

Small Fries Preschool



Parent & Family Handbook 2024-2025



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Section 1: Program Policies

Program Webpage and Seasonal Activity Guide

Program Brochures, the Parent & Family Handbook, and Registration Forms are available for download on our webpage: www.lovgov.org/SmallFries. Information on the Small Fries Preschool program, other preschool-aged programming, and all other Parks & Recreation services and activities can be found in the seasonal Parks & Recreation Activity Guide publication. Hard copies are available at the Chilson Center front desk, or it can be viewed online at www.lovgov.org/activityguide.

Program Location and Contact Information

Small Fries Preschool is located inside the Hatfield-Chilson Recreation & Senior Center in the Tiny Tot Room. During inclement weather and for enrichment activities, staff may accompany children to other multi-use areas of the facility including the Small Gym, Gymnastics Room, Pottery Studio, and others as scheduled. Walking field trips to other City parks and facilities including the Civic Center Lagoon, Library Park, Sunnyside Park, the Rialto Theater, Loveland Library and Loveland Museum may be scheduled by teaching staff. Families are provided with pre-notification of all off-site walking field trips and are given the opportunity to review and approve each event before it occurs.

The Hatfield-Chilson Recreation & Senior Center is located at:
700 E. Fourth St.
Loveland, CO 80537
970.962.2FUN

Preschool Classroom: Call (970) 962-2494 to leave us a voicemail regarding illnesses and/or absences. We check voicemails prior to the start and at the end of each class.

Preschool Cell Phone: Call or TEXT (970) 301-3194 to leave us a voicemail or message regarding illnesses and/or absences, late pick-ups, emergencies, etc. This phone will always be with one of our preschool staff and is often the quickest way to reach someone!

Chilson Center Front Desk: Call (970) 962-2458 to reach us immediately in the event of an emergency or to pass along information regarding the release of your child.

Early Education Director (Program Director): Kimberly McPherson. Call (970) 962-2499 or email kimberly.mcpherson@cityofloveland.org with questions regarding classroom environment, curriculum, and for any communications between teachers and families.

Senior Recreation Coordinator (Program Supervisor): Jen Herron. Call (970) 962-2487 or email jennifer.herron@cityofloveland.org with questions regarding classroom environment, curriculum, any communications between teachers and families, registration, enrollment, or billing, or for general program questions, concerns, or feedback.

We recommend adding the Classroom, Preschool Cell Phone, Kimberly & Jen's numbers to your contacts for easy use!

Program Mission, Vision, and Teaching Philosophies

Our mission is to lay a foundation of diverse abilities unique to each child, which will promote critical thinking, nurture self-esteem, and instill a love of learning. Staff provide a secure & comfortable learning environment for children to discover and cultivate his/her own unique abilities & interests by creating a

developmentally appropriate atmosphere of stimulation, opportunity, and discovery.

Our vision is to provide a community where all children feel loved, respected, and encouraged to develop to their fullest potential.

Classroom teachers utilize the *Colorado Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines* to develop both individual and group lesson plans. Our curriculum includes a balance of structured, teacher-led lessons and play-based, child-directed activities. This style of intentional planning provides a comprehensive approach to each child's unique social, emotional, cognitive, creative, and physical development.

Children develop readiness skills in all areas of development through quality interactions with both adults and peers in the classroom. Staff teach self-regulation & self-esteem through respect for us, each other, our belongings, and the environment. Children learn conflict resolution & problem-solving skills through positive guidance and behavior modification strategies.

Staff maintain educational & professional certifications awarded by the State of Colorado's Office of Early Childhood. Early Childhood Teachers complete annual training hours related to the health, safety, and education of children prior to, and during each school year.

Using a co-teaching approach, teachers conduct observations & assessments of each child throughout the school year. Lead teachers host bi-annual conferences with families to provide a comprehensive understanding of each child's developmental learning process.

NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct

Small Fries program staff hold a unique and important position of respect and trust with both the children & families enrolled in our programs, and with fellow team members. We believe that it is the duty of all staff members to understand their professional and ethical responsibilities as they relate to the children they care for, the families of those children, and their colleagues. To support this belief, we have created the following code of conduct, based on the NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (full copy available upon request).

Responsibilities to Children: Childhood is a unique and valuable stage in the human life cycle. Our paramount responsibility is to provide care and education in settings that are safe, healthy, nurturing, and responsive for each child. We are committed to supporting children's development and learning; respecting individual differences; and helping children learn to live, play, and work cooperatively. We are also committed to promoting children's self-awareness, competence, self-worth, resiliency, and physical well-being.

Responsibilities to Families: Families are of primary importance in children's development. Because the family and the early childhood practitioner have a common interest in the child's well-being, we acknowledge a primary responsibility to bring about communication, cooperation, and collaboration between the home and early childhood program in ways that enhance the child's development.

Responsibilities to Colleagues: In a caring, cooperative workplace, human dignity is respected, professional satisfaction is promoted, and positive relationships are developed and sustained. Based upon our core values, our primary responsibility to colleagues is to establish and maintain settings and relationships that support productive work and meet professional needs. The same ideals that apply to children also apply as we interact with adults in the workplace.

Responsibilities to Community & Society: Early childhood programs operate within the context of their immediate community made up of families and other institutions concerned with children's welfare. Our responsibilities to the community are to provide programs that meet the diverse needs of families, to cooperate with agencies and professions that share the responsibility for children, to assist families in gaining access to those agencies and allied professionals, and to assist in the development of community programs that are needed but not currently available.

Staff Qualifications

We pride ourselves in having extremely qualified staff on our team. All our Small Fries staff hold credentials with the Colorado Shines Professional Development Information System (PDIS). These credentials are awarded based on formal education, ongoing professional development, experience & demonstrated competencies. Our Small Fries Staff are also required to meet state-licensing requirements for either a Large Center Director, Early Childhood Lead Teacher, or Early Childhood Assistant Teacher. Additionally, our staff maintain 15-30 hours of professional development annually in addition to First Aid & CPR certifications. At least one lead teacher is required and scheduled in each classroom.

Primary Caregiving and Continuity of Care

Primary Caregiving Model

The primary caregiving model ensures that every child has a special person, and that each parent has a primary contact. The Lead teacher in the class serves as each child's primary caregiver. The primary caregiver works with other program staff to ensure a positive childcare experience for children and their families. The responsibilities of the caregivers include:

- To Communicate: A primary caregiver is the essential link in the communication chain between parents and program, and children and program. Primary caregivers ensure that every day, each child's experience is communicated to parents - not just what the teacher personally witnessed but what others observed or enacted. The primary caregiver relays parents' concerns and suggestions to other staff.
- To Advocate: A primary caregiver empowers parents and children by translating their individual concerns and needs into action through the efforts of all program staff.
- To Nurture: A teacher who is the primary caregiver tunes in to each child and develops a special bond while ensuring all needs are met and all caring times are carried out in ways that empower the child and establish a sense of security and basic trust.
- To Teach: A primary caregiver is a teacher who cares for children in ways that maximize language experiences and learning potential in all interactions, and who ensures that the learning environment works for all children.
- To Observe, Monitor, and Evaluate: A primary caregiver makes sure children's experiences in the program are positive and that parents' concerns are addressed by continually assessing each child's and parent's experience. Observation, discussions with other staff and parents, and analysis of the actual experience of the child and family are regularly made and noted. The primary caregiver will be the teacher who documents progress throughout the year and leads parent conferences.

Continuity of Care Model

The goal of a continuity of care model is to ensure strong, healthy, and lasting relationships between children and teaching staff. Lead teachers work with the same group of children for the two consecutive school years that a child may attend the Small Fries program. For example, a Lead Teacher who begins & completes a school year in the 3–4-year-old Preschool classroom will then begin & complete the following school year in the 4–5-year-old Pre-K classroom. With two age groups of children enrolled in the program on an annual basis and two Lead Teachers employed in the program, there will be alternating teachers in each age group over alternating school years. The benefits of Lead Teachers working with children over the course of both years that they are in the program include the ability to provide consistency of classroom and behavioral expectations, a deep understanding of developmental skill levels of the children over time and strengthened relationships with children's families.

Eligibility Requirements and Enrollment Procedures

Prior to enrolling, prospective families are encouraged to schedule a time to meet with program staff and tour the facility. During the tour, teaching philosophies, curriculum goals, and classroom schedules and routines are discussed. The Parent Handbook is available for review upon request or can be downloaded on our webpage at www.lovqgov.org/SmallFries.

Thompson School District requires that children entering Kindergarten must turn 5 years old by October 1st of the year they attend,

Therefore:

- Th/F Preschool students must turn 3 years old by October 1st of the current school year to enroll, however those children who turn 3 years old between the 1st scheduled day of school and October 1st cannot attend until they are 3 years old.
- M/T/W Pre-K students must turn 4 years old by October 1st of the current school year to enroll in the Pre-K classes. Those who do not turn 4 until after October 1st are encouraged to enroll in the Th/F Preschool classes.

Diapering facilities are not available in Small Fries. Therefore, ALL children enrolled must be fully toilet-trained prior to attending school. Any exceptions must be approved by the Program Director, and parents/guardians may be asked to remain on-site if diaper changing is needed.

Registration for each Fall Session begins early in the calendar year. All class spaces are filled on a first-come, first-serve basis. Families enrolled in the previous Spring Session are given a Priority Registration in January. Remaining spaces are then available to the public in early February. Exact dates are listed in the Recreation Department's Activity Guide. Completed Registration Forms must be submitted in-person at the Chilson Center along with a \$35 non-refundable Registration Fee. Families who are not able to enroll in the class of their choice due to lack of availability will be placed on a waiting list, at no charge. Class spots are filled as soon as they become available based on the order of those enrolled on that class's waiting list.

Following registration, an email will be sent to the primary guardian listed on the Registration Form with a copy of the Parent Handbook, important dates for the start of the school year, invitations to online emergency network profiles and other documents that need to be completed and returned. (Printed copies of the email and all forms will be available upon request.) All online profiles and paper documents must be completed, signed, and returned by designated due date(s). This includes but is not limited to the following:

- Online Health Profile through ePACT Emergency Network
- General Health Appraisal Form (requires parent AND physician signatures)
- Certificate of Immunization and/or Medical/Non-Medical Exemption Forms
- Child & Family Information Sheet

Prior to the start of school, families are required to attend a Parent Orientation meeting to become familiar with program policies & procedures, communication methods used throughout the school year, curriculum, daily schedules, and educational tools used in the classroom, and family engagement and volunteer leadership opportunities available to family members in the classroom/program.

