

2017-2018

Parent Handbook

Child Care Centers



PROGRAM NARRATIVE

Learning takes place when children are in surroundings where they feel safe and secure. In the classroom, the teachers provide opportunities for learning in an atmosphere of trust and love. The program allows for children (with proper supervision) to participate in activities both inside and outside their home classroom. A large, outdoor, play area is provided for large muscle play and activities.

Infant care serves children from six weeks to eighteen months. Consistent and qualified caregivers implement the goal of developing relationships between infants and significant adults in their environment. Activities and materials are chosen to support current levels of growth and encourage higher levels of development.

Toddler care serves children from eighteen months to three years. Emphasis in the classroom rests on care in a family-like setting and the representation of developmentally appropriate activities. Independence and enhancement of self-concept are stressed along with language and social/emotional development.

Preschool care serves children from three years to five years. A planned curriculum, developmentally appropriate for preschoolers, is balanced with opportunities for large muscle play, breaks for well-balanced meals and rest time. Experienced teachers allow children to learn through structured individual and group activities complemented by free choice time.

The program follows standards and best practices set forth by the **National Association for the Education of Young Children** (NAEYC) which works to promote high quality early learning for all young children, birth through age 8, by connecting early childhood practice, policy, and research.

The programs participate in the **Step Up To Quality** program, which recognizes early childhood programs that operate by standards above State licensing requirements. Each of our centers is highly rated at four or five stars. Step Up to Quality means: highly trained teachers; development of school readiness skills; commitment to continuous quality improvement; and focus on family engagement.

The programs participate in the **Universal Pre Kindergarten** (UPK) program sponsored by Invest in Children in Cuyahoga County. UPK is a comprehensive, high quality early care and education program for 3-5 year old children that will help them enter school healthy and ready to learn. UPK makes high quality early care and education possible by providing funding and resources to programs to enhance quality, as well as, scholarship assistance to low and moderate income families.

The Teaching Staff Members rely on a team effort to plan a program, which promotes experiences of value and enrichment. Staff meetings provide the opportunity to share experiences and projects as well as allow for planning time and individual skill development. In-service training is provided throughout the year in the areas of First Aid/CPR, health and safety, child development, recognition of child abuse, communicable diseases, child guidance, multi-cultural experiences, Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards and curriculum development.

The Family Life Child Care Centers utilize Creative Curriculum and The Teaching Strategies Gold online assessment system. This curriculum model was chosen based on the premise that it allows teachers to focus on the "whole" child to promote learning, and because curriculum and assessment are linked. The *Creative Curriculum* parallels the NAEYC accreditation standards and aligns with Ohio's Early Learning and Development Standards for preschool age children.

The *Creative Curriculum* is based on a developmental continuum that includes the domains of Social/ Emotional Development; Physical Development; Cognitive Development; and Language Development. This curriculum provides the teachers with a framework to plan activities to strengthen skills the children already have and to encourage and support new skills. This model allows teachers the flexibility that is needed to accommodate the developmental range of a group of young children.

Welcome to Family Life Child Care Centers. Family Life Child Care Centers are operated under the auspices of OhioGuidestone. Our mission is to provide pathways for growth, achievement and lifelong success. Our administrators and teachers are here to provide the highest quality care for your child. We invite you to share with us your ideas on ways to enhance the program.

Family Life Child Care Center Contact Information

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Center Parent Information- ODJFS

The center is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a noticeable place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the center's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing rules governing child care are available for review at the center.

The administrator and each employee of the center is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's service agency.

Any parent of a child enrolled in the center shall be permitted unlimited access to the center during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the center or the evaluating the premises. Upon entering the premises, the parent, or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence.

The administrator's hours of availability and the child/staff ratios are posted in a noticeable place in the center for review.

The licensing record, including licensing inspection reports, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments, is available for review upon written request from the Ohio department of job and family services.

It is unlawful for the center to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act or 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

For more information about child care licensing requirements as well as how to apply for child care assistance, Medicaid health screenings and early intervention services for your child, please visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/families.stm>

Center Program Information:

Goals and Philosophies:

Goals

- * To promote children's desire to be life-long learners;
- * Involve Parents in the education of their Children;
- * Improve children's pre-academic and language skills so that they are better prepared for school

Philosophies

- * Children learn in an environment of positive reinforcement. Caring, supportive adults, a stimulating environment, and the opportunity for discovery are the rights of all children.
- * Each child is an active learner and an active participant in his/her education. Learning is enhanced by the opportunity to explore, discover, and to make mistakes.
- * Parents and teachers working together are facilitators or guides in the learning process. Learning is life long and cumulative and the lessons of childhood are the foundation of later learning.
- * Each child is a unique individual that grows at his/her own rate, and learns in different ways by various means. Children who experience success are more willing to take risks, hazard guesses and explore hypotheses.

Sample Daily Schedule: *Daily Schedules will vary by site and by classroom.

Infant

*Daily Schedules will vary by site and by classroom.

6:30-9:00 Arrival- Breakfast, bottles as needed, diaper changes, activities in play area
9:00-11:30 Songs, art, small muscle play, Indoor/Outdoor Large Motor Play, snack and diaper changes
11:30-12:30 Lunch
12:30-3:30 Nap, activities in play area, diaper changes as needed, Indoor/Outdoor Large Motor Play
3:30-6:30 Snack/bottles diaper changes as needed, buggy walks, Departure

*This schedule is a guideline; all babies are on their own schedule. Feeding and sleeping are on demand and diapers are done every two hours, or as needed per parent request.

Toddler

*Daily Schedules will vary by site and by classroom.

6:30-8:45 Arrival- Breakfast, Small Group Play, Diapers/Potty,
8:45-12:00 Centers (small group/craft/music), Snack, Diapers/Potty, Indoor/Outdoor Large Motor Play
12:00-1:00 Lunch, Diapers/Potty, Cot set up
1:00-3:30 Naptime, Snack, Diapers/Potty
3:30-6:30 Small Group Play, Indoor/Outdoor Large Motor Play, Diapers/Potty, Departure

Preschool

*Daily Schedules will vary by site and by classroom.

