

# Bright Start Learning Center

*Serving Lake County since 2005*

## *Family Handbook*

# 2021-2022

### ***Bright Start Learning Center Mission***

*Our mission is to provide a safe, developmentally appropriate, high-quality care and educational environment for children 1-7 years of age in all domains of learning. By using a whole child approach, our experienced and trained educators will work collaboratively with families to build a bridge between community, home, and school, and will use evidence-based strategies and curriculum to prepare children for a successful Kindergarten experience.*

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## **Welcome**

Welcome to Bright Start Learning Center! We are very excited to have your family join our early childhood community. It is a privilege to work with you and we look forward to getting to know your child and family. Please take a little time to familiarize yourself with our policies and procedures. We welcome any questions or feedback you might have. Please carefully read this handbook and keep it for future reference.

## **Our Philosophy**

*We believe...*

- Children are unique and must receive care from adults who are educated, experienced and caring and whose values enable them to be excellent educators.
- Children should experience numerous positive learning experiences in a safe, age-appropriate environment. This will help children reach their full potential by providing activities that touch on all domains of learning.
- Children learn through play.
- Family partnerships are important to our work and to the overall development of each child.

## **Facility Contact Information**

Bright Start Learning Center  
315 West 6th Street  
Mailing address: 328 W 5th Street  
Leadville, CO 80461  
Phone (719) 839-0662  
E-mail: [brightstartlcdirector@gmail.com](mailto:brightstartlcdirector@gmail.com)

## **Ages of Children**

Bright Start Learning Center currently serves and accepts children 1 through 5 years old. We have designed our program into two rooms. We can accommodate older children through age 7 years of age based on staff to child ratio.

Room 1 Caterpillars	Ages 1 – 3 years
Room 2 Butterflies	Ages 3 – 7 years

## **Hours of Operation**

Monday-Friday from 7:30 A.M. – 5:30 P.M.

## **In-service Days**

Bright Start Learning Center closes three times a year for professional development and required trainings.

Tuition for these days is included in your overall agreement. We strive to post these days at least one month in advance so families can make proper childcare arrangements.

## **Holidays - 2021-2022**

Bright Start Learning Center will be closed for the following holidays. All holidays are included in the tuition formula:

- Labor Day (Monday, September 6)
- Thanksgiving (Thursday, November 25 & Friday, November 26)
- Christmas Eve (Friday, December 24)
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (Monday, January 17)
- President's Day (Monday, February 21)
- Memorial Day (Monday, May 30)
- Independence Day (Monday, July 4)

## **Unexpected & Emergency Closures**

In the event of an emergency, snow day or a severe outbreak of illness among staff or children, Bright Start may have to close for the day. Every effort will be made to give you as much notice as possible. Please tune in to radio and television stations or Facebook (Lake County School District or Lake County Office of Emergency Operation) that broadcast school closures in the event of a weather or other emergency that might require us to be closed. Families will not receive tuition credit for days when Bright Start is closed for emergencies.

## **Registration Information**

- Enrollment at Bright Start Learning Center shall be granted without discrimination with regard to sex, race, color, creed or national origin.
- In the event that BSLC is full, a waitlist will be created for each classroom. New enrollment will be determined based on the order of each classroom's waitlist.
  - Enrollment is prioritized in the order of:
    - Staff children
    - Previously enrolled children
    - Number of days enrolled ( 5 days being first, 4, 3, 2,... 1 day being last)
    - Siblings
- BSLC operates year-round. New enrollments are accepted throughout the year in a rolling admissions-style format on a space-available basis.
- Children may attend all days or certain days depending on scheduling 7:30 A.M. and 5:30 P.M. Monday through Friday.

- **A registration fee of \$30** is due once the director has assigned a start date. This is a one-time, non-refundable charge. If for any reason we cannot assign your child to a room, a refund will be honored.
- Please refer to our **Enrollment Checklist** to ensure you have read and/or completed the necessary forms:
  - Bright Start Learning Center Family Handbook
  - Enrollment Agreement
  - General Health Appraisal Form (**Please submit to your family doctor to complete and return to BSLC**)
  - Copy of Immunizations (**obtain from your family doctor/state**)
  - Medical Exemption Form (**if applicable**)
  - Colorado Child Care Assistance Program Policies for Families (**if applicable**)

## **Attendance Policy**

Please consider the best days for your child to attend BSLC. Regular and consistent attendance is important in learning and building skills. Predictable routines are helpful and we strongly suggest **all children are here by 9:30 when learning activities begin**. We understand family problems, serious illness, financial concerns, and other issues can cause absences; however, a predictable routine for your child can also provide support during these times. Please contact the director for information on local resources to assist. We will make every attempt to communicate with you if we see attendance a concern using the following interventions:

