

Stepping Stones Learning Center

Parent Handbook

Policies and Procedures

Updated and released September 2022

Address: 2691 Crow Canyon Rd. San Ramon CA 94583

Phone: 925.820.8820

Email: info@kidswonder.com

Website: www.kidswonder.com

Hours and Days of Operation: Monday through Friday 6:45 am-6:00 pm

Ages Accepted: Age 4 months to 12 years old

License #:

Lic. #: 073405630 - Infant

Lic #: 070215142 - Preschool w/Toddler Option

Lic #: 070215143 - School Age

What we believe...



Purpose: The purpose of Stepping Stones Learning Center is to provide each child with a nurturing environment in which he or she will grow to his or her full potential socially, emotionally, cognitively and physically.

Goal: The primary goal is to develop each child's positive sense of self. We plan to achieve this by dedicating ourselves to nurturing young children with love and care, encouraging self help skills, providing varied activities for their enrichment in a safe environment, and by assisting their families in guiding their child's development skills.

Philosophy: We believe that young children learn best through carefully planned play activities which provide them with a wide variety of opportunities to express themselves and to learn about the world around them. We strive to inspire a love of learning through active participation in developmentally appropriate group and individual experiences. Young children learn best by doing. The philosophy of Stepping Stones Learning Center is based on the premise that the best possible education for young children is a joint venture. The equal importance of home and school is stressed, and every family is encouraged to become actively involved in the school. We encourage the parents to seek assistance from our qualified teachers in nurturing their child's development. Stepping Stones Learning Center sees its role as a catalyst in the greatest adventure of providing the highest quality child development education.

We are state licensed and operated on a nondiscriminatory policy of race, religion, color, creed, and ethnic background.

Program Descriptions

Stepping Stones Learning Center programs are specially designed to enable your child to develop their awesome potential! Our class sizes are age appropriate and ensure individual attention. We are composed of professional, trained staff in early childhood education that are also First Aid and CPR Certified. Stepping Stones Learning Center offers year-round, full or half-day programs. For parents' convenience, we are open from 6:45 am – 6:00 pm. Half-day sessions begin at 9:00 am through 12:00 pm. and extended day programs begin at 9:00 am to 2:30pm.

Infant Program Description Ages 6weeks to 18months

The Program for our infants equates good care with trained infant teachers who are preparing themselves and the environment so that infants can learn. For care to be good, it must explore ways to help infant teachers get "in tune" with each infant they serve and learn from the individual infant what he or she needs, thinks, and feels. The Stepping Stones Learning Center philosophy also sees the setting for care as critical. Therefore, it helps infant teachers design environments that ensure safety, offer infants appropriate developmental challenges, and promote optimum health for children. An equally important program component is the strengthening of the child's developing family and cultural identity by making meaningful connections between child care and the child's family and culture. We take steps in making sure that each infant has a daily plan for care. Each infant is different with feedings and activity times, our program sets up a care plan, not a lesson plan, to give them what they need as they grow and develop. We think that you will find our program stimulating, safe and engaging. We welcome you to join our family and learn all about how we can be a part of your child's successful growth and development.

Toddler Program Description Ages 18 months up to 36 months

Our toddler program encourages continuous learning and growth experiences. We are committed to providing a safe and caring atmosphere in which children can explore and learn. We take pride in developing an age appropriate curriculum that corresponds to each child's development. Young children learn through play and need to be provided with many varied opportunities to explore and experiment with concepts through hands-on activities in their natural environment, through play and active learning. Learning areas such as blocks, art, dramatic play and others provide a learning environment to stimulate that learning. Our activities promote optimal physical, emotional, cognitive and social development while teaching respect for oneself and others and building positive self-esteem. Teachers keep the children engaged through singing, dancing, reading, and other activities that are planned weekly. All planned activities are carefully selected and submitted to the Director for appropriateness. We know that each child will be given what they need to stimulate their growth and development in this program.