6:30-8:00 Arrival- Free Play Activities
8:00-9:00 Breakfast, Free play Activities
9:00-12:00 Learning Centers, Meeting, Free Play Activities, Indoor/Outdoor Large Motor Play
12:00-1:00 Lunch, Quiet Activities/Language Arts
1:00-4:00 Quiet Activities, Nap/rest, Snack
4:00-6:30 Free Play Activities, Small Group Activities, Indoor/Outdoor Large Motor Play/ Departure

* Bathroom time is ongoing throughout the day

Staff/Child Ratios and Group sizes:

Room	Program ratio	State ratio	Group size
Infant	1:5 / 3:10	1:5 / 2:12	10
Toddler	1:7	1:7	12
Preschool	1:10	1:12/14	20

The program schedules staff to operate at accreditation ratios and strives to maintain the optimum ratios throughout the day. Certain circumstances may require operation at state ratios for a limited period of time.

Supervision of Children, Guidance and Management:

The discipline philosophy of the Family Life Child Care Centers is based on the concept that all children's behavior (whether appropriate or inappropriate for their developmental level) is based on their needs at a particular time. The goal of our program is to provide a safe, nurturing environment for children. Cooperation and open communication between parents and staff on behavior and discipline is essential.

The program's discipline policy is signed by all staff as a condition of employment.

Self Discipline:

Our goal for your children is that they are able to accept responsibility for their own behavior and to be able to function with inner controls. Teachers facilitate the development of self control in children by using positive guidance techniques such as modeling and encouraging expected behavior, redirecting children to a more acceptable activity, and setting clear limits.

Children are provided many opportunities to develop social skills such as cooperating with others, helping, negotiating and talking with the person involved to solve interpersonal problems. The teachers will facilitate the development of these positive social skills at all times.

Guidance Procedures:

Taking this philosophy into consideration, the following procedures have been established to maintain and develop discipline:

- 1 It is the responsibility of the staff members of the center to be able to communicate, at the child's own level of understanding, an acceptable behavior for each situation.
- 2 Staff will be as positive as possible, providing rewards and recognition for students who are following the established rules.
- 3 Pressure to perform can cause children to withdraw or avoid situations in which they may make mistakes. Children are not to be forced to answer questions or participate in any activity.
- 4 The center will assume that a child's misbehavior, at any time, was the best known behavior that the child had and will begin to teach an alternative behavior. This will be accomplished by:
 - A. Removing the child from the situation.
 - B. Directing the child back into the situation when he/she has a greater opportunity to be successful.
 - C. Develop an acceptable behavior with the child for the situation.
 - D. Place the child back into the situation to apply the alternative behavior that was developed.
 - E. Repeat procedure as many times as necessary until the new behavior is established.
- 5 In the event that the above procedures do not result in the appropriate resolution of the program the following procedure will be followed.
 - A. A parent/teacher conference will be held to discuss the behavior which is problematic and to establish a plan of action to be followed by all the caregivers.
 - B. If necessary and as decided on by the parents and the staff, a mental health consultation may be requested.
 - C. If the above steps do not bring about resolution, then the child's withdrawal from the center may be requested.

In extreme situations, the parent may be called to remove the child from the program for remainder of the day. Parents will be notified IMMEDIATELY to pick up their child. A meeting will be scheduled between parent(s), child and teachers to discuss the child's behavior and the consequences of the behavior. The staff/ site administrator and the parent will work together to make a plan for helping the child when he/she returns to the program.

Serious or repeated infractions of appropriate behavior may result in expulsion from the program. In these extreme cases, the Director will review all procedures with the Site Administrator and parents. Documentation of such action will be given to parents by the Site Administrator.

Each child care staff person will be responsible for the safety of the children assigned to his/her care. No child shall be left alone or unsupervised.

The program requires all staff to actively supervise the children in their care. Active supervision includes:

- * Being able to see and hear the children.
- * Having an awareness of the activities of each child
- * Standing in a strategic position in the room or on the playground in order to be able to see all children
- * Scanning activities and circulating throughout the room or playground

* Being near enough to children to be able to intervene quickly if necessary

Arrival/Departure Guidelines:

Each child must be brought into the center each day, and signed in, and signed out at the end of the day. This is done by writing the time of arrival and departure by each child's name.

Dropping children off in the hallway or the parking lot is not permitted. Each child must be brought into their designated classroom, and received by a staff person to ensure proper supervision. Staff members are not responsible for children who are not properly signed in or out. Consistent failure to observe this procedure may be cause for dismissal from the program.

Each child will be greeted by a staff person, and their presence recorded on an attendance sheet. After a child is signed out for the day the teacher will mark the child's departure on the attendance sheet.

We discourage the use of cell phones during the arrival and/or departure times when you are in the center.

Out of consideration for both your child and the program staff, please be prompt in picking up your child. Having to wait beyond the expected pickup time can be a very unsettling experience for a child. In addition, many of our staff members have family obligations after work hours.

Some suggestions to ensure smooth daily transition include:

Drop off

- 1 Bring your child in early enough so you don't feel rushed.
- 2 Always sign in and check for parent information.
- 3 Help your child put his/her belongings away.
- 4 Talk to the teacher.
- 5 Have a happy good-bye.

Pick up

- 1 Remember to sign out and check for parent information.
- 2 Allow your child to finish the activity he/she is involved in before leaving.
- 3 Encourage your child to put his/her toys away before leaving.

Release of Children:

Your child will not be permitted to leave the program, unless the person you have sent has the proper identification and is listed on the Child Release Authorization form. The authorized person must be at least 16 years of age. If someone is picking up the child and is not listed on the Child Release Authorization form, the parent/guardian must give a written and/or verbal authorization to the center for that person to sign out the child. This authorization must include the name of the person picking up, the relationship to the child, and the length of time that the person will be responsible for the child. A verbal authorization on voice mail is not acceptable, the parent/guardian must speak to a staff person directly. The person picking the child up must also provide a picture I.D.

If the parent or designated adult arrives at the center intoxicated or poses some other type of safety risk, the child will not be released from the center with that individual and a supervisor will be notified. The staff person or supervisor will contact another parent or adult listed on the emergency contact list to arrange for alternate transportation including possible transport by a taxicab service. If this transport is not possible and the parent or other designated adult does not comply, the child will be released and the staff person will get the license plate number of the vehicle and the local police department will be contacted.

