



# Aspen

Child Development Center

## Family Handbook

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Aspen Investments, LLC

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## I. INTRODUCTION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Welcome and thank you for choosing Aspen Child Development Center for your child! We respect the honor and privilege that comes with being trusted to care for your child, and strive to create a true partnership with parents enabling us to best serve your family. The Aspen Child Development Center staff believes that the parents are the child's first teachers, and we encourage your participation in our program development and providing child-oriented activities.

This program is operated by Aspen Investments, LLC. Aspen recognizes that environments for young children must be both caring and educational. Therefore, all the programs for young children are carefully planned so that the intimate connection of education and care are woven together.

### **General Principles**

1. All policies and procedures are non-discriminatory in regard to race, color, national origin, religion or sex.
2. Aspen Child Development Center is licensed by the State of Nebraska and committed to providing a positive experience for children.
3. Aspen Child Development Center uses the guidelines set by the National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC), ensuring the highest quality early education.
4. Learning is a life-long process that is highly individualized.
5. Family members, teachers and staff work together to provide care and instruction to children, and are respected and valued.
6. Ongoing evaluation is essential to program quality.

### **Principles Pertaining To the Learning Environment**

1. The curriculum stresses an anti-bias perspective in which children of all races and beliefs can grow and learn in an environment that will broaden their awareness and natural acceptance of diverse cultural heritages.
2. Children learn primarily through play and exploration.
3. Opportunities for learning will be varied and reflect the value of spontaneity and curiosity.

### **Principles Pertaining To Children**

1. Children's parents/guardians are their primary care givers.
2. Children are treated with kindness and respect.
3. Children benefit from positive, stable, and nurturing relationships.

### **Principles Pertaining To Families**

1. Parents/guardians are the most influential people in the lives of their children.
2. All families are valued and treated with respect.

## II. LOCATION, HOURS, & ENROLLMENT

**Aspen Child Development Center**  
**9300 Heritage Lakes Dr.**  
**(402) 483-5511 Fax (402) 483-5535**

- \* 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.
- \* Children between the ages of 6 weeks and 12 years are eligible for year round full time care.
- \* Contact Program Director for enrollment and child care reservation arrangements.
- \* Drop-in childcare is available when there are openings.

All enrollment forms must be completed and returned *prior to* the first day of attendance. Parents/guardians are required to complete the enrollment orientation tour provided by the Program Director prior to their child (ren) attending the childcare center. A transition schedule, or an easing into the new environment by temporarily utilizing fewer or drop-in hours, is encouraged.

## III. HOLIDAYS AND UNPLANNED CLOSINGS

### 2012 Holidays

Aspen Child Development Center at Heritage Lakes will be closed on the following holidays:

<b>New Year's Day</b>	<b>Mon Jan 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	<b>Thanksgiving Day:</b>	<b>Thurs Nov 22<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>Memorial Day:</b>	<b>Mon May 28<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Thanksgiving Fri:</b>	<b>Fri Nov 23<sup>th</sup></b>
<b>4<sup>th</sup> of July:</b>	<b>Wed July 4<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Holiday Break</b>	<b>(Christmas – New Years)</b>
<b>Labor Day:</b>	<b>Mon Sept 5<sup>th</sup></b>		<b>Mon Dec 24<sup>th</sup>-Tues Jan 1<sup>st</sup>, 2010</b>

In the event a holiday falls on a Saturday or Sunday, the centers will be closed on the preceding Friday or the following Monday. Over the holidays listed, Aspen CDC will offer a sign up sheet for parents needing care in order to staff appropriately, please make sure to follow what you sign up. **Tuition remains the same, regardless of closing due to holidays.**

### Closing Due to Inclement Weather and Emergencies

Aspen Child Development Center will be closed if Southeast Community College-Lincoln Campus closes for the entire day, as announced first thing in the morning, for inclement weather. If SCC closes early or designates a late start, Aspen CDC will be open regular hours. A message will be put on the voicemail of the center by **6:00am** if we are closed; as well as notices on KLKN Channel 8 and on the [aspencdc.com](http://aspencdc.com) website. Snow day care is not available please have backup care in mind. **Tuition remains the same, regardless of closing due to inclement weather.**

