



Parent Handbook





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Dear Families,

Thank you for selecting the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center in Ankeny for your child care needs. At the TreeHouse we strive to provide a solid educational foundation for your child from ages 8 weeks through twelve years of age.

We realize that no two children develop at the same rate so we use differentiated instruction as part of our philosophy to ensure success for all learners. Differentiated instruction simply means meeting children's needs at their learning level. This allows children to reach goals and grow as a learner.

While at the TreeHouse your child will be exposed to a variety of teaching styles throughout our program. This will help your child make a smoother transition to school. Children will learn through play and teacher guided instruction on a daily basis throughout our program. Our Directors and Teachers are dedicated to providing the optimal learning environment by implementing an age appropriate curriculum that focuses on helping every child experience success in learning. Early success will help your child prepare for school.

We want to welcome you to the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center & Study Loft,
Melinda Seeman and Melissa Michel
Owners/Directors

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide your child with not only quality care, but to prepare your child for the challenges of today's education. Our approach to learning is quite unique to what you will find anywhere else. We will meet your child's educational needs by meeting each child individually at their level using differentiated instruction. We keep our curriculum up to date with the ever changing expectations of education and complete assessments on students in the fall, winter and spring.



POLICY: ENROLLMENT

POLICY NO.: 1

Enrollment at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center is open to children from 8 weeks to twelve years of age. Enrollment shall be granted without regard to a child's race, color, religion, national origin, gender, or disability; and without regard to a parent or guardian's race, color, religion, age, national origin, gender, pregnancy or disability

Parents can apply for enrollment of their child at the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center by completing the Enrollment Forms and paying the \$75.00* Enrollment Fee and the first week of tuition. **The Enrollment Fee and first week of tuition are both NON-REFUNDABLE.** Initial enrollment is contingent upon receipt of the completed enrollment application, signed fee agreement, enrollment fee, first week tuition, immunization records and signed Parent Handbook receipt.

The Enrollment Fee and Fee Agreements are not meant to serve as contracts guaranteeing service for any duration.

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any child at any time for any reason.

Continued enrollment at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center is contingent upon receipt of the following forms: *Enrollment/Authorization Agreement Form, Child Information Form, Emergency Medical Consent Form, Child's Physical Examination Form, Immunization Card, and Acknowledgment Statement* showing that the handbook has been read and is understood.

Parents are required to notify TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center immediately, should any of the information collected at the time of enrollment or any time thereafter change. Failure to do so may result in the child(ren) being terminated.



POLICY: TUITION

POLICY NO.: 2

All custodial parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign an Enrollment Agreement prior to enrollment of their child in TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondence are to be addressed.

2.1 Tuition Payment are due Monday of each week or the first day of the week your child/children attends the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. Please fill out the Tuition Express Agreement

Tuition Express is a safe and convenient automated payment processing that allows you to pay tuition and fees automatically.

Annual Activity Fee is due every January. *ALL CHILDREN ENROLLED AT THE TREEHOUSE ARE REQUIRED TO PAY ACTIVITY FEE* regardless of full or part time enrollment.

2.2 Tuition Payments not received later than 3:00P.M. on Fridays of each week will be charged a \$25.00 LATE FEE.

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of God.

Our Center will be CLOSED the following Holidays

Labor Day

Memorial Day

Fourth of July**

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day** and Day following

New Years Eve & New Years Day**

Thanksgiving Day and Day following

* There will not be a reduction in tuition for Holiday closings. ** The following Monday or preceding Friday will be observed when the holiday falls on a weekend.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for immediate termination from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. However, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Center Directors immediately. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved, you will be notified by the Center Director.

2.3 TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center offers a multiple child discount for **FULL TIME FAMILIES ONLY** (*Note: if one child is a school age child the family does not qualify for discount*). A family discount of 10% off of the oldest child will be given to full time families with two or more children. **Part time, school age and summer families will not get a discount. Discounts are only applicable when tuition payments are made on time. The full tuition rate, plus any additional late fees will be charged when tuition payments are late as per the late tuition policy stated above.**

Rates per family will not change week to week based on child's attendance each week. Families are required to pay the rate discussed and agreed upon when signing their child up. (see Enrollment Agreement Form) *For example: If you agreed to pay the 3 day rate but your child only attended 2 days you are still responsible for the 3 day rate.*

2.4 After a family has been enrolled and considered full time (5 days per week) and is in good standing for six **(6)** months they are given one week of vacation at NO charge (this means that your child will be absent from The TreeHouse during this time). We require a two week written notice prior to you using your vacation so that we can adjust staff. This must be used before the end of the year and will not be accumulated. **Vacation days must be taken consecutively not broken up. Vacation may not be used as part of your two week notice or leaving The TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center.** *Any tuition increases will be announced in January of each year.*

**Enrollment changes at TreeHouse may not be made for 4 weeks after vacation days (5) have been taken.*

**Holding fees are at the discretion of Mindy & Missey. Families are only eligible if they are in good standing and will need to be absent for a minimum of 8 weeks. Please email melinda@treehouseglc.com with questions.*

**Holding fee spots are very limited and we only allow so many. Thank you in advance for your understanding.*



POLICY: CONFIDENTIALITY

POLICY NO.: 3

Within TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, confidential and sensitive information will only be shared with employees of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center who have a “*need to know*” in order to most appropriately and safely care for your child. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children is not be shared with other parents, as TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center strives to protect everyone’s right of privacy to the extent reasonably possible. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, and HIV/AIDS status or other unique health related information of anyone enrolled at with TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center.

