



# 2024 Stepping Stones Learning Center Parent Handbook

Group Day Care License #2006154  
Tax ID #87-3659499

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# Purpose

## Mission Statement

Our goal as a professional childcare provider is to provide a caring environment that encourages education experiments while promoting social, emotional, and cognitive development. We strive to encourage creativity, social skills and creating well-rounded individuals.

## Purpose

Stepping Stones Learning Center is a state licensed daycare center located in Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Our purpose is to help children build a solid foundation for school success. We believe that children should be in an environment where they feel loved, well cared for, and safe. Our center is a place where children can feel valued as individuals and where their need for attention, approval, and affection are supported.

Classrooms have been arranged to make it a safe and comfortable environment for children to explore and learn. Toys are placed on low shelves to make it easy for children to select the items that they enjoy. It also helps them learn how to make choices and be independent. We offer both structured and unstructured activities for the children. We believe that children learn through play, and we reflect our environment and curriculum through that. All activities are steps to growing and developing physically, socially, emotionally, and cognitively.

## Philosophy

At Stepping Stones Learning Center, it is our philosophy to provide a safe, comfortable, warm, and caring environment for children to play and learn. We allow children to experiment through creative play, small and large motor exercises, art, music, math, and science. We work with the children to assist the children in learning self-respect, self-esteem, as well as respect and compassion for others.

# Company Core Values

Inclusive practices are the building blocks for trust. We create space for conversations that grow transparency about our decisions, promises, and understanding of one another. We strive to include everyone regardless of their differences. We seek to make lasting change in the lives of those we work with by providing services that are inclusive, measurable, and durable. All children deserve the best chance in life, regardless of socioeconomic status, race, or other environmental factors.

# Enrollment/Admission

## Policies

In order to make our relationship as enjoyable as possible the following are some mutually beneficial requirements that are necessary to assure that there are no misunderstandings between either party. Any grievance or concern needs to be addressed first with involved parties. If this effort is unsatisfactory, please bring the concern to management. If these efforts are still not resolved, please contact WI State Licensing officials at 715-930-1148.

## Enrollment Policy

Prior to enrollment, parents and children should visit the center to meet the director, staff, and to observe the program. After a tour is given, we will answer all questions and provide paperwork necessary to continue the application process. Paperwork and schedules must be returned at least two weeks prior to the actual start date at the center. If English is a secondary language, we will do everything we can to accommodate the understanding of the center policies by using google translate and UW extension. Children will be accepted into the program based on availability. An application, along with the registration fee must be submitted before a spot is held for the child. To ensure your child's enrollment, we require a non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100.00 for each additional child.

PLEASE NOTE: Stepping Stones Learning Center will not start providing childcare unless the enrollment fee is made along with all proper paperwork turned in.

Stepping Stones Learning Center is regulated and licensed by:

The Department of Children and Families  
Division of Early Care and Education  
610 Gibson Street Suite #2  
Eau Claire, WI 54701  
(715) 930-1148

## Admission Paperwork

Before we will assume responsibility of caring for your child, we MUST have the following:

- Child Application Form
- Deposit of \$100.00 per first child.
- Signed Policy Handbook Contract
- Signed Financial Agreement
- Tuition Express Form
- If applicable- State Child Care Authorization
- Photo release form
- CACFP Enrollment and Household income form
- Paperwork as required by licensing regulations:
  - Form CFS-0062-E “Child Care Enrollment”
    - This needs to be updated on an annual basis or when any changes occur.
  - Form CFS-2345 “Health History and Emergency Care Plan”
  - Form CFS-0104-E “Alternate Arrival/Release Agreement” (if applicable)
  - Form CFS-0056 “Transportation Permission” (if applicable)
  - Form CFS-0061-E “Intake for Child Under 2 Years” (if applicable)
    - This form is required to be updated every 3 months until the child turns 2 years of age.

If any updates are needed, we will give you 2 weeks to submit the updated form. Failure to complete required paperwork in a specified time frame may result in your child’s enrollment to be suspended if evidence of an appointment is not provided.

The following items must be completed and returned within 3 months from the start date:

- Form CFS-0060-E “Child Health Report”
- Form F-44192 “Child Care Immunization Record” or other form of Immunization Records
  - Updates for these two forms will need to be completed and updated every 6 months until a child turns 2 years of age, and every 2 years after that.

Other health care records requested:

- Instructions for any of the child’s special needs such as allergies or chronic illness. A doctor signed form must be provided with substitutions to fulfill the food program requirements.
- Supporting evidence for cases in which a child is under-immunized because of a medical condition or family’s beliefs (in the event that a vaccine-preventable disease occurs in the program all parents will be notified by telephone and children that are not immunized will be removed from the area until parents are able to pick them up).

All the required forms are kept in the administrator/director’s office in a locked filing cabinet. Each teacher is given a copy of the emergency contact form to keep in their classroom to use as needed for communication and teaching purposes. Each member of our staff understands that the information provided is extremely confidential and is never discussed with anyone that is not directly involved with that child.

## Days of Operation

The center is open to children from 4 weeks to 13 years of age. Our licensed capacity at Stepping Stones Learning Center is 74.

Childcare services will be provided all year long, Monday through Friday from 5:30am to 7:00pm. Holiday closures are at the discretion of management. No service will be provided on the following holidays:

- New Year’s Eve
- New Year’s Day
- Memorial Day

- July 4<sup>th</sup>
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Day after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day

\*If one of the above holidays falls on a Saturday, we will be closed the Friday before. If it falls on a Sunday, we will be closed the following Monday. The center may be closed for longer periods during the Christmas holiday to accommodate staff traveling.

## Scheduling Policy

Everything is done on a two-week schedule. Parents are to submit their schedule by Monday, for the week at least two weeks in advance. Changes may be made to add days if space is available, but deductions will not be accepted, and your charges will not be reduced. If you are unable to attend on a scheduled day we must be notified in advance. Our center policy is to call a parent within 30 minutes of the scheduled time. Days missed due to vacation, illness, or emergency may not be traded for other days. For example, if your child is sick, you will still be required to pay for that day. Any changes to the schedule must be approved by the administrator or director.

## Part Time Policy

Stepping Stones Learning Center has a two-day minimum for care. This helps with scheduling staff and having a consistent teacher in classrooms and having the children on a schedule.

## Custody/Open Door

Parents are always welcome at Stepping Stones Learning Center. There is no limitation to parents visiting during normal business hours other than a court order that denies a parent access to their child. Parents are encouraged to participate in and help plan events and activities hosted by the center and individual classrooms.

Stepping Stones Learning Center follows all legal documents that are ordered from the court. We ask if there is a certain custody agreement that you bring in the court order so we can follow it correctly.

## Extended Absences

Extended absences will require a two-day minimum per week payment to hold your child's spot. Notification for any extended absences and vacations must be given at least two weeks in advance. If correct notification is not given, regular payment will be due. If your child is enrolled for our summer program only, you will need to re-register each spring and a spot will not be guaranteed for your child.

Extended absences lasting longer than 2 months will be evaluated on a case-to-case basis and could ultimately result in disenrollment.

