

Little Dippers Learning Center



Guardian HANDBOOK Policies and Procedures

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Table of Contents

About the Center	4
Mission	4
Skagway Child Care Council Board of Directors Meetings	4
Insurance	4
Licensure	4
Personnel	4
Point of Contact	4
Supervision of Children	4
Volunteers	5
Program Philosophy and Goals	5
Program Goals	6
Population We Serve	6
Enrollment Procedure & Requirements	6
Registration	6
Enrollment	7
Monthly Scheduling	7
Childcare Rates	7
Billing Procedure	7
Daily Program Basics	
Arrival & Departure	8
Learning Groups	8
Snack & Lunch	9
Rest & Nap Time	9
Important Parent Reminders	10
Field Trips	10
Curriculum/Activity Schedules	11
Video and Movies	11
Infant Care Policies Ages 0 - 35 months	11
Toilet Training	11
Parent Involvement	12
Behavior Management	12
Behavior Guidance Methods	12
Giving Direction and Redirection	12
Calming Area	12

Biting	13
Expulsion/Suspension Policy	14
Safety Procedures	14
Center Safety	14
Basic First Aid	15
Earthquake Procedure	15
Emergency Procedure	15
Fire Prevention and Evacuation Procedure	16
Flood/Tsunami Procedure	16
Medication Administration	16
Playground Safety	16
Additional Center Policies	16
Allergies	16
Birthday Treats	17
Children with Special Needs	17
Confidentiality	17
Firearms	17
Illness	17
Immunizations and Preventive Health Measures	18
Lice	18
Material Donations	19
Open Door Policy	19
Personal Property	19
Pets & Animals	19
Refraining from Sexual Play	20
Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect	20
Policy Changes	20
Grievance	20
Guardian Handbook Agreement- Signature Page	21

About the Center

Little Dippers Learning Center is owned and operated by Skagway Child Care Council, Inc. (SCCC), a local 501(c)3 non-profit. We provide Infant/ Toddler, Preschool, and School Age childcare with programs designed to meet the needs of the families and children we serve. The Center has been in operation since 1987.

Mission

Little Dippers Learning Center is dedicated to serving the families of Skagway. We provide safe, high quality child care that focuses on learning through play and structured experiences. We are devoted to nurturing each child, while exploring the richness of nature, culture and community.

Skagway Child Care Council Board of Directors Meetings

Membership on the Skagway Child Care Council Board of Directors is composed of parents and community members who have a passion for Skagway's children. Parent ideas, concerns, questions, and support are welcome. Meetings are scheduled monthly and will be posted at Little Dippers. The SCCC will hold an annual meeting for the entire Little Dippers community.

Little Dippers Daycare is licensed for:

- 30 children
- 6 months old and sitting - 12 years

The center is OPEN:

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- Hours of Operation: M-F 7:45 AM - 5:15PM

Little Dippers follows State Regulations for teacher to child ratios, which are:

- 1 teacher to 5 infants 0-18 months (Maximum of 10)
- 1 teacher for 6 toddlers 19 months up to 36 months (Maximum of 12)
- 1 teacher for every 10 preschoolers 3 and 4 years (Maximum of 20)
- 1 teacher for every 14 kindergartners 5 and 6 years
- 1 teacher for every 18 school aged children 7 up to 12 years

Where mixed ages are present, teacher to child ratios are determined by the youngest child in the room.

Insurance

Little Dippers Learning Center maintains liability insurance coverage according to the State of Alaska requirements.

Licensure

Little Dippers Learning Center is a licensed Childcare Center through the State of Alaska, the Department of Health & Social Services and the Department of Environmental Conservation. Little Dippers also has business licenses through the Municipality of Skagway and the State of Alaska.

Personnel

Administrator/Directors

- Credentials that satisfy the State of Alaska Office of Childcare Programs
- Extensive experience working with children, staff, parents, and volunteers

- CPR and First Aid certified
- Federal Background Check clearance
- State mandatory training for daycare providers

Teachers

- Qualified work experience
- 3 positive references for working with young children
- CPR and First Aid certified
- Federal Background Check clearance
- State mandatory training for daycare providers

Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome at the center as long as they have been approved by the Administrator and have successfully gone through the background check process.

Point of Contact

The Center's Administrator serves as the parent's primary point of contact. If the Center Administrator is not present, the director or a teacher will be appointed as the Person in Charge as designated by the Center Administrator.

Supervision of Children

Teacher to child ratios will be upheld at all times. Children are supervised at all times while at Little Dippers Learning Center.

- **Indoor activities:** Teachers will be in close proximity to children at all times. During free-play and other indoor activities, teachers will continually confirm the presence and well-being of each child in attendance.
- **Nap Time:** A teacher will be in attendance with sleeping infants and toddlers at all times. A teacher will always be present during nap and rest times for all children in care.
- **Playground:** Teachers will supervise all areas of the playground and continually account for all children, ensuring the wellbeing of each child in their care.

Field Trips: Teachers will be assigned to a specific group of children. Children will be accounted for throughout the trip. First aid kits, portable water and copies of emergency cards will be in possession of the teachers present on the trip.

Program Philosophy and Goals

Little Dippers Learning Center follows a developmentally appropriate learning philosophy. We believe that children progress through different stages of development at different times. In order to meet the varied needs of the children, our environment is structured to allow children to make stage-appropriate choices and master skills at their own pace. Skilled guidance and assistance in self directed play and structured learning experiences provide for a rich and enjoyable time for your child.

Program Goals

- Provide positive experiences for young children that promote self-esteem, confidence, and independence

- Assist child in developing self-regulation
- Nurture healthy patterns of interaction and expression of thoughts and feelings
- Foster well being and self care
- Teach decision making and problem solving skills
- Encourage and stimulate language development
- Allow opportunity for creative self-expression
- Create a warm and accepting atmosphere for children & families
- Stimulate learning through hands-on experiences

We offer a well-balanced program of planned activities, which integrate art, music, and language experiences, science, math, social studies, and physical education. Professional staff will guide the children through intellectual, emotional, social and physical growth with opportunities to play and freedom to explore. Little Dippers Learning Center fosters an environment of respect and friendship.