## IV. TUITION, FEES AND PAYMENT PROCEDURES

### Weekly Tuition

<b>Infants:</b>	6 weeks – 18 months	<b>\$191.00/week</b>
<b>Toddlers:</b>	18 months – 3 years	<b>\$176.00/week</b>
<b>Preschool:</b>	3 years <b>and toilet trained</b>	<b>\$171.00/week</b>
<b>Pre-Kindergarten</b>	4-6 years	<b>\$166.00/week</b>
<b>School Age</b>	Kindergarten – 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Before AND After School	<b>\$110.00/week</b>
<b>School Age</b>	Kindergarten – 6 <sup>th</sup> grade Before OR after School	<b>\$ 86.00/week</b>
<b>Non-School Day School Age Care</b>		<b>\$ 161.00/week</b>
		<b>\$32.20/day</b>
<b>Drop In Care</b>	<b>All Ages</b>	<b>\$40.00/day</b>

### ***(Weekly Tuition continued)***

Parents are responsible for paying the **full** weekly bill, regardless of absences, inclement weather closings or holidays. Families utilizing TXX services will be charged daily tuition rates for days the child is absent from the center or in attendance less than 6 hrs per day. Statements are available at any time. **Part time care is not available.**

Payment is appreciated by Electronic Funds Transfer (called Tuition Express.) Paper checks are accepted and are **due in full by Wednesday at close** the **week before** care is provided. All payment arrangements and possible exceptions must be arranged with the program director and approved by the owners.

No tuition account balance will be allowed to exceed **two weeks** beyond the agreed-upon time frame without an automatic suspension of care. All accounts must be paid weekly unless a previous arrangement has been made with the program director. Childcare spots will not be held if suspension for past-due accounts takes place. If spots are still available when the bill is paid in full, families are welcome to re-enroll. **After 30 days, any account that remains unpaid, or without formal payment arrangements and timely payments, will be sent to collections.**

Families that qualify and have already been approved to receive state assistance with childcare (Title XX) will be required to have the written authorization to the Center *before* the child is enrolled. The TXX childcare authorization must be full time, or at least 30 hours per week. **All participants must have their child in the center at least 6 hours per day in order to keep enrollment in good standing.** If the authorization is for less than full time, the client is required to pay the center the difference to make up the current authorized daily rate in order to maintain good standing. Families with foster children DO NOT fall under the 6 hour/day minimum attendance, but **families that have legally adopted their foster children are considered traditional TXX participants and do fall under the 6 hr/day minimum attendance policy unless otherwise specified in the adoption documents.** Legal documentation must be presented to the center if an adopted child meets this exception.

### **Fees**

**Registration Fee:** There is a **\$75.00** non-refundable, registration fee *per child*. The Registration Fee is due at enrollment in order to reserve your childcare spot. Families registering *infants that are not born yet* will be required to pay a **\$150.00** registration fee, as the starting date cannot be firmly set in most cases; the center will continue to hold the spot until needed. **Families utilizing Title Twenty services are personally responsible for the enrollment fee.**

**Annual Enrichment Fee:** There is a **\$50.00** annual enrichment fee *per child* or \$100 per family of 3 or more. These are due September 1st each year. The fees collected will go directly to the cost of new supplies for the children of the center, and will be added to your tuition account. **Families utilizing Title Twenty services are personally responsible for the enrichment fee, this includes all Foster Children.**

**Keycard Deposit:** There is a \$25.00 Refundable Deposit required for the issuance of keycards. Each family will receive 2 keycards; lost cards will be replaced for \$15.00(non-refundable fee) each. Additional keycards are available for an additional \$10.00 refundable deposit. **If all keycards issued are not returned at the point of discontinuation of care, the deposit is forfeited.**

**Late Fee:** If **full payment** is not received by the end of the business day on Wednesday, a **10% late payment fee (this is 10% of your balance on your account)** will be added to the account, unless formal exceptions are arranged with the Aspen Program Director and approved by the owners.

