



**growing futures**  
early education center  
A Head Start for children and families

# **Family Handbook 2022-2023**

Growing Futures Early Education Center, Inc.

8155 Santa Fe Drive  
Overland Park, KS 66204  
913-649-9714

**Attendance Line: 913-649-9714 ext. 282**

**My Home Based Family Educator is:**

**Mobile Phone/Work Phone:**

**Office Phone and Extension:**

## Agency Information

### **Office Location (and Early Head Start and Head Start classroom locations)**

8155 Santa Fe Drive  
Overland Park, KS 66204

### **Phone and Fax Numbers**

Phone: 913-649-9714  
Fax: 913-649-3485

### **Office Hours**

7:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.  
(In the event that classes are not in session, the building may be closed.)

### **General Information**

Growing Futures Early Education Center, Inc. (formally known as Head Start of Shawnee Mission) is an independent, non-profit corporation and is partially funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to deliver an Early Head Start and Head Start program. We offer a prenatal through age five child development program designed to meet the educational, developmental, social, health, nutritional, psychological and self-sufficiency needs of children and families.

Admission policies are non-discriminatory concerning race, religion, national origin, ancestry, physical handicap, or gender, in accordance with Kansas' civil rights statute KSA 44-1009 and relative federal laws.

Growing Futures abides by the Federal Head Start Program Performance Standards, the 2009 Head Start Act and the Kansas Department of Health and Environments Child Care Licensing Regulations for general operations.

This is an equal opportunity program. If you believe that you have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, veteran status, ancestry or any other status protected by law write immediately to:

The Secretary of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Ave., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

### **Growing Futures Management Team**

Executive Director: Larry Lewis  
Program Director: Samantha Mothersbaugh  
Assistant Program Director: Vicky Flucke  
Director of Finance: Dave Harrold  
Human Resource Manager: Suzanne Handlin  
Education Team Managers:

- Education Specialists: Kesha Tribitt & Taylor Williams
- Disabilities and School Readiness Specialist: Vicky Flucke
- Mental Health Specialist/Family Educator Coach: Julie Taylor
- Education Coach: Danelle Abbott

Family and Community Partnerships Coordinator: Tanesha Thompson

- Family Educators: Areli Aguilar, Cherra Acosta, Brittnie Brake, Jessica Halliwell, Lynee Gonzales, & Marissa Sheehy
- Family Support Advocates: Andi Newingham, Sophie Cassmeyer, & Leslie Shuck
- Data Associate/ERSEA Monitor: Heather Taylor
- Health and Nutrition Specialist: Bryanna Contreras

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## **Growing Futures Early Education Center, Inc.**

We are excited that you are here! Our home visits are filled with opportunities for imagination, creativity and fun! You will have the opportunity to engage your child in playing, learning, and growing – developing the skills for success in school and life.

### **Mission**

**Our mission is to nurture children and strengthen families to enrich our community.**

### **Vision**

To be a leading center of excellence in the growth and development of young children and support of their families.

### **Welcome**

Welcome to Growing Futures Early Education Center, Inc. (formally known as Head Start of Shawnee Mission). We are glad that you are here, we want to ensure you, and your child feel comfortable in our program. The Family Handbook covers program opportunities, policies, and procedures. Keep it in a convenient place so that you can refer to it easily throughout the year. We look forward to your suggestions and encourage you to ask questions about any program area.

### **School Readiness Goals**

Our Head Start program is more than an early childhood education, it is also school readiness. Head Start defines school readiness as children possessing the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for success in school and for later learning and life. *The Head Start Approach to School Readiness* means that children are ready for school, families are ready to support their children's learning, and schools are ready for children. Head Start is a leader in the early childhood field with a strong, clear, and comprehensive focus on all aspects of healthy development, including physical, cognitive, and social and emotional development, all of which are essential to children getting ready for school.

School readiness goals articulate the program's expectations of children's status and progress across the five essential domains of child development and early learning that will improve children's readiness for kindergarten. Growing Futures' School Readiness Goals are:

- For Infants and Toddlers:
  1. Children demonstrate age appropriate language and literacy development.
  2. Children demonstrate age appropriate cognition and general knowledge skills.
  3. Children demonstrate age appropriate approaches to learning.
  4. Children demonstrate age appropriate physical development and health.
  5. Children demonstrate age appropriate social and emotional development.
- For Preschoolers:
  1. Children demonstrate age appropriate physical development and health.
  2. Children demonstrate age appropriate social and emotional development.
  3. Children demonstrate age appropriate approaches to learning.
  4. Children demonstrate age appropriate logic and reasoning skills.
  5. Children demonstrate age appropriate communication and literacy knowledge and skills.
  6. Children demonstrate age appropriate mathematics knowledge and skills.
  7. Children demonstrate age appropriate science knowledge and skills.
  8. Children demonstrate age appropriate creative arts expression.

9. Children demonstrate age appropriate social studies knowledge and skills.
10. Children who speak English as a second language demonstrate age appropriate English language development.

## **Our Program**

### **The Head Start Model**

We are a Head Start program. The Federal Government began Project Head Start in 1965 as an 8-week pilot program for children in over 2,600 communities. The goal was for children who participated in Head Start to be better prepared for entry into kindergarten. In addition, Head Start was intended to bring change in children, families, and their communities. Once the data showed success, the “project” spread around the nation. Head Start services focus on children 3, 4 and 5 years of age. We currently serve 108 children in our preschool programs.

Early Head Start was created in the 1990’s. Growing Futures received a grant in 1998 to develop an Early Head Start Program. Early Head Start provides services to pregnant women, infants, and toddlers. Growing Futures receives federal and state funding to serve 95 pregnant women, infants, and toddlers.

All Head Start programs are required to implement and follow the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Act. The standards define the objectives and features of a quality Head Start program, while also providing a structure for enforcing quality. Federal Monitoring Reviews are conducted of all Early Head Start and Head Start programs in order to ensure compliance with the Head Start Program Performance Standards and the Head Start Act.

### **What Makes Head Start Unique?**

Head Start programs serve the whole family delivering comprehensive, high quality services designed to foster healthy development of young children and their families. Head Start programs provide a range of individualized services, not only in education and early childhood development, but also in health, mental health, nutrition, social services/family support, disabilities, and parent involvement. In addition, all Head Start services are responsive and appropriate to each child and family’s development, culture and personal experiences.

Our program seeks to provide the highest quality-learning environment for infants, toddlers and preschoolers in preparation for school readiness. Our program is designed and built around a research-based program model that reflects the developmental needs of children from prenatal to five, their families and the high-risk communities in which they live.