## Absent Child w/o Notification

If a child who is scheduled to arrive at the center does not arrive within 30 minutes after the specified time and the center has not been notified in advance the teacher will attempt to contact the parent or guardian to determine the child's whereabouts. Parents will be charged regardless of the pick-up and drop off time. Late arrival does not allow late pick up.

## Social Media Policy

We would love for you to talk about us on social media. Posting negative information on social media about our staff or program will result in dismissal from our program.

If at any time you have issues with Stepping Stones Learning Center, please seek the attention of a manager before you seek the attention of social media.

## Supplies

Stepping Stones Learning Center is responsible for supplying:

- Crib or playpen for children under 1 year of age
- 2-inch-thick nap mats for 1-year old's

- Breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snack (if child attends during scheduled times)
- Enfamil Gentlease or generic formula and baby food
- Unscented wipes (typically Members Mark or Parent’s Choice)

Parents are responsible for supplying:

- Bottles, special formula, special baby food
- Diapers
- Specific brand of wipes
- Sunscreen, bug spray, and any needed diaper creams or medications
- A full change of clothing in a Ziplock bag with name written on it.
- Closed toed shoes.
- Sleeping bag-children 1 year old and up that are here for nap.
- Weather specific outside clothing

All personal belongings should be marked with the child's name. We are not responsible for lost or stolen items. Please leave any personal toys at home as they may become lost, broken, or stolen.

## Signing in and out

The State of Wisconsin requires that each child be signed in and out of the center daily. Each classroom will have attendance sheets which are the responsibility of the teacher to sign children in and out each day. For the safety of your children, parents are required to contact staff and make them aware that their child is entering or leaving our premises. These attendance sheets always remain with the teacher and children and provide us with a method of tracking attendance and daily teacher to child ratios. Parents are required to view and initial these forms at the end of each week to confirm they are correct. Children are also clocked in and out using our classroom app located on every tablet in each classroom.

Parents are encouraged to clock their children in and out at the check-in computer near the front office daily to help with our tracking system. If you are unable to use the clock-in computer, please notify the teacher in the classroom to clock in your child. For your children’s safety, you are to only pick up and drop off through the front door. Children cannot be picked up at the gate outside or over the fence.

## Pick Up Procedure

In the event that you, the parents, are unable to pick up your child, we will only be able to allow them to be picked up by someone listed as an authorized pick-up person on their enrollment forms. If someone should arrive to pick up your child other than a parent, we will require that they identify themselves with a picture ID, to confirm that they are authorized to pick up. Please make sure to inform the center if someone other than a parent will be picking up the child. If you wish to add another authorized pick-up person, you can stop at the office and fill out a form to do so.

If a parent or other authorized person arrives to pick up a child and appears to be intoxicated or under the influence of drugs, all reasonable steps will be taken to prevent the person from leaving with the child, including offering to call a cab or another contact person. While we cannot legally withhold a child from the legal guardian, we will not hesitate to call the local authorities if we feel the child is in danger.

## Payments and Fees

### Enrollment Fee and Deposit

Stepping Stones Learning Center will require a non-refundable enrollment/material fee of \$100 for each child upon enrollment. An annual enrollment fee of \$75 per family will be accessed on Sept 1st of each year.

Each family will be given a key fob to enter the center. Each fob is \$10. If the fob is lost or you need a replacement fob, you will be charged \$10 for each additional key fob.

### Payment

Rates at Stepping Stones Learning Center effective 07/6/2023 are as follows:

	2 Days/Week	3 Days/Week	4 Days/Week	5 Days/Week
<b>Under 2</b>	\$245	\$285	\$300	\$315

<b>2-3 Years</b>	\$230	\$250	\$275	\$300
<b>3-6 Years</b>	\$220	\$235	\$265	\$280
<b>6-12 Years</b>	\$200	\$215	\$250	\$245

\*Stepping Stones Learning Center does not provide before and after school care during the school year. School-aged care (kindergarten and up) is only provided during summer break.

The hourly rate for \*unscheduled drop-in care is \$15.00 per hour for all age groups.

\*Unscheduled drop-in care is care that is not regularly scheduled. An advanced notice of 24 hours is required for drop-in care and can only be guaranteed if space is available, in order to maintain appropriate child-teacher ratios. Drop-in care needs to be approved by management.

Stepping Stones Learning Center holds the right to raise or lower the cost of child care at any given time. Parents will be notified in writing.

If a field trip is planned there may be other minimal expenses.

A 5% discount will be applied for legal parents or guardians that have served in the Military.

## Referral Discount

To show our appreciation of our families, Stepping Stones Learning Center will give you a \$100.00 discount on your bill each time you refer a family, and they are at our facility for more than 6 weeks. Referrals need to be written on the application form at the time of the new enrollment.

## Payment and Late Fees

Schedules are due on Mondays, two weeks in advance. Invoices are sent weekly on Thursday. We require an email address on file so that we may send them directly to you. Tuition express will be processed Friday's after 10 am. If you would like to pay by check, please have checks in the payment box by 10am. Payments that are not received by 10 am Monday mornings

will be charged a \$25 late fee. Credit Card payments will be run through tuition express as a batch payment. To combat the rising cost of credit card fees, there will be a \$5 processing fee added to your tuition if you choose to pay via credit card. If fees are not paid, you will run the risk of termination and your childcare spot being filled by another family.

All checks should be made payable to Stepping Stones Learning Center. If you choose to pay with cash or check, we ask that you put it in a labeled envelope and place it in the black payment box located on the wall near the check in computer. When disenrolling, if payments are not received within one week of the child's last day parents will be charged a \$25/week late payment fee until payment has been made or a plan set in place. Repeated late payments or unpaid balances that are more than one-week overdue may result in termination of attendance and will be sent to collections. We will take all outstanding accounts to court and collections. Should it be necessary, the parent/guardian is responsible for all court costs. Each family that has a 0 balance and is in good standing with our facility will receive an "End of Year" payment analysis at their request for tax purposes. Overdue balances will need to be paid before receiving an "End of Year" Statement.

Families who are involved in Wisconsin shares will be given two different billing options and must state to management which option they will use.

**Option 1:** Families who are involved in Wisconsin shares may submit their full monthly payment on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month and a weekly copayment will be calculated. If there is a balance left at the end of the month, parents are responsible for payment and cannot use their next month's Wisconsin shares to pay a balance for the previous month.

**Option 2:** Families who are involved in Wisconsin shares may submit their tuition fee on a weekly basis and will be responsible for paying the remaining due by the last day of the month.

For either option selected by families receiving shares, late payment fees will still be applied for all funds not received by the date they are due, or the date agreed upon with management.

Families that are experiencing special circumstances should discuss the situation with the Administrator. Exceptions to policies (layoffs, severe illness, late pick up due to weather) will be considered on an individual basis.

Checks: There will be a \$25.00 charge for all Checks returned NSF plus any additional charges incurred to Stepping Stones Learning Center and/or by the bank. Parents who have 3 NSF checks will be required to pay by cash or money order.

## Disenrollment Policies

### Disenrollment Policy

In the event that a family should decide that they no longer require care for their child at Stepping Stones Learning Center we require a 2 weeks' written notice prior to your child's last day to be given to the Administrator or the Director. You are required to pay tuition for the last two weeks based on your schedule, regardless of attendance. If payments were made in advance to cover a time frame that would go beyond their last day, a refund will be given on the child's last day at Stepping Stones Learning Center after all payments and fees have been addressed.