Population we serve

Little Dippers Learning Center was established to provide young children a safe and nurturing environment in which to grow. We provide an experienced-based education that encourages hands-on participation and outdoor learning. We serve a parent population whose hours of work typically increase during the summer months due to the seasonal employment opportunities in Skagway. Little Dippers is more recently steering toward servicing our year round community.

Enrollment Procedure & Requirements

Registration

Registration packets are available on the Little Dippers website: skagwaylittledippers.com

For new families or returning parents who did not maintain enrollment, **please provide all forms prior to the first day of attendance:**

- Guardian Handbook Agreement
- Current Immunization Record
- Religious Exemption Form (if applicable)
- Child Release Authorization
- Child Emergency Information
- Field Trip Authorization
- Photo Release Authorization
- Transportation Authorization
- Topical Skin Products Authorization
- Signed Financial Agreement
- Auto Pay (if applicable)
- CC49 (If Applicable)
- First Month Calendar
- Payment of registration fee of \$25.00 per child with application
- Refundable deposit of \$150.00 (per family)

All of the above items must be on file and fees paid before a child can attend the Center. All documentation must be kept current. It is the parents' responsibility to **inform the center of any changes** of phone numbers, new jobs, addresses, and/or changes to the Child Release Authorization form.

Enrollment

First priority is given to returning families and staff children. Each registering family's schedule will be reviewed as quickly as possible. Based on attendance and provider coverage, we will notify you of availability for hours of care needed. State and facility requirements must be considered prior to accepting enrollment.

Monthly Scheduling

- A blank **Monthly Calendar** will be provided via the website and/or at the sign in desk at the Center.
- Guardians must provide the Center with a completed **Monthly Calendar** by the 25th of the month prior to care being requested.
- **Approval of the Monthly Calendar will be based on space availability and staffing needs.**
- **Revisions to the monthly schedule must be in writing to the Administrator.** Frequent and/or last minute schedule changes are not guaranteed to be honored. Extenuating circumstances that alter your child's scheduled days will be addressed on a case by case basis.
- If your child is not scheduled on a given day or at a given time, you must call at least 15 minutes ahead to determine if space is available before bringing your child to the Center. Drop In Rates will apply.
- All charges are due upon receipt and must be paid before scheduling additional hours of care.

Childcare Rates

Childcare rates are based on the age of the child. Little Dippers Learning Center offers hourly care rates.

For current rates refer to the Financial Agreement.

Skagway Child Care Council reserves the right to adjust rates if necessary to cover unexpected costs. Families will be given advance notice before rate changes are implemented.

Billing Procedures

At a minimum, families are responsible for the hours reserved on their **Monthly Calendar**. Billing will be based upon reserved hours and any additional hours of care noted on the daily sign-in sheet.

You will be billed once monthly. Accounts are billed within 5 days after the close of the current billing cycle. Accounts are due upon receipt. A late fee of 1.5% (min. \$30) will be charged against any outstanding balance ten days after receipt. Children of families with an unpaid balance on their account may be denied service until accounts have been settled.

Sample of a Monthly Billing Cycle and Payment Schedule:

Billing End Date	Payment Due
March 31	April 15
April 30	May 15

Skagway Child Care Council reserves the right to deny services immediately and indefinitely for families whose accounts are past due. Legal action will be taken for accounts left unpaid for more than 60 days.

Families are encouraged to apply for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) to help reduce childcare costs. To learn more visit: <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/default.aspx> The Center will need to receive approval of Child Care Assistance. Qualifying families are responsible for any remaining balance to their account and will be billed accordingly.

Daily Program Basics

A general daily schedule is available upon request. Both our Infant / Toddler and 4+ programs take into account the needs of the individual children in attendance. All of our programming follows developmentally appropriate practices and utilizes many modalities of learning and learning styles. Alaska Early Learning Guidelines is a frequent resource and available at: <https://www.alaskaelg.org/> .

Arrival & Departure

Please escort your child into and out of the facility and to the child's designated room in the center. The parking lot and the ramp are **NOT** safe places for children to be left unsupervised.

Arrival

Parent/Guardian signs each of their children in and notifies staff of their arrival.

- Children put their belongings into their cubby and remove outside shoes.
- Guardian places cold lunches in the refrigerator. Remember a cold pack if refrigerator space is limited. Moon room children will need insulated packs for their bottles and food.
- Guardians fill out medication authorization forms if applicable.
- Share special instructions or observations regarding the child. Thoughts on mood, sleep concerns and teething moments are welcomed.
- Schedule should allow for a transition moment. Children may need a parent to linger, while they warm up to the space. We understand when time does not permit.

Departure

Parent/Guardian signs each of their children out and notifies staff of their departure.

- Staff will share with parent/guardian any incident reports, projects, participation, behavior, and overall observations of your child that day. Experienced providers will share developmental milestones and concerns.
- Parents collect lunch containers and personal items.
- **No child will be released to unauthorized persons.** Any person not registered, in writing, from the parent/guardian to pick up a child must be cleared by the Administrator or authorized staff. Picture I.D. must be shown before the release of a child to anyone not on the approved pick up list provided to the center by the parent/guardian.
- **No child will be released to a person who is impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.**

Snack & Lunch

Our priority is to ensure your child is eating nutritious foods and developing healthy eating habits. We strive to include all food groups between both snack times daily. When cost efficient and available, natural, whole, organic foods will be provided.

Please notify us if your child has any food allergies or dietary restrictions. All allergies/food restrictions will be posted in the kitchen for caregivers preparing snacks for children.