Preschool Program Description Ages 3yrs to 4yrs

Our Preschool Program is committed to providing a creative, high-quality developmentally appropriate curriculum that affords the teacher and children the opportunity to have fun and enjoy the learning process while engaging in creative integrated hands-on learning activities that encompasses the whole child. The Stepping Stones Learning Center curriculum is based on the philosophy that young children learn best in an environment that affords them the opportunity to explore, discover, and enjoy the learning process. Our curriculum is based upon the belief that children need to experience child-directed and teacher-directed activities each day through the use of an integrated curriculum. Children learn best if they have the opportunity to know something in a variety of ways. We provide basic learning areas of; block, dramatic play, art and quiet areas to help children with self directed choices. Children learn to take turns, share and develop healthy social relationships. Children are exposed to the world through activities and lessons that are age appropriate and planned weekly. Lesson plans are approved by site Directors for appropriateness.

Pre K Program Description 4 years to Kindergarten Entry (Approx. 5yrs)

Our Pre-Kindergarten Program contains areas of study that are important for every child during their pre kindergarten years. The first area, a phonics and literacy program. The second is "Writing Without Tears" program that will introduce your child to the world of writing correctly. The combined curriculums focus on writing, math, science and social development. Developing critical-thinking skills and stimulating intellectual curiosity ensure your child will successfully and confidently enter kindergarten in the fall. Our program features age appropriate learning environments featuring learning centers and are equipped with inviting, developmentally appropriate learning materials. Parents are given assessment updates throughout the year. These include written communications about your child's learning, ongoing portfolio collections, assessment reports and family/teacher conferences.

School Age Program Description 5 yrs to 12 years old

At Stepping Stones Learning Center we offer before- and after-school care, back-up care for school holidays and school closing days, and summer day camp programs for children up to age 12. School-age children in child care need the opportunity to live and learn in a relaxed environment free from the regular pressures of elementary school. Our Program offers a relaxed, balanced program with time to explore, play and learn with friends, work on their homework, and let off steam. We offer programs for when children are not in school for breaks and other out of school events. We offer a wealth of enrichment activities, and field trips. At Stepping Stones Learning Center you may find school-age children reading a magazine or books, creating art or being involved in a video. Children at our program have the chance to make individual choices each day depending on their needs and wants. The environment at Stepping Stones Learning Center is full of diverse activities in the areas including but not limited to multicultural awareness, science, arts and crafts, recreation, drama, cooking, and game playing. Some of the choices provided help to inspire creativity, others encourage understanding and acceptance and still other choices are put in place to assist children with homework. The program operates from the time children arrive from school until 6:30PM, Monday through Friday, and 6:00AM to 6:30 on many school holidays.

Admission Policies

Stepping Stones Learning Center will accept all children it is licensed to serve, without regard to ethnic background, gender or creed. People who schedule an appointment or stop by for information about Stepping Stones Learning Center are given a personal tour of the facility by the Center Director. This personal interview provides parents with information about the school's philosophy, policies, procedures and program. It also gives the school an opportunity to meet with the student. Families who wish to enroll may do so by completing a registration form and paying a non-refundable deposit (registration fee and first month's tuition). An admission package will then be given to the family which must be fully completed before the child can attend Stepping Stones Learning Center I. Tuition rates will be established and adjusted by the school. There will be no refunds. A thirty (30) day written notice is required to withdraw a child from the program or to reduce the child's scheduled days of enrollment. Should the parent(s) decide to increase the days of enrollment, the parent(s) should inquire with the Director for availability. If the notice is less than 30 days, parents are obligated to pay the full month's tuition. If the school is full, a waiting list will be maintained. Families will be notified if spaces become available. Siblings will be given first priority.

Enrollment Forms

The following must be filled out completely before admission to Stepping Stones Learning Center:

- Admission Agreement
- Photo Permission
- Participation Agreement
- Personal Right (LIC 613A)
- Consent for Medical Treatment (LIC 627)
- ID and Emergency Information (LIC 700)
- Physician's Report (LIC 701)
- Child's Preadmission Health History (LIC 702)
- Child Care Center Notification of Parent's Rights (LIC 995)
- Sunscreen Permission (CCHP 07/03)
- Immunization Record

Tuition

Payments are to be made by the fifth of each month. Tuition becomes delinquent as of the sixth day and a late fee of \$25.00 will be assessed. Fees delinquent longer than two weeks may result in termination of a child's enrollment. There will be a \$25.00 penalty for each check returned by the bank. Two returned checks will be cause for payments to be made in the form of money orders or cash only. All tuition checks are to be made payable to "Giant Na's". Stepping Stones requires a \$100 registration and a two week advance tuition deposit to reserve the spot for each child. The deposit will be held by Stepping Stones and may be used for delinquent payments or final notice at the school's discretion.

