

Center for
Children and
 Families

PARENT HANDBOOK

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Center for Children and Families is a not for profit childcare center. The Center was created in 2001 with the purchase of a building for the joining of the Vermillion Day Care Center and the Little Yotes childcare center. We have a partnership with Head Start; our preschool is a full day-full year program.

The goal of the Center for Children and Families is to provide excellent care to all children while helping to stimulate their social, physical, emotional, and cognitive skills. We strive to make the environment fun and educational: an environment which allows children many opportunities to grow and learn. The Center believes that the family network is the foundation from which all children learn to love and grow. We strive to implement family values throughout our daily activities.

CURRICULUM/ACTIVITIES

Our Center believes that all children possess the desire to learn and grow, and that this desire needs to be nurtured. The best way for children to learn is to play! We offer time for your child to explore individually and as a member of a small group. Our stimulating environment includes technology, educational toys and activities. We have a knowledgeable, experienced and trained staff that plans a variety of creative educational activities. The curriculum includes all areas of development: language, cognitive, physical-motor, and social, as well as art and music. Our staff plans the curriculum to alternate periods of active and quiet play. We strive to provide an environment that will help develop your child's intellectual and social skills as well as stimulate their growing imagination.

GENERAL POLICIES

The Center for Children and Families in partnership with the USD Head Start Program developed the following policies and procedures for CFCF. At any time you have a question regarding our policies and procedures or questions regarding Head Start Performance Standards, please feel free to contact the Director.

HOURS OF SERVICE AND HOLIDAYS

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., except for holidays.

The Center is closed the following Holidays:

January:	New Year's Day
February:	President's Day
March/April:	Good Friday
May:	Memorial Day
July:	Independence Day
September:	Labor Day
November:	Thanksgiving Day Day after Thanksgiving Day
December:	Christmas Eve Christmas Day

The Center will also be closed 2 additional days for staff training and center cleaning. These days will be announced well in advance so alternate childcare can be found. Parents will be billed for all days listed above as a part of contracted hours. Parents may choose to use vacation days (see Sick Days/Vacation Policy) in lieu of paying for days the Center is closed.

Inclement Weather Policy

The Center will close on days of severe weather. Severe weather closings will be broadcast on radio station KVHT/KOSZ (106.3 FM). Please listen to your radio in case the Center is closed because of severe weather. If the Center is closed due to inclement weather, parents will not be charged for that day. If the Center closes early, parents will be charged for that day.

ENROLLMENT POLICY

The Center for Children and Families accepts children from age 4 weeks through age 11. As a part of the enrollment you will be asked to do the following:

- Complete an Enrollment Application
- Visit the Center to meet the teachers and fill out paper work
- Submit proof of up-to-date immunizations for your child(ren). When your child receives new immunizations, please provide a copy to the Center for our records as required by the state.
- Sign an authorization for emergency care; and when needed, an authorization to give your child medication during the day
- Completed CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) Application and Enrollment Form
- Completed contract (contracts will be completed three (3) times per year. Fall, Spring, and Summer)

Children must be escorted into the building by an adult, and the adult must help the child take off outdoor clothing if the child cannot do this him/herself. Children will only be allowed to leave with those persons specified on the enrollment form. Parents may give written permission for substitutions.

An adult must sign a child in and out of the center daily using the electronic keypad located at the front desk. Each child is assigned an identification (PIN) number. If you forget to sign your child in/out, please fill out a time in/out clock error form and put it in the gray box at the front desk.

TERMINATION OF CARE REQUIREMENTS

The Center for Children and Families reserves the right to determinate a relationship with a family for any reason. The Director of the Center determines that the program can no longer meet the needs of the child. The following procedure will be followed in every instance that arises:

1. Staff will follow a step-by-step positive discipline procedure for every child in their care.
2. If a child's behavior requires an intensive intervention strategy, a meeting with the parent, teacher, and director will be scheduled.
3. If the problem continues to arise with the child, upon the approval of the Director, the child will be terminated from care at the Center.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Information in your child's record is confidential and private. It is only available to those persons who are directly involved with your child (Center Director, classroom teachers and Department of Social Services). You may request, as the child's parent or legal guardian, to see your child's file. Only with the written permission of the parent or legal guardian will records be released to other persons or agencies.