- 1) Child has a routine of missing sporadically with no notification. We will speak with the family to rectify the attendance.
- 2) Following the 4<sup>th</sup> day of consecutive absence with no contact, the director will try to contact the family or other persons listed on the enrollment forms to determine the reason for the absence.
- 3) If there is no improvement in attendance following a contact, the family will be asked if they would like to drop their child from BSLC and make the opening available to a child from the waiting list.
- 4) If we are not able to reach someone within 7 business days, we will dis-enroll your child as understanding that lack of communication is reasonably understood as dis-enrolled on part of the family.
- 5) After the decision, the director will drop your child from enrollment and your child can be put on a waiting list based on your family needs.
- 6) If you choose to re-enroll, a signed Attendance Improvement plan may be required.

## **Communicating Absences**

If your child will be absent due to illness, vacation, or scheduling purposes, or if he or she will be late or leaving early, we ask that you **please contact the Director by 9:45 A.M. at (719)839-0662**. Communication is key for planning our daily activities with the children. This

communication allows us to know who will be in our care and to plan accordingly. In addition, communication will allow us to know if there will be openings for drop-ins.

## **Children with Special Needs**

The *American Disabilities Act* mandates that children with disabilities be given equal access to childcare programs. We welcome the opportunity to collaborate with the state, regional and local agencies to make sure to access any supports that are available and our teachers will work tirelessly to obtain all training opportunities to continue to increase their skills so that all children receive the highest quality care and educational experiences.

Bright Start Learning Center complies with Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ([www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)). Please set-up an appointment with the Director if you believe your child should receive disability accommodations under the ADA. They will establish reasonable modifications to integrate your enrolled child into our programming and work with you as these modifications are implemented. It will be communicated to you, the guardian, if Bright Start cannot accommodate due to state licensing rules and regulations for overall care of children or a substantial risk of serious harm to the health and safety of others.

## **Tuition and Enrollment**

Tuition is based on monthly rates. We are holding a spot for your child based on the days for which you have signed up. Days cannot be traded. Tuition will not be refunded due to illness, doctor visits, vacation, etc. Two weeks of vacation are calculated into your tuition agreement.

Our tuition rate is \$43.75/day. Monthly tuition payment is based on the following formula:

$$\text{Monthly Tuition} = [\text{rate } (\$43.75) \times \text{number of days/week} \times 50 \text{ weeks}] / 12 \text{ months}$$

<b>Current Tuition</b>	
<i>Based on \$43.75/day</i>	
\$875/month	5 days/week
\$700/month	4 days/week
\$525/month	3 days/week
\$350/month	2 days/week
\$175/month	1 day/week

- If a family has a tuition agreement and their child is in need of an additional day during the week on an “on/off” basis *and* there is space, the additional day may be added for an additional day’s tuition. Each day will be charged as part of the next month’s bill for the additional day’s fee. Advanced notice is recommended for accommodating.
- Monthly payment is due the 1st day of each month on which BSLC is open. Payments will be considered late after the 6<sup>th</sup> day of the month.

- A \$10 fee **per week** will be added for late tuition payments. *This late fee will be applied for every week thereafter until the tuition is paid in full.*
- Other payment options (bi-monthly or weekly payments) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If needed, please arrange this with the director to avoid late fees.
- We offer a 7% discount for the oldest child if multiple children are attending.
- All returned checks will be charged a fee up to the maximum amount allowed by law. Two or more incidents will result in the account being placed on money order or cash-only status.

## **Drop-Ins**

We are happy to invite children to Bright Start Learning Center on a drop-in basis when staffing allows. Here are our guidelines for drop-in services:

- A one-time, non-refundable \$30 Enrollment Fee is due for each child prior to drop-in service. Enrollment Fee is good for 3 years.
- All documents are required upon drop-in. See Enrollment Packet. Document must be updated annually or when there is any immediate change.
- We offer a 7% discount for the oldest child if multiple children are attending.
- The daily drop-in rate is \$50 (regardless of full or half day)
- Drop-in payment is due the day of service or pre-registration
- Refunds will be honored if there is a 72-hour notice. Enrollment fee is non-refundable.
- All returned checks will be charged a fee up to the maximum amount allowed by law. Two or more incidents will result in the account being placed on money order or cash-only status.
- Drop-in care will depend on space and staff availability. Advanced notice is recommended.