*Stepping Stones does not offer any credit or make-up days towards tuition, or due to illness, holidays, vacations or in the event of a public health emergency.

These days were taken into consideration when tuition was determined. Tuition rates are standard even during weeks of holidays and when school is closed. There are three exceptions to this rule: There is a 10% discount for two full time siblings. There is a 10% discount for the month in which a child you refer enrolls.

Hours of Operation

Stepping Stones Learning Center is open from Monday through Friday, 6:45 am to 6:00 pm. Half-day sessions begin at 9:00 am through 12:00 pm. The extended day program is from 9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Meals

Lunch and two nutritious snacks twice a day are served at no additional charge.

Holidays

Stepping Stones reserves the right to close for a period of one day to one week for repairs or other service, giving 30 days' notice. We also observe the following holidays and will therefore be closed (holidays occurring on a Sunday will be observed on the following Monday or the previous Friday):

New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Jr.

President's Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Veterans Day

Thanksgiving and day after

Winter break (Closed for 10 days; dates based on when Christmas falls on)

Absence Procedure

Children enrolled in the Stepping Stones Learning Center are expected to maintain regular attendance. If your child is absent, please call the office at 925-820-8820 to notify school personnel of the reason for his/her absence. A written excuse is required to verify absences of longer than 5 days. The written verification is to be provided for each day your child is absent from preschool. Excessive unexcused absences will result in your child being dropped from the program.

Lunch/Snack

Nutritious lunches are provided by Stepping Stones Learning Center for children 18 months and older. Lunches include vegetables, fruit, bread, milk, and the main dish everyday. Monthly lunch menus are provided in all classrooms and we appreciate your suggestions. We also provide morning and afternoon snacks. Snacks usually consist of foods such as bread, fruits, crackers, or trail-mix. Juice or milk is included with all snacks. If your child has allergies that prevent him or her from eating the snacks and lunches we provide, we ask that you send in a substitute snack or lunch for your child.

Sign In/Out Procedure

All children arriving at school must be delivered to a staff member and signed in on the app. himama. Please use a legal signature. Parents may use their phone, or sign in on the tablet in the front entryway. Children will be released from school only to a person designated in our file, unless other arrangements have been made with a member of our staff in written authority. All changes must be done in writing. All children must be signed out using the app.. NO EXCEPTIONS. Accurate sign-in/out necessary to ensure your child's safe evacuation during any emergencies or fire drill practice. Failure to sign in or out could result in a hefty fee, especially if we are fined by the State during a licensing visit. Missing signatures are fined \$250 per signature, per day, It could also result in shutting down the center or other extreme measures. Please help us to stay in compliance.

Personal Property and Dress Code

Please label all of your child's belongings with his or her name. If an item is misplaced, please check the classroom or the "lost and found" area. Children should not bring toys to school. Stepping Stones Learning Center is not responsible for lost or broken belongings.

Please dress your child in clothes which are comfortable, appropriate for the weather, and can withstand the tests of our fun environment. Your child should wear shoes that have grip-soles and all sandals need to be secured by a strap for safety reasons. No flip-flops or thong shoes are allowed. Please keep in mind that the children are working on self-help skills, and in order to be successful, they need to wear clothes that they can manage. Items such as belts, difficult snaps and buttons can be quite frustrating for a child trying to learn. Each child is required to have a change of clothes at the center. An "extra set" consists of socks, underwear, pants/shorts/dress and shirt. We will periodically ask parents to update the change of clothes as the weather and seasons change.

Full-day preschoolers may bring a small pillow, crib sheet and blanket for naptime. Bedding will be kept in closeable containers at the center and will be sent home each Friday to be laundered.

Field Trip Provisions

Field trips for the preschool and school-age programs are carefully integrated into the curriculum each year. A field trip permission slip for walking field trips for the entire school year must be on file for each student. (A nature walk would be an example of a walking field trip.) For any other field trips, parents will be asked to sign a permission slip for each individual trip. Your child's teacher will let you know the specifics of each outing and these details will be included in the permission slip. Parent volunteers are needed for the preschool field trip to help with driving and supervision. Parent drivers must fill out a personal statement of health, TB test, a statement of ... concerning their insurance and seat belts. Parent volunteers will also be asked to provide a copy of their current driver license and auto insurance.