CHILD CARE RATES AND POLICIES

INFANT/MOBILE INFANT/TODDLER RATES:

(4 weeks- 12 months)/(12 month-24months)(24 months-3 years)

The regular Center for Children and Families rate for infant care is based upon the number of hours your child attends the Center (1-20, 21-35, and 36+). Please refer to the contract to find out weekly rates for Infants/Toddlers who are under 3 years of age.

PRESCHOOL RATES:

(3 years-5 years)

The regular Center for Children and Families rate for preschoolers is based upon the number of hours your child attends the Center (1-20, 21-35, and 36+). Please refer to the contract to find out weekly rates for Preschoolers.

CONTRACTS:

Parents are required to contract for hours needed for each child. Three contract periods are offered each year. Contracts are also available for before and after school care. You may give two weeks notice to cancel or change your contract. If you give two weeks notice, you will be charged your previous contracted rate until the two weeks is over. Then you will be charged the new contracted rate. If you are changing your contract the two weeks will start the Monday following the change (i.e. if you request a change on Wednesday, your 2 week period will start the following Monday). If a child needs to be here during non-contracted times, it must be approved by the Director.

If a child is here outside of arrival and dismissal time, according to contract, twice in a period, without permission, the contract will change to the new hours. For example, if a child is contracted to be here from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. and the child leaves at 4:30 p.m., twice in a contract period, the contract will change to 8 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. If the contract price goes up the parent will need to pay the higher price. The parent will be notified when their child is here outside of arrival and dismissal times. Please refer to the contract for all other contract information.

SICK/VACATION DAYS:

Full-time children (contracted for 21 or more hours weekly) enrolled at the Center are given 5 sick/vacation days at the beginning of the Fall and Spring contracts, a total of 10 days per year. If your child starts during the middle of a contract your leave days will be prorated based on the date of enrollment. These days may be taken as sick or vacation days. They may be used anytime your child is not at the Center and rolled over into the next contract period. However, they may not be carried over into the next year of enrollment, (i.e. if you don't use all your vacation days by August 31st you will lose any that you have remaining.)

Parents/Guardians will be responsible for filling out a leave slip and turning it into the director in order to use these days. You will have up to 5 days after your child is absent to turn in a leave slip. All vacation days become void on your child's last day of enrollment.

DROP-IN RATES:

Provided that the Center has sufficient room in staff/child ratios, we will accept drop-in children, who are not currently enrolled, for childcare. The drop-in rate is \$4.50/hr. for infants/toddlers and \$4.00/hr. for preschool age children.

BEFORE SCHOOL PROGRAM:

The Center has a before school program for children in kindergarten and elementary school. The rate is \$3.30/hr. in the morning with a minimum of \$3.30. In case of school late start, an hourly rate (\$3.50/hr.) will be charged if your child is at the Center.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM:

The Center has an after school program for children in kindergarten and elementary school. The rate is \$6.00 per afternoon. In case of early school dismissal, an hourly rate (\$3.50/hr.) will be charged if your child is at the Center.

SCHOOL AGE DROP-INS:

Please inform the Director (2 weeks notice is required) if your child will need to attend the Center on days that the Vermillion School District does not have school. Children may attend if our staff/child ratio allows. We may not have room for all children, and the parents that request care first will have the first spots.

BUS RATES:

Any child, who is provided care in the mornings before school starts or in the afternoon, will need to purchase a bus ticket from the Vermillion Public School Administration Building. This will allow your child to ride the bus to and from school.

TRANSPORTATION:

The Center does not provide transportation for any child. During the summer we use the Vermillion Public Transit to go on various field trips and to go to the pool. Parent's are expected to purchase the bus pass for their child(ren). The Center will not provide a bus pass for any child.

TORNADO/FIRE DRILL SCHEDULE:

The Center will conduct 4 fire drills and 1 tornado drill each year. The Center currently has an Emergency Response Plan that they implement in the event of a fire/tornado/lockdown. Each room is equipped with this information and staff have been trained in accordance with the administration of this plan. If children do evacuate the building for any reason, parents will be notified at a time when children have been deemed safe by staff. If it is determined that children should not return to the Center, parents will be contacted and can pick up their children at the Pump n Pak gas station located to the North of the Center on the corner of Stanford Street and Cherry Street.

INSURANCE/MATERIAL FEE:

A fee of \$25.00 per child will be assessed each August to pay for consumable art and educational materials and for accident insurance coverage.