**TXX participants that have a co-pay**, or “Family Fee” with their Title Twenty authorization are required to make payments on the first of the month, **considered late after the 5<sup>th</sup>** of the month unless other arrangements are made with the Program Director. **Payments for daily tuition of absent days are due Monday the week after the absence occurred and considered late (see “Late Fee”) if not received by Wednesday.** *Foster children are not included in the absence policy, however families that have legally adopted children utilizing subsidized adoption programs must meet policy guidelines (see “Weekly Tuition” policies.)*

**Late Pick up Fee:** Parents who arrive after the designated closing time to pick up their child (ren) will be charged a late fee. **The fee will be \$1.00 per minute, per child after 6pm.** Late fees are designed to discourage parents from picking up their child after hours, and are enforced. **This fee will be charged regardless of notification of Tardiness.** In the event the late fee is not paid, childcare may be discontinued.

**More than 3 Late pick-ups in 1 year will result in termination without a two week notice.**

**\*\*THE POLICE WILL BE NOTIFIED of children who are not picked up within one half hour following Aspen Child Development Center’s closing time if parents cannot be reached.**

### **Payment Procedures**

Our locked payment box is located in the hallway next to the family bulletin board by the front office. Paper checks or money orders should be placed in the box. Envelopes are not necessary. Cash payments must be submitted to the program director in person so that a receipt is given.

### **Electronic Withdrawal:**

Weekly Electronic Funds Transfers (Tuition Express) is appreciated. Please see the program director to make arrangements for Electronic Withdrawals. All withdrawals from client accounts are made on Wednesday before the following period of care.

### **Vacation days:**

Each full time enrolled child is eligible for a one week (5 **consecutive days**) vacation **after** twelve (12) months continuous attendance, renewable after each additional 12 months of care. Vacation credits must be used by the **family's anniversary date**; they **will not** "roll over." Tuition is not charged for that time. After 12 months of continuous care, TXX participants are not charged for days the center is closed; qualifying as the vacation discount. **Two weeks notice is needed; please see the program director for the vacation credit paperwork.** This will no longer be cut as a check, but credited to your account. Vacation time may be used for the week we are closed around the Holiday's but you still need to submit a form two weeks ahead of time. See program director for details.

### **Alternative Funding:**

Aspen Child Development Center will partner with the subsidy programs offered to active military families. Families wishing to utilize this subsidy must make arrangements with their sponsoring military organization.

### **Contract for Services:**

All enrolling families are required to complete a Child Care Contract for Services agreement at the time of enrollment. This agreement is used to determine your childcare tuition, and serves as a notice of all fees and payment procedures. If there is a change in your childcare needs, notify the Program Director immediately to modify your contract agreement. You will be held financially responsible for the most current service contract agreement we have on file. A copy of the contract is included in the Family Guidebook for your records. The contract with the enrollment packet is for our files. New contracts will be issued every January by the 31<sup>st</sup> of the month.

### **Termination of Care:**

Families who wish to terminate services are required to give the center two (2) weeks notice. **Vacation days may not be used during this time.** Families may choose to withdraw their child (ren) *prior* to the end of their contract, but they remain **financially** responsible for the final, full two weeks.

### **Default on Payment:**

In the event payment is more than one (1) week past due or the account is carrying an unpaid balance, the program director will contact the parent/guardian in by telephone or in writing in order to secure an acceptable payment arrangement before care is suspended. Every effort to honor payment plans will be made. However, Aspen Child Development Center reserves the right to terminate care for non-payment.

The TXX childcare authorization is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to keep in good standing. If an authorization is terminated by the state, the account will automatically revert to a private pay account.

Any tuition accounts more than 30 days past due, without an effort to pay, will be turned over to a collection agency.