Child Custody Issues:

There are several types of situations when custody can be an issue. The following procedures and/or documentation will be required:

- 1 **Biological Parents were married and are now divorced.**
The Site Administrator shall be provided with a copy of the divorce decree and any related documents which should specify the parent's rights with regard to the child or children.
- 2 **Biological Parents were never married.**
Absent a Court Order the father has no rights to visitation pursuant to Ohio Law. If a father requests visitation, it may be granted only upon providing a copy of the Court Order authorizing visitation or with the written consent of the mother.

Biological Parents are married but divorce action has been filed.

Parents have equal rights to visitation and custody barring the providing by one or the other if a Court Order specifying the rights of the parent.

Tracking Procedure:

If your child is going to be absent from the program, please call and inform the center. If your child is being transported from another program and does not arrive on a regularly scheduled day, staff will notify parent or designated emergency contact if a child does not show up. If the child was in attendance in school that day and is not in the program, then a supervisor should be notified and local law enforcement may be contacted. If a school or other program is delayed or cancelled the child may be dropped off at the center by the parent/guardian. Your cooperation is important to help account for each child in the program on a daily basis. Time spent tracking absent children takes away from time we are able to devote to the other children in the program.

No credit is given for missed days for any reason.

Transitions:

Children are transitioned between groups in the center to ensure that individual development needs are met, and not strictly according to chronological age. Conferences are scheduled prior to all transitions to discuss the child's readiness for transitioning and to familiarize the parents with the day-to-day routines in the child's new group. A written transition agreement between the parent/guardian and the center will be developed and signed by the parent/guardian. This agreement will include the beginning and the ending date of the transitioning period as well as the transitioning schedule that will be followed.

Food Information:

The Family Life Child Care Centers believe that sound nutrition contributes to overall development. For this reason, besides following the appropriate United States Department of Agriculture, Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) recommendations, the menu presented to the children is low in refined sugar, salt, and red meat.

Preschoolers will be provided with a breakfast, lunch, and one snack per day. Gum and candy do not fit the nutritional guidelines and should be left at home.

All FLCCC programs are peanut free environments. No food that contains peanuts should be brought into the center.

Menus are posted on the bulletin board and in the classrooms for parent's reference. Parents of children with diagnosed special nutritional needs will be provided supplements by the program. Parents will need to complete an ODJFS Medical Physical Care Plan and a ODJFS Medication Form (modified diet). Parents may choose to provide their own supplement in lieu of the program. Plans will be discussed at orientation. If supplements are desired due to parents preference, but it is not a diagnosed special nutritional need, parents will be required to provide the supplement. An ODJFS Medication form will need to be completed.

Programs with Infants and Toddlers:

* Children in the infant and toddler program will be provided with a breakfast, lunch, and two snacks per day. Written information will be presented to parents/guardians at pick-up time regarding infant and toddlers' food intake during the day.

* To meet CACFP requirements, Family Life Child Care Centers is required to offer formula and other required infant food to all enrolled infants. The iron-fortified infant formula we will provide for infants until they turn one year of age is: **Babies R Us**

Premium Infant Formula.

* A parent or guardian may decline the formula offered by the center and supply the infant's formula themselves. However, when an infant turns one year of age, the center will begin to provide milk and the other required food to meet the meal pattern for toddler age children.

* All infants' bottles and food must be labeled with the child's name and date, and will be stored in the refrigerator in the infant room. Bottles can not contain any food, medication or vitamins. Bottles will be discarded if not finished in one feeding, and sent home daily.

* All children between the ages of 12 months to 24 months will be served whole milk unless a supplement is provided due to parent preference or medical reason.

The Family Life Program participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The U.S Department of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)

If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, by fax (202) 690-7442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov.

Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

Our program provides time and supervision for preschool children in attendance for more than four hours to brush their teeth, at a time that best fits the program's curriculum. We will encourage children to brush their teeth and assist them. Parents with preschool aged children can "opt out" if they do not wish for their child to brush their teeth at the center. Individual parents who do not want their child to brush their teeth while in care must make a request for non-participation in writing, on a form that we will provide. This request will be maintained in the child's record, and must be renewed annually.

Procedures for Emergencies and Accidents:

General Emergency:

General emergencies are defined by child care licensing as:

- * Any threats to the safety of children due to environmental situations or threats of violence;
- * Natural disasters such as fire, tornado, flood, etc.;
- * Loss of power, heat or water

Fire, weather and emergency procedures are posted in each classroom, and the log of monthly fire drills is available in the office. Diagrams showing fire evacuation routes are posted in each room.

All staff members will have access to a working telephone/ cell phone at all times.

Staff members trained in CPR, First Aid and Communicable Disease are available at the center and on field trips at all times.

The center has a written disaster plan that includes procedures for responding to threatening situations that may pose a health or safety hazard to the children and would require lock-down, evacuation, etc.

If a loss of heat, water or power occurs, parents/ guardians or emergency contacts will be called for immediate pick up, unless we have received word that the situation will be rectified in a short period of time. If this event occurs in the overnight hours, the center closing will be announced on local television stations by 6:30am and every attempt will be made to contact parents by phone. **No refunds or credits are issued for these closings.**

Serious Incident, Injury or Illness:

A serious incident, injury, or illness is defined by child care licensing as any situation occurring while a child is in care of the center that requires emergency medical treatment; professional consultation or transportation for emergency treatment.

In the event of an emergency, parent/ guardian will be contacted and 911 will be called. If a child is transported for emergency treatment, the child's health and medical records shall accompany the child. The site administrator or a child care staff member shall stay with the child until the parent or guardian assumes responsibility for the child's care.

In situations requiring emergency transportation, the incident/ injury report shall be available at the center for the parent or guardian within at least 24 hours following the incident/ injury.

Emergency Transportation Authorization- The program reserves the right to refuse enrollment to parents/ guardians who will not grant permission to secure emergency transportation for their child in the event of an illness or injury that requires emergency treatment.

Incident/ Injury Reports:

An incident/ injury report shall be completed by the child care staff member in charge of the child when the following occur:

- * An illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment; or
- * A bump or blow to the head; or
- * Emergency transporting; or
- * An unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of children or staff, such as a child left unattended.

The completed report shall be given on the day of the incident/ injury to the parent, guardian, or person picking up the child from the center.