Snack:

Little Dippers Learning Center provides the morning and afternoon snack foods. We also strongly encourage regular consumption of water. **Please provide a water bottle for your child that is clearly labeled with their name.**

Examples of Snacks Provided

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| ● <u> </u> Fresh Fruit | ● <u> </u> Crackers and Cheese |
| ● <u> </u> Dried Fruit | ● <u> </u> Applesauce |
| ● <u> </u> Fresh Vegetables and Dip | ● <u> </u> Yogurt |
| ● <u> </u> Hummus with crackers | ● <u> </u> Toast |
| ● <u> </u> Granola | ● <u> </u> Muffins |
| ● <u> </u> Tortilla Wraps | |

Lunch:

- Provide each of their children with a separate lunch.
- PLEASE, do not send candy, soda, or gum with your child. These items will be set aside and sent home.
- **Label your child's lunch box and any food containers you send with the child's name.**
- A \$5.00 fee will be charged if a child does not bring lunch. The lunch fee will appear on your monthly billing statement.
- **Please send food that is ready to eat.** If your child's lunch requires warming, please consider using a thermos to keep foods warm as heating individual lunches is not always possible.

Rest & Nap Time

All children under 4 years of age are required to rest or nap as per Alaska State law. This quiet time will be observed whether a child sleeps or not. All children are encouraged to rest, sleep, or engage in calm, individual activities including looking at books, meditation, relaxation exercises, and listening to music or audio books. Children under 3 years will be encouraged to sleep, but are on an individualized schedule. Each child taking a nap has a consistent personal sleeping space and sanitized mat. Please provide a blanket and/or stuffy for your child to keep them comfortable during rest time.

Important Parent Reminders

- **Change of clothes:** Every child needs to have a complete change of clothes, LABELED with his/her name. We do water projects and go out on rainy days. Even school age kids need a spare set to wear. **If your child is potty training, please provide at least 3 sets of clothing.**
- **Appropriate shoes: we recommend closed toed shoes at all times.** On rainy days, please send your child with rain boots. We will be playing outside even on rainy days.
- **Cubby:** Each child will be provided with a cubby or crate to put his/her belongings in. Parents will need to check these **DAILY** for soiled clothes or papers that need to be taken home.
- **Weapon toys** and weapon play are not allowed at the Center.
- **Little Dippers Learning Center is not responsible for lost belongings.** Please do not allow your child to bring toys or valuables to the center. Again, please label your child's things.

- **Children coming from school** become the center's responsibility once they have been signed-in by their guardian or the teacher who is assisting in transporting from school to center.

Field Trips

We take the children on walking field trips throughout the Municipality. Little Dippers Learning Center is approved by the State of Alaska, Office of Child Care Programs, to lead children on wilderness walks on local hiking trails.

- Permission slips are required for off-site activities such as: hiking local trails, private car or shuttle transportation, train rides, transportation to Dyea, etc.
- When providing transportation, parents will be provided with a sign-up/ permission sheet describing the outing and how we are being transported. Parents are encouraged to volunteer in these off-site activities.
- Outings that do not require a permission slip might include the Skagway Recreation Center facilities, Skagway School facilities, Seven Pastures, Molly Walsh Park, the Skagway Public Library, and short cart rides and walks close to the Center.
- Caregivers will closely supervise the children in their care at all times. A manifest of the children participating in the activity along with each child's emergency information will be in the lead caregivers' possession.
- First aid kits and emergency potable water is taken on every outing.

Curriculum/Activity Schedules

Curriculum and Activities will be determined by the needs of the children enrolled at the Center.

Curriculum and schedules are determined with the following goals in mind:

- Alternate between indoor and outdoor, active and quiet play, and structured and free choice play.
- Provide activities that are developmentally appropriate and intellectually stimulating.
- Provide outlets for children to learn about nature, science, geography, literature, art, history and music.
- Encourage children's independence by allowing them time to problem solve and enjoy a challenge.

Videos and Movies

We limit screen time and use of electronics to educational media. You will have the opportunity to pre-approve all media.

Infant Care Policies Ages 6 months - 35 months

Infants 6 months and sitting and older will be accepted based on the center's staffing availability.

Diapering & Toileting

Guardians need to provide disposable diapers for use at the Center. If you use cloth diapers, you must provide an impermeable bag or sealed container to place the used diapers and clean the diapers and receptacle daily. All soiled cloth diapers should be taken home daily. They will not be washed at the Center.

Diaper Changing Procedure:

- Diapers will be checked/changed regularly or as soon as discovered to be wet or soiled.
- Parents provide diapers to the center. Staff will notify parents when their child's diaper supply is low.
- **Diapers will be provided by the center @ \$1.00 per diaper if not provided.**
This charge will appear on your billing statement.
- Diaper wipes will be provided by Little Dippers.
- Diaper changing will be completed on a changing station that has been sanitized according to Alaska State Regulations.
- Gloves (latex-free) will be worn by the caregiver for all changes. Gloves will be disposed of after each use.
- Children will not be permitted to dispose of used diapers.
- Staff will record each diaper change on ProCare and will provide a daily report.
- We do not initiate toilet training, but we do cooperate in training when the child has had some success at home. Parents are responsible for discussing their toilet training methods with the staff and agree on a plan for the child's training while at the center.

Toilet Training Procedure:

- If your child is toilet training, please communicate the methods that work at home with staff, as consistency will ultimately help them successfully potty train.
- Potty training children will be encouraged to try to use the toilet on a regular basis, and they will be praised for their efforts.
- Please bring several changes of clothes (including underwear) for your child.
- Depending on the child and where they are in their potty training journey, staff may change children into a pull-up after **one** potty accident.
 - Please provide pull-ups for your child if necessary.
 - Soiled clothes will be sealed in a plastic bag and returned to the parent for cleaning.
- **Children 3 years and older must be actively potty training while enrolled in our center.**

BOTTLES: Please bring all bottles pre-filled with milk, formula, etc., and bring enough bottles for each day. Little Dippers will not be responsible for cleaning or filling bottles. Please label all your bottles, bags, and milk containers.