To ensure success of the Small Fries program and the children enrolled, any family with a Chilson Center Household Account in good financial standing at the end of the Fall session (August-December) will be guaranteed a space in the consecutive Spring session (January-May).

Annual Calendar of Dates, Class Schedules, and Teacher to Child Ratios

The 2024 – 2025 Small Fries school year begins Tuesday, September 3, 2024, and ends Friday, May 18, 2025. The Small Fries Preschool Program *generally* follows the Thompson School District Calendar for district-wide holiday breaks and other school closures including teacher work and training days, and parent/teacher conferences. We consistently follow TSD for all weather-related closures. These dates are subject to change per the Thompson School District annual calendar. Please refer to monthly classroom newsletters and calendars for specific dates and the most up-to-date schedule.

- Friday, October 11, 2024: Teacher Workday
- Wednesday, October 16, 2024: Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Friday, October 18, 2024: Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Monday-Friday, November 25-29, 2024: Thanksgiving Break
- Monday-Tuesday, December 23-31, 2024: Winter Break
- Wednesday-Tuesday, January 1-7, 2025: Professional Development Days- Staff
- Monday, January 20, 2025: Martin Luther King Day
- Monday, February 17, 2025: Presidents Day
- Tuesday, February 18, 2025: Teacher Workday
- Monday-Friday, March 17-21, 2025: Spring Break
- Wednesday, March 26, 2025: Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Friday, March 28, 2025: Spring Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Friday, April 25, 2025: Teacher Workday

Class times are as follows.

M/T/W AM Pre-K (4-5 years) class: 9:00am – 11:30am

M/T/W PM Pre-K (4-5 years) class: 12:30pm – 3:00pm

Th/F AM Preschool (3-4 years) class: 9:00am – 11:30am

Th/F PM Preschool (3-4 years) class: 12:30pm – 3:00pm

Classroom Ratios

Childcare licensing regulations have designated our classroom space to allow for a capacity of 20 children at any one time. With two scheduled teaching staff per class period, we strive to allow for lower teacher to child ratios to improve quality of care and individualized attention. Small Fries exceeds NAEYC's recommendation regarding lower group sizes and improved adult-child ratios. Our ratios are as follows:

- 3-4-year-old Preschool classes: 8:1; 2 teachers with a total of 16 students
- 4-5-year-old Pre-K classes: 9:1; 2 teachers with a total of 18 students

Lunch Bunch Program for Pre-K Students

Pre-K students have the option to sign-up for daily lunch sessions before/after scheduled class hours. Teaching staff aid in opening packages or containers, reminders on what to eat first, how many more bites to eat before time is up, and support in self-regulation and being responsible for their own belongings. Children will eat, converse, practice manners and self-regulation as part of a larger group. Following mealtime, children will get loosely structured outdoor exercise on the patio, playground, or greenbelt area (Small Gym/Gymnastics Room in inclement/cold weather).

Sign-up sheets are posted in the classroom monthly. We alternate weeks for AM & PM groups to register. Parents/guardians may select how many days their child(ren) will attend. The cost is \$6 per day and monthly totals will be added to household accounts. An invoice will be emailed, and the full balance is due PRIOR to the start of each month. Parents/guardians should provide a healthy, sack lunch for their child that does not require refrigeration between drop-off and lunch times.

Session Fees and Tuition Payments

An annual \$35 per child, non-refundable Registration Fee is due at the time of enrollment. This fee covers administrative costs of record filing, data reporting, and household account management throughout the entirety of the August-May school year.

Session Fees for both Fall & Spring Sessions may be paid all at once or divided into monthly tuition payments. All monthly tuition payments are due by the first of each month, August through December (Fall Session) and January through May (Spring Session). All Fall Session fees must be paid in full by December 1st for a child to be re-enrolled in the following Spring Session. Additionally, Spring tuition payments must be up to date for the month of January (either paid in full or the first monthly payment made) for families to be able to receive priority registration status for the 2025-2026 school year registration (primarily Th/F preschool families who will be enrolling in the following year's M/T/W Pre-K Classes).

Session fees are based on the actual number of classroom days scheduled. Preschool fees are based on \$18 per scheduled class. **When classes are cancelled due to inclement weather, no refunds or household credits are given and makeup days are not scheduled.**

Inclement Weather and Class Cancellations

Inclement & Excessively Hot Weather

In the event of inclement or excessively hot weather during program times, staff will ensure the safety of the children by remaining indoors. Staff and students will remain inside during program times when outside temperatures are below 20 degrees or above 90 degrees Fahrenheit. Teaching staff should have secondary plans in their weekly schedules to accommodate activities in the event of inclement weather. The classrooms are always available for indoor options. Other areas within the Chilson Center may also be available including racquetball courts, gyms, etc. Should staff need to take the children outdoors during times of inclement or excessively hot weather, exposure shall be limited in time and children shall be dressed appropriately for the conditions.

Class Cancellations

Small Fries Preschool follows Thompson School District for closures due to weather or other emergencies. Parents/guardians should visit the school district website at www.thompson.k12.co.us and enroll their personal phone numbers to receive notifications of Thompson School District closures, cancellations, and late starts. Parents/guardians may also choose to refer to local news channels for notifications or call the Chilson Center Front Desk at (970) 962-2383 prior to coming to class on days when weather cancellations may be possible. Families will also receive ePact notifications.

Withdrawals, Refunds, and Discontinuation of Services

We rely on children's continued enrollment for a successful school year, however unexpected events happen in life which may require canceled enrollments. Prior to a formal withdrawal notification from a family to Small Fries, parents/guardians or family members are first encouraged to first discuss any upcoming changes or potential concerns with the Program Director. A meeting may be scheduled to discuss whether accommodations can be made to maintain your child's enrollment. We strive to meet the needs of each, and every family enrolled in the program, and wish for a positive relationship with our families that will result in a successful school year for your child. Formal withdrawal notifications must be received in writing and must be received 4 weeks in advance of your child's final day in the program for a full refund request to be approved.

Refund Policy:

For canceled enrollments prior to the end of the session, please note the following:

- All withdrawal and refund requests require a 4-week written notice.
- Any tuition payments still due at the time of withdrawal will be prorated to reflect the remaining 4 weeks from the date the written statement is received.
- The \$35 Registration Fee is non-refundable and will not be refunded for any reason.

Refunds for sick/vacation days:

- Refunds are not given for school days missed for sickness or family-planned vacation days regardless of prior notice given.

Services Discontinued:

Small Fries Preschool reserves the right to withdraw a child and discontinue services if:

- Parents/guardians refuse to or are unable to meet full tuition obligations.
- Parents/guardians fail to provide the required medical forms and immunization records prior to specified due dates.
- Extreme behavior problems exist which cannot be resolved (please refer to the Child Behavior & Guidance Strategies section later in the Handbook for more details)
- After attempting to meet all reasonable accommodation requests, preschool staff feel that the child is unable to function successfully in the Small Fries Preschool program.

Electronic Child Profiles, Signing-in/Out and ePACT

To increase privacy & security in collecting information, efficiencies in communicating with families, and to reduce time spent organizing and retaining high amounts of paper records, Small Fries has adopted ePACT Emergency Network to work in conjunction with the activity registration system used at the Chilson Center, RecTrac. ePACT is a secure emergency network used to collect medical and emergency contact information electronically. ePACT is used by agencies nationwide and can better support family members in sharing important contact details and medical records with multiple agencies in one central database.

Electronic Child Profiles

After enrollment in the Small Fries program, families will receive an invitation to complete and share emergency contact details and medical information with Small Fries staff. The invitation will be emailed to the primary email address provided on the original Registration Form. The owner of that email address must click 'Complete Request' to create a free account, or log-in if they already have an existing ePACT account. Once required information is completed and any required medical forms have been uploaded, information can be sent back to Small Fries administrative staff by clicking 'Share'. Information can be added or changed at any time simply by logging in and editing associated text fields. It is important for all changes to be resubmitted to Small Fries administrative by continuing through all sections and clicking 'Share' once again.

The following information is required to be completed on each child's ePACT profile (paper copies are available upon request for families who are unable to access or create online accounts, or upload documents):

- Dependent details
- Parent/Legal Guardian Contact Information
- Emergency Contact & Approved Pick-Up Contact Information
- Medical Insurance Provider & Policy #
- Medical Home (primary care physician and preferred hospital)
- General Medical History
- Date of Last Physical & Current Immunization Record (or exemption forms)

- General Health Appraisal (including concerns because of recent vision, hearing and/or dental screenings conducted at Physical appointment)
- Known Allergies & Medications
- Policy & Procedure Acknowledgement(s)
- General Liability & Release Waiver(s)

Staff have access to view all member records from any computer or mobile device. iPads are provided for classroom use and program events only. Login information and more details are provided during the annual staff training meetings.

Electronic Sign-in & Sign-Out

Small Fries teaching staff will utilize iPads in the classroom for signing children in and out of the program.

ePACT as an Emergency Notification System

ePACT gives Small Fries staff the ability to utilize automated email, text & voice messages for important reminders and in the event of illness, injury, closures, or a larger scale emergency.

ePACT Support

Have questions or feedback? Please contact help@epactnetwork.com or call 1-855-773-7228 ext. 1 to speak with ePACT's Customer Success Team. You can also visit our Help Center for many other resources.

Arrival & Departure, Late Pick-Ups, and Child Attendance

Arrival

We strive to maintain a safe and secure environment for our children and their families.

Electronic and/or paper daily sign-in/sign-out records and attendance rosters are maintained by program staff who closely monitor drop-off and pick-up. Staff put names to faces and match children to parents and other authorized adults that are listed on ePACT Child Profiles or provided in written form.

Parents/guardians do not need to wait in line at drop-off but should ensure children are signed in or out prior to leaving the classroom. Parents/guardians should assist their child(ren) each day as they transition into the classroom, directing them to immediately wash their hands upon arrival and then to complete their own sign-in process and engaging in an offered activity.

Departure

At the end of each class day, staff will ensure that all children have been picked up by reviewing daily attendance rosters and sign-out sheets. Staff will follow all closing procedures to double check that the classroom is empty and free of children or family members who remain in the classroom prior to locking the door when they leave.

