

Ballestrini's Child Care & Early Learning Centers

Family Handbook

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Mission Statement

Ballestrini's Child Care Center makes every effort to ensure that every child enjoys a pleasurable learning experience. Our program strives to develop positive learning outcomes to all children regardless of their backgrounds or experiences.

Goals and Objectives

Ballestrini's Child Care Centers Philosophy is to provide a warm, nurturing environment that encourages the development of the "whole child." We strive to provide an environment that is based on successful experiences, which encourages all children to develop a healthy self-concept. Ballestrini's Child Care Centers is a program which recognizes the uniqueness of each and every child and provides positive encouragement for the child's continued growth. We offer an environment that provides the child with the opportunity to learn by doing, moving from concrete hands-on experiences to more abstract concept development. We provide opportunities for a lifetime of creative living and learning.

Physical Development and Health Opportunities are offered to get physical exercise using a variety of equipment indoors and outdoors, to participate in individual and group games, music, creative dramatics, to participate in fine motor activities, and arts and crafts.

Cognitive Development Opportunities are offered to read books, do flannel boards, listen to tapes or records, watch videos, do experiments, cook, and go on field trips- strong emphasis on autonomy skills.

Literacy And Language Development Opportunities including reading books, telling stories, problem solving, and name recognition and writing are part of our everyday curriculum.

Creative Arts Development Opportunities are abundant through out the day including art projects, sensory exploration, music and movement.

Mathematics Development Opportunities are all around us. Shapes, colors, counting, sorting and patterns are all around us. We use these natural opportunities to learn and grow.

Social Studies Development Opportunities allow us to learn about ourselves, families, and communities. We love special visits from readers, the fire dept or dentist office to learn about our community. Children also participate in activities and event that help the community around them such as making banners and cheering on the Torch Light Parade runners.

Science Development Opportunities allow us to learn about the world around us through predictions and experiments. Growing plants, raising butterflies from caterpillars and nature walks are just some of the ways we explore.

Social Emotional Development are provided to express growing independence/self-reliance, and to work or be alone. All of the above are opportunities to interact with peers and adults and opportunities are also offered with board and card games, and time to just sit and talk with friends.

Basic Operating Policies

Our child care is a private child care program, licensed by the State Of Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. Our centers are open to all children ages six weeks to 12 years of age.

- The ratio for children under 3 years of age is 1:4,
- The ratio for children 3 to 12 years of age is 1:10

Operation Hours and Schedule Closing

Hours of Operation: Monday - Friday 6:30AM-6:00PM

Holidays the Center will be closed:

Memorial Day	New Year's Day	Independence Day
Labor Day	Columbus Day	Thanksgiving Day & the day after
Christmas Day	Christmas Eve	New Year's Eve @ 2:00PM
Good Friday @12:00		

Admission Policies

Before a child is enrolled, a complete online enrollment must be submitted. Once the online registration has been received additional paperwork will be required. This includes but is not limited to:

- Child questionnaire
- State of CT health evaluation signed by pediatrician
- Potassium-Iodide-KI permission
- For school-age children (K-6) Transportation form
- Policy review agreements
- **If your child has any allergies, asthma or other medical conditions additional paperwork will also be required.**

Annually parents will be required to review the following forms:

- Emergency and release authorization forms
- Medical forms
- Registration forms
- Permission forms

Children's files are confidential with the exception of administrators and educators, child's parents or legal guardians, regulatory authorities, or emergency medical personal.

Educational Programs

Infant and Toddler Programs:

Ballestrini's Infant and Toddler Programs provide a safe and nurturing environment. We create an atmosphere that enables your child to gain confidence to try new things. Infants and toddlers mirror the world around them as they grow. A loving caregiver and a dependable routine are a child's first "curriculum".

Activities in the infant and toddler program provide numerous opportunities for children to explore their environment safely, both indoors and outdoors. A child who wants to play will always find a willing adult for a game of Peek-A-Boo or hide a toy, stack the blocks or roll a ball. In a quieter moment, there is always a comfortable lap to snuggle into for a story, a song, or just a gentle cuddle.

As your infant begins to blossom into the active toddler there are many fun activities waiting for him or her to explore. Toddlers finger paint, glue, and tape during arts and crafts. Toddlers also have daily circle-time which involves singing, finger play, creative movement, and a chance to socialize. Toddler curriculum has a strong emphasis on early social and autonomy skills. Curriculums involve age-appropriate activities supporting all domains of development including social emotional, early literacy and language, mathematics, social studies, cognition, creative arts, physical development and health, and science.

Preschool Program

The Ballestrini's Preschool Program goals have been developed to promote the emotional, social, cognitive, and physical development of each child. We hold the philosophy that each child is a unique individual with a variety of interests, needs, and abilities.