## **CCCAP**

Parents who receive Colorado Child Care Assistance Program (CCCAP) have two options:

- 1) Children can start attending BSLC before the CCCAP process is officially completed, but families will have to pay applicable tuition until approval is received by the Department of Human Services. Payment will be the full regular tuition rate (by cash, check, or money order). Once families are approved, they may be reimbursed whatever they have paid up to 30 calendar days, with the exception of the enrollment fee, if the Department of Human Services has approved participation in the program.
- 2) Attendance can begin once approval is given by DHS. **IT IS IMPORTANT to maintain COMMUNICATION with DHS for AUTHORIZATION.**
- 3) **IMPORTANT: Please read and sign the “Policies for Colorado Child Care Assistance Program for Families” for Bright Start Learning Center.**

CCCAP Tuition Information



- Families are responsible to pay any applicable Parent Fees directly to BSLC on the first day of each month. Payments will be considered late after the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month. Rates may vary according to State disbursement.
- A \$10 fee **per week** will be added for late tuition payments. *This late fee will be applied for every week thereafter until the tuition is paid in full.*
- Other payment options (bi-monthly or weekly payments) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If needed, please arrange this with the director to avoid late fees.

## **Withdrawal**

A two-week notice is required before withdrawing a child from our center. Your account must be paid in full before withdrawing—including your child's tuition for that two-week period. Your monthly tuition can be prorated for the month if a two-week notice is given.

All tuition must be paid for the current month or the child will be dis-enrolled the first day of the next month. A 35% handling charge will be added if the account is sent to a *Collection Agency*.

**Bright Star's Director reserves the right to cancel the enrollment of a child at his/her discretion after reasonable effort to resolve.** A parent will be given proper notice if BSLC elects to withdraw a child. Here are the following possible reasons yet limited and based on circumstances:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments of tuition and fees.
- Lack of communication and cooperation
- Not observing the rules of the center as outlined in the parent agreement.
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent(s), children (whether enrolled or not) or authorized person.
- Expired immunizations and/or physical.
- Consistently picking-up or dropping off a child outside of BSLC hours.
- There are times when a child is not adjusting well to our program. In the event that our care is not a good fit for your child and your family, we may request that you withdraw your child from our program; however, we will give you a 2-week notice to find alternative care.
- Challenging Behaviors: We work hard to identify the social, emotional and developmental needs of each child. However, there are times when children may need additional care that our staff are not able to provide. Please see more information under "Challenging Behavior."

## **Family Participation & Conferences**

We have an open-door policy and you are always welcome. Please remember to wear a mask when indoors to follow LCSD's protocol. We also invite you to arrange a meeting with your child's teacher any time—even just to become better acquainted! Parents are required to

volunteer 10 hours a school year. Please do not hesitate to speak to your child's teacher or the Director.

### **Visitors in BSLC**

All visitors, planned or unplanned, must sign-in upon entering in our "Visitors Binder" by the Parent Board. All visitors will be accompanied by staff at all times and must wear a visitor badge and mask while indoors.

### **Updated and Accurate Contact Information**

Please talk to the director about any changes in your child's schedule, contact information, immunization or health updates, employment, insurance coverage, etc. We must be informed, in writing or email, regarding any changes to the people authorized to pick up your child.

### **Drop-Off and Pick-Up Policies/Due to COVID-19 precautions**

For your child's safety and to follow state regulations, parents have to fill out an online daily screening check through Brightwheel before dropping off. Children may be dropped off by parents inside the building at their classroom door, but may not enter the classroom to prevent spread of illnesses. Temperatures will be taken by staff but parents are more than welcome to share their temperature results. Children might be signed in/out each day by a parent, guardian, or a person over the age of 18 who is permitted on the enrollment packet to pick up or drop-off your child.

If a child has symptoms of COVID-19 or you are in contact with someone who was diagnosed, the child needs to be self-quarantined for 10 days and a doctor's note stating all is clear must be given if tested positive to return. Every child will have to bring and take home all items everyday, these items include water bottles, lunch boxes, and any clothes that have been placed in a plastic bag to be laundered. These items will have to be taken home at the end of the week: sleeping items, extra clothes, winter gear (when it is time) and the recyclable bag in which items were brought in. All items need to be labeled with your child's first and last name.

If you need someone on the authorized list to pick up your child or if you need to add someone to your drop-off/pick-up list, you can do this in person or through a phone call. For your child's safety, text messages or emails are not acceptable. Authorized persons will be documented in your child's file. The person added or persons unfamiliar to staff will need to be verified through identification of a valid state driver's license or any other form of identification card to ensure they are an authorized person.

### **Masks**

According to CDC guidelines, children over the age of 2 years and older are recommended to wear masks indoors. Children do not have to wear them during outside play times, naptime, and

eating times. Parents/Guardians must wear a mask upon entering the building following Lake County School District guidelines.