LABELING: As with all food your child brings, we will conserve any leftovers in a sealed, labeled container in the refrigerator. Please also label the date of the milk/food and the child's name. Blankets are laundered weekly and when soiled. If you bring your child's pacifiers, bottles, chew toys, or other personal items, please label with the child's name.

Parent Involvement

Parents are always welcome at the Center and are encouraged to become involved in a variety of ways. The Skagway Child Care Council Board of Directors encourages parents to:

- Volunteer at the Center. Opportunities include activities such as:
 - Reading stories to the kids
 - Leading activities
 - Leading games, dances, experiments, or crafts
 - Sharing about his/her profession, hobby, or life experience
 - Putting on a nature talk/walk
 - Bringing an instrument and singing songs
 - Practicing foreign language skills with the kids
- **Assist in our much needed and appreciated Fundraising Efforts!**
- Attend Municipal Assembly and Committee Meetings to speak in support of Little Dippers
- Stay informed by checking the Little Dippers Website for announcements and news.

Behavior Management

Behavior Guidance Methods

Care providers are well trained and effective. We utilize practices for preventing challenging behaviors by promoting and supporting a child's social competency. We have an established process of being nurturing and responsive. Our goal is to develop a child's emotional literacy through creating a preventative environment and positive relations. We will teach problem-solving skills and model this throughout the day. When individualized interventions are needed they will be adjusted to fit each child's needs. If needed we will meet with you to customize a behavior management program. Clear and constructive communications between the child, guardians and providers, will help your child thrive and build confidence. A collective effort will yield the best outcome for all involved.

Giving Direction and Redirection

- Directions are clear, specific, brief and expressed in a positive way.
- Redirection is to give meaningful suggestions or choices as to what the child may do when, changing from an undesired behavior. In the case of children 36 months and younger, it may be as simple as gently guiding them to another toy or area of play.

***The teachers and staff of Little Dippers will be proactive in their approach with children. They will model and teach appropriate behavior.**

Calming Area

A calming area will be provided for a child 3 years and older who kicks, hits, becomes violent or blatantly bullies and needs a separation from the group or activity. In a non-shaming manner, the child will be brought to a quiet area to talk with the teacher involved. The teacher and/or the Administrator will help the child to de-escalate. Proactive strategies will be discussed along with appropriate ways to gain restitution.

Guiding behavior includes:

- Protecting the rights of the child and others with clear and consistent guidelines and rules for appropriate behavior.
- Letting children know the consequences for their own behaviors/actions. Children will be taught that their actions affect other children's feelings.
- Teaching children to respond to disappointments and mistakes calmly and rationally. Using "feeling words" is taught and encouraged.
- Problem solving strategies will be modeled, taught and practiced.

In response to inappropriate behavior the staff will:

- Gain the child's attention by calmly approaching the child and speaking in a calm firm voice
- Speak with the child regarding the action and listen to the concerns of the child
- Remind the child of the rules
- Encourage restitution
- Redirect the child to an appropriate activity
- If the behavior continues, the child may need to be removed from the activity

Examples of gross or major inappropriate behaviors that are unacceptable for the childcare environment include:

- Inflicting, or attempting to inflict, bodily harm to another child or staff member
- Bullying (social, emotional, or physical)
- Foul language
- Rude gestures
- Chronic disruptive behaviors
- Chronic disrespect for the property of others, including Center items

Biting

Biting is a developmentally based behavior that is most often directly related to teething. Toddlers have definite oral needs during this stage of development. The child at this age is limited in verbal skills and can be impulsive, often choosing biting to express their needs. Biting behaviors are less often related to specific behavior concerns and are most often developmentally based. Little Dippers deals with biting proactively to prevent biting from occurring. If your child is teething, please send something with him/her that is acceptable to offer for chewing, such as a teething toy or necklace. Should an incident happen, the Little Dippers staff will closely monitor the child and assess the cause of the biting.

First Biting Incident:

- A caregiver will be specifically assigned to the biting child for the rest of the day and all parents involved will be notified.

Second Biting Incident: (within two weeks)

- Parents of the biting child and bitten child are notified.
- The parent(s) of the biting child will be requested to remove their child from Little Dippers for the day.

Third Biting Incident: (within two weeks)

- Parents of the biting child and bitten child are notified.
- The parent(s) of the biting child will be requested to remove their child, and an action plan will be created with input of parents and staff to prevent future biting as stated in *Level 3* of this Handbook under Expulsion/Suspension Policy.

Expulsion/Suspension Policy

Caregivers will be required to discern whether a behavior is appropriate or not, while considering the age and developmental stage of the child. In an attempt to correct a child's inappropriate behavior, the following Expulsion/Suspension Policy will be used as a guide:

- **Level 1:** Caregivers will meet privately with the parent/guardian to provide a description of the inappropriate behavior and the actions that were taken. The caregiver will make every effort to seek the parent's advice on how to address the inappropriate behavior if repeated in the future.
- **Level 2:** Caregivers will provide a written record of the inappropriate behavior and the parent/guardian will be asked to initial and date the written record to be placed in the child's file. Administrator and caregiver will identify and communicate to parent(s)/guardian(s) specific mechanisms for collaboratively addressing the inappropriate behavior.
- **Level 3:** The child's parent/guardian will meet with staff and Administrator to discuss the behavior and develop a plan of action in an attempt to extinguish the behavior. The plan of action will include methods for understanding the child's behavior, and developing, adopting, and implementing a team-based positive behavior support plan with the intent of reducing challenging behavior and preventing suspensions and expulsions. The Administrator will record the meeting. Caregivers and parent/guardian will be asked to sign and date the record to be placed in the child's file.
- **Level 4:** The child's parent/guardian will receive a letter of probation from the Administrator describing the inappropriate behavior and the possibility of their child's termination from the Center if the inappropriate behavior persists.