Preschool Curriculum Topics:

- Language and Literacy
- Science
- Dramatic or Practical Life Activities
- Music
- Art
- Sensory Stimulation
- Physical Development and Health-including gross and fine motor
- Social Studies
- Social and Emotional Development
- Mathematics

Lesson Plans Consist Of:

- A balance of child initiated, and teacher directed activities.
- A balance of active and quiet activities.
- A variety of activities that motivate children to explore and learn through play.

- A regular balance of sensory activities, art, science, music, large motor, math, reading readiness, field trips, cooking, group activities, dramatic play, fine motor, and language development.
- A variety of activities to support all types of learners
- Activities differentiated to each child's needs based on regular assessment
- Parent/Teacher conferences are offered twice a year. Meetings discuss the child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional progress. Conferences are documented and copies are offered to parents.

School age Program This program offers children many free choice activities. We try to help the children settle after a long, structured school day. We have a spacious outdoor area for sports. Fun and creative activities are scheduled daily. This program is available for kindergarten to sixth grade students.

All curriculum is reviewed and evaluated annually by the director. Parents may review the curriculum.

Tuition Policy

First and last weeks' tuition and a \$50.00 nonrefundable registration fee are due prior to a child attending the program. Following initial enrollment, tuition is due on Friday by 6:00PM for the following week of care.

Payments are to be made weekly on the Friday prior. Those parents whose payments are not made prior to services rendered will have their child's enrollment suspended until such payments are made.

Parents are charged for the hours and days scheduled plus, any overtime. Fees remain the same whether the child attends the child care center or not, with exception of approved scheduled vacations.

Full time care gives you 9 1/2 hours of care per day 5 days per week. Any additional time is allowed but you must pay the additional hourly rate. Research in Early Childhood Education shows children attending more than 45 hours per week demonstrate more aggressive behaviors and have greater difficulty in school.

Payment Procedure: Payments will be made with Procure Tuition Express. You can set up your payment method within the app. Our preferred payment method is ACH bank transfer.

Late Payments: When payment has not been received by the Friday prior to child care service a late fee of \$25.00 will be charged to your account, Those parents whose payments are not made prior to services rendered will have their child's enrollment suspended until such payments are made.

Bad Checks: Any checks returned for non-sufficient funds or for any other reason will result in a charge of \$40.

Last Week Retainer: A last week retainer of your child's regular scheduled tuition will be held on file until your child's last week of care. This retainer will be only applied to your account if your child was enrolled with us for more than 6 months and a two week written notice has been given.

Financial Assistance/ Care 4 Kids: The Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 allows increased tax credits to workers paying for child care. The federal government provides funding for child care services for children of low income families. Parents who qualify under income guidelines may be eligible for assistance. Information on financial assistance is available through the child care office.

Ballestrini's Child Care center accepts payments through Department of Social Services (DSS) it is our aim to support DSS efforts to provide affordable care. Clients that have applied for Care 4 Kids must receive a certificate of approval in order to qualify for the reduced family fee. Ballestrini's will not reduce tuition without the certificate of approval. Until the certificate is received, parents are responsible for the full tuition cost. If Care 4 Kids back dates their payments the difference will be applied to your account,

Child Absence and Center Closings: Weekly tuition payments DO NOT change during weeks that contain holiday closings, inclement weather closings, or the absence of a child. The tuition rates are based on the need to support personnel throughout the year. Although your child may be absent due to illness or family vacation, we are still required to provide pay and benefits to the staff in your child's program. Our rates are based on this need.

Schedule Changes: Schedule Change Form must be filled out two weeks in advance for permanent changes to a child's schedule. This will allow time to schedule staff members to maintain proper teacher/child ratios. Short-term schedule changes can be accommodated with the verbal approval of a director. There is a \$10.00 schedule change fee.

Late Pick Up Fee: Please be on time or plan for an alternate person to pick up your child at your scheduled pick up time. A fee of \$10 for every 5 mins after closing will be charged. This must be paid the next business day unless other arrangements have been made. State law requires that two staff members remain on duty as long as a child is present in the center.

Vacation Policy: There will be no charge for holding a place for the child while on vacation, providing:

1. The parent gives the center at least six weeks written notice prior to going on vacation.
2. The child has been enrolled in the program for one year or longer.

3. The vacation is a maximum of one week per program year of enrollment, any additional weeks will be charged as follows:
 - 2nd week of vacation (full tuition due)
 - 3rd week (half tuition due)
 - 4th week (full tuition due)

Withdrawal Procedure: At least two weeks written notice is required of parents when withdrawing a child from our program. Without sufficient notice, the center may find itself unable to efficiently fill the vacancy and parents will have to pay for care their child is not receiving. (Payment is due for at least two weeks after initial notification of written withdrawal.) A new registration fee will be required if the child is re-enrolled at a later date.