Signing In and Out

The following procedures are in place to ensure the safety and confidentiality of all children enrolled in the Small Fries program:

- Only persons listed on authorized delivery/release forms will be allowed to sign children in or out. Children will not be released to anyone not authorized by the parent/ guardian. Should an unsafe situation occur, the police department will be notified. Children may not sign themselves in or out of the Small Fries program.
- Parents/guardians or other authorized sign-in/sign-out adults are REQUIRED to sign their child in and out per the State Child Care Licensing Regulations.
- Parents/guardians should notify Small Fries staff immediately by calling (970) 962-2494 if

someone other than those listed as an approved pick-up will be picking up the child(ren). For child pick-up, a photo ID may be required.

- If a child has not been picked up, or a phone call has not been received informing staff of a delay, staff will attempt to contact emergency contacts and/or additional authorized pick-ups listed on Child Profiles. If the child has not been picked up within 30 minutes after class is over, the police department will be notified, and the child may be released into the custody of a police officer.
- If there currently exists a valid court order or decree prohibiting an identified individual from contacting the child, parents/guardians should provide program staff with a picture of the individual and a copy of such decree. These documents may be uploaded into electronic profile's or provided in writing and placed in the child's file. If that individual attempts to pick up the child from the Chilson Recreation Center, the center's policy is to contact the Loveland Police Department. Documentation must be provided of any changes in the status of such an order or decree.
- Parents/guardians should notify program staff AND the Chilson Center front desk staff of any changes in contact information including telephone numbers, home addresses and emails.

Late Fee Policy

A late fee may be assessed to parents/guardians who are habitually late (3 times or more) in picking up their child. Beginning 5 minutes after class has ended, a charge of \$1 per minute until the child is picked up is added to the family's household account at the Chilson Center.

Attendance & Absences

The attendance for each day is monitored in conjunction with daily sign-in sheets and attendance rosters. Program staff assume responsibility for the children at time of sign-in through time of sign-out. During this time, staff will frequently take a "rollcall" (name/count) of children in the program.

If a child will not be in class on a scheduled day, parents/guardians should call or text the preschool cell phone at (970) 301-3194 or call the classroom at (970) 962-2494 to notify staff of the reason for and expected length of your child's absence(s).

Parent & Family Communications and Confidentiality Practices

Parent & Family Communications

We value and rely on regular communication with all program participants. Parents/guardians may contact us with any questions or concerns regarding the program and/or their child's experience. Monthly newsletters and calendars are distributed describing themes, activities, and curriculum goals. These newsletters, along with weekly email reminders and social media posts in our private Facebook Group (participation optional), also contain information regarding upcoming dates to take note of including field trips and family engagement events. A Family Directory (participation optional) is distributed at the beginning of each program session to encourage communication among families as well.

Parent/teacher meetings may also occur outside of designated parent/teacher conference days to maintain open communication regarding a child's social, emotional, or behavioral needs. These meetings may be scheduled at the request of either the parent/guardian or your child's teacher(s).

Translated materials are available for any family who needs them. Parent Handbooks, monthly emails, calendars, lesson plans and program flyers, as well as any other pertinent program information can be translated upon request. A translation service such as One World Translation, Propio Language Services, or Google Translate may be used to provide these written communications. Enrolled families who have a dominant language other than English will receive a copy of this policy in their home language.

Confidentiality Practices

Program staff strive to maintain a culture of trust among Small Fries families through awareness of personal privacy and confidentiality. Families should refrain from confronting other parents/guardians regarding the behavior of their child or another child. All concerns regarding other children and/or family members should be brought to the attention of program staff immediately. Staff will then determine how to address the concern in an appropriate and respectful manner.

We also ask that parents/guardians remain aware of social media boundaries as they pertain to children and refrain from posting pictures of children who are not their own on social media sites. Small Fries maintains a private Facebook Group for posting and viewing photos taken of classroom activities and events.

Use of Translation Services and Interpreters and Bilingual Teaching Staff

The City of Loveland is committed to providing an equal opportunity for services, programs and activities and does not discriminate based on disability, race, age, color, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or gender. For more information on non-discrimination or for translation assistance, please contact the City's Title VI Coordinator at TitleSix@cityofloveland.org or 970-962-2372. The City will make reasonable accommodations for citizens in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). For more information on ADA or accommodations, please contact the City's ADA Coordinator at ADACoordinator@cityofloveland.org or 970-962-3319.

“La Ciudad de Loveland está comprometida a proporcionar igualdad de oportunidades para los servicios, programas y actividades y no discriminar en base a discapacidad, raza, edad, color, origen nacional, religión, orientación sexual o género. Para más información sobre la no discriminación o para asistencia en traducción, favor contacte al Coordinador Título VI de la Ciudad al TitleSix@cityofloveland.org o al 970-962-2372. La Ciudad realizará las acomodaciones razonables para los ciudadanos de acuerdo con la Ley de Discapacidades para americanos (ADA). Para más información sobre ADA o acomodaciones, favor contacte al Coordinador de ADA de la Ciudad en ADACoordinator@cityofloveland.org o al 970-962-3319”.

Identifying Need for Translation Services

When a family enrolls in the program who has a dominant language other than English, the following procedures will be followed to identify the need for translation services, the use of an interpreter, or bilingual teaching staff:

- Teaching staff will identify children for whom English is a second language. The identification process includes the reviewing of paperwork prior to the child's start date, the initial tour of the school, attendance at the annual Open House, and verbal and/or written communication with parents/guardians.
- Teaching staff may assess the child's use of English by communicating with parents/guardians and/or other family members. The focus of communicating with family members is to gain knowledge of the child's understanding or expression of the English language.
- Teaching staff may create labels to post in the classroom to describe classroom management processes including daily schedules in the child's home language; this is accomplished using a translation such as One World Translation, Propio Language Services, or Google Translate.
- Administrative staff may also use One World Translation or Propio Translation Management to translate written informal communications such as flyers, newsletters, and sign-up sheets to ensure all families receive regular and on-going communication about program events, field trips, conferences, and other family engagement opportunities.
- Parents and Administration staff may also contact Paez Translations Language & Localization Services for Spanish-English translations for in-person or documents 970-204-0212.
- The Cost of translation services will be incurred by the City of Loveland.

Use of Interpreters

To honor the home language and culture of all students, and most importantly to effectively communicate with all families enrolled in the program, it may be necessary for staff to call on a volunteer or paid interpreter (Propio Translation Management) to assist in translating and disseminating program information during enrollment, orientation, transition, and conference meeting times. It is our goal throughout a child's enrollment to collaborate with families to ensure developmental areas are being addressed and needs are met. The following procedures may be followed upon the identification of a need for an interpreter:

- A formal meeting time will be scheduled for staff and family members to attend.
- With permission from the family, an interpreter may be called upon to act as a conduit to provide precise and effective communication. Reasonable efforts will be made to select a licensed and/or certified interpreter that demonstrates cultural sensitivity, understands educational terminology, and has vocabulary expertise in both English and the target language (speaking, reading, and writing).
- Staff members will meet with the interpreter prior to the scheduled family meeting to clarify program policies & procedures and expectations for meeting outcomes. Interpreters may be asked to demonstrate their cultural awareness by describing similarities and differences, and their own experiences with the culture of the family involved. All interpreters used in family meetings will be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to the family meeting time.
- Communication during the family meeting will be focused between teaching staff and family members. The teaching staff will speak directly to family members, and interpreters will redirect comments, questions, eye contact and body language from the family back to teaching staff. Teaching staff will actively listen, acutely observe nonverbal cues, and take detailed notes to build trust and cultural understanding, and to gain insight into how family members are exchanging information.
- After the family meeting, teaching staff will summarize written notes taken during the meeting, clarify procedures and make a written plan for follow-up sessions moving forward. A final meeting between teaching staff and the interpreter will allow for reflection and evaluation of the process.
- The written summary and plan will be translated and delivered to the family involved.

Bi-lingual Teaching Staff

We strive to maintain and encourage home language development of all children enrolled in the Small Fries Preschool program, and to celebrate cultural diversity within the classroom environment. Parents/guardians of children with a dominant home language other than English may be asked by teaching staff to provide written translation of commonly used words to assist the child in understanding of classroom expectations and teaching directives. Immediate and/or extended family members may also be invited into the classroom to share storybooks and/or activities with the class.

If there is a dominant 2nd language in the classroom (50% or more of children enrolled in a class at any one time), all reasonable efforts will be made to incorporate at least one volunteer and/or paid teaching staff who is bilingual in English and the second dominant language. Bilingual teaching staff will be required to demonstrate fluency in verbal and written expressions of both languages. Bilingual teaching staff will work directly with all other teaching staff, including any Lead Teachers, and are responsible for ensuring that trust and relationships are built between the child, family, and all teaching staff.

Services for Children with Special Needs

At the time that an enrollment request is made for a child with special needs, program staff will notify the Adaptive/Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator, Karl von Zwehl – Karl.VonZwehl@cityofloveland.org. Staff will work with the family to identify the assistance needed and ensure full compliancy with ADA

and will strive to match the child with support as deemed necessary. The Adaptive/Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator will also be available to assist with other staff training for children with special needs.

Small Fries is committed to partnering with families and children with special needs to support their inclusion within the classroom and program, as well as meet their learning and development goals. Identifying developmental issues that may affect a child's success in school and later in their adult life and supporting the family to obtain early intervention is the key to mediating any issues that may arise for a child. If the parent or teacher of an enrolled child has a concern that their child has a developmental delay or other problem, (physical, developmental, emotional, social, or behavioral), staff can support the parent with contacting the appropriate agency, for example Child Find, for further observation and evaluation.

Several local resources are available to families in need of services for children with special needs through Child Find, HCP with Larimer County, and Foothills Gateway in Larimer County. Staff will work to accommodate the needs of all children enrolled in the program by and through all reasonable requests and will provide information on available resources to parents/guardians with the need for additional support.

Plans for ensuring the safety of all children with special needs in the event of an emergency or natural disaster are made upon enrollment. Plans include designating a staff member to ensure each child is accounted for and assisted in an appropriate manner.

Individual Education (IEP) and Family Service Plans (IFSP)

Small Fries Preschool program staff strive to assist and educate all children and families enrolled in the program to the best of their ability with available resources. Parent/guardians are asked to provide a copy of any IEP or IFSP if one exists prior to or during their child's enrollment period. Staff will work with families to allow any needed specialists that are needed in the classroom as provided by the plan. Staff will work with families to create individualized lesson plans for the child to provide appropriate activities that will support the goals incorporated in the plan. Sharing the education plan ensures that teachers and staff working with your child are aware of the goals for the child and the strategies used with the child that are both developmentally appropriate and support the child's learning goals. Sharing the plan ensures that the recommendations found in the plan are being followed while the child is in this program.

