

Family Handbook

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Welcome

Welcome to Early Bird Infant-Toddler Center. It is our pleasure to work with you and your child. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to work with you and your family to help raise a happy, healthy child. We value your opinions and hope to build a strong partnership in helping your child develop and thrive.

Early Bird Philosophy

Early Bird has adopted many practices from the Reggio Emilia approach. Our environments are designed in a natural way that invokes focus, curiosity for the natural world, and authentic learning. Our center focuses on respect for the child and trusting their unique, developmental learning processes. Our curriculum is emergent from children's interests. We believe that children should be given a lot of choice and freedom to explore their passions and that teachers should provide guidance and set up inviting environments that will stimulate curiosity and engagement in the children. Children's learning is documented daily to encourage reflection and self-confidence. We value open communication and family and community involvement and have an open door policy.

Early Bird MISSION

Our mission is to provide high quality child care in a setting that supports the development of young children through exploration and play.

Early Bird VALUES

- Respect for children
- Authentic Learning

Licensing and Quality Standards

Early Bird is licensed by the California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division. The California Department of Social Services works to protect the safety of children in child care by licensing child care centers and family child care homes. Their highest priority is to be sure that children are in safe and healthy settings. If you have any questions regarding licensing, contact the local office responsible for Community Care Licensing (address and phone below).

Annual visit reports from Community Care Licensing will be available for you to view at the center.

Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing
851 Traeger Ave, Suite 360
San Bruno, CA 94066
[\(650\) 266-8800](tel:6502668800)

The licensing agency has the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent.

Staff

Each staff member meets or exceeds all qualifications as required by the State of California. Staff names and qualifications may be obtained from the director upon request. Early Bird promotes and encourages the continuing education and training of every employee. Training provided includes health topics, discipline, special needs, professional development and curriculum development, just to name a few. All staff are required to complete, and bi-annually renew, CPR and first aid training.

Ratio

1:4

The director will be on site the majority of the day as well.

Children Served

Children and families are served without regard to sex, sexual orientation, gender, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, religion, color, or mental or physical need. Early Bird operates without religious instruction or worship of any kind.

Early Bird welcomes children who need special services or provisions. It's important to meet with your center director to discuss your child's needs and how we might best serve them in our program. Early Bird understands the requirement of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and strives to make accommodations when possible. Periodically we use community resources to assist us in providing the best care to every child and family.

Hours and Days of Operation

Early Bird is open Monday-Friday from 7:30am-6pm.

If there is a high enough demand for additional hours, the director may extend hours of operation and will alert families to these changes.

There will be occasional Saturday play groups open for families to come and interact together and share tips and advice.

Holidays (child care is not available on these days)

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving (Thursday and Friday)

Winter Holiday (2 days)

New Year's (2 days)

Martin Luther King Day

President's Day

Memorial Day

Early Bird will also be closed two to three additional days a year for staff training/ center clean up. One month's notification of these dates will be given.

Emergency Closing

In the event of an emergency closing that requires an evacuation, program staff will note the evacuation site on the door of the building.

Enrollment and Registration Procedures

To begin the enrollment process, an initial registration orientation is required to complete appropriate forms, discuss policies and procedures of the center, and answer any questions you may have about the program. You will also become familiar with program philosophy, program goals and activities. This orientation must be scheduled in advance with the director. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to the orientation to participate in activities, meet center staff and other children, and become familiar with the classrooms and the playground. Most children feel much more comfortable in the program having had

this initial short visit while the parent is with him or her. Please plan to spend about 30 minutes so you and your child have time to observe and explore after the tour of the center. At many programs you will be encouraged to visit often prior to your child's first day.

Waiting List Priorities

Acceptance into Early Bird from the waiting list will be based upon the schedule needed compared to the space available, and on the following priorities:

- . 1) Siblings of current or former Early Bird children.
- . 2) Date of wait list application
- . 3) Child Protective Services referred families will always receive priority.

