

# Parent Handbook



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## Philosophy on Education

At North Pole Montessori, LLC, our goal is to provide a secure environment where all children, parents and their families feel welcomed and valued. Children participate in a program of educationally challenging lessons and supportive personal interactions planned to foster their social, physical, emotional and intellectual development. All staff are responsible for working with children, parents, their family members, and other staff members in the spirit of collaboration and dedication. Children will always be under approved adult supervision to ensure the best possible safe environment.

Our education philosophy is that young children develop and learn best when they have opportunities to:

- Observe and be part of respectful, supportive and friendly adult-child and child-child interactions
- Engage in the experimenting, exploring, creating, discovering and idea-sharing which are all part of the children's activities adults describe as 'child's play'
- Make choices and become involved in activities that are personally and developmentally right for them

North Pole Montessori, LLC aims to offer the strongest developmentally appropriate practices for children from 2.5 years-6 years. This means the Montessori curriculum falls under the “primary” category which is also known as Early Childhood. The curriculum is geared to work from the most basic skills and to grow upon one another, so the child is expanding in all areas of development and becoming a leader themselves.

## Hours of Operation

Our program offers a part-time schedule of 9:00 am-1:00 pm which is available Monday-Friday. Our program also offers a full-time schedule of 9:00 am-3:00 pm which is available Monday-Friday. A minimum of 3-days attendance is required to allow children an adequate chance for growth and development.

Our doors open at 7:00 am and close at 5:00 pm Monday-Friday. Before school care and after school care take place between 7:00 am-9:00 am and 3:00 pm-5:00 pm. Please refer to [www.npmalaska.com](http://www.npmalaska.com) for all pricing details.

## Daily Schedule

<b>TIME</b>	<b>Description</b>
7:00-9:00	Independent exploration and breakfast is available for those eating at school <b>(Before school program)</b>
<b>9:00-11:30</b>	Morning work cycle
<i>10:00-10:30</i>	<i>Snack will be available</i>
11:30-12:00	<i>Lunch</i>
<i>12:00-12:30</i>	Outside free play
12:30-1:00	Quiet time, reading time
<b>1:00</b>	<b>PT release</b>
1:00-3:00	Afternoon work cycle/ <b>FT release</b>
<i>3:00-3:30</i>	<i>Snack will be available</i>
4:00-5:00	Outside Play and pick-up <b>(After school program)</b>

## Enrollment

North Pole Montessori, LLC is happy to accept children from the age of 30 months to 9 years of age for both preschool and Kindergarten, and Lower Elementary (1, 2, and 3 grade) curriculums. To enroll your child a non-refundable \$100 deposit is required to hold their spot along with a completed enrollment packet which can be found at the school. Along with the enrollment packet a copy of your child’s up-to-date immunizations is required before they can enter into the classroom. If you chose not to immunize your child, please see the administrator for other required forms. An emergency card is also required before your child may begin attending the program. To be added to the waitlist, the \$100 deposit fee must be submitted, and the waitlist will be visited in the order in which the deposits are received. A supply fee of non-refundable \$200 will be due August 1<sup>st</sup> of the coming school year or at the time of attendance. Tuition and fees cannot be prorated for time of attendance or refunded at the time of exit from the program.

## Fee & Payment Schedule

Payments may be made by directly through monthly invoices, in cash, or through PayPal preset tabs on northpolemontessori.com. Payment rates are set for a monthly amount for September 2021-August 2022. Invoices are emailed to the email provided on the Enrollment Contract by the 28<sup>th</sup> of each month and must be paid by the 10<sup>th</sup> of the month the bill is being paid. Fees are charged as such:

2.5 years (30 months)-9 years

<u># of days</u>	<u>Part-Time (9:00 am-1:00 pm)</u>	<u>Full-Time (9:00 am-3:00 pm)</u>
3	\$350/month	\$400/month
4	\$500/month	\$550/month
5	\$650/month	\$700/month
<u>Before Care (7:00am-9am)</u>	<u>After Care (3:00 pm-5:30 pm)</u>	<u>Full-Time Before &amp; After</u>
\$10.00/day (drop-in rate)	\$10/day (drop-in rate)	\$175/month (before or after)
		\$275/month (before & after)

Failure to pay will result in an immediate dismissal of the child. If payment arrangements are necessary due to a hardship, it must be communicated with the administrator. Failure to pay an invoice on time will result in a \$20 late fee. Any form of returned payment will also result in a \$20 fee.