***The parent/guardian can schedule an appointment to discuss the issue pertaining to their child's behavior with the center Administrator at any point in the process.**

Safety Procedures

Center Safety

Safety inside the Building

- All project materials and toys are cleaned-up after use.
- Children and adults are required to respect each other's personal space.
- Small movements and voices are often required within the center.

Safety in the classrooms and on the playground

- Teachers supervise the children to ensure the equipment is used appropriately and safely.
- The outdoor and indoor facilities are evaluated daily for health and safety maintenance.
- Fences and gates will be inspected to ensure they are secure and in working order each time children go outside.
- There will be a playground safety check for anything foreign or dangerous or any garbage before children go outside.
- Equipment and toys will be inspected for safety daily.

Playground Safety

Parents are responsible for providing appropriate outdoor clothing. **Every day each child must:**

- Have labeled garments including closed toed shoes or rain boots labeled with your child's name.
- Provide an extra set of clothes (two sets for toddlers) including something for water play.
- Provide a swimsuit, rain gear, a warm sweater, and a hat for sudden changes in weather.

- Be dressed in sturdy and washable play clothes.

Basic First Aid

- First Aid given will include cold compress and/or band aids to treat bumps and abrasions.
- All staff are trained in first aid.
- Sunscreen, bug repellent, and regular skin hydrating lotion will be used as needed and with parent's written permission.

Earthquake Procedure

In the event of an earthquake, the following actions will be taken:

If we are inside when it occurs, the children will be asked to drop, cover, and hold. This means: **drop to the floor, take cover under a sturdy table, and hold on to it.** The children will be asked to stay where they are until the Administrator or designee can assess the damage. If there is no damage, staff and children will remain in the building. If there is damage to the building that warrants evacuation, the children will be taken to the closest and safest exit. The caregiver will account for each child using the daily attendance record, and collect the emergency contact information, the first aid kit and disaster kit. The staff will make every attempt possible to contact the parents of each child.

If we are outside when an earthquake occurs, the children will be led to an open area away from power lines and buildings where we will huddle together until the earthquake has ceased. We will then follow the procedure of the Fire Chief and Administrator of the Center to determine when it is appropriate to re-enter the Center.

Emergency Procedure

The staff at Little Dippers makes every effort to ensure that your child will be safe, understanding that accidents do occur. In the event of a serious accident, you will be contacted immediately, along with the local Emergency Medical Services. If you or your emergency contact person is unable to be reached, emergency actions and/or whatever means necessary will be taken in order to provide care for your child. All incidents and accidents will be documented on an accident report and will require your signature.

The site Administrator and teachers are CPR and First Aid certified. However, if your child requires more than just basic first aid, the following steps are taken.

1. Staff calls EMS.
2. Parents or guardians are contacted.
3. If parents or guardians are not available, then the emergency contact is called.

Parents are responsible for the cost of medical help or treatment due to an accident or illness while at Little Dippers Learning Center. The EMS response does not impose charges for responding and assessment; only for treatment and transport. Parents may pay a yearly fee for ambulance transport insurance with the Municipality of Skagway.

Fire Prevention and Evacuation Procedure

Complying with current Fire and Safety codes and regulations:

- Little Dippers staff and children will perform a monthly fire drill evacuation.
- Each room is equipped with a fire extinguisher and is included in the evacuation plan.

In the event of a fire at Little Dipper’s Learning Center, teachers will evacuate children quickly and efficiently from the nearest exit. Teachers are responsible to account for all children within their group. Teachers will lead them outside to the designated meeting spot. The Administrator or designee will do a clean sweep after evacuation to ensure all children and staff are out of the building. Staff will use a cell phone to make a phone call to 911. Staff and children will wait for the arrival of the fire department in the designated meeting spot. The parents of all children will be called and asked to pick up their children immediately. The Fire Chief and Administrator of the Center will determine when it is appropriate for the Center to re-open depending on the amount of damage to the facility.

Flood/Tsunami Procedure

In the event of a flood or tsunami warning, the following action will be taken: The Administrator will contact the Skagway Fire Department and follow their instructions for needed response or evacuation. If directed by the Fire Department to evacuate, staff and children will move to the evacuation location specified by fire personnel. The Administrator or designee will retrieve the daily attendance record, the emergency contact information, the first aid kit, and disaster kit. Once settled, parents will be called and given a report of their child’s location.

Medication Administration

The center will only administer medications provided by the parent. Written permission must be obtained from the parent for each individual dose of **over the counter** drugs. **Prescription drugs** must have a current label with the prescribing child's name, the specific period of time that the drug may be administered to the child, and the dosage. Parents will fill out the appropriate form to allow the center to administer the medication with specific and detailed instructions. Medicine will be administered only by the Administrator or teacher designated by the Administrator.

Additional Center Policies

Allergies

It may become necessary to prohibit certain food from the center due to severe allergies. This ensures that those with allergies are safe and free from accidental ingestion. We will notify all parents and guardians if it becomes necessary to prohibit a particular food from the center.

Birthday Treats

Small celebrations at the Center are permitted for the children enrolled at the center and their family members. We want both you and your child to enjoy his/her special day. Your child may bring in a birthday treat to share. If you are going to bring a treat, please be sure to provide enough for all of the children attending that day. If you have any questions, consult with the Administrator. ***The healthier the better! Please check with the Administrator regarding any allergies present in the center before bringing a birthday treat.***

Children with Special Needs

Little Dippers strives to meet the needs of **ALL** children in our care. If a child has special needs that will require specialized care or extra supervision, we require parental collaboration in determining the best course of care for the child. This may include professional assistance or additional staffing. If, after all

reasonable accommodations have been exhausted, and we cannot safely care for the child in our care, we will recommend the parent find a more suitable child care environment. **If your child needs accommodations for their special need, please provide us with the following document to give us more insight into how to best support them per CC49:**

<https://health.alaska.gov/dpa/Documents/dpa/programs/ccare/forms/CC49-Special-Needs-Documentation.pdf>

Confidentiality

Enrolled children and parents' records will be kept confidential except:

- As needed by Little Dippers Learning Center staff OR
- By a Licensing representative from the State of Alaska, Health & Social Services in the case of reporting situations which may require child protective services

As required by Alaska State law AS 47.17.020, the center must report any suspected cases of abuse or neglect of any child at the center to the nearest Office of Children's Services.