Should Stepping Stones Learning Center Management decide to discharge a child for behavioral issues or non-compliance of any of the policies as set forth in this manual, a refund will not be given to parents.

### Termination

The center reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment for any of the following instances:

- Failure to pay by Monday of that week. If balance isn't paid or arrangement made, care will be suspended.
- Parent's disruptive behavior regardless of attempts to solve issues.
  - Physically or emotionally causing harm to a child
  - Improper language, slander or disrespect towards staff, center, and other families
  - Threatening emails, phone calls or notes
- Child behavior
  - Excessive biting
    - In the event that excessive biting occurs, parents will be notified, and a plan will be put in place.

- Behavior that is hazardous to self or others- can be discharged with no notice.
  - Stealing
  - Damage to property
  - Failure to submit required paperwork in a timely manner.
  - Failure to observe policies set forth in this manual.
  - Stepping Stones Learning Center holds the right to discharge a family at any time. Notice will be given in writing.
- If in any event the center believes that an outside agency can be of help to your child, a referral will be given.

### Steps to Behavioral Issues and Discharges

1. Documentation by teachers/management of behavior
2. Documentation is shared with parents in a sensitive, supportive, and confidential manner in a meeting with teachers, management and other specialists where a plan will be made.
3. Plan is put into action and observations will be documented (changes may occur).
4. If improvement is not seen, enrollment will be terminated after a 2-week' notice. (If behavior is putting others in harm's way, care will be terminated without notice.)
5. If you feel that this decision is unfair this decision can be appealed if a written statement is submitted to the director within 10 business days.

## Program

### Education Policy

Stepping Stones Learning Center will provide an educational program that is developmentally appropriate for children of all ages. Each member of the staff will be responsible for providing a variety of developmentally appropriate activities for their class based on age and ability. The learning materials strive to be multiracial, multicultural, non-sexist, and non-stereotypical. Stepping Stones Learning Center also has a website and social media account where parents can also be updated on events.

Some of the activities at Stepping Stones Learning Center will include:

- Language development: Books, music, story time, finger plays, flannel board stories



- Large muscle skills: Balls, hula hoops, bean bags, swinging, outdoor play
- Small muscle skills: Arts / crafts, stringing beads, pegboards, blocks.
- Creative expression: Dramatic play, puppets, music / instruments, flannel board
- Self-help skills: Assist with mealtime preparation, dress self for outdoors, potty training.

Stepping Stones Learning Center celebrates most holidays with the children. If you prefer your child not to take part in such activities, please let the Administrator and Teacher know. If you have any requests for a celebration, please inform us as well. In addition, we believe that cultural diversity and cultural competence within our staff and members are strengths that protect children, empower individuals to grow, and help Stepping Stones Learning Center achieve excellence. We find it important to educate children about the different cultures around the world while celebrating holidays. Stepping Stones Learning Center will not practice any religion, conduct any prayers, or read any bible stories to the children.

All staff will work cooperatively to implement daily teaching and learning activities. Individualized Family Service Plans and Individualized Education Programs as well as individual special plans will be incorporated into the children’s daily activities. All program staff will work to put these plans into place and assist teachers and families in coordination of goals.

## Staffing and Grouping

- The maximum number of children in a group may not exceed the number specified in the table below.
- The ratio of child care workers to children may not be less than the minimum number of child care workers to children specified in the table below.
- Our mixed-age classroom will have appropriate staffing to meet the developmental needs of the children attending and the licensing ratios.

**Maximum Group Size and Minimum Number of Child Care Workers in Group Child Care Centers Including NAEYC requirements**

Age of Children Minimum Number of Child	Minimum Number of Child Care Workers to Children	Maximum Number of Children in a Group
0-2	1:4	8
2-2 ½	1:6	12
2 ½-3	1:8	16
3-4	1:10	20
4-5	1:13	24
5-6	1:17	34
6-12	1:18	36

## Early/Late Programming

Early morning and late afternoon activities are planned to allow children time to adjust to the transitions of arrival and departure. Early morning arrivals are given the opportunity for quiet play in the classroom. Various toys and activities other than those used during most of the day will be available for free selection. Children may rest or request special activities from the early morning staff person. During arrival and departure times, groups may be combined into mixed age groupings. Children will be combined into one classroom in the early morning until as late as 8:00am based on each child’s schedule. By 5:30pm children will be combined into one classroom for dinner and the remainder of the evening.

Late afternoon programming includes quiet play, individual choice activities, and outdoor play. End of the day activities are self-selected by the child based on their interest and materials available to them for play. End of day clean-up is also an important responsibility for children as they depart.

## Programming by Age

Infants and toddlers (children under two years of age) will have a flexible schedule which reflects the child's individual needs. All children receive assessments throughout their time in our program. They will be given individual attention including lots of time for interaction. The body position of non-mobile infants and their location in the center will be changed

frequently. We will provide safe, open spaces for children who are creeping and crawling. Infants and toddlers will be encouraged to play with a wide variety of safe toys and objects.

Toddler/Preschool/Kindergarten age children will have a flexible schedule of activities that meet their age requirements and individual needs. These schedules may be modified by the teacher to scaffold children's learning and development of skills, social relationships as well as interests and ideas. They will have access to multiple play and learn activities. They will also be provided with a quiet place, as well as access to appropriate materials. They will have ample time for large muscle activities. We will provide an indoor and outdoor area for all children to play.

Teachers will create opportunities for the children individually and in groups by acknowledging their interests, ideas, and skills.

School age children will have a flexible schedule that reflects their individual needs and is developmentally appropriate. They will also be provided with a quiet place to study or relax, as well as access to appropriate materials and activities and will have ample time for large muscle activities. We will provide an indoor and outdoor area for all children to play.

## Schedule

Every classroom has their own schedule posted outside of the door, and in the room. This schedule states times of meals, snacks, outside times, curriculum, and activities.

As per licensing, food is served every three hours at the following times:

Breakfast is served from 8:30am-9:30am

Lunch is served from 11:30-12:30pm

Afternoon snack is served from 2:30-3:00pm

Dinner is served from 5:45-6:15pm

## Naps

Infants will be provided opportunities to sleep on an individual basis. The schedule for naps (quiet time) will be developed in consultation with parents.

All children will be supervised during nap times and periods of rest. If a child is asleep in a classroom while the other children are awake, staff will be positioned to be able to supervise all the children at one time.

Parents are asked to bring individual sleeping bags for each child 1 year of age and up. Parents are asked to take sleeping bags home at the end of every week for cleaning and return them the following week. For all one-year-old children, nap mats will be provided by the center. For children younger than one individual cribs and sheets will be provided by the center. Washing of the sheets is the responsibility of the center and will be done nightly.

All children under the age of 5 are offered a rest period. If they are not asleep after 30 minutes of rest, then quiet activities will be supplied to keep the children engaged yet not interrupt the sleeping children. During periods of time when school is not in session and school age children are at the center the older children will have developmentally appropriate activities that they can be engaged in quietly while the younger children nap.

If parents would like to limit their child's nap time, we can wake up a child with written consent from the parents.