It is important to note that although Small Fries will work with all children to address a variety of disabilities, our staff does not have specialized degrees or expertise that may be needed to address every disability or health need. In the event the parents or the teachers have a concern regarding any one child's development, the parents and the teachers will meet and discuss all available options that will provide the child with necessary help and interventions. This is a collaborative venture; participation and cooperation of all involved parties is needed to meet the learning and development needs of the child. In some cases, the administrative staff in consultation with the family, the nurse consultant, and/or other specialists may determine if we are unable to meet the needs of the child and the family. If that happens, we will work closely with specialists to refer the family and the child to a more appropriate placement.

Parent Education Information Sessions and Support Groups

Small Fries Preschool promotes parent education opportunities and provides a variety of informational sessions and support group opportunities to all enrolled families. Families will be informed of informational sessions offered internally through monthly emails and paper flyers distributed in

children's cubbies. Information on external opportunities offered by community agencies such as Summit Stone Behavioral Health's Incredible Year's Parenting Group is provided in the form of paper flyers displayed and distributed in the classroom and is also provided electronically through the program's private Facebook Group.

Community Agency Collaborations and Available Resources

For families and children facing health, safety or financial challenges, this program can be an important link to support a family's access to services that can address their needs. The first step we take to learn about the overall strengths and challenges of families is to ask all families to complete the Child and Family" questionnaire which you will receive at enrollment and at the beginning of every year thereafter. This questionnaire will help your teacher and the director better understand your family and your child, as well as gain insight into the needs of your family and your child's development and learning needs. With this knowledge, the director and teacher will be better able to address those needs.

Teacher/family conferences are an example of another time when we will be asking questions about successes and challenges your family may be having and any concerns you may have about your child's social, academic, and physical development. Of course, if your family needs support or you have specific concerns, you can always contact us any time by speaking personally with your child's teacher and/or the Director, or you can phone or email us. Also, a binder with a list of resources, as well as a variety of pamphlets, brochures, and other materials, are located on top of the teacher library shelf located at the entrance of the classroom and are accessible any time you choose. You may also request to have resources or materials emailed or mailed to you.

For families with other specific needs, the program can link families to community supports, training, and information resources that can increase overall well-being. For example, if your family is experiencing trauma, such as homelessness, and needs the support of a community-based resource or service, we can help identify a service and connect you with that service. Other available services that focus on family needs include, for example, health care, housing, job, and food assistance. We can also provide you with information on a variety of topics, including child development, nutrition, parenting and, among other topics, discipline. In sum, we at Small Fries are here to support your family and your attending child/children as you need.

Community Agency Collaborations

Small Fries Preschool partners with a variety of community agencies to provide resources to all enrolled families. During scheduled class times, optional resources are offered at no charge to families, including:

- Vision Screening with Lions Club of Northern Colorado
- Speech Screenings with Children's Speech & Reading Center
- Social/Emotional Development Screenings with Summit Stone Behavioral Health Partners

Available Community Resources

A variety of additional resources that are provided by community agencies are displayed on the bulletin board outside the classroom in the Chilson Center lobby and inside the classroom on bulletin boards and in flyer racks on the sign-in table. Available resource materials may include information on:

- WIC financial assistance – larimer.gov/health/maternal-child-and-family-health/wic
- Low-income housing – Neighbor to Neighbor – n2n.org
- Utility Assistance – House of Neighborly Service – honservice.org
- Transportation services – City of Loveland – lovgov.org/services/public-works/bus-service

- Legal assistance – Larimer County Pro Bono Program – larimerbar.org/pro-bono
- Dental screenings – Sunrise Community Health – sunrisecommunityhealth.org
- Child nutrition – Food Bank Larimer County – foodbanklarimer.org/nutritious-kitchen/
- Health care and medical insurance providers – colorado.gov/health
- Programs for children with special needs - Child Find, HCP with Larimer County, and Foothills Gateway

Information on program scholarship opportunities offered through the City of Loveland Parks & Recreation Foundation and a comprehensive, printed list of available community resources is available upon request at any time.

Developmental Screening Referral Process

Recommendations for further evaluation of a child's development may arise at any time throughout a child's enrollment in the program and may be initiated by parents/guardians from home experience, from teaching staff observations discussed during parent/teacher conferences, or from developmental screenings that take place during scheduled class times with community agencies that the program partners with.

Prior to teaching staff discussing the option for further referrals with a family, a strong foundational relationship built on trust and confidentiality must be developed. All program behavior and guidance strategies must be followed, and any provided individual or family educational plans (IEP, FEP) must be addressed. When all strategies and procedures have been followed and teaching staff determine that a child is not responding or developmental challenges may be interfering with a child's learning, then a referral can be made. All potential referrals must first be discussed with the teaching team and the Recreation Coordinator.

Once parents/guardians request a referral from program staff, and assistance from internal staff such as the Recreation Department's Adaptive/Therapeutic Recreation Coordinator can no longer support the child or family's needs, a referral may be offered by the child's Lead Teacher/Primary Caregiver or the Recreation Coordinator for the family to connect with additional community resource agencies such as the Child Find program through the Colorado department of Education. Full developmental evaluations can be scheduled with the Child Find team, followed by an application for acceptance in Thompson School District's Early Childhood Program where additional services can be obtained if recommended.

Parents/guardians may contact the **Child Find Program** for the Thompson R-2J district at:
800 S. Taft Ave.
Loveland CO 80537
(970) 613-5762

Additional resources or referral processes may be available through the following community agencies:
Early Childhood Council of Larimer County
424 Pine St. Suite 201
Fort Collins, CO 80524
(970) 377-3388

Summit Stone Health Partners
221 E 29th St.
Loveland, CO 80538
(970) 494-4200

House of Neighborly Service

1511 E 11th St.

Loveland, CO 80537

(970) 667-4939

Child Behavior and Guidance Strategies

To create and maintain a socially and emotionally respectful atmosphere, teaching strategies are implemented through each interaction that support positive and pro-social behaviors in the children. Self-regulation is nurtured through one-on-one interactions between a teacher and child, and conflict resolution is addressed in both small and large groups through identification of feelings, use of language, and storytelling. Rules and limits regarding social behavior set by program staff strive to be clear, developmentally appropriate, and consistent for children to learn acceptable behaviors and build trust in others.

When challenges arise with an individual child or a conflict occurs between children, teachers meet the child(ren) on their level and immediately discuss “thumbs up” desired choices, restate the rules to ensure safety, and offer encouragement for future opportunities to develop positive behavior. Language is used to identify each child’s feelings and questions are posed to allow children the opportunity to reflect and learn through each interaction. Program staff may review and reflect on the situation after the immediate need has been resolved. Strategies to modify the classroom routine, environment, or teaching methods may be implemented to prevent future similar conflicts from occurring.

Any serious behavior problems, specifically those that present safety challenges, will be brought to the attention of the parent/guardian as soon as possible. Program staff may work with parents/guardians to create an Individual Guidance Plan for the child including designated time to evaluate and discuss the progress and effectiveness of the Plan. Additional resources and support, including a possible consultation with or observation by a behavioral health specialist, may be discussed with and offered to families. Any referrals initiated by program staff are intended to promote positive social/emotional development in children that will ensure success in the years ahead, both in school and in life.

The following steps will be taken if a child is not responding to typical redirection and guidance within a reasonable amount of time:

- A parent/teacher meeting is scheduled to review the situation and evaluate possible strategies to ensure safety and success of the child in the program.
- An Individual Guidance Plan is created and implemented during an agreed upon trial period. A follow-up date is scheduled to evaluate the Plan.
- Program staff conduct observations and document behaviors during the trial period, and evaluation occurs at scheduled parent/teacher follow-up meetings.
- If behavior modification and guidance strategies have been unsuccessful using the Guidance Plan, program staff will explore community resources including professional assessments conducted by a behavioral health specialist. Additional resources may also be provided to the parent/guardian depending on the nature of the situation.
- If all previous steps have occurred and the child’s behavior continues to pose a safety risk to themselves or to others in the classroom*, or if teachers are unable to make reasonable accommodations to the environment or classroom schedule that discourage the behavior, program staff reserve the right to dis-enroll the child from Small Fries Preschool.

*If a severe behavior occurs that causes harm to self or others, program staff reserve the right to bypass these steps and dis-enroll the child immediately.

Program Transitions: Supporting Children and Their Families

Transitions are a crucial time in a child's learning and educational experience. We strive to ensure that communication between administration, teaching staff and enrolled families remains clear and open during these times, and to support the unique needs of each child. Below is a list of established opportunities to support important transition times throughout a child's enrollment in the program. Program staff are always open to suggestions from families and/or establishing alternative means to support the transition of any child entering or currently enrolled in the program.

Transition from Home to Preschool

Open House/Classroom Tours

Prospective families and their children may attend a scheduled Open House or call to schedule a tour of the classroom before enrolling their child(ren) to meet & greet with teaching staff, ask questions about the program and gain comfortability with the classroom environment. Scheduled Open House dates along with program phone numbers are advertised in seasonal, printed Activity Guides and online through the city website and social media sites.

Parent Orientation Meetings

Two date options for Parent Orientation meetings are scheduled prior to the start of each school year. Families are informed through email and/or printed & hand-delivered packets after enrollment, and RSVPs are requested to ensure all families attend these required meeting times. Administrative staff can clarify program policies and procedures with all parents, and teaching staff are able to meet with families informally to hear their concerns regarding their child(ren)'s school experience.

Child Orientation Days

In the Fall, the first scheduled day of each class is reserved as a non-drop-off day, where parents/guardians will attend with their child. Families are informed of this date through email and/or printed & hand-delivered packets after enrollment and are reminded in-person at Parent Orientation meetings. The purpose of the visit is to help the child with separation anxiety by exploring the classroom at their own pace and to provide information and answer parents' questions. During the child orientation day, the children will go through the drop off and pick up routine along with their parents to help with the transition on their first "official" day of school. If the child is having difficulty on their first "official" day, the parent may come into the classroom to help their child with the morning routine.

Fall Family Picnic

Within the first 30 days of the start of each school year, a Family Picnic is scheduled at a neighborhood park. This is the first of several opportunities that all families will have throughout the school year to meet and mingle amongst each other outside of the classroom, and to have fun and play with their child(ren) and new friends made at school. Families are informed of the scheduled date at Parent Orientation meetings, given a printed flyer and reminded through email with the start of school monthly calendar.