Management of Illness and Medication:

Symptoms for which a child will be discharged from the center:

- * Diarrhea (two or more abnormally, unexpected or unexplained loose stools within a 24 hour period).
- * Vomiting more than one time or when accompanied by any other sign or symptom of illness.
- * Severe coughing, causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping sound.
- * Difficult or rapid breathing.
- * Yellowish skin or eyes.
- * Redness of the eye or eyelid, thick and purulent (pus) eye discharge, matted eyelashes, burning, itching or eye pain.
- * Stiff neck with elevated temperature.
- * Sore throat or difficulty in swallowing.
- * Temperature of one hundred degrees Fahrenheit, (taken under the arm), when in combination with any other signs of illness.
- * Unusually dark urine and or grey/white stool.
- * Untreated infected skin patches, unusual spots or rashes.
- * Evidence of untreated lice, scabies or other parasitic infestations.

Precautions the center will take when isolating a child who is ill:

A person trained in the recognition of communicable diseases is available at all times and will observe each child daily as he/she enters the group. The Communicable Disease Chart is posted at each site.

In the event that parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact people listed on the CEHI form and Child Release Authorization form will be contacted to pick up the child. Until the child is picked up, he/she will be isolated within sight and hearing of an adult and made comfortable.

Parents of other children enrolled in a classroom where a child has been diagnosed as having a communicable disease will be notified of that fact by the classroom staff and posted health alert.

Means of notifying Parents:

You must notify the center in the event that your child is diagnosed as having any communicable disease/infection (e.g., strep throat, scarlet fever, head lice, chicken pox, and measles). A notice will be posted in the classroom to notify parents of any communicable disease to which their children may have been exposed. Information will be available which describes the disease as well as the symptoms associated with the disease/ infection.

The Center's policy concerning care of mildly ill children is:

- * The program defines a mildly ill child, as a child experiencing cold symptoms not included in the above list.
- * A child with a low-grade temperature and no other signs of illness: A low-grade temperature is defined as less than 101 degrees (taken under the arm).
- * Parent or emergency contact person must remain in contact with the center.
- * The child will be sent home with any worsening condition.
- * The child must be able to participate fully in his/her age group activities.

The following guidelines are to be used to determine when your child can return to the center after illness:

- * Twenty-four hours after the stool or urine has returned to a normal color or consistency.
- * Twenty-four hours after vomiting has ceased.
- * Twenty-four hours after beginning antibiotic treatment for a positive throat culture.
- * Twenty-four hours after beginning of antibiotic treatment for conjunctivitis.
- * Twenty-four hours after a child has been sent home due to illness.
- * Re-admittance of a child who has been ill shall be by verbal communication from the parent/guardian that the child has recovered from the illness.
- * At the discretion of the Site Administrator/Head Teacher, a doctor's written approval may be requested for re-admission.
- * A child's attendance at the center implies his/her ability to participate fully in his/her age group activities. A child may not remain indoors if his/her class is going out. For this reason proper clothing is required.
- * Twenty-four hours of recovery time is important to strengthen the child and to help the child resist further infection.

When Medication will be given:

Administration of medication will only be given for emergency situations, with a few exceptions, such as diabetes, behavior and asthma medications.

Types of Medication that will be kept on site:

- * Epi pens
- * Asthma medication
- * Topical ointments (diaper rash cream, eczema cream and sun block)
- * Seizure medications
- * Behavior Medications

Non-Emergency Medication:

- * Parents need to tell their doctor that dosage times for prescription medications need to be at times when the child is at home.
- * In regards to breathing treatments, parents are to give morning breathing treatments at home so that the center will only need to give one breathing treatment.
- * Medications such as pain relievers/fever reducers and orajel can be given to infants and toddlers that are either teething or following immunizations. In this case parents will need to bring in the medication the first day it is to be used and can only be given for up to 3 consecutive days. The medication will then need to go home at the end of the third day.
- * **No** other over the counter medications will be given.

Topical Over the Counter:

Topical items such as diaper rash creams, eczema cream and sun block can be kept at the center.

Parent Guidelines for Prescription Medications:

- * A prescription label attached to the original container which gives the child's name, a current date (within the last six months), the exact dosage to be given, the specific number of dosages given daily, and the means of administration.
- * The parent/guardian and/or doctor must complete Administration of Medication Form, which can be secured in the classroom or office.
- * No medication may be administered beyond the expiration date or for longer than six months after the prescribed date, which ever comes first. Written instruction forms must be renewed every six months for each instruction which reads "to be given as needed." It must be accompanied by written instructions stating exact symptoms, which require administration of the medication, the amount of time between dosages, the maximum number of dosages per day, and the means of administration.

Parent Guidelines for Non Prescription Medications, food supplements:

Non-aspirin fever reducers may be administered for three days or less only for infants and toddlers for teething or after immunizations, non-prescription topical ointments (diaper cream, eczema cream or sunscreen only) may be administered for twelve months if the following conditions are met.

- * Parents/guardians must complete Administration of Medication Form, which can be secured in the classroom or office.
- * The medication must be in its original container with the original label attached, which specifies appropriate dosages, based on the child's age or weight. All medication must state the child's name, the current date, the name of the medication, the dosage, the times to be given, and the method of administration on the container.

* The dosage on the form signed by the parent/guardian cannot exceed the manufacturers recommended dosage. The center shall follow manufacturers' guidelines regarding application. When the topical product is used for skin irritations the product shall be applied by the center for no longer than fourteen consecutive days at any one period of use.

Where Medications are to be kept:

All medications and topical items are to be kept in the child's classroom in a locked cabinet out of reach of children. ALL MEDICATIONS, SUPPLEMENTS, AND FORMS MUST BE GIVEN BY THE PARENT/GUARDIAN, TO THE STAFF MEMBER ASSIGNED TO THE CHILD'S ROOM. NONE OF THE ABOVE MAY BE PLACED IN THE CHILD'S BOOK BAG, OR CUBBY. Parents/guardians are responsible for requesting that medicine be returned at the end of the day if they wish to take it home.

Inhalers and other medication:

For school age children who require the use of a prescribed inhaler, the procedure will be as follows:

* Parent/ guardian must fill out and sign a Request for Administration of Medication form stating that they are permitting their child to have access to their inhaler.

* The inhaler may not be stored in a cubby or book bag, it must be given to the program staff for proper storage.

For other emergency medications, please refer to the section on Administration of Medication, Food Supplements or Modified Diets.