PAYMENT POLICY:

Payment is due every other Wednesday for services provided during the previous two weeks. Any payment made after Wednesday will be subject to a \$15.00 late fee unless approved by the Director. If payment is missed two consecutive billing periods, your child will not be able to return to the Center until your account is paid in full or a payment plan has been approved by the Director. If you have not made any payments for one month, or you miss a payment on a payment plan, your account will be sent to a collection agency. If a check is returned for non-sufficient funds, you will be charged \$20 per returned check. If you have a credit on the account it will be refunded when your child is withdrawn from the Center and all billing is complete.

LATE PICKUP FEE:

The Center staffs each classroom based upon each child's arrival and departure time. If you are late picking up your child, and it has not been approved by the Director, you will be charged a late fee. The late fee will start when you are 5 minutes late. A fee of \$2.00 per child will be charged every 5 minutes that you are late. If you are to pick up your child at 3:30 and you don't arrive until 3:45, you will be charged \$6.00. This also includes dropping your child off early. You must stay within your contract times. The Center closes at 5:30 p.m. Staff will attempt to contact you and your alternate contacts. At 6:00 p.m., if staff is unable to reach you or your alternate contacts, the Police Department will be notified.

SUMMER HOLDING FEE:

If you will be taking your child out of the Center for the summer and would like to hold a spot for them in the fall, you will have to pay a holding fee. The rate is \$75 for each month (June, July, and August), a total of \$225 for the entire summer, this holding fee will need to be paid prior to the summer break. Before returning to the Center your bill will need to be paid in full.

FINALS WEEK POLICY:

The Center attempts to provide extended care for children during finals week at the University (fall and spring semester). The Center will need documentation, in writing, if your child will need to be present for times, other than their normal contracted hours, the week of finals. This written documentation must be signed by a parent or guardian and by the Director. This documentation must be received by the Director 6 weeks prior to the first day of finals week for approval. Please note that we will try to accommodate as much as we can, but situations may arise that will prevent us from accommodating every request. We must keep our staff/child ratios at all times, as mandated by the State of South Dakota.

CHILD CARE ASSISTANCE:

Child Care Assistance (CCA) is available through the State of South Dakota to help families who qualify for such assistance. If you are interested, you may contact the local Department of Social Services office, obtain materials from our office or find out more information at www.state.sd.us. If you do qualify for CCA and the state does not cover your child's entire bill, you will be responsible for the remainder of the bill. If you are no longer receiving CCA, you must notify the Director immediately.

Families receiving CCA will be responsible to pay weekly until the Center receives your child care certificate from CCA. After the certificate is received, you will be charged once a month because the daycare bills the state once a month. Once payment is received from CCA, the families will receive a bill. The families will have 1 week to pay the bill before it is considered late and would accrue late fees, unless other arrangements have been made and approved by the Director. If you have a credit on the account once CCA start paying, it will be refunded when your child is withdrawn from the Center and all billing is complete.

DISCIPLINE:

Behavior management techniques will be used to help each child develop self-control, self-esteem, and respect for the rights of others. We will provide positive guidance and verbal redirection. No physical or discipline is allowed at the Center. The Center prohibits the use of humiliating and frightening punishment and prohibits peers from administering discipline. Parents will be notified and a conference will be held with the child's teacher if the child displays on-going

inappropriate behavior. If dangerous or disruptive behavior to himself/herself or others continues, we reserve the right to discontinue services.

CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT:

South Dakota law (S.D.C.L. 26-10-10) mandates that all licensed or registered child care providers report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services or law enforcement. Our staff is trained to recognize signs of child abuse and neglect. We are required to report any suspected abuse or neglect to the appropriate state authorities *before* informing the parents or guardians. Staff is also required to read and sign a child abuse/neglect statement (defines child abuse/neglect, identifies reporting responsibilities and procedures). When reported suspected cases of abuse or neglect, the staff member or volunteer is required to make the call to DSS with the assistance of the director.

No staff member or volunteer will have substantiated reports of abuse. If a staff member is suspected of child abuse, that staff member will be suspended immediately upon notice of such incidence. The staff member must appeal their continued employment with the Center in written form through the Director who will present the information to the Board who will ultimately decide continued employability at the Center.

CHANGES TO CIRCUMSTANCE

If the Center for Children and Families falls out of compliance with their licensing requirements, the current families will be notified via a letter sent home to notifying them of these changes. Any change to the Center such as renovation, location change, ownership change, employee felony convictions, or director change will be conveyed to parents in a timely fashion via a letter sent out to all current families. Information may also be presented on the website or Facebook page.

