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# Boone Beginnings Early Childhood & Family Development Center **FAMILY HANDBOOK**



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## WELCOME

Dear Boone Beginnings Early Childhood and Family Development Center Family,

We would like to welcome you to Boone Beginnings Early Childhood and Family Development Center (Boone Beginnings)! We are so excited that you are a part of our family! We look forward to a wonderful year working together to provide the best education and experiences to your child/children. This handbook has been prepared especially for you with the hope that it will provide your family with a feeling of excitement and security. After reading through our handbook please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions, or if there is anything you need further explained. This handbook should be kept throughout your child's time with us as it will serve as a great reference to you.

Thank you for choosing Boone Beginnings. We look forward to providing your child with a caring and enriching environment.

Sincerely,

*Mattaya Addison*

Mattaya Addison  
Center Director

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## ABOUT US

### **Mission Statement**

Our mission is to nurture, guide, and challenge our children and engage the families and communities we serve in a sustainable high-quality environment.

### **Vision Points**

- *Child-Centered:* Quality care, trust and safety are the cornerstone for the services provided to children at the Boone Beginnings Family and Child Development Center. Research based developmentally appropriate practices will be utilized under the direction of a qualified director. We will implement curriculum that encompasses academic, social, and developmental growth, ensuring children are adequately prepared to begin their school careers.
- *Family-Focused:* Family is the primary influence in a child's life. We are committed to working collaboratively with the parents and children we serve through consistent communication and opportunities for parenting education, promoting best practices in early childhood development. We aim to ensure that parents feel supported and encouraged in raising their children.
- *Business Partnerships:* For today's working families, access to reliable and affordable care is essential. It offers parents peace of mind knowing their child is safe and secure, allowing working parents to fully focus on their workday. Additionally, high quality care is top priority for families with young children and can be used as a recruitment tool for local businesses.
- *Community Development:* The strength of our community lies in the people that live in and around Boone County. The support we will provide our families extends to the childcare providers in our communities through trainings and curriculum resources. Additionally, we commit to provide a space and opportunities for community groups to utilize the Boone Beginnings Family and Child Development Center for activities that may further support our children and families.

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### ***Definition of Family***

In this handbook we refer to family as a parent, legal guardian, sponsor, or anyone else who provides for the well-being, best-interest, and responsibility of the child in our care.

### ***Hours and Days of Operation***

The center is open Monday through Friday, 7:30am to 5:30pm.

The center is closed on the following holidays:

- **New Year's Day**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Independence Day**
- **Labor Day**
- **Thanksgiving Day**
- **Friday after Thanksgiving**
- **Christmas Eve**
- **Christmas Day**

If a holiday falls on a Saturday, the previous Friday may be observed. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday may be observed.

In addition, we are closed four full days in the year for staff to attend professional development training. You will be notified by the center with enough notice of these professional development days.

### ***Admission & Enrollment***

Based on the availability and openings, our facility admits children 6 weeks to preschool age. Families interested in enrolling their child(ren) should call the Center Director and arrange for a visit or complete a pre application located on the website and the Center Director will contact you with more information.

#### ***Waiting List Fee:***

A \$50.00 NON-refundable per child fee is needed to have your child/children on the waiting list at Boone Beginnings. **Boone Beginnings will contact you when a space becomes available for your child.**

#### ***Enrollment Fee:***

When a spot for your child is available, you will receive a verbal or written communication. Upon receiving the notification, you will be asked to submit the cost of one week of care to hold the spot as well as fill out and return the Enrollment Agreement Form. This fee will be applied to the child's first week of care. If you send the enrollment fee and then DO NOT take the spot, the enrollment fee is NON-refundable.

All enrollment forms must be completed prior to your child's first day of attendance.

Children are admitted without regard to race culture, sex, religion, national origin, or disability. We do not discriminate based on special needs as long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided.

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### ***Orientation***

We request that a parent visit with their child in the classroom prior to the child's actual start date. In most cases, one or two visits are best; please speak with the Center Director about your child's prestart date visit(s).

Completion of the enrollment rate agreement must be completed by a parent prior to your child's first visit day.

During the first few weeks your child will be adjusting to a new place and many new faces. We are interested in making this adjustment as easy as possible for both children and families. Options for easing your child into the program should be discussed with the Center Director and Teachers.

### ***Inclusion***

Boone Beginnings believes that children of all ability levels are entitled to the same opportunities for participation, acceptance, and belonging in childcare. We will make every reasonable accommodation to encourage full and active participation of all children in our program based on his/her individual capabilities and needs. We welcome early intervention specialists to support children while they are at Boone Beginnings.

If your child has an identified special need, please contact the Center Director.

### ***Employee Screening***

All Boone Beginnings employees are screened through the child abuse/neglect center registry, the State Patrol sex offender registry, and have criminal background checks completed prior to working with children. Additionally, a federal mandate requires national criminal history record checks through fingerprinting by the Nebraska State Patrol.

### ***Non-Discrimination***

At Boone Beginnings equal educational opportunities are available for all children, without regard to race, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, disability, or parent/provider political beliefs, marital status, sexual orientation or special needs, or any other consideration made unlawful by federal, state, or local laws. Educational programs are designed to meet the varying needs of all students.

### ***Confidentiality***

Unless we receive your written consent, information regarding your child will not be released with the exception of that required by our regulatory and partnering agencies. All records concerning children at our program are confidential.