Medications Forms and Medical Physical Care Plans:

* Medical Physical Care Plan: If care is provided for a child who requires or may require a medical procedure or who has an ongoing health condition that requires child specific care, the parent/guardian will need to complete a "Medical/Physical Care Plan". The plan is to be completed and must include training all necessary staff prior to the child's first day of care. The Site Administrator will review the plan with the parent/guardian during the enrollment process. This requirement does not include short term illnesses, unless the child care staff member needs to perform a medical procedure for the child. The plan will need to be updated annually or more often if necessary, if there is a change in the care instructions or change in teaching staff.

* All new Medication Forms need to be completed by the designated teacher with the parents. If a parent requests a change in dosage or time to administer medication that differs from the prescription label or directions; a new medication form must be completed. If the change falls within the prescription label or directions; the parent needs to indicate the change on the existing medication form in writing along with signature and date. Medication forms will then be reviewed and approved by the Site Administrator prior to administering the medication, and twice a week thereafter.

Who Can Administer Medication:

* The Site Administrator and one designated fulltime teacher per classroom may administer medication. Names of staff able to administer medication is posted at the center.

* The Site Administrator and designated teachers are to attend an annual training on medication administration. Documentation of this training will be kept in the staff person's file.

* Staff will record each time medication is given and the dosage.

* Prior to administering medication the teacher/site administrator must have another teacher witness the dosing and administering of all medication. The witness will also sign and date the medication form acknowledging who is getting what medication and that the amount and time are accurate per the medication form.

Children With Special Needs:

Parents or guardians of children with allergies or handicapping conditions such as, but not limited to, cognitive, physical, or social delays in development shall confer with the Site Administrator/ Head Teacher. Both the teacher and the Site Administrator shall be included in the development of an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) for the child. The signed, dated, and written plan will outline any special instructions necessary for the health and/or development of the child. This form will also include any special services the child is currently receiving. Only staff trained by parents or certified medical professionals can administer special treatments. The Site Administrator/Head Teacher will document efforts to receive parental consent for sharing of information. The program is unable to serve children with special needs if access to the IEP or treatment information is denied.

Mandated Reporting of Abuse:

In Ohio, child care centers' administrators and employees are considered to be "Mandated Reporters" of suspected neglect, physical or sexual abuse of a child enrolled in the center. The staff maintains current training certification in the Recognition of Symptoms of Child Abuse. The Site Administrator is the designated reporter for this center. If a staff member believes that a child is showing symptoms of abuse, the Site Administrator/ Director and the agency's Child Advocate will be notified. The suspected symptoms are documented, and a report of suspected abuse is made to the Child Abuse Hotline (216-696-5437), as required by law, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code. The Site Administrator will call in reports or be present when a staff member reports.

Parents who suspect that their child is being abused should report their suspicions to the Hotline. Communication with the agency administration is encouraged so that an internal inquiry can be conducted, to protect all children enrolled in the center. The Child Advocate is available to accept complaints from parents, guardians, staff and children (440-260-8308). The program reports abuse/neglect complaints to the Ohio Department of Job & Family Services, Child Care Licensing Section.

Transportation and Field Trips:

Transporting Children for Emergencies:

In the event of an emergency, the parent/guardian will be contacted and 911 will be called. Children will be transported as per their parent/guardian instructions in the Emergency Transportation Authorization section of the CEHI. An accident/illness report form will be completed, and copies will be distributed to the parent/guardian and the office. The original will go in the child's file.

Transporting Children for Field Trips:

- * Parents/guardians will be notified of all field trips and will be required to sign a permission slip.
- * Transportation vehicles may include parent cars, buses or agency vans.
- * A first-aid kit and staff trained in first aid, communicable disease, and CPR will be available on all field trips.
- * CEHI forms will be taken on all field trips.
- * Children will wear identification bracelets with the center's name, address and phone number.

Transporting for routine field trips:

- * Parent/guardian will sign a permission slip for the routine field trips, including walking trips in surrounding areas.
- * A first-aid kit and staff trained in first aid, communicable disease, and CPR will be available on all routine field trips.
- * CEHI forms will be taken on all routine field trips.

Supervision plans for all field trips:

- * Required staff/child ratios will be maintained on all field trips.
- * All staff will take attendance at departure and arrival at each destination point.

Swimming Policy:

It is the policy of the Family Life Child Care Centers to take children swimming only in controlled settings when Water Safety Instructors are on duty, such as a community pool, or when swimming lessons are being provided by a community organization.

During any swimming activity, the staff is required to actively supervise the children, and shall be able to clearly see all parts of the swimming area.

During warm weather, children may also have the opportunity to use sprinklers and wading pools. These activities are fully supervised by the staff.

The child care staff members will review swimming and water safety rules with children each time they participate in water activities.

Prior to any swimming activities, written permission will be obtained from the parent/guardian, and will include the following information:

- * The child's name and birth date,

- * A statement indicating whether the child is a swimmer or a non swimmer,
- * Location of the swimming site,
- * A statement of whether or not the center is providing additional adults or child care staff members above the licensing ratio requirements for this activity,
- * A statement that the parent or guardian grants permission for the child to participate

Outdoor Play Policy:

Outdoor play is an important part of our daily activities. Children are able to exercise, explore natural surroundings, and move freely during outdoor play.

Children enrolled in the center for four or more consecutive daylight hours have a planned outdoor play period each day weather permitting. It is important that parents provide the appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, boots, gloves, etc.). The building and shade trees often shelter the play areas from cold wind and hot sun. Children will have the opportunity to engage in relays, games and movement activities in a gym, classroom, or hall if the weather prevents outdoor activity during the day.

Children will play outdoors in suitable weather which is considered between 25 and 90 degrees Fahrenheit.

Children are encouraged to get plenty of water to replenish body fluids before going out, during and after returning to the building.

- * Parents need to provide a water bottle labeled with their child's name
- * Parents are encouraged to provide non aerosol sunscreen
- * Staff will limit the amount of running that the students engage in
- * Staff will allow a ten minute cool down period once the students return to the building
- * Staff will warn children that metal playground equipment may be hot to the touch
- * Staff has been trained to recognize symptoms of heat related health problems

Ozone Alert: Ozone alert situations will be monitored. Time outside will be restricted to half its normal length in an orange level ozone warning. Parents must provide the Center with written information if a child has a condition that makes them more sensitive to heat or ozone conditions.

Thunderstorms: Staff will postpone outdoor activities if a thunderstorm is imminent. If caught outside during a thunderstorm, staff will move children to a sturdy shelter, car, van or bus. Staff will take children indoors immediately after seeing lightening or hearing thunder.