Transition from Preschool to Pre-K

Lead teachers work with the same group of children for the two consecutive school years that a child may attend the Small Fries program. For example, a Lead Teacher who begins & completes a school year in the 3–4-year-old Preschool classroom will then begin & complete the following school year in the 4–5-year-old Pre-K classroom. With two age groups of children enrolled in the program on an

annual basis and two Lead Teachers employed in the program, there will be alternating teachers in each age group over alternating school years. The benefits of Lead Teachers working with children over the course of both years that they are in the program include the ability to provide consistency of classroom and behavioral expectations, a deep understanding of developmental skill levels of the children over time and strengthened relationships with children's families.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled in the Fall and Spring semesters, generally following the Thompson School District calendar. Information about conference meeting times, along with printed sign-up sheets, are available on Child Orientation Days and in the classroom daily thereafter. Lead Teachers are responsible for confirming meeting times with all families at least 1 week prior to scheduled meeting times, either in-person, via email or phone call. These conferences allow parents/guardians to ask questions regarding their child's time spent in the classroom as well as for teaching staff to celebrate child's strengths and/or discuss options for addressing classroom challenges. Special attention is applied in Fall conferences surrounding a child's transition into the classroom, while Spring conference meetings target developing and mastered developmental skills children are exhibiting as they prepare to transition onto their next classroom/school.

Transition from Pre-K to Kindergarten

We value input from families regarding kindergarten preparation and partner with them in decision making regarding school readiness during, for example, spring conferences, to ensure a smooth transition from preschool to kindergarten. In partnership with local school districts (Thompson School District, Poudre School District), we provide Kindergarten transition and readiness information through bereadylarimercounty.org. We also provide parents with information regarding Kindergarten Information nights at the local elementary school and the Be Ready Fair at the Loveland Library.

End of Year Celebrations and Pre-K Graduation Ceremonies

The final class day for all classes is scheduled as an end-of-year celebration (3–4-year-old Preschool classes) or a Graduation ceremony (4–5-year-old Pre-K classes). These events are an opportunity for everyone involved to celebrate the successes of the children and the relationships built over the year(s) they were enrolled in the program. Events are held during class times, however typical daily schedules are modified to incorporate the children's involvement in preparation for the event, and for informal mingling opportunities for families and teaching staff after ceremonies are completed. Families are informed of celebration/ceremony dates through printed flyers, emailed invitations and in-person reminders from teaching staff.

Curriculum and Assessments

Curriculum

One of the important indicators of a high-quality early childhood education and care program is its use of developmentally appropriate, culturally, and linguistically responsive instruction and evidence-based curriculum and learning environments that are aligned with the State Early Learning and Development Standards. What is a curriculum? According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), "curriculum" is the organized framework that delineates the content children are to learn, the processes through which children will use to achieve the identified curricular goals, what teachers will do to help children achieve these goals, and the context in which teaching, and learning occur (Bredekamp & Rosegrant, 1995). Essentially, a curriculum identifies the "what" and "how" of the learning experiences children will have. We create our lesson plans using developmentally appropriate activities which align with the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines.

What are the Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines (ELDGS)? The ELDGS lay out the expectations and developmental milestones of what would be developmentally, linguistically, and culturally appropriate for children birth through age 8. The areas covered include approaches towards learning, physical well-being, motor development including adaptive skills, social and emotional development, language, literacy, the arts, cognition, and general knowledge such as early mathematics and science. In summary, they provide descriptions for what children can know and are able to do so that everyone who interacts with young children can prepare them to be successful in school and elsewhere. Having a knowledge of the ELDGS will provide you with a better understanding of what we do here at Small Fries and why we use Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines. They can be found here: <https://earlylearningco.org/>.

Assessments

Why are assessments of a child important? Early childhood educators and administrators want to know if their program is effective and if their program meets the developmental needs of the children in their care. For teachers, early childhood assessment of the young child in their care helps the teacher have a clear and accurate picture of a student's development and that knowledge provides teachers with the basis from which they can develop plans tailored to support the developmental needs of each individual child.

Families also want and need detailed information about how their child is doing. In formal family/teacher conferences, informal meetings, and the use of tools of communication such as emails, educators can communicate with families about information learned from the assessments, including important milestones in students' development and any concerns they may be having. When educators share important information about children's work with accompanying evaluations, it helps parents learn about their own child's performance, as well as gain understanding of the curriculum and appropriate expectations. Families can also provide important information to the program on what they are observing and seeing at home and in other locations. Frequent communication between families and teachers about the child's development provides an opportunity for teachers and parents to work together to support children as they grow.

Small Fries utilizes the Colorado Early Learning and Developmental Guidelines Observation Tool for ages 3-5 years which was created by the Early Childhood Council of Larimer County. The tool is based on the CELDG's for 3–5-year-olds. Teachers gather information about the children through observations, anecdotal records, checklists, and portfolios which are used to complete assessments on the children. Once the assessments are completed, the teachers will meet with the parent/caregiver to discuss the information during the parent/teacher conference. Parent/teacher conferences occur twice a year - one in the fall, and one in the spring.

Families and educators who would like to learn more about developmental milestones can check out the Act Early Milestone Moments Website. Act Early Milestone Moments is a great website that talks about what a child should be doing by a certain age and when to act if there is a concern. The website is located here: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/index.html> The Colorado Early Learning and Development Guidelines (ELDGS) website also contains information for families and teachers about child development and can be found here: <https://earlylearningco.org/>.

Family Engagement Opportunities

It is our goal to cultivate positive relationships between staff, children, and families. A wide variety of engagement opportunities are offered throughout the school year, including being a guest speaker or

classroom volunteer, supervising a field trip, or attending one of many special events. A list of scheduled special event dates is distributed at the beginning of each Session for advance scheduling. Please talk with program staff about any additional ways that you may enjoy being involved in your child's early learning experience.

A few of the social events that are open to all families to attend throughout the year include:

- Fall Family Picnic in the Park
- Costume Parades
- Celebrating Cultures Dinner & Art Show
- Winter Sing-along Programs
- Field Days
- Graduation Ceremonies

Classroom Visitors and Volunteer Opportunities

Classroom Visitors

All visitors, including classroom volunteers and guest speakers, are required to sign a visitor log daily and will be under the general supervision of the classroom teachers and Program Director or other supervisory staff. The visitor log is kept with Small Fries staff and will be available upon entering the classroom.

Families are encouraged to complete the Child & Family Information Sheet upon enrollment and to inform teaching staff through their responses about interests, hobbies, careers, or cultural traditions that they may be interested in sharing with their child's classroom. Based on the information provided, Lead Teachers may reach out to family members throughout the year to bring their passions and/or skills into the classroom. Some past family visitors have included a hairdresser, NFL player, Army Veteran, firefighter, police officer, beekeeper, baker, beloved Grandparent, Geologist, and many more.

All families can choose a variety of activities to assist with throughout the school year, including:

- Visiting in the Classroom: Classroom visitors provide invaluable assistance to the teachers while observing and interacting with the children in the classroom. The insight a parent learns by engaging in their child's early education experience provides important information about what their child knows, how they learn, how they develop relationships with other children, and how they interact with their teachers.
- Special Person: A special person is a family member who signs up to visit the classroom on a special day. Often, families choose to visit close to their child's birthday, special occasion/celebration, etc. A special Person visitor goes a bit beyond a regular classroom visitor as they can read a special book to the class and/or prepare a small activity to lead with the children in small groups.

Volunteer Opportunities

Parents/guardians and family members have a unique opportunity to be an active participant in the Small Fries Preschool program and to support the program and their child's learning all at the same time. One of the most engaging and rewarding ways to be immersed in our learning environment is to be part of our Small Fries Parent Leadership Group.

Parent Leadership Group Purpose

The purpose of the Small Fires Parent Leadership Group is to provide leadership positions for families so that they can assist in the development and overall success of the Small Fries Program. The primary focus of this group will be program event coordination such as the annual Cultures Dinner, Winter Program, Spring Student Art Show, Pre-K graduation, fundraising, etc.

Parent Leadership Group Selection

Participation in the Parent Leadership Group is completely voluntary. Each classroom will select 2 parents/guardians through a lottery system. Parent Orientation meetings will provide additional information on the group selection process, time commitment, and other important details. If not selected for the Parent Leadership Group, parents are still encouraged to participate as a classroom volunteer by signing up to donate snack, be a special person (for birthdays or special occasions) and visit the classroom as often as they would like.

Parent Leadership Group Meetings

The first meeting will be an orientation which will include (but is not limited to), a facility tour, leadership expectations, group objectives, program policies & procedures, etc.

As a member of the Parent Leadership Group, parents & guardians are under the direction and supervision of the Lead Teacher and Program Director or other senior staff during their time in the classroom or at program events.

- Activity and/or Event Coordination: Activity and Event Leaders assist with planning activities for the children to participate in, either during scheduled classroom hours or during a special program event such as a celebration or field day. Activities may require coordinating assistance from other family members or volunteers, preparing and/or purchasing materials. Activity and Event Leaders may also choose to arrive early to assist with the set-up and/or stay later for the clean-up of scheduled program events (alongside or separate from activity/event planning & coordination).
- Preparing materials from home: At-home volunteers assist teaching staff by bringing home activity supplies to be prepared for future activities, or to repair broken and/or damaged equipment outside of classroom hours. Assisting in this way allows teaching staff to dedicate their provided planning time to future curriculum development and collaboration with other teachers or community agencies to support the children's learning.

Family Donations and Fundraising Opportunities

Food and Monetary Donations

Families may choose to support their child's classroom by providing non-perishable snack items or by contributing monetary support to the Small Fries Snack Fund. Snack items brought into the classroom must be non-perishable foods that do not need to be refrigerated. A list of acceptable snack items that parents may provide is provided at Parent Orientation meetings and available upon request at any time.

Additional monetary donations may be made at any time. Monies will be deposited into the General Recreation Programing budget and available for use by administrative staff to support program budget line items at their discretion. Funds may be used for purchasing classroom supplies, equipment, or to supplement available budgets for planning program events.

Fundraising Opportunities

Fundraising opportunities vary by school year. Budget line items are provided annually from the Parks & Recreation Department Business Manager. Program administrative staff may provide opportunities for families to participate in fundraising efforts including used book cart sales, Scholastic Book Order sales & bonus point accumulation for purchase of classroom supplies, program clothing sales (t-shirts, tote bags, etc.), and local business-sponsored family meals. Families may bring ideas for further fundraising efforts to program administrative staff. Ideas and offers for support will be evaluated at staff discretion.