### ***Communication & Family Partnership***

Our team believes good communication between providers and parents is key to ensuring quality care is always being provided. Since staff's days are devoted to caring for children, it is usually not feasible to have a long discussion during regular program hours. If a situation requires a longer discussion, kindly arrange for an appointment.

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**Daily Communications.** As a parent, you now have access to our communication app, Procure, where you will be able to see your child’s daily schedules, activities, milestones, photos, and videos in one place. You will also be able to use the app to communicate with your child’s teachers.

**Bulletin Boards.** Located throughout the center, bulletin boards provide center news, upcoming events, staff changes, holiday closing dates, announcements, etc.

**Newsletters.** Monthly newsletters provide center news, events, announcements, etc.

**Email.** We encourage you to provide an email address that you use regularly so that we may send you announcements, event invitations, newsletters, and general updates.

**Family Visits.** Family participation is encouraged. Visit our classrooms, volunteer, come along on a field trip, or eat a meal with your child. Signing in is required for the safety and protection of our children. Each visitor must wear a visitor’s badge while on premises and sign-out upon leaving.

**Family Night.** Family nights are scheduled on a regular basis. These nights may include snacks, drinks and fun filled age-appropriate activities for families. Family Nights allow families and children time to share, learn, and have fun. Families have an opportunity to be a part of their child’s learning experience and connect with other families.

### ***Family Activities***

Each family is a child’s first teacher. We value families as partners in the growth and development of children in our program. We encourage parents and other family members to be involved in the program, visit children’s classrooms, participate in events, and provide feedback on the program. We offer a variety of ways in which families can participate in helping us establish and reach our program goals.

### ***Open Door Policy***

We are delighted to have family members participate in our program. Parents/Guardians are welcome to visit the program any time during regular program hours. The infant room welcomes parents/guardians to nurse or feed their infants. There is also a private feeding room for parents who choose to use it as well.

Open Door Policy does not mean the doors will be unlocked. For the safety and protection of the children, external doors will be kept locked at all times.

### ***Grievance Policy***

Open and honest communication between families and the center is an essential component of a high-quality early childhood program. We want you to be confident that your child is being well cared for and is having a quality experience.

If there is ever a time you have a concern regarding your child, we want to encourage you to address your concern to your child’s teacher first. Conversations can be addressed via in person at drop off, pick up, a scheduled time, or over the phone. Procure messages are reserved for providing parents of quick reminders or sharing information regarding the child’s day. Teachers will work with parents right away to address concerns and come to solutions. Teachers have at



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most 24 hours to communicate back to the parents regarding the issue at hand in the event that the Teacher is not able to respond right away. If additional help is needed, either party may ask for the assistance from the Center Director after an attempt to resolve the issue at hand has been attempted.

The Center Director will be involved right away if the matter is regarding an immediate safety concern.

If you have a concern regarding some aspect of the program or policy, please contact the Center Director.

### ***Child to Staff Ratios***

Children are supervised at all times. All caregivers receive scheduled breaks which reduce fatigue and help to ensure alertness.

We maintain the following standards for child to staff ratios:

<b>Age</b>	<b>Child to Staff</b>	<b>Maximum Group Size</b>
6 weeks to 18 months	4 to 1	8
18 months to 3 years	6 to 1	12
3 years	10 to 1	20
4 and 5 years	12 to 1	24

### ***Publicity***

Occasionally, photos will be taken of the children at the center for use within the center or on our website and or social media page. Written permission will be obtained prior to use of photographs.

## **CURRICULA & LEARNING**

### ***Learning Environment***

We provide a rich learning environment with a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate to the specific ages in each classroom. We have a flexible daily routine that allows children to advance at their own pace. We strongly believe that learning happens through play. Learning and exploring are hands-on and are facilitated through interest areas. Our teachers understand children's cognitive, social/emotional, linguistic, and physical development to ensure a safe and stimulating classroom environment where children are actively engaged and encouraged to succeed. Our program is designed to enhance children's development in the following areas: creativity, self-expression, decision-making, problem-solving, responsibility, independence, and reasoning. We encourage openness to that which is different from us, and the ability to work and play with others.

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## ***Curriculum & Assessment***

Boone Beginnings uses the Gee Whiz curriculum, which focuses on engaging experiences through ten developmental areas with the flexibility to make adaptations to meet the needs of the whole child. As part of this curriculum, we gather information about each child's developmental abilities and evaluate progress so we can modify and adjust what we are doing in our classroom to deliver the best individualized instruction for each child. This evaluation is communicated to families periodically during the school year using various formal and informal tools, forms, and resources.

It is Boone Beginnings belief that assessment of young children should be purposeful, developmentally appropriate, and take place in the natural setting by familiar adults. The results will be used for planning experiences for the children and to guide instruction. A family's culture and child's experiences outside the center setting are recognized as being an important piece of the child's growth and development. All results will be kept confidential, placed in each child's file, and stored in a secure filing cabinet.

Children are assessed in the following ways:

- ❖ Ages and Stages- Forms are filled out by parents and staff three times a year, August, December and April.
- ❖ Child portfolios are organized by the teaching staff and include observational data and child work samples collected on an ongoing basis.
- ❖ Families are asked to contribute information about their child's progress. Young children often show different skills in different settings. Working together, the teaching staff and families can gather a complete picture of a child's growth and development.

