



Employee Handbook

About Little Minds

- Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is a multi age group early learning environment, with a strong dedication to providing quality early childhood education to young children. Little Minds utilizes an emergent curriculum while supporting the importance of social/emotional development and outdoor play.
- This handbook is intended to give staff an understanding of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool policies & procedures. This handbook is not intended to be used as an employment contract. This handbook will be revised as necessary, all staff will be notified of any changes made before they take place.
- Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is a group size mixed age group environment. Our facility has a maximum capacity of 9 children. Little Minds Childcare & Preschool classroom ratio for our infant/toddler room is 3:1 & 6:1 for our preschool room. MT Child Care Licensing ratio is 8:1 or 15:2 in a group facility.

Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Probationary Period

- There is a 90 day probationary period from the date of hire in which all required training and orientation must be completed. This period will be extended as necessary, an employee will be notified in writing if their probationary period is extended.
- All staff will have a folder file or binder that describes their specific job duties, training requirements, and goals. Training will be provided on each item of the checklist during the probationary period.

Cameras

- For the protection of all children, families, and staff Little Minds Childcare & Preschool uses security cameras located in the three main rooms of the facility. These are not regularly accessible to anyone besides the Director. The activity from all cameras is stored for a period of two weeks.

Cell Phones & Social Media

- Personal cell phone use is prohibited during the time you are clocked in. Inappropriate cell phone use may be cause for termination.
- Situations may arise where cell phone use is appropriate. The following situations an employee may have their cell phone to be used only for Childcare & Preschool purposes.
 - Updating Brightwheel if the tablet is unavailable
 - When taking children for a walk or on a field trip
 - In the case of emergency, ie an evacuation
- If you need to be reached while you are clocked in direct those necessary to call the facility phone.
- Employees of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool may not be "friends" with or "follow" family members of the children on any social media site including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or TikTok, while they are enrolled at Little Minds.
- What an employee puts on their social media is their private business. However, it is recommended to make sure your social media is on a private setting. If you are sharing information from Little Minds Childcare & Preschool social media pages it is required & necessary you do so in a professional manner. If you have questions regarding social media please ask the Director.

Babysitting for families

- Employees of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool may babysit currently enrolled children outside of Little Minds operating hours. Details such as time and pay will need to be discussed privately between you and the family. Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is not responsible for ensuring payment of babysitting services. The Director will need to be notified of the arrangement beforehand.

Parking

- Staff parking is available along the even numbered side of Walnut St near the facility. When parking along Walnut St do not park in front of neighboring mailboxes or driveways.

Clocking In/Out

- All employees are required to clock in & out through Brightwheel. You will be shown how to on your first day. If a problem occurs when you try to clock in or out please let the Director know immediately so they can fix it.

Pay Periods

- Paydays fall on a bimonthly schedule. For hours worked the 1st - 15th of the month payday is on the 17th. For hours worked the 16th - 31st of the month payday is on the 2nd. If payday falls on a Saturday you will be paid the Friday before. If payday falls on a Sunday you will be paid the Monday after. It is your responsibility to verify your hours are correct, if there is an error notify the Director immediately so they can fix it.

Non Compete & Non Solicitation Agreement

Little Minds Childcare & Preschool invests time and resources in educating and training staff. This agreement specifically prohibits employees from soliciting Childcare & Preschool opportunities or acting as nannies for Little Minds families for a period of 1 year after ending employment (voluntary or involuntary) with Little Minds Childcare & Preschool. While employees may provide babysitting services outside of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool operating hours employees past or present are specifically prohibited from the following:

1. Soliciting Little Minds families for another Childcare & Preschool provider or for yourself should you choose to become an independent provider.
2. Offering or accepting nanny positions to or from Little Minds families.

Past or present employees who violate this agreement will be held responsible to the fullest extent of the law. Including but not limited to being financially responsible for Little Minds Childcare & Preschool monetary losses as a result of their actions.

Vacation/Sick Leave

- Employees will be paid for the following holiday closure days (if the day falls on a regularly scheduled work day):
 - New Years Eve, New Years Day
 - Presidents Day
 - Easter Monday
 - Memorial Day
 - Juneteenth
 - Independence Day
 - Labor Day
 - Indigenous Peoples' /Columbus Day
 - Wednesday, Thursday, Friday surrounding Thanksgiving
 - Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Day after Christmas

- After 90 days of employment employees will be allotted 5 days of paid sick leave per year.
- After 1 year of employment employees will be allotted 5 days of paid vacation leave per year. Vacation leave will need to be approved by the Director a minimum 2 weeks ahead of time in order to be able to use paid vacation leave time.

Benefits

- Immediately upon hire employees may receive a tuition discount for their own child as well as a gym membership to Planet Fitness.
- After 90 days of employment, employees will be eligible for a Telehealth medical plan.
- After 12 months of employment, employees will be eligible for a retirement plan.

Calling Out

- If an emergency arises and you are unable to work your scheduled shift the Director will need to be notified immediately, ideally 24 hours ahead of time.

Scheduling

- Employee schedules will be posted to Brightwheel a minimum 2 weeks at a time. If there is a scheduling conflict (ie doctor appointments or vacation) you must notify the Director a minimum 2 weeks ahead of time. It is preferred that appointments be made in the afternoon if possible to allow adequate time for Little Minds Childcare & Preschool to provide substitute coverage for that time.

Tobacco use

- Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is a tobacco free facility. Tobacco use is prohibited in and around the facility including parking areas, sidewalk in front of the facility, and the playground.

Use of Drugs & Alcohol

- The use of drugs or alcohol during scheduled hours (including lunch breaks when you will be returning to the classroom afterwards) is cause for immediate termination.

Fraternization with Parents/Guardians &

Co-workers

- Fraternalizing with the families of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is prohibited and can be a cause for termination.
- Fraternalizing with staff members of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is highly discouraged. If staff members are in a relationship of any nature it must be discussed with the Director.

Conscious Discipline Training & Discipline Policy

- Little Minds Childcare & Preschool utilizes Conscious Discipline throughout our program. Conscious Discipline uses " seven skills to transform everyday discipline into teachable moments, equipping children with the social-emotional and communication skills needed to manage themselves, resolve conflict, and develop healthy behavior". It creates a compassionate culture and facilitates an intentional shift in adult understanding of behavior via the Conscious Discipline Brain State Model. All staff will be trained in Conscious Discipline.

- Little Minds Childcare & Preschool prohibits corporal punishment of any kind, cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse. Use of corporal punishment is cause for immediate termination.

Dress Code

As an early childhood professional you are expected to dress accordingly by maintaining good personal hygiene and wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. Staff should be dressed appropriately for all weather conditions.

- Shoes should be comfortable and suitable for working with children, closed toed with a backing is highly suggested. Staff are required to have a pair of inside shoes to be left at the facility.
- Clothing should be comfortable and suitable for working with children while remaining professional. Business casual attire is the standard in which we follow. If you need assistance with choosing business casual attire please ask the Director.
- Listed below are examples of clothing that is inappropriate for staff at Little Minds Childcare & Preschool:
 - Exposed undergarments/ See through clothing
 - Low-cut tops
 - Bare midriff or half shirts
 - Sweatpants/sweatshirts/pajamas/workout clothes
 - Jeans with holes/rips/stains
 - Leggings without a shirt or sweater long enough to cover the backside.
 - Shorts or dresses shorter than fingertip or mid thigh length.
 - Attire with messages or illustrations that are obscene, vulgar, violent and/or advertise alcohol, tobacco, drugs.
- Jewelry may be worn if it does not intrude on the employees job performance ability i.e. washing hands. Any jewelry worn may not have messages or illustrations that are obscene, vulgar, violent, and/or advertise alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. Facial piercings will need to be discussed with the Director, clear jewelry may be required during working hours.

- We welcome self expression of our employees while also being mindful of the young children we teach. In regards to tattoos, any tattoo showing will need to follow the same appropriate clothing guidelines. If a tattoo is obscene, vulgar, violent, and/or advertise alcohol, tobacco, or drugs it must be covered while the employee is in the facility or in the public representing Little Minds Childcare & Preschool.
- Little Minds Childcare & Preschool is not responsible for reimbursing or replacing damaged clothing or jewelry items should they be damaged in any way while an employee is in the facility or on a field trip.

If you have questions about whether or not something is appropriate please ask the Director.

Confidentiality

- Photos of Children - Employees of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool should not be sharing photos of children with anyone besides their parent/guardian and other staff. Photos should never be on personal cell phones or shared to any personal social media site.
- Due to the nature of this field you will be privy to private information. This includes but is not limited to; conference reports, service plans, immunization records, family incomes, family dynamics, and medical information. Any staff member of Little Minds Childcare & Preschool will NOT disclose or discuss personal information regarding children and their families with any unauthorized person. Confidential information should be seen by and discussed only with staff members who need the information in order to provide services. Staff members will NOT discuss confidential information about children or their families in the presence of others in the facility.

Maintaining Equipment & Materials

- It is the responsibility of all staff members to ensure classroom equipment & materials are in safe working condition. This includes but is not limited to ensuring staff and children are using equipment and materials the way they are intended to be used. If something is in need of repair or broken please let the Director know.

Purchasing Materials

- All day to day materials are purchased by the Director, if we are running low please let them know ASAP to purchase more in a timely manner. If there is a specific item you are wanting for your classroom, speak with the Director and they will either purchase it, deny the request, or reimburse your purchase. Items purchased not approved by the Director ahead of time will NOT be reimbursed.

Personal Belongings

- Items such as coats, purses, lunches will each have a place in the classroom. You will be shown where to put those items during your training period.
- Personal medication should be stored properly out of children's reach.

Disciplinary Procedure

- If a staff member's job performance is not meeting Little Minds standards, or is in violation of policies outlined in this handbook they will be informed of the issue and be informed of the possible penalties if job performance does not improve. An action plan to correct the issue and improve job performance will also be discussed. All warnings and action plans will be documented and signed.
 - Verbal Warning - Verbal warnings may be given for violations of Little Minds policies, failure to follow procedure, unsatisfactory

performance, excessive tardiness or absenteeism. If the issue presents itself after a verbal warning a written warning will be the next step.

- Written Warning - Written warnings may be given for refusal to follow lawful instructions, a serious policy violation, or endangerment of children & staff safety and integrity. If the issue presents itself after a written warning termination will be the next step.
- Termination - Termination may result if action plans have not produced satisfactory and acceptable job performance. In some cases termination may be immediate without warning. Reasons for immediate termination include but are not limited to:
 - Commitment of child abuse
 - Abuse of parents/guardians or staff members
 - Harassment
 - Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while clocked in or on a lunch break
 - Theft
 - Possession of a weapon in or near the facility

Employee Handbook Acknowledgement Form

This employee handbook describes important information about Little Minds Childcare & Preschool, should there be any questions not answered in this handbook please bring your questions to the Director.

As the information, policies, and benefits described in this handbook are subject to change; by signing this you acknowledge revisions of this handbook may occur at any time. All staff will be notified of revisions before they take place. Revisions may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies.

I agree to fully complete and submit all required paperwork in a timely manner _____ (initial)

I agree to complete required trainings within the probationary period _____ (initial)

I have read and understood the Employee Handbook _____ (initial)

I have read and understood the policy regarding COVID-19 _____ (initial)

I have read and understood the policy regarding Shaken Baby Syndrome _____ (initial)

Employee Name Printed _____

Employee Signature _____

Date _____