Ballestrini's Child Care Centers reserves the right to terminate a child's enrollment in the program if we do not feel that our program is meeting all the child's needs. Other reasons that may result in termination from the program are as follows:

- Incomplete or lack of an updated physical/immunization record
- Tuition policies not being followed and/or payments not being made
- Family's failure to abide by all policies
- Abusive behaviors or verbal threats by parents or children toward staff members or other children/families (See Aggressive Behavior Policy for more detailed information)
- Parents disciplining, in any way, children (other than their own) while at the program
- If a child exhibits special needs or needs related to a serious illness that is unable to be met by the program. In this instance, staff will make every effort to assist parents in finding a program that is better able to accommodate the individual child's needs prior to withdrawal
- Failure to cooperate with Ballestrini's Child Care staff to resolve differences or to meet your child's needs through parent meetings/conferences
- Consistent late pick-up

If Ballestrini's Child Care terminates a child's enrollment the last week deposit will be refunded to the family within 30 days.

Parent Communication

Parents are encouraged to take an active interest in the center. They are expected to read and be in compliance with the operating procedures of the child care center. Parents are to be aware of supplemental notes and newsletters which are sent home.

Monthly Newsletter: A monthly newsletter containing information such as monthly

themes or special visitors will be distributed to families. This will be sent out via e-mail and the ProCare app. Please make sure your e-mail address is on file with Ballestrini's Child Care Centers.

Family Information Bulletin Board: A family bulletin board will have general information posted. Information such as parent meetings and special events in the community will be posted here. Information on local resources for parents will also be available here.

Telephone and Written Communication: Staff will make every attempt to notify parents either by phone or a written note when they feel a situation arises that a parent/guardian should be aware of. We also request that families keep staff informed of any concerns or changes at home. All administrative questions are to be directed to 860-442-2273.

Email: Parents can contact the director via email to express concerns, ask questions, or provide program feedback. The e-mail address is Ballestrini.ChildCare@gmail.com

Conferences/ Progress reports: Teachers offer conferences at parent's request. Parents can discuss their child's cognitive, physical, social and emotional progress. These conferences will be documented. Progress reports will be given to the parents at the midpoint and end of the school year. Lead teachers assess children regularly both through regular observations and formal one on one assessments. A copy will be kept in the child's file. Please see the director with any questions or concerns on types of assessments.

Attendance: Please call the center no later than 9:00AM if your child is going to be late or not attending.

Conflict Resolution (conflict between adults): While every effort is made to meet the needs of children, parents, and staff, we realize that from time to time a conflict may occur between parents, staff, and administrators. The following processes is followed should a conflict occur:

1. A respectful discussion is held between the persons directly involved at a time and place that ensures privacy and sufficient time for a through resolution to take place
2. If resolution is not found at the first meeting, a second meeting is held with the director for the purpose of creating a plan for resolution and a timeline for expected success.
3. If the conflict is not resolved according to the timeline, adjustments may be made to the plan, and an additional timeline be established or
4. If at anytime the director determines that resolution is not possible, she or he will consider one of the following immediate actions:
 - a. Withdrawal for services from the program or
 - b. Suspension of the staff member until disciplinary actions can be taken

Grounds for determining that a resolution is not possible include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Any person involved displays inappropriate behavior such as shouting, accusing, name calling, swearing or physical assault.

- b. Any person involved refused to follow the prescribed plan
- c. Any person involved jeopardizes the process by spreading information concerning the conflict to those outside the immediate conflict or those involved in the resolution process.

Daily Arrival and Departure Policy:

Daily Arrival: Upon arrival children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Each child must be signed in. Parents/guardians must make eye contact and communicate with a staff prior to leaving their child at the center. Under no circumstances is the child to be sent into the center unaccompanied by a responsible adult. Please remember for all children's safety do not leave unattended vehicles running.

Daily Departure: Please be on time. If you know you are going to be delayed, please notify the child care center immediately. So, we can reassure your child, and provide appropriate staff coverage. Each program at the center has a specific closing time. Each parent is to have an alternate plan available if you are not able to pick up your child by closing time.

Authorized Pick-Up List: A list of persons authorized to remove the child must be on file. Only those persons will be authorized to pick up your child from the center. The authorized person must come to the center with a picture ID. The name on the picture ID must match the name we have on file. A telephone call, faxed, or email note will not be permitted. All changes to pick up authorization must be made in person.

In the event that your child is still at the child care center after designated pick-up time and we have not heard from you, we will take the following steps (in order):

1. Attempt to reach you at home, work or school.
2. Call the people listed on the emergency card
3. Call the authorities if we can not make contact with parents/guardians or authorized pick up person.