## ***Developmental Screening***

Boone Beginnings uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire, Third Edition (ASQ-3). To coincide with curriculum-based assessment(s), we monitor each child's achievement of developmental milestones, share observations with parents/guardians, and provide resource information as needed for further screenings, evaluations, and early intervention and treatment. The developmental screening process is a collaborative one, involving parents/guardians and done in conjunction with the child's primary care provider. The ASQ-3 is completed by the parent and provided to the child's primary care provider.

## ***Daily Schedule***

Flexible daily schedules will provide your child with the structure they enjoy. These schedules allow children to anticipate what is happening in their day, ease children through transitions, and achieve their goals. Learning is both formal and informal. Play is planned for every day. Your child will have the opportunity for the following types of activities every day:

- ❖ Group times, including large and small group learning opportunities
- ❖ Meals
- ❖ Choice time
- ❖ Math, science, art, and literacy opportunities
- ❖ Quiet time

Lesson plans for each week are posted in the classroom showing how these activities are incorporated into the daily schedule.

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### ***Outside Play***

Weather permitting; we conduct 30 minutes supervised outdoor play and/or walking trips around the neighborhood 2 times a day for all children. Children are accounted for at all times. A permission statement for participation in “offsite” walking trips is included in the enrollment package.

The Nursery will only go outside if the outside temperature is above 55 degrees and below 85. Older infants, (8 months -18 months) will only go outside if the outside temperature is 30 or above. Toddler and Preschool will go out at temperatures 20 and above for a limited amount of time.

### ***Sunscreen***

Sunscreen will be applied to children during the months of April through September when the UV index is a 3 or above. Parent’s will provide at minimum SPF 30 sunscreen for their child, in the original container, labeled with the child’s name. We ask that parent’s bring lotion sunscreen and not spray sunscreen. Spray sunscreen can often create spotty coverage and risks getting on the floor and shelving, which can ruin them. Parent’s may bring sunscreen sticks if they choose so to apply to a child’s face.

Sunscreen will be applied at least 20-30 minutes before going outside and reapplied every two hours especially if the child is sweating or playing in water. If parents bring their child later in the day and your classroom is going to be outside, we ask that parent’s apply sunscreen *before* dropping off to allow time for the sunscreen to set.

Sunscreen is not recommended for children under 6 months of age. Therefore, we will not apply sunscreen to an infant under 6 months of age unless provided with written consent and the parent has first applied sunscreen at home. Infants will be kept out of direct sunlight at all times.

### ***Transitions***

Your child’s transition in childcare should be a positive and exciting learning adventure. As your child grows, he/she will transition from one classroom to another. Here at the center, we strive to make these transitions as stress-free as possible. You will be notified in advance if your child will be transitioning to another room. Both classrooms will work together to provide your child with visits to the new classroom to avoid any anxiety.

### ***Transition Guidelines***

Below are some of the room transitions we follow. These are meant to be a guideline to get your child ready from one room to the next.

- **6 months**
  - Begin introducing pureed foods
  - Introduced to a sippy cup at mealtimes with water or milk if preferred
  - Pacifiers are only utilized during naps
- **10 months**
  - Begin to introduce solid foods
  - Eating breakfast, lunch, and snack

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- Weather appropriate clothing and shoes, as children will be going outside more and more
  - **12 Months**
    - Child is ready to eat all meals from center menu
    - Once children are proficient in walking, they must come everyday in shoes and wear all day
    - Transition to drinking cow's milk or an approved CACFP substitution in a sippy cup with meals
    - Begin to eliminate bottles throughout a child's day
  - **15 Months**
    - Children will be served milk at mealtimes only, eliminating all bottles
  - **16 months**
    - Children will begin to utilize an open cup during meals
    - Children will begin to utilize a small plate during meals
  - **18 months**
    - Transitions to nap without the use of a pacifier
  - **Naps**
    - We follow the following in regard to dropping naps:
      - Up until 6 months= 3 naps
      - 6-8 months= 2 naps
      - Between 12-15 months= 1 nap (the aim here is to drop the morning nap and transition to one long midday nap)
    - Children will move begin to transition from 3 naps a day to one
      - Morning Nap- 9:15-9:45 (half hour max)
      - Mid-Day Nap- 12:00-1:30
      - Afternoon Nap- 3:30-4:30
      - Staff will work with parents to eliminate one nap first, either morning or afternoon nap.
    - Children will adjust to staying on cots or in cribs during the afternoon scheduled nap period (12:00-1:30). Children awake before nap is over will be provided quiet activities
    - Staff will begin to work with the child to fall asleep in their crib or cot on their own or by having their back rubbed.

### ***Multiculturalism***

Multiculturalism is vital for all children because it sets social goals and promotes respect for all people and the environment we inhabit. We utilize books, music, games, and a wide range of activities as aids to teach our children respect for our world and the diversity of life upon it.

### ***Celebrations***

Our holiday policy encourages an enhanced understanding of and respect for different cultures and beliefs of children, families, staff, and community.

If you would like your child to bring treats to the center for a celebration, we just ask that you bring healthy snacks such as fruit, yogurt, crackers, etc.

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## ***Rest Time***

Infants sleep according to their own schedule and are put to sleep on their backs. Staff directly observe infants by sight and sound at all times and check on sleeping infants every 10 minutes. Infants 6 weeks -12 months will be placed in a crib to nap. We encourage families to provide a blanket for your child to utilize throughout the day. Per licensing requirements blankets are not able to go into the crib. Once a child is 12 months, a child will sleep on a cot and is able to have a blanket and pillow.