### **Program Options**

- **Early Head Start Home Based** – Family Educators provide weekly 90-minute visits in the family’s home to support parents in fostering the relationship between the parent and child through guided interactions and activities. Services to pregnant women encourage early

access to prenatal and postpartum care as well as opportunities to access parenting education and information on fetal and child development.

- **Early Head Start Center Based** – This program option is for children whose parents are working, attending job training or going to school. Young children, 6 weeks to 3 years of age, are taught basic self-help skills such as toileting, eating, washing and cleaning up. Children also learn how to play together. The teacher-child ratio is one to four with no more than eight children enrolled in a classroom so that each child can proceed at his/her own pace.
- **Head Start** – Promotes the school readiness of children ages birth to 5 from low-income families by enhancing their cognitive, social, and emotional development.
  - Our Head Start classrooms provide children with activities that help them grow cognitively, socially, emotionally, and physically. Children socialize with others, problem-solve, and have other experiences that help them become self-confident and ready to enter kindergarten. Teachers welcome your involvement in activities and want to work as partners with you to help your child progress. The teacher child ratio is one to eight with no more than 18 children in a classroom so that each child can develop at his/her own pace.
    - Extended Day: This option serves children 6 hours a day Monday – Thursday, July – June. Classes are from 8:00 a.m to 2:00 p.m or 8:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m
    - Wrap-Around-Care (WAC): This option is for children whose parents are working or in school at least 30 hours a week and require full day care 5 days per week. The first portion of the day, 8:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., is funded through Head Start. The family is responsible for payment of the second portion of the day but may utilize resources such as Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF) child care subsidy assistance..

### **Child Bereavement Policy**

In the event of the death of an enrolled Early Head Start or Head Start child, who does not have a sibling enrolled in the program, families may continue receiving services from Growing Futures until they are able to transition to another program that may better meet their needs. Families may receive up to five home visits from a Family Educator, Family Support Advocate or other staff person, during a period not to exceed 60 days. During this time, staff will provide resources and support to help families deal with the loss of their child, as well as any other social service and/or mental health needs they may have. These same services will be provided to an enrolled pregnant woman who has a miscarriage.

### **Operating Hours**

- **Early Head Start Home Based:** Growing Futures Early Education Center offers Early Head Start Home Based services year-round. Home visits are completed Monday through Thursday 8:00 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Fridays 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- **Early Head Start:** Growing Futures offers Early Head Start Center Based Services. The center opens at 7:15 a.m. and children must be present for a minimum of **six hours a day**. Classrooms 17, 18, 19, and 20

**Sample Schedule:**

- 7:15-8:15 arrival/ worktime/ clean up
  - 8:15-8:45 breakfast/ books at table
  - 8:45-9:00 teeth brushing/ diapering/ bathroom
  - 9:00-9:15 circle time
  - 9:15-10:00 outside time
  - 10:00-10:15 baby doll circle time
  - 10:15-11:15 work time (small group)/ clean up/ diapering/ bathroom
  - 11:15-12:00 lunch/ books at table/tooth brushing/
  - 12:00-2:30 nap time
  - 2:30-3:00 snack/diapering/ bathroom
  - 3:00-4:30 work time/ clean up/outside time/departure
- **Extended Day:** Growing Futures offers Extended Day classroom options and operates 8:00 a.m.-2:00 PM or 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. Classrooms 1, 3, 4, 6, and 7

**Sample Schedule:**

- 8:30-8:50 Arrival/sign in/ Greeting circle
  - 8:55-9:00 Bathroom
  - 9:00-9:30 Breakfast
  - 9:30-9:35 Brush teeth
  - 9:35-9:50 Circle time
  - 9:50-10:30 small group
  - 10:30-10:35 clean up/bathroom
  - 10:35-11:15 Outside
  - 11:15-11:20 water break/wash hands
  - 11:25-11:45 Work time/clean up
  - 11:45-12:00 recall/wash hands
  - 12:00-12:30 Lunch
  - 12:30-12:45 bathroom/books
  - 12:45-2:00 Chill time
  - 2:00-2:30 Bathroom/tabletop activities /departure
- **Head Start Wrap-Around Care:** Growing Futures Early Education Center, Inc. is open from 7:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Classrooms 2 and 16

**Sample Schedule:**

- 7:15-8:15 arrival/ worktime/ clean up
- 8:15-8:45 breakfast/ books at table
- 8:45-9:00 teeth brushing/ diapering/ bathroom
- 9:00-9:15 circle time
- 9:15-10:00 outside time
- 10:00-10:15 baby doll circle time
- 10:15-11:15 work time (small group)/ clean up/ diapering/ bathroom
- 11:15-12:00 lunch/ books at table/tooth brushing/
- 12:00-2:30 nap time
- 2:30-3:00 snack/diapering/ bathroom
- 3:00-4:30 work time/ clean up/outside time/departure

For those enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start Wrap-Around Care sessions:



- **It is important for us to know the hours your child is going to be with us because we set up our staffing patterns to accommodate the need.**
- **There is a 10-hour limit of childcare per day.**

A center calendar will be given to each family to alert families on closings.

### **Parking**

Parking lots are dangerous for young children. We want all children to arrive safely to their classrooms. We ask that all families and their guests drive at a maximum safe speed of 5 mph while in the Head Start parking lot. Park your car in a designated parking area in the back of the building. **The parking lot located on the south end of the building is designated for staff only. Signs are posted outside of the parking lot indicating that it is for staff only.** Anyone parked in the handicap parking without a permit may be ticketed. Turn off your car engine before removing your child (ren) from their car seat(s). ***Other children may NOT be left in the car without an adult present. Please hold your child(ren)'s hand when walking between the parking lot and the building.***

### **Educators and Staff**

Caring, responsive, knowledgeable and reflective educators are essential to children's early learning experiences. Our teachers have various qualifications including a passion to provide a stimulating learning environment for children. All staff have completed a national criminal background check, Department of Kansas Health and Environment fingerprinting and renew their First Aid/CPR certification every 2 years. Our staff members are dedicated to professional growth and as such attend several professional development workshops and conferences both internally as well as within the community.

The Family Educator will provide services to families in the Head Start Home Based program. In partnership with parents, the Family Educator develops mutually trusting relationships, acts as an advocate for families, and provides support services as needed. The Family Educator will assist families in determining their needs and in identifying and developing goals to meet those needs.