Special consideration may be given, based on needed mix of age groups, families undergoing crisis, full time working parent(s), or other extenuating circumstance, with approval of the director.

Enrollment Forms

The State of California requires that the following be on file at the center before your child can attend:

-
- . 1) Identification and Emergency
 - . 2) Preadmission Health History
 - . 3) Parents Rights
 - . 4) Personal Rights
 - . 5) Physician's Report

- . 6) Introduction of Child
- . 7) Field Trip/Medical Consent
- . 8) Early Bird Contract
- . 9) Sunscreen Release
- . 10) Photo Release
- . 11) Immunizations
- . 13) Needs and Services Plan
- . 14) Medication Release Form
- .

NOTE: All forms can be found on Early Bird's website. The forms can be downloaded and saved, making it convenient when forms need to be updated.

Payment and Fees

Tuition

Tuition is established prior to admission according to your child's schedule. Any schedule changes or termination of services should be indicated to the center director.

Deposit and Refund Policy

Parents registering their children will be assessed a deposit fee. The fee will equal one-half of the monthly rate of care. Deposit will be applied to the last two weeks of enrollment. Any existing tuition credit at the time of contract termination will be refunded 4 to 6 weeks after the child's last day of care. If two (2)-weeks' advanced written notice has not been given prior to termination

of a contract, no refund will be given.

Registration Fee

A one-time, non-refundable fee of \$50 will be charged for each new registration or re-registration after termination.

Payment of Tuition (Fees)

Monthly payments are due the 1st of each month. Tuition is considered late on the 5th of the month. If Early Bird does not receive payment by the 5th of the month, a 5% late payment fee will be assessed. If payment, including the \$50 fee is not received by the 11th of the month, services will be suspended until payment is received.

Checks should be made payable to: Early Bird

There are several options for making your monthly tuition payments:

- . 1) Mail or drop off payment to 1922 Palmetto Avenue Pacifica, CA 94044
- . 2) Your bank account can be automatically debited by the fifth of each month. Request the form from the director to use this option.

Billing questions or arrangements for payment should be directed to the director.

Tuition Changes

Early Bird will give a 30-day written notice for all changes in tuition fees.

Returned Checks or Auto Debits

Checks or auto debits returned from the bank will be subject to a \$20 service charge. If a check or auto debit is returned, you will be notified by phone or email and will be expected to submit payment, with the service charge included. If two checks or auto debits are returned from the bank within a school year, cashier's checks or money orders will be required for future payments. If a check is returned due to bank error, a letter of explanation from the bank will be accepted and the service charge waived.

Extra Hours Extra hours may be arranged in advance with the center director and permitted on a space- available basis. If extra hours beyond the contract's scheduled hours are used, the center director will give the parent an invoice, which is to be paid within ten (10) days.

Late Fees

If a parent picks up his/her child after the contracted hour, there is a late fee charge of \$2.00 per minute per child. You will receive an invoice from the center for the amount owed. Late fee payments are due within ten (10) days. **Termination of services may occur if parents are late when picking up their child(ren) four (4) times in a contract year.**

Absences

Please notify your center by phone or in writing as early as possible regarding your child's absences. Tuition guarantees your child's place at the center; therefore, no tuition credits or make-up days will be given. Tuition remains the same whether or not the child attends.

Notification of Changes to Child's Records

The program must maintain current and accurate records in case of emergencies. Forms, including address, home and work telephone numbers, work location, names of at least three authorized persons to pick up your child, and record of immunizations must be kept current at all times. It is your responsibility to notify the director of any changes. This is done for the safety of your child.

Schedule Change and Withdrawal

All families are committed to their contracted fee until the end of a month, even if a reduction in hours is requested by the parent/guardian.

Advance written notice must be given for any reductions in hours or termination of care.

- Reduction of hours will be effective after a two (2)0 week written notice period.
- Termination of care becomes effective after a two (2)-week written notice period.
- A maximum of three (3) schedule changes shall be permitted within a contract year. Written notice must be given to request an increase in hours (if the center director confirms that space is available, the increase in hours will take effect immediately). If it is a mid-month change, the fee will be prorated for that month.

