

Wild Wonders Early Learning Program
Employee Handbook
Revised date 08/28/2022

Welcome!

I am excited to welcome you to my Wild Wonders Family. At Wild Wonders I care about giving my employees everything they need to perform their best and grow as early childhood educator professionals. The following employee handbook is designed to help my employees with that goal, in addition to the new employee orientation checklist, family handbook, and any other resources or policies that I may add or give to my employees later during their employment. In no way is this handbook an acknowledgement of a contract.

About me



My name is BriAnne Moline. I am a Montana native, mother of 4 boys named Theodore (2 yrs) Carl (5 years), Harvee (8 years), and Ezekiel (14 years). My husband, Ryan, and I are avid outdoors, animal and all-around nature people. We love hiking, camping, snowshoeing, backpacking, huckleberry picking, hunting, visiting national parks, immersing oneself in nature, the list is endless.

In February 2008 after the birth of my first son I discovered a passion for learning more about child development that led me to my first early childhood education position as a teacher's aide in a local preschool in October 2008. I had found my calling! In spring 2009 I began my own educational journey towards attaining first an Associate's of Applied Science in Early Childhood Education in May 2012. During that time, I worked at center preschool and group licensed programs within the Missoula community in all capacities.

With the birth of my third son I realized that it was time to continue on in my business dreams to serve more families who shared similar ideals around an early learning philosophy. Soon after I opened my own family licensed program in March 2017. Wild Wonders Early Learning program became a level 2 on the STARS to Quality Program within the first 6 months of opening, and attained a level 4 within the next rating year. Wild Wonders continues to strive to grow professionally to provide a high quality early learning program for children and families in our community.

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Facility Information

Facility name:	Wild Wonders Early Learning Program
Facility License #:	PV93708
Facility address:	13755 Fairbanks Lane Missoula, MT 59808
Facility phone:	406-830-4321
Owner:	BriAnne Moline
Owner cell phone:	406-214-6898
Number of children:	15 full day (max 6 infants) + 3 overlap
Teacher:Child ratios:	1:5 ratio preferred mixed ages

Facility Services Contact Information

Contact	Phone	Email/website
Fire/Rescue	911	http://mrfdfire.org/stations/
Police	911	http://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/332/Police-Department
Community Hospital	(406) 728-4100	http://communitymed.org/
St. Patrick Hospital	(406) 543-7271	https://montana.providence.org/locations-directory/s/st-patrick-hospital
Poison control	1-800-222-1222	https://aapcc.org/ https://www.poisonhelp.org/help
Northwestern Energy	1-888-467-2669	https://www.northwesternenergy.com/
Missoula Water	(406) 552-6700	https://www.ci.missoula.mt.us/water
Payne West Insurance/ Elizabeth Gustin	(406) 327-6578	bgustin@paynewest.com
Jodi Linne (MT Child Care Licensor)	(406) 453-0526	jlinne@mt.gov

Mission Statement

It is Wild Wonders' mission to partner with parents and guardians in order to provide all children with age and developmentally appropriate activities and materials in a safe, supportive environment where they are free to explore and learn.

Philosophy

The most important goal of Wild Wonders Early Learning Program is to provide a play-based exploration and learning program. Research shows that throughout the first five years of a child's life and the respective various developmental stages, it is not 'teachers' that children need to help them learn, but loving, responsive relationships with caregivers, based on respect for the child and his or her family's unique culture in addition to intentionally designing the environment to invite children to explore and learn at their own individual pace. As well as including each child's personal interests and developmental needs. **At Wild Wonders, each child will have the opportunity to explore and grow, create and discover, build relationships with his or her peers, and become confident and competent learners.**

Hiring Process:

Upon hiring, Wild Wonders requires the following documentation:

- Up to date immunization records, showing a current MMR and Tetanus vaccine
- Current First Aid and C.P.R. Certification (hands on classes only)
- Copy of current driver's license and Social Security Card
- State of Montana Release of Information (filled out at the time of interview)
- Fingerprints for Federal Background Check (completed at Child Care Resources)
- Montana Statement of Health (filled out at the time of interview)
- W-4 form, Form I-9,
- Montana Early Childhood Practitioner Registry certificate and training records
- Orientation training at facility
- TB Test for Accreditation
- Accreditation Health Statement (doctor's appointment required)

Probation Period:

All new hires are on a 6-month probation period. During this time, it will be determined if the new hire is a "good fit" for Wild Wonders.

Wage Scale

No formal/verifiable ECE program experience. \$9.00
CPR and first aid = \$9.25
State trainings = \$9.50
Star 1 trainings = \$10
Star 2 trainings= \$10.25
Infant Toddler training = \$10.75
Preschool teacher training = \$11.25
Star 3 trainings=\$11.50
Star 4 trainings=\$12.00
Star 5 trainings=\$12.50
ECE Credits, Degrees, taking on leadership roles with the groups=higher pay!!! \$+++

Employee Benefits

Meals, discounted tuition for own child dependent upon availability and Director's decision, paid training, quarterly bonuses as determined by director, MtAEYC state conference attendance, mentorship, advocacy opportunities, career advancement opportunities, PTO accrual after 1 year of employment, etc.

Teacher Assistant Job Description:

- Must be willing to learn new things and take annual license required trainings in addition to STARS to Quality level trainings,
- Be able to build relationships with children and their families.
- Must be punctual and consistent.
- Must strive to maintain professionalism.
- Must communicate clearly with fellow educators and clients.
- Must love to work with children.
- Support lead teachers in carrying out curriculum plans that promote the physical, cognitive, emotional and social development of children
- Engage children in activities by telling stories, teaching songs and preparing crafts
- Prepare snacks and arrange rooms or furniture for lunch and rest periods
- Assist with proper eating, dressing and toilet habits (must be able to lift up to 30 lbs)
- Submit written observations on children to early childhood educators or supervisors
- Maintain equipment and assist in housekeeping and cooking duties
- Attend staff meetings to discuss progress and problems of children
- May assist early childhood educators or supervisors in keeping records
- Assist in any other reasonable job-related duties as assigned by the owner/director
- Actively supervise children.
- Constructively participate in monthly staff meetings.
- Participate in developing yearly individual professional development plans relevant to your career choices or as guided by the director.

Staff Meeting:

Staff members are required to attend the monthly staff meeting. It will be held on the third Thursday of every month at 5:30pm. Plan for at the maximum one hour of paid time for attending. Important information, policies, and procedures are introduced and reviewed at these meetings; it is important to have 100% attendance. If a meeting is not attended upon previous approval from the director, then an alternate time will be scheduled.

New Staff Orientation:

All staff members will be asked to read the employee and parent handbooks. Prior to working in the classroom, the Director will schedule an orientation meeting to complete the paperwork and review the facilities operations and policies. The new staff member will fill out a training plan and go through the orientation check list with the Director.

New caregivers will be introduced to the children and families as they arrive or depart depending on work schedules. If applicable the monthly newsletter will inform parents of a new hire and the qualifications and experience you bring to the program. By having a formal introduction to the families and their children an important bond will be able to start forming. After this introduction, you will begin performing your duties as described in the job description.

Evaluations:

Evaluations of a staff member's performance will be conducted by the Director. Evaluations will be performed annually. In formal evaluations will be performed throughout the year during scheduled and unscheduled classroom observations.

Professional and ethical conduct:

Each Wild Wonders employee is an early childhood professional and is expected to act as such. The following general guidelines for professionalism should be maintained at all times:

- Arrive on time and stay entire shift, if needed
- Is not absent from work on a regular basis and finds a substitute when necessary
- Dress appropriately for interaction with children
- Take directions, suggestions and criticisms, and follow through to improve performance
- Respect confidential information regarding children, families, and co-workers
- Display a positive attitude toward the entire facility (the program, children, families, and co-workers)
- Attend staff meetings and other program events

- Complete DPHHS required training hours in a timely fashion.
- Complete an annual training plan to be kept on file in the office.
- Keep immunizations and TB tests up to date.
- Communicate with co-workers clearly and concisely.