Electronic Funds Transfers that are rejected or checks returned for Insufficient Funds will not be submitted a second time, and a \$35 fee will be attached to the tuition account. If more than two (2) payments are returned due to insufficient funds, payments must be made in cash or by money order.

## **V. DAILY ARRIVAL AND PICK-UP**

Children **must be accompanied** by a parent or an authorized escort (adult) in and out of the room and the building. Parents and authorized escorts are required to sign their child (ren) in and out on the family computer at the front desk. Each family will be given a code for sign in/out purposes at enrollment. Please do **NOT** take your child/children without letting a staff member know.

## **(Daily Arrival and Pick up Continued)**

### **Release of children from the center:**

Parents/guardians identified as having legal custody of the child (ren) will be allowed to determine who has permission to pick their child up from the center. Families may change the status of an “authorized” escort at anytime with a call, email or note to the center staff. We cannot legally keep any biological parent from picking up a child from the center without legal documentation denying custody rights to do so. We will abide with legal determinations of child custody arrangements and reserve the right to request a copy of the Court Decree describing those arrangements.

We will release children **only** to individuals listed as approved for release by the parent/guardian.

Teachers will request photo identification to ensure children are released to authorized adults.

If a parent, guardian or authorized pick up should arrive at the center obviously under the influence of alcohol or any other behavior-altering substance, or is behaving in such a manner that causes the center staff alarm, Aspen Child Development Center reserves the right to *detain* that person from picking up any child until another contact or the authorities is reached. We cannot refuse any parent access to their child (who has legal access rights) but will detain a person until the situation is deemed safe *for the child*. In such a case, one staff member will engage and distract the adult in question to the best of his/her ability while another designated staff member calls either the authorities or another contact person for the child. If it is determined that a situation is or becomes unsafe for the staff or the children (threat of violence,) the children and staff will be immediately removed (by direction of a code word) to a “safe room;” an area that is able to be locked against outside entrance until authorized to be released by either authorities or the Program Director. In such an instance, parents will not have access to their children until it is deemed safe.

Please inform the program director when your child is going to be arriving late, leaving early or absent. This is very important for teachers to plan activities and for the director to meet daily meal counts and child-to-teacher ratios. We may utilize sign-up sheets for commonly used vacation times, such as around the Christmas holidays in order to appropriately schedule teachers. If you choose to take your child out of the center for an extended vacation or for the summer, we cannot guarantee a childcare opening when you return, unless you choose to keep paying the full weekly tuition in order to retain it. If your child is absent from the center for more than one week without notification or payment, your childcare spot may be terminated.

### **What to bring; Please clearly mark each with the child’s name**

All children:

- A seasonally appropriate, complete change of clothes
- Diapers and wipes if not fully toilet-trained
- Pull Ups or several changes of clothes and wipes if currently toilet-training
- Weather appropriate outside clothing including a jacket or coat (winter includes snow pants, snow boots, mittens/gloves and a hat.)
- One soft “lovey,” a blanket and/or pillow (small airplane, it must fit in their cubby) for naptime

**Please do not allow your child to bring toys from home. Aspen CDC does not assume responsibility for items brought from home. Your child’s teacher will inform you of special “Show and Share” occasions. Please NO LARGE PILLOW PETS!**

Infants:

- At least 3 bottles or Sippy cups (plastic please no glass)
- At least 2 pacifiers if used
- Any breast milk, formula, infant cereal, or infant foods needed *if not using the formula, infant cereal or infant foods supplied by the center.*
- Blanket
- Diapers and wipes
- Diaper rash cream if used (Must have a signed medication form)
- At least 2 seasonally appropriate, complete changes of clothes

### **Babysitting**

Families sometimes ask teachers to babysit privately outside of Center hours. Employees may choose to do so at their own discretion, but we assume no responsibility for any individual who cares for a child outside of the program.