### **Program Approach**

#### **Environment**

The environment plays a vital role in children's learning and discovery. A beautiful, welcoming and thoughtfully planned environment invites and supports children's questions, theories, ideas and discoveries. Growing Futures environments are warm, encourage children's learning and reflect the work of the children and teachers in each classroom. During home visits in the home-based program, Family Educators partner with parents to facilitate a positive learning environment in the home as well.

#### **Documentation**

One of the main purposes of documentation is to make thinking, and the process of learning, visible. There are numerous ways that teachers document: photos, video, children's drawings and other work samples, transcribed conversations, as well as adult interpretations and theories about the work of the children. Teachers and children work collaboratively to display, reflect on and revisit documentation. We believe that documentation is one way that adults can respect children and in turn, demonstrate that each child is listened to, and that their work is important and valued. Documentation is also a powerful tool for teachers and can help them to understand the children more deeply and make decisions for next steps in their curriculum.

## **Our Curriculum**

**Parents as Teachers:** Our primary Home-Based curriculum is Parents as Teachers. The philosophy behind the PAT curriculum is that parents are their children's first teachers. Our curriculum is implemented in collaboration with parents. We seek their input and encourage them to share any ideas that will enhance learning with their child. Children learn best when they are in an environment where they feel safe, emotionally secure and have a sense of belonging. Establishing and maintaining positive secure relationships is extremely important to children's later school and life success. Additional information about PAT can be found in the Parent Education and Early Education tabs.

**Partners for a Healthy Baby:** Partners for a Healthy Baby is the primary curriculum tool used with pregnant women to provide education on topics including healthy pregnancies and fetal development.

## **Additional Tools**

**COR (Child Observation Record):** COR is an observation-based tool used to monitor and track children's developmental achievements. Family Educators seek input from parents to complete observations together. A summary of progress is shared once the observation period is complete.

**Conscious Discipline:** Is a guidance model that provides teachers on the latest brain research, which helps them understand how the brain influences behavior. Teachers use connecting activities, known as "I Love You Rituals" , which can be used at school/ our center and at home to foster self-regulation and cooperation, as well as stimulate healthy brain development in children.

## **Screenings**

It is a Head Start requirement that every child receive developmental, hearing, vision, and social emotional screenings within 45 calendar days of when the child first attends the program or the first home visit. The information from the screenings will identify your child's strength, and areas of growth. Family Educator will give you a copy of these screenings, as well as review the information with you. If a screening reveals that your child needs further assistance in a specific area, with your permission, a referral will be made to the appropriate support agency.

## **Services to Children with Disabilities**

Growing Futures maintains a collaborative agreement with Infant/Toddler Services of Johnson County and the Shawnee Mission School District to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, providing a wide range of services to include social, educational, nutritional, medical, speech, occupational and physical therapy. Inclusion in Early Head Start and Head Start allows children with

various needs and strengths to be in an inclusive classroom setting. This inclusion fosters understanding of individual differences for all children.

## **Mental Health**

Growing Futures strives to provide the very best services to children and their families. We realize children and families enrolling at our center may face challenges that require special services. Our Mental Health Specialist works with the classroom teachers, family educators, and parents to develop strategies that support children with healthy social-emotional and behavioral development and connects them to outside support services when needed. The Mental Health Specialist seeks to understand the child's whole environment and how that may be impacting a child's social emotional development and behaviors. Some examples of factors that would be considered are exposure to violence, losses, and family stress.

## **Parent Participation**

Parents as Partners: We believe that parents are their children's first teachers and as such, you have much to offer to your child's program. Your participation can greatly enhance your child's program and maximize their learning experience. The meaningful exchange of ideas between teachers and parents supports the child as they grow and develop within our program. We encourage you to be active in your child's experience in our programs through the many opportunities that we offer. The areas listed below are ways we incorporate families into our program:

- **Home Visits** – Home visits provide great opportunities to make connections between the home and the program setting. They offer a chance for parents and staff to get to know one another and for staff to give individualized attention to family strengths, interests, and goals. Early Head Start Home Based Program option requires weekly 90-minute home visits and a minimum of 46 home visits per year. The staff will work with you on arranging convenient times for these visits.
- **Family Partnership Agreements** – Because Head Start is a comprehensive program, we also recognize that families are unique. We work with parents, through the Individualized Family Partnership process. In this process, we assist parents to meet goals they have identified by providing ongoing support, referrals (as needed), training and volunteer opportunities. We provide assistance in seeking employment, obtaining housing, helping through crisis intervention, accessing community resources, or simply by making sure their children are healthy and prepared for Kindergarten. Anytime we can be of assistance to you in finding services or resources please feel free to talk to your Family Educator.
- **On-going Involvement/Communication** – Primary parents are automatically opted-in to receive center alerts. We welcome the involvement of all family members and are always interested in hearing your suggestions, concerns, or thoughts. Parents or other close family members are strongly encouraged to participate in home visits, attend workshops and trainings at our center.
- **Playgroups** --The Early Head Start Home Based option offers playgroups to enrolled families twice a month. Your Family Educator will provide you with flyers and invite you to upcoming playgroups. This is a valuable opportunity for you to connect with other parents and for your child to socialize with other children and adults.

- **Parent Committee Meetings** – All parents of enrolled children are automatically members of the Parent Committee. Parent Committee meetings are held each month, the first Thursday of the month. The purpose of the meeting is to give parents an opportunity to assist in the development of activities that address your interests and needs. Important program updates will also be discussed. You will have the chance to suggest topics for the meetings and attend sessions on child development, child language and literacy, nutrition, and child guidance just to name a few. All parents and other involved family members are encouraged to attend.
- **Policy Council** – The Policy Council, with the Board of Directors, share governance responsibility of our Early Head Start/ Head Start programming with staff overseeing the delivery of high-quality services to children and families. Through the Policy Council and Parent Committees, parents and other community representatives are empowered to actively participate in the shared decision-making process. Serving on the Policy Council provides an opportunity for parents to develop valuable team communication and leadership skills. Policy Council members are nominated and elected annually by the Parent Committee in the fall. Once elected, you can begin to be a part of a unique experience that will thoroughly enrich your life. See Appendix for more information.
- **Volunteering** – Growing Futures also encourages you to volunteer in your child’s program. We welcome whatever way you can be involved! To volunteer please contact Kathy McLellan at (913) 649-9714.

### **Volunteer and Student Participation**

Volunteers and student placements are important to our program. In order to ensure the safety and well-being of all children in our program, volunteers or students will not have direct unsupervised access to children and are not counted in our required staffing ratios. Growing Futures has an orientation process in place that includes a criminal records check, a review of policies and procedures and ongoing monitoring, and the behavior guidance of all volunteers and students. A current physical and TB test on file are also required.

### **Celebrations**

- **Religious and Cultural Observances:** Our program is not affiliated with any religious institution and therefore does not include any type of religious instruction or observance. Staff respect each family’s individual beliefs and faith systems and will never impose personal beliefs on your child or family. We ask that you share with us during enrollment any instructions regarding special traditions or beliefs that your family observes. In the hope that all children will share stories and thoughts freely with each other, children will be hearing about the different beliefs and holiday celebrations that are happening in your family. Staff will use these differences as educational experiences and try to integrate these ideas into themes of understanding and respecting diversity. For this reason, specific holidays are not observed.
- **Birthdays:** Children’s birthdays are acknowledged in various ways in our classrooms. We want all children to feel special when celebrating birthdays, and therefore do not allow parents/guardians to bring goody bags or gifts for the children in the classroom or center as

this can cause added hardship on families. We prefer to keep the celebration simple, but special for your child. Parents/guardians are welcome to celebrate by doing a special activity with the child in honor of the birthday. In keeping with our Nutrition Policy, we do not allow families to bring any food or treats into the center to celebrate birthdays. If your child is having a birthday party and would like to invite friends from the center, we ask that you directly contact the other families. Teachers will not pass out birthday invitations. **Due to strict regulations, outside food is not allowed in the program.**

## **Photography/Social Media**

In order to protect the confidentiality of children at Growing Futures, photos are taken only by employees or approved media outlets.

Designated staff will only take pictures of children with parent permission for publication.

Photos will be used per the indicated consent found on the Permission Record form.

Photos, audio recordings, or video is used in newsletters, bulletin boards, displays, local newspapers/magazines, agency website, social media or other media publications.

## **Drills**

For your child's safety, fire drills are conducted monthly. Tornado Drills are conducted during April - September. Lockdown and Evacuation drills are conducted twice a year.

## **Transitions**

### **2 ½ Transitions**

1. When the child turns 2 ½, The Family Educator will review the Exit Transition Procedure and the Transition Flow Chart with the family.
2. The Family Educator will begin the Transition Planning process with families.
3. When a center-based spot is available for the child, Eligibility Recruitment Selection Enrollment Attendance Associate (ERSEA) will notify Family Educators and classrooms of Transitions via email. Included in the email will be the Family & Community Partnership Coordinator, Family Support Advocate, Teaching team, Health and Nutrition Coordinator, Disability and Mental Health Service Specialist, Education Specialist and Kitchen staff.
1. The Eligibility Recruitment Selection Enrollment Attendance Associate (ERSEA) will type a letter to the family spelling out the dates and plan for transition.
2. The copy of the letter will be filed in child's Education file.
3. The Family Educator will then complete a Transition Form with the family, then turn it into the Family & Community Partnership Coordinator.
4. The Family Educator will notify School Readiness and Disabilities Specialist, via email, to transition the child in COR.

## **Our Policies: Our Rules**

### **We are Electronic Cigarettes and Tobacco-Free**

Growing Futures has an electronic cigarettes, tobacco, substance and alcohol-free policy, which states that smoking and the use of illegal substances or alcohol are not permitted anywhere on the property. We ask parents (and their guests) to follow this policy while in the presence of children indoors, outdoors, or while on field trips or other events.

### **We are a Violence-Free Program**

Growing Futures promotes safe and healthy environments for all children and families enrolled. To ensure that our environment remains safe and comfortable for families, children, and staff we ask that you adhere to the following policies:

- All center staff and participants must understand that Growing Futures is a violence-free zone for children and adults.
- Visitors must refrain from using offensive language or threats of abuse at the center.
- There is to be no verbal, physical, or written abuse displayed toward any child or adult within the center or surrounding property.
- Any display of inappropriate behavior by a parent, guardian, or visiting adult will be addressed immediately.
- All members of the center staff are Mandated Reporters and any sign of physical or mental abuse by a parent, caregiver, or visiting adult upon any child must **by law** be reported to the Department of Children and Families (DCF). Whenever possible we will contact you first. (See our policy listed under Mandated Reporting Act/Abuse and Neglect for further information)
- Weapons of any kind are prohibited from the center/classrooms and the grounds. **The presence of any weapons will result in notification of the police.**

### **Confidentiality Statement**

We recognize that as you participate in our program, you share very confidential and private information with us. All forms and information provided by you, regarding your child (ren), and your family are considered confidential, and can only be viewed by appropriate staff and designated external consultants and reviewers. Other persons will not be given access to this information without your written consent unless it becomes necessary in order to ensure you or your child's safety and welfare. These records are secured both in locked file cabinets and are protected in our family data system.

### **Mandated Reporting Act/Abuse and Neglect Policy**

All staff members are legally mandated by the State of Kansas to report suspected child abuse and neglect. If we have reason to believe that child abuse or neglect has occurred or is occurring, we are required **by law** to report it to the Kansas Department of Children and Families. For this reason, we will ask you about all serious bumps, bruises, burns, injuries or observed neglect of a child's health or safety needs. *You may be asked to join a special meeting where we can discuss a plan for reporting and implementing a potential safety plan.*

Please let us know if your child has had an accident outside of the program.

## **Guidance and Discipline Policy**

### **Policy:**

Guidance and Discipline are viewed as a learning opportunity and the joint responsibility of the staff and family. Developmentally appropriate activities and a daily schedule are provided to engage the children mentally and physically, which will lead to positive behavior. Only people who have a relationship with the child will set and follow through with limits and consequences, keeping in consideration children's different levels of ability to control their own behavior. The final goal of this policy is to promote self-regulation, which is one element of social and emotional development that enables children to form friendships, to communicate effectively, to use others as resources for problem solving, and to gain social competence.

### **Procedures:**

1. Adults will use positive techniques to help children develop self-regulation, such as modeling expected behavior, redirecting children to acceptable activities, and intervening to implement consequences for unacceptable or harmful behavior.
2. A process of observing, anticipating and redirecting will be utilized to guide behavior;
3. Limits and consequences shall be clear and understandable to the child, consistently implemented and explained to the child at their level of understanding before and as part of the consequence.
4. Guidance and consequences shall be developmentally appropriate and logically related to the child's act and shall not be out of proportion to the particular unacceptable behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequences. Firm positive statements about behaviors or redirection of behaviors shall be the accepted techniques for use with infants and toddlers.
5. Direct service staff will develop consistent and clear rules, involving children, where possible, in the development of those rules;
6. Direct service staff will assist children to develop age-appropriate problem-solving skills by guiding them and by modeling how to solve problems and to resolve differences;
7. Direct service staff will use books, stories, puppets, and other experiences to reinforce positive social behaviors;
8. Direct service staff will utilize other resources (current curriculum books and supervisors) to develop plans for guidance and discipline specific to pre-school children, infants, and toddlers.
9. Preschool children shall have reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts.
10. If a child needs to be away from the group or activity to regain control, the child will be redirected to another space, preferably with an adult, with the opportunity to engage in an activity. The child

will be given the opportunity to re-engage in the original activity or with the group with the support of the direct service staff.

11. Direct service staff will talk with parents about child rearing practices that support the child, and that bridge the home and program environment to provide consistency for the child.
12. When there is a specific plan for responding to a child's pattern of unacceptable behavior, staff shall be aware of the plan and cooperate in its implementation.
13. Specific behavior management plans may be developed to meet the needs of a particular child if developed with the parent and a professional developmental/mental health consultant. This must be documented in the child's file. All staff working with the child shall receive training on implementing the plan.
14. The child's placement in the program may be terminated if behavior of the child continues to challenge the resources of the center such that the needs of the child are not being met and/or the safety of the child or other children are at risk.

To assist with this process Growing Futures has a Care Team consisting of individuals trained in crisis prevention and intervention. If a child is exhibiting unsafe behaviors the care team supports the child, other children, and the staff. The care team will work in collaboration with the child's family to meet the needs of the child and family.

**The following behaviors are prohibited by any adults in the center, including staff, parents, and visitors:**

- Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear;
- Threats regarding or the actual withdrawal of food, rest, use of the bathroom, or activities;
- Children shall not be disciplined for toilet accidents.
- Abusive or profane language;
- Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment and any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing or isolating a child.
- Suspected substance and/or alcohol use

**Attendance/Absentee Policy**

Regular attendance is important for you and your child to establish and maintain a consistent relationship with his/her Family Educator and receive the benefits from the program. Families enrolled in the home-based program option of Early Head Start are required to attend 46 weekly visits per year. Of course, we recognize that cancellations by Growing Futures Early Education Center staff or by the families may occur due to conflicts in schedule, illness, inclement weather, etc.



Home Visits must occur weekly in the home for 90 minutes and at a time that is mutually convenient for the parents or primary caregivers and staff. Family Educators (FE) and parents will work together to reschedule any canceled home visits within the same week to ensure each family receives the required number of visits per year. If a family is not meeting the attendance requirements, the Family Educators may offer the parent or primary caregiver opportunities to complete make up visits when deemed appropriate by the Family Educator and Family and Community Partnership Coordinator. Make up visits are required by Head Start Performance Standards to be a minimum of 60 minutes.

A family is subject to termination from the EHS Home-based program if attendance requirements are not met. After two consecutive missed home visits, the Family Educator will send the first attendance letter and the family is expected to contact the Family Educator and schedule a home visit within one week of receiving the letter. If the family has not scheduled and completed a home visit within one week of the letter, the Family Educator will send the second attendance letter. The family is given one week from the second attendance letter to schedule and complete a home visit. If a home visit is not scheduled and completed within one week of the second attendance letter, the family will be removed from the Early Head Start Home Based program. The Family Educator will then send a final attendance letter to notify the family of their enrollment status.

Please communicate regularly with your Family Educator about your home visit needs and call ahead of time to cancel/reschedule visits. Clear and open communication between parents and Family Educators is key to a family's success in the Early Head Start Home Based program.

***If your family consistently has unexcused irregular attendance for home visits, unfortunately, we may need to withdraw him/her from the program. This is due to our commitment toward continuous learning as well as our need to meet Head Start Performance Standards.***

### **Site Entry and Visiting Policy**

The center is a special protected place for children to learn and grow. It should be a safe and predictable environment for them. For this reason, we must be careful and mindful of the activity and traffic in the center. Our policy for building entry and visiting is the following:

- All adults entering the center are asked to push the building buzzer on left brick wall and state why you are at Growing Futures to office staff. To further building security, please do not hold the door open for parents or guests in line behind you at the door. Allow the door to close and the next parent or guest to press the buzzer.
- Please be aware that you, or your designated person picking up your child, may be asked to show a picture ID to the front desk and/or classroom teacher and checked against the child's approved pick up list.
- If you are entering the building between 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., you will be asked to come to the office and sign-in. You will receive a nametag, please make sure your name tag is visible at all times while you are in the building. When you are leaving, we ask that you sign-out in the front office.
- When you are transporting your child to/from the center, please be sure to walk your child to his/her classroom.
- All children must be signed in and out at one of the computer stations and clipboard located in classrooms every day.

- All adults picking up a child must sign in and go to the classroom to pick up a child.
- Parents who bring other children to the center will be responsible to supervise them at all times.
- Children should remain by your side at all times and not left alone in the hallway.
- To ensure the safety of all the children do not allow your child (ren) to run in the hallways of the center or in the parking lot.
- **No one** is allowed to use cell phones, including earpieces, in the hallway and classroom. Please complete your conversation prior to entering our center.
- **No pets are allowed in the building.**
- **Parents should park in the parking lot allotted for them in a parking stall.**

### **Emergency Contact Information Policy**

Periodically we will ask you to update your child's enrollment form so that we can ensure accuracy in our records. Please notify us of any change in your address, telephone (work/home) numbers, emergency contact persons or telephone changes for them. **It is critical that we be able to get a hold of someone in case of illness or emergency with your child. Please let us know how to best reach you by phone or email.**

### **Personal Belongings**

The center's overall policy is that children not bring personal belongings (toys, games, stuffed animals, etc.) to the center unless they are requested. This is to prevent the loss of these precious items. You can be assured that we will provide your child with all that he/she needs to have an active, productive, fun filled day in the program.

The following items should not be brought to the center:

- Money
- Medication (unless it is by prescription and given to the teachers and approved by the Health & Nutrition Specialist)
- Toys (unless requested by the teachers for special occasions)
- Priceless or breakable items
- Sharp objects
- Candy, gum or food
- Weapons

### **Your Gifts to Us**

Parents/caregivers can best show their appreciation to staff and volunteers through kind words (written or spoken). There is no better gift than for you to allow us to share in the development of your child and family. Please note that staff and volunteers cannot accept gifts or money from parents/caregivers. It would be our pleasure to accept letters, drawings or photos!

