's reach. Foods requiring refrigeration will be kept cold until served.

For each child with special health care needs, food allergies, or special nutrition needs, the child's health care provider should provide the program in individualized care plan prepared in consultation with family members and specialist involved in the child's care. Children with food allergies shall be protected from contact with the problem food. With family consent, the program posts information about the child's allergies in the food preparation area and in areas of the facility the child uses to serve as a visual reminder to all adults who interact with the child during the day. Program staff will keep a daily record documenting the type and quantity of food a child consumes when any child with a disability has special feeding needs and provide parents with that information. Program staff will also document and relay to parents of infants all food consumed throughout the day. In accordance with Indiana licensing guidelines all breast milk must be labeled with the child's name and the date and time it was collected.

High risk foods, often involved in choking incidents, will not be served. For children younger than three years, these include hotdogs (whole or sliced into rounds), whole grapes, raisins, nuts, popcorn, raw peas, hard pretzels, and chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.

The program does not use food or beverages as rewards for good behavior and will not withhold food or beverages as a punishment, nor will teaching staff ever threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline.

At breakfast, snack and lunch time (if applicable) staff members will be seated with students while eating and engage children in conversation as this promotes positive relationships and provides positive models in language, speech and vocabulary development.

Preschool Snacks: A snack is early morning and mid-afternoon daily. Two food groups will be represented at each snack time as outlined in USDA guidelines. Foundation's serves a wide variety of nutritional snacks and encourages children to expand their tastes by at least trying a portion of the food offered. Snack and meals are at least 2 hours apart but no more than 3 hours apart.

Birthday Snack Guidelines: Birthdays are an important and significant event in the life of a child. They afford the opportunity for children to be given special recognition. Accordingly, students who wish to bring treats for the class on their birthday may do so. Birthday snacks brought from home must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in factory-sealed containers.

Communication with Families

The program will promote communication between families and staff by using written notes, informal conversations or e-mail. Families are encouraged to send written notes with important information so all the staff who work with the child can share the parent's communication. The teaching staff will write notes for families no less than weekly. Staff will use these notes to inform families about the child's experiences, accomplishments, behavior, and other issues that affect the child's development and well-being. Parents are encouraged to maintain regular, on-going, two-way communication with the teaching staff in a manner that best meets their needs -email, in person, notes, or phone calls. We also use our parent engagement (Procure) for communication.

Open Door Policy: Parents and legal guardians are always welcome to visit our classrooms. As a safety feature, all parents and visitors will enter through the designated doors which remain locked during business hours. A numeric password is required to be entered to assure safety. Families are asked to use discretion when sharing their entry code with others.

Grievance Policy: Open and honest communication between families and the preschool program is an essential component of a high-quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience. If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concern to your child's teacher. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for assistance from the administration. Parents can also email or put in writing any concerns. Sit-down meetings to discuss the concerns and come together with a plan can also be initiated if the first steps are not successful.

If you are concerned about some aspect of the program or policy, contact the director. Should you continue to have problems, you may reach out to the executive director.

As part of our program assessment, in the fall and spring of each year, we also provide you with a family questionnaire to evaluate our program. This information helps us assess how the program is meeting the needs of families and children and identify strengths and weaknesses.

Family Involvement: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence encourages families to be very involved in their child's education by observing their children during the day when possible and meeting with staff. Family members are welcome to visit at any time during class sessions.

Teachers and administrators use a variety of formal and informal (including conversations) ways to become acquainted with and learn from families about their family structure and their preferred means of child-rearing practices and communication; and information about their socioeconomic, linguistic, racial, religious, and cultural backgrounds as they wish to share. Families are surveyed in enrollment paperwork and through other questionnaires during the year regarding their family, beliefs, and preferences. Program staff communicate with families, on at least a weekly basis, regarding children's activities and developmental milestones, shared care-giving issues, and other information that affects the well-being of their children. Family teacher conferences are held in both the fall and spring, as well as when either party requests. At least one Family Night is held during the year.

Foundation's values the time spent talking and interacting with families and developing strong, reciprocal relationships. As the teacher learns from the families' expertise regarding their child's interests, approaches to learning, and developmental needs, goals for your child's growth and development can be incorporated into ongoing classroom planning. Families are encouraged to share any concerns, preferences or questions with the preschool teacher or administration at any time.

Although in-person daily contact cannot be replaced, preschool staff also relies on notes home, emails, phone calls, newsletters, and bulletin boards as alternative means to establish and maintain open, two-way communication.

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence invites you to become involved in one or all the following ways and welcomes other ideas as well.

1. Support your child's daily transition to school by sharing information about your child's interests and abilities. Keeping the teacher informed of changes and events that might affect your child, allows the teacher to be more responsive to your child's needs.
2. Attend family meetings.
3. Return all forms, questionnaires, and so on, promptly
4. Attending Family/Teacher conferences in the Fall and Spring.
5. Take time to read the classroom or preschool parent bulletin board(s).
6. Check your child's cubby each day.
7. Participate in field trip activities & Family Nights.
8. Share some of your talents in your child's class through activities such as: reading or storytelling, art, preparing visuals, music, sewing, crafts, hobbies, your profession, or artifacts from trips you have taken.
9. Share any of your families' cultural traditions, celebrations, or customs.
10. Read all the material sent home with your child.
11. Help with special events. Helping takes many different forms such as preparation of materials at home, making telephone calls, preparing or posting flyers, recruiting other volunteers, collecting donations or prizes, run errands, photography, setup before the event, or clean afterwards.

Foundations will, to the extent possible, provide full opportunities for meaningful participation of the families with children with limited English proficiency, families with children with disabilities, including providing information and reports in an understandable and uniform format and, including alternative formats on request, and, to the extent possible, in a language families understand.

Foundations believes that families should be supported in making decisions about services that their children may need. The teaching staff will provide information to families about available community resources and assist as requested in helping the family make connections.

Program Advisory Committee: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence is governed by a board of directors. The board is composed of parents and community members interested in the governance of the child care program. In addition, Foundation's also has a Parent Advisory Committee to support its work. This group meets every quarter to discuss professional development, and best practices in early childhood education. This group is composed of parents and members of the community. They also serve as a sounding board for new ideas and services. If you have any ideas, concerns, or questions for these governance boards, please contact Jennifer Fisher.

Children's Records-Confidentiality: Student records containing personally identifiable information, except for directory information, are confidential and are stored in a locked cabinet. Only persons, including employees with a legitimate educational interest, can access a student's records without the parent's permission. Parents may access, request amendments to, and copy their child's records during regular office hours.

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence maintains records on each child to facilitate the students' instruction, guidance, and educational progress. The records contain information about the student and his or her education and may include, but are not limited to, the following types of information:

Identification data, attendance data, record of achievement, family background data, discipline data, teacher observations, and external agency reports. The records of each child are in the director's office

The following persons, agencies, and organizations may have restricted access to a child's records without prior written consent of the parent. Any other access to student records shall be only upon written consent or upon court order or legally issued subpoena.

- A. Teachers with a legitimate educational interest.
- B. Representatives of state and local government when auditing and evaluating federal educational programs.
- C. Accrediting organizations for accrediting purposes.
- D. Custodial parents of dependent children, regardless of child's age.
- E. Appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.
- F. Child Protective Services.

Health and Safety Policies & Procedures

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence is committed to promoting wellness and to safeguard the health and safety of children and adults who participate in our program. To provide a safe and secure environment for every child and adult, we follow guidelines required by the National Association for the Education of Young Children Standards, NAC and regulatory agencies and pediatric authorities in the field.

Building Security and Access: The building will be locked at all times. Parents and approved pick-up people will receive a coded key card. This will open the door to the building during business hours. To maintain a secure environment **please do not let other people into the building**. Parents need to use their keycard for entry into the building and to show staff members that they are approved to pick-up from the program. Visitors will be required to ring the doorbell to gain entry.

Health Records and Immunization Certificates: Before a child begins the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the Indiana Department of Public Health.

When a child is overdue for any routine health services, parents, legal guardians, or both provide evidence of an appointment for those services before the child's entry into the program and as a condition of remaining enrolled in the program, except for immunization for which parents are using religious exemption.

Dental Health Emergency: Upon enrollment a family is required to submit, in writing, the name of a dentist, in the case of a dental emergency. The files will be maintained by the administration.

Health and Safety Records: Health and safety information collected from families will be maintained on file for each child in the school nurse's office. Files are kept current by updating as needed, but at least quarterly. Health records document the dates of routine screening tests and immunizations. The content of the file is confidential but is immediately available to administrators or teaching staff who have consent from a parent or legal guardian for access to records; the child's parent or legal guardian; and regulatory authorities, upon request.

Child Health and Safety Records will include

1. Current information about any health insurance coverage required for treatment in an emergency;
2. Results of health examination, showing up-to-date immunizations and screening tests with an indication of normal or abnormal results and any follow-up required for abnormal results; Families must provide current immunization records before entering the programs.
3. Current emergency contact information for each child, that is kept up to date by a specified method during the year;
4. Names of individuals authorized by the family to have access to health information about the child;
5. Instructions for any of the child's special health needs such as allergies or chronic illness (e.g., asthma, hearing or vision impairments, feeding needs, neuromuscular conditions, urinary or other ongoing health problems, seizures, diabetes);
6. Individual emergency care plans for children with known medical or developmental problems or other conditions that might require special care in an emergency (allergy, asthma, seizures, orthopedic or sensory problems, and other chronic conditions, conditions that require regular medication or technology support; Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under immunized because of a medical condition (documented by a licensed health professional) or the family's beliefs. Staff implements a plan to exclude the child promptly if a vaccine-preventable disease to which children are susceptible occurs in the program.

General Health and Safety Guidelines for the Teaching Staff

- All staff must be alert to the health of each child, known allergies, or special medical conditions. Parents will be required to sign a release of medical information (HIPPA).
- Under the supervision of the preschool teacher, all staff must be alert to the whereabouts of all children. Systems are in place for accounting for children regularly, especially during transition periods.

- All staff are to follow proper procedures for hand washing, using disinfectant, and following universal precautions to prevent infections.
- All staff will use gloves, other barriers and techniques when needed to minimize contact with mucous membranes or of openings in the skin with potentially infectious body fluids.
- All staff are familiar with evacuation routes and procedures.
- All teaching staff complete Universal Precautions training.
- At least one staff member who has a certificate of satisfactory completion in pediatric first aid training, including managing a blocked airway and providing rescue breathing for infants and children, is always present with each group of children. When a child in the group has a special health condition that might require CPR, one staff person who has successfully completed training in CPR is always present in the program.

Illness Policy and Exclusion of Sick Children: For the health and safety of all the children, it is mandatory that sick children not be brought to school. In spite of everyone's efforts, children do get sick, and parents need to have a backup plan for emergency pick-up and child care. Please provide the program with up-to-date emergency contact phone numbers. Once parents are contacted and informed that their child is ill and must go home, for health and safety reasons, the child needs to be picked up within one hour.

If your child has any of the following symptoms during the night, they will not be admitted the following morning for the other children's safety.

- fever greater than 100.5 degrees F
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- pink eyes with drainage
- cough with congestion and excessive nasal discharge

Additionally, the following conditions will result in exclusion from the program:

- Impetigo.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e. strep throat) (may return 24 hours after medication- if fever-free).
- Head lice OR nits (may return after treatment and removal of all nits. Foundations is a nit-free institution).
- Scabies, until after the first treatment.
- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
- Pertussis, until 5 days of documented antibiotic treatment.
- Mumps, until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A.
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.

Upon arrival, each child is observed by teaching staff for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate comfortably in the daily activities. **Children will be excluded when a child is not able to participate comfortably; if the illness requires more care than staff are able to provide without compromising the needs of the other children in the group; or if keeping the child at school poses an increased risk to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child will come in contact.**

When a child develops signs of an illness during their day, parents, legal guardians, or other persons authorized by the parent will be notified immediately to pick up the child. For this reason, please be sure that we have current, accurate phone numbers for you, your authorized emergency contact person and your child's pediatrician. In the meantime, we will provide the child a place to rest until the parent, legal guardian or designated person arrives under the supervision of someone familiar with the child. If the child is suspected of having a contagious disease, then, until she or he can be picked up, the child is located where new individuals will not be exposed.

Reporting Communicable Diseases: Staff and teachers provide information to families verbally and in writing about any unusual level or type of communicable disease to which their child was exposed, signs and symptoms of the disease, mode of transmission, period of communicability, and control measures that are being implemented at the program and that the families should implement at home. The program has documentation that it has cooperative arrangements with local health authorities and has, at least annually, contacted those authorities to keep current on relevant health information and to arrange for obtaining advice when outbreaks of communicable disease occur.

Medication Policies and Procedures: The center will administer medication to children with written approval of the parent and an order from a health provider for a specific child. Because administration of medication in the program is a safety hazard, medication administration will be limited to situations where an agreement to give medicine outside preschool hours cannot be made. The first dose of medication **MUST** be given at home to see if the child has any type of reaction.

Procedure: Staff will administer medication during center hours only if the parent or legal guardian has provided written consent and the medication is available in an original labeled prescription or manufacturer's container that is child resistant. Any other person who would administer medication has specific training and a written performance evaluation, updated annually by a health professional on the practice of the five right practices of medication administration: (1) verifying that the right child receives the (2) right medication (3) in the right dose (4) at the right time (5) by the right method with documentation of each right each time the medication is given. Medication errors will be controlled by checking and recording these five right practices each time medication is given. Should a medication error occur, the Poison Control Center and the child's parents will be contacted immediately. The incident will be documented in the child's record.

For prescription medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the center with the medication in the original, child-resistant container that is labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name and strength of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage, and disposal instructions.

For over-the-counter medications, parents or legal guardians will provide the medication in a child-resistant container. The medication will be labeled with the child's first and last names; specific, legible instructions for administration and storage supplied by the manufacturer; and the name of the health care provider who recommended the medication for the child.

Instructions for the dose, time, method to be used, and duration of administration will be provided to the teaching staff in writing (by a signed note or a prescription label) or dictated over the telephone by a physician or other person legally authorized to prescribe medication. This requirement applies both to prescription and over-the-counter medications.