## Transitions

When children move from one activity to another, staff members provide a smooth and unregimented transition. Transitions between activities are integrated into the program as learning opportunities. The Teachers carefully plan transitions. Children are given advanced notice to prepare for all changes in the schedule. Transitions are gradual rather than abrupt and waiting time is minimized. Examples of transitions are guessing games, songs, finger plays, number or color games, etc. When children are developmentally ready to move up to the next classroom, that transition will be made gradually. Parents will receive a transition notification through Procure.

During the transition period, the child will visit the next room on a schedule that fits the ratios of the classroom and teachers. This may take place over a few weeks so that the children and staff can grow accustomed to the change. This transition period may be sporadic and not consistent.

If any difficulties are seen during this time period, teachers and parents may decide to take another week of transitions before moving the child up into the new classroom if time and ratios allow.

## Outdoor Play

An opportunity for outdoor play is provided daily. It is assumed that every child at the center is well enough to go out for fresh air. A daily schedule is posted outside each classroom stating outdoor times. Exceptions to this are as follows:

- The center has a written statement from the child's doctor requesting that the child remain inside with a reason.
- If the outdoor temperature is extreme, which includes:
  - Heavy rain
  - Temperatures above 90 degrees F.
  - Wind chills of 0 degrees F. or below for children aged 2 and above.
  - Wind chills of 20 degrees F. or below for children under age 2
  - Air quality conditions are poor.

\*When outdoor opportunities are not possible because of conditions, similar activities will be conducted indoors. Large motor indoor equipment meets national safety standards and is supervised at the same level as outdoor equipment.

Children should have appropriate clothing in the center each day so that they can actively participate in outdoor play activities. Appropriate clothing for winter includes hats, mittens, coats, snow pants and boots. Please label all clothing, sunscreen, and bug repellent with your child's name.

### **RULES FOR PLAYGROUND**

- Before going outside, each child will be required to go to the bathroom and get a drink of water.
- Children will not be allowed to come inside alone.
- Water cups may be taken out to the play area.
- Children will always keep sand and sandbox toys in the sandbox.
- Staff members should not group together on the playground but should move around to provide adequate supervision. Further rules and instructions will be given during orientation.
- Closed-toed shoes must be worn to play on the playground.

- If closed-toed shoes are not provided, an activity will be provided for those children to remain on the sidewalk.

## Curriculum Development

Written curriculum plans are rotated weekly and change themes. Teachers use a variety of resources including information about the child and their families, connections with the community, as well as utilizing a library of resources kept on site. The learning environment and the activities for the children reflect the philosophy and goals of Stepping Stones Learning Center and the creative curriculum aligned by WMELS.

Teachers plan the activities for the week ahead according to the age-appropriate themes and focus areas, which are then based on children's interests as observed by the teachers. A written lesson plan is posted for parents to view in each. These plans are designed to provide experiences, which enhance all areas of development, such as:

- Large Motor Skills: Outdoor play, obstacle courses, parachute play, climbers, or walks.
- Small Motor Skills: Puzzles, lacing cards, building blocks and a variety of art activities.
- Group Time: Reading books, calendar, and songs.
- Math/Science/Sensory: Counting, colors, shapes, numbers, patterns, cause and effect, reasoning, opposites and our five senses.

The items listed are only examples of what will be included as there are a wide range of themed activities that the children will be engaged in. Each classroom will develop and post its own time frame for these activities, making sure to keep all time frames age appropriate.

Please keep in mind that we do follow schedules at Stepping Stones Learning Center closely and it may take children a while to adjust to these schedules. We will do our best to make the child's time with us relaxing, stimulating, and safe.

Many opportunities for walks are offered.

## Special Needs

Children with special needs will be properly cared for at Stepping Stones Learning Center. The child's personal information will be shared with staff so that everyone is aware of his/her defined needs. We will partner with parents and other professionals to develop and implement an individualized plan that supports the child's inclusion and success. One-on-one care will be an option for children that require it. If you believe your child may need one-on-one care, please talk to a director to set up a payment contract. Payment will be more than regular tuition at the center. If you are on state assistance your co-payment may be higher. Payment will be determined at the time the contract is made or state authorization comes through if applicable.

## Guidelines and Limitations

All staff at Stepping Stones Learning Center are responsible for setting guidelines and limitations for their individual classroom based on the age of the children they are caring for.

We understand that there will be times when a child will become distraught and upset. Our first action in these situations will be an attempt to determine the cause of the distress.

We understand that crying is normal, and that all babies will have times when they cry. At these times, we will stay calm and will do whatever we can to soothe the child. Sometimes this may mean just allowing the child to cry for a few minutes and then trying again.

However, there also may be times when we need your advice or assistance, and we won't hesitate to call you if we feel that it is necessary.

Child guidance will be handled in a caring manner and will emphasize redirection and positive behavior alternatives. Children will be encouraged to solve problems for themselves as teachers model positive behavior.

If a child's behavior becomes unsafe for the child or others, that child may be removed from the classroom away from others (office, hallway, or another area of the classroom) until the child calms down and is ready to talk about his/her behavior. The child will then be walked back to the classroom to try again. Multiple instances may result in a parent meeting and/or termination.

## Child Guidance Policy

Each Classroom at Stepping Stones Learning Center will be arranged to allow for the children to safely learn through play. Our program will involve different techniques that allow for the children to learn responsibility, autonomy, empathy, self-esteem, self-respect, sharing, caring, as well as teaching boundaries and how unacceptable behavior will be handled. All teaching staff are responsible for the care of the children enrolled in their classroom. Staff that are counted in staff to child ratios are always required to be within sight and sound of all children (including when they are sleeping).

## Timeouts

There will often be times when children make poor choices; it is part of being young. During these times, children may be given a time out period. Time outs will not be given to a child under the age of three and will not exceed 3 minutes. Children under three will have positive redirection and distraction.

A time out consists of having the child sit quietly away from others to reflect on unacceptable behavior and gain self-control. Following the brief time out, the teacher and child will discuss how the situation disrupted the class, how it could have been handled differently, and if the time out was the result of the child hurting someone else, an apology would then follow, and the child would return to the activity.

In accordance with DCF 251 Licensing Rules for Group Child Care Centers, actions that are aversive, cruel, or humiliating and actions that may be psychologically, emotionally, or physically painful, discomfoting, dangerous or potentially injurious are prohibited. Prohibited actions include spanking, hitting, pinching, shaking, slapping, twisting or inflicting any other form of corporal punishment on the child; verbal abuse, threats or derogatory remarks about the child or the child's family; physical restraint, binding or tying the child to restrict the child's movement; enclosing the child in a confined space such as a closet, locked room, box or similar cubicle; withholding or forcing meals, snacks or naps; or punishing a child for lapses in toilet training. These forms of punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

## Toilet Training and Diapering

Stepping Stones Learning Center will work with parents to make toilet training as effortless as possible. We cannot be toilet training any child earlier than eighteen months of age. Experiences in toilet training have shown that children around two years of age are the most willing to learn and want to be doing whatever their peers are doing. In our two-year-old room, the older two-year olds will begin being introduced to the bathroom and the concept of using the bathroom. Our 2 ½ year old room is our main potty-training room where they start working on it consistently. We ask that once we begin the process of toilet training, parents provide the teacher with extra clothing in the event of accidents. We will send home any soiled or wet clothes in plastic bags as these accidents occur.