Child Health & Wellness, and Illnesses

Child Health & Wellness

Healthy habits are encouraged at school including proper handwashing, (upon arrival, after using the bathroom, before a snack, and upon returning to the classroom after outside activities), portion size and food group inclusion at snack times, and promotion of good physical, social, and emotional health strategies. Families are encouraged to support these habits at home as well.

Program staff conduct daily health & wellness checks with all children upon their arrival. Parents/guardians should discuss with teaching staff any pertinent information regarding changes in sleep or eating patterns since the last day their child(ren) attended, or any observations or concerns they have regarding their physical or emotional health. Staff may request additional information and reserve the right to request that a child return home if symptoms of an illness are present.

Child Illness

If a child becomes ill while at the program, staff must separate the child from the other children. Staff should contact the Program Director or Sr. Recreation Coordinator to come to the classroom to retrieve the child, bring them to the staff office where there is a cot, pillow & blanket, and contact the parent/guardian or emergency contacts (if needed) for immediate pick-up. A staff member must remain with the child until a parent/guardian or emergency contact arrives to pick them up.

Parents/guardians should keep their child at home for a 24-hour period after starting any antibiotics and until they are symptom free. To prevent the spread of illness in the classroom, children should not attend school if they:

- have had a fever over 100 degrees within the previous 24 hours.
- have vomited or had diarrhea within the previous 24 hours.
- have a constant cough or are regularly sneezing.
- have heavy or colored nasal discharge.
- have itchy, watery eyes (not related to seasonal allergies)
- have symptoms of a communicable disease

For more information on whether or not your child is too sick to attend school, please visit the following CO Department of Education website for details:

<https://www.cde.state.co.us/healthandwellness/howstooosickforparentsenglishpdf-2018>

Reporting of Communicable Diseases

If a child has a contagious illness such as strep throat or chicken pox, parents/guardians should notify program staff immediately. All confirmed cases of communicable illnesses must be reported to program administrative staff. In the event of an outbreak of a confirmed communicable disease, the Program Director will notify all enrolled families and make them aware of the risks of illness to their child(ren). Additionally, program administrative staff are required to report all confirmed outbreaks of communicable diseases to the Colorado Department of Public Health. A complete list of Communicable Diseases that are to be reported can be viewed in the classroom upon request.

Medication Administration at School

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to administer all medications to their child at home. However, if emergency or routine medications are needed at school due to severe allergies, asthma, etc., parents/guardians should alert administrative staff immediately upon enrollment. Required, written orders signed by a physician or nurse with prescriptive authority must be provided along with the medication itself and the original packaging with matching prescription.

Written orders by the prescribing practitioner must include:

- Child's name.
- Licensed prescribing practitioner name, telephone number, and signature.
- Date authorized.
- Name of medication and dosage.
- Time of day medication is to be given.
- Route of medication.
- Length of time the medication is to be given.
- Reason for medication (unless this information needs to remain confidential).
- Side effects or reactions to watch for; and
- Special instructions.

Medications must be kept in the original labeled bottle or container. Prescription medications must contain the original pharmacy label that lists:

- Child's name.
- Prescribing practitioner's name.
- Pharmacy name and telephone number.
- The date prescription was filled.
- Expiration date of the medication.
- Name of the medication.
- Dosage.
- How often to give the medication; and
- Length of time the medication is to be given.

In the case that a medication needs to be given on an ongoing, long-term basis, the authorization and consent forms must be reauthorized on an annual basis. Any changes in the original medication authorization require a new written order by the prescribing practitioner and a change in the prescription label. Verbal orders taken from the licensed prescriber may be accepted only by a licensed registered nurse.

Teaching staff designated to administer medications must complete a 4-hour Department-approved Medication Administration Training and have current First Aid, CPR and Standard Precautions training. All staff must be aware of which children have asthma, and which of those may use their own inhalers as needed. All staff must be aware of which children are at risk of anaphylaxis, and which of those may administer their own epinephrine as needed. Photos of children labelled with their name and allergy, or condition are posted in the classroom. For confidentiality purposes, they are located inside the cabinet above the telephone where the medications are stored. A label on the outside of the cabinet alerts staff to where to find first aid supplies and medications.

Medications are kept in an area inaccessible to children. Inhalers, epinephrine, and other emergency medications are stored in the cabinet above the phone. This cabinet remains unlocked during scheduled class hours to ensure immediate retrieval in the event of an emergency. A temperature-controlled container is available for staff to put inhalers and epinephrine in when leaving the classroom. All emergency medications are to be carried on the person of a delegated staff member when leaving the classroom. Controlled medications must be counted and safely secured, and specific policies regarding their handling require special attention in the center's policies. Access to these medications must be limited to those staff authorized to administer medication to the child.

If a medication is out of date or left over, parents are responsible for picking up the medication. If parents do not pick up the medication, the center is responsible for the disposal of medications according to center policy and procedures. Disposal of medications must be documented. A written medication log must be kept for each child. This log is part of the child's records. The log must contain the following:

- Child's name.
- Name of the medication, dosage, and route.
- Time medication is to be given.
- Special instructions.
- Name and initials of the individuals giving the medication; and
- Notation if the medication was not given and the reason.

Sunscreen and Preventative, Topical Creams

In general, sunscreen and/or other preventative creams (i.e., diaper or eczema creams) should not be brought into the Small Fries classroom (i.e., left in a child's backpack or cubby). Parents/guardians should apply sunscreen and/or creams to their child(ren) prior to arriving to class. Due to the short length of the program, staff will not apply sunscreen to a child prior to outdoor play as a general procedure.

Parents/guardians who wish to send lotion sunscreen (no aerosol sunscreens permitted) or other preventative creams for reapplication during scheduled classroom hours must notify a staff member by handing original, labelled containers directly to staff at the time of drop-off with written permission for reapplication at a designated time. These preparations may not be applied to open wounds or broken skin unless there is a written order by the prescribing practitioner (see section on Medication Administration at School). All sunscreens and creams must be stored out of reach of the children while in possession of the program.

Immunization Requirements and Annual Reporting & General Health Appraisal

Immunization Requirements and Annual Reporting

Parents/guardians are required to provide a completed Certificate of Immunization and/or appropriate exemption forms within 30 days of enrollment into the program.

Small Fries Preschool does not require enrolled children to be fully immunized to enroll in and attend the program and recognizes that the likelihood of transmission of illness and disease is increased with close contact of children and caregivers in a childcare setting. A statement is posted in the classroom regarding the presence of enrolled children who are not fully immunized when necessary.

Administrative staff will inform parents/guardians of children who are not up to date on immunizations when any confirmed communicable disease has been reported to the program. It is the decision of the parent/guardian whether their child(ren) will be excluded from the program for any amount of time due to increased risk of illness transmission.

The Program Director is responsible for completing an annual Immunization Course through the State of Colorado's PDIS system. Program immunization and exemption rates are reported annually to the Department of Health & Human Services.

Medical and Nonmedical exemption forms are available to download in ePACT or copies can be sent via email if requested. Beginning on 7/1/2021, the process for submitting a Nonmedical Exemption has changed. There are now 2 ways to submit the Nonmedical Exemption:

1. Submit the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption WITH a signature from an immunizing provider

in Colorado who is a medical doctor, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, advanced practice nurse, delegated physician's assistant, or pharmacist OR

2. Submit the Certificate of Nonmedical Exemption received upon the completion of the CDPHE's Online Immunization Education Module.

Information on current exemption policies and access to the Online Immunization Education Module can be found at <https://cdphe.colorado.gov/vaccine-exemptions>.

General Health Appraisal

Colorado Child Care Licensing and Colorado Department of Health and Environment requires that each child has a current general health appraisal on file at the preschool in order for the child to attend. The form must be signed by the physician and include a dental, hearing and vision review.

Child Accidents and Injuries

If a child has any type of fall or injury during class time that does not require a parent/guardian's immediate attention, program staff will notify parents/guardians verbally when the child is picked up and a detailed, written Accident Form will be sent home with the child.

A City of Loveland online Incident Report Form will be filed in cases when the safety of the child was hindered due to facility or environmental damage, or staff error. The City of Loveland Risk Management Department will review the incident and contact all involved parties to discuss prevention of future similar accidents.

In the case of a major injury, parents/guardians and emergency personnel will be notified utilizing the contact information provided on ePACT Child Profiles. All accidents or injuries that result in medical treatment by a physician or other health care professional, hospitalization, or death must be reported in writing to the Department of Human Services within twenty-four (24) hours after the accident or illness occurred. A report about a fatality must include:

1. The child's name, birth date, address, and telephone number.
2. The names of the child's parents or guardians and their address and telephone number if different from those of the child.
3. Date of the fatality.
4. Brief description of the incident or illness leading to the fatality.
5. Names and addresses of witnesses or persons who were with the child at the time of death; and
6. Name and address of police department or authority to whom the report was made.

Further details on the handling and notification of emergency situations due to injury can be found in the section titled Emergency Response Protocol at the end of this Handbook.

Personal Belongings, Clothing and Outdoor Play

Personal Belongings

Each child is assigned an individual cubby to keep all their needed belongings in during class time. Family members should encourage and assist each child in being responsible for their own belongings. Children are not to bring toys, money, jewelry, and other important personal belongings to preschool. Program staff are not responsible for these items if they become broken or misplaced.

Clothing

Children should attend class dressed in appropriate, comfortable clothing that can be easily self-managed, and an extra set of clothes should be sent in the likely event that they engage in any of a variety of active or sensory activities offered on a regular basis. This includes clothing that allows for freedom of movement and good play shoes for both indoor and outdoor activities (no flip-flops or dress shoes, please).

Outdoor Play

Additional, extra clothing and footwear appropriate for weather conditions including heat, sun, rain, snow, wind and cold should be brought daily and stored in individual child(ren)'s cubbies to allow for outdoor play when outdoor temperatures are between 20- and 90-degrees Fahrenheit (factoring in wind chill). Children's items should be labeled to reduce confusion and loss.

Toileting

All students must be fully toilet-trained prior to the first day of class (exceptions may be accommodated - please contact the Program Director). Parents/guardians should dress their child in clothing that they can manage on their own for toileting purposes.

We have a single-person bathroom inside the classroom. In the event of two children urgently in need of the toilet at the same time, program staff will request temporary additional classroom assistance from administrative staff to maintain the correct staff/child ratio and will take the 2nd child to a restroom located outside the classroom.