Suspension or Termination of Services

Child care services can be terminated or suspended for the

following reasons:

- If parents/guardians are late when picking up their child(ren) four (4) times in a contract year.
- If payment is not received by the 11th of the month, or payment is late on a continual basis.
- If your child endangers the health or safety of children or staff; continuously refuses to follow acceptable rules of behavior; habitually uses profanity, vulgarity or obscenities; possesses or uses illegal substances or possesses drug paraphernalia or weapons; steals or damages school or private property; leaves the child care premises without permission.
- If the behavior of the parent(s)/guardian is inappropriate or abusive toward staff or children, or if the parent(s)/guardian continually does not follow Early Bird policy as outlined in this Handbook.

Your Child's Day

Early Bird offer children a variety of appropriate experiences throughout each day. Depending on the needs of the children they will be offered indoor play, outdoor play, social experiences, and arts and crafts, just to name a few. Please refer to newsletters and calendars for specific information.

Early Bird makes communication between program and family a priority. Through frequent verbal and written communication, families are informed of what to expect each day. Whether it's a field trip or a need for diaper supplies, your program staff will notify you.

Infant Charts

Parents and staff utilize an infant chart which has spaces to list what your child ate, when he/she slept, and when diaper changes occurred. Please complete the chart upon arrival. This helps us determine what your child may need at any particular time. Also, write and communicate any special information for the day. You can count on us to do the same!

Rest Time/Naps

We follow each individual infant's sleeping pattern. Toddlers usually nap at the same time each day. Please provide a sheet, blanket, and any comfort items that will aide your child's sleep.

Infants under the age of 1 year will always be placed on their backs to sleep. If your infant under 1 year of age needs to be placed on his or her stomach for sleep due to medical reasons, a physician's authorization will be required.

Optional Services

At different times of the year, we may offer classes such as dance, computer and gymnastics for an additional fee. The option for participation is left open to each family.

Daily Preparation

Clothing

Our programs offer lots of fun and play! For this reason we request that you dress your child comfortably and in clothing that may get dirty. We suggest that extra clothing be kept on hand at the program and it be labeled.

Diapers

We do offer a diaper service for an additional \$50 per month fee to include diapers and wipes.

For those families providing diapers, we will accept disposable or cloth diapers.

Bottles

Families must provide formula or breast milk. Formula must come already prepared, bottled, and labeled with the date and child's name. Our center is not allowed to mix formula. Please keep your child's teachers up to date on progress or your desire to transition your child from a bottle to a cup. The teachers can help identify strategies to assist you -- just ask!

Personal Property

Early Bird is not responsible for any personal belongings brought to the program. If your child is bringing personal items to the program, please be sure to label items.

Some items are necessary for your child's comfort during the day, including nap time. Please consult with your program staff regarding necessary items and how they are cared for.

Children need to be aware that toys from home may get broken at the center. Early Bird is not responsible for toys that break, get lost or are stolen. If toys cause a problem, children will be asked to keep them in their cubbies. Weapons, including toy weapons, are not allowed at our programs.

Attendance and Absences

Please notify your program by phone or in writing as early as possible regarding your child's absences. We do have an answering machine, so you may call any time to leave a message. Tuition guarantees your child's place at the center; therefore, no tuition credits or make-up days will be given for any reason. Tuition remains the same whether or not the child attends.

Arrivals and Departures

Sign-In/Out

It is a Licensing requirement that each child must be signed in and out by a parent or authorized parent representative every day in the Sign-In/Out books located in the Parent Center. The time and a full, legal signature are required.

Non-Parent Pick-Up

Children will be released only to individuals authorized on the child's Identification and Emergency Information form. Any changes in persons authorized to pick up your child must be submitted to the center director **in writing** by the parent. Due to licensing regulations, a parent signature is required for changes. Phone and/or email authorization will not be accepted.