### **Accidents or Injuries to Children in the Center**

As always, safety is our first priority however, sometimes during normal development such as a toddler learning to walk or a preschooler learning through exploration, accidents and/or injuries will

occur. In those situations, our staff's first priority is to attend to the child and then inform the parent or designee.

Health Gram reports will be written whenever a child is injured or when a mark on a child's body has occurred while in our care. Some examples of a Health Gram reporting would be: falls, bumps, scratches, scrapes, bites from another child, or any other injury resulting in medical attention or a call to 911. Nail cutting, splinters, and foreign objects in the eye, nose, or ears will not be removed by staff. Parents will be contacted. If the injury is serious, you will be contacted immediately. If it is determined that the child requires immediate medical care, staff will call 911 and a staff person will accompany the child to the emergency room until the parent arrives.

The parent will be notified any time there is an accident/injury with their child. If other children were involved (Child A was bit by Child B and Child A is injured) the other child's name will not be mentioned in the accident report form to protect the confidentiality of all families. The accident/injury form will be given to the parent at pick up.

### **On-going Health Documentation**

It is mandated within the first 30 days of enrollment that each child has health coverage for medical and dental services while in our program. To ensure that our children are insured, we need to have a copy of their health insurance card. If your child does not have a source of ongoing care or coverage, we will assist you in resources for care and medical coverage. Please see the Health Specialist and/or your Family Educator.

Head Start Program Performance Standards require staff to track health events of each child throughout the program year. This includes, but not limited to, well child exams, physical exams (annually), dental exams (semi-annually), immunizations, any doctor's visits, and referrals. A letter will be sent home reminding parents to take their child to their primary care provider to fulfill the health requirement(s) before the date listed in the letter. If the health requirement(s) or proof of a scheduled appointment are not turned into our office by the given date in the letter, that child cannot return to our center until we have received the needed documentation. It is best practice for parents to turn in a copy of their child's health record after having a visit with their doctor or dentist. Please reach out to the Health & Nutrition Specialist if there are any questions.

\*As a parent/guardian you are able to request a copy of your child's well-child exam, physical, dental exam, immunization.

### **Medical and Dental Home**

Growing Futures works closely with parents, The Health Partnership Clinic of Johnson County, Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Kansas Department for Children and Families and other agencies to ensure health services are provided and all children are enrolled in a "medical and dental home." Parents who receive Medicaid or private insurance are encouraged to use this source of payment for needed health services. All children are required to have an annual medical examination completed on file upon enrollment and an annual dental examination within 90 calendar days of entrance to the program. Contact your Family Educator for assistance to obtain health insurance. The Health Partnership Clinic also offers medical and dental services on site at Growing Futures monthly. Appointments can be made by contacting your Family Educator.

## **Well-Child and Immunizations**

Growing Futures is a licensed center and as such, it is required by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) that all children enrolled in center-based services are up-to-date with all immunizations and well-child examinations at enrollment and throughout the program year. All children are required to have an annual medical examination completed in the last 6 months on file. Per Kansas Child Care Licensing Standards, please let your Family Support Advocate and Nutrition Specialist know if you need help obtaining the required health information.

If a child is exempt from one or all immunizations, then a certification from a licensed physician stating that the physical condition of the child is such that immunizations would endanger the child's life or health or a signed written statement stating that the parent/guardian is an adherent of a religious denomination whose teachings are opposed to immunizations.

All center and/or home-based parents/guardians who have children who are not immunized against certain infectious diseases due to the age of the child, delayed scheduling, medical exemption, or religious belief exemption, such as MMR must sign a statement of risk. This will educate and inform the parents/guardians of the risk associated with a vaccine-preventable disease. If a child is diagnosed with an infectious disease such as MMR any child who is not vaccinated may be excluded from the program until the Health Department and other governing positions give the all clear for return.

## **Medical Policy for Home Visits and Playgroups**

To ensure the safety and well-being of the families we serve, if you notice any of the following please contact your Family Educator to let them know so that the home visit can be rescheduled for the following week. Please do not bring your child to a playgroup, event or the center if you notice the following symptoms:

- **A statement is needed to return to the childcare center when a child has been out sick 5 or more days or has had a communicable illness.**
- **The statement must be signed by a Health Care Provider.**
- **The Health Care Provider must be a** (licensed physician, a nurse practitioner or physician's assistant who is working under the supervision of a licensed physician or a medical facility).
- **Parents, please notify the center immediately when your child has been diagnosed with any communicable illness.**

**Children must be excluded from the Child Care Center when any of the symptoms listed below are observed:**

**Red eyes draining thick mucus or pus**  
(Pink eye)

**Children will be allowed to return to the center after:**

- Being examined by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center and 24 hours after treatment has started

<p><b><u>Extended cold or flu-like symptoms</u></b> (e.g. cough or nasal drainage) <b>that is persistent and unusual for the child</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>or</b> symptoms subside.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Difficulty breathing</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider and a note is given to return to the center <b>or</b> breathing is normal for that child</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>A sore throat with fever and/or swollen glands</u></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>or</b> symptoms subside</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Diarrhea</u></b>          -Child passes 2 or more loose stools within 24 hrs.          -Child has a fever along with loose stool          -Passing a loose stool every 1-2 hrs. or more often          -Loose stool that cannot be contained in the diaper          -Child is unable to control loose stool until he/she gets to the bathroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider and it is determined diarrhea is not related to a contagious condition</li> <li>▪ And a note is given to return to the center <b>or</b> Child has not had diarrhea within the past 24 hours without the use of anti-diarrheal medication.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Fever</u></b>  <b>100.4</b> degrees (F) or higher, taken with temporal (forehead).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>or</b></li> <li>▪ Child has been without a fever for 24 hours or more without the use of fever reducing medication</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Abdominal Pain:</u></b>          Pain that is continuous for 2 or more hours or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>Or</b></li> <li>▪ Child has been without abdominal pain for 24 hours or more without the use of pain relieving medication.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Vomiting</u></b>          (Two or more times within the past 24 hours)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined by a Health Care Provider and it is determined the vomiting is not related to a contagious condition, a note is given to return to the center <b>or</b></li> <li>▪ Child has not vomited within the past 24 hours</li> </ul>