## VI. CURRICULUM

### Resources

Components of various, recognized, high-quality curricula are incorporated into our programs, stressing an anti-bias perspective in which children of all races, religions, and abilities can grow and learn in an environment that will broaden their awareness and natural acceptance of diverse cultural heritages. Curricula used include Lincoln Preschool Curriculum, Developmentally Appropriate Practices in Early Childhood Classrooms (NAEYC/Copple), and Ages & Stages (Karen Miller), and accreditation requirements for young educators (NAC)

### Individual Curriculum

Throughout the childcare day, activities and interactions are structured which emphasize the use of exploration, thinking and communication skills.

Your child will be encouraged to make choices and learn at her/his own pace. Close relationships between the teachers and the individual child ensure that each child will be challenged at their own level, and appropriate goals will be set.

Parents are encouraged to take an active role in teaching their children, both at home and in child care by maintaining daily communication with their children and teacher.

### Child Development

Our infant program is set up to provide the best environment for infants at each different developmental stage. The children are divided into classrooms in small groups with consistent teachers. Infant curriculum of ages 6 weeks to 18 months centers on social awareness and loving relationships with lessons designed for early exploration and building large motor skills, as well as utilizing and reinforcing infant sign language. Every effort is made to keep the children in groups of their developmental peers, along with consistent, long-term staff members and incorporate plenty of cuddles and love. We utilize "Continuity of Care" concept; infants will remain in the same room, with the same teachers and the same peers until they are ready to transition to toddler rooms. We will change the environment to meet their growing and individual needs within that time. We use the "Back to Sleep" policy; we will only lay infants on their back for sleeping or napping.

Our toddler rooms are set up with the most appropriate environment so that we can cater to each child at his or her individual level of development. Our educated and experienced teachers design activities to stimulate thought and language skills, with a sense of wonder and fun around a weekly theme. The children practice a variety of large and fine motor skills through both unstructured play and guided activities. Our goal is to challenge each child at his or her level by creating a wonderful balance of nurturing and pre-educational experiences. Ask about our "Potty Boot Camp"

Our Preschool program is designed as an all-day, every day, and year-round development program ensuring that our graduates are ready for kindergarten. It is a very literature-based curriculum, creatively planning in areas of reading, writing, math, science, computers, and art, music and independence skills! Our teachers model and emphasize the appropriate social skills along with emotional maturity skills that are the building blocks for academic success. Daily lesson plans are made revolving around a central theme; chosen according to student interest. They include reading, writing, math, science and art in activity centers, music, indoor and outdoor play, walking outings, field trips, computers and food/cooking experiences every week. Because the curriculum is not limited to only a couple of hours or a couple days a week, families with varying schedules can gain the most out of the experiences offered. Although there is no set time for activities to begin, it is recommended that the children be here by 9:00am in order to get the most out of the activities planned.

### Holidays

Birthdays and holiday celebrations are a big part of children's lives. It is our goal to model respect for every family's traditions and beliefs. We will celebrate holidays in the ways our families celebrate them at home in order to raise awareness and natural acceptance of diverse cultural heritages.

Reasonable accommodations will be made for any family that chooses not to participate in any holiday celebration because of personal beliefs.

Families may bring non food treats for birthdays or classroom celebrations if they wish. Classroom teachers can let you know how many treats to bring for a classroom celebration, and give suggestions on appropriate treats. Please remember Aspen CDC is a NO NUT ZONE! Please only bring store bought snacks with the label clearly on them. **NO HOMEMADE TREATS ALLOWED ANYMORE!**

## **Daily Schedules**

Our classrooms are very child-centered and flexible in scheduling activities. Each room has its own written routines that are specific to the individual dynamics of the room, such as enrollment and daily circumstances. Classroom teachers will be able to provide a specific daily schedule for your child. Normal “routines” and general schedules are posted in each room. Your child will need to arrive to Aspen before mealtimes in order to be served. If you are planning to arrive around mealtimes please make sure your child has eaten.

## **Outdoor Play**

Supervised outdoor play will occur on most days, year round. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and to allow for comfortable play. Please do not dress your child up and ask us not to let them “get dirty.” Childcare is a place for exploration, and exploration requires play clothes. Also, please do not ask us to keep your child indoors due to illness or infection. If your child is not able to participate in activities due to illness, parents will be called to take the child home to recuperate.