Program staff will check the photo ID of any newly authorized individuals. In addition, it is our responsibility to ensure the safe exit of every child and we will not release a child to any adult who appears inebriated or acting in an erratic behavior.

Late Pick-Up

If a child has not been picked up by closing time, the program staff will try to contact the parent(s) and/or authorized persons. If the child is still in our care one hour past closing time, the program

staff will exhaust all possible sources and then contact the police department. The police department will determine if shelter care is necessary. Staff will post a notice, on the center door, of the phone number of the precinct and will continue to try to reach the parent(s).

Please remember, late fee is \$2 per minute per child.

Field Trips

Infant-Toddler and Preschool

Planned field trips are infrequent; when they are planned, in order for them to be successful, we may ask families to help transport and chaperone children. We will give you advance notice of upcoming field trips. Sometimes a program will take an impromptu walk to a nearby park or around the neighborhood. A sign is posted of the destination of the walk if all staff and children are vacating the program location.

Smoking

Smoking is prohibited in and around Early Bird.

Illness and Communicable Diseases

Early Bird's Health Policies and Procedures have been established to ensure the health and safety of each child. We realize that it is very difficult for working families to stay home with sick children, but for the health and well-being of both your child and the other children, it is important that ill children have a chance to recover before returning to their program.

A quick health assessment will be done daily as your child enters

the center. This is a licensing regulation (SDSS 101326) “for ensuring that children with obvious symptoms of illness including but not limited to fever or vomiting are not accepted.” This regulation requires that the person bringing the child remains until the assessment is complete.

You are requested to notify the center any time your child is absent. If the absence is related to illness, please inform us of the symptoms and/or illness. Also, please notify the center of immunization updates as this information is mandated by our licensing agency and the Public Health Department.

For the protection of everyone, children with contagious conditions may not be present at the center. If your child is present and exhibits Excludable Symptoms, you will be asked to pick up your child within one hour. During this time, your child will be safely isolated from well children. The following list of **Excludable Symptoms** was developed with guidelines from the Center For Disease Control and American Academy of Pediatrics. It is also noted when your child may return to the center following an illness. To ensure the best health for your child and others, please cooperate with this policy at the same level you would expect from other parents.

FEVER

Child will be excluded:

with a temperature at or above 100 degrees axillary.

Child can return:

when temperature is below 100 axillary or normal for that child for 24 hours.

DIARRHEA

Child will be excluded:

with three or more unexplained diarrhea stools (loose, watery, or mucus filled) in a day. An attempt will be made to provide parents with an informational call after the second episode of diarrhea.

Child can return:

when diarrhea has not occurred for 24 hours. 1/25/2016 Page 18

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VOMITING

Child will be excluded:

when vomiting occurs and lacks a clear reason (i.e., too many rounds on the tire swing).

Child can return:

when vomiting has not occurred for 24 hours.

SKIN RASH

Child will be excluded:

with any generalized skin rash until determined to be non-contagious.

with any skin rash with fever, drainage or behavior change.

Child can return:

when skin rash is diagnosed as non-contagious AND accompanied by a doctor's note.

PINK EYE

Child will be excluded:

with conjunctivitis which is characterized by eye drainage that is yellow or greenish in color

that returns soon after being removed.

Child can return:

when eye drainage is no longer evident. Typically after 2 - 3 doses of medication drainage will disappear.

MOUTH SORES

Child will be excluded:

with any mouth sores (in or around the mouth) until determined to be non-contagious.

Child can return:

when mouth sores are diagnosed as non-contagious AND accompanied by a doctor's note.

HEAD LICE

Child will be excluded:

with evidence of lice or nits. Please ask center staff for information about treating head

lice.

Child can return:

when ALL lice and nits are gone.

CHILD FEELS TOO POORLY TO PARTICIPATE IN NORMAL CENTER ACTIVITIES

Every effort is made to address each family's unique needs within the limits of our resources.