EMERGENCY SHELTER:

The Vermillion Police Department will notify the Center for Children and Families directly if there is a weather watch or warning. The Center also has a weather radio. This allows us to take the children to the lower level of the building for safety before the whistle is blown for the rest of the community. Tornado and fire drills are practiced throughout the year. We have emergency evacuation procedures posted in the front entry.

CLOTHING:

Please have your child dressed appropriately for the weather and have your child bring a jacket or coat, mittens, hat or other appropriate outdoor clothing, depending upon the season and weather. If your child is likely to have an accident that requires a change of clothes, we would suggest that they have a change of clothing stored in their cubby.

BABY SUPPLIES:

All diapers, wipes, diaper rash ointment, bottles, blankets, change of clothes, etc. must be provided by parents. All supplies will be stored appropriately with your child's name on them in their cubby.

Cloth diapers will not be used at the Center due to cleanliness issues. If your child is allergic or cannot use disposable diapers, a doctor's note will be required. That note needs to include what will happen if the child wears disposable diapers.

State food service regulations require us to offer and provide one type of baby formula. We provide Parent's Choice with Iron. If your child needs a specific formula, if the child is breast-fed, or if you prefer to provide your own formula, we ask that you sign a form showing that you are declining formula from the Center. All infants will be held while bottle feeding. There is no propping of bottles allowed at the Center.

TOYS:

PLEASE DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO BRING TOYS TO DAYCARE FOR HIS/HER OWN PERSONAL USE. This sometimes causes conflict with other children, and it is difficult to ensure that your child's toy will be returned. Your child's teacher will inform you of special "show and tell" days when toys, etc. may be brought from home. Toys may also not be taken out of the Center for any reason. If this happens, please let staff know so that we are aware of the situation so that we can work with you to deal with it appropriately.

MEAL/FOODS:

The Center provides breakfast, a well-balanced lunch and an afternoon snack at no additional charge. Breakfast is served at the following times: 8 a.m. – 9 a.m. in the infant room, 8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. in the toddler room, and 9-9:30 in the preschool room. Lunch is served at the following times: 10:45 a.m. -11:30 a.m. in the infant and toddler rooms, and 11:30-12:00 in the preschool/head start rooms. Snack is served at the following times: 2:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. in the infant room, 3:00 p.m. -3:30 p.m. in the toddler room, and 3:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m. in the preschool. Because the Center is eligible to receive reimbursement through the USDA Child Care Food Program, you will be asked to complete an application form to determine your child's reimbursement status. We will accommodate special medical, cultural, and religious needs, and we should be informed if your child has any food allergies. If your child has any food allergies or needs medical accommodation there are additional forms required with your application. These forms must be signed by a medical doctor.

All food served at the Center will be prepared by staff. Food and beverages may not be brought to the Center. This includes candy, soda pop, coffee, tea, etc. This guideline is in place due to concerns with food allergies, food safety,

nutrition and liability. This guideline also serves to teach children about healthy eating habits.

CELEBRATION:

If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday by bringing something, please bring NON-FOOD items. If you bring food for a celebration, it will not be handed out to the other children. It will be saved and sent home with your child.

MEDICATIONS:

If children require medication during the day, it must be brought in its original container explaining the dosage. The parent or guardian will be required to sign a release form, to insure the child's safety, allowing the medication to be administered by the staff. Medications will be stored in the child's designated classroom unless the medication needs to be refrigerated. Medications will be placed in a locked storage container. In the case of a refrigerated medication, that medication will be placed in the small refrigerator located in the dining room.

BUILDING LOCK-DOWN PLAN:

If the building needs to be locked down, no one enters and no one leaves for any reason, parents will be notified. The Director will call each parent and notify of lock-down. The Director will then notify the parents again when it is ok to pick up their child. If the building is put on lock down it will also be broadcast on KVHT/KOSZ (106.3 FM).

BUILDING EVACUATION PLAN:

If the building needs to be evacuated for a long period of time, the children will be taken to Pump 'N Pak gas station. Parents will be called to come and pick up their child immediately. Parents will be notified when children can return to the building. This will also be broadcast on KVHT/KOSZ (106.3 FM).