Transporting School-Age Children

We provide transportation to and from several elementary schools in San Ramon. Transportation costs are included in the tuition. No adjustments or credits will be given for unused days or holidays. There is a \$10 fee for returning to pick up a child who has missed the bus or when we have not been notified of a child's absence regardless of the cause. Our program is set up in a manner that involves students in crafts, games, cooking projects, and occasional field trips. An afternoon snack will be provided daily

Health & Safety

Health regulations require that the school be notified of any contagious diseases or serious illnesses. This is for the protection of other children and our staff. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to advise Stepping Stones Learning Center staff of any medications to be administered with clearly written dosage instructions. Please use the space provided when signing your child in for the day. Please see more detailed information under the Medication Policy section of the handbook.

In compliance with Health & Safety Code Section 1596.81 (b), (1), (c): "The Department of Social Services has the authority to interview children or staff, and to inspect and audit child or child care center records without prior consent. The licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any child, children or staff member and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of the child care center, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect or inappropriate placement."

For the Department of Justice "Registered Sex Offender" database, go to: www.meganslaw.ca.gov.

Outside play is an important part of our school day, weather permitting, and all children are expected to participate. State regulations prohibit us from admitting a child too ill to participate in regular daily activities. In order to keep the children healthy, we ask that you adhere to the following guidelines and keep your child at home if any of the following apply:

If your child has any of these symptoms, his or her illness may be contagious. We expect parents to thoughtfully assess a child's health before sending him or her to school. Please notify us if your child will be absent due to illness or if your child has a contagious condition (chicken pox, pink eye, lice, etc.)

Health Requirements

The following guidelines have been developed in order to provide a safe, healthy environment for all students. If a child has one or more of the following symptoms, he or she will be sent home and not be allowed to return to Stepping Stones Learning Center until free of symptoms, has been on medication for 24 hours, or has a physician's release form.

- **A fever of 100 or above:** Your child should stay at home if s/he has an oral or ear temperature of 100 degrees, or rectal of 100.4, or an under arm temperature of 100 or 4 greater and accompanied by behavior changes and/or other symptoms of illness such as a sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, earache, etc.
- **Vomiting:** Repeated forceful evacuation with other symptoms or a child's inability to eat. The parent will be notified and the child may be monitored. If vomiting continues or other symptoms occur, the child will be sent home immediately.
- **Diarrhea:** Loose bowel movements for two (2) days in a row or three (3) times in one day. Children may return after they are symptom-free for 24 hours.
- **Body rash with a fever.** Must bring a written release from a healthcare professional to return to school.
- **Discharge from the eyes:** Pink eye or any other eye infection is highly contagious. Children can return 48 hours after antibiotics or with a written release from a healthcare professional.
- **Sore throat with a fever and swollen glands or mouth sores with drooling.** Must bring a written release from a healthcare professional to return to school.
- **Strep throat:** Children who are diagnosed with strep throat may return to school after 24 hours on an antibiotic.
- **Head Lice:** Hair must be washed with medicated shampoo and be free of live lice and most dead nit (eggs) before returning to the center.
- **Severe coughing:** Child gets red or blue in the face, or makes a high pitched whooping sound after coughing.
- **Any other diagnosed contagious illness or disease:** such as chicken pox, whooping cough, and scarlet fever. Children may return to school when they are no longer contagious. If your child is diagnosed as having lice, scabies, impetigo, ringworm, or any other contagious disease by your source of medical care, you must notify the school within twenty-four hours.

If your child has any symptoms of illness not mentioned above (listlessness, pale, flushed, stomachache, etc.), the staff will contact you to discuss whether your child needs to go home. You will need to have three names on file to call if you are not available to pick up your child in case of illness.

Daily Health Check

Children will be observed for signs of illnesses upon arrival by their teachers. Children with any communicable illnesses listed under the "Health Requirements" of the handbook will be asked to not attend. Parents and adults authorized on the child's information form are the only people allowed to remove the child from the facility. Parent(s) of school age children must notify the Stepping Stones Learning Center if the child is not attending or taking a vacation on their regular school day.