### **Late Pick-Up**

BSLC closes at 5:30 P.M. Staff will double check each classroom as well as outdoor play areas to ensure that there are no children unaccounted for. If a child has not been picked up by our closing time, that child will continue to be cared for by one or more of our qualified staff and the parent(s)/guardian(s) will be called to ensure pick-up. If a parent or guardian cannot be reached, we will call the emergency contacts listed. **A fee of \$1.00 per minute will be charged for each minute after BSLC closes at 5:30pm for each child in our care.** This fee is subject to change. If a child remains in our care for more than 45 minutes after BSLC has closed and we have been unable to reach a person, the center Director or qualified staff will contact the Department of Human Services and/or law enforcement.

### **Identifying Where Children Are at All Times**

Each classroom will have 2 qualified teachers/aides that will verify attendance on a half hour basis within their classroom to identify where children are at all times. Children will have a name to face headcount taken after each transition. The classroom teachers will ensure that each parent/guardian signs in their child upon arrival and signs out upon leaving the classroom daily through the Brightwheel application. The center Director or Assistant Director will also make periodic head counts throughout the day.

### **Supporting Positive Behavior & Social Emotional Needs**

Each teacher or aide at Bright Start Learning Center has received training on positive teaching practices that ensure that children's behavior is guided in a positive manner. We continuously update our families through daily communications regarding their child(ren) and encourage family involvement to ensure that their child(ren) are being guided in a positive direction.

1. All of our teachers and aides encourage positive interactions with each child through demonstration and teachings that allow children to learn and be capable of respecting others socially and emotionally.
2. Through training, each teacher is able to effectively and positively reinforce children's positive behavior and redirect any behavior that is harmful to a desired behavior. Each teacher continuously demonstrates positive interactions with each child, which helps children learn how to treat others in a positive way and allows them to be more socially and emotionally aware of the feelings of their peers.
3. Bright Start Learning Center believes in working as a team to identify the specific social and emotional needs of each child. Our staff are trained in methods that enable them to understand children's behavior and develop positive behavior support plans for each child. This reduces challenging behaviors and may prevent suspensions and expulsions.

4. At BSLC, we continuously strive to strengthen our relationships with our children and their family. Through our continuous specialized trainings, our teachers are able to identify the individual needs of our children. While working with our families, we are able to provide each child with the specialized care that he/she may need within our classrooms. When a situation occurs that makes a child's needs difficult for staff and parent(s)/guardian(s) to adequately address, the family will be given information on how to access an early childhood behavioral health specialist to support their child in all environments. We will work alongside to support the needs of the child and family to the best of our abilities.

## **Challenging Behavior**

We will make every effort to work with the parent or guardian to ensure a cooperative approach for children having difficulties with behavior. We are here to serve and protect all of our children. A parent may be called at work or home at any time the child exhibits uncontrollable behavior that cannot be modified by the center's staff. The parent may be asked to take the child home immediately. The following steps may be taken regarding children who display *chronic* disruptive behavior that is upsetting to the emotional or physical well-being of another child or an adult.

Children who display destructive or harmful behavior to themselves or other children and/or who disregard the authority of the teachers and director will be sent home immediately. A parent will be called and asked to come get his/her child for the remainder of the day. After three occasions of being sent home, we may choose to suspend the child for a certain period of time that will be discussed with the parent. Please refer to our detailed discipline policy for more information regarding the steps that are taken by our staff to work with children who are displaying challenging behaviors. Once the child returns to our program, if the child is still a danger, we will discuss if we are the best environment in which to care for the child. The parent will be given two weeks to find alternate child care and the child will be unenrolled from our program.

## **Child Abuse and Neglect**

Bright Start recognizes that families have their own parenting styles and beliefs. By law, we are mandated to report suspected abuse or neglect. The procedures are as follows:

1. Any suspected abuse or neglect will be documented by the person observing the situation.
2. That person will contact his or her director to relate relevant information and they will report the incident to the Department of Human Services.
3. After reporting the incident to DHS, their office will investigate and let the center know what, if anything, needs to happen and the outcome.

If you suspect child abuse within our program, please contact the Colorado Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at 1-844-CO-4-KIDS (1-844-264-5437). The report will be filed with our local Child Protective Services agency.

## **Filing a Concern or Complaint**

The following steps outline a procedure to receive and address complaints:

If the complaint is in regards to something **happening in a classroom**:

- 1) Speak to the teacher(s) about the issue
- 2) If this issue is not resolved, speak to the Director
- 3) If resolution still cannot be reached, the parent may ask to speak with a member of the Board of Directors

If the complaint is about something not directly related to the classroom, it should be reported to the Director. The matter can be taken from there to the Board of Directors as described above.