Please familiarize yourself with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (aka NAEYC) Code of Ethical Conduct for Early Childhood Education Professionals at the following link:

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/position-statements/ethical-conduct>

Dress code:

Since we are working with children at Wild Wonders, we expect the following considerations to be taken seriously:

- Clothing is to be clean, neat, non-revealing, appropriate (aka no vulgar words/images), properly fitting and non-offensive, and must not, in anyway, conflict with the employee's work performance.

It is expected that all staff members will present themselves and Wild Wonders in a professional, respectable manner. Any staff member not adhering to the dress code may be asked to leave and return dressed appropriately. This may incur a loss of pay or hours worked. There will be a verbal warning, two written warnings and then a termination if the dress code is not adhered to.

It is recommended that employees have a set of spare clothes on hand due to the nature of our work young infants/children can be quite messy and employees may need to change their clothes during a shift.

Personal Belongings:

Coats, backpacks, purses, cell phones, etc. must be safely put in the provided employee cubbies out of the reach of the children. Wild Wonders is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

Cell Phone Use:

It is important that every staff member's attention remains on the children *at all times*. A second's lapse in attention could result in a serious accident, which, with appropriate supervision, would have been prevented. It is never appropriate to make a personal phone call, send a text message, check voicemail, check social media platforms, etc. **Personal cell phone use is not permitted during an employee's shift.** Personal cell phones may be used only during your scheduled break or if approved by the director first. Please make sure that your

emergency contacts have the Wild Wonders primary number **406-830-4321** to get ahold of you during the day in case of emergency only. The dedicated program cell phone is used by employees for utilizing Brightwheel or for curriculum related uses only.

The first incident of misuse of either personal cell phone or Wild Wonders cell phone use will result in a documented verbal warning, the 2nd will result in a written warning and the 3rd will result in probationary based employment for a determined amount of time.

It is expected that when leaving the center for any reason (walk, field trip, etc.) the Early Childhood Teacher will carry with them the Wild Wonders cell phone. In this circumstance, the cell phone should only be used in the event of an emergency and to use Brightwheel for communicating with families. It may not be used for personal calls/text messaging, inappropriate use of browsers, etc.

Computer Use:

All Wild Wonders owned computers are to be used for work purposes **only**. Under no circumstances may software be installed without the prior written permission of the Director. Online training will be scheduled and done under Director supervision.

Property Use:

All Wild Wonders Employees will use any other Wild Wonders property in the approved or designated way. If an employee is found to use any other Wild Wonders or personal property of my family or I in such a manner that it breaks, then the employee is liable for the cost of replacing the item.

Montana Early Childhood Practitioner's Registry:

Within the first week of hire the Employee will register on the Montana Early Childhood Practitioner Registry. The registration fee is waived for employees of Wild Wonders.

<https://www.mtecp.org/practitioner.html#apply>

Licensing Trainings:

Research indicates that formal education of training that increases the knowledge of providers has been shown to be the greatest determinant of safe and quality programming for children. Therefore, the state of Montana has set the following requirements for staff training and development.

Pre-Service Training-to be completed prior to caring for children, or under the supervision of a Primary Caregiver. *Training must be completed within the first 30-days of hire.*

- CPR/First Aid Certification 4 hours
- Infant Safety Essentials 2 hours

Basic Health and Safety PD Track. *Training must be completed within 90 days of hire.*

- Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases & Immunizations training-2 hours
- Medication Administration in Child Care Part I-3 hours on-line
- YIKES Disaster Planning-Emergency Preparedness training-2 hours on-line
- Protecting Children from Harm-2 hours on-line
- Child Abuse & Neglect Mandatory Reporting in Child Care training-3 hours on-line
- Together We Grow
- Orientation Overview: Child Care Essentials or Early Childhood Professionals training-In person CCR&R Agency
- Review of Health & Safety every 3 years

Many of these courses are available online at:

<https://www.childcaretraining.org/>

Stars to Quality Training:

Wild Wonders is enrolled in the Stars to Quality Program, now known as STARS. This program helps childcare providers provide a better quality of childcare to the children and their parents. Each employee will be required to take all classes required in each STAR level in a specific order and timeline. You will be guided on what is required and when classes are available. Many of the classes are available online. Wild Wonders will pay for trainings that are taken by employees; training hours will be added to the current pay period when a completed training certificate is received. If the Employee fails to attend a scheduled, paid for class, the cost of the class will be deducted from the next Employee's paycheck.

