

WELCOME TO GROWING TREE CHILDREN'S CENTER

We hope you find the time spent at Growing Tree enriching for all of your family as well as your child. This **Parent Handbook** contains information about the Center. Please read it carefully so you will become familiar with our policies. We welcome and encourage parent involvement at Growing Tree, as it greatly enhances the program and fosters continuity between home and Center. If you have any questions please feel free to discuss them with your child's teacher or the Director at any time.

Remember – you are welcome to visit the Center at any time.

Growing Tree operates year round and is open from 6:00am to 6:00pm Monday through Friday. Children from six weeks to six years are accepted in both full-time and part-time programs. They are grouped by age as follows:

- **Seedling Room:** Infants 6 weeks to 10-12 months
- **Big Seed Room:** Mobile Infants 10-12 months – 18 months
- **Sprout Room:** Toddlers 18 months – 30 months
- **Bud Room:** 30 months old but not 3 years in September
- **Branch Room:** 3 years by September 1st
- **Blossom Room:** 4 years by September 1st
- **TreeHouse:** Older 4's – 6 years

PHILOSOPHY

CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PLAY.

We believe each child has a unique and individual potential and deserves the opportunity to develop this potential. The Growing Tree Children's Center helps children of all abilities experience childhood as it is meant to be; in a loving, safe and nurturing environment, with joy and discovery intact.

Growing Tree Children's Center was established in 1979 as a not-for-profit early childhood education center. We are dedicated to providing affordable, high quality developmental programs for all children. We welcome all families without regard to race, religion, national or ethnic origin, gender, or sexual orientation.

MISSION STATEMENT

We Believe:

Young children need understanding and consistent relationships with adults to foster positive self-images.

Programs must be flexible and responsive to children's needs.

We provide a clean, reliable, safe and healthy environment for children, full of opportunity for social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth.

Children benefit from challenges, guidance and the opportunity to develop at their own pace.

Our programs strengthen family and community relationships and respond to family and community needs.

GOALS

Goals for Infants and Toddler

Our goal at Growing Tree is to make your infant/toddler feel safe, secure, and nurtured while in our care. We recognize that each child is a unique individual who develops at his/her own rate. Our infants and toddlers are divided into “family pods,” each with a primary caregiver. Each pod has four children. This method of care giving allows teachers, children, and families the opportunity to work as a team to provide the best care for their child.

We provide an environment that is emotionally warm and nurturing, physically safe and cognitively challenging. Respect is shown to each child along with observations in order to understand his/her individual needs.

Goals for two to Five Year Olds

Social Emotional Development

- To experience a sense of self esteem
- To exhibit a positive attitude towards life
- To demonstrate cooperative, pro-social behavior

Cognitive Development

- To acquire learning and problem-solving skills
- To expand logical thinking skills
- To acquire concepts and information
- To demonstrate skills in make-believe
- To expand verbal communication
- To develop beginning reading skills
- To acquire beginning writing skills

Physical Development

- To enhance gross motor skills
- To enhance and refine motor skills
- To use all senses in learning

By focusing on children’s socio-emotional, cognitive and physical growth Growing Tree Children’s Center promotes an integrated and effective developmental approach to learning.

CURRICULUM

Growing Tree Children's Center accepts children of all abilities into its Center. We collaborate with health professionals to meet the individual needs of all children and make the necessary exceptions and accommodations as needed within the boundaries set forth by the Office of Child Care.

To implement our philosophy, **CHILDREN LEARN THROUGH PLAY**, we care for children in a developmentally appropriate environment. Children are given choices. They can experiment and explore activities designed to meet their needs in all areas of development. The Center's curriculum follows the Creative Curriculum model and is carefully planned by the teachers to offer choices designed to encourage physical skills, cognitive learning, problem solving and independence. Active physical play, conceptual learning, art, music, science, math concepts, literature and dramatic play are part of the daily program.

Opportunities for artistic expression are offered to children daily, from the simplest crayon and paper drawings to carpentry and multi technique projects such as finger painting and collage creation. Our philosophy is that **the process is important, not the product**, so children are usually given a variety of open-ended materials and encouraged to create what they will.

Curriculum varies according to age. As children mature, they engage in increasingly more intricate and challenging activities. Curriculum also varies from year to year, because no one group of children is like another. The flexibility allows our teachers the opportunity to assess the nature of their group and design their curriculum accordingly.