## **State Licensing Violation**

If there are any concerns or if you would like to file a complaint regarding our child care program, please contact:

Office of Early Childhood, Division of Early Care and Learning Licensing  
1575 Sherman St. Denver, CO 80203  
(303) 866-5948

## **Illnesses**

It is both your responsibility and Bright Start's to maintain children's health. Our trained staff follow policies on illness prevention and the spread of infection. Young children get sick more often since their immune systems do not fight illness like adults, nor have they been exposed to many of the germs that cause infection. **Bright Start does not have facilities to care for children who are ill.** If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he or she should be kept home for at least 24 hours. If the symptoms develop at Bright Start, you or your emergency contact will be called to take your child home.

### ***COVID-19 related illness***

Bright Start Learning Center will be in close communication with our nurse consultant and public health specialist if we were to have a positive COVID-19 case in our building within staff and/or family and children. According to CDPHE and CDC (updated on September 18, 2021), you have to quarantine **10 days without a test OR 7 days after receiving a negative test result.** Information will be kept confidential.

### ***Children with these symptoms should not attend:***

- Unknown rash.
- Fever of 100° or higher. (Children cannot return for 24 hours after the fever dissipates)
- Unusual behavior (cranky, less active, listless, crying, won't eat)

- Severe red or sore throat
- One diarrhea (loose or runny stool)
- One vomit
- Lice
- Severe coughing
- Pink eye
- Impetigo (bacterial skin infection)

***Children may return to the center after:***

- Obtaining written verification from a doctor.
- Taking an antibiotic for a contagious illness for 24-hours
- Fever-free and non-contagious for 24-hours.
- In the case of head lice, following treatment with appropriate shampoo. Lice free 24-hours.

***Exclusion Policy:***

Children will be excluded from attendance at Bright Start if:

- The child's illness prevents the child from participating in routine activities.
- The illness requires more care than childcare staff is able to provide.
- Keeping the child in childcare poses an increased risk of illness to the child or to other children or adults with whom the child comes into contact.
- The child exhibits any of the following symptoms, which require immediate attention: fever, rash, abdominal pain, unusually irritable behavior, sore or red throat, upper respiratory infection, diarrhea, vomiting, impetigo, lice, ringworm, pink eye with pus coming from the eye, severe coughing. Covid-19 symptoms will result in exclusion and immediate isolation from other participants

If questions arise when a child may return to the center, the final decision will be made by the Director.

**Illness While at Bright Start**

If your child arrives at Bright Start with symptoms falling under the Exclusion Policy, the staff will check your child when they arrive at school. If the child shows any of the symptoms described above, you will be asked to take your child home until they are free of the above symptoms. If the child develops illness under this policy while at Bright Start, the child will be separated from classmates and cared for in the office until he or she can be taken home. **Parents or emergency contacts are expected to pick up the child within one hour of the time they are contacted.** Please keep all contact information current so we are able to reach someone to take your child in case of illness.

## **Injuries, Accidents, & Emergency Reports**

If a child has an accident or is injured while at Bright Start, an accident report will be completed and presented to the person picking up the child. The person picking up the child will sign the report and receive a copy.

In the event of a major medical emergency or an accident, the center teacher or director will call 911 first. The child will be transported by ambulance to St. Vincent's Hospital. If staffing permits, an early childhood teacher or director will accompany the child. The parent/guardian and family physician will be called immediately. Serious injuries will be reported to the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care within 48 hours.

In the case of head injuries, an online head injury report will be filed within 48 hours of injury to the Early Care and Learning website.

A first aid kit is available in each classroom. First aid supplies will be taken on any field trip (including walking trips). Emergency phone numbers are posted in each classroom. Child Enrollment forms and health/medical information have been copied for each classroom teacher and will also accompany the class on any field trip. Teachers will keep an accurate daily attendance list.

In the very unlikely event a child should be found missing, the following steps will be taken immediately:

1. A director will be notified.
2. Available staff members will assist in a search inside and outside the facility.
3. If the child is still not located, the local police will be called to assist in the search.
4. Parents will be notified.
5. The center director will conduct a thorough investigation after the incident and a report will be given to parents and staff.

## **Ingesting Non-Toxic Art Supplies**

Bright Start Learning Center provides non-toxic art supplies for every child in our care. If your child has ingested any type of art supplies, staff will get in contact with you to report the incident, as well as getting in contact with our Public Health Agency for next steps, or Poison Control if a child ingested something toxic. Parents are more than welcome to come and pick-up their child if they feel like they prefer for their child to be examined by their primary care physician.

## **Emergency Operation (Action) Plan (EOP/EAP)**

Bright Start Learning Center has developed an Emergency Action Plan. The Plan will provide information intended to ensure a safe environment during a variety of specific emergency situations. For emergencies such as fires, tornadoes, lost children, and any other emergencies, please see Bright Start Learning Center's full Emergency Action Plan. The Plan is available upon request to families.