- STAR 1 courses: (completed 6 months within hire date)
 - STARS to Quality Essentials
 - Food Safety
 - Practitioner Registry
- STAR 2 courses: (completed 9 months within hire date)
 - Intro to the Pyramid Model
 - Pyramid Model MT Blended Module 1
 - Oral Health Training
 - MT Medication Administration II

- Intro to the MELS
- Practitioner Registry
- Medication Refresher (3 years)
- STAR 3 courses: (completed 1 year within hire date)
 - Certified Infant/Toddler Caregiver Course
 - Preschool Caregiver Education
 - Pyramid Model MT Blended Module 2
 - Developmental Screening
- STAR 4 courses: (completed 18 months within hire date)
 - Inclusion I
 - Pyramid Model Module 3 Overview or MT Blended PM Module 3
- STAR 5 courses: (completed 18 months within hire date)
 - Inclusion II
 - Building Skills & Safe Places

Training Pay Policy:

All employees who are attending long term courses such as Infant/Toddler, Preschool ed. Or similar courses are required to have the course instructor verify their attendance at each class so their training hours can be added to each biweekly payperiod and to ensure that employees are not going into overtime (and increasing chances of burnout). The director will provide the training hour verification form to employees to share with their instructors at the beginning of the course.

Montana State Child Care Licensing Regulations:

All employees are to read the Requirements for Registration for Family/Group Home Daycares, sign and date the rules and regulations acknowledgement form.

<https://dphhs.mt.gov/Portals/85/qad/documents/LicensureBureau/ChildCare/RegistrationRequirementsforFamilyGroup.pdf>

Child Abuse and Neglect:

All staff members are mandatory child abuse reporters. Suspected cases of child abuse and neglect must be reported to the Montana Child and Family Services Division or local law enforcement immediately.

Child Abuse Hotline (toll free, 24 hours)
1-866-820-5437
Child Abuse Hotline (TTY-hearing –impaired)

1-866-341-8811

Staff members may directly report suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the Montana Child and Family Services Division and will complete all necessary paperwork. The staff member should inform the Director of the report and together decide further actions. If a staff member is accused of abuse and or neglect by a parent or co-worker, such an accusation will be reported to the Director and a determination will be made as to whether there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse and or neglect. If there is reasonable cause, a report must be made to the Montana Child and Family Services Divisions. Wild Wonders and all employees will cooperate with any investigations. In addition, the accused staff member will be informed of the allegations and be given an opportunity to respond to those allegations. Suspension or termination of employment after a child abuse allegation is at the discretion of the Director, and the results of the investigation. <https://youtu.be/duxvnbI493w>

Active Supervision:

Active supervision requires focused attention and intentional observation of children at all times. Caregivers position themselves so that they can observe all of the children: watching, counting, and listening at all times. They also use their knowledge of each child's development and abilities constant vigilance helps children learn safely. Simply put, active supervision is: physically, mentally and emotionally present and willing to engage when needed observing what children are doing...ready to offer help...comment on happenings...taking advantage of teachable moments. Playing WITH children in intentional and planned ways inside and outside is also an example of "active" supervision.

Confidentiality:

It is important that all staff members be discreet in sharing information regarding the children and their parents in public areas. Names and identifying characteristics of children and families should not be shared with anymore other than staff members working in the classroom and the Director. Confidentiality is expected and required when grievances arise; staff members who discuss issues with individuals not directly related to the situation may be subjected to Disciplinary Procedures. Staff should also be careful in discussing details of the facility operation, particularly problem areas, with others in public. Staff members may not distribute or post children's last names, addresses, phone numbers, etc. with the exception of distribution to Wild Wonders employees. Personal information should never be used for personal purposes. Montana law specifically prohibits the sharing of information about children or staff members within a childcare setting without written consent from the parent, guardian, or individual with lawful custody. This applies to outside professionals as well. You must seek written parental consent before consulting with an outside agency about a child. All CPS and other official agency personnel will be directed to the Director.