Outside of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given express written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law. Parents will be provided document detailing the information that is to be shared outside of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, persons with whom the information will be shared, and the reason(s) for sharing the information.

Any parent or employee who violates the Confidentiality policy will not be permitted on agency property thereafter. Please refer to the policy regarding Parents Right to Immediate Access for additional information regarding termination of enrollment of a child when a parent is prohibited from accessing agency property.

If you observe children at our center who are disabled or who occasionally exhibit behavior that may appear inappropriate (i.e. biting, hitting, and spitting), you may be curious or concerned about children involved. Our Confidentiality Policy protects every child’s privacy. Employees of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about another child with you.



POLICY: MANDATED REPORTING OF SUSPECTED
CHILD ABUSE AND/OR NEGLECT

POLICY NO.: 4

Under the Child Protective Services Act, mandated reporters are required to report any **suspicion** of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. The employees of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center are considered mandated reporters, under this law. The employees of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to the appropriate authorities, nor are they required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition prior to making a report. Under the Act, mandated reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. We at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities. The Child Protective Services Act is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

As mandated reporters, the staff of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center can not be held liable for reports made to Child Protective Services which are determined to be unfounded, provided the report was made in "good faith."

Causes for reporting suspected child abuse or neglect include, but are not limited to:

- ◆ Unusual bruising, marks, or cuts on the child's body
- ◆ Severe verbal reprimands
- ◆ Improper clothing relating to size, cleanliness, season
- ◆ Transporting a child without appropriate child restraints (e.g. car seats, seat belts, etc.)
- ◆ Dropping off or picking up a child while under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
- ◆ Not providing appropriate meals including a drink for your child
- ◆ Leaving a child unattended for any amount of time
- ◆ Failure to attend to the special needs of a disabled child
- ◆ Sending a sick child to school over medicated to hide symptoms, which would typically require the child to be kept at home until symptoms subside.
- ◆ Children who exhibit behavior consistent with an abusive situation



POLICY: PARENT CODE OF CONDUCT

POLICY NO.: 5

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

5.1 SWEARING/CURSING:

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

5.2 THREATENING OF EMPLOYEES, CHILDREN OTHER PARENTS OR ADULTS ASSOCIATED WITH TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center:

Threats of any kind will not be tolerated. In addition, all threats will be reported to the appropriate authorities and offenders will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. While apologies for such behavior may be appreciated, the agency will not assume the risk of a second chance. **PARENTS MUST BE RESPONSIBLE FOR AND IN CONTROL OF THEIR BEHAVIOR AT ALL TIMES.**

5.3 PHYSICAL/VERBAL PUNISHMENT OF YOUR CHILD OR OTHER CHILDREN AT TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center:

Corporal punishment of children, is not permitted in the child care facility. While verbal reprimands may be necessary it is not appropriate for parents to verbally abuse their child. Doing so may cause undue embarrassment or emotional distress. Parents are always welcome to discuss a behavior issue with the teacher and to seek advice and guidance regarding appropriate and effective disciplinary procedures.

Parents are prohibited from addressing, for the purpose of correction or discipline, a child that is not their own. Of course, no parent or other adult may physically punish another parent's child. If a parent should witness another parent's child behaving in an inappropriate manner, or is concerned about behavior reported to them by their own child, it is most appropriate for the parent to direct their concern to the classroom teacher and/or Center Directors.

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

5.4 SMOKING:

For the health of all TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center employees, children and associates, smoking is prohibited anywhere on agency property. Parents are prohibited from smoking in the building, on the grounds, and in the parking lot of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. Parents who are smoking in their cars must dispose of the cigarette prior to entering the parking lot.

5.5 VIOLATIONS OF THE SAFETY POLICY:

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

5.6 CONFRONTATIONAL INTERACTIONS WITH EMPLOYEES, OTHER PARENTS OR ASSOCIATES OF TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center:

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

5.7 VIOLATIONS OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY POLICY:

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



POLICY: PARENT'S RIGHT TO IMMEDIATE ACCESS

POLICY NO.: 6

As provided by law, parents of a child in our care are entitled to immediate access, without prior notice, to their child whenever they are in care at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center.

In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order) TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center must be provided with a **Certified Copy** of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. The orders of the court will be strictly followed unless the custodial parent(s) requests a more liberal variation of the order in writing. In the case where both parents are afforded shared/joint custody by order of the court, both parents must sign the request for more liberal interpretation of the order.

