



Once Upon a Childcare

Parent Handbook

2025

WELCOME TO ONCE UPON A CHILDCARE!

Hello parents! We are overjoyed to add your child and family to our one-of-a-kind program! We understand that every family is different, and every child deserves to be treated as an individual. We are confident that you will not find a more personalized childcare program. We look forward to creating a long lasting and meaningful relationship with your child and your entire family!

MISSION STATEMENT

Once Upon a Childcare celebrates each child as a unique individual and provides a developmentally appropriate opportunity for learning in a safe and loving environment. We value the human spirit and development of physical, social, emotional, and cognitive needs.

PHILOSOPHY

Once Upon a Childcare has structured our program around the belief that children deserve a safe, stimulating, and nurturing environment that is developmentally appropriate, to allow them to foster their natural desire to learn, explore, and grow. Our goal is to meet your child's social, emotional, and cognitive needs.

- Children at Once Upon a Childcare are encouraged to be children!
- We understand the importance of play.
- The individual progress, development, and growth of every child is important to us.
- Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development.
- All children have the potential to reach great success when provided with encouragement, appropriate support, and instruction.
- Each child deserves to be treated as a unique individual.

CONTACT AND COMMUNICATION

At Once Upon a Childcare, we believe Parent & Provider communication is vital to a successful childcare experience. We ask that you be as open with us as we promise to be with you. If you ever have questions or concerns, we encourage you to come to the director or your child's teacher with all

questions or concerns. They will be addressed and remedied in a loving, professional manner.

Drop off and pick up times are generally not a good time for lengthy discussions which require more than 5 minutes of time and attention. You may call the leadership team during business hours to discuss your concerns via phone or schedule a time to come in and speak with us directly. After hours, we can be reached by email at onceuponachildcare@yahoo.com or ouacvickers@yahoo.com for non-pressing matters. You can reach Robin (Owner) at 719-640-0883 or Shaunna (Regional Director) 719-726-1187 for time sensitive matters or emergencies that need immediate attention. We will return your call, email, or text as soon as we are able.

We utilize a variety of methods to keep you informed. Teachers and Directors will send communication daily and weekly via the Tadpoles App. This will keep you informed about your child's progress and growth, daily activities, any supplies that are needed, and events or other important information you may need to know. You will also receive a monthly Community Calendar as well as ongoing communication from the leadership team about any change in policies, hours, closures, or special events. You can also visit our website for up-to-date information about rates and enrollment and join our Facebook or Instagram page to see daily posts about our program.

Contact Information:

Robin Sedillo (Owner): 719-640-0883
Shaunna Pate (Regional Director): 719-726-1187
Direct Line: 719-465-1342 (Garden of the Gods)
Direct Line: 719-375-3927 (Vickers)

Website: www.onceuponachildcare.com
Email: onceuponachildcare@yahoo.com, ouacvickers@yahoo.com

Facebook Pages(by direct add only)

Once Upon a Childcare
Once Upon a Childcare-Vickers
At home with OUAC

To report child abuse/neglect, please contact Child Protective Service Help Line at 719-444-5700 or 1-800-CO4KIDS.

We are required, by law, to report any suspected abuse or neglect.

You can request a copy of the official rules and regulations for Childcare centers at

https://www.coloradoofficeofearlychildhood.com/oec/OEC_Providers?p=Providers&s=Rules-and-Regulations&lang=en. All reports are available on site, upon request.

To file a complaint against Once Upon a Childcare, please contact The Office of Early Childhood, Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm at 303-866-5958.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Our admission process is simple and easy. If you feel Once Upon a Childcare may be the right fit for your family, give us a call! We would love to schedule a tour, let you meet our amazing teachers, and answer all your questions.

At the time of enrollment, you will be provided with a link to our website where you can find, and download required registration forms. All paperwork must be completed and turned in prior to your child's first day of attendance. In addition to enrollment paperwork, a current physical and immunization record is required for your child's file.

Records are kept on file for each child enrolled at Once Upon a Childcare. These records include, but are not limited to:

- Enrollment Application
- Parent/Financial contract
- Sunscreen/topical ointment form
- Emergency Release Form
- Photo Release Form
- Cot Permission (children under 3)
- ACH Form
- Up-to-date physical
- Immunization form

You are expected to inform our program of any changes or additions to the information you provide as it arises. All enrollment forms are reviewed and updated annually, during the month of January.

FEES AND RATES

A registration fee of \$125 per child and \$175 per family is due at the time of enrollment, as well as the first two weeks of tuition. Registration fees are due annually for every family that continues care with Once Upon a Childcare. Registration and tuition must be paid, in full, before your child is admitted into care. During the admission process, you will sign a parent/financial contract that will include your tuition rate. ALL FEES AND TUITION PAYMENTS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE.