Firearms

No firearms are allowed on the premises at any time.

Illness

We are concerned with the health and well-being of all children and adults who have contact with your child throughout the day. We request that you keep children who are potentially infectious at home. If you have **any doubt** in the morning about your child's health, keep him/her home. Any special requests must be approved through the Administrator.

We will not accept children on the same day they have a fever or have undergone general anesthesia.

If your child becomes sick:

Children with infectious or communicable diseases will not be admitted to the center. Parents may not bring a child to the center if the child has:

- Strep throat which has not been treated with an antibiotic for 24 hours
- An uncontrollable or persistent cough with colorful mucus present
- Any rash of acute onset associated with fever or symptoms of illness
- Impetigo with less than 24 hours of treatment with an antibiotic
- An oral temperature of 100 degrees or greater
- **Vomiting and/or diarrhea in the last 24 hours prior to scheduled time to attend the center**
- Head lice or nits present on child
- Pink eye present on child
- Scabies present on child
- Hand Foot and Mouth disease with open sores present

If a child displays any of the above symptoms we will take all steps possible to see that he or she is kept quiet and comfortable until a parent or authorized person can take him/her home. When your child has any of the above conditions, you will need to pick them up within one hour of being notified. After one hour we will charge \$15.00 for every 15 minutes your child is left in our care.

Parents have the responsibility to inform the center if their child's absence is because of illness and the nature of the illness. If a child is absent for a prolonged period of time due to illness, and they do not inform us, the parent will be charged for the first three (3) sick days in a row.

Returning after an illness:

A child who has had an infectious or communicable disease may return to the center in the following time period:

- Fever free for 24 hours (without use of reliever)
- Free from vomiting or diarrhea for 24 hours
- Chicken pox: Five days after the last blister has scabbed.
- Pinworm: After 48 hours of being on medication.
- Strep throat: After 24 hours of being on an antibiotic.
- Head lice: Signed release from nurse stating child is free of eggs, nits, and mature lice.
- Any others: Must be discussed with the Administrator.

Parent notification:

The center will notify all parents of enrolled children when outbreaks of the following list occur: Strep throat, impetigo, measles, mumps, rubella, chicken pox, pinworms, head lice, scabies, pink eye or any other highly contagious disease or virus outbreaks. Staff will call the parent immediately if their child:

- Bites or is bitten with a skin break
- Falls and hits their head
- Has an obvious mark on their head or face
- Is lethargic or hurting
- Becomes sick, has diarrhea, or develops a fever
- Is involved in an injury needing to be assessed by the Dahl Memorial Clinic
- Is involved in an injury where Emergency Medical Services is called

Immunizations and Preventive Health Measures

The State of Alaska requires that we have a current immunization record for all children in our care on file. We do accept religious exemption forms and have the forms available in your registration packets. The Religious Exemption form must be filled out and notarized before registration can be completed.

Please note that if you are new to Little Dippers, you will have to fill out and notarize your Religious Exemption form before your child is registered and then again in July when the form expires.

Returning families that have a current Religious Exemption form on file will only need to reregister in July by completing and notarizing the form to be placed in the child's file.

Lice

Little Dippers Learning Center will enact the following protocol to aid in managing lice at the center in the event of a breakout. In our research we have found that people spread lice. Lice are not a symptom of an unclean environment and can be managed by a few key steps.

- 1.) Lice & nits need to be treated by a proven effective treatment and comb. Any child or teacher found with lice or nits will be sent home and allowed to return after a clean check by onsite staff.
- 2.) All emergency clothing brought from home to the center must be placed in a sealed zip lock bag.
- 3.) All jackets, rain coats, & boots will be placed in a sealed bag in the child's cubby.

- 4.) Blankets for napping should be taken home daily and dried on hot heat for 30-45 minutes to kill any nits or lice. Once dried, the blanket should be placed in a sealed plastic bag and brought in daily for the child's nap.
- 5.) All lunch boxes other than metal should be left home until further notice. All lunches should be placed in a sealed Ziploc, paper bag or metal boxes with the child's name clearly marked.

We will take the following precautions at the Center:

- 1.) Launder all dress up clothing and seal in garbage bags until the center is clear of the threat of lice.
- 2.) Launder all plush toys/bean bag covers and seal them in garbage bags until the center is clear of the threat of lice.
- 3.) Vacuum daily and empty vacuum canister.
- 4.) Check all teachers and children at the door to ensure they are lice and nit free. Only those that are free from lice and nits will be permitted to stay.

Being vigilant and checking your children is key! Just because your child is nit-free one day does not mean they will be the next. We recommend that parents check their children for nits and lice at least twice daily EVERY DAY until every child at the center is nit-free. We know that with your help we will be able to keep the lice under control should an outbreak occur.

Material Donations

Donations of toys, games, etc. are welcomed at the Center. However, they must be clean, safe, functional and fully intact with all pieces. **Please discuss donations with the Administrator for approval.**

Open Door Policy for Guardians

All parents are welcome to observe the Little Dippers Learning Center program at any time. We encourage you to stay with your children as they warm up to the environment each day. You are invited to join your child for lunch or to do an activity with your child. Please make arrangements with the Director.

Personal Property

Parents are in charge of labeling all of their child's personal belongings, including all clothing, lunch boxes, dishes, water bottles, and any other personal items. Little Dippers is not responsible for any items that become lost while children are in our care. We do our best to keep track of personal property, but it is the task of parents to observe and locate missing items upon discovery.