- **Naps for Infants**
  - We follow the following in regard to dropping naps:
    - Up until 6 months= 3 naps
    - 6-8 months= 2 naps
    - Between 12-15 months= 1 nap (the aim here is to drop the morning nap and transition to one long midday nap)
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  - Staff will begin to work with the child to fall asleep in their crib or cot on their own or by having their back rubbed.

After lunch, all children participate in a quiet rest time. Children are not required to sleep and may be given quiet activities.

## ***Toilet Training***

When you feel your child is ready for toilet training, we ask that you begin teaching at home. Learning to use the toilet is an important step in a child's development. Readiness to control bladder and bowel functions is as individual as each child. Although there is no definite age when readiness occurs, children around 2 years old often begin to show muscle control and have the language and intellectual maturity to understand the toilet concept.

### **Children are most likely ready to begin toilet training when:**

- *They show a preference for clean diapers and when soiled ask to be changed.*
- *They stay dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day or are dry after naps.*
- *Their bowel movements become regular and predictable.*
- *Facial expressions, posture, or words reveal that your child is about to urinate or have a bowel movement.*

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- *They can walk to and from the bathroom and help undress.*
  - *They ask to use the toilet or potty chair, or they ask to wear underwear.*

We will use diapers until your child remains dry for **two weeks** throughout the day, can announce that he/she has to use the bathroom and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement. It is then you can bring your child in underwear and be sure to let staff know.

We will follow through and encourage your child while they are in our care. Daily communication between the parent and staff is very important.

- *The child must be showing signs of readiness and able to control their bladder and bowel movements.*
- *The child must be kept in a diaper, pull-ups, vinyl training pants, or underwear.*
- *Please keep in mind that the high activity level here at the Center may distract your child from responding to the urge to use the potty more so than at home.*
- *Staff will never put a child on the potty unless the child is willing.*
- *Staff cannot wash out soiled clothing per regulations set by the Center for Disease Control. They are required to put soiled clothing in a plastic bag for you to take home and wash.*
- *Please send them to the center with loose fitting clothing that your child can manage independently. Try to avoid tight clothing, pants with snaps or buttons, overalls, and tight leggings.*
- *The child will be encouraged to use the potty every 30 minutes.*
- *Parents are required to supply the diaper/pull-up or vinyl training pants and extra clothing (including socks and shoes) daily.*
- *A pull-up or diaper will be put on the child if 3 accidents occur within a 2-hour timeframe.*
- *We encourage parents to communicate with your child's teacher throughout the potty-training process.*

Potty training should be a positive experience for everyone involved. It should only take a short period of time when your child is truly ready. Problems arise when adults (parents and caregivers) do not pay attention to the child's lack of readiness. There is no right or wrong age to potty training a child. It should only be determined on an individual basis, much like learning to walk. No two children will potty train in exactly the same time frame or even in the same manner.

### ***Cloth Diapers***

Boone Beginnings allows reusable (cloth) diapers with the following guidelines. Adequate diapers should be provided daily. They must be clearly labeled, and an airtight, watertight container must be provided for soiled diapers. Diapers must be picked up daily.

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## **GUIDANCE**

### ***General Procedure***

Boone Beginnings is committed to each child's success in learning within a caring, responsive, and safe environment that is free of discrimination, violence, and bullying. Our center works to ensure that all children have the opportunity and support to develop to their fullest potential and share a personal and meaningful bond with other children and teachers.

Thoughtful direction and planning are used to prevent problems and encourage appropriate behavior. Communicating consistent, clear rules and involving children in problem solving help children develop their ability to become self-disciplined. We encourage children to be fair, to be respectful of other people, of property, and to learn to understand the results of their actions.

We have created a guidance and challenging behavior policy that reflects our philosophy of positive guidance with children. A copy of this policy is provided below:

### ***Guidance and Challenging Behavior Policy***

Children are guided to treat each other and adults with self-control and kindness. Each student at Boone Beginnings has a right to:

- Learn in a safe and friendly place
- Be treated with respect
- Receive the help and support of caring adults

### **We Do:**

- ❖ Communicate to children using positive statements.
- ❖ Communicate with children on their level.
- ❖ Talk with children in a calm quiet manner.
- ❖ Explain acceptable behavior to children.
- ❖ Give attention to children for positive behavior.
- ❖ Praise and encourage the children.
- ❖ Reason with and set limits for the children.
- ❖ Apply rules consistently.
- ❖ Model appropriate behavior.
- ❖ Set up the classroom environment to prevent problems.
- ❖ Provide alternatives and redirect children to acceptable activity.
- ❖ Give children opportunities to make choices and solve problems.
- ❖ Help children talk out problems and think of solutions.
- ❖ Listen to children and respect the children's needs, desires, and feelings.
- ❖ Provide appropriate words to help solve conflicts.
- ❖ Use storybooks and discussion to work through common conflicts.

### **We Do Not:**

- ❖ Inflict corporal punishment in any manner upon a child. (Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force to the body as a discipline measure. Physical force to the

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body includes, but is not limited to spanking, hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, pushing, pulling, or slapping.)

- ❖ Use any strategy that hurts, shames, or belittles a child which includes sarcastic humor.
- ❖ Use any strategy that threatens, intimidates, or forces a child.
- ❖ Use food as a form of reward or punishment.
- ❖ Use or withhold physical activity as a punishment.
- ❖ Shame or punish a child if a bathroom accident occurs.
- ❖ Embarrass any child in front of others.
- ❖ Compare children.
- ❖ Place children in a locked and/or dark room.
- ❖ Leave any child alone, unattended or without supervision.
- ❖ Allow discipline of a child by other children.
- ❖ Criticize, make fun of, or otherwise belittle a child's parents, families, or ethnic groups.