Incident/Accident Reports

Incident/Accident Reports are used to record and report a variety of situations that can occur in the early learning setting. They include but are not limited to:

- Injury from play, accident, or aggression from another child
- Aggression to another child or staff member
- Inappropriate statements to another child or staff member
- Inappropriate physical contact to or from another child
- Unusual behavior that causes teacher concern (see note below)

Incident reports will note information about the reason, the time of day that the incident

occurred, and the teacher's response to the situation. Privacy laws prevents us from stating name of any other child but yours. Do not ask staff members who other children were if more than one child is involved in the incident. Staff members are not permitted to release this information under any circumstance. All incident or accident reports are the property of Ballestrini's Child Care Center. The parent may be required to sign acknowledgment and a copy will be provided.

Reporting of Child Behaviors

There are times when unusual statements, actions of the child, or appearance of the child lead the teacher to have concerns for the child's well-being. There are many innocent reasons why these things occur. However, without background knowledge, teachers may feel that there is some issues of neglect. Teachers are not permitted to decide if neglect has or has not occurred. However, if they feel there is a problem, by law, the teachers are required to report this information to Department of Child & Family (DCF) Services. Please give teachers background knowledge that will help them and prepare them for unusual behaviors. The single best approach to prevent misunderstanding is to keep your teachers informed of your child's changes or challenges.

If at any time a family has concerns that a staff member is abusing or neglecting a child they must report their concerns to the director. At this time the center and/or the parent will report to DCF for an investigation. The staff member may be suspended during investigation and all requirements by DCF will be followed. It is our primary concern that all children are safe both at home and while in the program. We also always want to ensure a fair investigation occurs for any concerns.

Health Policy

We are required by the State of Connecticut to have on file, a statement signed and dated by a physician, physician assistant or an advanced practice registered nurse stating that the child is current with immunizations or has a scheduled appointment that will keep the child's immunizations current within the past year. Physical exams must be kept up to date with accordance with state regulation. Health records will remain confidential only information relevant to the child's care will be shared with classroom teachers. Records may be shared with nurse consultant for review and CT Office of Early Childhood as necessary.

Children in good health benefit more from their school day. We ask that you not bring your child to the center if he/she will be unable to fully participate with peers in the indoor and outdoor activities of the day. Children who have colds that are not accompanied by fever or fatigue may attend the center.

Communicable Disease: Parents are asked to notify the child care center within 24 hours if their child has been exposed to any communicable disease. (For example: Chicken Pox.) The center will notify all families in writing when the children in the center have been exposed to a communicable disease. Further, the center will notify the Commissioner of

Health when any illness or condition specified by law or regulation is present in the program within 24 hours of the program's awareness of this situation. No personal information will be shared with other families in the program and old share with health department when necessary for contact tracing. The illness log is used by staff to record any symptoms of illness with children or staff. It is the responsibility of each teacher to make sure the log is maintained accurately. Parents are notified of symptoms and program policy is followed with regard to posting a notice.

Guidelines for Excluding Child from Child Care Center

If a child becomes ill while at school, we will make the child comfortable, place the child in a designated "quiet corner" where the child can be seen and heard by staff members but separate from the group to reduce the risk of spreading the illness. We will then contact the parent/guardian to have the child be picked up as soon as possible, If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, we will contact an authorized individual from the emergency/release.

Illness which Exclude Attendance at the Center

- Fever: Auxiliary temperature: 100.4 degrees or higher. Child may return after being fever free for 24 hours without any fever reducing medications.
- Respiratory Symptoms: Difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing: child may make high-pitched croup or whipping sounds after he/she coughs. The child is unable to lie comfortably due to continuous cough. May return once cough has subsisted.
- Respiratory Illness (Febrile): Excluded until the child is without fever for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in normal daily activities.
- Diarrhea/ Vomiting: Child may return after symptom free for 24 hours.
- Eye/Nose Drainage: Any discharge other than clear may be signs of infection. Child may return with doctors note.
- Sore Throat: Sore throat, especially when fever or swollen glands in the neck are present
- Rash: Skin rashes, undiagnosed or contagious. Child may return with a doctors note.
- Infected Sores: sores with crusty, yellow or green drainage which cannot be covered by clothing or bandages. Must have Doctors note to return,
- Itching: Persistent itching (or scratching) of body or scalp, must have Doctors note to return
- Lice: Exclude until first treatment has been completed and no live lice
- Appearance/ Behavior: Child looks or acts differently; unusually tired, pale, lacking appetite, confused, irritable, and difficult to awaken.
- Unusual Color: Eyes or Skin yellow (jaundice), Stool gray or white, Urine dark, tea colored
- Measles: Exclude until 4 days after the rash appears.
- Mumps: Exclude until swelling subsides (usually 5 days may be as long as 9 days)
- Pertussis: (Whooping Cough) Exclude until 5-7 days after antibiotic treatment begins,
- Pin Worms: Exclude until after treatment has been started.
- Ringworm: Exclude until 24 hours after treatment begins
- Scabies: Exclude until 24 hours after treatment begins and child is without fever for 24 hours.
- AIDS: Exclude infected child if he exhibits biting and is not in control of his body fluids, or has open skin sores which cannot be covered.
- Chicken Pox: Until all blisters have dried into scabs, about 6 days after rash onset.
- Conjunctivitis: Exclude until treatment has been received for 24 hours.