In the absence of a court order on file with TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, **both** parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center can not, without a court order, limit the access of a one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason. If a situation presents itself where one parent does not want the other parent to have access to their child, TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center suggests that the parent keep the child with them until a court order is issued, since our rights to retain your child are secondary to the other parent's right to immediate access. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center staff will contact the local police should a conflict arise.

Visitors are asked to schedule appointments with the Center Directors, and are allowed in the child care facility only at the discretion of the Center Director. An employee of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will accompany visitors at all times, throughout the center.

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will terminate the enrollment any child whose parent is prohibited from entering upon agency property. Due to the parents' right to immediate access policy, as well as state and federal regulations, TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center can not have a child at the agency when the child's parent is prohibited access. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will not agree to any request to maintain a child's enrollment even if the parent agrees to stay out of the center. Such an agreement is a violation of the law and can not be agreed upon.



POLICY: DISMISSAL

POLICY NO.: 7

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center reserves the right to terminate enrollment of any child at any time, with or without cause.

Parents will be refunded any unused tuition within two weeks of the dismissal. An agency check will be mailed to the address indicated in the child's file. Any past due balances must be paid on last day of attendance at the center. An invoice detailing current or past due balances will be issued at time of termination. Any balances remaining after the 30 day period will be referred to the agency's legal counsel for collection.

The Center Directors or designee will assist the parent in gathering their child's belongings at the time of dismissal and parents are required to immediately leave agency property in a calm and respectful manner. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will request assistance from local police should any parent become disruptive and/or uncooperative while gathering their child's belongings.

A terminated child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Directors if they wish to return to agency property following a termination. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Directors and are not a right of the child or parent.

Following a termination, any parent or child who harasses, threatens or in any manner causes harm to anyone affiliated with the agency by calling, writing, or any other means, will be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law, by TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center.



POLICY: WITHDRAW

POLICY NO.: 8

Two weeks written/paid notice is required when withdrawing a child for any reason. If the required notice is not given, parents will be charged tuition for two additional weeks beyond the required paid two week notice.

The parents and child, following their last day of enrollment, are not permitted to re-enter agency property without prior permission of the Center Directors. A withdrawn child and his/her parents are required to call and request an appointment with the Center Directors if they wish to return to agency property following the last day of enrollment at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. Appointments are made at the discretion of the Center Directors and are not a right of the withdrawn child or parent.

Parents who wish to change their child's days or times of enrollment at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, must submit a request to the directors two weeks in advance of the proposed change. A new enrollment form will then need to be filled out and will go into effect two weeks from date of notice on change.

The Center Directors will notify the parents if the new schedule is available. A schedule change will not be considered to be final until a new enrollment agreement is signed. If the schedule change requires an additional deposit and/or registration fee, the change will also be contingent upon payment of these monies. If the requested schedule is not available parents may choose to continue with the current schedule until such time as the requested schedule becomes available, or may choose to withdraw their child from the program.



POLICY: ARRIVAL PROCEDURES

POLICY NO.: 9

Upon arrival at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, the parents or the adult dropping the child off must sign the child into care on the sign-in sheet located in your child's classroom or sign in computer (Northview). Children are required to be escorted by their parent or the adult dropping them off, to their designated classroom. Children are required by law to be supervised at all times while in the child care facility. Parents are required to help children put away their outerwear and get settled for the day.

Parents are required to notify the child's teacher or Center Directors of any special instructions or needs for the child's day. The parent must present the special instructions in the form of a letter and verbally discuss them with either the classroom teacher or Center Directors. These special instructions include but are not limited to: *Early Pick Up, Alternative Pick Up Person, health issues over the previous night which need to be observed and/or any general issues of concern* which the child care providers should be aware to best meet the needs of your child throughout the day.

9.1 NOTIFICATION OF ABSENCE

Parents are required to inform the center by 10:00A.M. if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to more effectively maintain appropriate ratios and help the classroom teacher effectively plan for the day.

If your child is ill, we request that you notify the center directors not only of the absence, but also of the nature of the illness. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our center. This information will only be shared with staff on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a *communicable disease*, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Center Directors, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will take appropriate steps to protect your child's confidentiality, to the extent possible. Parents are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from the center.

9.2 AGENCY'S RIGHT TO REFUSE ADMISSION

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center reserves the right to refuse admission to any child at any time with or without cause.

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center strives to maintain a list of substitutes in anticipation of staff absences, however, there are times when substitutes are not available, and classrooms need to be closed

to maintain compliance with licensing regulations. Refusal will be based on a "first come first served" basis when seeking to maintain appropriate staff to child ratios and/or when closing classrooms.

Possible reasons for the refusal of admission may include but are not limited to:

1. Lack of staff to maintain appropriate Staff to Child Ratios as determined by State Licensing Regulations.
2. The need to maintain compliance with Licensing Regulations.
3. Staff deems the child too ill to attend.
4. Domestic Situations that present a safety risk to the child, staff or other children enrolled at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center if the child were to be present at the center.
5. Parents failure to maintain accurate, up to date records.
6. Parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.