Pets & Animals

There are State laws regulating what pets may be allowed on the premises of a learning center as well as current allergies of our children. Please check with the Administrator before bringing pets to Little Dippers.

Refraining from Sexual Play

Any play of a sexual nature will be immediately interrupted. Although sexual play is normal, the Center is not an appropriate place for such exploration. Any forts and secluded areas are watched carefully. Bathrooms are supervised. Sexual play and incidents will be reported to the appropriate parents.

Repeated incidents will result in the Administrator requesting a meeting with the parents to create a behavior plan.

Reporting Child Abuse and Neglect

Alaska State Statutes state that all licensed child care providers and paid staff, who, in the performance of their professional duties, have cause to believe that a child has suffered harm as a result of abuse, and/or neglect, to immediately report the harm to the nearest Office of Childcare Programs. This facility is therefore obligated by law to report such incidents within 24 hours to the Office of Child Protection. Our priority is the safety of the child. Handling of the situation will be confidential. **The staff at Little Dippers will not release a child to a parent or guardian who is obviously intoxicated or under the influence of drugs.**

Policy Changes

Guardians will receive a handbook at time of registration. If policy changes are made during the summer season, the SCCC will notify enrolled parents within two weeks of the change.

Grievance

Those who have concerns about Little Dippers policies or procedures must follow the grievance procedure below:

- **Step 1.** Discuss the matter causing concern with the Center Administrator. The parent has a limit of 10 days after the incident of concern to begin step 2.
- **Step 2.** If this discussion does not resolve the problem, the parent shall report in writing to the SCCC. The Council must submit a written reply to the parent within five days.
- **Step 3.** If the parent considers the response unsatisfactory, the grievance shall be referred to the Juneau Department of Health & Social Services licensing office.

At each appeal level (Steps 1, 2, & 3) the parent has the right to have witnesses and to have a third party to represent him/her.

Guardian Handbook Agreement

Please **check** the following to indicate that you have received and have read, understand, and agree to policies and procedures of Little Dippers Learning Center

Enrollment Procedure & Requirements

- Registration
- Scheduling
- Enrollment

- Pets & Animals
- Refrain from Sexual Play
- Reporting Child abuse and Neglect
- Videos and Movies
- Policy Changes

Daily Program Basics

- Mission
- Arrival & Departure
- Diapering & Toileting
- Snack & Lunch
- Rest & Nap Time
- Important Parent Reminders

Behavior Management

- Behavior Guidance Methods
- Giving Direction & Redirection
- Enrollment Termination

Program Philosophy and Curriculum

- Program Objectives
- Parent Involvement
- Field Trips
- Curriculum/Activity Schedules

Center Policies

- Allergies
- Birthday Treats
- Biting
- Children with Special Needs
- Confidentiality
- Firearms
- Grievance
- Illness
- Immunization & Preventative Health Measures
- Lice
- Material Donations
- Open Door Policy
- Personal Property

Safety Procedures

- Center Safety
- Basic First Aid
- Earthquake Procedure
- Emergency Procedure
- Fire Prevention and Evacuation Procedure
- Flood/Tsunami Procedure
- Medication Administration
- Playground Safety

About the Center

- Insurance
- Licensure
- Personnel
- Supervision of Children
- Skagway Child Care Council Board Meetings
- Volunteers

Forms Required in Child's File:

- Application
- Parent Guide to Licensed Child Care: State of AK
- Financial Agreement
- Parent Handbook Agreement
- Child Emergency Information
- Current Immunization Record
- Religious Exemption Form (if applicable)
- Child Release Authorization
- Field Trip Authorization
- Topical Skin Products Authorization
- S.M.A.R.T. Transportation Authorization
- Photo Release Authorization

I HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE PARENT HANDBOOK CONTENTS. I understand that this is not a contract and the policies and procedures may be changed. I agree to the terms of Little Dippers Learning Center. If I have any concerns, I will promptly address the Administrator of Little Dippers.

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

Administrator Signature _____ Date _____



CHILD CARE LICENSING PROGRAM

Division of Public Assistance
Child Care Program Office



PARENTS' GUIDE TO LICENSED CHILD CARE

This form is required to be included in a child care facility's policies and must be provided to parents at enrollment.

- ◆ Choosing care for your child is a significant decision.

When you entrust the care of your child to another person, you are making an important decision. Visit, ask questions, and carefully compare several programs. Licensed care includes child care homes, group homes, and centers. Your choice depends on what you want and need for your child.

- ◆ Licensing is a key to quality child care.

Licensing promotes good care by setting basic health and safety standards. Before a center, group home, or home is granted a child care license, it must meet minimum regulatory standards such as: health, safety, and program requirements. Child Care Licensing Specialists from the Child Care Program Office conduct on-site inspections at a facility to monitor regulatory compliance and to investigate reports of concern. The goal of licensing is to prevent predictable risks of harm to children; however, licensing cannot guarantee that a facility meets all requirements at all times.

- ◆ An informed parent is a key to quality child care.

Parents are responsible for choosing and monitoring their child's care. Licensors generally visit a minimum of twice a year, but you visit each time you take your child. Visit unexpectedly sometimes or in the middle of the day. Keep an eye on the quality of care. What do you see when you visit? Is the environment safe? Are caregivers knowledgeable, nurturing, and communicating with you about your child's daily care and needs? How many children are present, are there enough caregivers? Are activities appropriate? Watch how your child responds to the program and interacts with caregivers. Listen to what your child says and pay attention to changes in their behavior. It's ultimately a parent's decision to choose a facility which meets their family's needs and their standards for health, safety, and quality.