Parent/Employee Participation Policy:

We encourage parents to be a part of our program and there are many activities in which you can take part. Activities include seasonal celebrations, field trips, and parent conferences. We have an open door policy and parents are welcome to visit the center at any time without notice.

Child Advocate Services:

The Family Life Child Care Centers a OhioGuidestone organization offer the services of a Child Advocate. The advocate is a person available to advocate for the child, child rights, and safety. The advocate is available to receive, respond to and take appropriate action on complaints of mistreatment and/or neglect received from the children, staff members, and parents/guardians. Complaints may be communicated to the advocate in written form, informal meeting, or via telephone. The Child Advocate can be reached by calling (440) 260-8308.

OhioGuidestone has a clients' rights policy and client grievance procedure. To review that policy or to receive a copy of the policy, contact the Child Advocate at (440) 260-8308.

Privacy Policy:

The Family Life Child Care Program is pledged to keep all information about your child and your family confidential. This means we will not release any information unless we are required to under state law or if you give us written permission to do so. State law mandates that we release certain information when requested by child care licensing, law enforcement agencies, child protective agencies, or government health officials.

We will also not release any information about your child/family on the internet without your written permission. This includes the posting of names, contact information, photographs, videos, audio of children or family members on our website, Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, or any other location on the internet. We will not share information through texting or sharing of photos on cell phones.

We also discourage you as parents to post pictures or other information on these internet sites that would contain pictures or other information about children that are not your own.

Parent Concern Procedures:

The program intends that parents have an effective way of negotiating differences and difficulties that arise in their interactions with the teachers and administrators. The following techniques are available to handle differences.

- 1 Approach the teacher and ask for a meeting or phone conversation at a time when the teacher does not have classroom supervision responsibility. Teachers cannot engage in lengthy conversations in the classroom for reasons of confidentiality and safety of children.
- 2 Concerns that cannot be addressed by the teacher need to be directed to the Site Administrator. The Site Administrator is available for conferences as requested by the family.
- 3 When concerns cannot be resolved within the program, the Site Administrator and/or the family should contact the Assistant Director at 440.260.6017. If the concern is related to the Head Start program then the Head Start Assistant Director should be contacted at 440.260.6885.
If concerns are not able to be resolved at the Assistant Director level, then the Assistant Director, and or the family should call the Program Director at 440.260.6030. A phone call or conference will be arranged to address the concern.
- 4

Resolving differences is essential to quality childcare. There is a negative affect on children and the childcare program when ongoing complaints cannot be resolved. Parents always have the right to withdraw their child from the program if they have basic disagreements with the philosophy of the program (e.g. confidentiality in incident reporting) or are dissatisfied with the service. The program has the right to request that a family leave the program if differences cannot be resolved.

Any complaints concerning maltreatment or neglect will be addressed in accordance with the Mandated Reporting of Abuse Policy and Child Advocate Services Policy.

Adult Conduct Responsibilities:

Children need a safe and secure environment to grow and flourish. Children deserve respectful, nurturing responses from all the adults in their environment. Therefore, all adults, parent, guardians, teachers, and support staff will adhere to the following code of conduct while on the premises of Family Life Child Care Centers. Children shall not be exposed to inappropriate language, conversations, or behavior by center employees, parents or media.

Failure to comply with these expectations will result in the termination of services to a family. All staff receives and acknowledges policies on discipline upon hire.

* Parents/guardians may not hit/spank their child on the premises of the center.

* Parents/guardians may not speak in an intimidating tone, or use threatening speech or any obscenity when speaking to any child including their own or when addressing any staff person.

* Parents/guardians may not discipline or interfere with the discipline of any child/children other than their own child/children.

Parent/Center Communication:

The Family Life Program encourages the participation of parents in its programs. Participation opportunities include but are not limited to formal and informal parent/teacher conferences, parent accompanying children on field trips, family/social events, parent group discussions, and other volunteer tasks. Parents are welcome visitors at the center at all times.

Conferences:

The teachers will schedule semi-annual conferences with you to discuss your child's progress. If at any other time you would like to discuss your child's progress, please feel free to schedule an appointment with your child's teacher.

Newsletter:

Parents/guardians will be kept informed of the activities at the Center via monthly newsletters and notes sent home with the children. This information will be placed in the child's cubby. All newsletters will be posted on the bulletin boards in each individual classroom. Newsletters will contain information about the events happening in each program and class area. Information about field trips, themes of the week, and special events will also appear in the newsletter.

Daily Communication:

Take a few minutes to talk with your child's teacher about the day's activities. Share some special things your child does at home.

Parents/guardians of infants and toddlers will receive a daily sheet on activities, eating, sleeping, and toileting. Once your child transitions to the preschool/prek environment, forms of communication will depend on your child's classroom. Please speak to your teacher if you have questions or would like more information. We recommend families to review the activity log or other forms of communication on a daily basis to stay connected with your child's development.

Notify the teacher of times when you will be late or someone else will be picking up your child. Remember, your child should be picked up no later than 6:00 pm.

Please feel free to suggest some guidance techniques that are useful for your child with his/her teacher. Discuss with the teacher plans for handling disciplinary and behavioral difficulties.

Parent Activities Committee (PAC):

This group is committed to supporting the family, educationally and socially, through monthly meetings to share, plan, and organize activities. PAC is composed of parents and family members of children enrolled at the center.

Parent Input and Evaluation:

We encourage and welcome your comments and suggestions. It is our hope that by working together we will provide a high quality program for children. Annually, we will elicit your input through the use of evaluation surveys. The information you provide is important to us as we make adjustments to improve the program. Concerns that cannot be addressed by the teacher need to be directed to the Site Administrator.

Formal Assessments:

The program conducts formal assessments on enrolled children to determine strengths and weaknesses. Information collected from the assessment is used to determine strategies to support development of the child within the context of the classroom as well as his/her family, culture and environment. The assessment of individual children's development and learning is essential for planning and implementing appropriate curriculum. At Family Life Child Care Centers, a child's assessment and curriculum are integrated. Our teachers continually engage in observational assessment of your child for the purpose of improving teaching and learning.

The program reports child level data from the Early Language Assessment (ELA) on enrolled children to the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services pursuant to 5101:2-17-02 of the Administrative Code.