For children with cloth diapers, we require them to have an absorbent inner lining completely contained within an outer covering made of a waterproof material that prevents the escape of feces and urine and is changed as a unit. Any cloth diapers and clothing that are soiled by urine or feces are immediately placed in a plastic bag (without rinsing or avoidable handling) and will be put onto the child's hook to be sent home that day for laundering. All diapers will be checked and changed at least every two hours by staff when children are awake or upon waking. Diapers are changed when wet or soiled. All soiled clothing and diapers will be changed in designated changing areas that are separated by a partial wall or at least three feet from other areas that children use and is exclusively for one designated group of children. Changing areas will not be used to set temporary objects and especially not for any object involved with food or feeding. Children will be supervised, and caregivers will have one hand on the child while they are on an elevated changing table. Policies and procedures for changing diapers and sanitary precautions will be posted near the changing area and followed by all staff. All containers that hold soiled diapers and diapering materials have a lid that opens and closes tightly by using a hand's free device. These containers are kept closed and are not accessible to children. Staff that change diapers and prepare food do not change diapers until their food preparation duties are completed and proper hand washing has been completed.

## Non-discrimination Statement

### USDA Statement

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: [http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint\\_filing\\_cust.html](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410.
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

**Children with disabilities will be encouraged to attend, and reasonable accommodation will be provided.** Issues of great difficulty (undue hardship) will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. RE: Americans with Disabilities Act.

## Parent-Teacher Communication

Communication between parents and staff is something we are constantly striving to improve. We hope if you have any questions, comments, or concerns you will voice them with teachers or the administrator /directors. We will communicate with you in the following ways:

- **ProCare App-** These communicate what the children did during the day, their times of diaper changes, food they ate, naps they took and any other information we would like to share. These are sent via our classroom app to parents daily.
- **Website-** Our website contains information about staff biographies and pictures, and general information about the center.
- **Calendar/Newsletter-** Our calendar and newsletter go out monthly and contain information about center activities, birthdays and events happening.
- **Parent's Survey-** We have random "parent's surveys" in which we will email all families to address questions or concerns parents may have. We work collaboratively to create our program planning. We encourage all parents and staff to complete.
- **Formal/ Informal Conversations-** All staff and administration work together with parents to ensure their child/children are getting the services they need by having conversations about concerns or improvements. We encourage families to utilize the classroom app to directly message your child's classroom on any sort of information that needs to be relayed. If a concern comes up with the care provided, please address management as soon as possible. We would like to set up a meeting with you as well to address any concerns. Staff and administration can provide information and connections to services outside of the daycare.
- **Management Communication-** The best way to communicate with management is via email. There are many responsibilities assigned to management and we ask that you give adequate time and notice of any concerns or questions that arise so that we can address them as soon as possible.

Materials and resources that are not readily available for families that speak other languages will be made available from Child Care Partnership when requested.

## Parent Information Board

The following items can be found on the wall near the front door:

- The license issued to Stepping Stones learning Center by the State of Wisconsin
- Any copies of non-compliance issues as they relate to our license.
- Emergency closing information.
- Any health/illness notices
- Parental notices
- Newsletters
- Menu
- Policy Book
- State Licensing Book

## Assessments

We will be doing on-going assessments on each child throughout their time in our program. We gather information about your child and his/her progress in various aspects of our curriculum. Teachers keep notes, art work, projects, conversations, pictures, etc. in your child's portfolio on our classroom app. The portfolio will be shared during bi-annual parent/teacher conferences in March and October. All these records will be kept confidential and shared only with teachers working with your child. We would like your input whenever possible about your child's development. We appreciate all your help!

Our assessments are conducted using a variety of methods. These methods include, but are not limited to, observations, checklists, rating scales, and individually administered tests. The purpose of these assessments is to plan and implement goals that are developmentally appropriate for your child as well as distinguish any interests or needs that your child has. Assessments are also used to track developmental progress, adapt classroom settings and curriculum for your child, as well as improve the program. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's progress, please communicate these with your child's teacher so we can provide you with the correct resources that best fit your child. If further screening or diagnostic assessments are indicated referrals will be made.

## Pets

Stepping Stones Learning Center currently has no pets in the center.

## Transportation and Motor Vehicle

Stepping Stones Learning Center does not have any vehicles to transport children. If your child is to be picked up or dropped off at Stepping Stones Learning Center by bus for 4k or another program, parents must complete an Alternate Arrival Agreement.

Stepping Stones Learning Center will be contracting transportation for field trips through Eau Claire Transit. Stepping Stones Learning Center will be responsible for each child during transportation and while the children are in our care. To ensure that no child is left behind attendance will be checked when boarding and exiting the vehicle. Smoking is prohibited in all center contracted vehicles while in use by the center. Each parent will have to sign a transportation authorization form for their child to be transported by the facility.

When a field trip is planned parents will be notified in writing and asked to sign a permission slip (field trip authorization form) to allow their child to attend. A fee may be put in place to pay for costs accrued from this event.

When on a field trip all emergency medical documentation (Transportation Permission, Parent Contacts, Emergency Contact, Physician Contact, Emergency Medical Consent) filled out by parents will accompany the children as well as first aid kits. Teachers will be responsible for these items. Teachers will also be responsible for daily attendance sheets and keeping accurate records of who is in their care and their whereabouts. If a child is signed up for a field trip but does not show up on time the child will be put in a different classroom until their class returns.

When 9 or more children are on a field trip there shall be at least 2 child care workers with the children at all times and all staff to child ratios shall be implemented when on field trips.

When on a field trip all meals will still be at their scheduled times and center provided. We do participate in walking field trips with the children around the center. During this time staff will take a cell phone in case of an emergency.

## Health Care Policies

## Confidentiality

Never will the name of the child with an illness be posted or given out to anyone other than the Eau Claire County Health Department and licensing department. We are responsible to contact the health department in the event of a child being sent home or not attending due to a communicable illness such as chicken pox, hepatitis, or tuberculosis.

## Definitions

In Order to comply with state regulations and protect the health of other children and staff at Stepping Stones Learning Center, a parent must keep their child home, or return to the center to pick up their child, if any of the following symptoms are evident.

**Rashes**-Children with contagious rashes will not be allowed to attend Stepping Stone Learning Center. Any rash that cannot be explained or is questionable, will need to be seen by the child's physician and a note will be required verifying that the rash is not contagious before the child may return to the center.

**Diarrhea**- Children having diarrhea (including diarrhea associated with teething or diarrhea that is the result of a certain medication) at a rate of three times within a 1-hour period or a total of two "blow outs" (with or without other symptoms) of underpants or diapers in a one-day period will be sent home and unable to return to the center until they have gone twenty-four hours without these diarrhea symptoms.

**Head Lice**-Children that have been diagnosed with head lice will be checked by Administrator or Director for any remaining eggs or nits before receiving care again.

**Fever**- Children with a fever of 100 degrees or more (even if associated with teething), should refrain from attending day care. Children that are sent home with a temperature of 101 degrees or more are unable to return to child care until they have been fever free without medication for a period of at least twenty-four hours.

**Pink Eye**- Children with pink eye or any eye inflammation will be sent home and unable to return until the inflammation has been diagnosed and/or treated. We ask that the child return only with a note of readmission from their physician.