A child made irritable by illness or injury is not only uncomfortable but also takes an inordinate portion of attention from staff, thus decreasing our ability to care for other children.

Child can return when he/she can fully participate in normal center activities.

If your child develops symptoms of infectious illness, as previously described, during his/her day you will be asked to pick up the child within one hour. We strongly encourage a visit to the doctor for a diagnosis and any information that can be shared with center staff to ensure the health of your child and others.

The exclusion and return of an ill or injured child will be at the discretion of the center staff and/or EBITC nurse. Their decision will be based on current medical information and health policies.

Sharing of information related to your child's health is important to the quality of care we provide you and your child as well as the other children. We will notify families of exposure to any communicable disease. Our goal is to keep the children healthy and we appreciate your support of these policies.

IMMUNIZATIONS

All children must be up-to-date on their immunizations and cannot be admitted to the program without proper immunization documentation. If a child is not immunized due to medical reasons, proper documentation must be provided in order to admit the child into the child care program. This includes a

doctor's note, signed by a licensed physician, which includes the following information:

- That the physical condition or medical circumstances of the child are such that the require immunization(s) is not indicated
- Which vaccines are being exempted
- Whether the medical exemption is permanent or temporary
- The expiration date, if the exemption is temporary

If a child is not immunized as required for child care entry due to medical reasons, it may be necessary to exclude the child in the case of an outbreak of any one of the diseases protected by immunizations. Staff will follow the recommendations of the Public Health Department.

Medication and Special Health Needs

Medication

Only prescription medication will be administered. Medication must be in the **original** prescription bottle with your child's name on the bottle. For ALL medication, please:

- . 1) fill out a Medication Release form for the duration for which the medication will be given. These release forms may be found in the parent area, or ask a teacher.
- . 2) sign the form.
- . 3) give the form and the medication to a teacher.

Please note: Inhaled medications and Epi Pens require specific

instruction from the parent/legal guardian and the child's physician. Please ask the Director for the appropriate forms for these medications.

If non-prescription medication (over-the-counter) is prescribed by your child's physician, it must be in the original container and accompanied by a note from the physician stating:

- the reason for the medication
 - how long the medication should be given
 - the exact times and dosage for the medication
- Upon giving your child the medication, the staff person will log the dosage and time given on the medication release form. Please check the form to confirm that the medication was given.

Diaper Cream/Lotion Application

In order for us to apply diaper cream or lotion to your child(ren), a Diaper Cream/Lotion Application Release form must be completed. Creams containing medicines (e.g., lotrimin, calamine, Neosporin, hydrocortisone, etc.) **REQUIRE** a physician's prescription and Medication Authorization form.

Allergies

Upon enrollment, please notify your program staff of any allergies to food or medication or other food restrictions that your child has. Also, please write the allergies in the appropriate boxes on the enrollment forms. These forms are kept in your child's file and our emergency book. The allergies will be posted in the appropriate area in each program. We will make every effort to work with you and

your child to accommodate special dietary needs. If allergies or food restrictions are severe, we may ask you to provide supplemental food items.

Chronic Health Condition

If a child has a chronic health condition that must be monitored, parents should notify staff upon enrollment to ensure that the child's needs are met. This may be necessary for children with conditions such as asthma, heart conditions, ADD, ADHD, etc.

Accidents and Emergency Procedures

Accidents and Injuries

If your child is injured at Early Bird the staff will give the appropriate first aid for the injury. If the injury is serious and requires a physician's or dentist's attendance, the parent(s) or authorized persons will be notified immediately. If no one designated for emergency contact is available, we will call 911. If you will be away from your usual contact phone, please be sure to leave a phone number where you may be reached. If transportation by emergency services is required, a staff member will accompany the child, whenever possible. Staff are not allowed to transport children.

All minor accidents are documented and parents are notified either verbally or in writing. The staff may also contact a parent or other legal guardian to notify of an injury that may not require immediate medical attention. This is to ensure the safety of the child and give the parent the opportunity to seek medical attention immediately if desired.