Monthly drills will be held alongside Cloud City High School for staff and children for fire, evacuation and lock-down procedures. We conduct practice drills to ensure that all staff and children are familiar with the drill procedures in case of a real emergency. All families will receive basic instructions of procedures for lockdown, lockout, evacuation, shelter and reunification.

## **Storing and Administering Children's Medicines**

All medications given to the center to administer to children will need to have annual parental permission and doctor's orders for each medication prescribed. For children under age two years old, the orders will need to be renewed according to the AAP well child exam schedule. All medication will be administered by trained and delegated staff and in accordance with the prescribed directions and will be documented in our medication log book. All medication will be stored in areas inaccessible to children at all times. If a medication is expired or left over, those medications will be given back to the parent(s)/guardian(s). If the parent(s)/guardian(s) are not able to be reached, the leftover medication will be properly disposed of. Emergency medications will be stored in an area that is easily accessed by staff, but inaccessible to children.

## **Immunizations and Physicals**

All children who attend child care programs in Colorado are required by law to be vaccinated. Medical Exempt and Non-Exempt forms are available in our office for those who wish to file an exemption to this law.

## **Outside Time**

Our outdoor environment is considered to be an extension of our classroom and we have planned activities that connect to our lesson plans. In addition, licensing regulations require children be taken outdoors each day. Children will play outdoors if the temperature is 15°F or warmer with calm winds. Children should be dressed accordingly: light jacket, cap, rain boots in fall and spring; heavy winter jacket, snow pants, mittens, scarf, hat, and snow boots in winter. An extra sweater or sweatshirt at school is recommended for sudden changes in temperature. **All clothing must be labeled clearly with your child's name. We will be participating in more outside time to allow fresh air to help with social distancing.**

## **Inclement Excessively Hot and Cold Weather**

To ensure the safety of the children, during excessively hot and cold days, outside time will be limited. While the children are outside they will have access to drinking water and shade. If the "feels like" temperature is below 15° or exceeds 88° F, we will not take children outside. We will continue with indoor large gross motor activities.

In an instant where we experienced power outages, we will wait for at least an hour before making a decision to close down for the day or until power is restored. Winter time can be a tough call due to the weather and colder conditions, but we are prioritizing children's safety to



stay warm and comfortable. This decision will be made by the Director and Assistant Director. Enough time will be given to parents to plan on picking up their children if needed.

### **Diapering and Toileting**

Staff are trained in proper diapering procedures. Parents are responsible for providing diapers and wipes for their child. A note will be sent home when more are needed. **Please label packages with your child's name.**

When your child begins to show an interest in toilet learning and the parent(s)/guardian(s) are also ready to assist with the begin the process, a plan will be developed that is developmentally appropriate for your child. You will be responsible for bringing several extra changes of clothing and either Pull-Ups or underpants during this time period.

For safety reasons, a staff member always monitors children during trips to the bathroom. Staff members take children in gender-specific groups to the bathroom several times during the day, however, bathroom trips are also made available to individual children when needed.

### **Bottles, Blankets, Pacifiers, Money, and Other Personal Belongings**

You may send a small security blanket, other needed item for your child. Staff will make every effort to keep track of these items but will not be held responsible if lost. Because our storage space is limited, we encourage children to keep valuable personal items at home. We do not allow children to bring money to BSLC. If there is money that is required for a field trip or special activity, all funds will be collected by the director from the parent(s)/guardian(s) prior to the field trip and/or special activity.

**PLEASE LABEL ALL BELONGINGS.** Items to consider are cups, lunchboxes, lunch containers, clothing and bedding.

Due to space limitations, please bring only one blanket, one sheet and one lovey. Individual items can touch other children's items so do not overfill your child's cubby area to avoid overlapping.

### **Field Trips, Television or Video Viewing, and Special Activities**

BSLC plans for occasional walking field trips, television/video viewing and special activities. Field trips require parental permission with emergency numbers for the day in order for your child to participate. Walking field trips and nature walks will be taken during warmer months. The center will ensure that each group of children has a qualified early childhood teacher accompanying them for these excursions and other events. We will ensure that proper staff-to-child ratios are maintained at all times. Attendance will be verified every 30-minutes to account for all children. Parent volunteers are welcome to assist with field trips.

BSLC will occasionally show educational G-rated videos for children that will require permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s). Videos are limited to 30 minutes per week.

**If a child arrives late to the center, and the class has already left on a walking field trip,** the child may be asked to participate in another classroom, or the parent can take their child to meet their class.

Please communicate by calling the director by 10:00 A.M. at (719)839-0662 to make arrangements. Director may be out on the excursion with the children.