COVID-19 POLICY

We know that as a parent you are concerned with COVID 19. Because our focus as a quality program is to maintain a high standard for health and safety first we are using this page to answer questions you may have regarding any protocol with the COVID 19 virus. Please come back often to see anything new. We are always adding new ways to prevent the spread of any disease. This page will be specific to COVID 19. Below you will find some of the protocol that we have already implemented. On the left we will add updates to any change in our policies regarding COVID 19.

Positive COVID-19 Test

If a child or member of a child's household tests positive for COVID-19, the family must notify Stepping Stones within 24 hours. The child may not return to the center except as indicated above

Drop off and Pick Up

Parents may enter the classroom for drop off and pick up.

- We ask that if you are not immunized, to please wear a mask for the protection of everyone. Otherwise, if you have been immunized you are ok to not wear a mask. Social distance when possible.
- Any child with any symptoms related to any illness will be asked to remain at home for at least 72 hours and may return, symptom - free, without medication.
- Any adults on file that have permission to pick up a child will be allowed to pick up and drop off.
- Adults that have shown any symptoms of illness should not enter the premises. Please remain at home and arrange for pick up or drop off by an adult with no symptoms.

Cleaning and Sanitizing

Our facility is cleaned and sanitized daily.

- For younger children, we will remove toys and items if a child puts them in their mouth and they will be sanitized appropriately.
- All toys in each classroom are sanitized daily with Hydrogen Peroxide. Regularly used items will be washed with hot water in our dishwasher.
- Body temperature of every child and staff is taken and logged every day. Anyone with a temperature !00 degrees or higher will not be allowed to remain at the center.
- Anyone with a symptom of illness will be sent home. We ask that children be picked up as soon as possible. Children will be isolated away from others until they are picked up.

Health Questionnaire

The following assessment/questionnaire must be reviewed daily by the parent or guardian of each child and family member entering the facility or a center-owned vehicle.

If a child answers yes to any of the questions below, they may not enter the facility:

- Have you had a temperature at or above 100.4 degrees or any reason to be concerned you may be developing a fever?
- Have you experienced a new cough that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Have you experienced a new shortness of breath that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Have you experienced a new sore throat that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Have you experienced new muscle aches that you cannot attribute to another health condition or a specific activity, such as physical exercise?
- Have you experienced any chills that you cannot attribute to another health condition?
- Have you experienced a new loss of taste or smell?
- Have you experienced any new nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea?
- Have you had close contact with someone who is currently sick with suspected or confirmed COVID-19? (*Note: Close contact is defined as within 6 feet or more than 15 consecutive minutes.*)
- Have you received a positive test result for COVID-19 in the last 14 days?
- Do you currently have or are suspected of having COVID-19?

When a child contracts COVID -19 or has been in contact with someone that has contracted it.

Any child who, while at the facility begins exhibiting any sign or symptom of COVID-19, an upper respiratory illness, or other related symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea will be sent home. **Any child with any symptoms related to any illness will be asked to remain at home for at least 72 hours and may return if symptom free without medication.** It is possible that the child will need to remain at home for 10 to 14 days depending on the outcome of a medical provider consultation and public health guidelines. In accordance with public health guidelines, in order to return to school a child will need to

- (1) have no fever, without medication, for 24 hours and a negative COVID-19 test (a home test will be accepted)
- (2) choose to stay home for 10 days.
- (3) child may return to school when a negative test is provided.

Students who need to go home due to illness **must be picked up within 30 minutes**. Please review your emergency contacts and make arrangements with an authorized individual if you are unable to pick-up your child within the 30 minute window.

If a child or member of a child's household tests positive for COVID-19, the family must notify Stepping Stones within 24 hours. The child may not return to the center except as indicated above.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of a natural disaster, medical emergency or other major safety threat, the following emergency procedure will be followed:

In the event of an earthquake or fire, the staff of Stepping Stones Learning Center will follow the Emergency Action Plan posted in each classroom.