Video Viewing

Video viewing will be limited to special activities, at no more than 5 minutes in length at any one time, such as audio or e-books, songs or videos with learning content directly related to planned curriculum. Advance notice of any video viewing will be given in monthly newsletters when at all possible.

Photographs and Social Media Policy

The City of Loveland Parks & Recreation Department reserves the right to use images and/or photographs of anyone in any activity, park, or public place in present and/or future printed publications or on the department's web pages for promotional purposes, unless told otherwise at the time the image or photo is taken. A photo release statement is also included in Enrollment Forms, and any exclusions should be noted by parents/caregivers.

Photos and videos taken during class time or family engagement events are used to compile annual slideshows that are shared with all enrolled families and may also be posted in the Small Fries Preschool private Facebook Group. All parents/guardians listed on Enrollment Forms are invited to join the Facebook Group by email at the beginning of each school year, and program staff must approve all requests to join the Group. Only members of the Group can view the photos.

Parents/caregivers may also post and share their own photos taken of activities and events in this Group and are asked to respect privacy and confidentiality of other families by not posting pictures of other children on personal social media accounts or pages. At the end of each school year, all photos, posts, and members are removed from the Group.

Nutrition, Garden, and Celebrations

Daily Snacks

Small Fries provides a short snack time in each class period. Children use this time to practice important health habits such as hand washing, social/emotional skills such as table manners, and environmental awareness including food disposal options such as trash, recycling, and composting.

Nutritious daily snacks are provided which are small healthy portions and include a dry snack which is low in sugar content and fresh fruit or vegetables. Small Fries maintains and provides items that must be refrigerated as dictated under Larimer County Department of Health guidelines.

Food Sensitivities & Allergies

Parents/guardians are responsible for informing administrative staff of any food sensitivities or allergies upon enrollment and documenting this information on the Child Profile through ePACT. Administrative staff will review all Child Profiles prior to the start of school and complete a written chart of all children with food sensitivities, allergies, emergency medications related to allergies or other conditions. This information will be shared with all teaching staff during pre-service training in August and copies will be posted confidentially in the classroom (inside the cabinet where medications are stored). Pictures of each child will also be posted inside this cabinet for teaching staff to refer to when preparing daily snacks and cooking activities. Staff will provide alternative snack options for children with food sensitivities or allergies when needed. Parents/guardians are also welcome and encouraged to provide specific snack items for their child. Staff will keep all child-specific snacks in a sealed, labelled container and will use them only for the child they are provided for.

Garden

Utilizing a garden space to bring the world of fresh produce to life is one way our program teaches young children and their families about healthy food choices and the types of nutritious foods that will support childrens' brain development. Children participating in growing and harvesting fresh produce can build a strong connection that fruits and vegetables are more than just food on a plate or a snack to eat. It teaches them responsibility, time, and attention so that living things will grow and thrive. The children learn science by using it to create an understanding of how the plants grow from a tiny seed into these amazing plants that produce fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Small Fries has a garden area that is conveniently located on our patio. In the garden area, the children are provided with the opportunity to learn how to prepare a garden bed or a planter, plant seeds, care for the plants as they grow, talk about what is happening inside the plant, the children then harvest the produce, and we try the various vegetables/fruits/herbs during snack. Examples of the types of plants that the children and teachers grow are carrots, tomatoes, lettuce, mint, and cilantro to name a few. With the garden we are teaching children the importance of eating fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs. Using the garden to bring it all together in a real-life experience, which also builds understanding of life cycles, nutrition, hard work, and responsibility.

Birthdays and Special Occasions

We love to celebrate birthdays and special occasions with our students and their families in the classroom. Food items brought in as a treat to recognize a special day must meet all Health Department guidelines. All food items brought into the classroom must have a full list of ingredients on a label from the store/shop of which it was purchased. Fresh produce must be uncut and unwashed. Items that need to be refrigerated after purchase are not allowed to be brought into the program. Families who wish to share homemade food items may be invited to share the recipe with program staff and schedule a day to visit or volunteer in the classroom. A cooking activity can be planned for all the children in class. Advanced notice is requested to ensure ingredients can be properly purchased and stored by program staff. Staff reserve the right to alter or modify recipes/ingredients to meet the dietary needs of all children in class and to avoid potential reactions to food allergies. We also ask that "treats" that come into the classroom are low in added sugar

Physical Activity

When we think of structured physical activity, we often associate it with the teachers leading an activity out on the playground. Teacher-led structured physical activity can happen outside in the playground when the teacher invites children to participate in a game such as Red Light, Green Light or Kick the Ball. Such activities can offer important insights into a child's development. However, here at Small

Fries, we know that teacher-led structured physical activity can play a particularly important role in enhancing the social cohesiveness of a class, helping children learn to regulate their bodies and their emotions, and teaching valuable academic knowledge and skills.

Teachers, families, and administrators know that transitioning between activities and locations can sometimes be incredibly challenging for preschool aged children. Being asked to stop one activity and start another is a common trigger for challenging behavior in all children, especially when they are being asked to transition from a fun activity like playing with blocks to something like cleaning up. Transitions are often viewed as an in-between time between activities, rather than a time when valuable learning can occur. All transitions can be a learning opportunity if the time is used intentionally and thoughtfully. Research has shown that when teacher-led structured physical activity is used as a transition activity, it becomes a valuable strategy to help prevent negative behaviors and encourage positive behaviors, while at the same time learning important skills such as self-regulation, mindfulness, and among others, pro-social behaviors.

Opportunities to implement a transition strategy can happen many times during the day – when a child arrives in the morning to school, when moving from one activity to another, when moving from one location to another, when waiting, and the list goes on. For example, when teachers and children come in from playing outside and go to the carpet and do a calming yoga activity, children are getting their brains and bodies ready for a learning activity such as the teacher reading a book. When free play ends, and a teacher invites the child who has finished cleaning up to go to the carpet and choose a fun Music and Movement song, it is acting as a draw for other children, an incentive for them to finish cleaning up quickly, and helps keep the children who have completed the activity engaged and learning. Academic learning can also take place when the transition activity involves counting, for example, while toddlers are jumping and singing to 5 Little Monkeys Jumping on a Bed or vocabulary acquisition when squishing through the thick oozy mud and tiptoeing through the narrow gloomy cave in the Bear Hunt Music and Movement song. For these reasons, we, at Small Fries, place such a high value on teacher-led structured physical activity. We recognize and acknowledge the beneficial impact it can have on children's development and learning and therefore encourage teachers to use it multiple times throughout the day.

Field Trips and Transportation

Parents/guardians are responsible for transporting all children to off-site field trips and must remain with them for the duration of the field trip activities. Written permission must be given for any child to carpool with another family or classroom volunteer, and a copy of any parent/guardian, volunteer, or teacher's automobile insurance is required to be kept on file if they will be transporting any children other than their own.

Field trip information is detailed in monthly newsletters, email reminders, and paper flyers sent home the week of each trip. Directions to the site location are posted on the classroom door during all off-site activities. In the event of a late arrival on a field trip day, parents/guardians are responsible for transporting children to the site of the trip and following all sign-in procedures upon meeting of the group.

Only in the event of an emergency evacuation are staff permitted to transport children away from the facility without prior permission and required documentation in the child's file. Further details are available on evacuation locations and reunification procedures in the section titled Emergency Response Protocol at the end of this handbook.

Family Concerns and Program Complaints

Questions, concerns, and feedback from families are welcome at any time, especially regarding ways we can improve the quality or delivery of our program. Should a concern arise, parents/guardians are asked to communicate first with their child's Lead Teacher/Primary Caregiver. If the concern is not satisfactorily addressed, concerns can be brought to the attention of the Sr. Recreation Coordinator by calling (970) 962-2487.

Annual Program Evaluations and Quality Improvement Planning

Annual Program Evaluations

At the end of each calendar year (midway through the school year), both staff and enrolled families have an opportunity to complete a Small Fries Preschool Program Evaluation survey. For staff, the evaluation form is hand delivered at a monthly team meeting in December. For families, the survey is emailed by administrative staff in December to all families and paper copies are also provided in the classroom. Survey results are reviewed by administrative staff and a cumulative Survey Results Response is prepared and shared with staff at the January in-service training day, and with families and program stakeholders through email (paper copies are also available upon request).

Quality Improvement Planning

Two of the survey responses (one from staff responses and one from family surveys) are used to formulate a Quality Improvement Plan to be implemented in the immediately following Spring session of the same school year. Additionally, staff and newly enrolled families receive follow-up information on the progress completed and/or improvements made during the following school year's pre-service training and Parent Orientation meetings in August. Quality Improvement Plans are updated annually, shared with program stakeholders through email, and are kept on file electronically and are available in the classroom on the top of the library shelf in a binder marked Small Fries Resource Binder.

Equity and Diversity

While diversity may include different faiths, gender roles, socioeconomic status, and ethnicity, it is not limited to just these areas. Diversity also includes the different physical, cognitive, and social abilities that one possesses. Small Fries values and welcomes the diversity of the community, families, and children we serve and offers classrooms that are equitable and inclusive of all children and families. We strive to create a developmentally appropriate classroom environment that not only reflects each child's unique abilities but also encompasses their home culture and experiences as well.

One of the most important things that we do to help ensure that our program reflects the diversity of our community and is responsive to their needs, as well as the needs of the children we serve, is we conduct annual self-assessments in various areas, including Family Engagement, Inclusive Teaching and Learning, Culturally Responsive Practices, Reducing Bias, and Trauma Informed Programming. Another way we work to ensure that Small Fries remains sensitive to the diversity of our families and children is we ask families to complete the Child and Family Information Sheet, which will give us insights into your family's traditions and needs.

If you or your family is experiencing trauma or other adversity or challenges and in need of the support of a community-based resource or service, we can help you connect with those supports. Trauma refers to a deeply stressful experience or its short and long-term impacts. Research has shown that children's exposure to trauma can cause a host of problems with potentially lifelong consequences,

which can impact children's abilities to learn, to create healthy attachments, to form supportive relationships, and, among other affects, to follow classroom expectations. Early screening and intervention are, therefore, significant in that may produce better outcomes for children and families. It is also important that early childhood settings be safe, trauma-sensitive spaces where teachers support children in creating positive self-identities. It is the policy of this program to create those spaces.

Our full-time staff have completed Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) trainings with the City of Loveland. Our teachers have also received training on trauma informed practices, as well as training about recognizing the impact of bias on early childhood professionals. The diversity of our community and society is also reflected in the teaching that occurs in the classrooms and in the materials, for example, the books, music, and props, that are found in the classrooms. We warmly invite families, staff, and members of our community to share their traditions and customs with the program and the children in the classroom. These stories and experiences will be valued and respected as part of the children's learning experience.