- Fifth Disease: Exclude until no fever present.
- Giardiasis: For those with diarrhea only, exclude until the child has started treatment and diarrhea is no longer present.
- Hand Foot and Mouth: Exclude until fever is gone and child is well enough to participate in normal daily activities (sores may still be present) Requires a note from the child's doctor.
- Hepatitis B: No exclusion necessary unless infected child exhibits biting behavior or has open sores that cannot be covered.
- Impetigo: Excluded until sores are healed or can be covered with bandages, or until child has been treated with antibiotics for at least a full 24 hours. Requires a dr note.

Medication Administration:

Prescription and non-prescription drugs will be administered to a child enrolled at Ballestrini's Child Care Centers, providing that the proper Medical Administration Form has been filled out. If your child is taking medication at home, please be sure to notify the center. Ballestrini's Child Care Center will follow our medication administration policy. Please be sure all medications or topical creams are handed to a staff member and not left in child's belongings so they can be safely stored.

Ballestrini's Child Care will undertake the administration of the following medications:

- **Oral over the counter medications:** Over the counter non-prescription medications are not permitted unless prescribed by a physician and the signed medication permission form is brought in with the medications.
- **Prescription Medications:** Staff members are certified to administer prescription medications to children providing the medication is brought to the program in the original prescription bottle accompanied by an appropriately completed and signed medication permission form signed by both the child's physician and parent.
- **Topical Medications :** Non-prescription topical medication will be administered to a child by a staff member providing that the medication is in the original container and is labeled with the child's name, name of medication, and the direction for the administration. A Non-prescription topical med form must be filled out by the parent and kept on file. This authorization is limited to the following topical medications:
 - Non-prescription diaper changing ointments that are free of antibiotic or steroid components.
 - Non-prescription powders
 - Non-prescription insect repellent
 - Non-prescription sunscreens that are free of amino benzoic acid or its derivatives. (Sunscreen will be applied in the afternoon, parents are to apply first coat of sunscreen before drop of)
- **Inhaled Medications:** Inhaled medication administration require specific detailed plans of care developed in conjunction with the physician, parent, and child care center. The determination of when inhaled medications are to be administered must be specifically defined. Inhaled medications will be administered by hand help inhalers. A prescription medication administration form must be kept on file.

- **Injectable Medications:** Injectable medications will be stored on site for treatment of allergic reactions. A prescription medication administration form must be kept on file. This medication will be administered by any certified staff member in the event of an allergic reaction. A written care plan will be in place for the usage of the medication. This procedure will be on file and approved by the parent, physician, director and nurse consultant.

Discipline Policy:

Our program promotes a positive approach to managing the behavior of all children. Discipline at the program has two primary goals. First, we strive to find a solution to the current situation. Second, we attempt to help the child process feelings, recognize consequences, explore alternative solutions and outcomes, and develop self control. To accomplish these goals we use the following techniques on a daily basis:

Prevention: A well-designed and well-equipped classroom tailored to the developmental level of the children prevents frustrations, interruptions and hazards. It offers privacy, independence, and easy adult supervision, In addition, the daily routine provides enough time for play, a sense of security, little waiting, and few transitions.

Positive redirection: The basic procedure used in all classrooms is positive redirection, which is redirecting unacceptable behavior to an acceptable alternative. This may be enhanced by verbal praise and other reward systems. We praise children for the appropriate behaviors and successes by describing what we see and how we feel. "I see the books are all on the shelf. It is nice to have such a clean room"

Modeling: Children learn from what they see and hear around them. We strive to provide an environment in which children and teachers can learn to care and feel respect for one another. Teachers model behaviors that they wish to see in the children of the program.

Limit setting: We have a few clear, simple rules that vary according to the developmental level of the children. In establishing rules, each teacher follows these guidelines:

1. Tell children what they are to do in a positive tone.
2. Post rules prominently throughout the classroom for parents and staff to read.
3. Specify rewards for following rules
4. Explain rules to students and apply rules consistently.