EMPLOYEE AND STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

All staff has or is receiving training in Early Childhood Education and Development and meets all state regulations. All permanent staff at the Center for Children and Families receives additional training each year. We also believe it is crucial that each staff member has a true love for children. In order for a staff member to work at the Center, they must be 18 years of age or older to work directly with children unsupervised. A secondary child worker must be 14 years of age or older and must be under the constant supervision of the room teacher and/or director of the facility. The Center will employ a Program Planner. This individual must have at minimum their CDA preferably a Bachelor's Degree in Early Education. This individual will be in charge of supervising teachers lesson plans to make sure they are developmentally appropriate and follows the Center and state guidelines for early education curriculum standards.

No staff member at the Center for Children and Families will be allowed to work at the Center if they have been convicted of a felony within the past 5 years, sex offense, a crime of violence, or a crime against children or if the staff members name appears on the sex offender registry.

Each full-time staff member is required to receive a minimum of 20 hours of training annually in the following areas:

- Basic first aid and child CPR
- How to plan learning activities
- Guidance and discipline techniques
- Communication skills
- Child growth and development
- Detecting and reporting child abuse and neglect
- Food handling techniques
- Prevention of communicable disease
- Procedures to follow in the event of natural disasters and other emergencies
- Child health and safety

HEALTH POLICY

The spread of communicable diseases has a huge impact on the health and well-being of children, their families and our staff. The spread of communicable diseases can be reduced by keeping your child home when he or she is ill. Children that are ill will be separated from the other children and other parents will be notified if a child is ill at the center. A doctor's note may be required for your child to return to the Center. Discretion is up to the Director and the Board of Directors. The Department of Health will also be notified when there is a contagious disease at the Center.

A child may be too sick to attend the Center or may be sent home if:

- A. The child has any of the following symptoms:
- Fever of 99 degrees Fahrenheit axillary or above 100 degrees Fahrenheit orally accompanied by behavior changes and other signs or symptoms of illness. Child may return when he/she has gone 24 hours without a fever, without medication.
 - Signs or symptoms of a possibly severe illness (e.g., persistent crying, extreme irritability, uncontrolled coughing, difficulty breathing, wheezing, lethargy)
 - Diarrhea: Changes from the child's usual stool pattern (increased frequency or loose/watery stools). Child may return when he/she has gone 24 hours without diarrhea. Two loose/watery stools within 2 hours.

- Vomiting more than once in the previous 24 hours. Child may return when he/she has gone 24 hours without vomiting.
 - Mouth sores with drooling
 - Rash with fever or behavior change or other symptoms of illness
- B. The child has any of the following diagnoses from a health care provider (until treated and/or no longer contagious)
- Infectious conjunctivitis/pink-eye (with eye discharge) until 24 hours after treatment has been started
 - Scabies, head lice, pin worms or other infestations until 24 hours after treatment and the child is free of nits in the case of head lice
 - Impetigo or ringworm until 24 hours after treatment is started
 - Strep throat, scarlet fever, or other strep infection until 24 hours after treatment started and the child is free of fever.
 - Pertussis (whooping cough) until 5 days after treatment is started
 - Tuberculosis (TB) until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious
 - Chicken Pox until 6 days after the start of a rash or all sores have crusted over
 - Mumps until 9 days after the start of symptoms (swelling of cheeks)
 - Hepatitis A until 7 days after the start of symptoms (jaundice)
 - Measles until 6 days after the start of a rash
 - Rubella (German Measles) until 6 days after the start of a rash
 - Oral Herpes (if child is drooling or lesions cannot be covered), until lesions are dry
 - Shingles (if lesions cannot be covered), until lesions are dry
 - Hepatitis B until one month after the start of symptoms (jaundice)
 - Meningitis (Bacterial) until 24-48 hours after treatment is started and (Viral) until a health care provider determines that the disease is not contagious
 - Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease until 3 days after start of symptom or until all sores have crusted over
 - Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) until you obtain a doctor's note stating that your child is non-contagious and able to return to childcare
 - Influenza A until you obtain a doctor's note stating that your child is non-contagious and able to return to childcare

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Center for Children and Families does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability.

The Center for Children and Families welcomes the opportunity to serve your family and the Vermillion Community.

I have read the Parent Handbook for the Center for Children and Families. I understand that these are the policies of the agency. I understand that should I have any questions regarding these policies I will contact the Center Director.

Parent Signature

Date