<p><b><u>Enteroviruses (Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease)</u></b> Fever and blister-like eruptions in the mouth and/or a rash (usually on palms and soles)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Children with fever and rash should stay home from center until fever free</li> <li>▪ If symptoms continue, being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider and a note is given to return to center</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Croup</u></b> (spasms of the airway that cause difficult breathing and a cough sounding like a seal’s bark.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider and a note is given to return to center</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>COVID-19</u></b> -100.4 -Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing -Chills -Muscle pain -Sore throat -Immediate loss of taste and/or smell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 days with no fever and symptoms improved and 10 days since symptoms first appeared</li> <li>• Tested positive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 days have passed since test or Being examined by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Cold sore/Skin Sores</u></b> Sores that are on exposed body surface that cannot be covered and are weeping fluid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lesion and drainage can be completely covered and contained with a dressing</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Head lice</u></b> Growing Futures follows the Shawnee Mission School District Head Lice Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Routine screenings for head lice are not conducted. If head lice is identified at the center, the parent will be notified of the need for treatment. The students will be checked upon return to the center for the presence of live lice. Children will not be allowed to return to the center if live lice are present. Children will be individually checked at regular intervals for up to two weeks until nits are not present or nits are no longer viable/hatching.</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>A rash of unknown cause</u></b> Rash of unknown cause that spreads quickly, with fever, or behavioral change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Parent or caretaker gives child care staff a relevant explanation that is consistent with the symptoms that the child is showing <b>or</b> being examined by a health care provider and a note is given to return to the center</li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Draining/irritated wound</u></b> that cannot be completely covered</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Caring for wound</b></li> </ul>
<p><b><u>Any of the reportable communicable diseases</u></b> (ex, Pertussis [Whooping Cough], Chicken Pox, Measles, Mumps, Meningitis etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center.</li> </ul>

<b><u>Impetigo</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>and</b> Child has been taking prescribed medication 24 hours or more</li> </ul>
<b><u>Ringworm</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>and</b> child has been taking/using prescribed medication 24 hours or more</li> </ul>
<b><u>Scabies</u></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider <b>and</b> a note is given to return to the center</li> </ul>
<b><u>Strep throat</u></b> (Scarlet fever)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being examined and treated by a Health Care Provider, a note is given to return to the center <b>and</b> child has been taking prescribed medication 24 hours or more</li> </ul>
<b>A condition that prevents the child from participating comfortably or child is drowsy, Irritable/ crying persistently</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Symptoms subsides</li> </ul>
<b>Any illness which calls for greater care than the staff can safely provide</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Symptoms subsides</li> </ul>
<b>A medical condition that needs more clarification from a Health Care Provider.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Symptoms subsides and being examined by a Health Care Provider and a note is given to return to the center.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To aid in the <u>prevention</u> and spread of communicable diseases <b>Daily Health</b> checks are done when children arrive at the center.</li> </ul>	

If it is determined that the child requires immediate medical care, staff will call 911 and a staff person will accompany the child to the emergency room until the parent arrives.

See Kansas Department of Health and Environment on Guidelines for Exclusion of Children Who Are Ill as Recommended in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Standards: Guiding for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs (Third Edition)*

## **Center Closings**

At the start of each program year or at the time of a child's enrollment, a program schedule including specific dates for center closings will be given to parents/caregivers.

## **Weather Related Closings**

If the Shawnee Mission School District 512 is closed due to weather conditions, then Growing Futures will also be closed. Please listen to the local radio and television stations for a list of school/center closings. If the center is closed due to inclement weather, remote programming will be provided.

If the center is closing for any emergency, you will be contacted by text.

## **Emergency Closings**

As always, our primary concern is the health and safety of the children and it is for this reason that if at any time we cannot operate safely, the center will be closed. Parents/caregivers will be called and asked to come and pick up their children as soon as possible.

## **Withdrawal from Program/Withdrawal Policy**

Growing Futures is a diverse and inclusive organization that is committed to supporting families and collaborating with children in their learning. At times, despite our best efforts and commitment to children and their families, we may not be able to adequately support a child with complex needs or particular challenging behavior. Growing Futures will make every reasonable effort to support a child and their parents/guardians, including utilizing available support services, meeting with parents/guardians to discuss new strategies, and facilitate transition to other appropriate service programs if needed. If efforts are exhausted, two week's written notification of withdrawal will be provided to the parents/guardians. In extreme situations, where safety of all children is compromised, Growing Futures reserves the right to give immediate notice of withdrawal of in-person programming and will provide virtual support in locating alternative resources and options.

## **Termination of Care**

Growing Futures staff want all children to be successful in our learning environments. The health and safety of all children is a priority. A temporary suspension may be implemented when there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated, there is chronic low attendance or no communication from you as their parent/guardian. Should your child exhibit behaviors that are a safety risk to him/herself and other children in the classroom we require a parent meeting to establish a written plan to address the behavior issues. During temporary suspension virtual learning may be provided to continue to engage with you and your child. Additional resources will also be offered.

## **Grievance Procedure/Questions and Concerns**

Growing Futures strives to provide the very best service to children and their families. Strong, healthy relationships with parents and community members help us to continually improve. Therefore, we welcome comments about our services whether they are positive or negative.

If at any time you are dissatisfied with the services you receive at Growing Futures, please take your concern directly to the staff person with whom your disappointment arises. If a satisfactory result is



not reached, contact that employee's supervisor, then the Program Director, Human Resources, and finally the Executive Director. If these procedures have been followed with no resolution, the matter may be brought to the Personnel Committee of the Board of Directors within 10 days of the Executive Director's decision. The Chair of the Personnel Committee will review and may ask for a meeting. We also take these additional internal steps to resolve issues:

The Program Director informs the Executive Director about any complaint that:

- Is already covered by existing Head Start policies or procedures,
- Threatens to disrupt services,
- That involves a conflict with a family which needs further resolution,
- Might damage the reputation of the organization,
- Has been made by a community organization or agency.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

- 1) Fire Emergency:  
Fire Drills are conducted every three weeks following guidance from the Kansas State Fire Marshal's Office.
- 2) Tornado Emergency:  
Tornado drills are conducted monthly from April to September following guidance from the Kansas Department of Health and Environment Child Care Licensing requirements.
- 3) Lockdown and Evacuation Procedures:  
Lockdown and Evacuation drills are conducted annually with students and may require leaving the center property and moving to Overland Park Elementary School located at 8150 Santa Fe Drive.
- 4) Pandemic Response:  
In response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic of 2020, Growing Futures Early Education Center, Inc. created a plan to provide care and services to all enrolled children and families. Adaptations to normal operations include:
  - a) Drop off and Pick up procedural changes:
    - (1) Following guidance from the State of Kansas and the Johnson County Health Department, all parents will be expected to wear a mask during drop off and pick up processes. If you are in need of a mask to begin the program year, please contact your Family Support Advocate. (Masks may not be available upon last minute request due to limited supplies).
    - (2) Schedules for drop off and pick up will be assigned to families in the extended day program. Schedules for drop off and pick up will be arranged through parent request and availability for Wrap-Around-Care and Early Head Start participants. Any changes in parental needs for drop off and pick up must be arranged through your Family Support Advocate.
    - (3) Families will ring the doorbell upon arrival and temperatures should be taken at the door.
    - (4) Temperatures of children are to be taken at drop off and periodically throughout the day. Temperatures of staff are taken at arrival to the center.
    - (5) Pick-up procedures include parents exiting their car and standing by it until their child approaches the gate to the parking lot. Children will be escorted at all times by staff members of Growing Futures.