Parent Interactions:

Many of our employees will become well acquainted with the parents of the children. This is an important part of providing quality care, but there are a few guidelines to which staff members must adhere:

- Address parents by their first name.
- Talk with parents about their child's day in a positive manner. If the child had challenging behavior or an incident of some kind you will be directed by BriAnne as to how to share it with the family.
- Never talk about concerns or incidents about a child in front of any other children or parents.
- When stating a concern about their child, also state at least two positives things about their child. Don't focus only on the negative.
- Do not use other children's names when discussing behaviors concerns and/or incident reports.
- Avoid the phrases "I don't know." Instead say "I'm not certain of the answer for that; can I get back to you?" then find the answer and reply to the parent as soon as possible.
- Conversations at pick-up time and drop-off should be brief; your chief responsibility remains the supervision of the children. If you feel a parent needs more time or attention, ask them to contact the director to schedule a time to meet for a scheduled conference.

Parent Complaints:

Parent concerns or complaints should be deferred to the director if on program premises. Otherwise please follow the steps below:

- Listen carefully. Many times, a person just needs an opportunity to air his or her feelings and feel they've been heard.
- Repeat what you have heard the other person say, trying to summarize it in one sentence. (You're upset that Gavin isn't able to stay awake for dinner and seems crabby at night.)
- State changes that you think the parent would like to have made. ("I will speak with the other staff and make a note on his chart to make sure the message reaches everyone.")
- Follow through. If you tell a parent you will do something, do it promptly and follow up with them immediately afterward. (I spoke with the other staff last week; how are things going with Gavin? Did you notice a change?)
- If you are unsure how to solve the complaint, refer the parent to the Director. ("I'm not sure how to answer that; the Director will be able to better help you.")

Co-Worker Communication:

Open communication between staff members, parents, and children is critical to a successful program. Before leaving a classroom for any reason (bathroom, making copies (which should be done before children arrive), or calling a parent) an employee should inform his/her cooperating teachers of the reason he/she is leaving. For all involved, it is important that all issues be addressed and resolved as they arise. All employees are expected to function as a team member at all times.

Grievance Procedure:

As childcare professionals, all staff members are expected to make reasonable attempts to resolve conflicts directly with the individual(s) concerned. If a solution cannot be reached, staff members should then seek assistance from the Director and/or Assistance Director in resolving the conflict.

Confidentiality is expected and required when grievances arise. Staff members who discuss issues with other staff members not directly related to the situation may be subject to the Disciplinary Procedure. This policy applies both during paid hours as well as on the staff member's personal time.

Guidance Strategies

Every adult who cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult's actions often are called guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are crucial because they promote children's self-control, teach children responsibility and help children make thoughtful choices. The more effective caregivers are at encouraging appropriate child behavior, the less time and effort adults will spend correcting children's mistaken behavior.

Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child. They also preserve the child's self-esteem and dignity. Actions that insult or belittle are likely to cause children to view their caregivers negatively, which can inhibit learning and can teach the child to be unkind to others. However, actions that acknowledge the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, is likely to encourage healthy development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation and a good understanding of the child. Wild Wonders staff will use **only positive guidance techniques**.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:
"Am I..."

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting children's choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Using redirection?

- Talking with children at their eye level? Make sure you are having a conversation not talking at them.
- Circulating throughout the classroom?
- At the child's eye level?
- Getting down on the floor and working with the children.

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/dec2012/planning-for-positive-guidance>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/jul2015/rocking-rolling>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/may2015/trauma-sensitive-classrooms>

Mistaken Behavior:

I define the two concepts of mistaken behavior and misbehavior, the first as an error in judgment and action made in the process of learning life skills. Mistaken behaviors occur at three levels which are: experimentation, socially influenced, and strong unmet needs. Teachers who use guidance see self-ruled life skills as difficult to learn, and they recognize that children are just at the beginning stages of a lifelong process of learning these skills. In the process of learning any difficult skill, children, like all of us, make mistakes.

Reasons for Mistaken Behavior

If caregivers understand why children have mistaken behavior, they can be more successful at reducing behavior problems. Listed here are some of the possible reasons why children have mistaken behavior.