Tuition Guidelines:**Monthly Tuition and County Assistance:**

Tuition rates are published annually. Rates can be changed with one month's notice. Tuition is due within one week of receiving an invoice. Parents/guardians need to submit payments/co pays in a timely manner. Failure to pay by the payment due date will result in removal of the child from the program. Checks and/or money orders should be made payable to OhioGuidestone. Cash is accepted in the amount of \$20.00 or less only. A registration fee will be charged at the time of enrollment and when a child changes to a different program. Children receiving county assistance will be required to swipe an ECC card at arrival and departure every day. You must be authorized in the state ECC portal and be able to use your card each day. If you are unable to swipe you may switch to private pay or your child will not be able attend.

Absence or Illness:

Tuition is the means by which a slot in our center is held for your child. If your child is ill or absent, no refund of tuition can be made because that time slot still belongs to your family. It cannot be filled by another child on short notice. If your child is absent on a scheduled class day, we ask that you please notify the center's office so the classroom teachers can be informed.

Late Pickup:

Parents/guardians must pick up their child/children before 6:00 p.m. A pattern of late pick up, disregard for the pick up time or a late pick up over 15 minutes without phone contact may be cause for termination of services to a family. An after hours fee of \$10 for every 15 minute period will be charged to parents who pick up their child after the daily scheduled closing time of 6:00 p.m. The staff person involved will notify the billing department. The fee will be added to the next billing cycle, or it may be requested upon your child's return to the center.

Withdrawal Notice:

Withdrawal of a child from the center must be made in writing at least two weeks in advance of the withdrawal date. No refund in tuition fees will be made before that date. All classroom spaces must be filled year round to meet the program's financial obligations. Any child withdrawn can re-enter the program only if an appropriate age group space is available. No space can be held for a child.

Holidays:

There is no charge for the eight holidays that the Center is closed. These holidays include:

New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. All other days will be billed.

Emergency Closing:

Refunds on tuition are not given for emergency closings. The program will close only in the event of a natural disaster which prevents operation in compliance with State licensing regulations, during a local, state or federal declared state of emergency, or if the center loses power and the temperature of the facility falls below or exceeds those required by licensing.

Available Slot Procedure:

The Family Life Child Care Centers does not hold slots. All slots are first come first serve. Parents have until the following Monday to start or they have the option to pay to hold the slot.

The withdrawal of children, so that parents do not have to pay for vacations or other leaves of absences is prohibited unless there are extenuating circumstances and you have the written approval from the Director, otherwise once the child is withdrawn, the slot is considered open. The family may reenroll upon their return if a slot is available.

Late Tuition:

All payments are due one week after receiving the invoice. A grace period will be allotted until the 15th of the month. Late tuition payments may result in termination of child care services.

The following would be documented exceptions.

- * The Site Administrator has had contact with the caseworker, regarding the status of the voucher. Phone contacts must be documented. This is only accepted for the current month. This will not be accepted for families who owe vouchers for multiple months.
- * The family has filed for a state hearing. The letter from the State acknowledging the hearing must be on file at the center to maintain the family in the program.
- * A written payment plan that is signed by the parent, and submitted to the director. Payment plans extending beyond 4 months, will not be accepted. (This is for payments only- voucher must have been submitted).
- * The family works for OhioGuidestone and are using dependent care accounts.

Disenrollment Policy:

The staff of the Family Life Child Care Centers seeks a solid partnership with our families as a basis for the children's success within the program. It is only on rare occasions that a child's / family's behavior may warrant the need to find a more suitable setting for either a short term or permanent basis. We will do everything possible to work with you to avoid a child's disenrollment from the center. The following are some reasons why we would have to dismiss a child or family from the center:

Parental Actions:

- * Non-payment of child care tuition;
- * A parent refuses intervention for their child that is required by the center as a condition of continued enrollment;
- * A parent/ guardian is physically or verbally abusive or intimidating to center staff, children, other parents, or anyone else at the center;
- * Failure to follow center policies and procedures

Child's Actions:

- * Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children;
- * Child unable to adjust to group care after a reasonable amount of time;
- * Child repeatedly runs out of the classroom, and/or out of the center

Children's Enrollment and Health Information:

To enroll a child in the Center each parent, guardian, or parent designate must:

- 1 Complete and submit the required forms.
- 2 Participate in a preadmission interview.
- 3 Participate in a preadmission orientation visit.

Each child attending the program will be required to have an annual medical examination. **The Child's Medical Statement must be on file at the center within thirty days of the child's date of admission, and annually thereafter.** The medical statement must include a record of the immunizations that the child has had, specifying the month, day and year of each immunization. The medical provider must also verify that the immunizations are up to date as recommended by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). A statement from the medical provider of any immunization exemptions is also required upon enrollment.

The parent/ guardian is also required to complete the Child Enrollment and Health Information form prior to the child's first day of attendance. On this form, the parent/ guardian must grant permission for the program to transport in the case of an emergency or the program has the right to refuse enrollment of that child. This form will need to be updated annually or as needed if the information has changed.

As required by the Ohio Department of Health, Ohio State law makes provisions for non-vaccination of children whose parents object to vaccines for medical, religious or philosophical reasons. However, in the event of an outbreak of any disease listed on the immunization exemption form, children without required vaccinations will be subject to exclusion from the center and/or classroom for the duration of the outbreak. This action is necessary not only to protect the child, but the remainder of the students and faculty of the classroom.

Miscellaneous Guidelines:

Nap Time:

Children who are at the center for 5 hours or more a day are required by Child Care Licensing to be offered a nap or rest time. Routines such as rest and sleeping are handled in a relaxed manner. Teachers often will give gentle backrubs to help the children relax, if the children want them.

We recognize that there are individual differences in the amount of rest/sleep children need and these differences are respected as much as possible. The children who do not fall asleep are encouraged to rest for half an hour. At that point, they will be allowed to look at a book or engage in some other quiet activity while the other children are sleeping.

Infant Sleep Position:

Research shows that the best measure to prevent Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or “Crib Death” is to put infants on their backs to sleep. Child Care Licensing requires that all infants be placed on their backs to sleep unless your physician signs a “Sleep Position Waiver” form that can be provided to you. However, the program encourages back sleeping as a best practice for infants.

Infant Care:

Families enrolled in the program will provide their own supply of diapers. All families are required to provide two extra sets of clothing in case of accidents.