In the winter months, determinations on whether or not the children may go outside for short periods of time will be made based on the temperature, presence of wind and/or wind-chill factors. It is expected that children will bring appropriate snow pants, snow boots, mittens or gloves and a hat in the winter months. It is advised that either families leave these things here during the week and take them home on Friday or bring them to school every day so that children can participate warmly and safely.

## **VII. HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Illness**

Should your child arrive or become ill here, they will be isolated from their group and the parent or guardian will be called to make immediate arrangements to have them picked up within a reasonable amount of time, preferably within an half hour. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, we will call the persons designated as emergency contacts on the enrollment form to come and pick up the child.

**The child will be excluded from care from the time the symptoms are recognized until the child has been symptom-free without medication for 24 hours.** If the child sees a physician within this time frame, he/she may return with a signed physician’s note stating the child is not contagious and is able to participate in regular activities.

The Lincoln/Lancaster County Health Department has issued the guidelines for exclusion from childcare. A child should not be in attendance with any of the following symptoms: A copy of those guidelines is in the back of the handbook.

- \* Temperature of 100 degrees or higher (auxiliary under the arm)
- \* Diarrhea (2 watery stools in a 24 hour period)
- \* Vomiting (more than spit-up, unknown cause)
- \* A deep, consistent, or croupy cough
- \* Undiagnosed rash
- \* Red eyes with yellow or white drainage
- \* Severe sore throat
- \* Suspected infectious disease such as, but not limited to, chicken pox, measles, hepatitis, etc.
- \* Draining of ears or sores on the skin
- \* Head lice or nits in the hair—in all cases of head lice, the child must be treated with a medication specifically designed for head lice and all nits must be removed before the child can return to care.

If a teacher or the program director suspects a child may be becoming ill; has noticed atypical behavior; if the child is unable to participate in regular activities, or has any of the above symptoms to a lesser degree than is necessary to exclude the child from care, the parents or guardian may be notified with a precautionary “head’s up.” The parent or guardian is not required to make immediate arrangements for pick-up, unless they wish.

In some cases it may be necessary to present a doctor's note to indicate an illness is no longer infectious.

All allergies and other special health needs (such as diabetes, asthma, etc.) must be noted on the child's Enrollment Form. Written instruction and any equipment necessary to handle special needs must be provided to the staff. The Aspen Child Development Center will provide the appropriate training for all staff in emergency administration of certain medications (ex: Epi-pen) as necessary.

**All illnesses that are contagious will be posted on the white board at the front desk.**

**All parents must sign a copy of Aspen CDC’s Health Contract.**

## **Medication**

The Aspen Child Development center prefers not to administer medication if at all possible. However, we understand that in some circumstances, it is necessary. To assure the highest standards of health and safety, the following guidelines were put in place by the Health and Human Services department for childcare licensing, and must be followed in dispensation of medication:

1. A parent or guardian must sign in all medication each day it is to be given, unless a long-term medication form is appropriate.
2. No medication will be administered to a child unless it has a current prescription label, which includes the date, child's name, physician's name, directions for administration, and the appropriate dispenser included.
3. Non-prescription medication (i.e. Tylenol, Neosporin ointment, cough medicine, vitamins, gas drops or decongestants) will be given only with a prescription label stating the child's name, doctor's name and dose. If no prescription label is on the medication it **WILL NOT BE GIVEN. Medication is not to be used to disguise symptoms of illness to avoid exclusion.**
4. Medication must be given directly to a staff member so that it may be put away in a locked space.
5. Parents may provide sunscreen and bug repellent to be applied as directed without a long-term medication form, but an authorization form must be filled out.

## **Injuries**

All of the full time staff at the Aspen Child Development Center is required to be currently certified in pediatric CPR and First Aid. All injuries that leave a mark will be reported on our "Ouch Report" to be signed by both the teacher and the parent and placed in the child's file. Parents may request a copy of any report. If a child is hurt or bitten by another child, privacy laws keep us from revealing the aggressor. Most injuries at daycare are common, non-life-threatening, and can be cleaned and treated appropriately. All head injuries are to be reported immediately to the Program Director, who will decide if the parent should be notified, and will call if necessary.