Parents WILL NOT be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.



POLICY: PICK UP PROCEDURES

POLICY NO.: 10

Parents or other authorized adult are required to sign their child out of care on the sign-out sheet located inside your child's classroom or sign in/out computers (Northview). Once a parent signs their child out, the parent is then solely responsible for supervising their child while on agency premises. The parent may not allow a child to wander through the hallways, bathrooms, other classrooms and/or playground.

Parents must take home all papers in the child's cubby or school bag each day.

Parents or persons designated to act "in loco parentis" are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up. The lead teacher most likely will already be gone for the day. However, should you feel it necessary to have an in depth discussion or meeting, it is most appropriate to schedule the meeting for a later date with the teacher who witnessed the incident/accident. A telephone conference may be scheduled for later in the day or for the next day at nap/rest time if the parent(s) is unable to meet at the center during the course of the day.

10.1 LATE PICK-UP:

The TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center closes at 6:00P.M. It is very important that your child is picked up on time. ***Late pick up fee is \$1.00 per minute that you are late. This fee is to be paid at the time of late pick up.*** All measurements of time are to be according to the TreeHouse clock located in the director's office.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or Emergency/Alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time. If picking your child up late becomes a habit (3 or more times) you will be contacted by the directors and a meeting will be set up to determine if child care services will be terminated or how the situation can be resolved.

10.2 PERSONS APPEARING TO BE IMPAIRED BY DRUGS/ALCOHOL AT PICK-UP

The staff of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will contact local police and/or the other custodial parent should a parent appear to the staff of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. The parent's right to immediate access does not permit the agency from denying a custodial parent access to their child even if the parent is or appears to be impaired. However, TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center staff will delay the impaired parent as long as possible, while contacting the other parent, the local police and Child Protective Services.

Any other authorized person who attempts to pick-up a child, and appears to the staff of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center to be under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol will be denied access to the child. The staff of TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will contact the child's parents, local police and Child Protective Services to notify them of the situation.

10.3 EMERGENCYCONTACTS

At enrollment, parents will provide Emergency Contact information. Parents are encouraged to include on this form any, and all persons who, in the course of events, may at one time be asked to pick-up their child from TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. In an emergency situation the child's parents will be called first. If they can not be reached staff will call the persons listed on this form until someone can be reached.

Should the staff contact a parent, and if the parent is unable to pick up the child, it is then the responsibility of the parent to arrange for their child to be picked up by someone on the emergency list. Failure of the parent to make such arrangements will result in termination from the program.

Parents do not need to be listed on the Emergency Contact Form. The nature of the parental relationship affords the parents (in the absence of a court order indicating otherwise) the right to pick-up their child.

The persons on the Emergency/Alternate pick-up form will be required to provide a valid drivers license to verify identity prior to the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center releasing the child. A photo copy of their drivers license will be taken, there will be no exceptions to this rule.

All changes and/or additions to the Emergency/Alternate Pick-up form must be made in writing and be dated and signed. Only custodial parents have the right to make changes or additions to this form.

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center reserves the right to refuse/ban any person listed on the Emergency/Alternate Contact Form for any reason, including but not limited to violations of the policies/procedures contained herein. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to inform each person on the Emergency/Alternate Form of the policies/procedures contained herein.



POLICY: TRANSPORTATION

POLICY NO.: 11

Our School Age Program offers safe transportation to and from the elementary schools in Ankeny, by means of center owned passenger activity buses or center owned passenger vans. Children will be required to wear a safety harness and behave appropriately while riding on the bus.

Parents will be notified by center directors if their child will be going on a field trip that will require transportation by the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, parents will be responsible for providing an appropriate car seat to help ensure their Childs safety, if needed.

A GUIDE TO SAFELY TRANSPORTING CHILDREN IN A MOVING VEHICLE			
COMMON CHILD SAFETY SEAT MISUSES: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seat installed too loose • Improper seating position (in front of an air bag) • Not buckling child into restraint • Not <u>securely</u> anchoring the child restraint to the vehicle • Improper seat for child's age and size • Infant riding forward facing • Harness retainer clip not at armpit level • Loose harness straps 			
To graduate to an adult belt -- a child must be able to sit with their back/buttocks against the seat and with their knees bent at the edge of the seat. The belt system must be snug across the center of the child's chest and across their lap at the hips.			
NATIONALLY RECOMMENDED STANDARDS FOR SAFE USE OF CHILD RESTRAINT SYSTEMS			
	INFANTS	TODDLER/ PRESCHOOL	YOUNG CHILDREN
Weight	Birth to 1 year Up to 20-22 lbs.	Over 1 year 20-40 lbs.	Over 40 lbs. up to about 80 lbs. and 4'9" tall
Type of Seat	Infant only or rear-facing convertible	Convertible or Forward-facing	Belt positioning booster seat
Seat Position	Rear-facing only	Forward-facing	Forward-facing
Always Make Sure	Children to one year AND at least 20 lbs. in rear-facing seats Harness straps at or below shoulder level	Harness straps should be at or above shoulders Most seats require top slot for forward facing	Belt positioning booster seats must be used with both lap AND shoulder belt
WARNING	Do not place infants in the front passenger seat of cars with air bags	All children under age 13 should ride in the back seat	Make sure the lap belt fits low and tight to avoid abdominal injuries
For further information on child restraints, contact the Iowa Child Passenger Safety Helpline 1-800-258-6419 For Certified Child Passenger Technicians & Child Restraint Checks Visit this Website: www.blankchildrens.org/cps			