- (6) Communication with classroom teachers will be sent through Child Observation Record (COR) to your email address on a daily basis. Longer conversations may be had through zoom meetings or phone calls.
- b) Parents and other visitors must make an appointment before entering the facility in an effort to manage possible exposure. All parents and visitors must wear a mask and have their temperature taken prior to entering the facility. If you need a mask, please contact your Family Support Advocate.
  - c) Children ages 2 and above will be offered masks to wear during their participation in center-based activities. Each child will be issued 4 masks which will be laundered daily.
  - d) All staff members will wear masks when in the center. Each staff member will be issued four masks to use throughout the day. These masks will be laundered daily.
  - e) Children or staff members who have a temperature of 100.4° will not be allowed to enter the facility.
  - f) Please see the section “Sick Child in Center—Medical Policy” for more information.
  - g) Emergency Closure:  
Growing Futures follows guidance from the State of Kansas, Johnson County Health Department, the Center for Disease Control, and the Kansas Department of Health and Environment concerning responses to the pandemic. It may occur that Growing Futures closes the center for quarantine if the number of COVID-19 cases increase in the area.
  - h) Virtual Learning and Attendance:  
During program closures, other than planned federally recognized holidays or Winter and Spring Breaks, Growing Futures staff will continue to provide virtual learning activities. These will arrive through COR to your phone or email address. Please make sure to open and respond to the messages as attendance will be maintained through these contacts in addition to virtual home visiting activities. All children are expected to maintain a minimum of 85% attendance.
  - i) Parent Committee activities will continue through virtual platforms.
  - j) Policy Council meetings will be conducted using Zoom, a virtual meeting platform.
  - k) Other adjustments to regular operations may occur as COVID-19 or other pandemics continue in order to keep all children, families and Growing Futures staff safe and healthy.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Introduction to the Policy Council**

The Policy Council serves as a link to Parent Committee, the Grantee agency, governing boards, sub-committees and the larger communities that provide Head Start Services. All program options are represented on the Policy Council. Parents participate in establishing policy and collaborative decision-making through the Policy Council and/or Parent Committee.

The Policy Council works with management Staff and the governing body to review approve and/or disapprove:

- Funding applications

- Procedures for collaborative decision-making about long and short range program goals
- The composition of the Policy Council and selection process;
- The annual and on-going Self-Assessment process;
- Criteria for recruitment and enrollment of children;
- Personnel policies; and
- Following policies for hiring or terminating staff.

The Policy Council also establishes procedures to work with the Agency in resolving community complaints about the Head Start Program. The Policy Council assists Parent Committee in planning, organizing and coordinating program activities for parents with the assistance of staff. The Policy Council typically meets monthly (other than December or July) on the third Thursday evening of the month with dinner, childcare and interpreters provided.

### **Program Calendar**

At the beginning of each year, every family will receive a yearly calendar. You will receive one at annual parent orientation or by a Family Educator.

### **USDA Nondiscrimination 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, audiotope, 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](http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html), (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).

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**Kansas Department of Health and Environment**

Bureau of Family Health  
Child Care Licensing Program  
1000 SW Jackson, Suite 200  
Topeka, KS 66612-1274  
Phone (785) 296-1270 Fax (785) 296-0803  
Website: [www.kdheks.gov/kidsnet](http://www.kdheks.gov/kidsnet)

**Guidelines for Exclusion of Children (or Staff Working With Children) Who Are Ill  
As Recommended in *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety  
Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs (Third Edition)***

When formulating exclusion policies, it is reasonable to focus on the needs and behavior of the ill child and the ability of staff in the out-of-home child care setting to meet those needs without compromising the care of other children in the group.

Children with fever are managed differently in child care. The presence of fever alone has little relevance to the spread of disease and may not preclude a child's participation in child care. A small proportion of childhood illness with fever is caused by life-threatening diseases, such as meningitis. It is unreasonable and inappropriate for child care staff to attempt to determine which illnesses with fevers may be serious. The child's parents or legal guardians, with the help of their child's health care provider, are responsible for these decisions. Parents should be notified anytime a child has a fever.

A facility should not deny admission to or send home a child because of illness unless one or more of the following conditions exists. The parent, legal guardian, or other person authorized by the parent should be notified immediately when a child has a sign or symptom requiring exclusion from the facility, as described below:

- 1) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities;**
- 2) The illness results in a greater care need than the child care staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children; or**
- 3) The child has any of the following conditions and poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others:**

- A. An acute change in behavior including lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, uncontrolled coughing, noticeable (spreading) rash, or other signs or symptoms of illness until medical evaluation indicates inclusion in the facility.
- B. Fever (temperature above 101 degrees Fahrenheit orally, above 102 degrees Fahrenheit rectally, or 100 degrees or higher taken auxiliary (armpit)) and behavior change or other signs and symptoms (e.g., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea). Oral temperature should not be taken on children younger than 4 years (or younger than 3 years if a digital thermometer is used). Rectal temperature should be taken only by persons with specific health training.
- C. Uncontrolled diarrhea, that is, increased number of stools, increased stool water, and/or decreased form that is not contained by the diaper until diarrhea stops; blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
- D. Vomiting illness (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines the illness to be non-communicable, and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- E. Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms of illness.
- F. Mouth sores with drooling, unless a health care provider or health official determines the condition is noninfectious.
- G. Rash with fever or behavior change, until a health care provider determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.

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H. Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.

I. Untreated scabies, head lice, or other infestation.

J. Untreated Tuberculosis, until a health care provider or health official states that the child can attend child care.

K. Known contagious diseases while still in the communicable stage (chicken pox, streptococcal pharyngitis, rubella, pertussis, mumps, measles, hepatitis A).

**My Notes:**


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