## Family Involvement

The Montessori Method is a lifestyle learning where independence and growth must be fostered both in the program and at home. Thus, family involvement is as integral a component of high-quality early childhood education as providing direct education and care to children. We respect and support families by maintaining ongoing communication between Educators and parents. Educators communicate with families through regular Parent-Educator communication, weekly folders containing work of children's learning, and a myriad of informal ways of staying on site and interact frequently with families, Educators and children. This way immediate concerns can be properly addressed before minor problems become big ones.

Volunteering in the classroom and observing all the different ways the Educators provide learning activities can be very eye opening. You will learn a lot about simple, fun activities you can do at home to advance your child's education and overall development.

## Parent-Educator Partnership

Corresponds with parents may be done verbally or by email. Records will be kept routinely documenting individual children's growth. The records track children's interests, skills and conceptual development. This data is used to write reports for parents to present at parent/ Educator conferences, and it is used to tailor curriculum to each child's learning needs in the class.

Parents are permitted to visit North Pole Montessori, LLC at any time. Feel free to join the classroom activities and accompany us on field trips, but keep in mind the three-hour work cycles and their importance in your child's development.

The ultimate goal of parent-educator communication is fostering a lifelong, rich relationship between a child and his or her parent(s).

## Substitute, Emergency, & Volunteers

In the event of emergency coverage, only adults who have completed the required background check will be asked to step in for the Administrator/Lead Teacher. On days when only a single staff member is available and emergency occurs, all parents will be notified of the situation and directed to pick up children if found necessary. Emergency Procedures are outlined in the Get Out Alive! Evacuation and Disaster Preparedness Plan posted at the entrance of the classroom. All emergency procedures will be reviewed and followed as outlined in the plan. A copy can be requested with the Administrator. Volunteers may come into the classroom but will not be left without another supervising adult. All staff members undergo a background screening.

## Discipline Policy

It is strictly prohibited in our policy to physically discipline children (no spanking, hitting, or shaking). We do not believe in threatening, shaming, or belittling children for misbehavior. We never withhold or threaten to withhold food as a form of discipline, nor do we bribe children with food or any other treat in order to get them to comply.

Young children can struggle to communicate their needs as they work through their social and emotional development. Thus, yelling, throwing objects, and biting could occur. Corrective measures such as verbal acknowledgment or redirecting attention to tasks will be used. These actions are never condoned behavior, but it is a clear understanding child must learn from their mistakes if behavior is truly to ever be changed.

Parents will be notified of issues seen with behavior in the classroom. If a pattern is recognized a behavior action plan will be developed between Educators and parents. If behavior becomes too dangerous for the child or others in the program, dismissal may be required immediately which will be at the discretion of the program administrator.

Classroom Educators embrace and uphold a few basic rules and routines and give warnings and reminders (for scheduled transitions as well as for rules of behavior). Gently and consistently, Educators insist on compliance. In general, we try not to say 'no' and 'don't', instead we communicate with "no thank-you". Educators make an effort to frame directions in positive language (instead of 'don't run', we say 'walking feet').

## Corporal Punishment

Meeting requirements of the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development and as stated in our discipline policy, no child will be disciplined by means of corporal punishment at North Pole Montessori. In the unfortunate event that a staff member violates this policy, the staff member will be counseled, and corrective action will be taken up to and including termination.

## Video Camera-Security

To provide additional security measures for students and staff, video cameras have been installed in the Children's House classroom, Elementary classroom, and on the playground. If an incident arises the school administrator will offer footage to the parties involved or a parent may request footage for an incident in question. Footage is stored in our system for a total of 27 days (standard

app availability), please note this does require time sensitivity with a request. Beginning December 1, 2020 (denials prior to this date were made in an area where they could be captured on recording, but due to storage retention this is not a sufficient method) an incident report will be filled out with a date and time stamp to the video in question. The individual or parties involved, depending on the particular incident, will be offered the chance to view the video or decline. If the video is declined, this will be documented, and the declining party will be asked to sign in acknowledgment they have declined to view. If accepted, the video link will be emailed by the school administrator for record of receipt. Video footage is not be shared via text message, email, social media, or in any other form by any parties, other than the school administrator during the initial presentation. Failure to comply with this policy may result in dismissal from the program or further actions deemed necessary for student, staff, or program security.