## **Classroom/Birthday Celebrations**

Parents are welcome to send birthday treats to share with their child's classmates on birthdays or special occasions; we encourage you to bring pre-packaged treats. We will dedicate time in the afternoon during the afternoon snack to celebrate the special occasion. Please let your child's teacher know in advance (at least 2 days in advance) that you will bring a treat. Parents are always welcome at their child's birthday celebration. **Please do not bring balloons.** If your family does not celebrate birthdays or other holidays, please discuss this with your child's teacher. A short message or letter will be sent home before the celebration, as well as a verbal reminder between the teachers/director and parents. Bright Start is respectful of your culture and choices. A plan can be developed to meet your child's needs during any classroom celebrations. ***We will advise you of any allergies as needed to ensure the safety of all children at BSLC.***

## **Activity Fees**

Activity fees are a yearly amount determined by activity opportunities in our community. Examples: swimming, train ride, parade participation or walking field trips to local businesses. Director will notify families of the upcoming yearly fee and it will be added to tuition.

## **Photographs and Publicity**

Photographs of the children participating in our programs may be taken from time to time and may appear on our Facebook page, newspapers, magazines, brochures or other publicity materials. Permission for photographs of your child was included in the Enrollment Agreement material. You will not receive compensation for use of your child's photograph.

We know we love to take photos of the children with their center friends. However, we ask that you check to ensure that all children whose photo you want to share have given permission.

## **Transportation, Seating, Supervision and Emergency Procedures on the Road**

***\*Please Note: Currently, we are NOT transporting children in vehicles.***

In the case that Bright Start Learning Center has a vehicle and is transporting children on field trips, we ensure that Colorado State Laws are followed at all times. A qualified driver will be present in each center vehicle with each group of children. All center vehicles are equipped with first aid supplies and will have an individual currently certified in First Aid and CPR. Each driver will also be instructed in emergency roadside procedures. Children are required to

remain seated, with their seatbelt fastened appropriately and children are never left unattended in a vehicle.

Transportation could include drop off, pick up and field trips. In order for our program to provide transportation, we require that each child has written permission from the parent(s)/guardian(s). It is the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to return the permission slip to Bright Start. We will not transport any children on field trips, drop off or pick up if we do not have a copy of the permission slip.

Bright Start will follow the Emergency Action Plan procedures if Emergency Transportation is needed for out-of-town or other emergencies requiring transportation.

## Changes in Policies

The fees, procedures, and policies stated in this handbook are subject to be changed at the discretion of the center Director along with the Board of Directors. This *Bright Start Parent Handbook* was last revised in September 2021.

## What to bring

- **Nap Bag-** Including a small blanket, crib sheet and one lovey for rest time. These items should be in a non-porous bag such as a reusable grocery bag. All items must have your child's name written clearly on them.
- **Extra Change of Clothes-** Including shirts, pants, underwear, and socks. These items should be placed in a zip lock bag and kept in your child's cubby.
- **Lunch-** Please read the food guidelines below. You must bring your child a lunch every day. We will provide milk. Lunches will be stored in the fridge.
- **Diapers-** You will need to provide diapers and wipes for your child. Wipes must come in a hard plastic case. Diaper cream may also be stored in your child's diaper container. You will be notified when diapering supplies run low. If diapers and wipes must be supplied by Bright Start, a fee will incur.
- **Appropriate Clothing for Outside Play-** We go outside every day!
  - During fall/winter—boots, coat, mittens, hat, snow pants, etc. must be provided.
  - During spring/summer—hat, sunglasses, sunscreen, and a light jacket must be provided. Label each item with your child's name.
- **Masks-** According to CDC guidelines, children over the age of 2 are encouraged to wear masks indoors. They will not wear them during outside times, snack, lunch, and nap time for they are a choking hazard. Please provide extra masks in a plastic sandwich bag (Ziploc) bag with their name on them. These will be sent home at the end of the day to be laundered or disposed of if used.

## Meals

The center will provide milk, water and two snacks, morning and afternoon, for each day that meets the State nutritional requirements. **BSLC does not provide lunch.** We appreciate you sending a healthy lunch for your child that does not need to be heated or cooked. To accommodate children with food allergies, there may be some food items that are restricted from being served or brought into the center. If any allergies arise in the classroom, parents will be notified.

## Food Guidelines

As Bright Start does not provide lunch, there are a few items we ask that you remember as you pack your child's food every day. We want your child to have a nutritious meal that is safe from choking hazards and which provides them with the fuel they need to play and learn. Please review the following guidelines and consider posting this page of the handbook where you will see it when packing your child's lunch.