- ◆ What to do if you have questions or concerns about the care your child is receiving:

First discuss with your caregiver or the facility's Administrator or Child Care Associate if you have any concerns, observe any health or safety issues, or feel the facility's program needs

improvement. If you are still concerned, believe children may be in danger, or feel a licensing standard has been violated, contact the Child Care Program Office toll free at 1-888-268-4632 or via email at CCPO@alaska.gov

CC61 (06-4086) Rev. 02/18 Electronic <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/> Page 1 of 4

CHILD TO CAREGIVER RATIO REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSED CHILD CARE FACILITIES

CHILD CARE HOMES

- 1 caregiver required; must be at least 21 years of age
- No more than 5 children younger than 13 years of age including the caregiver's own children, without fire safety approval
- No more than 8 children total, younger than 13 years of age, including the caregiver's own children, with fire safety approval
- No more than 3 children under the age of 30 months
- No more than 2 children may be non-ambulatory
- No more than 5 children, including the caregiver's own children under the age of 18 years, are allowed in nighttime care between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., with fire safety approval

CHILD CARE GROUP HOMES

- 2 caregivers required, one must be the Administrator and must be at least 21 years of age
- Caregivers must be at least 18 years of age
- No more than 12 children total younger than 13 years of age, including the caregiver's own children, with fire safety approval
- No more than 5 children under the age of 30 months
- No more than 4 children may be non-ambulatory
- No more than 5 children, including the caregiver's own children under the age of 18 years, are allowed in nighttime care between the hours of 10:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., with fire safety approval

See 7 AAC 57.505 for child-to-caregiver ratio requirements allowing 1 caregiver in a Group Home.

CHILD CARE CENTERS

- Administrator and/or Child Care Associates must be at least 21 years of age

- 13 or more children in care, with fire safety approval

The number of caregivers, who are at least 18 years of age, needed to meet child-to-caregiver ratios:

- 1 caregiver for every 5 infants (birth through 18 months)
- 1 caregiver for every 6 toddlers (19 months up to 36 months)
- 1 caregiver for every 10 preschool children (3 and 4 year olds)
- 1 caregiver for every 14 kindergarten children (5 and 6 year olds)
- 1 caregiver for every 18 school age children (7 through 12 years old)

See 7 AAC 57.510 for allowable maximum group sizes in a Center.

CHILD CARE FACILITIES MUST MEET THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS TO BE LICENSED

- Required to apply for a Provisional or Biennial License
- Must meet all licensing standards and requirements
- Must be in compliance with all licensing regulations
- Must allow Child Care Licensing access to inspect the facility and premises to ensure licensing compliance and to investigate complaints
- All staff/household members must have valid criminal history check from the State of Alaska Background Check Program
- All caregivers must meet the licensing early child development training requirements

CC61 (06-4086) Rev. 02/18 Electronic <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/> Page 2 of 4

OBTAIN FROM PARENTS

- Child's immunization records or an approved exemption form
- Child emergency information
 - must be updated by parent when changes occur or
 - at least semi-annually
- Permission for:
 - medication administration
 - transportation
 - field trip participation
- A plan of care for a child identified with a special need
- A behavior guidance plan for a child with a behavior issue

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

- Must promote children's healthy development
- Must include quiet and active, group and individual, indoor and outdoor activities
- Must include minimum of 20 minutes of vigorous physical activity for every 3 hours in care
- Must ensure screen time viewing is limited to 1½ hours in a 24- hour period
- Must have a specialization approved by Child Care Licensing to provide nighttime care or allow children to participate in a moderate risk activity

SUPERVISION

- Ensure children are always supervised by an adult caregiver
- Ensure children receive age appropriate supervision
- Ensure a child's whereabouts are known at all times while in care
- Ensure child-to-caregiver ratios are always met

SAFETY

- Must meet Child Care Licensing and fire safety standards
- Must have an emergency evacuation plan, train staff, and document monthly evacuation drills
- Ensure water temperature is between 100 and 120 degrees Fahrenheit
- Ensure firearms and ammunition are stored properly away from children.
Note: firearms and ammunition are prohibited in a child care center.
- Ensure the facility is free of hazards inside and outside
- Ensure electric outlets accessible to children under age 5, have child protective outlet covers

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

- Must be positive and never cruel, humiliating, or damaging to the child
- Must set realistic expectations and clear and consistent limits
- Must not be disciplined or punished related to eating, napping, or toileting
- Ensure if time-outs are used they are age appropriate and a child is never removed from other children for more than 10 minutes
- Ensure corporal punishment of children is prohibited. Note: corporal punishment means “the infliction of bodily pain as a penalty for a disapproved behavior. It includes: shaking, spanking, delivering a blow with a part of the body or an object, slapping, punching, pulling or any other action that seeks to induce pain.”

CC61 (06-4086) Rev. 02/18 Electronic <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/> Page 3 of 4

HEALTH

- Ensure the facility meets cleaning and sanitation standards
- Ensure meals and snacks are nutritious and follow Alaska Food Program standards
- Ensure sanitary practices are used for food preparation and handling
- Must notify parents if their child is exposed to a contagious or communicable disease
- Ensure a medical provider approves attendance before admitting a seriously ill child
- Ensure drinking water is safe
- Ensure facility is smoke free

- Ensure there is always a caregiver with CPR and first aid certification present
- Ensure medicine and toxic materials are labeled and stored safely out of reach
- Ensure medicine is only administered with parent permission
- Ensure a caregiver's own child and all children in care are treated equitably

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

- Ensure furniture and equipment are safe and durable
- Ensure there is an adequate and varied amount of age appropriate toys and books available for children in care
- Ensure children have storage space for their belongings
- Ensure children under age 5 have a cot/mat/bed and bedding that is clean and sanitary for resting • Ensure infants sleep on their backs in an approved crib free from materials and blankets that could increase the risk of suffocation

SPACE

- Must have indoor and outdoor space to accommodate the physical and developmental needs of children in care:
 - 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child
 - 75 square feet of usable outdoor space per child

CC61 (06-4086) Rev. 02/18 Electronic <http://dhss.alaska.gov/dpa/Pages/ccare/> Page 4 of 4