- If necessary, children will be evacuated to the temporary relocation sites listed and parents will be notified via phone (if possible) or by signage of the children's relocation.
- In the event of a medical emergency, the staff of Stepping Stones Learning Center will use their First Aid/CPR training to assess the situation and determine what steps need to be taken.
- Parents will be notified of all injuries via written injury reports and phone calls when deemed necessary.
- If the injury requires medical attention above and beyond what the staff is certified to provide, 911 or other appropriate medical services will be called.
- If such a call is made, parents will be notified immediately.
- In the case of a major safety threat caused by a terrorist agency or intruder, Stepping Stones Learning Center will follow the coded emergency alert system posted in each classroom.
- The staff will follow any and all instructions given by local agencies and/or will contact the San Ramon Police Department for direction.
- Classrooms will be placed on lock-down and/or evacuation procedures will be implemented depending on the emergency at hand.
- In the event of such an emergency, parents will be notified as soon as possible via phone once the children's safety is no longer in question.

Medication

The school can only administer medications and over-the-counter products when specific requirements are met. The requirements are as follows:

- The school must have parental permission in writing. A record will be kept by the school staff of any medications administered to the child, noting the date, time, and by whom the medication was given.
- Medication must be given to the teacher by the parent. DO NOT SEND MEDICATIONS WITH THE CHILD.
- The medication is current (not expired).
- Any medication container having a detached or excessively soiled or damaged label will be returned to the parent for a new label from the issuing pharmacy. Unused portions will be returned to the parent. Medicines with a specific expiration date will not be used after the date of expiration. Medicines will be stored in a locked cupboard out of reach and inaccessible to children. These requirements are for all medications. All medications must be in the ORIGINAL containers, whether prescription or non-prescription.
 - The medication must be in a labeled pharmacy bottle which states the following:
 - The name of the medication
 - The prescription number
 - The strength and quantity
 - The expiration date of time-dated medication
 - The directions for use
 - The child's name
 - The physician's name
 - The date of issue
 - The name and address of the licensed pharmacy issuing the medication.

If a prescribed over-the-counter product is required, it must be in the original labeled container accompanied by the physician's directions.

Incidental Medical Records (IMS) Plan of Operation

Medical Records

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has released recommended guidelines for vaccinating young children. We follow Community Care Licensing regulations regarding medical examinations and immunization records for your child. For detailed information regarding immunization regulations and recommendations, please visit the Centers for Disease Control website: www.cdc.gov. Medical examinations and immunization records must be provided upon enrollment and kept current. We cannot permit attendance unless immunization records on file meet individual state child care licensing regulations.

Medications

Medications will be administered in accordance with individual state child care licensing regulations and as described below. In the event the two regulations differ, the more stringent guidelines always apply.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

- To authorize us to give your child prescription or nonprescription medications — or to apply topical nonprescription medications — you must complete either a Medication Authorization Form or Topical Ointment Authorization Form. On the form, you must note the number of days we should give your child the medication, and how often he or she needs to receive it (the daily frequency).
- Please provide us with all printed information about the medication's possible side effects.
- Bring medication in its original container in a clear bag. Clearly label the container and bag with your child's first and last name.
- Prescription medication must include a prescription label with specific dispensing instructions and a current date.
- Do not store medication in diaper bags, lunch bags, backpacks, or any other personal belongings.
- We do not mix medication with food, formula or juice, nor will we dispense any medication in a bottle or cup.
- Unused medications must be taken home every Friday or on the child's last day of attendance each week. With the exception of emergency medication and medication needed by school-age children who do not arrive with their parents or guardians on their first day of the week, our centers cannot store medications over the weekend.

Medication Authorization Forms

Prescription Medications

- In order for a staff member to administer prescription medications to your child in accordance with the prescription label, you must complete a Medication Authorization Form.
- A prescription in your child's name demonstrates physician authorization.

Nonprescription Medications

- In order for a staff member to administer nonprescription medications to your child in accordance with the manufacturer's directions on the label, you must complete a Medication Authorization Form.
- We require written instructions from a physician in order to administer any over the counter medication.
- If your child is under the age of two, we require written instructions from a physician before we can give your son or daughter over-the-counter medication.

Provision of Medical Care

We are not licensed to provide medical care, and our employees are not trained to provide medical care. Our employees do not provide invasive medical treatments (such as insulin injections), nor do they determine the dosage of medication.