Medications will be kept at the temperature recommended for that type of medication, in a sturdy, child-resistant container that is locked and prevents spillage.

Medication will not be used beyond the date of expiration on the container or beyond any expiration of the instructions provided by the physician or other person legally permitted to prescribe medication. Instructions which state that the medication may be used whenever needed will be renewed by the physician at least annually.

A medication log will be maintained by the school staff to record the instructions for giving the medication, consent obtained from the parent or legal guardian, amount, the time of administration, and the person who administered each dose of medication. Spills, reactions, and refusal to take medication will be noted in this log.

Provider Illness or Emergency Notification Policy: In the event of provider illness or an emergency that makes us unable to open or remain open, the parents will be notified via the parent engagement app. Authorized subs may be used if appropriate to provide care. If that is not available, then the parents/guardians will be responsible for alternative care.

Safety Procedures in the Classroom Environment: Before children arrive at school, the teacher will complete the following daily safety checklist indoor and outdoor:

- All safety plugs and electrical outlets are covered; heat/AC, water temperature, and toilets, etc. are in working order.

- All cleaning supplies/poisons out of children reach and stored properly.
- Classroom and materials checked for cleanliness/broken parts, etc. including playground.
- Supplies checked- first aid kit, latex gloves, soap, paper towels, etc.
- Daily monitoring of environment -spills, sand, etc. Other serious problems reported to office.
- Upon entry into the classroom from outside, children and adults wash their hands.
- Upon arrival, each child is observed by the teacher for signs of illness or injury that could affect the child's ability to participate in the daily activities.
- First Aid Kits are available for use in the classroom and always taken outdoors.
- Prior to participating in the program, health records that document the dates of service shall be submitted that show the child is current for routine screening tests and immunizations according to the schedule recommended and published by the American Academy of Pediatrics.
- No child will be left unsupervised.

Supervision, Ratios & Square Footage Policies

- The maximum class size in each is based on square footage of the current location.
- Our center always maintains a state ratio. Ratios depend on group size and age of the children.
- All children will be within "line of sight" of adults both indoors and outdoors unless toileting.
- When toileting, students will be monitored by sound and checked visually when necessary.
- When students enter the hallways to access their cubbies, an adult visually monitors and supervises the children from the classroom doorway.
- Adult-student ratios are maintained on field trips.
- Outdoor and indoor spaces are zoned by the teaching staff to provide adequate supervision of the entire classroom.
- The program director will maintain a current list of available substitutes. Should one of the teaching staff need to temporarily leave the room; arrangements will be made to cover the classroom to maintain the staff-child ratio.

Water Activities- Health & Safety Policies and Procedures: There is a water table in the classroom for children to engage in learning activities through play. During water play children are involved in active experiences with science and math concepts. Children with sores on their hands are not allowed to participate with others in the water table to ensure that no infectious diseases are spread. Children must wash their hands before engaging in water play. Children are not allowed to drink water during water play activities. When the activity period is complete, the water table is drained and refilled with fresh water before a new group of children comes to participate. Outdoor water play is limited to tubs, buckets, containers and the water table. Staff supervise all children by sight and sound in all areas with access to water in tubs, buckets, and water tables.

Outside Play: Health & Safety Precautions: We have daily opportunities for outdoor play as the weather permits and provided the weather air quality and environmental safety conditions do not pose a threat. This allows children the opportunity to develop their large muscle skills, get exercise, and be active. We use Weather Bug guidelines to determine if the Wind Chill Factor or Heat Index is safe for outdoor play.

In cases when we cannot go outside (due to weather conditions) children are given the opportunity to use indoor equipment for similar activities inside and are supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment. For example, tumbling mats may be offered for upper body activities or rolling across the mat.

To make sure that your child can play comfortably outside, it is important to dress him according to the weather. When it is cold outside, he needs a warm coat, mittens or gloves and a hat (labeled with your child's name). For the warmer days, dressing your child lightly is just as important. For those in-between days, dressing your child in layers is a practical idea. It is expected that all students will go outside unless there is a doctor's note indicating the reason why the child cannot go outside.

There are areas on the playground for children to be in the shade and still be active. We encourage you to bring a hat or other clothing for your child to wear as another protection from the sun. Sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher will be applied to your child's exposed skin (only with your written parental permission to do

so). We will also use an insect repellent containing DEET (only with your written permission) no more than once a day to protect your child from insect bites when the public health authorities recommend its use.

Program staff will complete the National Program for Playground Safety's Suggested General Maintenance Checklist quarterly. Foundation's maintenance personnel will inspect the playground weekly to ensure that there are no safety issues.