**Vomiting-** Children will be sent home and unable to return until twenty-four hours after the vomiting has ceased.

**Chicken Pox-** Children that have been diagnosed with Chickenpox will need to remain out of the center until all the pox has scabbed over. This is usually a period of five to seven days.

**Communicable Diseases-** Children with any communicable disease will be removed from the center and will only be readmitted after being absent for the number of days recommended by the Eau Claire County Health Department and/or the child's physician.

**COVID-19** – If someone within your household or someone you have been in contact with tests positive for COVID-19, it is important that you communicate that with management right away. We will take any necessary precautions suggested by the health department at that time.

**Miscellaneous-** Any child with a bacterial diarrhea infection, hepatitis, infectious mononucleosis, strep or staph infections or tuberculosis must have doctor's written permission in order to return to Stepping Stones Learning Center. The Doctors document must note that the child's condition is not contagious.

**Hand, Foot and Mouth (HFV)-** If a child is suspected of having HFV, parents will have to have their child checked. If HFV is confirmed, it is the daycare policy that the lesions must have ruptured and scabbed over before the child can return to daycare.

**Health Department Contact Number: 715-839-4718**

## Ill Child

Stepping Stones Learning Center does not provide care for ill children. If a child develops any of the above illnesses while at Stepping Stones Learning Center, they will be kept in the administrator or director's office until their parents arrive to pick them up. The child will be given the opportunity to rest on their sleeping bag or play quietly with a separate collection of toys kept in a container for the sole purpose of being used by ill children waiting to be picked up. All toys will be sanitized after the child is finished playing with them and before any other child can play with them. Once parents are

notified, they are allowed 60 minutes to pick up their child. The administrator or director is responsible for posting the illness once a child is either sent home ill, or the parents have notified us of the child's illness. Included in the posting will be the following information:

- The nature of the illness
- The age/classroom of the affected child
- Date of diagnosis

## Administration of Medication

Medication will only be administered if the parents submit a signed medical authorization form. Medication must be in its original container. If it is prescription medication, it must have a label on the prescription that includes the child's full name. If there is no label with the child's name, we will be unable to give the child the medication. Non-prescription medicine will not be given for a period of more than seven days. Once medication has been administered to a child it will be logged into the medical log book. All entries into the medical log book will include the child's name, medicine name and dosage, date and time administered, and the initials of the person that administered the medicine. Medicine will be stored in a covered container that is labeled and out of the children's reach. Medication that requires refrigeration will be kept in a covered container clearly labeled and kept in the refrigerator located in the kitchen or classroom. The medical log book will be kept in each room to ensure that the person that administers the medication, logs the information immediately following the administration. If we miss a dosage the parent will be contacted and will decide whether to administer it or not.

## Allergies/Other Health Issues

It is of extreme importance that parents disclose with management and staff any allergies and/or underlying health issues that may arise while their child is receiving care at Stepping Stones Learning Center. Enrollment paperwork requires parents to document child allergies or food intolerances. If there is a food allergy, we will need a medical statement from the doctor and a food plan will be arranged with the family. Forms will be placed confidentially in the child's file. This information will be shared



with teachers working with that child as well as posted in a confidential place in your child's classroom and the kitchen. Weekly menus are posted on the parent board and in each classroom. If there are foods you would like us to avoid, please document them on the menus. **Please note that we are a peanut-free facility.** All staff are informed of the correct steps to take in case of an allergic reaction, along with the proper procedure of administering an Epi pen.

## Medical Emergency

Should Stepping Stones Learning Center need to remove a child due to a medical emergency, the child and one representative from the Stepping Stones Learning Center staff will be transported by ambulance provided by the Eau Claire Fire Department to Mayo, Sacred Heart Hospital, or Marshfield, unless a different hospital is indicated in the child's file. The staff member will remain responsible for ensuring that the child's file (including the permission to transport form, immunization form, and all other medical information) goes to the hospital with the child. The child's parent(s) will be called, and it is expected that they will meet the Stepping Stones Learning Center employee at the hospital as soon as possible.

# Emergencies

## Fire Evacuation Plan

All Stepping Stones Learning Center employees have been successfully trained in the procedure for evacuation in the event of a fire. Each classroom will have an emergency exit plan posted on the wall nearest the door. Each plan will allow for two exit options, an original and an alternative, as well as a prearranged meeting location where the children and teachers will meet following the evacuation. This prearranged meeting location will be at the dumpster located in the corner of the parking lot. Both exit plans are handicap accessible as well as functional for the evacuation of children with special needs. All teachers will be held accountable for the safe exit of all children in their care at that time, as well as attendance reports for tracking children.

Our evacuation plan will be practiced on a monthly basis. Upon completion of the drill, we will document the date, time, and actual amount of time that it took to successfully complete the fire drill. This documentation will be kept up to date, and posted in the Administrator or Directors office, and a copy of this documentation is forwarded to the State Licensing Department on a yearly basis once completed. This documentation also includes our monthly required checks that ensure that all smoke alarms and fire extinguishers are maintained and in good working order.

## Tornado

In the event of a tornado, it is the responsibility of the teachers to take with them the daily attendance report and the teacher's responsibility to bring emergency files with parent names and phone numbers. Their first and most important priority is to make sure that all the children and staff are safe. In the event of a tornado warning or severe weather, the children will be taken to the Underwater room, away from any doors and windows to the outside. Blankets and a portable radio and flashlight, with extra batteries for both, are always kept in the tornado shelter area. Tornado drills will be performed and documented monthly from April to October.

## Missing Child

In the event of a lost child, all areas of the center will be put in lock down and checked. A head count will be done in each classroom. If the child cannot be found, the child's parents and /or emergency contact and the police will be notified immediately.

## Inclement Weather and Closing Procedures

Stepping Stones does not intend to close for inclement weather. Should Stepping Stones Learning Center be unable to open on a given day due to an emergency (inclement weather, electric failure, etc.) the following procedures will be followed:

- The owner will reach out in the event of a large snow storm. We will ask if you plan on sending your children. We will base our decision on the number of children who will need care. In the event of a major snow storm, the owner will contact parents as soon as possible to let them know if the center will be closed.

Parents are not charged for days that are closed due to inclement weather or utility failure.

- If we need to close mid-day due to an emergency, the administrator, director, or a staff member appointed will call the parents individually. We certify that staff will maintain all state regulated ratios and group sizes until all the children in our care have been safely picked up from the center. In the event that this happens, we request that parents pick up their children within 1 hour of receiving the phone call.

## Other Emergency

If there is a danger or potential risk to the public and/or the children in our care (air pollution notice, public health related issue, etc.) parents will be notified via email, telephone, social media, and/or our classroom app what our requirements are. ex. Air pollution notice- children will not be allowed outdoors.

## Contact Person

There will always be a second adult available within five minutes of the center. The name, address and phone number of this person shall be posted in the break room, along with their signature stating that they are available to come whenever needed.

A listing of all emergency telephone numbers-Fire Department, Police Department, Rescue Squad and Poison Control will be posted by each phone at Stepping Stones Learning Center.

# Injury

## Injury Protocol

If a child receives an injury while in care at Stepping Stones Learning Center, it will be taken very seriously and handled immediately. We can use soap and water to clean the injury and band aids will be applied. If the injury is too severe for a regular band aid, parents will be called immediately. If a child is bitten the wound will be washed with soap and water and an ice

pack will be applied. If a bite breaks the skin, a band aid will be applied after washing.

All incidents will be recorded in the medical logbook, DCF required Incident report and through a report in our classroom app, and parents will be notified. With any incident or injury to the head, parents will be notified. If the injury is too severe for regular Band-Aids, parents will be called immediately. Whether at the center or on a field trip, in the case of a severe medical emergency or injury, 911 will be called before contacting the parents, and the child will be taken to the hospital. Should an ambulance be needed, parents will be responsible for any costs. Parents will be contacted as soon as possible. If possible, we will ask that the ambulance take your child to the emergency medical facility that you designated on the child enrollment form.

## Universal Precautions

1. Center staff shall adopt universal precautions when exposed to blood and blood containing body fluids and injury discharges of all children.
2. All persons exposed to blood or blood containing body fluids and tissue discharges shall wash their hands immediately with soap and warm running water.
3. Single use disposable gloves shall be worn if there is contact with blood containing body fluids or tissue discharges. Hands shall be washed with soap and water after removal of gloves. Gloves shall be discarded in plastic bags.
4. For spills of vomit, urine, feces, blood or other body fluids, center staff shall clean and disinfect the floors, walls, bathrooms, tabletops, toys, kitchen countertops and diaper changing tables.

Stepping Stones Learning Center follows the guidance of the health department when it comes to precautions above and beyond the universal ones. In instances where the health department recommends wearing masks or other cleaning procedures, we will follow them.

# Nutrition

## Nutrition Policy

Stepping Stones Learning Center will serve breakfast, lunch, dinner and one additional snack every day. Stepping Stones Learning Center participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program which regulates the amounts and portions of all components served to children in our care. We promote healthy eating and limit sugar, juice, sodium, and saturated fats in all our meals. If your child has a special diet, please communicate what your special circumstances are. All meals and snacks that are served will be prepared at the center and according to the state guidelines as set forth in the Licensing Rules for Group Day Care Centers and USDA requirements. Staff will sit and eat with the children and engage the children in conversations during snacks and meals.

Dietary restrictions due to personal or religious beliefs will result in parents providing meals/snacks.

## Menus

All menus prepared at Stepping Stones Learning Center will be posted in the classrooms and the parent board. The menus will be planned at least two weeks in advance and include a variety of foods that meet with the USDA minimum daily requirements. Any changes made to the menu will be recorded and kept on file, and the change will also be posted on the parent board. Meal time routines will always be followed, for routines see "Daily Schedules." If parents would like to bring in "treats" for children's birthdays or other events, they must make sure they are store bought with a clear list of ingredients. Please check with the office or classroom teachers if there are any allergies present in the classroom and remember that we are completely peanut and tree nut free.

When necessary, an age-appropriate substitution will be made within the same food group for infants. Infants will be fed on demand in accordance with their own schedules. Infants will be held when bottle-fed. All new foods will be introduced according to their parents' wishes. Menus will be

given to the parents of infants that are starting table food, so they can indicate what they wish to be offered to their child.

## Food Service Personnel

1. Personnel who help prepare meals shall:
  - a. Be at least 18 years of age.
  - b. Wear clean clothing and effective hair restraints such as hair nets or caps.
  - c. Wash their hands with soap and warm running water before starting work, before and after handling food, and after using the toilet. Hand shall be dried with single use towels.
2. No one with an open infected wound or sore may work in the food preparation area unless the wound or sore is covered and, if it is on a hand, a nonporous glove is worn on that hand.
3. All Personnel will complete orientation and training provided by the center and will document annual training of at least 4 hours in kitchen sanitation, food handling and nutrition.
  - a. Dishwashing will be completed by using a home-type spray dishwasher and then dishes and utensils will be submerged in a sanitizing agent for no less than 2 minutes. Then the air dried in the kitchen area.
  - b. The kitchen is always to be kept clean.

The only time that the employee hired to cook at Stepping Stones Learning Center can be included into the staff to child ratios, is when the employee is done with all of the duties that relate to cooking, and they can provide uninterrupted attention to the children. The employee must also have taken the necessary course that would qualify them as a child care teacher or assistant teacher.

## Food Handling

1. Raw fruits and vegetables shall be washed before being served or cooked.
2. Food returned from individual plates or from dining tables shall be discarded.
3. Leftover prepared food which has not been served shall be dated, refrigerated promptly, and used within 36 hours, or frozen immediately for use later.

4. Potentially Hazardous frozen food shall be thawed in the refrigerator, under cold running water or on the defrost setting in a microwave oven. Not by leaving it at room temperature.
5. All food will be purchased from a licensed grocery store. Once at the center the food will be stored at the proper temperatures.

## Employee Training

### New Employee/Volunteer Orientation

Upon hire, each new employee/volunteer of Stepping Stones Learning Center will be given their own copy of the Policy & Procedure Manual and an Employee Handbook. They will be required to preview each and become familiar with all policies and procedures at Stepping Stones Learning Center. The final page of the Employee Handbook requires their signature verifying that they have read and understand the book and their responsibilities. They will also be required to review and understand the State Licensing Rules and how those rules apply to their position.

The first week of employment/volunteering at Stepping Stones Learning Center will be the new teacher's orientation period. During this week, the Director will ensure that the new staff person is oriented in the following areas:

- STEPPING STONES LEARNING CENTER Policies
- Licensing Rules & Regulations
- Center Contingency Plans including fire and tornado evacuation plans and the operation of fire extinguishers.
- First Aid Procedures
- Job responsibilities as they relate to their job description.
- Training in the recognition of childhood illnesses and infectious disease control including hand washing procedures and universal precautions for handling body fluids.
- Schedule of activities of the STEPPING STONES LEARNING CENTER
- Review of child abuse and neglect laws and center reporting procedures
- The procedure for ensuring that all child care workers know the children assigned to their care and their whereabouts at all times.
- Child Management techniques
- Procedure for sharing information related to a child's special health care needs including any physical, emotional, social, cognitive disabilities with any child care worker who may be

assigned to care for that child throughout the day and confidentiality.

- Review of procedures to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) prior to employee's or volunteer's first day of work.
- Review Abusive Head Trauma (AHT) training to reduce the risk of Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS)
- The procedure to contact a parent if a child is absent from the center without prior notification from the parent.
- Staff will be trained in administration of any medication need to give children.
- Information on any special needs a child enrolled in the center may have and the plan for how those needs will be met and confidentiality.
- Emergency training including first aid, CPR, AED
- Procedure for tracking transported children.

During their orientation, every employee of Stepping Stones Learning Center will be taught the importance of sanitizing toys and equipment, wearing gloves, hand washing and administering first aid to an injured child (including proper training as it relates to a bleeding child). Training will be completed within 3 months of the start date. Orientation will be documented on a form provided by licensing.

Staff are taught to identify and protect children from bodies and of water and vehicular traffic. They are also taught how to handle and store hazardous materials and bio contaminants.

### Structure of Administration

The structure of administration at Stepping Stones Learning Center will be as shown below (with number one being the highest in rank).

1. Owner(s)/Administrator
2. Director
3. Assistant Director
4. Lead Teachers
5. Assistant Teachers
6. Volunteers

Each member of the staff will try their best to provide you with information at your request, referring you to a higher-up individual if necessary.

### Employee Training

As a part of their orientation, all employees of Stepping Stones Learning Center will be trained in the correct use of a fire extinguisher and where

each one of them is located within the center. They will be shown the exit plans for each classroom and reminded that they are responsible for ensuring the safety of the children should they need to evacuate the center. All Staff members have been educated in Adult & Pediatric First Aid and Pediatric and Adult CPR. All emergency numbers are located near all telephone outlets.

## Employee Health Training

All new employees at Stepping Stones Learning Center will be trained the following procedure on hand washing, first aid and health precautions and how they apply to their daily activities:

Any employee of Stepping Stones Learning Center shall wash their hands with soap and warm running water before handling any food, after assisting with toileting, diapering, and after wiping any bodily secretions from a child with a disposable tissue. Single-use disposable gloves should be worn if there is any contact with blood, bodily fluids that contain blood, bodily secretions, feces, urine or any other body fluids.

Teachers are also responsible for teaching and implementing hand washing skills to the children in their care. Children are to wash their hands upon entering the center daily as well as before and after eating, after toileting, and after any other activity that includes foreign matter. (Dirt, paint, etc.) Wet or soiled clothing and diapers shall be changed promptly from an available supply of clean clothing.

Each person hired to work at Stepping Stones Learning Center must provide a physical exam report prior to assuming their position as a child care worker.

## Sanitizing and Cleaning

All surfaces in the facility are cleaned and sanitized daily. Staff are supplied with gloves and trained to use proper procedures and standard precautions to help prevent the spread of bacteria that could potentially cause illness. Any materials that are contaminated with bodily fluids are placed in a plastic bag, sealed, and sent home or disposed of in a closed container. When bodily fluids are spilled onto the floor, they are wiped up immediately and then cleaned thoroughly using a carpet shampooer after the children have vacated the room for the day. Any time a child is sent

home with any type of communicable illness, we will deep clean and sanitize all toys and equipment in the room. Staff will also run an air cleaning unit for 20 minutes. As a part of their orientation, each employee of Stepping Stones Learning Center will be trained the proper way to sanitize toys. We will use sanitizer that meets with the state requirements, and make sure that the toys are left to air dry for a period of no less than two minutes. Stepping Stones Learning Center will not sanitize the toys by dunking or soaking them. Each toy will be individually wiped with a towel dampened with sanitizer. The toys will then be placed on a clean surface and allowed to air dry. This procedure will not be done while the children are trying to play with the toys or equipment. Toys in all rooms will be sanitized daily.

## Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS)

All staff employed at Stepping Stones Learning Center are trained in Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. To take all precautions we do the following:

- Children under one year of age:
  - Child will be placed to sleep on his or her back in a crib unless the child's physician authorizes another position in writing.
  - Child will not sleep in a crib or playpen that contains materials such as sheepskins, pillows, fluffy blankets, bumper pads, or stuffed animals.
  - Children are unable to be swaddled with a blanket or swaddle. Sleep Sacs that are worn are acceptable.
  - Cribs and playpens shall contain a tight-fitting mattress and any mattress covering shall fit snugly over the mattress. Waterbeds may not be used.
  - Sheets will be tucked tightly under the mattress.
  - If a child falls asleep in a swing the child will be removed and placed to sleep on his or her back in a crib.
  - Parents are required to take children out of their car seats upon arrival.

## Child Abuse and Neglect

As required by state law, any employee of Stepping Stones Learning Center that knows or has reason to believe that a child in their care has been or is being abused or neglected either physically or mentally is responsible to report it to the County Department of Social Services, or the Eau Claire

County Sheriff's Department. Observations will be recorded in the medical log book. Any staff member who physically or verbally abuses another staff member or child will be dismissed. This training will be updated every two years.

## Continuing Education for Employees

All employees of Stepping Stones Learning Center are required by the State of Wisconsin to participate in Continuing Education. All employees that work more than twenty hours per week are required to provide themselves with twenty-five hours per year, and an employee that works less than twenty hours per week needs to have fifteen hours per year. Stepping Stones Learning Center will provide a few continuing education hours in service training for their employees, but the ultimate responsibility remains that of the employee. Continuing Education shall include, but is not limited to the following:

- Formal courses, resulting in credits or continuing education units.
- Workshops or conferences concerning childhood education.
- Training in emergency procedures including CPR and AED
- Training in identifying and handling childhood illness.
- Child Abuse and Neglect- annual training and reporting process
- Fire extinguisher and training

Participation in any or all of these must be documented with a certificate of participation. This certificate will be kept in their employee file in the Administrator or Director's Office. Stepping Stones Learning Center employees that are responsible for food preparation for the children will be required to take part in a training program that is at least four hours and covers sanitation, food handling and nutrition as it applies to child care centers.

Any Continuing Education hours that are obtained through credit courses can be carried over for a period of two years from the date of completion of that course. Continuing Education payments will not be reimbursed by Stepping Stones Learning Center.

It is required by the State of Wisconsin that licensed child care centers hold meetings on a monthly basis. These meetings are to be used to discuss problems, issues or information pertaining to appropriate teaching methods, upcoming events, etc. There is written documentation of these meetings and attendance records from them kept in the Administrator or Directors Office. The State of Wisconsin also requires that any staff members working directly with children in licensed centers must have current infant and child CPR certification.

Stepping Stones Learning Center employees that are responsible for food preparation for the children will be required to take part in a training program that is at least four hours and covers sanitation, food handling and nutrition as it applies to child care centers.

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## Confidentiality

All Stepping Stones Learning Center staff and state officials who have access to children's records or personal information about children or their families shall not discuss or disclose this information except with other staff members who need to know to perform their duties. Reports will be made to the local department when notification is given through written correspondence. If information is requested by an outside agency, written consent from the family must be given for them to obtain any information. Any and all child related health issues will be documented in their file and in their classrooms. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to:

- All enrollment paperwork
- Observed behavior.
- Health issues
- Verbal exchanges
- Custody arrangements

This does not apply to:

- The parent or a person authorized in writing by the parent to receive the information.
- Any agency assisting in planning for the child when informed with written parental consent has been given.
- Agencies authorized under s. 48.78 Statutes of Wisconsin.
- All records required by the department of Health and Family Services for licensing purposes will be made available to the licensing representative as required by law.

**Policy Handbook Contract**

The following contract pertains to the policies set forth in the Parent Policy Handbook governed by the Stepping Stones Learning Center. It is the Parent's responsibility to read the Policy Handbook completely before signing and it is the Parent's responsibility to abide by all the policies stipulated in the Policy Handbook. This is a legal and binding Contract and signing it obligates you to this Contract legally.

Parent Initial: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contract**

I hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the conditions stated in the Stepping Stones Learning Center's Policy Handbook and agree to abide by the above signed policies and requirements in conjunction with the financial agreement and the Agreement for Child Care Services. This Contract is in effect for the year of 20\_\_\_\_\_.

Parent  
Signature\_\_\_\_\_Date\_\_\_\_\_

Parent  
Name\_\_\_\_\_

Administrator/Director  
Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Child Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_