All Early Bird staff are CPR certified and first aid trained.

Update of Emergency Information

To effectively meet the needs of the children, all information on the emergency forms must be kept current. It is the responsibility of parent(s) to inform the program of changes in the following information:

- Home address and phone numbers of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Work place or school phone numbers
- Name, address and phone number of child's physician
- Person(s) authorized to pick up the child
- Person(s) to contact in a medical emergency if parent is not reachable

Disaster Emergency Procedures

Early Bird has a Disaster Plan in the case of earthquake or fire. A copy of this disaster plan is in the center office for your information. Each program also maintains an "Earthquake Box." The box contains a 72-hour supply of food, water, blankets, flashlights, and other emergency supplies for the children and staff if an earthquake or other disaster should occur. If an earthquake or other disaster leaves the program uninhabitable, we will relocate to another safe location. The program staff will post a note on the outside door of the center as to the location. No child will be dismissed from the program unless a parent (or individual previously designated by a parent) comes for him/her.

The staff conducts routine earthquake and fire drills with the children to help prepare them for an emergency situation.

Here are a few things to remember to assist with our response in an emergency:

- No child will be allowed to leave with another person, even a relative or babysitter, unless that particular person is listed on the child's emergency form. With this in mind, if your child's emergency form is not up to date, please complete a new one!
- All parents or designated persons who come to pick up children must sign them out at the program or at the temporary relocation site.
- Please do not call the program. We must have the phone lines open for emergency calls.
- As soon as possible, come to the program to pick up your child and any others for whom you are the emergency form designee.

Transportation

Occasional off-site activities take place. In almost every case the families will be asked to volunteer to drive their own cars. Children under the age of eight (8) must be secured in a car seat or booster. Children under 8 who are 4'9" or taller may be secured by a safety belt in the back seat. A Volunteer Driver form must be completed for each driver. This form asks for proof of auto insurance. Early Bird staff may not drive children during these activities.

Outdoor Weather Safety Procedures

Sunscreen

In order to protect your child from the sun, we ask that you apply sunscreen before arriving at the program. Teachers will re-apply sunscreen as needed. In order for us to apply sunscreen you must complete a Permission to Apply Sunscreen form. Parents should supply their own sunscreen if a child has skin sensitivity or allergies. We spend a lot of time outside!

Outdoor Play

Please make sure your children are dressed appropriately for the weather. Drinking water is always available. We also incorporate water into daily activities at most programs, especially on really hot days. Please provide extra clothes for this purpose.

Snacks and Nutrition

A morning snack, an afternoon snack and a hot lunch are offered daily. Daily hot lunch consists of protein, grains, fruits, vegetables and milk.

The menu for the week is posted in the parent area. We strive to provide child-friendly, nutritionally balanced meals and snacks that children enjoy.

All meals are served and eaten “family style” to create a social environment which encourages children to taste everything and to encourage independent eating skills. The teachers eat with the children to model tasting, eating skills and to encourage conversation. Toddlers are encouraged to ask for “more please.”

Food is never withheld or used as a reward or bribe.

At the infant-toddler programs families provide formula or breast milk. Formula must be provided in the original, factory-sealed container only; bottles made at home are accepted but can only be used for the day it arrives and must be dated and labeled with child's name. The center also provides jarred baby food. Parents are responsible for keeping food charts updated. This allows caregivers to be consistent with the food your child receives at home. No new food, including milk, will be served to your child before it is introduced at home and authorized on the child's Needs and Services Plan.

Early Bird Birthday Treat Guidelines

Birthday celebrations are an important part of your child's experience in our program. We emphasize birthdays as a celebration of the child as a unique person, rather than emphasizing a birthday treat. The following guidelines for acceptable birthday treats have been created to support our *Healthy Food and Beverage Practices with Children*. Please refer to them if you would like to bring food into our programs as part of celebrating your child's birthday. All birthday treats must be planned in cooperation with program staff. See the center director for additional guidelines that may apply at your particular program.