Classroom Animals and Pets: Health & Safety Guidelines: If you, as a parent or legal guardian, want to bring your family pet to share with your child's classroom, you are welcome. Please note the sharing of any pets must be prearranged with your child's classroom teacher and office. The preschool teacher ensures that the animal does not create an unsafe or unsanitary condition. The animal would appear to be in good health and have documentation from a veterinarian or an animal shelter to show that the animal is fully immunized (if the animal should be so protected) and suitable for contact with children. The teacher would ensure staff and children practice good hygiene and hand washing when coming into contact with the animal and after coming into contact with the animal. Teaching staff supervise all interactions between children and animals and instruct children on safe behavior when in close proximity to animals.

Note: Any children allergic to the pet will not be exposed to the animal. Reptiles are not allowed because of the risk for salmonella. The classroom teacher is responsible for checking that requirements have been met.

Cleaning and Sanitization: The facility will be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition. When a spill occurs, the area will be made inaccessible to children and the area will be cleaned immediately. Staff will clean rugs and carpeting by blotting, spot cleaning with a detergent-disinfectant, and shampooing or steam cleaning as part of standard precautions. Staff will use ventilation and sanitation rather than sprays, air freshening chemicals, or deodorizers, controls odors in inhabited areas of the facility and in custodial closets.

Toys placed in a child's mouth or contaminated by body secretion or excretion will be removed immediately and disinfected after cleaning with soap and water. This also applies to other surfaces in the classroom. Toys will be cleaned with soap and water and then sprayed with a Sanitizing Solution, and then air dried. Surfaces will be disinfected using a non-toxic solution provided by Cintas (Safety Sheets are attached to the dispenser). To disinfect, the surfaces will be sprayed until glossy. The solution will be left on for at least two minutes before it is wiped off with a clean paper towel, or it may be allowed to air dry. Machine washable cloth toys that have been placed in a child's mouth or that are otherwise contaminated by body secretion or excretion must be laundered before another child's use. Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized will not be used.

Staff will be trained in cleaning techniques, proper use of protective barriers such as gloves, proper handling and disposal of contaminated materials, and information required by the US Occupational Safety and Health Administration about the use of any chemical agents.

Routine cleaning will be supervised by the preschool teacher and will follow the NAEYC Cleaning and Sanitation Frequency Table found on the NAEYC website (www.naeyc.org/torch). A checklist will be completed as indicated in the table.

Facility cleaning requiring potentially hazardous chemicals will be scheduled when children are not present to minimize exposure of the children. All cleaning products will be used as directed by the manufacturer's label. Nontoxic substances will be used whenever possible. Staff are trained yearly.

Hand Washing Practices: Frequent hand washing is critical to preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Teachers teach children how to wash their hands effectively. Posters of children using proper hand washing procedures are placed by each sink. The program follows these practices regarding hand washing:

- Staff members and those children who are developmentally able to learn personal hygiene are taught hand-washing procedures and are periodically monitored.
- Hand washing is required by all staff, volunteers, and children when hand washing reduces the risk of transmission of infectious diseases to themselves and to others.
- Staff assist children with hand washing as needed to successfully complete the task.

Children and adults wash their hands:

- upon arrival for the day;
- after diapering or using the toilet;
- after handling body fluids (e.g., blowing or wiping a nose, coughing on a hand, or any touching of mucus, blood or vomit);
- before meals and snacks, preparing or serving food, or handling any raw food that requires cooking (e.g., meat, eggs, poultry);
- after playing in water that is shared by two or more people;
- after handling pets and other animals or any materials such as sand, dirt, or surfaces that might be contaminated by contact with animals

Adults also wash their hands:

- before and after feeding a child;
- before and after administering medication;
- after assisting a child with toileting
- after handling garbage or cleaning.

Proper hand-washing procedures are followed by adults and children and include

- using liquid soap and running water;
- rubbing hands vigorously for at least seconds, including back of hands, wrists, between fingers, under and around any jewelry, and under fingernails; rinsing well; drying hands with a paper towel, or a dryer; and avoiding touching the faucet with just-washed hands (e.g., by using a paper towel to turn off water).

Except when handling blood or body fluids that might contain blood (when wearing gloves is required), wearing gloves is an optional supplement, but not a substitute, for hand washing in any situation listed above.

- Staff must wear gloves when contamination with blood may occur;
- Staff do not use hand-washing sinks for bathing children or removing smeared fecal matter.

In situations where sinks are used for both food preparation and other purposes, staff clean and sanitize the sinks before using them to prepare food.