A GUIDE TO THE IOWA CHILD RESTRAINT LAW	
<i>Iowa Code 321.446, Data Code 198a - as of July 2010</i>	
Key Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A child under 1 year old <u>and</u> weighing less than 20 lbs. must be secured in a rear-facing child restraint system • A child age 1 up to 6 years old must be secured in a child restraint system (a safety seat or booster seat-- NOT a seat belt) • A child from age 6 up to age 11 must be secured in a child restraint system or by a safety belt • Rear seat occupants up to age 18 must be secured by a safety belt 	
A "child restraint system" is a specially designed seating system, including a belt positioning seat or a booster seat that meets federal motor vehicle safety standards.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The misdemeanor fine is \$100.00, plus costs (non-moving violation) totaling at least \$195.00 • The law applies to both residents and non-residents of Iowa • The child restraint system must be used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions • The child must be secured in the child restraint and the child restraint must be properly secured to the vehicle • Non-use of a child restraint is probable cause to stop a vehicle • An officer may investigate a suspected violation • For unrestrained passengers age 0-13, the driver receives the citation, and for unrestrained passengers 14-17, the passenger receives the citation • 1st offense citation will not result in conviction if driver "produces in court" proof of acquisition of child restraint 	
Exceptions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children certified by a physician as having a medical, physical or mental disability making restraint use inadvisable • Children on bus, including a school bus • Children riding on motorcycles • Children riding in vehicles manufactured before 1966 • Children transported in authorized emergency vehicles • Children transported by peace officers on official duty • Children riding in motor homes except if riding in the front passenger seat (where they must be restrained) • Children for whom a seat belt is not available due to all other belts being used (example: 4th child in back seat with only 3 belts) 	
This is only a guide, provided through the courtesy of Iowa Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau Department of Public Safety <small>Produced with Federal Highway Safety Funds 07/10 10M</small>	



POLICY: EMERGENCY CLOSING AND INCLEMENT
WEATHER INFORMATION

POLICY NO.: 12

In the event of an emergency closing and/or inclement weather, parents will be notified of the closing by Channel 8 News Web Site and Tadpole Emergency Update will be sent out via email and text message.

Should the TreeHouse need to close in the middle of the day, the TreeHouse staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called until pick up arrangements can be made. Staff will notify the parents or emergency contact person at the time of the call, of the pick up location should the children need to be evacuated from the child care center. Parents or emergency contact persons should report directly to the alternate location if one is indicated during phone call.

Should the center need to close for any reason, tuition will not be refunded or reduced.



POLICY: CURRICULUM INFORMATION

POLICY NO.: 13

13.1 DAILY SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES

Every age group at the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center has their own age appropriate daily schedule. Classroom schedules are posted in each classroom.

13.2 STAFF TO CHILD RATIOS

At the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center we pride ourselves in following ratio guidelines set by the state of Iowa.

13.3 NAP/REST TIME

Rest Time is from 12:30-2:30 for all ages with the exception of our school age program. Rest is an essential part of a child's development but not all children are used to a regular rest time in their daily routine. At the TreeHouse (children 5 and under) are encourage to rest quietly on their assigned cot. Children 12 months of age and older may choose to bring a blanket. Blankets are to be taken home each Friday for laundering.

13.4 EDUCATIONAL/PERSONAL CARE SUPPLIES NEEDED

Parents need to bring the following items for their children's needs (Label everything)

- Change of clothes (appropriate for season)
- Blanket (for rest time)
- Snow pants/Snow boots/Mittens/Hat (seasonal)
- Diapers/Wipes/ Diaper Cream (if needed)
- Formula or Breast Milk/ Baby Food (infant program)
- Special Milk for Allergies (Soy Milk)

13.5 Food Brought From Home

- Food brought from home for children five and under, who are not enrolled in school, shall be monitored and supplemented if necessary to ensure that our nutritional goals are met.
- **NO PEANUT PRODUCTS ARE ALLOWED AT THE CENTER.**
- Food brought into the center shall have a label showing child's name, date, and type of food. These will be refrigerated/kept for no more than 48 hours. Food may not be shared with other children and must be prepared and/or packaged for consumption. Teaching staff will return any empty containers at the end of the day and will not reuse unfinished portion.
- On a limited basis, parents/legal guardians or teaching staff may provide snacks for special occasions, such as birthdays or holidays.