Child Abuse and Neglect

All program staff are required to complete annual Mandated Reporter Training for Educators through the State of Colorado's Professional Development & Information System (PDIS). If a staff member has a reasonable cause to believe or suspect that a child is the victim of abuse or neglect, he or she will immediately contact his or her supervisor who will contact:

Department of Social Services

2555 Midpoint Dr. Fort Collins, CO 80525

Larimer County Abuse Report phone number: (970) 498-6990.

Colorado Child Care Licensing and Quality Ratings

Small Fries Preschool maintains a general childcare license through the State of Colorado's Department of Early Childhood and is a Colorado Shines 5 - Star Quality Rated Program. Program staff, enrolled families and members of the public are welcome to view childcare licensing reports and quality rating information by visiting www.ColoradoShines.com or calling (877) 338-2273.

All licensing information and required documentation for Small Fries Preschool's quality rating, including Fire Inspections, Colorado State Licensing Inspections, or Larimer County Health Department Inspections can be viewed upon request at any time by contacting the Recreation Coordinator at (970) 962-2487.

To file a new complaint about our program or this facility, please contact:

The Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care

1575 Sherman Street

Denver, CO 80203-1714

(303) 866-5958 or (800)799-5876

Small Fries Preschool Childcare License ID: #38510

City of Loveland Tax ID # 84-6000609

Section 2: Emergency Response Protocol

Conducting and Documenting Disaster Drills

Program Directors are responsible for conducting and documenting fire/evacuation drills at least once per quarter/4 times annually. Drill logs are viewable upon request.

Societal Threat Drill Procedures

Prior to working with children, all program staff are informed of policies for Societal Threats including Shelter-in-Place, Lock Down, and Active Shooter situations. Drills for these situations are not required to be conducted with children present, however all staff must be aware of the procedures to follow in the event of a societal threat. During training, staff will discuss role responsibilities in each situation, hiding or evacuation locations, and items to be kept with the group. A written plan for each of the 3 situations will be documented by the Program Director, and drills will be practiced until all staff are comfortable with their understanding of policies & procedures.

Other Indoor Alarms

After sounding an alarm, staff will also immediately alert Front Desk staff, a Building Supervisor on duty, and the Facility Manager. In the event of a fire or other indoor alarm, staff always assume that any alarm is real until specifically informed otherwise, and then proceed with evacuation plan immediately. After evacuation and when safe within the pre-designated evacuation area, all children and adults are accounted for. The Program Director and/or Recreation Coordinator will check with each member of staff to make sure children and any adult assistants are all accounted for.

Evacuation Locations

If an emergency evacuation is required within 1 mile of the facility, staff will walk with children to a designated reunification spot:

Loveland Museum/Gallery

503 N. Lincoln Ave.
Loveland, CO 80537

If an emergency evacuation is required from the surrounding neighborhood, students will be transported by whatever means necessary (City or staff vehicles) at least 3 miles away from the Chilson Center to a designated reunification spot:

Lucile Erwin Middle School

4700 Lucerne Ave.
Loveland, CO 80538

Missing Children

If a child should ever come up missing during scheduled class times, the following steps will be taken:

1. Children will be gathered, and attendance will be taken to determine who is missing.
2. One staff will be assigned to supervise the class; a second will be assigned to contact the Program Director and/or Recreation Coordinator.
3. The Program Director/Recreation Coordinator will immediately request the assistance of other Chilson Center staff to help with the search and go directly to meet the class.
4. In the moments until the Program Director or Recreation Coordinator arrives in the class, staff members will search for the child in areas not easily seen at a quick glance (such as bathrooms,

- locker rooms, playground equipment, etc.)
5. The Program Director/Recreation Coordinator will quickly gather details from teaching staff and then join Chilson Center staff in the search for the child.
 6. Teaching staff will remain with the class to maintain required teacher to child ratios.
 7. The search will last NO LONGER than 10 minutes.

If the child is not found, the Program Director/Recreation Coordinator will make the following telephone calls:

1. To 9-1-1 to report a missing child.
2. To the parents/guardians of the missing child and have them meet the staff at the present location.

The Program Director/Recreation Coordinator will stay with police to assist and aid in the search for the missing child and then inform the Program Supervisor and Recreation Manager of the incident as soon as possible. A City Incident Report and a Department of Human Services Critical Incident Report must be submitted within 24 hours about any child who has been lost from the center and for whom local authorities have been contacted.

Natural Disasters and Environmental Threats

POWER OUTAGE/BLACKOUTS

Have children freeze where they are until you can obtain alternate lighting from flashlights which have been previously stored for use in case of such an occurrence. If daytime, and the weather is nice, evacuate the building. Transfer activities outdoors if rooms are too dark to use. If the weather is hot and an electricity blackout has caused the air conditioner and fans to cease operating, plan for being outdoors, if possible. If it is very hot outdoors, find the coolest area possible where there is adequate shade. If the weather is too cold or rainy, keep the children indoors. Utilize the available emergency supplies to keep the children comfortable.

FLOODING

If it is safe to remain in the building, as on a second floor, do so unless ordered to evacuate by City officials. Use available emergency supplies to keep children comfortable. If ordered to evacuate the building and the grounds are flooded outdoors, wait for official assistance. If assistance is not forthcoming, take the children to the highest possible location.

TORNADO

If there is sufficient warning, children can be picked up by their parents. Children who remain at the facility during the tornado warnings should be kept indoors and taken to an inner hallway. If there are no such hallways, they should drop, get under furniture, and cover as they would in an earthquake. A door and window should be opened to allow air to move through the building. Care must be taken to stay out of the path of debris blowing through.

- Flashlights should be made available in case of power outages.
- A portable radio should be used to keep informed of the progress of the tornado and of predictions and/or any special instructions from local officials.
- Once children are in a protected area, your biggest problem will be morale. Children need much more reassurance in times of disaster.
- Tornado drills will be held and recorded often enough so that all participants are familiar with the procedure.

EARTHQUAKES

During the earthquake and aftershocks: the gravest dangers may come from injury caused by falling

objects, or toppling furniture or structures, the body being thrown by the shaking, or broken outdoor power lines.

- When the shaking begins, shout “duck and cover”. Children duck and cover as practiced during earthquake drills.
- Turn away from windows and drop to knees.
- Get under a desk or table if possible.
- Clasp hands behind neck, bring arms against head (covering ears), close eyes, drop head to knees.
- Remain silent and hold position for five (5) minutes or until shaking has stopped, whichever is longer.
- If furniture moves, move your own body with it, remaining under cover.
- Alert children that a loud rumbling noise is an expected part of the earthquake.

Adults do the following:

- Duck and cover as do children.
- If there is no room under furniture after the children have been positioned, stand in an interior doorway.
- Brace back against one side of door frame, feet slightly forward, knees slightly bent. Cover head as for duck and cover, and bend head down slightly, keeping eyes closed. If glass is not shattering, open your eyes to monitor children.

After the shaking stops, the building needs to be evacuated before the aftershocks occur, because the initial quake may have caused structural damage that will cause the building to collapse under the stress of additional shaking. When the initial shaking has stopped, allow five minutes to evacuate the premises, hopefully before the aftershocks occur.

- Establish a buddy system, so that each leader is responsible for one another.
- Shout to check to make sure leaders in neighboring areas have not been injured. By previous arrangement, have each person shout, “OK in Room X” or “OK in X’s room” or some similar agreed upon phrase.
- Lead group calmly to prearranged evacuation site in an outdoor area as far from power line danger as possible.
- Take sign in/out book, tracking clipboard, backpack/fanny pack and medications.

Predesignated staff, probably director and office personnel, check restrooms, sick bay, and any other areas where children might have been away from their own areas. Lead these children to safety.

Societal Threats

SHELTER-IN-PLACE (Threat is Outside)

“Shelter-in-place” means a drill in which the occupants of a building seek shelter in the building from an external threat.

- Lock all windows and exterior doors.
- Students must remain in classrooms until further notice.
- Take attendance. All students must be accounted for during the procedure.
- The Program Director or Recreation Coordinator must provide approval before students are taken out of the classroom for other indoor areas or before they are allowed outside.

LOCKDOWN

“Lockdown” means a drill in which the occupants of a building are restricted to the interior of the building and the building is secured.

- Lock all windows and exterior doors.
- Students must remain in classrooms until further notice.
- Take attendance. All students must be accounted for during the procedure.
- The Program Director or Recreation Coordinator must provide approval before students are taken out of the classroom for other indoor areas or before they are allowed outside.

ACTIVE SHOOTER

“Active shooter” means a drill to address an individual actively engaged in killing or attempting to kill people in a confined space or other populated area.

- Lock all exterior and indoor doors and windows. Pull blinds to cover windows.
- Turn off all lights.
- Move children to a safe place in a room out of sight of doors and windows.
- Keep children quiet and calm.
- Take attendance. All students must be accounted for during the duration of the procedure.
- Ignore all alarms and bells. DO NOT leave until directed by law enforcement or Recreation Administrators.

All Chilson Center staff, including Small Fries Preschool staff, are trained to implement procedures for Shelter-in Place, Lockdown, and Active Shooters in the event of these societal threats. A full copy of facility procedures is available upon request.

Reuniting Families after an Emergency or Disaster

Notify parents/guardians immediately upon re-admittance to the building or upon arrival at evacuation location. Remain with students until they are picked up by a parent/guardian or an authorized emergency contact.

Serving Children with Disabilities and those with Access and Functional Needs

Each child with special needs will be attended to during the evacuation and relocation by a pre-designated staff member, the Program Director, or a Recreation Coordinator/Supervisor. This includes but is not limited to ensuring all medications leave the site with the student in the event of the emergency relocation and creating an individualized plan (with the student and their family) for assisting students with physical disabilities during and after the emergency relocation.

Continuity of Operations after a Disaster

In the aftermath of an evacuation or natural disaster, Program Directors will work alongside the Recreation Coordinator, Program Supervisor, Facility Supervisor, & Recreation Manager to ensure essential staffing needs and predetermined roles are adequately filled. The Preschool Education Director is responsible for backing up or retrieving all children’s files. The Recreation Coordinator is responsible for backing up and retrieving all staff files. Both the Preschool Education Director and Recreation Coordinator are responsible for protecting confidential and financial records for those families enrolled in the Small Fries program.

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