### **Serious Injuries:**

If any child receives a serious injury, has a life-threatening allergic reaction causing anaphylaxis, or there is obvious cause for calling emergency medical personnel, 911 will be called to the Center *before* the parents are alerted. Every effort will be made to contact the parents or legal guardians of the child as soon as possible. If a child must be transported by ambulance, and the parents or legal guardians have not arrived, a staff member or the Director will escort the child and remain with them until the parents or guardians have arrived.

**It is extremely important to keep all emergency information updated.**

## **Immunizations**

It is required by state licensing to have a current immunization record for all children. This information must be recorded on the Enrollment Form or a copy of the immunization record provided. Parents who choose not to immunize their child, for whatever reason, must sign a waiver to be recorded by the state and kept on file at the child care center.

Every time children receive new immunizations, please notify us with the update, or have your doctor fax them to 483-5535

## **Emergencies:**

### **Death:**

Although unthinkable; if the death of any child in our care should occur, Aspen Child Development Center will follow the Serious Injury policy; with the addition of informing the Lincoln Police Dept. and Nebraska Health & Human Services Childcare Licensing dept. immediately.

### **Lost Child:**

If at any time staff is unable to locate a child in our care, the staff will search the immediate area, get another staff member to notify the Program Director (if on a field trip, security is notified immediately) and extra staff to extend the search. Parents/Guardians will be notified by the primary staff member or the program director, and emergency personnel (911) will be called.

### **Emergency Displacement:**

If any emergency requires evacuation of the Center, the children and staff will be relocated to the *Nebraska Heart Institute at 7440 S. 91<sup>st</sup> St.* The front lobby entrance will remain unlocked & parents may contact the front desk personnel to notify Aspen staff in order to pick up their child.

## VIII. DISCIPLINE

The Aspen CDC believes that discipline means teaching appropriate behaviors. Our philosophy is to develop the relationships between teachers and your child as an individual. We work with parents to help each child as he or she grows to become self-disciplined by teaching how her/his behavior affects others. There are consistent limits based on common-sense rules, which are appropriate to the age of the child. Our primary method of discipline will be of a positive nature to include redirection and positive reinforcement.

Children learn to feel good about themselves and others in a positive, secure environment. Although an organized discipline plan is inappropriate for children under 18 months of age, toddlers and preschoolers learn to resolve problems by using words. While it is okay to feel angry and frustrated, hitting and breaking objects is not okay. Children are never humiliated, spanked, or punished in a harsh manner. The teachers will take time to talk with your child about what he or she is feeling.

### **Our guidelines for talking about inappropriate behaviors:**

1. Describe exactly **what** the inappropriate behavior was.
2. Detail exactly **why** it was not okay.
3. Give the child **alternatives** that are appropriate when they are feeling that way.
4. Give **positive reinforcement** and **encouragement** that the teacher believes in the child and knows the child can make the positive change in the future.

Your child will be encouraged and taught to use positive, non-aggressive methods of resolving conflict and reaching their own goals. If necessary, children are given supervised time away from the group to gain control of their behavior. We treat children as we expect them to treat others, with dignity and respect.

Since our goal is to be partners with you, we will keep you informed of disciplinary issues and will seek your input as we work together through the process.

Parents/Guardians will be informed anytime their child is the aggressor in hurtful, destructive or unsafe behaviors by receiving a written "incident report." Although many hurtful behaviors are developmentally appropriate or done in an exploratory manner (very young children,) all aggressive behaviors will be tracked by the Program Director. It is never our goal to exclude a child displaying aggressive behaviors (as exclusion does not improve the behaviors or benefit the child) however if and when patterns of aggressive behaviors begin to threaten the overall safety of the children in our care, Aspen Child Development Center reserves the right to terminate care. Permanent exclusion will occur only after all methods of intervention have failed, and families will be given two weeks notice in writing.