List of recommended birthday treats (all treats must be **NUT FREE**):

- Whole grain muffins
- Fresh fruits
- Low fat yogurt parfaits with fresh fruit and nut-free low fat granola

- Banana bread
- Zucchini bread
- 100% fruit juice popsicle
- Share your healthy treat ideas with our staff!

NOTE: Avoid high calorie/low nutrient density foods such as donuts, cupcakes, cake, cookies, candy, etc.

Guidance, Discipline, and Behavior Management

Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. This is accomplished through respect for the individual child, a positive attitude, sensitivity, consistency, firmness, and conflict resolution techniques.

From the earliest age, a child's behavior is viewed from a developmental perspective. Appropriate behavior and expectations will differ with the developmental age and level of each child. Staff members recognize their responsibility to model the behavior expected, provide an appropriate environment and consistently set limits. Consistent limits are stated positively and refer to specific behavior rather than the child. Children are empowered by acknowledgment of feelings and being provided with alternatives. When one child's exploration conflicts with another person, we view it as a conflict resolution situation and apply a problem-solving approach. As children are able, they are encouraged to be involved in the rules and solutions. Parent/staff conferences provide an opportunity to explore philosophy, expectations, family practices, and the child's ongoing development. **Corporal punishment is never used.**

Sometimes a child has emotional or social needs that cannot be met in our program. In such a case, a conference will be set up with the parent(s) and staff and a reasonable probationary period will be set. Withdrawal of service is a last resort only when physical or emotional safety is an issue. In the event a child's behavior continues to endanger the safety and well-being of others participating in the program, Early Bird reserves the right to discontinue service if the above steps have been followed and resolution cannot be reached.

The Following Behaviors Are Not Acceptable (and may be cause for suspension or immediate termination of child care services)

- Endangering the health and safety of children and staff.
- Continual refusal to follow acceptable rules of behavior.
- Habitual use of profanity, vulgarity, obscenity, racial or other offensive remarks.
- Possession or use of illegal substance or possession of drug paraphernalia or weapons.
- Theft or damage of school or private property.
- Leaving the premises without permission.

Confidentiality

Personal and emergency information about your child will be kept on file at your center. This information, as well as conversations between parents and staff, will be held in confidence. Center staff have access to children's files as needed.

Only Community Care Licensing and Child Protective Services have the authority to interview children or staff, and inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent. Early Bird is required to make provisions for private interviews with any child(ren) or any staff member, and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the facility. Community Care Licensing or Child Protective Services shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional examine the child(ren).

On occasion, staff are asked to provide information about a child with other relevant providers, agencies, or other programs. Staff will obtain written consent from the family prior to sharing any information.

Section 11166 of the Penal Code requires any child care employee to report any known or suspected instance of child abuse to a child protective agency.

Release of Records

On occasion parents request copies of forms kept in the child's file. When copies are requested, Early Bird will follow this procedure:

- Early Bird will provide copies of any educational forms for the parent(s) or legal guardian. Educational forms include, but are not limited to, any form kept in the child's file such as health, assessment, and emergency information.

- Early Bird will provide copies of business forms only

to the parent(s) who has contracted the care with Early Bird. Business forms include contracts, billing information, attendance records.

□ If copies of attendance records are requested, Early Bird will provide up to one month of records unless otherwise required by a court order.

Communication

Early Bird staff are committed to building lasting relationships with families. These relationships are based on trust, respect, acceptance, and appreciation of one another. We believe that the best way to build a relationship is through open and honest communication that is motivated by the common goal of meeting your child and family's needs and interests.

Daily Check-In

We feel that daily interaction with parents is the most valuable tool for a successful relationship. Please take time at the beginning of the day to communicate to your child's teacher any information or special needs that might help your child have a good day. Please communicate this to your child's teacher verbally, or write it in the log book. If you have a message or concern that you prefer remain private, please let a teacher know, and we will pass the information on to the other staff discreetly. In turn, at pick-up time, the staff will make an effort to communicate with you about your child's day.

We encourage you to pick up your child at least 15 minutes prior to closing time so that you have time to receive information about your child's day.

Bulletin Boards

Parent area display boards will communicate a variety of information to you. Check these boards each day for little “snippets” about the day’s activities, the children’s experiences, and special events. These boards keep monthly calendars of special events, news flashes, and parent reminders.

Log Book

A parent log book is kept in the parent area. This book is another way for all of us to pass on information. Please address sensitive issues privately with the appropriate person.

Conferences

Early Bird holds parent/teacher conferences quarterly. This is a time for the families and teachers to come together to assess your child’s development and to develop goals for your child. Teachers are also available to conference with families upon need or request. Please check with your program staff regarding timing for conferences. We encourage daily questions or concerns too. When frustrations arise let us know. We’ll help you understand your child’s behavior and provide some strategies.

Special Events

Parent education, potlucks, meetings, work days, and other opportunities may be available. We value the connection that is made with families during these special times. It also shows the children that there is a special connection between the home and program. Please ask your program staff about the traditional events held in your program.

Newsletters

Early Bird publishes a weekly newsletter to be e-mailed out at the

beginning of each week. These newsletters provide you with a variety of pertinent information regarding your child's care, upcoming events, and center closings, just to name a few. Please take the time to read these newsletters.

Parent and Guardian Involvement

Family Surveys

Early Bird will survey families annually to allow for feedback on the service we provide. We will use the results of all surveys to formulate goals for the program.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement Early Bird encourages continuity between the home and the place where the children spend a large portion of their day. Parent participation also leads to closer relationships among the parents themselves, giving the children a wider sense of community and allowing parents to communicate with each other.

There are many ways for parents to be involved in their child's program. These may include special events, parent meetings, parent jobs to support the function of the program, and sharing a special tradition, a family recipe, or skill with the children and staff. All families are encouraged to participate in a way that is meaningful to you.

Visiting the Program

Parents and guardians are welcome visitors to their child's program at any time during operating hours.

Staff Services Outside of Program Hours

The connections you will make with your program staff will likely become very close and comfortable. Often this creates a situation in which families wish to extend these relationships into other aspects of their daily lives. If a family wishes to utilize a teacher's skills outside of the program, such as babysitting, house sitting, etc., it is with the family's understanding that Early Bird is not responsible for staff behavior outside the center environment and hours of operation. In addition, it is important to understand that our teachers are professionals. If you would like to know if a teacher is interested in additional work opportunities with your family, please consider approaching your center director first. Your center director will likely know if any of the teachers are interested, or they can ask the staff for you. We appreciate your respectful consideration of our teaching staff as professionals.

Staff Appreciation Gift Guidelines

In support of our goal to provide the highest quality care and education for mid-peninsula children, Early Bird employs outstanding child care professionals. Early Bird recognizes that families often wish to express their appreciation for these fine staff members in many thoughtful ways. However, Early Bird does not encourage nor promote staff gifting. If families wish to give individual or group gifts around the holidays or at the end of the school year, Early Bird believes that careful consideration and respect should be shown to all involved.

We have adopted the following guidelines to assist families in appropriate and respectful giving:

- . 1) Gifting is always voluntary.
- . 2) Coordinated group gifting may not involve any Early Bird resources or personnel.

- . 3) Solicitation for group gifting must be respectful of an individual family's ability to give.
 - . a) Organizers of group gifts should refrain from suggesting a donation amount.
 - . b) Any appearance of a "requirement" or "expectation" to contribute toward a group gift should be explicitly avoided.
 - . c) Family participation is strictly confidential.
 - . d) Group gifts should be presented as "from all center parents", regardless of actual contributions.

In Closing...

Thank you for choosing Early Bird as your partner in the healthy development of your child. We are committed to making your and your child's experience with us a positive and enduring one. Please let your program staff know if you have any questions regarding this handbook or Early Bird in general.

We are happy to have your family here!