Problem Solving: We appeal to the child's growing intellectual and moral reasoning by using natural and logical consequences and asking questions to encourage problem solving. Teachers help children identify their needs, feelings, causes, alternatives and choices. We provide cues such as the Statement, "Use your words". Staff is there to assist the child in developing their own resolution with peers.

Managing behaviors: When a child has a physical or emotional outburst, we provide comfort and privacy. This allows the child to regain composure and ensures the safety of other children and staff. "Time out" will be used only as a last resort, when a child is unable to break a pattern of negative or attention-seeking behavior. This is not a punishment, but rather a time of renewal for the child. When the child has regained control, he/she will be allowed to join the group. In any event, the time out should not

exceed the number of minutes corresponding with the age of the child (for example three minutes for a three year old). Disciplinary procedures involving corporal punishment shall not be employed. Deliberate humiliation, embarrassment and ridicule are prohibited.

Disenrollment: We reserve the right to disenroll any child at any time if we feel the child's behavior is going to harm another child or staff member. Every effort will be made to work with families and to suggest resources.

Prohibited Actions: Children will not be subjected to any form of corporal punishment including physical punishment, psychological abuse or coercion.

Biting Policy

The news that your child has bitten or been bitten can be stressful. Biting can occur in the best of families, and within the best child care programs. Biting can occur anytime a group of children are together.

Young children can be quite self-centered. They know what they want, and they need it immediately. Biting generally occurs during a child's toddler years. The child can not yet fully express what it is they want, need, or feel. Due to the frustration a child often resorts to biting. At this age children often become educated by copying. A bite can happen just simply because a child saw another friend bite. Biting also occurs in phases. It is the adult's responsibility to intervene so the child will know that biting is not an okay thing to do.

There are several methods we try to prevent biting from occurring. Modeling kindness, caring and gentleness are demonstrated so these behaviors will be repeated by the children. Eventually we will learn the sequence of events prior to the biting, which will help in trying to prevent a bite from occurring. The day is designed so children will have an opportunity to participate in stress relieving activities such as outdoor play, sensory play, music, and art.

Even with all the preventive measures a bite can still happen. The child that has been injured will be taking care of first. The injured child will receive a large amount of TLC. We make it abundantly clear to the biter that biting hurts and biting is not acceptable behavior.

When a child has been bit or has bitten an incident report will be filed. It is a center policy to keep the names of the children involved in the incident confidential.

If biting becomes a common occurrence staff will work with the children's parents to set up an action plan to help address the biting behavior. Children may be expelled for excessive biting.

Aggressive Behavior Policy

Aggressive behavior is defined as using physical or verbal abuse towards peers and/or teachers. Depending on the age group, aggressive behavior is usually a response to a child's inability to

express frustrations to their individual needs. Aggression is a learned response. Our goal is to teach children to use safe and alternative ways to express their frustrations. There may be times when, despite our best efforts, a child is not responding to frustrations in a manner that is safe for their peers or their teachers. A child's inability to learn appropriate responses to frustration may be a result of a developmental delay that our program cannot adequately address. This policy is designed to address children that may need more support or are unable to learn appropriate methods for dealing with their daily frustrations through typical means. The following steps will be taken to attempt to limit the need for suspension or expulsion from the program.

- Level 1: Behaviors are logged in the classroom. Teachers and director will work to assess the function of the behavior. As well as discuss behaviors and possible functions of the behaviors with the family. Staff will make every effort to use support strategies listed in our discipline policy to limit the behavior with the support of the family as well as make any changes possible to room layout, materials or routine that will benefit the child.
- Level 2: Child continues with multiple incident reports describing acts of aggression towards their peers and/or staff - Parents are required to seek outside mental health consultant for child and develop a plan of action with the center. Information on where to find help will be provided upon request. The child pediatrician is often a great starting point for more resources. The child may be sent home if the safety of the child, staff or other children in the program is at risk.
- Level 3: Aggressive behavior continues and/or parents do not follow through with the program's evaluation recommended within the given timeline- Child is no longer enrolled with Ballestrini's Child Care Centers. We will make every effort to help the family utilize all local resources and to find a new placement if necessary.

This policy will be followed as it complies with federal and state civil rights laws.

Severe Weather Plan

In the event of severe weather, the center will use their discretion for closings, delayed openings and early dismissals. The center will remain open as long as it is not a safety concern for the staff or families to attend. Decisions will always be made with safety in mind. All decisions regarding child care center closings or delays will be sent via the ProCare app.

In the event of an early closing, parents/guardians will be contacted by ProCare, email or phone and informed of the closing. If a parents/guardian cannot be reached, staff will try and contact an authorized individual to pick up the child.