Classroom Screen Time Policy:

- **Growing Tree does not allow screen time** for children less than 3 years of age. For those age 3 years and up viewing time is limited to 30 minutes per week. Parents will be notified 24 hours prior to screen time. Notice will include subject matter to be viewed.
- **Only G rated movies are allowed to be shown at the Growing Tree.** Rental movies brought in by the children are not allowed at all.
- Computers are available for child use in the Branch, Blossom, and TreeHouse classrooms only. Children are allowed a maximum of 10 minutes of screen time before they are encouraged to find another center to engage in.

STAFF

The staff at Growing Tree Children's Center are specialists in Early Childhood Education. They understand the importance of developing a positive relationship with each child. Every staff member is registered in the **Oregon Registry** and is awarded a Step 1-11 based on his/her level of education, training and experience. They complete a minimum of twenty (20) hours of early childhood education courses yearly. Teachers are experienced in facilitating the growth and development of children from birth to age five. Several staff members hold Bachelor Degrees; others have AA degrees in Early Childhood education or are continuing their education at the college level. Some have community based training along with experience. All staff are required to be registered in the Central Background Registry, maintain a current CPR card, Food Handlers card and have completed a Child Abuse and Neglect course.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A Board of Directors, consisting of parents and community members meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The Board determines Center policies, organizes fundraising events, and oversees the general functions of the Center.

REGISTRATION

Registration is arranged with the Director after a tour of the Center is completed. A **non-refundable** registration fee (\$175 one child/\$200 multiple child family) is required of each family at the time a space is guaranteed. Thereafter, an annual registration fee of \$175/\$200 is due each January. New students enrolling in November or December will not be charged a registration fee the following January. One month prior to starting at the Center, a **non-refundable** tuition deposit is required to reserve the space in an amount equal to one-half a month's tuition, which will then be applied to the first month's tuition.

Prior to admission the following forms are required:

1. New Child Information;
2. Ages & Stages Questionnaire (ASQ);
3. Child Enrollment and Authorization;
4. Parental Release;
5. Volunteer Hours;
6. Tuition Payment Contract;
7. Credit Policy;
8. USDA Child Enrollment;
9. Confidential Income Statement;
10. Emergency Card;
11. Proof of Immunizations (see written policy on page 9 of Parent Handbook)
12. Parent Handbook Acknowledgement
13. Infant Information (if applicable).

These forms must be returned to Growing Tree before your child's first day of attendance.

SCHEDULING CHANGES

Two week's notice is required for withdrawal of child/ren. You will be charged for the last two weeks whether your child attends or not. Requests for schedule changes will be granted if space allows with a two week notice required.

TUITION POLICIES

Mark Your Calendar!

Tuition is due by the 5th of each month, and considered late on the 10th.

In order to properly staff and plan for your child's care we require payments in advance for the month. Monthly rates already include adjustments for sick days, holiday or vacation days and credit is not given for days absent. Child care billings (and deposits) are a set charge and **non-refundable**.

- **Tuition**

The primary source of funding for the Center is through tuition fees. Budget surpluses, while rare, are invested back into operations. Any "extra" capital projects are paid solely through fundraisers, grants, and in-kind donations.

- **Tuition Payment**

Payments may be made by cash or check. Receipts will be issued on request. Should a check be returned for insufficient funds, an additional charge of \$25 shall be due upon presentation of payment. Tuition payments can be put in the drop box which is located on the front desk.

- **Tuition Late Fee**

Payments are due on the 5th of the month and will be charged a late fee of \$25.00 if not received by the 10th of the month. The Center reserves the right to refuse childcare service when tuition is more than 15 days late. All exceptions to the policy and past due payments are referred to The Board of Directors.

DAILY LIFE AT GROWING TREE CHILDREN’S CENTER

List of things your child needs at school:

- Blanket, stuffed toy, (pillow optional)
- Extra clothes (including underwear and socks)
- Weather appropriate outerwear

SIGN IN, SIGN OUT

The Office of Child Care (OCC) requires that children are signed in and out each morning and afternoon with the time and your initials. The sign in sheets are located at the front desk.

Children must be dropped off and picked up in the classroom by an adult. **Please make sure that a teacher knows when your child has arrived or is leaving.**

DOOR CODES

Upon enrollment each family will be given a door code to access the Center during hours of operation. We ask that you not share this number with anyone other than your immediate family. If someone other than yourself is going to be picking up your child please have them ring the doorbell for entrance. We will check their ID and introduce them to the classroom.

LATE PICK UP CHARGES

If children are not picked up by 6:00pm, you will need to pay:

- \$5.00 for any fraction of the first 5 minutes, plus
- \$1.00 per minute thereafter

Late pick up fees are charged **per child** and should be paid **directly to the teacher at the time of pick up.**

CLOTHING

Children should be dressed comfortably for the day’s probable weather and temperatures. Layers are best! **Please label everything.** As much as possible **children should wear clothes that can get dirty** without it being a source of anxiety for them or frustration for you. Our paints are supposed to be washable, but occasionally they don’t completely wash out. We usually, but not always, use paint smocks.

Diapers

For sanitation reasons all non-toilet trained children will be required to be in **disposable** diapers.

Shoes

Sneakers are the best! For running, climbing and playing in the sand, children need to either go barefoot – which we allow for many activities – or wear supportive shoes. We encourage you to not send your child to school in flip flops.

REST TIME

A two hour nap or rest time is provided following lunch. The Center provides individual cots. We encourage you to provide a blanket, stuffed toy, and pillow (optional) for your child’s nap. All nap items will be sent home on Friday’s to be washed and returned on Monday.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are taken throughout the year. Children must be three years of age. You will be notified in advance with a **Field Trip Permission Slip** of any field trip that is planned for your child's classroom. Transportation is provided using the Growing Tree van. It is equipped with twelve Diono 5 point harness car seats.

NUTRITION

The Growing Tree is a participant in the **USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program**. Because we count on our monthly reimbursement from USDA to offset our food costs we would appreciate it if you did not bring food into the Center. **Weekly menus** are posted in the lobby, on the bulletin board in each classroom, the monthly newsletter and on the website for your convenience. The following meals are prepared daily in our kitchen and served in the classrooms.

- Breakfast 8:15am – 8:45am
- Lunch: 11:30am – 12:00pm
- Afternoon snack – 2:320pm – 3:00pm

Birthday Snacks

Each child's birthday is important. If you would like to provide a special snack (optional) for your child's birthday we encourage nutritional snacks. All **snacks must be store bought**. Teachers will work with you to provide a happy birthday experience whether or not you bring a special snack.

Party Invitations

Birthdays are a special time of heightened feelings in the lives of children. Please do not pass out party invitations in your child's class unless there is one for **every** child. A class play list with email addresses is available at the front desk if needed.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

We are adamant about our policies for sick children, as health care is a chief concern among families and staff.

In the event of a medical emergency, parents are to be contacted immediately. If you or the emergency contact that you list on enrollment information is unavailable, we reserve the right to obtain traditional medical services to preserve the health of your child.

Sick Child Policy

Children must be fever free and symptom free for 24 hours without Tylenol or Ibuprofen. We ask that they are eating normally before returning to school also.

Symptoms that require exclusion of a child from childcare:

- Fever of 100.5 or higher
- Vomiting/nausea
- Diarrhea
- Severe cough
- Skin lesions
- Weeping or pus filled eyes
- Unexplained rash
- Stiff neck
- Headache
- Difficulty breathing
- Severe pain
- Yellow color to skin or eyes
- Impetigo, strep, or staff infections
- Head lice or nits (eggs)
- Contagious disease

HEALTH ALERT NOTICES

Notice of communicable disease or food poisoning outbreak will be posted at the front desk and at on classroom doors.

If your child becomes ill at school, you will be contacted to pick your child up. We appreciate you picking your child up in a timely manner for their benefit as well as to prevent the spread of the illness to other children and staff.

Children can return to the Center when:

- Child is symptom free for 24 hours, eating normally and without Tylenol or Ibuprofen.
- Received a note from doctor stating they are not contagious and well enough to return to school
- Child is fever free without Tylenol or Ibuprofen for 24 hours
- If prescribed antibiotics, they have received a full course in the past 24 hours.

Please notify the front desk if your child will not be at school.

MEDICATIONS

All medication prescribed or over the counter can be administered by the Center's staff with written authorization from the parent or guardian. The consent forms are available in the classrooms. All medication shall be in the original container and will be administered according to the instructions **on the label only**. Over the counter medications that do not have instructions that meet the child's age or weight will need to have a doctor's written note with dosage instructions before administering. Prescription medications must have the child's name on the label. Expired medications will not be administered.