## Field Trips

When completing your initial child registration form, you will have the option to permit your child to accompany the class on regular neighborhood outings, such as nature walks. These walks may replace any outdoor time when the group home playground is otherwise not available. In most cases, parents are welcome to come along on any formal field trip. Note that our educators always bring along cell phones and can be reached at any point during a trip. Transportation for field trips will be done in a North Pole Montessori insurance covered vehicle unless otherwise found necessary. Travel details for any field trips will be included as necessary. A permission slip will be available the morning of a scheduled field trip which requires a parent signature for a child to attend the activities.

## Snack Time

We are a peanut and gluten friendly environment. For gluten free children we do our best to accommodate snacks with fresh fruits and vegetables, but unfortunately cannot guarantee all snacks will meet specifications. If your child has any food allergy it is important to discuss the matter with the administrator to find the best options for food. Snack time generally consists of fruits, vegetables, cheese and crackers, granola, yogurt, and smoothies. We try to provide organic and natural diets for the betterment of the student body. Snack is provided for 30 minutes where children can serve themselves when they find a moment to break from their current lesson.

## Supplies to be Provided by Parents

Lunches: Children must bring lunch from home as there will not be any provided from the program.

Clothing: Weather appropriate attire!!! Children need the opportunity for free outdoor play which will be conducted outside whenever permitted up to -20. An extra pair of clothing should be included for any accidents, messy outdoor play, or craft time mishaps.

Indoor shoes: A pair of no slip shoes are required for indoors. These are separate shoes than what is worn to and from school or used for recess time. This ensures cleaner workspaces for the children and eliminates the spread of illness and disease. This is also a Fire Marshal requirement to ensure children have shoes on their feet in the case of an emergency or during a fire drill.

## Items from Home (including Birthday Parties)

Comfort items and family photographs can help a child feel more secure away from home. Toys from home can create problems at school. If you are wondering about what your child can bring to school, and what should stay home, please ask.

Talk to the Educator before if you wish to provide treats to celebrate your child's birthday. The Educators will help you decide what and how much to bring. Also, if the preparation may be a great lesson opportunity during school hours.

## Television/Technology

No outside technology devices will be allowed in school unless specified for a special activity/occasion. Television at school is limited to educational programs which assist in delivering certain lessons. Yoga activities or other movement activities may also be delivered through television. All videos, movies, and activities will be previewed to ensure appropriate content. Regulations prohibit no more than 1.5 hours of television, movie, computer, or games in a 24hour period. Although not used in the program, computer learning activities must not exceed 2 hours per day.

## Child Pick-Up Authorization

Children are only permitted to be picked up by those the enrolling parent(s) authorize. These persons are listed on the pick-up card. Keep the list up to date. If you need to ask someone to pick up your child who is NOT on the card, please notify us ahead of time, in writing. Anyone picking up a child should be prepared to supply photo identification, which will be copied and kept on file.

When dropping off or picking up your child, NEVER leave your child unattended. DO NOT leave children of any age unattended by parked vehicles. All children must be directly supervised (within eyesight) of an adult family member or one of our staff members.

## Inclement Weather Closures

North Pole Montessori, LLC aims to notify parents at least 24 hours in advance of any anticipated closures due to inclement weather, most notably in the case of a major snow or ice storm, but generally only in extended power outage situations. It is possible that in some cases 24-hour's notice is not available. All family members will be notified by phone of any group home closures as soon as possible. If you do not receive a phone call regarding a weather-related closure, assume the group home is open as usual.

## Holiday Closures

Please refer to [northpolemontessori.com](http://northpolemontessori.com) for scheduled school closures. Any dates listed here which do not result from an emergency situation will be available 30 days prior to closure. Note North Pole Montessori does not observe the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District Schedule.

## Attendance: Vacations and Absences

It is understandable that at times families get busy and a late arrival is unavoidable. Where at all possible, please be sure to drop-off your child on time. Late arrivals can disrupt daily routines for your child, as well as the class in entirety. If you know your child will be more than 15 minutes late, please call or text directly to notify your educator.

Vacations are a great opportunity for all families to experience. When a vacation has been scheduled, school absences should be discussed with your educator directly. You will be responsible for all group home fees during this time. This is important to continually provide quality food, material, and education. If payment is not made for vacation/extended absences, the child's slot can no longer be guaranteed upon return.

If your child becomes ill with a fever, it's important to keep them home for the day (refer to Appendix A below).

## Penalties for Late Pick-Up

When not previously discussed, 1.00 per minute will be charged for late pickup past 5:35pm. There are times of emergency or unavoidable circumstances where communication is essential!