Nutrition

For children over the age of three years, the child care center provides a nutritious snack in the afternoon (2:30PM). Children often participate in snack preparation. The menu is posted in the center for easy reference. Children bring in their own nutritious lunch and breakfast from home. Please be sure any food that needs to be heated is placed in a separate non-plastic microwave safe container.

We request that parents follow healthy eating guidelines for children. More information can be provided upon request. Candy, gum and foods containing large amounts of processed sugar are not served in the center.

Special diets can be accommodated with a medical note from the pediatrician stating food allergies and suggested meal plan.

Parents that wish to provide a treat for an occasion such as a child's birthday, please notify the center at least a week in advance. A simple dessert will be an exception to our "no sweets" policy.

Infant and toddler diets are determined by their parents and primary health care provider. Formula and/or solid foods will be fed by the care giver in prescribed quantities and at specified times. Infants are required to be served formula or breast milk until 1 year of age unless otherwise instructed by a physician. Bottles must come to the center pre made with the appropriate amount in each bottle and be labeled with the child's full name. All formula or breast milk will be discarded one hour after first offering the bottle to the infant. Breast milk must be labeled with the date milk was expressed. All children with bottles will be held while being bottle fed.

It is recommended toddlers drink whole milk until 2 years of age. Written instructions are to be provided. Toddler mealtimes will be served in accordance with the childcare schedule. We ask that parents provide a drink for each mealtime. Cups and bottles will be rinsed and sent home for proper cleaning daily. Drinking water will be offered to infants and toddlers throughout the day.

Items Brought From Home

Our center maintains a generous supply of materials, toys and equipment for the children to use. Therefore, children are asked to keep toys and other personal items at home. This helps us to avoid hurt feelings if an item is lost, broken, or desired by the other children. We cannot be responsible for an item from home once it is brought to the center. If it helps your child to take a toy or special item with them when they leave the house each day, leaving it in your car is a safe and secure place where your child can have it later.

Please check with your child's teacher for show and share days. These are the days that your child is allowed to bring in an item from home that relates to the theme of the week being discussed in the classroom.

Rest Time

"Nap time" is required by childcare licensing regulations in all programs which operate for 5 hours or longer daily. The center recognizes that not all children of preschool age will sleep during rest time. For the children to make the rest time an enjoyable, relaxing experience for all concerned we will allow quiet book reading during rest time.

Cots or cribs are provided. Parents must provide a blanket and crib sized fitted sheet (Infants: Fitted porta crib sized sheet) **Infants under the age of 12 months are not permitted to use blankets or other soft items in cribs. They may use a sleep sack.** If bedding for nap time is not provided, parents will be called to bring bedding to the center. These nap items must be brought in every Monday and brought home every Friday for laundering. If a child has a favorite blanket or stuffed toy, parents are invited to send these from home.

Infants will be placed to sleep following all safe sleep recommendations including: being placed in crib on back with no loose or soft items including sleep positions. No child may not sleep with bibs, necklaces or any other object around their neck. Infants that come to the program sleeping will be woken to be sure they are alert and well and then be allowed to go back to sleep in crib. They will not be left to sleep in a car seat. If an infant falls asleep in any equipment not designed for sleep they will be immediately moved to a crib.

Clothing

Please dress children in comfortable play clothes, suitable for both active and messy activities. Clothes that are both sturdy and washable work best in the child care setting. Remember-the child is going to get dirty!

A complete change of clothes, including socks and underwear, should be kept at the center at all times. All clothing that is sent or worn to the center **MUST** be labeled with the child's name. Changes of clothes will need to be replaced as the child grows. On hot summer days, children will use the sprinklers or an occasional trip to the beach. Please provide swimsuits and towels. Parents are to apply sunscreen prior to arrival at daycare.

Children go outside in all weather. Please provide appropriate outside clothing for the season; i.e. jackets, snow suits, gloves, bathing suits ect..

Field Trips

Advance notice will be given prior to a field trip. The costs for field trips are not included in the regular tuition fees. These costs will be billed at the time of the field trip.

Smoking policy

No smoking is allowed on any Ballestrini's Child Care property.

COVID POLICIES

Important information:

- All staff must use face masks at all times inside the center
- All parents/guardians must wear masks when picking up or dropping off their child.
- All children ages 3 years and older must use face coverings unless they are eating, drinking, sleeping, resting or are outdoors. (Please review full mask policy)
- Distance between children will be maximized when face coverings are removed.
- When possible, children and staff will stay in the same group each day. (Maximum group size will not exceed 18 children)
- Children and staff will be screened each day for any observable illness
- Our cleaning and disinfection schedule will be enhanced.
- Parents/guardians will provide their child with a bag or backpack to transport their child's personal belongings back and forth each day.
- Children and staff should have multiple changes of clothing on-hand.
- Social distancing will be maximized when possible.
- Groups of children will not come in contact with other groups of children.
- Bedding will be stored on each child's individual cot. We ask that parents provide a bag to store bedding in. (A pillow case works great)

Drop off Routine:

We would prefer families to designate one person to handle both drop-off and pick-up each day.