At Once Upon a Childcare, we only accept automatic withdrawal payable by checking or FSA account. Payments can be made bi-weekly, and tuition is always due on Thursday, ahead of services. Your contract will specify your preference. If you wish to change your payment method or schedule, we require 2 weeks' notice to change your account and continue charging your tuition correctly. Your first payment is due at the time of enrollment and is non-refundable. All following payments must be made on Thursday. See tuition sheet and parent contract for more details.

Your child will be initially enrolled on a two-week (14 calendar day) trial period beginning on your child's first day of attendance. During this trial period, the parent or provider may terminate the childcare agreement without further obligation. No pre-paid childcare fees will be refunded upon cancellation. Any remaining tuition will be credited to your account for future use. Initial Payments made during enrollment, excluding the enrollment fee, will be allocated to childcare fees. All payments are nonrefundable, non-transferable, and cannot be credited for future care. If parents choose not to enroll their child after this agreement is established, these fees will be applied towards disenrollment.

We try our best to accommodate all special needs and disabilities. Families with children in need of specialized care or disability accommodation will be enrolled on a two-week trial basis. At the end of the trial, we will discuss our ability to adequately meet all needs and continued enrollment. We do consult with a Registered Nurse and Mental Health consultant to assist with any reasonable accommodation needed.

HOURS OF OPERATION

Once Upon a Childcare is open Monday through Friday, excluding holidays.

Garden of the Gods: 7:00 am- 5:30 PM

Vickers: 6:30 am- 6:00 pm

Late/early fees equal to \$1 per minute, per child, will be billed to you in the event of any early drop off or late pick up that has not been previously authorized by the Owner or Director. Your account will be charged any fees and payment is due within 24 hours. You should be prepared with an authorized emergency contact should an emergency or unanticipated delay in your arrival to our center occur. We sincerely do not want to charge late fees, so communication is key. Our intent is not to gain more money, but to have our business hours respected and allow our employees to be home on time for their families and needs.

If you need to change your enrollment days, we require a minimum of two weeks' notice in writing. We can occasionally accommodate last-minute changes if the situation is dire. We reserve the right to terminate our childcare arrangement if we cannot accommodate your new schedule. In some instances, even with proper notice, we cannot accommodate a schedule change due to enrollment and attendance in each classroom.

WEEKLY FEE SCHEDULE

Annual Registration Fee

\$125 per Child

\$175 per family

10% older sibling discount

10% older Military & First Responder discount

Infants & Young Toddlers

(6 weeks through 24 months)

Full Time \$410

3 Days \$340

2 Days \$300

Toddlers

(24 months)

Full Time \$385

3 Days \$315

2 Days \$275

Pre-k*

(3-5 years)

Full Time \$335

3 Days \$265

2 Days \$215

**To qualify for Pre-K Rates, child must be 3 and fully potty trained*

OUR CLASSROOMS

Our program consists of age-appropriate classrooms and outdoor spaces. We currently provide care for children aged 6 weeks until admission to kindergarten.

Each classroom space is designed to provide your child an optimal learning experience. Classrooms are structured in a way that allows children to explore, learn, and engage in both independent and group activities to meet their social, emotional, and cognitive needs.

We follow all state ratios for childcare centers in all age groups:

Infants (6 weeks to 12 months)- 1:5/ Capacity 10 children

Young Toddlers (12 months to 24 months)- 1:5/ Capacity 10 children

Toddlers (2 years to 3 years)- 1:7 (2-2.5 years) or 1:8 (2.5-3 years)/ Capacity 14 or 16 children

Pre-K (3 to 4 years)- 1:10/ Capacity 20 children

Pre-K (4 to 5 years)- 1:12/ Capacity 24 children

LATE OPENING/EARLY CLOSING

There will be no credit or refund for early dismissal or delayed start due to inclement weather, emergency, or other circumstances. In addition, all early/late fees will apply to the temporary opening or closing time for that day. This is not a situation we anticipate happening as we take pride in our reliability.

FULL-TIME CARE

Full-Time care is defined as any enrollment of 4 or 5 days per week

PART-TIME CARE

Once Upon a Childcare offers a 2 day or 3 day per week option for part time care.

EXTENDED CARE (OVERTIME)

Extended care is defined as any days or times your family needs childcare outside of your regular/contracted hours.

We understand that families may occasionally need to attend additional days. You must request days needed as early as possible, and we will do our very best to accommodate any changes to schedule and attendance. Additional days will be subject to availability and will be charged at the current daily tuition rate.

SCHEDULED ATTENDANCE DAYS

Upon enrollment, your family will acknowledge and sign a financial contract with your child's scheduled days of attendance. OUAC does not allow attendance days to be switched in the case of illness, absence, or center closure. If an additional day is required, please speak to the leadership team about availability and the current daily rate for these days.

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP

When dropping off and/or picking up your child, you must park in our designated parking lot. Do not permit your children to play with outside decorations or landscaping when arriving or leaving.

When arriving for drop off/pickup, please abide by all posted speed limits in parking lots.

Smoking is prohibited inside our center and on Once Upon a Childcare premises.

You must document your child's arrival and departure daily at our check in/out station, located in the front lobby. This will be used to compute your drop-off, pick-up, and late/early fee times as well as a proven record of attendance for evacuation and billing purposes. Your unique PIN and password numbers are your digital signature and is required by the State of Colorado as record of your child's attendance at Once Upon a Childcare.

It is normal for some children to have a difficult time separating from parents in the morning and/or to make the transition into leaving at the end of the

day. Please be brief in your goodbyes and hellos when possible. It is harder on the child when you prolong your stay. Teachers need to focus their attention on the other children, who tend to act out when they see teachers busy with another parent. A smile, cheerful good-bye kiss, and a reassuring word that you will be back, usually works best in the mornings. With your cooperation, drop-off and pick-up times will be as stress free as possible.

Children will only be released to the authorized pick-up persons whom you have identified on your Enrollment Form. You are required to always notify us if one of your authorized pick-up persons will be picking up your child, even if they are on the list. Verbal notification is accepted unless the pick-up person is not one of your authorized pick-up people. In the case of an unauthorized pick up, we will need written permission from you. If you do not inform your child's teacher, and the director that someone else (other than a parent) will be picking up your child, they will not be released even if they are one of your authorized pick-up persons. Anyone picking up your child will be asked to show proper photo identification.

If you or one of your authorized pick-up persons arrives without a proper auto safety seat, your child will not be released, and late charges will apply. If you arrive under the suspected influence of drugs and/or alcohol, an alternative contact will be called, and late charges will apply. If you insist on leaving the premises with your child, law enforcement will be called immediately.

Any child remaining after the scheduled closure of our regular hours (when parents, guardians or other emergency contacts cannot be reached) will be fed an appropriate dinner and partake in age-appropriate activities while we attempt to contact a parent or guardian. If we are unable to reach a parent, guardian, or authorized contact after two hours, the department of social services or the local police station may be contacted.

ARRIVAL TIME

We welcome your child at any time during our hours of operation. We ask that if you will be checking in after 9 AM, you send a message through our Tadpoles App and let us know when you will be arriving at the center. You can drop your child off between opening and 11:30 AM and then again after 2:30 PM. We do not allow drop off during lunch and rest time to allow for a peaceful and quiet transition.

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Upon enrollment, your child will be assigned a personal cubby to store all their belongings. Please do not send your child with small objects that can pose a choking hazard or toys that are a distraction for daily activities. All medications **MUST** be checked into the front office and are not allowed in the classroom. Please send a blanket or comfort item for your child during rest time. Once upon a Childcare is not responsible for loss of any personal items, outside of the required items. Please refrain from sending your child to the center with money or food. No plastic bags are permitted in the classroom to avoid suffocation. You will be informed of what your child needs for their day at school on an on-going basis.

SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN

At Once Upon a Childcare, we understand the importance of adequate supervision and engaging with every child in the classroom. Each classroom is equipped with cameras that are viewed and reviewed regularly by the Owner and Leadership team. Our program meets or exceeds state regulations regarding child to teacher ratios. We employ knowledgeable, attentive staff and children are always supervised by sight and sound, including nap time. When there is a mixed age group, the lower required ratio and group size for the age of the youngest child shall prevail.

VISITORS

All visitors that enter Once Upon a Childcare are required to sign in/out and provide staff with a valid id, address, phone number, and time of visit and departure. All visitors are required to be accompanied by a member of the staff and will never be allowed unsupervised access to any children in care.

GUIDANCE PROCEDURES

Once Upon a Childcare is focused on cultivating positive relationships between children, staff, and families. We encourage parent involvement and strive to keep communication open and productive. Each encounter that a child or parent has with our staff is an opportunity to create a positive relationship. We look forward to building a relationship with your family and providing you with individualized, quality childcare.

We want children to feel heard and understood and our staff will work diligently to build a personal relationship with your child. It is imperative that children feel secure in their learning environment. Our goal is to provide each child with a deep sense of security, love, and acceptance. We promote positive behavior and implement age appropriate, realistic expectations and guidance to help promote a positive learning environment.

We understand the importance of utilizing developmentally and individually appropriate strategies that take into consideration each child's different personality. We recognize that each child has different needs, interests, and abilities, and we embrace these differences. Your child will be treated with the utmost respect and be genuinely cared for physically and emotionally.

All programs and teaching strategies that are implemented at Once Upon a Childcare are in place to support positive behaviors, encourage peer interactions, and to help your child become socially and emotionally competent. Each child will be given the opportunity to build and maintain positive relationships, develop critical thinking, and utilize problem solving skills.

Our staff understands that all children are different and reach milestones at different times. Each teacher will keep track of your child's accomplishments and keep you updated on their progress. We will implement individualized, social, and emotional intervention when needed. All interventions will be done in a positive manner and have a team approach. We will provide you with age-appropriate strategies that you can implement at home, while we continue to work on a positive way to help your child reach their goals. We believe that if we take an active approach and a personal interest in each child, while maintaining realistic expectations, we can, together, help your child achieve greatness.

If needed, we will provide parents with resources for mental health consultations, or other specialists pertaining to their child's specific needs.

PROGRESS UPDATES

Although we are always available to discuss your child's accomplishments or struggles, we invite parents to participate in progress updates quarterly. This is a great time to keep communication lines open and touch base regarding all your child's accomplishments, upcoming transitions, or areas of opportunity. Staff may give detailed written updates or schedule a dedicated face-to-face communication for these quarterly meetings. It's a great time to reacquaint yourself with your child's learning environment and

discuss any questions, changes, or concerns you may have. If you need a meeting outside of this quarterly update, you can schedule that at any time.

PAYMENT POLICY

Your first childcare payment is due at the time of enrollment, then Thursday thereafter. If this day is a holiday, a vacation, or a planned day off for you, payment is due the previous business day. If you or your child are ill, your payment is still expected unless other arrangements have been made.

There will be a late fee of \$15 per child for each calendar day (including weekends) that payments are received late or returned as NSF, beginning the following morning for all payments not made before your contracted drop-off time.

An insufficient funds fee (NSF) of \$40 will be applied to all returned payments and will be added to your account upon resubmission for payment.

Please do not put us in the uncomfortable position of having to ask for payment including, but not limited to, late fees, extended care requests, and/or drop-in requests. Any unpaid balances will be turned over to collections and the responsible party who signed our contract will pay all fees incurred.

You will be given a minimum of two weeks' notice of any increase or change in your childcare fees.

TAX INFORMATION

A yearly invoice in January each year will be available for your tax purposes. If your childcare has been terminated by either party prior to January, it is your responsibility to request this form. We DO NOT send them out automatically as they contain critical information, and your address may have changed. You can access your payment information at www.myprocure.com.

EXTENDED LEAVE

In cases of potential absence due to parental or extended leave from your job (i.e.: district teachers), we require full childcare payments for the entire length of your absence to hold your child's space.

ABSENT DAYS AND NOTIFICATIONS

There will be no refunds or adjustments made to your childcare fees for absent days for any reason. These include, but are not limited to illness, holidays, closures, and time off from work. You are not only paying for the care of your child, but you are also paying for their "space" in care.

WEATHER-RELATED AND OTHER UNANTICIPATED CLOSINGS

We reserve the right to close Once Upon a Childcare early or for the day without notice in the event of unanticipated situations such as, but not limited to, power outages, no water, widespread illness, and/or extreme weather conditions. Extreme weather conditions include, but are not limited to tornado, blizzard, hurricane, flood, and/or earthquake.

Our paramount concern is the safety of the children. If we deem it unsafe for children to stay in care and/or for parents/staff to get to our center, we will close.

We will take into consideration local school districts and their decision to close or delay school in the event of extreme weather. We also look closely at driving conditions around the region and the forecast on all local news channels. We will inform you through Tadpoles and social media if any closure or delay as soon as a decision is made. Decisions on delayed opening or closure are typically made by 5 am.

We make every effort at Once Upon a Childcare to enjoy the outdoors, however, in the case of extreme weather, hot or cold, we will protect the children by remaining inside until the weather has returned to a safe temperature for outdoor play.

HOLIDAYS AND VACATION DAYS

The following paid holidays are observed at OUAC:

Spring Break (Friday before Easter and return Tuesday after Easter).
Memorial Day
Labor Day
4th of July
Thanksgiving Day/ the day after Thanksgiving
Christmas Break: Dec 24th -Jan 1st

Additional staff training days are observed and OUAC will be closed:

President's Day
Columbus Day

If the holiday falls on Saturday, it will be observed Friday. If the holiday falls on Sunday, it will be observed on Monday.

Early Closure dates: Halloween 4pm.

VACATION POLICY

OUAC will offer an annual vacation credit to all families who have been enrolled with our program for a full calendar year. Each family will receive this one-week credit (per child) on their anniversary date, which can be redeemed once per calendar year. Each family must request their vacation credit, in writing, at least two weeks prior to their absence. Vacation credits may not be used for previously scheduled center closures, or in lieu of a two-week withdrawal notice. For families who have paid a discounted bulk payment, this credit will be added to their account at the discounted rate and will alter the next regularly scheduled tuition payment.

HEALTH AND ILLNESS POLICY

We must provide a healthy environment for the wellbeing of all the children in our care. We will accept non-immunized children with a signed exemption form stating the reason for non-immunization. A physician or school authority must sign off on immunization records. A current health appraisal must be submitted in accordance with the AAP guidelines. We accept children with MILD colds or other MINOR ailments only. Use your good judgment and, if in doubt, please call us in the morning to discuss your child's symptoms and

ability to attend for the day. An ill child requires extra care and close attention and is best cared for at home. Do not send your child if he/she has shown any of the following symptoms during the previous 24 hours:

Communicable Diseases: Not permitted by law in childcare. Some of these illnesses are, but not limited to: Impetigo, Hepatitis A, Scabies, Ringworm, Infectious Diarrhea, Chicken Pox, Scarlet Fever, Lice, or Strep Throat. If your child is thought to have a communicable disease, you will be notified and asked to pick him/her up within the hour. Your child will be accepted back into care when they are no longer contagious. All communicable diseases will be reported to the health department as well as our licensing specialist per regulations. In the event of a communicable disease outbreak, we will report cases to the proper agencies and follow guidance for operation. During an outbreak, all non-immunized children will be allowed to return once the incubation period has passed, and the outbreak is no longer active. All parents will be notified of the possibility of a communicable disease and what symptoms to watch for. We may require a doctor's note, at our discretion, for return to childcare.

Fever: Not permitted. Any child with a fever ≥ 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit will be sent home immediately. For infants, we will exclude a fever of 100 or higher. Your child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours without the aid of any fever reducing medication before returning to childcare. Administering medication to reduce your child's fever so that you can bring him/her to childcare is grounds for termination unless fever is caused by teething.

COVID-19: Please ask management for latest guidance on quarantine, exclusion, and return to care.

Vomiting: Not permitted. Any child who vomits while at childcare will be sent home immediately and must stay home until 24 hours have passed with no vomiting episodes.

Diarrhea: Not permitted unless diarrhea is related to an existing chronic condition, is explained by a diagnosed condition not requiring a person to stay home or is consistent with the person's baseline. Children and staff must be excluded. Children may return to school or childcare 24 hours after their last episode of diarrhea unless the diarrhea is caused by an illness that requires them to stay home longer. If diarrhea is explained by a specific illness, then your child can return to school or childcare following exclusion guidelines for that illness.

Runny Nose & Cough: You may bring your child to care if he/she has a common cold, slight occasional cough, clear runny nose, occasional sneezing.

Rashes: Not permitted. If your child has any rash other than a diaper rash, you must bring a note from the doctor stating it is not contagious before returning to care.

Conjunctivitis: Children and adults do not need to stay home unless they have a fever or are unable to participate in usual activities. Proper hand washing is required.

Lice: Not permitted back to childcare until after the second hair treatment and no nits are present. Your child will be inspected by a member of management upon arrival at childcare before you leave.

Hand, Foot, & Mouth: Both children and staff will be required to remain excluded until they have been fever-free without the use of medication for a period of 24 hours, and all blisters have formed scabs and are no longer spreading.

If we become aware of any of these symptoms during care, you will be asked to return for your child immediately. You will be expected to arrive within one hour.

Please notify us at once if you find that your child has a contagious illness, so we may notify other parents. If your child is on medication for something contagious, do not bring him or her until they have been on medication long enough for the contagious period to pass (usually 24 hours). Please remember that just because your child has been home or on medication for 24 hours, does not mean that they feel well enough to take part in the daily activities at childcare. Children must be well enough for all activities, be able to eat and sleep on their regular schedule and feel generally normal. If your child has been given any prescription or over-the-counter medication before arriving at childcare, please inform your child's teacher when dropping off.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORTATION

We do not leave the property for any field trips. OUAC does not transport children to or from our facility.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

Please take every measure possible to administer all medication at home. Select staff members are certified in medication administration and are delegated under our nurse consultant to administer medications at the

center. We have an on-call nurse available and, if needed, we will administer medications, ointments, and creams you provide, so long as they are accompanied by a physician's authorization or health care plan. The medications must be in their original containers and labeled with your child's first and last name. We will not exceed the manufacturer's recommended dosage unless you provide us with a written physician's note and instructions. All medications will be stored in a locked box and are inaccessible to children. We will keep a medication log, and write down dosage and time given, and if your child was able to keep medication down. If there are any adverse reactions, Parents and our nurse consultant will be notified immediately.

All medication will be disposed of in a manner that meets or exceeds Colorado State law. In most cases, we will send all unused medication home to be disposed of by the parent or guardian. If we need to dispose of them at the center, we will remove them from their original containers and mix them with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds, dirt, or kitty litter. Mixtures will be placed in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container to prevent the drug from leaking or breaking out of a garbage bag. We will discard them in a trash bin that is inaccessible to children and fill out the required paperwork.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

According to Colorado law, students enrolled in school and licensed childcare facilities must either be vaccinated against specific diseases or have a documented vaccine exemption. Once Upon a Childcare requires that an up-to-date immunization record or a state exemption be maintained for every child participating in our program. OUAC will compile and report all relevant data annually and will request updated records as necessary for your child.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

During childcare hours, scrapes and bumps are inevitable. In the event of serious injury, illness, or emergency, staff will take the appropriate first aid action and, if necessary, will call the Colorado Springs Police Department or Paramedic Unit. You will be notified as soon as it is possible.