## Record-Keeping

It is extremely important to tell us about changes in home address, home phone number, workplace (or school), work (or school) address, work (school) telephone, and cell phone of parents in the home, emergency contacts and all those authorized to pick up the child. For your child's welfare we must be able to reach you (or your alternative emergency contacts), all day, every day. Keep us informed daily of phone number changes.

All pertinent information related to your child's health should be updated regularly, including allergies, food restrictions, medical procedures, health conditions, your pediatric health provider's name, address and phone number. Also include your child's health insurance information.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

Types of information which are kept confidential and shared only with those who need it to carry out their jobs include: medical history including any current or suspected medical problems; family status; financial information; and other personal issues like family matters or children's behaviors.

Access to written records is restricted to administrative staff, state monitors, and the Educators directly responsible for the child. In order for records to be released to any other person, school or agency, written permission is needed from the child's parent.

Areas of concern (like problem behavior or other special needs) are discussed with parents in private and in a problem-solving manner, respecting the roles we all can play in helping children feel competent and successfully become part of the group.

## Child Abuse/Neglect

If there is any abuse or neglect suspected of any children in our care, our team is required to report it to Child Protective Services. If our team has reason to believe that any family member or guardian picking up a child is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, an emergency contact will

be called to pick up the child. If the impaired individual is insistent on leaving with the child, the incident will immediately be reported to the authorities.

## Firearms on the Premise

No one is advised to carry a weapon onto the property without preauthorization from the Administrator.

## Medication on Premises

If your child is on medication, try to arrange the medication schedule so your child does not need the medicine at school. If this is not possible, and if the medication is prescription (or accompanied by a doctor's note), we can administer as designated on the label. Medications must arrive in their original packaging and contain the child's name if it is a prescription. Please provide us with any medications that your child would need in an emergency (for example, asthma medications, or an EpiPen for allergic reactions). Under no circumstances may children hold their own medicines, and medications may never be kept in children's cubbies. Any medication must be accompanied by a Medication Permission Slip before it may be administered to a child. Medication administered at school will be logged without exception on a medication log.

## COVID-19 Mitigation Plan or Other Such Mass Illness

At any point the Governor of the State of Alaska may make amendments to our normal operating procedures, to include temporary closure. We will continue to follow the advisory of the State of Alaska, which at this point allows for a COVID test within 72 hours of travel or a 10-day quarantine. This applies to both student and/or family members. If a family member is quarantined in the same household and can come into contact with the child attending the program, North Pole Montessori, LLC will require the child to be kept home for the 10 days of self-quarantine.

To comply with the 2020 CDC school reopening guidelines, the following procedures will be followed to the best of our ability to ensure the environment is safe for all in attendance. In the interest of sanitation, shared materials will be greatly decreased in the classroom. When at all possible, each child will have their own designated materials. When shared materials are required, sanitation of the material will be conducted between uses. Children will also be directed to wash their hands both before and after touching any shared materials. Children and staff who fail to provide a pair of inside shoes available for the day will be sprayed upon entrance into the program and hand sanitizer will be administered between each physical contact when **hand washing** is not available. The classroom tables, door handles, light switches, etc. will be disinfected hourly. Due to the nature of cleanliness and distraction from the classroom, children exhibiting signs of poLy-training issues will be excused from the program at the discretion of the director. Multiple occurrences per week or consist occurrences will be considered when making this difficult decision.

-Children are not required to wear masks but are encouraged to when over the age of 2. A mask must be kept at school for use if a child becomes ill or if the need arises for the student body to wear one in the building. Disposable masks are available for any child unable to provide their own.

-All staff members will be required to wear masks when possible. Staff is advised to wear masks when bringing children to and from the drop-off and pick-up line, when interacting with adults, and while serving a snack or assisting with lunch.

-Temperature checks will be done for each staff member and child before they enter the classroom. Any person with a temperature of 100.4 or higher will not be permitted to enter the classroom. If a child begins to show any signs of illness, they will immediately be separated from the group and an authorized adult will need to come pick-up in a timely manner. A fever must not be present without medication for an additional 24 hours before the individual exhibiting signs of illness is welcomed back into the classroom.

-New students will be required to present a negative COVID test upon entrance of their first day of school. The test should be done a maximum of 72 hours beforehand when **permissible**.