- Children want to test whether caregivers will enforce the rule
- A child does not understand the rules, there are too many rules to follow, or the rule is developmentally appropriate for the child
- They want to assert themselves and their independence
- They feel ill, bored or tired
- They lack accurate information and prior experience
- They have been previously “rewarded” for their mistaken behavior with adult attention
- They have experienced childhood trauma

Preventing Mistaken Behavior

Child Mistaken Behavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers have not expected. However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent mistaken behavior.

- Set clear, consistent rules (walking feet, gentle touch)

- Make certain you review the rules and expectations several times a day in a positive manner
- Make certain the environment is safe and worry-free
- Show interest in the child's activities (participating in activities with the children so they stay interested for longer periods)
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices (you may pick up the blocks or the art center)
- Focus on the desired behavior, rather than the one to be avoided (Tommy, please use gentle touches with your friends.)
- Build children's images of themselves as trustworthy, responsible and cooperative
- Give clear directions, one at a time
- Say "Yes" whenever possible
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right (Amy, you are playing so nicely. I like the way you keep the blocks on your carpet?)
- Encourage children often and generously
- Set a good example (using a quiet voice when children should be quiet)
- Help children see how their actions affect others

Responding to Mistaken Behavior:

Below are strategies Wild Wonders staff will use to respond to child mistaken behavior. Remember, however, that it's always a good idea if rules are explained fully and clearly understood before mistaken behavior occurs. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom.

- **Redirection**
This strategy should be used most frequently when working with young children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Kate, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the bike for a long time and its now Logan's turn."
- **Logical consequences**
These are structured consequences that follow specific mistaken behaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, Andrew is standing on his chair at lunch. His teacher should remind him that if he stands on his chair, he could fall and get hurt; this will make him feel better."
- **Participate in the solution**
If a child damages something, he/she should help in relieving that. For example, "It made Sarah very sad when you told her she wasn't your friend anymore. Please come and

speak to her about the problem and come up with a way to prevent it from happening again.”

- **“Take a break” or “Calm down chair/quiet space”**

In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a particular situation in which he/she has become overwhelmed or violent. The child should be directed to “take a break” or use the “calm down space.” This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, and reflect quietly on her or his behavior away from other. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing a break or being sent to the calm down chair. For example, “Emily, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable, but because you hit Johnny you must leave the block area and go to the calming area. I will talk to you when you are ready.”

If these actions do not help in reducing or changing behavior the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Director.
2. The Director will observe the child and meet with the staff to develop a behavior management plan.
3. The behavior management plan will be discussed with the parents and then put into practice.
4. The Director, Staff, and parents will evaluate the behavior management plan and will adjust if needed.

Biting/Aggressive Behaviors:

Biting (and other aggressive behaviors) is a behavior that usually appears between the ages of one and three years. While biting is an age-appropriate behavior, it is important to remember it is also an unacceptable behavior in a childcare environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teacher. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Munchkin Land to prevent and stop biting. This is the process followed when a child bites.

- The biting child is stopped and told, “Stop biting. Biting hurts” in a firm voice. Staff should remain calm, being careful not to show anger or frustration towards the child.
- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive for the bite, the separation may include re-direction or meeting the child’s needs. As little attention as possible will be placed on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior.
- Appropriate first aid and TLC will be provided to the child who was bitten/hurt following health and safety policies.

It is important to explore the reason for biting when it occurs. Staff need to work with parents to gather information about the child’s behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of triggers would be communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need of oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on

prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are the steps the staff will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior.

1. The staff will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The following questions should be asked:
 - Was the space too crowded?
 - Were there too few toys?
 - Was there too little to do or too much wait time?
 - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she needs at other time?
2. The staff will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary.
3. The staff will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate ways.
4. The staff will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The staff will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The staff, parent, and Director will meet regularly to develop and implement an action plan and measure outcomes.
7. If biting continues the staff will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

All information is confidential, and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on an Accident/Incident Report which is completed and signed by the observing staff member, parent, and director. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child's permanent file in the office.