If we must vacate the property due to an emergency, parents will be notified, and children will be picked up from the parking lot or a safe location close by.

All children with special needs will be evacuated in a manner that is conducive with an individualized plan created at the time of enrollment.

Staff will make a conscientious effort to locate you or your designated emergency contact before taking any action in an emergency. If staff cannot locate you or your designated emergency contact we will call your doctor, dentist, or hospital if needed. In addition, and if needed, we will call an ambulance at our own discretion. All costs involved in emergency treatment and/or the cost of an ambulance are your responsibility. Staff will accompany all children to the Emergency Room if a parent, guardian, or emergency contact is unreachable.

Evacuation, shelter in place, lockdown, active shooter and natural disaster drills are held every quarter and fire drills are held monthly to familiarize children and staff with safety procedures. Fire drills are held at various times with the purpose of simulating actual situations so that children are adequately prepared in case of an emergency. This includes one drill during naptime to practice getting children out if they are all asleep.

Fire and emergency safety is included in our curriculum and is a regular part of our program. It is especially important that children know what to do in case of an emergency, not only in our center, but in other environments as well.

In the event of an unexpected natural disaster with children already in attendance, plenty of food and water will be on hand and children will be cared for until conditions allow for pick up.

INFANT SAFE SLEEP

All childcare professionals who care for infants are required by The Office of Early Childhood to be trained in safe sleep practices.

All infants must be placed on their backs while sleeping unless we have been provided with an alternate sleep position form signed by your child's pediatrician. This sleep plan must specify that an alternate sleep position is medically required. This form must be placed in your child's file.

Unless a parent provides staff with an infant swaddling permission form signed by their child's pediatrician, including a healthcare plan, swaddling is prohibited.

Pacifier use may reduce the risk of SIDS, therefore all infants over 1mo will be offered a clean, dry pacifier, free of any solution at sleep time. If you prefer your child not to use a pacifier, you must sign a waiver indicating that you do not want your child to utilize a pacifier while in care.

Garden of The Gods/Vickers

All cribs have been approved by the Consumer Product Safety Commission and a certificate of compliance is on file. All cribs must remain free of toys, mobiles, bumpers, and all other items that pose a risk to infants. All infants who fall asleep outside of an approved crib must be immediately placed on their back in their designated crib, with a pacifier offered. Sleeping children will be visually checked every 10 minutes so that staff can observe breathing, sleep position, skin color, level of sleep, overheating, and restlessness. Only sleep sacks that allow free movement of arms and legs are permitted. Age/developmentally appropriate music will be played during sleep time, but a music device will be placed no closer than 3 feet to any crib.

To promote a safe and comfortable sleep environment, our thermostat is set to 67 to reduce the possibility of overheating and is conducive to safe sleep.

Protecting infants/children from secondhand smoke is imperative to child safety and health. This facility is smoke free.

MEALS AND SNACKS

All meals at OUAC meet or exceed USDA guidelines for children. We serve breakfast, lunch, and snacks throughout the day. All meals are complete with several components and organic or locally sourced, when available.

You are responsible for feeding your child at home if you arrive after mealtime. Our mealtimes are posted on your child's classroom schedule. Please ask a member of the Leadership team if you're unsure of a certain mealtime.

All Infant bottles must be prepared before arriving at the center and must be labeled with both first name, last name, and the date. Breast milk must have a **BRIGHT** label and include your child's first name, last name, and date as well. Staff will begin the transition from a bottle to a cup at the parent's request, usually the same time as finger foods are introduced.

Our weekly menu is updated and available for viewing via tadpoles and on our parent bulletin board. If your child has any allergies, dietary restrictions, or other requirements, please inform us during enrollment and if any changes occur. We will do our best to accommodate all restrictions and allergies with an appropriate substitute. In rare cases, we will ask you to provide your child's meals if we are unable to find a suitable and healthy alternative.

We encourage healthy eating habits. Children are offered a variety of foods and are encouraged to try new things. Nutrition lessons are taught as a regular part of our program and teachers sit with children during meals to encourage health habits, language development, and social interaction.

DISCIPLINE AND GUIDANCE

Our goal is to help your child develop self-discipline and encourage positive behavior by guiding children in an age-appropriate manner. It is imperative that children are nurtured through caring, patience, and understanding.

When dealing with young children, we believe that many inappropriate behaviors can be prevented with adequate supervision and redirection. Our teachers are trained to provide positive guidance and set realistic expectations for their classrooms. Each teacher implements learning activities that help set expectations and positive behavior guidance as part of their curriculum.

We believe that children thrive on consistency, routine, and loving guidance and that it is particularly important to teach children empathy and to take responsibility for their own actions. Children in our care will be taught and expected to share with others, play cooperatively, express themselves verbally, clean up when asked, follow directions and, most importantly, to treat themselves and others with respect.