Toilet Learning: Toilet learning is an important time in a child’s development. For children who are unable to use the toilet consistently, the following procedures are in place:

1. Diapering will be done in the designated diaper area, i.e., the changing room with a changing table or the bathroom stall. Food handling will not be permitted in these diapering areas.
2. Staff will follow all diapering guidelines set forth by Child Care Licensing, NAC and NAEYC Standards.
3. Cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and sent home that day for laundering.
4. Staff check children for signs that diapers or pull-ups are wet or contain feces at least every 2 hours and after periods of rest. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled.
5. Staff change children’s diapers or soiled underwear in the designated changing areas including bathroom stall as needed and not elsewhere in the facility. Each Infant and toddler classroom has a designated changing area to be used by that classroom exclusively.
6. At all times, caregivers have a hand on the child if being changed on an elevated surface.
7. Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not used for other purposes, including temporary placement of other objects, and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding.
8. Staff disposes contaminated materials and diapers in a plastic bag with a secure tie that is placed in a closed container.
9. Containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly using a hands-free device (e.g., a step can). Containers are kept closed and are inaccessible to children. The container will be clearly labeled to show its intended use.
10. Diapering and Gloving posters will be posted in the changing area showing procedures through visuals and words. These procedures are used by the program administrator to evaluate teaching staff that change diapers.

11. For children who require cloth diapers, the diaper has an absorbent interlining completely contained within an outer covering made of waterproof material that prevents the escapes of feces & urine. Both the diaper and the outer covering are changed as a unit.
12. Potty chairs will not be used due to the risk of spreading infectious diarrhea.
13. Families will be asked to provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an “accident” or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child’s name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Tooth Brushing Policy: At least once daily, where children receive two or more meals, teaching staff provide an opportunity for tooth brushing and gum cleaning to remove food and plaque. (Toothpaste is not required.) Toothbrushes will be rinsed thoroughly after each use placed back in child’s cubby. Toothbrushes will be replaced every six months or as needed. It is the parent’s responsibility to provide their child with a toothbrush.

First Aid Kit: It is inaccessible to children, but readily available for adult use. It is fully equipped according to guidance from FSSA, NAEYC, NAP and PTQ. Following each use of the First Aid kit, the contents will be inspected and missing or used items replaced immediately. The First Aid kit will be inspected monthly. The first aid kit is taken to the outdoor play areas and on field trips and outings away from the site.

Fire Safety: A fire extinguisher is installed in the preschool classroom with a tag indicating its annual service date. The fire alarm system is serviced annually. Smoke detectors, fire alarms, and carbon monoxide detectors are tested monthly. A written log of testing dates and battery changes is maintained and available upon request. Fire drills are conducted monthly and recorded on a log.

Emergencies and Notification of Accidents or Incidents

Safety

- *Smoking, Prohibited Substances and Guns:* Indoor and outdoor environments used by our program are designated non-smoking areas. The use of tobacco in any form, alcohol, or illegal drugs is prohibited on the facility premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances (pesticide and herbicide) is prohibited. No guns or lethal weapons are allowed in or around the facility.
- *Evacuation Plans, Drills, Closings:* Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom above the sink. Fire drills are practiced monthly during different times of the day, including nap time. Program closing will take place as emergencies arise.
- *Evacuation Procedure:* In case of an emergency evacuation, the following plan will take place:
 - The fire alarm will be sounded
 - The staff will give children clear and simple rules to stop their activities immediately and proceed to the classroom door.
 - Staff will then escort the children out of the building to a designated safe place.
- *Fire or Risk of Explosion:* Anyone who discovers smoke, fire, or risk of explosion will pull the fire alarm located in their designated area.
- *Power Failures:* Staff will comfort the children and explain the situation, and model for them how to remain calm. The director will discover if the power outage is confined to the facility or includes the neighborhood or surrounding area. Flashlights are stored in each classroom. Unless the power failure is accompanied by an emergency requiring evacuation, children will be kept inside. Should it be necessary to leave the building, staff will follow emergency evacuation procedures.

Lock Down: If Foundation’s for Early Childhood Excellence is ever informed by the Elkhart County, Elkhart City, South Bend or St. Joseph County Police of an emergency that requires us to stay inside, all doors will be locked and everyone will remain inside until further notice from the police.

Fire Drills: Fire Drills are practiced monthly during varying times of the day. Once a year in the Fall when the Fire Department brings their truck to the center for a visit, the fireman observes our evacuation procedures as we conduct a fire drill on that day. The fire department also teaches the children fire safety.

Tornado Drills: Tornado and Hurricane drills are practiced once per month. Documentation logs are kept on all drills.

Tornados:

Infant/Toddler Program on Grant: Children will be taken downstairs to the basement and wait for further instruction. The staff will take all emergency contact information, flashlights and a cell phone into the basement. Staff and children will remain in this area until the threat of the storm has passed.

Infant/Toddler Program on Indiana: Children will follow the procedures in place for the building and report to a safe area.

Ages 2-12: Director will notify staff of severe weather. Staff will evacuate children out of the classroom, taking all emergency contact information and flashlights into the main hallway. The director will take a cell phone and radio with batteries. Staff and children will remain in this area until the threat of the storm has passed and the Director releases all groups.

Center Closing: If a SNOW EMERGENCY is declared by the city or county that the program is in, and/or if staff members cannot safely arrive at work, we may be forced to close for the day. If we need to close due to harsh weather or an emergency, we will post our closing on our Facebook Page and send an alert via Procure. Tuition will not be refunded for emergency closings, due to ongoing expenses. If the center must close early due to an emergency, parents will be contacted and need to pick up their children immediately.