Medications are stored in a locked medicine box and cupboard in each classroom. If a medication needs to be refrigerated it will be stored in childproof box in the staff room refrigerator. **No medication is to be put in a child's cubby.**

Items treated as medication

- Chapstick
- Lotion
- Cough Drops
- Sunscreen

The following is a list of helpful hints when your child is on medication.

- Ask your doctor for written instructions on any over-the-counter medications he/she prescribes.
- Request 12-hour antibiotics if possible, to eliminate the need to have medication administered at the Center.
- Ask your pharmacist to split a prescription into two bottles, one to leave at the Center and one for at home. This will eliminate the problem of transporting the medication back and forth between home and the Center.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Growing Tree Children's Center Immunization Policy

As of April 1, 2015 any child who is eligible to receive immunizations must present proof of immunization in compliance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention "2015 Recommended Immunizations for Children Birth Through Six Years Old" prior to enrolling in or continuing to attend Growing Tree Children's Center (hereinafter "The Center"). The Executive Director shall exclude any child from The Center for noncompliance. In the event of noncompliance, the Executive Director will provide written notice of exclusion to the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s), stating the basis for the exclusion, and that the child will remain excluded until the child has complied with this immunization policy.

Children and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) claiming a medical exemption to this policy must submit a document signed by a physician or representative of the local health department stating that the child should be exempted from receiving specified immunizations because of an indicated medical diagnosis.

Children and their parent(s) or legal guardian(s) claiming a non-medical exemption this policy must provide either;

1. A Vaccine Education Certificate signed by a physician or representative of the local health department, OR;
2. A Certificate of Immunization Status (with a completed non-medical exemption section) AND a Vaccine Education Certificate completed by the child's parent(s) or legal guardian(s) after viewing the online vaccine education module at www.healthoregon.org/vaccineexemption.

In the event of a reported case of a "vaccine-preventable disease" (as delineated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/>) The Center will follow the protocols of the Deschutes County Health Department and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Children who are not in compliance with this immunization policy shall provide the following to the Executive Director within 30 days of the implementation of this policy;

1. Proof that the child has received a Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccination, AND;
2. Proof that the child has received an initial round of vaccination(s) in compliance with this immunization policy, OR;
3. Documentation qualifying the child for a medical exemption as defined in this immunization policy, OR;
4. Documentation qualifying the child for a non-medical exemption as defined in this immunization policy.

This policy shall be updated annually to incorporate the most recent immunization recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or on a more frequent basis should there be change to applicable Oregon law regarding immunizations.

The Office of Child Care and the Oregon Health Authority require **that if someone in the facility is found to have a restrictable disease, all 'SUSCEPTIBLE' individuals must be excluded from the facility.** 'Susceptible' primarily means children who have not been vaccinated. It also includes staff who have not been vaccinated unless they fall within certain age ranges.

GUIDANCE PHILOSOPHY

{Discipline} verb
to teach

Discipline is a normal part of growing up. At Growing Tree we define “discipline” as teaching. The center shall provide positive guidance, re-direction and the setting of clear limits designed to help children develop self-esteem, self-regulation and respect for others. It shall be fair, consistently applied, timely and age/developmentally appropriate.

Conflicts are a way of life. They come up in every classroom and it’s tempting for adults to solve the problem quickly by offering a solution. These quick solutions do not teach the child how to solve problems on their own. Rather, it ensures that children will depend on adults to solve their problems. Growing Tree staff will guide children in **social problem solving skills** using the following steps to guide them in conflict resolution.

1. Help the child calm down – Identify emotions
2. Identify problem – Allow each child a chance to speak
3. Generate Solutions – Encourage children to come up with several solutions
4. Choose a solution – Arrive at a solution that each child can live with
5. Check back –Check back with children to see if their solution is working

It will also be appropriate to use indirect guidance in arranging programs and room environments that encourage and support positive behavior.

PARENTS AS PARTNERS

VISITING

Parents are always welcome to visit the Center.
The Center is open to any custodial guardian during all hours of operation without advanced notice.

COMMUNICATION

There are many lines of communication available between families and staff.

- Each child has a **file folder** in his/her classroom. Please check it daily, for notices, invoices, art work etc.
- The **bulletin board**, located just inside the entrance of each classroom, displays classroom news and information regarding the Center. The **Weekly Lesson Plan and Daily Schedule** is posted on this board. Please check it frequently. The following information is also included on this board: Growing Tree Promise, weekly menus and monthly calendar.
- A **newsletter** is published monthly and sent out electronically via Constant Contact. Important events, school closures, articles, and classroom news are included each month.
- **Parent/Teacher conferences** are held formally twice a year in November and again in April. Informal conferences can be scheduled at any time by either parents or teachers.
- **Reminder notices** for upcoming events, school closures and health alerts are communicated in the following ways: Fliers posted at front desk, email and facebook.
- **Play Lists** are available for each classroom. These lists include child's name, parents name and email address. Lists are only to be used for setting up play dates or sending out birthday party invitations.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

In the case of an emergency or school closure you will be notified in the following ways:

1. Via email
2. Post closure information on Facebook
3. If the situation allows we will the contact you by phone

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Growing Tree does **not** follow the public school schedule for snow/weather days or 2-hour delays. It is our goal to be open as usual. In the event that the Center needed to be closed you would be notified in the manner stated above.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Growing Tree has three annual family events each year to give families the opportunity to meet other Growing Tree families.

- October: **Happy Harvest**
- December: **Holiday Sing A Long**
- July: **Family BBQ**

GTCC PARENT VOLUNTEER HOURS

1. Annually, families are given the option to reduce their annual fees by \$100 by committing to volunteer hours at the Center.
2. Families are asked to contribute 10 volunteer hours per year. We encourage you to tap into your resources and bring to the Center projects that you enjoy and will benefit the Center .
3. The volunteer obligation must be fulfilled during the calendar year January1 through December 31.
4. Every volunteer hour not completed in that year will be billed in January at the rate of \$10 per hour.
5. Volunteer hours are not prorated in the event you withdraw from the Center prior to December 31st.
6. Volunteer opportunities will be posted monthly in the newsletter.

Parent volunteer opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- Elected member of the Board of Directors
- Poinsettia Sale
- Mixed Bag Sale
- Garage Sale
- Volunteering in classroom
- Participating in Field Trips
- Yard clean up
- Snow removal
- IT services
- Website maintenance
- Fundraising

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

In accordance with Federal Law and the US Department of Agriculture policy, Growing Tree is prohibited from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

To file a complaint of discrimination, write:

USDA
Director Office of Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue
SW Washington DC 20250-9410

Call toll free 866-632-9992 voice.

TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal relay at 800-877-8339 TDD or 866-377-8642 relay voice users.

Growing Tree is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

OFFICE OF CHILDCARE

The Center is certified by the **OFFICE OF CHILDCARE (OCC)**. A yearly review is conducted, including announced and unannounced visits by a Licensing Specialist and sanitation and fire inspections. Growing Tree Children's Center is in full compliance with the laws of the State of Oregon and applicable administrative rules.

Any person with questions or concerns regarding the certification requirements of this facility may contact the Office of Child Care Licensing Specialist at the number below:

Carol Petersen 541-548-8196 ext.323

***ALL INSPECTION REPORTS ARE
AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST***

Growing Tree Rate Sheet – 2014/2015 School Year

FULL TIME (HOURS MUST FALL BETWEEN 6AM & 6PM)

	5-DAY	4-DAY	3-DAY	2-DAY	1-DAY
SEEDS					
MONTHLY	940	845	745	630	420
DROP IN CHARGE					65
SPROUTS					
MONTHLY	930	835	735	620	405
DROP IN CHARGE					65
BUDS					
MONTHLY	825	750	660	540	400
DROP IN CHARGE					55
BRANCH/BLOSSOM/TREEHOUSE					
MONTHLY	695	655	585	470	320
KINDERGARTEN	570	535	470	360	300
DROP IN CHARGE					45

PART TIME 6 HRS OR LESS (HOURS MUST FALL BETWEEN 6AM & 12PM OR 12PM & 6PM)

	5-DAY	4-DAY	3-DAY	2-DAY	1-DAY
SEEDS					
MONTHLY	705	640	565	465	330
DROP IN CHARGE					45
SPROUTS					
MONTHLY	690	625	555	440	325
DROP IN CHARGE					45
BUDS					
MONTHLY	620	575	515	430	315
DROP IN CHARGE					40
BRANCH/BLOSSOM/TREEHOUSE					
MONTHLY	550	495	455	385	285
DROP IN CHARGE					35

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have read the Growing Tree Parent Handbook and agree to the policies set forth in the handbook.

This agreement must be signed upon enrollment.

Signature_____

Print Name_____

Date_____