When a child becomes verbally or physically aggressive, we intervene immediately to protect all of the children. Our usual approach to helping children with challenging behaviors is to show them how to solve problems using appropriate interactions. When discipline is necessary, it is clear, consistent, and understandable to the child. We maintain a zero tolerance to bullying. If you have any concerns about this at any time, please report it to the Director of the Center.

### ***Notification of Behavioral Issues to Families***

If a child's behavior/circumstance is of concern, communication will begin with the parents as the first step to understanding the child's individual needs and challenges. We will work together to evaluate these needs in the context of our program.

On rare occasions, a child's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for care and is at the discretion of the Center Director.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

### ***Important Notice***

Payment is due by Monday for the upcoming 2 weeks attendance. Payments are biweekly and can only be paid through automatic bank withdrawal through Procure.

All payment and fee processing will be completed through Procure. The Center Director will oversee monitoring tuition and other fees and contacting families regarding payment issues. If you have a question or concern regarding a payment or fee, please contact the Center Director.

### ***Tuition Rates***

The most current tuition rates can be found on our website: [www.boonebeginnings.com/rates](http://www.boonebeginnings.com/rates).

Families contract for a weekly schedule as indicated on the Parent Enrollment Agreement. Payment for this contracted schedule is required every two weeks year-round whether or not your child attends; this enables us to pay teachers a stable salary every week all year. No credits are given for sick or vacation days, holidays, staff training closure or closure due to inclement weather.



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Tuition fees are subject to change each year. Parents will receive notice and resign contracts when such changes occur.

### ***Deposit***

You will be contacted via email or telephone when we have a space for your child. A deposit equal to the first week of tuition is required to secure the guaranteed slot. This deposit is applied to the first week of care. The deposit can be paid by check or ACH payment and is non-refundable.

Additionally, we will also send you our enrollment agreement form to have you complete and send in with the deposit. We cannot guarantee the space until we receive the enrollment agreement form and the deposit.

### ***Payment***

Payment is always due in advance with no deduction for any absences, holidays, or closures due to inclement weather, power outages, or other situations beyond our control. Payment is due bi-weekly on every other Monday, as outlined in the *Parent Enrollment Agreement*

A non-refundable administrative fee of \$25 is due annually in June. The administrative fee is utilized towards maintaining child's file, updating/maintaining database system, printing parent handbooks, and updating enrollment paperwork

### ***State Aid***

In Nebraska, this is referred to as Title 20. The State of Nebraska, through several programs, provides financial aid on a needs basis to cover childcare. The state pays the funds directly to the childcare provider. The provider voluntarily enters into a contract with the state to provide this service. Boone Beginnings is accepting Title 20.

### ***Late Payment Charges***

Late payments can pose serious problems for our programs and as a result, the business does not have the latitude to allow families to accrue a balance equal to more than one week of tuition.

**Late payments will result in the imposition of late payment fees. Failure to pay childcare payments will result in childcare services being terminated.**

If payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$25 will be added to your next tuition payment for each week that it is late.

Any payments made will be applied to the oldest charges and late fees may still apply if the account is not paid in full by the next tuition due date.

### ***Returned Checks/Rejected Transaction Charges***

All returned checks or rejected ACH (automatic withdraw) transactions will be charged a fee of \$25. This charge may be collected electronically. Two or more returned checks or rejected transactions will result in your account being placed on "cash only" status.

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### ***Late Pick-up Fees***

Late pick-up is not a normal program option and will only be considered as an exceptional occurrence. Late fees of \$1 per minute will be assessed beginning at 5:30 PM and will be due upon arrival. **Repeated late pick up may result in childcare services being terminated.**

### ***Other Fees***

- From time-to-time there will be additional fees associated with special activities or field trips. These fees are due prior to the event, activity, or trip.

### ***Absence***

If your child is going to be absent or arrive later than their normal time, please call the director or send a message to your child's teacher. We will be concerned about your child if we do not hear from you and want to ensure adequate meal counts for the day.

### ***Termination***

We reserve the right to terminate your child's care for the following reasons:

- Failure to pay
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Physical or verbal abuse of a person or property
- Lack of compliance with handbook regulations

We appreciate as much advance notice as possible when withdrawing your child. Parents agree to give two weeks' notice before removing their child from the program.

### ***Extreme Weather***

Should severe weather or other conditions (i.e., snow, storms, floods, tornadoes, blizzards, loss of power, loss of water) prevent us from opening on time or at all, notification to the families will be announced through our parent app and Facebook.

If it becomes necessary to close early, we will contact you or your emergency contacts as soon as possible. Your child's early pick-up is your responsibility to arrange.

## **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP**

### ***General Procedure***

Parents are responsible for bringing their child into the building each morning. Please check your child in with our check in system and then take them to their classroom. We open at 7:30 am. Please do not drop off your child prior to opening, center doors will open at 7:30am.

We close at 5:30 PM. When picking up your child, please make sure to use the system to check them out. Check your child's cubby, daily, for any items that need to go home, as well as notes from the teacher. Please allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, and leave by closing time.

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### *Cell Phone Usage*

The times you spend in the center dropping off and picking up your child are the primary windows of time we have to communicate with you about your child. In order to make the best use of these opportunities, as well as to be attentive to your child and other children, we ask that you please not use your cell phone while visiting the center.