Children in diapers will be checked for wet and/or soiled diapers every 2 hours. A new diaper will be put on the child if the diaper is wet or soiled. Diapers and clothing will be changed immediately between checks when visibly wet and/or soiled.

Children are not left unattended on the changing table at any time. Staff will keep one hand on the child the entire time the child is on the changing table. They will talk with the child during the changing, and the child will not be scolded at any time.

For breastfeeding mothers, at the Berea and Lakewood locations there is a rocking chair in the crib area of the Infant Room for breastfeeding at any time. At Berea there is also a private room across from the office that is referred to as a library, that may be used for breastfeeding. At the Lakewood location the private area is in the front building, 2nd floor office, right outside the preschool room. Please ask your child's teachers or office staff to help you with these locations.

Classroom Pets:

Children can benefit from having a classroom pet. It can assist with teaching responsibility skills, kindness to animals, as well as expand their knowledge about their environment. Teachers may choose to keep a small, caged animal in their room. Precautions will be taken for the safety and health needs of the children and any pets. Children will also be instructed on safe behaviors when in close proximity to the animals. Occasionally, families may want to have their family pet visit the program. The following rules will apply to all classroom and visiting pets:

- * Supervisory staff must be given 24 hours notice for visiting pets;
- * All classroom and visiting pets will have documentation from a veterinarian indicating that the animals are fully immunized, and that the animal is suitable for contact with children;
- * Visiting pets may be denied if allergies in the classroom prohibit a safe visit for children.

Items Brought To School:**Bedding:**

Each infant will be assigned to a crib. Crib sheets will be supplied by the center for each infant. Clean sheets will be provided weekly or as needed throughout the day. No blankets shall be in the crib for children under 12 months old. A one piece sleeper or wearable blanket is permitted. Only children who are not yet able to roll-over are permitted to be swaddled using a wearable swaddling blanket.

Toddlers and preschoolers will have assigned cots. Your child may bring a cot-size (small) pillow and blanket for his/her cot. Parents/guardians will be responsible for laundering the bedding every other week or as needed.

Food, Toys, and Other Items at the Center:

Please do not allow your child to bring candy, gum, money, or other food items into the Center. Your child may bring a special stuffed animal/item for nap time. This will be stored in the child's cubby. ***Toy weapons (guns, knives, swords, etc.) are not permitted in our program at any time. Any such toys brought to our center will be confiscated. Other valuables including hand held video games, or money should be left at home. We cannot be responsible for the loss or theft of valuables or broken items.***

Please discourage children from bringing videos to the center however, the teacher may request a video for a special occasion.

Clothing:

Please use a permanent marker to label all of your child's clothes with his/her full name.

School clothing should be washable and durable. Your child will be involved in a variety of art and play activities throughout each day. He/she should be dressed to play freely without fear of getting dirty.

All children are encouraged to take some responsibility in helping to dress themselves. Please provide clothing that the child can easily manipulate when toileting.

We will be spending time out-of-doors as well as indoors. Please provide boots, scarves, hats, and mittens as we will be playing in the snow in the winter.

We require that all children have a change of weather appropriate clothing kept at the center to be used when needed.

No Babysitting Policy:

The Family Life Child Care Centers strongly discourages any form of babysitting, sleepovers, inviting children to a staff person's home or transporting for any child/family enrolled in the center.

Making sure each child leaves our program safely must be balanced with the custodial parent's right to decide what is in the best interest of the child. These policies and procedures prevent issues from arising when a parent requests a staff person to transport or babysit their child.

All parents are required to sign a consent form so that in the event a parent decides to have a staff person babysit or transport a child in their vehicle, even though it is discouraged by the program, we have written documentation that you have been made aware of the policy.

No Smoking Policy:

Smoking is prohibited anywhere on the premises, including outside entrances.

History of the OhioGuidestone

Founded in 1864 as the German Methodist Orphan Asylum, OhioGuidestone was originally dedicated to providing shelter for Civil War orphans and caring for neglected, dependent or abandoned children. In 1960, after a study with the Child Welfare League of America, the agency shifted its focus to serving children and youth needing specialized therapeutic programs.

Today, we are OhioGuidestone. We are dedicated to finding comprehensive solutions for families which has helped us evolve into one of the leading organizations in Ohio dedicated to preserving family relationships and helping make children, families and communities stronger. Our approach is comprehensive and integrated – aimed at creating long-term solutions for individuals, families and communities. It's based on the belief that it's our responsibility to help equip children and families to reach their potential and become contributing members of a strong community.

At OhioGuidestone, we believe that every individual and community is unique and that their needs are different. Because of this, we've created flexible, customized programs designed to help children, families and communities, especially those in need. Our innovative, comprehensive programs preserve family relationships, help make children and families more self-sufficient and reduce clients' need for future social service or court interventions. They are focused on making a positive, lasting, measurable difference in the lives and communities we serve. Our programs and services include: Behavioral Health Treatment Services; Skill Building Services; Foster Care Services; Residential Treatment and Group Homes; and our affiliate organizations including Family Life Child Care Centers and Stepstone Academy. We are a private, not-for-profit, charitable organization governed by a board of directors in covenant relationship with the East Ohio Conference of the United Methodist Church. Annually, we serve over 20,000 children and families throughout the State of Ohio.

Our Brand Promise

We're OhioGuidestone – built on a solid foundation of experience and expertise, rooted in faith and a legacy of serving children and families. Our range of flexible, customized programs build upon one another so they address every aspect of a person's needs. We're a solutions-focused organization with passionate people committed to providing direction and inspiration to children, families and communities to help them become stronger.

Our Mission

To provide pathways for growth, achievement and lifelong success.

Our Vision

Future generations are educated, self-reliant and contributing members of strong communities

Our Values

Faith: Faith is a belief that a force greater than ourselves supports and guides us.

Trust: Trust is the foundation of every relationship and provides a safe environment to work, to grow and to change.

Courage: Courage strengthens us to do the right thing, even when it is the difficult thing.

Empowerment: Empowerment guides people to realize they have the ability to change the purpose, the direction and the outcome of their life.

Wisdom: Wisdom comes from learning and experiencing life and is then shared with others.

Justice: Justice is equal opportunity for all and individual responsibility to act on the opportunities provided

Hope: Hope is a positive view of the future and belief in the capacity for change.

Compassion: Compassion is the emotion that we feel in response to suffering.