## What to pack for lunch

Below are the guidelines published by the USDA for lunch and supper meal patterns. On the following page are some other tips for feeding preschool children. When packing your child's lunch, please use these resources as a guide on what to pack. If you include an item such as a dessert IN ADDITION TO a meal that follows these guidelines, we will encourage your child to eat the meal first. Keep in mind that we will continue to provide milk:

### Lunch and Supper Meal Patterns

	Ages 1-2		Ages 3-5		Ages 6-12 & 13-18		Adults	
	Previous	Updated	Previous	Updated	Previous	Updated	Previous	Updated
<b>Milk</b>	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup	1 cup*
<b>Meat and meat alternates</b>	1 oz	1 oz	1 ½ oz	1 ½ oz	2 oz	2 oz	2 oz	2 oz
<b>Vegetables</b>	¾ cup	½ cup	½ cup	¼ cup	¾ cup	½ cup	1 cup	½ cup
<b>Fruits</b>		½ cup		¼ cup		¼ cup		
<b>Grains</b>	½ serving	½ oz eq	½ serving	½ oz eq	1 serving	1 oz eq	2 servings	2 oz eq

\*A serving of milk is not required at supper meals for adults  
Oz eq = ounce equivalents

For more info, please visit: [https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP\\_MealBP.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP_MealBP.pdf)

## What to avoid

We ask that you avoid sending the following foods due to choking hazards or USDA guidelines:

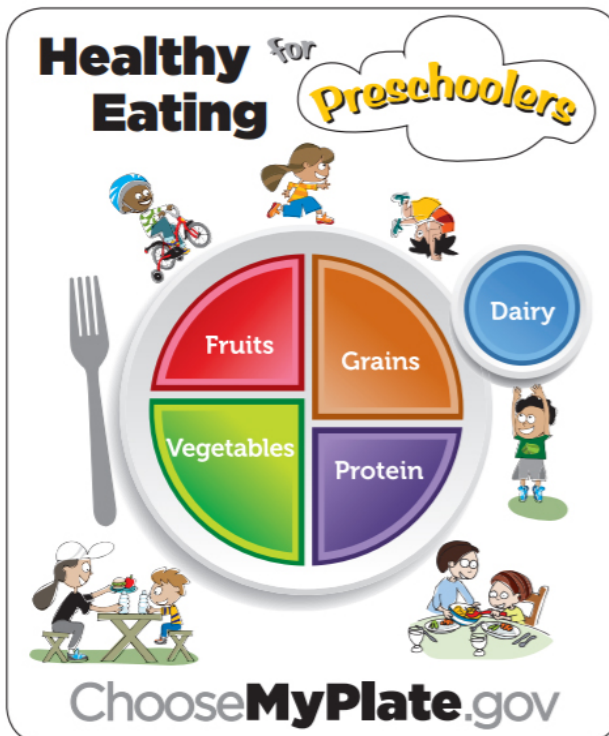
- Whole grapes or tomatoes -please cut in half lengthwise)
- Hot dogs - please cut into short strips instead of round)
- Jell-O or pudding
- Meat with bones
- Hard and soft candy or gum
- Any caffeinated drinks or soda
- Juice or juice-type drinks
- Fruits with pits; peaches, cherries, apricots, avocado - please remove pits
- Popcorn

## Storage and heating

Food brought from home will be stored in our refrigerators and will be eaten cold. We do not have the ability to heat food, as licensing does not allow this. Hot foods may be heated at home and stored in a thermos. All foods will be taken out of their containers by a staff member and given to your child. If staff notice that your child's lunch does not reflect these guidelines, they may send home an additional copy of these guidelines or have a conversation with you about your child's lunch. Thank you for taking the time and energy to provide a nutritious and safe meal for your child. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please notify the Director at (719)839-0662 or through [brighstartlcdirector@gmail.com](mailto:brighstartlcdirector@gmail.com)



United States Department of Agriculture



### Get your child on the path to healthy eating.



#### *Offer a variety of healthy foods.*

Choose foods from each MyPlate food group. Pay attention to dairy foods, whole grains, and vegetables to build healthy habits that will last a lifetime.

#### *Be mindful of sweet drinks and other foods.*

Offer water instead of sugary drinks like regular soda and fruit drinks. Other foods like hot dogs, burgers, pizza, cookies, cakes, and candy are only occasional treats.

#### *Focus on the meal and each other.*

Your child learns by watching you. Let your child choose how much to eat of foods you provide. Children copy your likes, dislikes, and your interest in trying new foods.

#### *Be patient with your child.*

Children enjoy food when eating it is their own choice. Some new foods take time. Give a taste at first and wait a bit. Let children serve themselves by taking small amounts. Offer new foods many times.

#### *Cook together.*

#### *Eat together.*

#### *Talk together.*

#### *Make meal time family time.*



Food and Nutrition Service  
USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Based on the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

FNS-451  
Revised December 2016