Administration of any medication type as listed above including but not limited to: nebulizers, Epi-Pens, oral medications- liquid or capsules, inhalers, etc, the parent/guardian will instruct and show the lead teacher of the classroom and the Director how to properly administer the medication. At the time of medication to be administered, only the designated persons will administer the medication to the child. Proper protocol will be followed recording the child's name, the date, medicine being administered, the time, the dosage amount, and by whom. The designated person will sign their name once the medication has been given.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of sudden illness or serious injury, parents/guardians will be notified immediately. It is the parents'/guardians' responsibility to provide the school with other emergency contacts who are able to pick up the child immediately. If the nature of illness or injury needs to have no delay in getting medical treatment, then Stepping Stones will contact 911 or bring the child to an emergency room while the parents/guardians are being reached. If the nature of illness can wait for the parents/guardians/emergency contact to get to Stepping Stones, then the child will be isolated from other children before the authorized representative arrives.

In case of evacuation, we will be meeting at Staples located at 2710 Crow Canyon Road San Ramon, CA 94583

Earthquake Kit

To help our school be prepared for an emergency, we require that each child have an earthquake kit stored in the classroom. We have a disaster plan in place and regularly practice fire and earthquake drills so that the children also know how to respond in case of an emergency.

The emergency kit shall be provided to Stepping Stones Learning Center on your child's first day of school and contain the following items:

- (2) High energy bars (granola bars, Power Bars, Balance Bars, etc.)
- (1) Package of crackers or wafers
- (1) Fruit roll up
- (1) Package or Beef/Turkey jerky
- (2) Small (5-8 oz) canned juices (no juice boxes)
- (1) Plastic water bottle, 1 pint, unopened
- A note and/or family photo for reassurance

Place all items in a gallon size resealable plastic bag with your child's name on it.

When putting together the emergency kit, keep in mind your child's likes and dislikes, allergies, etc. Please talk to your child and have them be involved in packing the bag. This is a great opportunity to educate them about disasters and how we need to be prepared in these situations. Please provide only non-perishable food items for your child. Please do not send extra food. We also ask that you follow the guidelines and do not deviate from the list.

*At the end of the school year, the emergency kit will be returned or eaten in celebration of no disaster.

Parent Communication and Conferences

We believe that close communication between home and school is vital to a child's well being and school success. We encourage parental involvement and have an open door policy. Conferences will be scheduled twice a year and can also be arranged throughout the year, if necessary.

Discipline Policies

At Stepping Stones Learning Center, we believe that discipline is the key to learning. Because we believe in the value of each and every child and the child's right to be treated with dignity and respect, our staff will NEVER use corporal punishment and other humiliating or frightening techniques. If a child exhibits persistent unacceptable behavior that requires an increased amount of staff guidance and time, a plan to address the behavior will be developed in conjunction with the parents, staff, and director. A child is never subjected to corporal punishment or emotional abuse. Stepping Stones Learning Center reserves the right to immediately dismiss the child if, in the school's sole discretion, it determines that the welfare of the child or school requires such dismissal. Children find security and direction where there is consistent adult guidance and discipline. Children explore, observe, feel, interact and learn through the process of being involved with people and things in their world, and they need guidelines to do this safely. Stepping Stones Learning Center teachers use preventative methods of discipline to reduce the likelihood of disruptive behavior. Teachers support children by providing set limits, reminders, encouragement and acknowledgment of positive behaviors. By routinely recalling rules, teachers help children internalize positive behaviors. Teachers consistently monitor all activities in the classroom and on the playground and give direction clearly, anticipating and reducing the possibility of problems through advance planning and organization. When there is a potential problem, teachers use constructive methods for maintaining group control and handling the behavior of the individual student. They maintain an atmosphere of love, acceptance and order.

When necessary, teachers will step into a situation quickly and use redirection by directing a child to another activity, or whenever possible, natural consequences will be followed through that is appropriate to the situation and the child's development level. Rules are discussed with all children to make sure they understand. Our goal is to create a safe environment in which a child's self-esteem and skills for expression and conflict resolutions are enhanced.