13.5 PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES/COMMUNICATION

TreeHouse Times Newsletter

- Every month you will receive a Newsletter from your directors. This will provide general center information you may need for the month ahead as well as a lunch menu. The Newsletter will be sent out electronically each month to all families.

Classroom Newsletter

- Classroom newsletters will be sent out electronically monthly to inform parents of curriculum being taught in the classroom.

Meet and Greet

- Every fall we encourage our families to come to our Meet and Greet. This special evening allows our teachers to outline what children will be learning and overall expectations in each program area.

Teacher Conferences

- Teacher conferences are held twice per year at The TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center to review child's growth.

13.6 GRADUATION

Graduation is held every spring for our graduating preschool students who are ready to transition into Kindergarten. We encourage families to attend our graduation celebration.



POLICY: DISCIPLINE

POLICY NO.: 14

At the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center expectations for good behavior are based on the child's stage of development. Aggressive physical behavior towards staff other children or property is unacceptable. Teaching staff will provide positive guidance, redirection and outline clear objectives for children as an alternative to the undesired behavior. The TreeHouse staff does not use any form of Corporal punishment.qw0

The TreeHouse believes that our discipline should be constant and consistent throughout our program. We follow the basic steps listed below.

Discipline Steps Taken By Staff at the TreeHouse:

- **Redirect child**, Discuss better choices the child could have made and separate individual child from other child or children involved
- **Documentation** * Reports will be filled out and parents contacted if needed (ex. Biting, physical harm or destruction to property)
- **Office Intervention** *Director works with lead teacher to come up with a behavior plan that will reduce or eliminate behavior. (ex. Behavior Chart, etc.) Directors will also visit with child about making better choices.
- **Parent Meeting** *Director, Lead Teacher and Parents of the child will meet and discuss current behavior issues. Together, we will work to create a plan that will help with child's overall behavior.

Children that continue to have difficulties abiding by acceptable behavior after all of the above steps have been completed may require that their parents be asked to find an alternative care opportunity for the child. We will work together and try are very best to resolve issues and find a workable solution.

*If any one (1) incident warrants immediate termination from the center, we reserve the right to do so prior to a parent/legal guardian and teaching staff meeting. This is to protect the child involved, other children in the center, and our teaching staff.



POLICY: TOYS FROM HOME

POLICY NO.: 15

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, *children may not bring in toys from home*, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy.

If the parents fail repeatedly to enforce this policy with their children, the staff will call the parents and require that they come to the school and remove the toy.

Children in classrooms with nap/rest time are permitted to include with their bedding supplies, one plush/non-musical toy with which to nap/rest. This toy is to be placed with the bedding supplies and use of it will only be allowed at nap/rest time.

Not responsible for lost, stolen or broken toys from home.



POLICY: DRESS CODE

POLICY NO.: 16

Children Clothing:

Children are engaged in various activities during the course of the day; some of these activities can be messy, and/or athletic in nature. Additionally, children are engaged in outdoor play daily, weather permitting. Due to these activities, children are required to be dressed in seasonably appropriate, comfortable clothing.

Coats, hats, gloves, scarves, snow pants and winter boots must be provided in the winter months. It is not necessary for the children to wear their winter boots to school. Teachers will change the children into their winter boots when they go outdoors.

Children are not permitted to wear open toed, and/or open backed shoes. The most appropriate type of shoes for participation in school activities are rubber-soled, sneakers/tennis shoes.

Children ages 3 through 5 are required to have one seasonably and size appropriate complete change of clothing at the center at all times. Children under 3 years of age are required to have two seasonably and size appropriate, complete changes of clothing at the center at all times. A complete change of clothing includes shirt, pants, underwear, socks, and shoes. Teachers will post reminders for parents to update changes of clothing as the weather begins to change.

All clothing items must be clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. This includes, coats, hats, gloves, snow pants, scarves, and boots. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center is not responsible for lost or damaged items of clothing.

School Age children and TreeHouse Children are required to wear TreeHouse/ Study Loft T Shirts on all field trips. Please let us know if you need to purchase a T-Shirt for your child. Our preschool children are encouraged to wear TreeHouse T -Shirts when going on field trips. This makes it easy for us to identify our children when we are outside of our building.



POLICY: FIELD TRIPS

POLICY NO.: 17

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center frequently supplements the classroom curriculum with off premise field trips. Parents are required to give written permission for their child to attend each field trip. Notification of a field trip will be sent home in advance of the trip, with all pertinent trip information including, destination, date, time, reason for trip, cost, and mode of transportation. Accompanying the notification paper, teachers will include a permission slip to be filled out, signed, and returned to the teacher prior to the date of the trip. The field trip permission slip must be filled out completely and accurately, and all trip costs must be paid in advance in order for your child to attend.

If parents wish to attend the trip with their child, they should discuss attending with the classroom teacher. TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center provides all required supervision for all field trips, but always invites and welcomes parents to attend. All parents who wish to attend a TreeHouse Field Trips are required to drive their own car to and from the field trip and pay for any fees that apply.

Parents will not be permitted to transport any child, other than their own, on a TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center sponsored trip.

If your child is not scheduled to attend on the day of a field trip and you wish for your child to participate in the trip, please discuss this with your child's teacher at least three days prior to the date of the trip. Your child will be permitted to attend if required ratios can be maintained with his/her addition to the class. An additional day fee will be assessed and you will be responsible for the cost of the trip and signed permission slip will be due prior to the date of the trip.



18.1 PRE-ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

Each family enrolling at The TreeHouse is required to complete all enrollment forms. These forms can be printed from our website www.treehouseglc.com as well as filled out online and submitted to us electronically. This packet is to be returned to the center's office prior to the child's first day of attendance. All children are required to have a complete up to date immunization record on file at TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. This is per our licensing regulations. If you have chosen not to have your child immunized, please ask the center director for an immunization waiver form. Immunizations may be waived for certain reasons. Please discuss this with the center director to determine whether you have the right to be enrolled and not have your child immunized. Parents are required to have a waiver on file in place of an immunization record, so that the center can maintain compliance with licensing regulations.

All children are required to have a physical examination form filled out by a licensed medical professional, in order to attend TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center. The Physical Examination Form, indicating the child's fitness to attend TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center, must be completed by a licensed healthcare professional and returned to the Center Director within the first 30 days of enrollment.

18.2 CHILDREN WITH SEVERE ALLERGIES

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide a signed copy of the "Authorization For Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, detailing any allergies, food or otherwise, from which their child suffers, at the time of enrollment or when the allergy is discovered. This form must be completely filled out by the child's physician and parent(s) or legal guardian(s), and must be updated every six months, or more frequently, as needed. In addition to this form, parents must provide a copy of any additional physician's orders and procedural guidelines relating to the prevention and treatment of the child's allergy. This form can be obtained by request from directors.

Parents must also execute a "Release and Waiver of Liability for Administering Emergency Treatment to Children with Severe Allergies" form. This form releases TreeHouse from liability for administering treatment to children with severe allergies and taking other necessary actions set forth in the "Authorization for Emergency Care for Children with Severe Allergies" form, provided TreeHouse exercises reasonable care in taking such actions.

Any medication required to treat an allergic reaction must be provided in accordance with the Medication Policy detailed herein.

18.3 COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual. A copy of this manual is on file with the Center Director and is available upon request for review.

*Parents are required to **pick up an ill child within 45 minutes** of notification by phone.* If a parent is reached, but can not pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. The staff will not continue to call those listed on the emergency contact list once a parent is reached. If a parent can not be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up.

Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. This may include but is not limited to vomiting, rash, and fever. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Children must present a doctor's note stating they are no longer contagious and can return to the program. TreeHouse reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the center directors or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

Children excluded from the program due to a fever may not return to the program until they are fever free, without fever reducing medication, for 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 101 degrees Fahrenheit or more as taken under the arm or ear. If your child is sent home because of vomiting they are not allowed to return to The TreeHouse for 24 hours after last time of vomiting.

Children are required to be excluded from the program for loose bowels or diarrhea which occur *3 or more times in a 24 hours period of time*. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the center director. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our center. This information will only be shared with faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. Once again, only the communicable disease information will be shared. TreeHouse will take all measures necessary to protect your child's confidentiality. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason for your child's absence from school.

18.4 BITING

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center recognizes that biting is a behavior that can be exhibited by children in the infant through 2 ½ year old classrooms. Such behavior is not developmentally abnormal for children of these ages. Parents with children in these classrooms should expect that their children may be bit, or will bite another child. The staff understands that parents are concerned and can be upset when their child is involved in a biting incident. We ask that you remember this is a developmentally appropriate behavior, and that the staff is working to identify situations which, provoke, or elicit this behavior so it can be prevented in the future. The staff will not punish, or harshly discipline children in the younger classrooms for biting behavior; they will simply redirect the children to different activities in separate areas of the classroom. Parents are expected to work with staff to identify methods and strategies to curb this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have their child's services terminated.

Children older than 3 years of age, may occasionally be involved in a biting incident. For children in this age group who bite, the staff will use the discipline procedures outlined in the discipline section of this handbook, as well as observe the child to determine what provokes or elicits this inappropriate behavior. Parents are expected to cooperate with staff to help their child control this behavior. Uncooperative parents will have their child's service terminated.

Parents will be notified by incident/accident report that a biting incident occurred during the course of the day. The staff may not discuss with either parent the identity of the other child involved in the incident. This information is considered to be confidential and can not be disclosed. The staff of the TreeHouse can't discuss the medical history of any child involved in a biting incident with the other party. Biting over the age of 3 is not developmentally appropriate. It is a behavior and will require a meeting to discuss.

18.5 DISPENSING MEDICATION

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will only dispense prescription medication that is in original, labeled containers, and is accompanied by a doctor's note with explicit dosage and administration instructions. TreeHouse will only give medication to the child for whom the doctor's note is written and for whom the medication container is labeled. Most prescription medication can be taken before coming to the TreeHouse.

Parents are required to complete a Medical Authorization Form each day that medication is to be dispensed. Medication Forms can be obtained from the directors of the center. Medication Forms, doctor's notes and medication are to be turned into Lead Teachers and Directors.

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center will not dispense over-the-counter, fever reducing/pain medication, unless prescribed by a doctor with duration of time to be given and correct dosage. (ex. Children's Tylenol, Children's Motrin)

Parents are responsible for ensuring that all prescription medication is properly labeled by a pharmacist and replaced prior to the expiration date.

18.6 FIRE/EMERGENCY DRILLS

TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center conducts monthly fire and tornado evacuation drills. Parents, staff and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most effective way to assess the effectiveness of fire and emergency/evacuation plans.

In the event of a real fire/emergency situation, the director or designate will inform each classroom teacher that the center will be closing. At this time any parents waiting to sign their child in will have to leave the premises with their child. All other parents or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation. If the emergency should require evacuation of our building you may pick up your child at Juls Design located to the east of our building. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call.

18.7 INCIDENT/ACCIDENT REPORTS

Should your child be involved in an incident/accident during the course of the school day, a staff member will complete an Incident/Accident Report.

Parents or legal guardians are required to sign any incident/accident reports from the day at pick-up.

Should a person other than the parent or legal guardians pick-up the child, they must sign the Incident/Accident Report and return a copy to the center director within 24 hours.

If an injury requires emergency medical or dental treatment, the center director or teaching staff will notify the child's physician/dentist or emergency response team as well as contact parents or legal guardians. TreeHouse staff will accompany child to hospital or clinic until family arrives. You and your health insurance will be responsible for payment of any medical treatment needed.

18.8 Nutrition

At the TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center we believe in teaching our children what good nutrition tastes like. Our center provides morning breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for ages 15 months and older. We serve 1% milk at all meals and snacks daily. We are a Juice Free center so please do not bring juice into the center.

Our Nutritional Goals include and are not limited to the following:

- To provide nutritional meals and snacks
- To introduce a variety of foods to children
- To serve whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables
- To discuss nutritional values of foods that children are eating
- To model good eating habits and etiquette and communicate with children during meal time

Parents or legal guardians will be responsible for providing nutritional needs for infants or children 8 weeks to 18 months. Infant meals and supplements provided by the center will contain at a minimum the food components specified in national guidelines. (Food Components for Infants) All menus are posted and available for parents review.

18.9 PEANUT/ JUICE FREE CENTER

Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to Peanuts and products containing peanuts in some children, TreeHouse Growing and Learning Center prohibits peanuts and/or foods containing peanut products on TreeHouse property, and/or at TreeHouse sponsored events. These peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath, or touching peanut oil residue left on a counter top, not only from consuming peanuts or peanut products. The TreeHouse also is a juice free building please note that we serve milk and water with all meals and snacks.

Parents are responsible for providing foods that are peanut and peanut product free for their child's lunch and/or snack. We have included for your reference a list of acceptable food items that are peanut, and peanut product free. However, this is only a partial listing of foods. There are many acceptable food items that are peanut, and peanut product free in stores. The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child. Many foods which we do not think of as containing peanuts, or peanut products have in fact been made in the same factories as peanut containing foods and are therefore considered to be contaminated. When reading the label look at not only the ingredients listed, but for statements such as, "may contain traces of peanuts." For example, Plain Chocolate M & M's have this statement on the label.

PEANUT FREE FOOD IDEAS

Carrot Sticks	Oreos
Celery	Chips Ahoy (Large Cookies)
Peppers	Teddy Grahams
Broccoli	Shortbread
Applesauce	Rice Krispy Treats (Original Flavor)
Grapes	Fruit By the Foot
Oranges	Fruit Gushers
Apples	Nutri Grain Fruit Bars
Bananas	Full Size Ritz Crackers (Not Ritz Bits)
Melon	Chicken Salad
Raisins	Dried Fruit
Plain Cherrios	Cashews
Pistachios	Yogurt
Cheese	Lunch Meat
Cream Cheese	Jelly (Not contaminated by peanut butter)
Tuna Fish	Egg Salad
Pretzels	Potato Chips (Not Fried in Peanut Oil)
Goldfish Crackers	Graham Crackers
Popcorn	Jell-O
Pizza	Popsicles



Growing and Learning Center

**2401 W First Street
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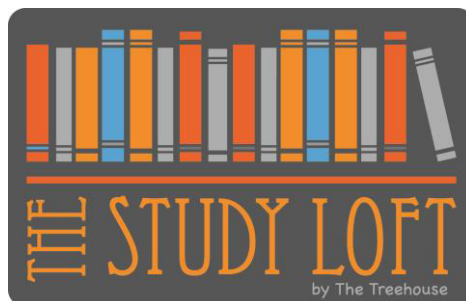
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