### *Authorized & Unauthorized Pick-up*

Your child will only be released to you or those persons you have listed as Emergency and Release Contacts and Authorized Pick Ups. If you want a person who is not identified as an Emergency and Release Contact or Authorized Pick Up to pick-up your child, you must notify us in advance, in writing. Your child will not be released without prior written authorization. The person picking up your child will be required to show a picture ID as verification. Please notify your pick-up person of our policy.

If a child has not been picked up after closing and we have not heard from you, attempts will be made to contact you, and the contacts listed as Emergency and Release Contacts. Provisions will be made for someone to stay with your child as long as possible, but if after one hour we have not been able to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency and Release Contact, we will call the local child protective services agency.

### *Child Custody*

Without a court document, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We are legally bound to respect the wishes of the parent/guardian with legal custody based on a certified copy of the most recent court order, active restraining order, or court-ordered visitation schedule. We will not accept the responsibility of deciding which parent/guardian has legal custody where there is no court documentation.

### *Safety*

If Boone Beginnings' staff have reasonable cause to suspect that any person picking up a child is under the influence of drugs, alcohol, or is physically or emotionally impaired in any way that may endanger the child, Boone Beginnings' staff may call the police to prevent potential harm to your child. Reoccurring situations may result in the release of your child from the program.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

### *What to Bring*

- **Infants:** 2-4 clean bottles for a day's use, diapers, wipes, and at least 2 changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be labeled and dated.
- **Toddlers:** 2-4 clean bottles for a day's use (if applicable), diapers, wipes, and at least two changes of clothes per day. All bottles must be labeled and dated.
- **Older Toddlers:** at least two changes of clothes or more per day if going through the toilet training program.
- **Preschoolers:** at least one change of clothes, socks and shoes.

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Please label all items brought from home with your child's name (i.e., clothes, bottles, diapers, pacifiers, blanket, etc.) to prevent items from becoming misplaced or lost. We are not responsible for lost or damaged items. Notices will be sent home when your child's supplies are low.

We ask parents to bring these items to your child's orientation. This will help your first day run smoothly.

### ***Cubbies***

Upon enrollment each child will be assigned a "cubby." Cubbies are labeled with your child's name and photo. Please check your child's cubby on a daily basis for items that need to be taken home.

### ***Toys from Home***

We request that you do not allow your child to bring toys from home into the center unless they are part of a show-and-tell activity.

## **NUTRITION**

### ***Foods Brought from Home***

We request that you do not bring food from home into our center unless there is preapproval/doctor's note for certain dietary needs for the child.

### ***Food Prepared at the Center***

Food prepared at the center will be properly planned, prepared, and portioned according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/>) and the state requirements for food service. The center will provide breakfast, lunch, and an afternoon snack to all rooms.

A well-timed snack can even out spikes in hunger and provide a much-needed energy boost between meals. We know that the Toddler and Preschool classrooms may need a mid-morning snack to help carry them over until lunch. The mid-morning snack will rely on parent donations to the classroom. Each classroom will supply a list of healthy snacks that can be brought in for the children.

### ***Food Allergies***

If your child has a food allergy, you must notify us in writing so that we can make appropriate substitutions. The written notification should list appropriate food substitutions and must be updated at least annually.

Food allergies can be life threatening and each child with a food allergy should have an action plan for emergency care completed by the family physician.

### ***Mealtime***

At mealtime the tables are set with real plates and silverware, and the food is placed in small bowls from which the children can help themselves, family style dining. Children are encouraged

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to serve themselves from food passed around each table. Good table manners are modeled and encouraged. Weekly menus are posted for viewing by parents/caregivers.

### ***Infant Feedings***

Infant feedings follow these procedures:

- Infants will be held for bottle-feeding until able to hold his or her own bottle. Bottles will never be propped.
- Infants are fed “on cue” to the extent possible (at least every 4 hours and usually not more than hourly) and by a consistent caregiver/teacher.
- Solid foods will only be introduced after a consultation with the child’s family. Solid foods should be introduced to the child first at home, before being introduced at the center.

### **Breastfeeding Policy**

#### **Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.**

Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area provides an electrical outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water.

#### **A refrigerator and freezer space will be made available for storage of expressed breastmilk.**

Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the center refrigerator and/or freezer. Mothers should provide their own containers. According to Nebraska Child Care Licensing Rules and Regulations all breastmilk must be clearly labeled with the child’s name, date received, and date expressed and date frozen if applicable.

#### **Staff shall be trained in handling human milk.**

All childcare center staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of breast milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers. Universal precautions are not required in handling human milk. If the child hasn’t finished the bottle and some breastmilk remains, we talk with the mother about what her preference is. If the baby shows hunger sign within 1 hour again, we can re-offer the unfinished bottle. If the milk isn’t consumed after that 1 hour we can return the breastmilk back to the mother if they wish or if the mother doesn’t want the leftover breast milk back, we will dispose of it.

#### **Breastfeeding employees shall be provided flexible breaks to accommodate breastfeeding or milk expression.**

Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breastmilk for their children. The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave must be used, or the employee can come in a little earlier or leave a little late to make up the time.

### ***Children 24 Months and Older***

- No child shall go more than 4 hours without a meal or snack being provided.

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- Children are encouraged to self-feed to the extent that they have the skills. Children are encouraged, but not forced to eat a variety of foods.
  - Round, firm foods that pose a choking hazard for children less than 4 years of age are not permitted. These foods include, but are not limited to hot dogs, whole grapes, peanuts, popcorn, thickly spread peanut butter and hard candy.