- Parents/guardians must wear masks when dropping off their child.
- Parents/guardians will drop children off to a staff member in the front entrance way of each building.
- Parents/guardians will not be permitted into the classrooms.
- Parents/guardians are required to sign children in using the parent kiosk. No parent will be permitted to touch kiosk without first washing hands or using hand sanitizer.
- Parents/guardians will answer all screening questions at drop off.
- Staff will observe the child for any visible illness prior to child being permitted into the program.
- We will only allow one family in the entrance way at a time. Please wait outside to maximize social distancing.

Pick up Routine:

We would prefer families to designate one person to handle both drop-off and pick-up each day.

- Parents/guardians must wear a mask when picking up their child.
- Parents/guardians will not be permitted into the classrooms.
- Parents/guardians are required to sign children out using the parent kiosk. No parent will be permitted to touch kiosk without first washing hands or using hand sanitizer.

- We will only allow one family in the entrance way at a time. Please wait outside to maximize social distancing.

Sick Procedures :

- Children and staff who are showing signs of sickness shall stay home.
- Children with a temp over 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will not be permitted in the program.
- If a child starts showing symptoms while at the program the child will be isolated. The facility will then be cleaned and disinfected.
- If a child or a staff member who has been present in the program is diagnosed with COVID-19, we will notify all families and staff about the exposure.
- If a child or staff member is exposed to COVID-19 they shall follow the CDC guidelines.

Ventilation:

- We will keep the central ventilations systems running during the hours the building is occupied. The filters will be changed regularly.
- When possible, windows will be open to bring in fresh air
- In classrooms with ceiling fans, the fans will be adjusted to draw air up towards the ceiling and not down.

MASK POLICY

This policy outlines the requirements for mask wearing in all Ballestrini's Child Care programs. Updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics along with the guidance to assist children with the social emotional aspects of mask wearing found on the website of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood were considered when developing this policy.

Mask Requirements

All staff are required to wear a mask or face covering at all times while in the program unless doing so would be contrary to his or her health or safety because of a medical condition, or subject to another exception listed below. If a medical condition exists, documentation will be required from a licensed medical practitioner.

Children age three and older are required to wear a mask or face covering except for the following:

- A child with a documented medical condition, special health care need, or developmental need (such a sensory integration) for whom wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their health or safety. A child with a documented disability or special education need for whom wearing a mask or face covering would be contrary to their needs. In addition, children and staff while involved with certain special education and related services activities like speech and language therapy or where lip reading is required.
- Children who are newly enrolled within the past two months and are working toward mask wearing.
- Children who have just turned three years old within the past two months and are acclimating to wearing a mask.

Breaks from Mask Wearing

- Children are not required to wear a mask while eating, sleeping or resting. During these times when masks are removed, distance between children will be maximized, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible.
- One mask break will be held in the morning and one in the afternoon within cohorts of children. During these breaks, a physical distance between children will be maximized, maintaining at least 6 feet of distance wherever possible.
- Children will be allowed to remove their mask when outdoors.

Children Experiencing Difficulties with Mask Wearing

Staff will work with children who have difficulty complying with the mask requirement by issuing soft verbal reminders and other gentle means of supporting compliance. Children will not be disciplined or excluded from the program or isolated from their peers due to non-compliance with mask wearing. Staff will work with parents of children having difficulty wearing a face mask to develop a plan to support the child so that they will adapt to wearing a face mask.

However, if a parent refuses to have their child wear a face mask, continued enrollment will not be permitted.

Wearing and Removing Masks

- Hands will be washed or sanitized before putting on a mask.
- All masks or face coverings shall cover the mouth and nose and wrap securely around the face. Face shields will not be permitted.
- Masks will not be put around the neck or up on the forehead.
- Efforts will be taken to not touch the mask when wearing and only handled by the ear loops or ties.
- Efforts will be taken not to touch eyes, nose, and mouth when removing.
- Hands will be washed immediately after removing a mask.
- When possible, staff will wash or sanitize their hands before and after helping a student put on or adjust a mask.
- Masks will be clearly identified with staff and children's names or initials, to avoid confusion or swapping.
- Masks will be stored in individually labeled containers or paper bags.
- Masks are required to be washed after every day of use and/or before being used again, or if visibly soiled.
- Parents will be asked to supply additional masks for their child in case a back-up mask is needed during the day and to facilitate every day washing of masks.

A copy of this policy will be maintained on site at the program.