Protection from Hazards and Environmental Health: Program staff protect children and adults from hazards, including electrical shock, burns, scalding, slipping, tripping, or falling. Floor coverings are secured to keep staff and children from tripping or slipping. Teaching staff and maintenance personnel perform routine indoor inspections of classrooms and correct safety issues.

Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence has undergone extensive Phase I Environmental Inspections looking for lead, radon, radiation, asbestos, fiberglass, and other hazards that could impact children's health.

The assistant director maintains the building's heating, cooling, and ventilation systems in compliance with national standards for facility use by children.

The program utilizes the Weather Bug website to determine air quality levels outdoors. Should the air quality be predicted to be poor, outdoor times are adjusted to minimize exposure.

The program maintains facilities, so they are free from harmful animals, insect pests, and poisonous plants. Pesticides and herbicides, if used, are applied according to the manufacturer's instructions when children are not at the facility and in a manner that prevents skin contact, inhalation, and other exposure to children. The program uses the techniques known as Integrated Pest Management (IPM) so that the least hazardous means are used to control pests and unwanted vegetation.

Child Protection Policies: The health and well-being of every child in our care is of the utmost importance and the protection of children is our responsibility. An applicant or volunteer for temporary or permanent employment with our program involves direct interaction with or the opportunity to interact and associate with children must execute and submit an affidavit of clearance from all crimes against a child or families. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children.

The program has written policy for reporting child abuse and neglect and procedures in place that comply with applicable federal, state, and local laws. The policy includes requirements for staff to report all suspected incidents of child abuse, neglect, or both by families, staff, volunteers, or others to the appropriate local agencies. Staff who report suspicions of child abuse or neglect where they work are immune from discharge, retaliation, or other disciplinary action for that reason alone unless it is proven that the report is malicious. All teaching staff complete "Mandatory Reporter: Child and Dependent Adult

Abuse” annually and within the 1st week of employment. Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence does not tolerate employees physically, or sexually abusing or harassing students.

Children who are physically or sexually abused or harassed by an employee should notify their parents, legal guardians, teacher, or another employee.

Suspected Substance Abuse: Persons under the influence of drugs or alcohol will not be permitted on the premises Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence. At no time will children be released to a person under the influence of alcohol or drugs and school officials will call the proper authorities if warranted.

Volunteers: Families are encouraged to take an active part in the educational process of the children. Families are encouraged to contact the teacher if they would like to volunteer in the classroom. We have a volunteer job description that defines the role and responsibilities of a volunteer. For safety’s sake, if a volunteer will be working with children, he/she will be expected to report directly to the director, and it may be necessary to undergo an interview with teaching staff and/or director before permission to volunteer is granted. In addition, no person with a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect will come in contact with children in the program or have responsibility for children. Volunteers are never permitted to work alone with children. People interested in volunteering should contact their child’s teacher or the center director at (574) 501-4ECE.

Staff Policies & Procedures: Foundations for Early Childhood Excellence has written personnel policies that define the roles and responsibilities, qualifications, and specialized training required of staff and volunteer positions. The policies outline nondiscriminatory hiring procedures and policies for staff evaluation. Policies detail job descriptions for each position, including reporting relationships; salary scales with increments based on professional qualification, length of employment, and performance evaluation; benefits; and resignation, termination, and grievance procedures. Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. The policies are provided to each employee upon hiring.

Hiring procedures include completion of the following checks: criminal-record check, free from history of substantiated child abuse or neglect check, education credentials, verification of age, completion of high school or GED, personal references and a current health assessment.

Staff Health Assessment: The program maintains health information from documented health forms for all paid staff and for all volunteers who work more than 6 hours per month and have contact with children. A health form is received by the program before an employee starts work or before a volunteer has contact with children.

Documented health assessments include:

- Capacities and limitations that may affect job performance
- Documentation by a licensed health professional of TB skin testing using the Mantoux method and showing the employee to be free from active TB disease. For those who have a positive TB skin test and who develop a persistent cough or unexpected fever, immediate assessment by a licensed physician is required. For those who have increased risk of TB according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), documentation is required annually by a licensed health professional showing that the employee is free from active TB disease (upon hire).

Staff Records: Confidential personnel files, including applications with record of experience, transcripts of education, health-assessment records, documentation of ongoing professional development, and results of performance evaluation, are kept in a locked filing cabinet in the director’s office

Staff Orientation: Employees must know their role and duties. New teaching staff will be required to participate in an initial orientation program that introduces them to fundamental aspects of the program operation including:

- Program philosophy, mission, and goals;
- Expectations for ethical conduct;
- Individual needs of children they will be teaching or caring for;
- Accepted guidance and classroom management techniques;

- Daily activities and routines of the program;
- Program curriculum;
- Child abuse and reporting procedures;
- Program policies and procedures;
- National Association for the Education of Young Children Standards;
- Regulatory requirements.