-Parents/legal guardians, siblings, or any other individual not enrolled in the program or currently on staff with North Pole Montessori, LLC are not permitted in the classroom without prior arrangement. All pickup and drop-offs will be conducted by a staff member at each individual car.

Signage is clearly marked on the front door explaining anyone showing any signs or symptoms of COVID-19 are not allowed to enter the premise. If a staff member or child becomes ill and tests positive with COVID-19, the school will be closed for a minimum of 72 hours to allow for the natural disinfecting process. The school will then be cleaned thoroughly before admittance of any individual.

## Appendix A: Illnesses or Symptoms

Please do not bring your child into the group home if they have any of the following illnesses or symptoms. If you are unsure about whether you should bring your child into the group home, please contact us.

- A) The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the staff;
- B) The illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children as determined by the staff;
- C) The child has any of the following conditions, unless a health professional determines the child's condition does not require exclusion:
  - Appears to be severely ill – this could include lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, or having a quickly spreading rash
  - Temperature, oral temperature 101 or greater, axillary (armpit) temperature 100 or greater, accompanied by behavior changes or other signs or symptoms of illness
  - Uncontrolled diarrhea, defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool that is not associated with changes of diet. Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose stool is not contained by the diaper, and toilet-trained children if the diarrhea is causing 'accidents'. Readmission after diarrhea can occur when diapered children have their stool contained by the diaper (even if the stools remain loose) and when toilet-trained children do not have toileting accidents.  
Special circumstances that require specific exclusion criteria include the following:
    - o Toxin-productin E coil or Shigella infection, until the diarrhea resolves and the test results of 2 stool cultures are negative for these organisms.

- Salmonella serotype Typhi infection, until diarrhea resolves. In children younger than 5 years with Salmonella serotype Typhi 3 negative stool cultures are required
- Blood or mucus in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication or hard stools
- Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs of symptoms
- Mouth sores with drooling unless the child's physician or local health department authority states the child is non-infectious
- Rash with fever or lethargy / decreased activity until a physician has determined the illness not to be a communicable disease
- Tuberculosis, until the child's physician or local health department authority states the child is on appropriate treatment and can return
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has begun
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (i.e. strep throat or other streptococcal infection), until 24 hours after treatment has been started
- Head lice (pediculosis), until after the first treatment
- Scabies, until after treatment has been given
- Varicella+ (chicken pox), until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually six days)
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues for more than 2 hours) or intermittent abdominal pain associated with fever, dehydration, or other sign or symptoms of illness
- Rubella+, until 6 days after rash appears
- Pertussis+, until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment
- Mumps+, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- Measles+, until 4 days after rash appears
- Hepatitis A virus infection, until 1 week after onset of illness or jaundice or as directed by the health department

## Appendix B: Conditions That Do Not Require Exclusion

The following conditions do not require exclusion to control spread of disease to others.

- Common colds, runny nose (regardless of color or consistency of nasal discharge), and coughs
- Watery eye discharge without fever, eye pain, or eyelid redness
- Yellow or white eye drainage that is not associated with pink or red conjunctiva (i.e. the whites of the eyes)
- Fever without any signs or symptoms of illness in children who are older than 4 months. For this purpose, fever is defined as a temperature above 101 orally or 100 in the armpit. Fever is an indication of the body's response to something, but is neither a disease nor a serious problem by itself. Body temperature can be elevated by overheating caused by overdressing or a hot environment, reactions to medications, and response to infection. If the child is behaving normally but has a fever, the child should be monitored, but does not need to be excluded for fever alone
- Rash without fever and behavior changes
- Lice or nits without lice (exclusion for treatment may be delayed until the end of the day). The child will need to receive a medicated shampoo treatment before they are permitted back into the program. The manufacturers or doctor recommendations should be followed for any additional treatments. If nits are still present after 2 treatments, the child may be required to provide a doctor's note to indicate treatment for Lice and/or Nits are being conducted.
- Ringworm (exclusion for treatment that may be delayed until the end of the day)
- Thrush (i.e. white spots or patches in the mouth)
- Fifth disease (slapped cheek disease, parvovirus B19)

- Methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus, or MRSA, without an infection or illness that would otherwise require exclusion. Known MRSA carriers or colonized individuals should not be excluded
- Pinkeye (bacterial conjunctivitis). Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye mucus drainage (signs of bacterial infection), often with matted eyelids after sleep and eye pain. Exclusion is no longer required for this condition after a doctor's advice and/or medication has been administered (according to medication guidelines). Health professionals may vary on whether to treat this condition with antibiotic drops. The role of antibiotics in treatment and preventing spread is unclear. Most children with pinkeye get better after 5 or 6 days without antibiotics. Parents should discuss care of this condition with their child's health professional, and follow the health professional's advice.
- Cytomegalovirus infection
- Chronic hepatitis B virus infection
- Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection. Exclusion of an HIV-infected child whose immunologic deficiency poses a risk from exposures of the HIV-infected child to other children's infections should be decided on a case-by-case basis by health professionals
- The presence of infectious germs in stool or urine without illness symptoms (exceptions include potentially serious organisms [ex. Escherichia coli (E Coli) 0157:H7 or Shigella must be excluded until 2 stool cultures are negative and the child is cleared to return by local health department officials. Children with 5 serotype Typhi must be excluded until 3 stool cultures are negative, and they are cleared by health professional or local health department officials

## Appendix C: Emergency Medical Services

Call 911 immediately for any of the following situations:

- Anytime you believe a child needs immediate medical assessment and treatment that cannot wait for parents to take the child for care; fever in association with abnormal appearance, difficulty breathing, or a problem with circulation indicated by abnormal skin color, such as looking exceptionally pale, having a bluish tone, or having skin that is exceptionally pink
- Multiple children affected by injury or serious illness at the same time
- A child is acting strangely, is much less alert, or is much more withdrawn than usual
- Rhythmic jerking of arms and legs and a loss of responsiveness (seizure – except for a child who is known to have seizures and for whom a care plan is in place for management of seizures without calling 911)
- Vomiting blood
- Severe stiff neck (limiting child's ability to put his or her chin to chest) with headache and fever
- Severe dehydration with sunken eyes, lethargy, no tears, and not urinating
- Suddenly spreading purple or red rash
- A large volume of blood in the stools
- Hot or cold weather injuries (e.g., frostbite, heat exhaustion)

Situations that require urgent medical attention (these conditions do not necessarily need EMS or ambulance transport if parent notification and transport to medical care can be achieved within an hour or so):

- Fever in a child of any age who looks more than mildly ill
- Appearing and acting very ill for a child of any age
- Severe vomiting and/or diarrhea
- An injury that may require medical treatment, such as a cut that does not hold together after it is cleaned
- Any animal bite that breaks the skin

- Venomous bites or stings with spreading local redness and swelling, or evidence of general illness
- Any medical condition that is outlined in the child's care plan as requiring medical attention

## Appendix D: Emergency Response Plan

The following are recommended actions to take in an emergency:

- Whether a crisis takes the form of a family emergency, local disaster or a national event, follow your usual family routines as closely as possible. Eat meals, go to bed and spend your time together in much the same way as you typically do. If an emergency strikes when children are at school, we will follow our daily program with as little disruption as possible, too. Children feel secure with familiar routines. It helps them sort out what has changed, and what will stay the same. If children can count on parents and Educators to remain calm, answer their questions openly and honestly and respond reassuringly to their anxiety and fear, they will learn how to cope with crisis situations.
- The director will contact local, state, and federal officials, and listens to the news to stay on top of what is happening and how we should respond. As soon as we receive instructions from the authorities, the director meets with the management team to execute the recommended course of action.
- Administrators will quietly inform Educators of the situation. We ask all adults – Educators and parents – to limit discussion of traumatic events around the children.
- Likewise, we suggest you limit children's exposure to news reports of disasters on TV or on the radio at home. We respond to questions openly and honestly, but with comfort and reassurance.
- Administrators and Educators will develop plans and ensure that usual routines with children are followed with as little disruption as possible.
- We will remain available to field incoming phone calls.

### Immediate Emergency Evacuation

If building occupants are in any immediate danger, we will evacuate immediately. We will follow the usual evacuations routine that we practice. We always bring attendance sheets and emergency information for all enrolled children whenever we evacuate. On the rare occasion that we evacuate and can't return to the group home, we telephone parents and ask that children be picked up from our emergency location.

If you arrive to drop off or pick up your child and we're in the midst of an evacuation, you may not know if this is practice or a real emergency. It is critical that we keep track of each and every child in our care during evacuations. Therefore, do not drop off or pick up your child until you have been instructed you may do so.

**\*\*Any changes made to this manual will be delivered to parents in paper form with a 30day notice before changes are implemented. Parent Handbooks are made available through the school and may be requested at any time.\*\***