## HEALTH

### *Immunizations*

**It is required that you provide a copy of your child's current and updated immunization record for your child before their first day.** Immunizations are required according to the current schedule recommended by the U.S. Public Health Services and the American Academy of Pediatrics, [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org). Every January, we check with the public health department or the American Academy of Pediatrics for updates of the recommended immunization schedule. Our state regulations regarding attendance of children who are not immunized due to religious or medical reasons are followed. Unimmunized children are excluded during outbreaks of vaccine preventable illness as directed by the state health department.

All caregivers, teachers, and staff are encouraged to be current with all immunizations routinely recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

### *Illness*

We understand that it is difficult for a family member to leave or miss work, but to protect other children; you may not bring a sick child to the center. The center has the right to refuse a child who appears ill. You will be called and asked to retrieve your child if your child exhibits any of the following symptoms. We will try to keep your child comfortable, but he/she will be excluded from all activities until you arrive.

This is not an all-inclusive list.

- Illness that poses a risk of spread of harmful diseases to others.
- Illness that prevents your child from participating in activities.
- Illness that results in greater need for care than we can provide.
- Fever (101°F or higher by any method) accompanied by other symptoms.
- Diarrhea- Exclusion is required for all diapered children whose frequency exceeds 2 stools or more; whose stool is not contained in the diaper. Toilet-trained children if the diarrhea is causing "accidents". Exclusion is required if stools contain blood or mucus.
- Vomiting – 2 or more occasions within the past 24 hours or bloody.
- Rash with fever, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- Pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge, until on antibiotics for 24 hours.
- Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Hand, foot and mouth, until 24 hours of being fever free and open blisters have healed.
- Strep throat, until 24 hours after treatment.
- Head lice, until treatment and all nits are removed.
- Scabies, until 24 hours after treatment.

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- Chickenpox, until all lesions have dried and crusted.
  - Pertussis (Whooping Cough), until 5 days of antibiotics.
  - Hepatitis A virus, until one week after immune globulin has been administered.
  - Tuberculosis, until a health professional indicates the child is not infectious.
  - Rubella, until 7 days after the rash appears.
  - Mumps, until 5 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
  - Measles, until 4 days after onset of rash.
  - Has a physician or other health professionals written order that individual be separated from others.

Children who have been ill may return when:

- They are free of fever, vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours.
- They have been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours.
- They are able to participate comfortably in all usual activities.
- They are free of open, oozing skin conditions and drooling (not related to teething) unless:
  - The child's physician signs a note stating that the child's condition is not contagious, and,
  - The involved areas can be covered by a bandage without seepage or drainage through the bandage.
- If a child had a reportable communicable disease, a physician's note stating that the child is no longer contagious and may return to our care is required.

### ***Allergy Prevention***

Families are expected to notify us regarding children's food and environmental allergies. Families of children with diagnosed allergies are required to provide us a letter detailing the child's symptoms, reactions, treatments, and care. A list of the children's allergies will be posted in the classrooms and kitchen. We are trained to familiarize ourselves and consult the list to avoid the potential of exposing children to substances to which they have known allergies.

### ***Medications***

Medication can be stored and administered at Boone Beginnings. Assuring the health and safety of all children in our center is a team effort by the childcare provider, family, and health care provider. This is particularly true when medication is necessary to the child's participation in childcare. Therefore, an understanding of each of our responsibilities, policies, and procedures concerning medication administration is critical to meeting that goal.

The following guidelines to administering medication is laid out in our **Medication Administration Policy and Procedure** that each family signs prior to enrollment.

Records of all medication given to a child are completed in ink and are signed by the staff designated to give the medication. These records are maintained in the center. Samples of the forms used include:

1. Authorization to Give Medicine
2. Receiving Medication Form

3. Medication Log
4. Medication Incident Report

Delivery of medication shall be done in accordance with the “5 Rights” as required in Nebraska Statutes 71-6718 through 6742. These are:

1. The right drug
2. The right recipient
3. In the right dose
4. By the right route
5. At the right time

***Temperatures***

When staff suspect a fever of a child the following procedure will be followed. Staff will utilize a thermometer (temporal or ear) to take child’s temperature. If a child was napping or partaking in physical activity the child must be awake or abstained from physical activity for at least 30 minutes before the temperature is taken.

Three temperature 15 minutes apart must be taken and recorded. The last temperature must be taken by a different staff member and on a different devise. All three temperatures must be above 101°F in order for the child to be sent home.

	Temp 1:	Temp 2:	Temp 3:
Time:			
By Whom:			
Thermometer:			

***Communicable Diseases***

When an enrolled child or an employee of the center has a (suspected) reportable disease, it is our legal responsibility to notify the local Board of Health or Department of Public Health. We will take care to notify families about exposure so children can receive preventive treatments.

Included among the reportable illnesses are the following:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Botulism
- Chicken Pox
- Diphtheria
- Heamophilus Influenza (invasive)
- Measles (including suspect)
- Meningococcal Infection (invasive)
- Poliomyelitis (including suspect)
- Rabies (human only)
- Rubella Congenital and Non-congenital (including suspect)
- Tetanus (including suspect)



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- H1N1 Virus
  - Any cluster/outbreak of illness
  - Tuberculosis

### *Cleaning*

We take great pride in our facility as well as our ability to provide a healthy environment. We are committed to keeping our center as clean as possible to minimize the spread of germs. We clean and sanitize all areas that children come in contact with. Handwashing is the single most effective practice in preventing the spread of germs. Staff and children will practice proper hand washing throughout the day.

## **EMERGENCIES**

Boone Beginnings has a written Emergency Preparedness Plan that lays out the procedures followed in the event of emergencies and natural disasters. Emergency Preparedness Plans can be found in each classroom, front desk, director's office, kitchen, and teacher work room. As a center we will conduct both fire and tornado mock drills to ensure that the staff and children understand how to react in these emergency situations.

Should Boone Beginnings ever have to evacuate the building, staff and volunteers will take children to our evacuation location. The evacuation location is Good Samaritan Society at 1225 South 6<sup>th</sup> Street. Parents will be notified immediately should the center have to evacuate.

Staff are required to undergo and maintain first-aid certification, CPR certification, and blood borne pathogens trainings to provide immediate care for an acute illness, medical condition, or injury.

A complete first-aid kit, procedures for Health Emergencies, CPR Procedure, and First-Aid procedures for health emergencies are located in each classroom.

## **SAFETY**

### *Clothing*

Please dress your child in practical clothing that allows for freedom of movement and is appropriate for the weather. Your child will be involved in a variety of activities including painting, outdoor play, sand, water, and other sensory activities. Our playground is used as an extension of the center, and activities are conducted outside whenever weather permits.

Sandals and flip-flops are not appropriate for center play and make it difficult for your child to participate in some activities. Please bring your child in closed toed shoes that provide a backing support. Infant room children are not required to be brought in shoes. Once your child begins to transition to the older infant room, we will ask for you to begin to bring your child in shoes to begin to adjust to wearing shoes every day.

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Children under the age of 3 are not allowed to wear anything around their necks like toy necklaces, amber necklaces, or any other items that could be a choking hazard. This is a policy that is in place from the state of Nebraska.

### ***Extreme Weather and Outdoor Play***

The Child Care Weather Watch chart will be utilized to determine when and if children should go outside. Outside play is a vital part of a child's day. It provides children with fresh air and the opportunity to utilize gross motor skills.

### ***Injuries***

Safety is a major concern in childcare. Daily safety inspections are completed inside and outside the center area in order to prevent injuries. First aid will be administered by a trained caregiver in the event that your child sustains a minor injury (e.g., scraped knee). You will receive an incident report outlining the incident and course of action taken. If the injury produces any type of swelling or needs medical attention, you will be contacted immediately. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit meeting the state regulations.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, the child will be taken to the hospital immediately by ambulance, while we will try to contact you or an emergency contact.

### ***Biting***

Biting is a normal stage of development that is common among infants and toddlers and sometimes even among preschoolers. It is something that most young children will try at least once.

When biting happens, our response will be to care for and help the child who was bitten and to help the biter learn a more appropriate behavior. Our focus will not be on punishment for biting, but on effective behaviors that address the specific reason for biting.

Notification will be provided to the family of the child who was bitten and the biter's family. We will work together with the families of each to keep them informed and to develop strategies for change.

### ***Smoking***

The poisons in secondhand smoke are especially harmful to infants and young children's developing bodies, therefore the indoor and outdoor center environment and vehicles used by the center are non-smoking areas at all times. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited on the center's premises.

### ***Prohibited Substances***

The use of alcohol or illegal drugs is prohibited on the center's premises. Possession of illegal substances or unauthorized potentially toxic substances is prohibited.

Any adult who appears to be inebriated, intoxicated, or otherwise under the influence of mind-altering or polluting substances is required to leave the premises immediately.

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### ***Dangerous Weapons***

A dangerous weapon is a gun, knife, razor, or any other object, which by the manner it is used or intended to be used, is capable of inflicting bodily harm. Families, children, staff or guests (other than law enforcement officers) possessing a dangerous weapon will not be permitted onto the premises.

In cases that clearly involve a gun, or any other weapon on our premises, the police will be called and the individual(s) involved will be immediately removed from the premises. This policy applies to visible or concealed weapons.

### ***Suspected Child Abuse***

We are required by law to report all observations of child abuse or neglect cases to the appropriate state authorities if we have reasonable cause to believe or suspect a child is suffering from abuse or neglect or is in danger of abuse or neglect, no matter where the abuse might have occurred. The child protective service agency will determine appropriate action and may conduct an investigation. It then becomes the role of the agency to determine if the report is substantiated and to work with the family to ensure the child's needs are met. Our center will cooperate fully with any investigation and will maintain confidentiality concerning any report of child abuse or neglect.

## **CENTER POLICIES**

Our center policies not included in this handbook are reviewed annually and updated as needed. They are available for review upon request to the center director.

Boone Beginnings serves the right to revise this handbook when necessary. You will be given written notice of any changes when they occur.

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# Family Handbook Acknowledgement

Please sign this acknowledgement, detach it from the handbook, and return it to the center prior to enrollment.

This handbook may be updated from time-to-time, and notice will be provided as updates are implemented.

Thank you for your acknowledging the policies and procedures we have established for the safety and welfare of all children in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your family.

I have received the Boone Beginnings Family Handbook, and I have reviewed the family handbook with a member of the Boone Beginnings staff. It is my responsibility to understand and familiarize myself the Family Handbook and to ask center management for clarification of any policy, procedure or information contained in the Boone Beginnings Family Handbook that I do not understand.

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Recipient Signature

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Date

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Center Staff Signature

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Date

I have received the Parent Information Brochure for Licensed Child Care from the Division of Public Health. (Attach)