The employee's immediate supervisor should provide the new employee with a review of the employee's responsibilities and duties. The director will explain payroll procedures, employee benefit programs (life insurance, health insurance, etc.) and accompanying forms to the employee.

Staff -Code of Ethics: Staff follow an important code of ethics to guide their involvement with children and families. It is essential to protect the confidentiality of all information concerning children and their families. Maintaining a professional attitude includes being responsive to the needs of children and their families while balancing the need for confidentiality. All adults and children deserve respect. One way we demonstrate this respect is to refrain from talking about the children and/or their families in their presence unless the child is part of the conversation and to refrain from labeling a child/family negatively or positively. No information about any child shall be shared with another child's parent. We continually strive to model qualities like patience, tolerance, cooperation, acceptance, understanding of others, and enthusiasm for children and other adults. All early childhood staff are required to read and respond to the NAEYC Code of Ethics and to uphold its principles.

The program complies with staff regulations and certification requirements. Our program follows staffing requirements according to the NAEYC and FSSA program standards and maintains approved adult/child ratios. Children remain on the same roster with the same teacher over the year. The program administrator will maintain lists of current substitutes for both the teachers and teaching assistance in case of an absence.

Staff are provided with space and time away from children during the day. Should staff work directly with children for more than four hours, staff are provided with breaks of at least 15 minutes in each four-hour period. In addition, staff may request temporary relief when they are unable to perform their duties.

Staff Development Activities: Personnel policies provide for incentives based on participation in professional development opportunities. All teaching staff continuously strengthen their leadership skills and relationships with others and work to improve the conditions of children and families within their programs, the local community, and beyond. Teaching staff are encouraged to participate in informal and formal ways in local, state, or regional public-awareness activities. They may join an early childhood group or organization, attend meetings, or share information with others both at and outside the program.

Teaching staff will be informed of professional development activities provided by Child Care Resource and Referral, Early Childhood Alliance, and other applicable organizations. Staff are expected to attend all staff training courses and meetings throughout the year. Training will focus on early childhood topics relevant to the program and community and are held the 3rd Saturday of each month.

Staff Evaluation and Professional Growth Plan: All staff are evaluated at least annually by an appropriate supervisor or, in the case of the program administrator, by the teaching staff and board of directors. Staff also evaluate and improve their own performance based on ongoing reflections and feedback from supervisors, peers, and families. From this, they develop an annual individualized professional development plan with their supervisor and use it to inform their continuous professional development.

General Student Policies & Procedures

Clothing: Your child will be learning through creative, active play that can sometimes be messy. Your child should wear comfortable, washable clothing and rubber-soled and closed-toe shoes to school. While we encourage the use of paint

smocks or shirts during art projects, we can't guarantee that spills or stains will not occur. Clothing should be free of words, graphics, or pictures that are profane, immoral, illegal, or disruptive in nature. For ages 0-5, families must provide an extra set of clothing for their child in case of an "accident" or messy play. Please clearly label the clothing with your child's name to reduce the possibility of mistakes.

Requests to Stay Indoors at Recess: It is our belief that fresh air and exercise are a beneficial part of our students' day. Therefore, a physician's note is needed for any child who requests to stay in from recess. We work very hard to monitor the wind chill and make sure our students do not go outside, or stay outside, for any length of time when the conditions are unfavorable. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the season. For example, in the winter please make sure your child wears a winter coat, gloves, hat and boots if needed. In addition, if your child wears boots to school, please send a pair of shoes in for their school day.

PLEASE LABEL ALL ITEMS YOUR CHILD WEARS TO SCHOOL.

Objects from Home: Because the program provides ample toys and learning materials for your child, we ask that you do not bring toys from home. If your child brings an "attachment" item from home to assist with coping skills, we ask that it is small enough to fit inside his/her backpack or cubby. Please do not allow children to bring gum, candy, money, or toy guns to school. The program cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home.

Telephone and Address Change: Please notify the school immediately if there is a change in your address, telephone number, or person to contact in an emergency. This information is very important in case your child becomes ill or injured.

Procedures of Action to Be Taken in Unique Situations

Child Abduction / Lost or Missing Child: If a child is abducted, following are the steps that will be taken:

- Immediately notify the director.
- Contact the police and give a complete description of the child
- Contact the parents.

Vehicle / Person Identification: If you see a child pulled into a vehicle or a vehicle seems to be driving back and forth or unfamiliar to the area, remember the following and write down if possible.

- Color of vehicle
- Type of vehicle (Ford, Toyota, etc.)
- License plate number and state
- Window tint, dents, rust, or anything else that might be
- Race/nationality of driver
- Sex
- Hair
- Clothes
- Other passengers