Teachers will discuss with you any behavioral problems as they arise. The following methods of discipline will be used: Encourage children to solve problems themselves, intervention, discussion, positive re-direction to another play area, logical consequences, and/or reflection time. Please show your child that you respect us and our rules by reminding them and enforcing the rules while you are in our center.

If your child does not respond to the above listed methods and their behavior is becoming a distraction or safety concern in the classroom, we will work closely with you, and utilize all resources at our disposal to help support positive behavior choices for your child.

Anytime a child poses a risk to themselves or others, parents will be notified immediately. After 3 incidents, we will suspend students for a specified period, to allow parents the ability to work closely with their child to modify behavior. Once the child has returned to our program, we will continue to work with your family to help maintain positive boundaries and implement strategies to help your child thrive. If after the first suspension, behavior is still not showing signs of improvement, Once Upon A Childcare will resort to disenrolling your child from our program.

QUIET TIME

Quiet time is an especially important time of the day in a childcare environment. The children need rest to enable them to have an enjoyable afternoon and continued evening at home with their family. Teachers need this time to allow for regeneration of patience and the mental attitude it requires working with young children full-time. This is also the best opportunity during the day to clean up, do paperwork, and plan activities for the upcoming week.

All children will lay down to rest but not required to sleep. Even older children need a break from the day to rest and rejuvenate. Infants and young toddlers will be provided their own crib or napping cot, and older toddlers and preschoolers will be provided a napping cot. We ask you to provide a blanket for your child. You may also provide a small pillow if you wish. Children are permitted to bring a small soft friend from home to sleep with as well. All children will be monitored by sight, and sound, at all times. Please do not ask us to keep your child awake during this time. However, should your child be unable to fall asleep, we will provide them with a quiet, independent activity.

If you do not wish to have your child participate in a quiet time, our childcare facility may not fit your family's needs.

BELONGINGS AND SUPPLIES

You are always expected to keep spare clothing at the childcare (including socks and underwear), that are appropriate for the season. While your child is toilet training, you will be expected to keep two sets of spare clothing at the childcare. Any soiled clothing will be sent home, and you will be expected to replace them with fresh items the following day.

During Cold months, you will need to provide outside clothing so that children stay warm during outside play. This may include coats, hats, gloves/mittens, boots, and snow pants.

During warmer months, you will need to bring a bathing suit that may be kept at the center for the entire summer season for water play days. If your child is not fully toilet trained, you are expected to provide additional diapers for water play.

Children may bring a blanket, binky, small pillow, and/or small stuffed friend, to be kept at childcare, for our daily quiet time.

You are expected to supply diapers (and Pull-ups during toilet training) as they are needed as well as diaper wipes. You are expected to supply any diaper creams or over-the counter ointments and medications you wish us to use.

You are required to provide bug repellent and sunblock, labeled with your child's name.

Please label all items with your child's first and last name. Keep in mind that if you do not supply a needed item, your child may not be able to participate in an activity or it may prevent all the children from enjoying an activity. We reserve the right to purchase needed items for your child if you do not supply them in a timely manner. You will be billed for the cost of the item(s) and staff time if this should occur.

We will identify, on a routine basis, any recalled toys, equipment, and furnishings and remove such recalled items from our childcare center.

TOILET TRAINING

Children generally achieve toilet training between the ages of 2 and 3 years. If toilet training is initiated when your child is ready, the task is quick, easy, and can often be achieved in a few days. Some signs to look for include appropriate language skills to communicate the need to use the potty, staying dry for long periods of time, the ability to dress and undress self, and an interest in staying dry or clean. We take a very relaxed attitude towards potty training. Please realize this should be your child's accomplishment and not yours or our staff's. Children should not be compared to how others are doing. Children train easily when they are ready.

Parents must begin the toileting process at home. If you are successful and the teacher agrees that your child is ready, we will follow up with toilet training here. During this time, we require that children wear pull-ups for health and safety reasons while in a childcare setting. Please keep in mind that the activity level here can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore, we will continue to use pull-ups until your child can announce regularly that he/she must use the bathroom (not just at home, but here, as well) and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement.

It will be at our discretion if you may bring your child in big girl or big boy underpants to childcare. While your child is learning to use the potty, the rules are: No overalls, onesies, belts, buckles, snaps, or buttons. A second set of spare clothing is required. In addition, we require that the Pull-ups your child uses have Velcro sides. We recommend that you supply your child with a spare pair of shoes during the potty-training process as well.

DIAPERING

We ask parents to supply diapers, wipes, and ointment of their choosing for each child enrolled. These supplies can be brought daily or in bulk, and teachers will let you know when your supply needs replenishing with ample time.

We take every precaution possible and meet or exceed all state standards in our diapering areas. Staff are thoroughly trained in diaper changing techniques, safety, and hygiene practices. Children are routinely checked and changed frequently to prevent diaper irritation/rash.

DRESS CODE AND HYGIENE

You are expected to bring your child clean and in comfortable, weather appropriate clothing unless there are extenuating circumstances. (i.e.: Pajama Day or Halloween). When dressing your child, please keep in mind that we sometimes participate in “messy” activities. Please do not dress your child in clothes you would not like to be soiled. Though teachers try their best to keep children’s clothing free of mess, sometimes they lose the battle.

You are expected to provide outerwear appropriate for the weather daily. This includes hats, mittens, warm jackets, and boots for cold or snowy days. You may keep a pair of play shoes in your child’s cubby if you wish.

On a rare occasion, we may need to give your child a quick sink bath or shower. Examples may include a potty incident, slipping in the mud, spilling a large amount of food or liquid, illness. If you do not wish us to do any of the above, please let us know and we will mark it as such in your child's file.

OUTSIDE PLAY TIME

At Once Upon a Childcare, we love spending time outside when the weather permits. Children will always have shade available to them while outdoors to prevent sunburn. Sunscreen will be applied to children when allowed and will be applied 30 minutes prior to outdoor play and re-applied every two hours.

We ask parents to please provide the sunscreen of their choice, with your child's first and last name clearly labeled. If you choose for your child to not wear sunscreen, we will make every effort to prevent a sunburn from happening. We provide a release form at the time of enrollment, where you can mark your preferences.

BIRTHDAYS AND PARTIES

Each child's birthday is his/her "Special Day." You may bring a special treat for the entire class on your child's special day if you wish. If your child's birthday falls on a weekend, you may choose another day to celebrate their special day.

We also have holiday and special theme parties for the children occasionally throughout the year. We typically will request treat donation on a volunteer basis for these parties. You are welcome to participate but never required.

MEDIA USE

We are technology free in all our classrooms and utilize no media for children.

WITHDRAWAL

We appreciate the opportunity to provide childcare services to you and sincerely hope that you are satisfied with our program. If you have any issues, we would be glad to resolve them, as most of our childcare concerns can be resolved.

Should you decide to terminate care for your child after the trial period, please provide us with written notice, including full advance payment of the final two weeks.

We require two weeks' written notification for any termination. This period will begin on the first Monday after your notice is received. We require your final two-week childcare payment at the time written notification is presented to us. This full payment is due regardless of your child's attendance and/or if the childcare is closed for any reason.

We will initiate the last payment when we receive notice of withdrawal. This final payment is due upon presentation of written notification.

TERMINATION

We appreciate as much advance notice of withdrawal as you can give and in return, will give you the same courtesy if we intend on terminating our agreement for any reason. We will give a two-week's notice of our intent to terminate, however, we reserve the right to terminate our contract immediately for any of the following reasons (but not limited to):

- Non-Payment, Continual late payments
- Lack of compliance with Handbook Policies
- Lack of parental cooperation, Disrespect
- Failure to complete and return required forms.
- Continual disciplinary problems
- Physical or verbal abuse of any person or property
- False information given by parent either verbally or in writing.

If we terminate this contract for any reason and any outstanding fees are due, a bill will accompany the termination notice. If we do not receive those fees in a timely manner, legal action will be taken. You will be billed \$25 per day in late fees beginning with the payment due date specified in the termination notice, until our court date and beyond if necessary. You will be responsible for all court, filing, and mailing fees in addition to the amount

due. You will be responsible for any fees associated with a judgment for payment and/or for any fees associated with a garnishment of wages.

PHOTOS/VIDEOS

Photographs of the children's participation in daily activities are taken often and posted to our Tadpoles app for you to keep and view. These are only sent to you and any primary contacts on the app. We also post pictures around the classrooms for children to view and use them in art projects and other displays. Once Upon a Childcare also has a Facebook page, Instagram account, and website where photos may be displayed. If you wish for your child not to be included in pictures for any reason, please make that request in writing on our photo release form during enrollment.

REFERRALS

Should any currently enrolled family exclusively refer another family to Once Upon a Childcare, a referral bonus will be paid. The referred family must contract for a minimum of 3 days per week and be in care and paid up to date, for a period of three months. At the three-month point, a \$100 payment credit will be issued as a THANK YOU to the referring family!! Happy families are our BEST advertisement, and we thank you for your referral!! This fee is only paid if space is available, and the family is enrolled.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information provided to Once Upon a Childcare will be kept confidential and released only to authorized persons including, but not limited to, State licensor, police department, and health and social services if required. This information will also be available to teachers and other staff members, if needed, to care for your child.

POLICY CHANGES

We will review and revise our Handbook of Policies and Procedures and our financial contract annually. Renewals will go into effect on the first of January each year. However, we reserve the right to make any policy or financial changes at any time when it is in the best interest of our business or operations. We will give a minimum of two weeks' notice if any changes occur.

WAIVER

If OUAC does not enforce a certain policy at any time, it does not mean the policy is no longer in effect. If we do not enforce a right we have in this agreement/handbook, that does not mean we have given up that right.