## IX. ABUSE/ NEGLECT POLICY

All staff is required by state law to report any and all suspected cases of abuse or neglect to the proper authorities. Staff is NOT required to inform the adult suspected of abuse or neglect about their suspicions or about a report to the appropriate authorities.

Aspen Child Development Center teachers and staff are held to high levels of professionalism. All teacher/staff interactions with children attending our center should be respectful and motivated by positive goal-oriented outcomes. Any teacher/staff actions that do not meet these expectations and have the affect of threatening a child's physical or emotional well being will be reported to the Program Director and Child Protective Services.

## X. NUTRITION

Our center participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. We provide nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack that comply with USDA standards for children and outside foods are discouraged. Weekly menus will be posted in the childcare center and available Friday's by noon for the next week. Every effort will be made to accommodate special dietary restrictions and allergies, although parents may be required to provide components of dietary-appropriate meals and snacks for their child in order to avoid a negative reaction. Please contact the Program Director with any ALLERGIES to FOOD.

The center provides Members Mark (Sam's Club) Lipil with Iron formula (a generic form of Enfamil Lipil with Iron infant formula) and iron-fortified infant cereal. Infant foods for children 4 months to 12 months are prepared and pureed on site. Do to allergy concerns, we ask that parents introduce new solids at home first, then let us know which infant foods are appropriate for their child. If a parent or guardian chooses to use a formula, cereal or food different than the ones we provide, we must have their consent or waiver on file for our records. We encourage the benefits of breast milk for infants, and will work with breast feeding moms to accommodate their schedule.

### ***(Nutrition Continued)***

Our menus have been prepared by a registered dietician and are prepared on site daily. While we do our best to maintain the menu provided it is subject to change without notice due to the delivery and availability of food. All changes will be posted on the white board at the front desk.

## **XI. COMMUNICATION**

### **Daily Communication**

Aspen recognizes the importance of daily communication between parents/guardians and the childcare teachers. The infant and toddler teachers provide daily written notes regarding each child's daily experience. Note boards outside each room let others know where the class is at all times. Teachers will inform parents/guardians of any accidents or unusual incidents that may have occurred each day. *Please note that any specific communication that should be handled confidentially should be relayed directly to the Program Director or to your child's teacher.* The Parents/guardians are encouraged to keep the Program Director and teachers informed of significant events or changes in their child's life. Information from parents is welcomed as we plan activities and strive to meet the varied needs of the children.

### **Addressing Parent/Guardian Concerns**

Although Aspen Child Development teachers and staff make every effort to provide excellent childcare, parents/guardians may have concerns regarding that care. We respectfully request the following steps are followed to address concerns about the quality of child care, operating procedures, etc.

1. Parents/guardians are encouraged to first talk with the teacher in their child's classroom. The teachers will discuss all concerns with the Program Director, and the parents will be contacted with the follow-through results.
2. Parents are always encouraged to contact the Program Director with ANY questions or concerns about our program or staff. Steps will be taken to address any issues, with follow-through for the parent.
3. In the event concerns are not resolved, parents/guardians may then contact the Aspen CDC owner, Trixie Schmidt, at 483-5511.

Following these steps promptly will assist in expedient resolution of problems. Parents/guardians are asked to initiate the first step within 24 hours of an identified concern. Serious concerns, which represent safety or health issues, should be immediately brought to the attention of the Program Director or the owner at **(402) 483-5511**. In many cases, they can be reached by cell phone; every teacher has access to these numbers.

### **Cubbies/Mailboxes**

Cubbies or baskets are provided for each child for items such as a change of clothes, special nap "lovies," treasures, completed projects, etc. Separate "mailboxes" are provided in the front hall for newsletters, notes and billing statements. Parents/guardians are encouraged to check both areas daily.

**Thank You for choosing Aspen Child Development Center!**

**Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions regarding policy or the early education programs offered here.**

**We look forward to getting to know your family!**