Children are never allowed to hurt themselves, adults or other children. When a child injures another person, teachers will work with the child in a loving and constructive manner to reduce the child's need for striking out. Teachers will offer alternative ways to deal with difficult situations. Every incident will be recorded in a report that will require a parent's signature. If a child has repeated or continued behavioral issues, we will ask to have a parent/director conference in order to determine the course of action to be followed. Our goal is to work in partnership with parents. Positive results come from parental input and consistency from all adults involved in a child's life. Corporal punishment in any way shape or form will **never** be used to discipline children at the center. We have a four-step program in place for behavior problems that victimize others:

- 1st Incident: The child will be told, very seriously, that this behavior is not allowed. An Incident Report will be written and parents will be notified. Staff will do their best to observe and monitor the child to encourage a more positive solution. Staff will intervene by redirecting or guiding the child with positive prompts that encourage positive behavior.
- 2nd Incident: An Incident Report will be written and parents will be asked to participate in a conference that will consist of a plan that can be implemented both at home and at the center.
- 3rd Incident: An Incident Report will be written and depending on the severity, parents may be asked to pick up their child from school. The center will contact an inclusion expert and parents must agree to allow the expert to begin with observations and with input from the center and family, a plan will be created. Depending on the severity, the Parents may be informed that if the behavior occurs for a fourth time, the child may be dismissed from school. Any future actions from the center will be in writing to the parents.
- 4th Incident: The child may be dismissed from school. Stepping Stones Learning Center reserves the right to immediately dismiss the child if, at the school's discretion, it is determined that the welfare of the child, other children or the school requires such dismissal.

Late Charge and Collection Costs

Tuition is due at the beginning of the month and is considered late after the 5th of the same month, after which a \$10.00 weekly late fee will be assessed. Returned checks will be subject to a \$40.00 service charge.

Late charges are assessed for pick-up of a child after 5:30 pm. The rate is \$1.00 for each minute after 5:30 pm. If you are late, you need to pay the late charge to the staff person at the center for the extra time to care for your child. If payment is not made upon pick-up, you will be billed for the charge. Excessive late pick-ups can lead to your being asked to make other arrangements for your child and removal from the center will be necessary.

Termination

The Admission Agreement shall be terminated under the following conditions:

- Failure to pay tuition
- Thirty (30) days written notice to terminate service from parent(s) or guardian(s)
- Behavioral problems
- Child or parent is physically or verbally abusive to other children, parents or staff
- Child or parent displays prejudicial or biased behavior to other children, parents or staff
- Failure to comply with the rules
- For parents in the alternative payment program, failure to complete the forms in the required period

Withdrawal

Withdrawal/Schedule Change

Stepping Stones reserves the right to put all new children on a thirty day trial basis to ensure that our environment is well matched with their needs. Our staff and administration have 6 developed policies to maintain a safe environment for all children. In the event of inappropriate behavior directed from a child to another child or teacher (hitting, kicking, biting), parents will be notified immediately. The director will decide if further action is necessary (parent involvement, suspension, or dismissal). Termination of care by the Center as stated above, the child's adjustment to the Center and the appropriateness of this particular care arrangement for an individual child may be cause for concern for the child's well-being. If the Center does not feel that it is meeting the child's needs, we reserve the right to terminate the care arrangement on a time-line that is in the child's best interest. Other reasons that may result in termination of care include:

1. Failure to complete required paperwork in a timely manner
2. Failure to provide verification of a child's physical examination within thirty (30) calendar days of enrollment in a Center program
3. Failure to provide updated immunization records as needed
4. Failure to pay fees and penalties. Delinquent fee. Checks returned by the bank.
5. Three (3) late pickups of your child within a six (6) months period.
6. Three (3) consecutive days of absence without notification will be considered a voluntary withdrawal by the parent.
7. Failure to adhere to Stepping Stones policies or comply with community care licensing requirements
8. Ineligible for services due to laws, regulations or other legal requirements
9. Lack of cooperation from parents with the Center's effort to resolve differences and/or to meet the child's needs through parent/staff meetings or conferences.
10. The child exhibits special needs related to a serious illness that we cannot meet at the Center. In this case, the Center's staff will make every effort to involve the parents and possibly other resource persons (as appropriate, in order to jointly decide on the best course of action for this child before termination occurs). Termination of care by the parent Since preschool space is limited in this area, any children absent for a period of 3 days without notification will be considered withdrawn. The vacancy will be made available for another child and re-enrollment of the previous child will depend upon availability. Stepping Stones requires a 30 days advance written notice of any schedule changes.

Acknowledgement of Receipt of Parent Handbook

I, _____ acknowledge that I
(Printed Name)
received a copy of the Stepping Stones Parent
Handbook Updated and released September 2022.

Parent Signature:

Date:

Child Name: