

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center PARENT HANDBOOK



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This handbook is intended to familiarize families with current Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc. (Giggles & Grace) policy, procedures, and mandated regulations. Giggles & Grace reserves the right to revise its policies, procedures, and regulations as deemed appropriate by the Executive Director, Board, or state of Oregon. Moreover, families will be notified of updates to the handbook.

History

Barb Gerulf decided to retire for her growing family after being the 30-year owner and operator of Giggle Tree Daycare in Ontario. However, she was aware of the need for continued quality preschool and childcare services for families located within and near Malheur county. Barb and Pastor James Aalgaard, former pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, presented the opportunity of opening a new childcare center to the congregation. Soon after, Barb's vision of a center-based preschool and childcare center came to fruition. Through a capital campaign and Mission Builders, Giggles & Grace opened our doors to serve families on July 1, 2013.

To date, Giggles & Grace is currently licensed for 99 children in our Center and 32 children at a partner's facility. We are a non-profit organization committed to serving preschool and child care services to children between the ages of 6 weeks to 12 years old. Giggles & Grace currently has infant, toddler, and preschool classrooms as well as a before and after school program.

Mission Statement

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc., with community, parents and teachers, is committed to providing a safe, nurturing Christian environment emphasizing the total development of each child; spiritual, intellectual, emotional, physical, and social, while accepting and celebrating our individual and cultural diversity.

As caregivers and educators, **Our Mission is to provide a safe and developmentally appropriate learning environment, which fosters a child's natural desire to explore, discover, create, and become a lifelong learner.** We currently serve the Western Treasure Valley by providing care for about 180 children yearly and employ 28 staff members.

Philosophy

Our Philosophy: At Giggles & Grace, we value the lives of all children. *The programs we provide to our children are based around the belief that children are born ready to learn and should be nurtured in a Christian manner. As caregivers and teachers, our goal is to create a learning environment that is safe, stimulating, encouraging, and ensures the inclusion of all children by celebrating individual and cultural diversity. The following guiding principles are excerpts from the Oregon Early Childhood Foundations and serve as the foundation for our curriculum:*

- Children develop knowledge of their world through active interactions with caregivers, peers, materials, and events
- Learning is continuous and sequential, building on prior understandings and experiences
- Learning proceeds at different rates in each area and each child; children will show a range of skills and understandings in any one area of development
- Learning in each area is interconnected. Young children learn best through experiences, which incorporate several areas of development
- Learning is embedded in a culture. Children learn best when their learning activities are rooted in a familiar cultural context
- Learning begins in the family, continues in early care and education settings, and depends on parent involvement and caregiver guidance

General Center Information

ADMINISTRATION

Executive Director: Shawn C. Reynolds

Office Manager: Peggy Hawkins

Site Coordinator/Head Teacher: Traci Duff

Program Coordinator: Miranda Spivey

gigglegraceoffice@gmail.com

Office: (541) 889-6141

Fax: (541) 889-6142

HOURS OF OPERATION

Giggles & Grace ELC is open Monday-Friday from 7:30 AM to 6:00 PM. **(Please note that infant/toddler care ends at 5:30 PM each day)** The center is closed for the following holidays:

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>New Year’s Day</i> | <i>Labor Day</i> |
| <i>Memorial Day</i> | <i>Thanksgiving (2 days)</i> |
| <i>Independence Day</i> | <i>Christmas (2 days)</i> |

PROGRAMS

There are four childcare programs offered at the Giggles & Grace Center as follows:

• Infant/Toddler	6 weeks to 36 months	21 children
• Squirrels	3 years to 4 years	20 Children
• Redbirds	4 years to 5 years	20 children
• Explorers	5 years to 12 years	29 children

In addition, Giggles & Grace provides half-day preschool programs to children ages 3-5 from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM

RATIOS

At Giggles & Grace, the following ratios must be maintained within each age group:

<u>Age of Children</u>	<u>Minimum Caregiver/Children Ratio</u>
6 weeks to 35 months	1:4 caregiver to children
3 years to 5 years	1:10 caregiver to children
5 years to 12 years	1:15 caregiver to children

LICENSING

The Giggles & Grace Center is a private program voluntarily licensed to serve 99 children by the Oregon Department of Education Office of Childcare. The license can be found posted next to the SmartCare login area and a declaration of viewing the license is required upon your child or children during registration.

Continuous Quality Improvement Plan

Giggles & Grace is committed to quality standards and achieving a higher star rating than three and accreditation with SPARK by 2020. This commitment reflects our professionalism and dedication to continuous improvement.

WEATHER-RELATED CLOSINGS

Giggles & Grace will remain open during most weather conditions. The Executive Director will monitor the weather and local news stations to determine when it is appropriate to close the Center early or cancel services for the following day.

In the event that Giggles & Grace closes early or cancels care for the following day, parents will be contacted and informed of the situation via phone call, text, or Facebook notification. The decision to close early or cancel care for a day will be made with the safety of our children and families in mind.

UPDATING ENROLLMENT RECORDS

When enrolling at Giggles & Grace, a complete Registration Packet must be completed prior to the attendance of your child. Thereafter the first year of enrollment, USDA Foods, Emergency Contact, and Medical Release forms must be updated annually every fall. Giggles & Grace completes an audit of enrollment records, every fall, that is mandated by various entities that we must work with in order to retain our license. At the conclusion of this audit, families will be notified of any necessary corrections to ensure documentation completion accuracy.

Other records, such as current immunization information, must be maintained on a yearly basis in the fall. When visiting your child’s physician for a yearly “well-child” appointment, please request a copy of your child’s most recent immunization record. You may bring these items in yourself or have your physician fax them to us at 541-889-6142. You may also bring in your child’s immunization card. **In addition, any time a family’s information changes such as address, employment, health insurance provider, a new emergency contact, and new medical information must be completed.**

CONFIDENTIALITY

Confidentiality is a top priority for Giggles & Grace. Personal information of families and staff will not be shared for any reason, except for legal purposes, without prior written consent of the individual. In speaking about a child, to individuals outside of Giggles & Grace, a first name only basis will be enforced in addition to first name or initials only via email when consent has been given or required. In situations regarding Incident/Accident Reports, a child's name will not be shared with anyone besides the family of the child.

Confidentiality is of the utmost importance and a top priority for Giggles & Grace children, families, and partners. At times, information must be shared between sites; however, confidential information is kept safe and locked at each site and a procedure has been implemented to limit the chance of information exposure.

Curriculum

Curriculum at Giggles & Grace includes the child-initiated and teacher-directed activities and experiences offered to young children that support and enrich their development physically, emotionally, socially, and cognitively. Giggles & Grace uses the Creative Curriculum for Infants, Toddlers and Twos, Creative Curriculum for Preschool, and High Scope Curriculum for Preschool as guides for planning the curriculum in each of its program rooms. Each classroom has weekly lesson plans, posted in the classroom or available upon request. These plans contain several learning activities designed to foster each child's individual development and the development of the peer group. Lesson plans may be changed in order to accommodate the children's abilities and interest.

Each classroom is set-up in centers, which include blocks, dramatic play, books, gross motor, fine motor, and art. Outdoor play is important to a child's physical development and must be included in both the morning and afternoon schedule. Self-selection or "free-play" is a daily part of the curriculum and means a child has the opportunity to choose which center or activity he/she participates in. This promotes creative expression and development of important social skills.

DAILY SCHEDULE AND ACTIVITIES

The classroom's teachers work cooperatively to create a daily schedule and plan activities that meet each child's developmental abilities and needs. The daily schedule and activities create a balance between active and quiet times; large and small group, and individual activities; small and large muscle activities; indoor and outdoor play times; as well as times for self-selection and teacher-directed activities.

Consistency from day-to-day is particularly important to the overall well-being of the children and classroom environment. Children **thrive** on consistency! Routines will be maintained whenever possible for arrivals and departures; meals and snacks; resting or nap times; personal care routines like diapering/toileting and hand washing; and transitions.

FREE PLAY

"Free-play" (also called child-initiated activities, free choice, self-selection) activities are incorporated into the morning and afternoon schedule. During free-play, teachers actively participate with the children by asking questions about what the children are doing, participating in their pretend play, reading books when prompted, encouraging children to try new activities or play with a new toy, etc. Free-play is another opportunity for a child to grow socially and cognitively through the development of relationships.

OUTDOOR PLAY

Outdoor play is incorporated into the daily schedule for both the morning and afternoon. There is less structure in an outdoor learning environment; however, staff members actively engage in activities when prompted by the children. Outdoor play is an opportunity for children to run, jump, climb and use their bodies in ways that would otherwise be unsafe in an indoor classroom. In addition, a large amount of social interaction takes place when children play outdoors. Because they are engaged in fewer teacher-directed activities and more child-directed play, children can choose their friends and who to interact with.

Children will go outside year-round, including winter, for a minimum of 20 minutes a day. Only during extreme weather conditions or an emergency would the children remaining completely indoors.

It is important for parents to send their children in appropriate clothing and outerwear for the weather conditions (e.g., coat, snow pants, boots, gloves, etc.). **Please clearly label all articles of clothing with your child's name.** Please ask your child's teacher if you have any questions about weather-appropriate clothing.

NAP/REST TIME

The Oregon Child Care Division requires that all children must be given time daily to nap or rest. Children will not be forced to sleep; however, they will be expected to lie or sit quietly during nap time so as not to interfere with the nap or rest time of other children. The length of time a child sleeps is dependent upon each child's resting needs; furthermore, children shall be provided alternative quiet activities if unable to rest after 45 minutes.

Children are encouraged to bring a familiar item from home to use during nap/rest time, such as a small blanket, stuffed animal, or other items agreed upon between the parent/guardian of the child and G&G. These items will be stored in your child's cubby or on his/her mat. There is limited space for storage of such items. Please take this into consideration when deciding which items to bring for your child. All items should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

WEAPONS/VIOLENT PLAY

Giggles & Grace has a zero-tolerance weapon/violent play policy. Children are not permitted to play with weapons of any type, size, or to pretend that other items are weapons including, but not limited to, the following: fingers, hands, toys such as Legos or blocks, or other objects that resemble a weapon. Redirection will be used when a child is engaging in play that involves the mimicking of weapon use or acts of violence. If a child brings a weapon to Giggles & Grace, the weapon will be confiscated, and a Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect Report will be completed and given to the proper agencies or authorities.

Competitive behavior is kept to a minimum within Giggles & Grace. In young children, competition often increases negative behavior and decreases acceptance of others. Therefore, increasing the likelihood of violence or bullying. Bullying is not considered acceptable behavior. All efforts will be made to guide children in finding appropriate ways to interact with others in a friendly manner.

Field Trips

Giggles & Grace offers a variety of experiences both at and away from our Center. Field trips are a creative way to enrich themes and expand the learning environment. The Executive Director must approve all field trips. Moreover, parents will be notified, at least a week before the planned field trip, in writing. A permission slip will be sent home and must be signed and returned by the parent/guardian of a child; otherwise, a child will not be permitted to attend.

Teachers may decide and are encouraged to conduct short walking field trips upon informing the Executive Director. These walking field trips include, but not limited to, the following: walks around the Center premises, St Paul Lutheran Church, Alameda Elementary School, Brookdale, Albertsons, Four Rivers Cultural Center or Treasure Valley Community College, Nazarene Church, or any other child appropriate businesses or locations within a one-mile radius of the Center. Giggles & Grace staff/children ratios must always be maintained. As a parents or guardians, you must complete a "Child Enrollment and Authorization" form prior to a start date. The form includes walking field trip permissions for the locations and distance mentioned above within this paragraph.

TRANSPORTATION

Giggles & Grace will only provide transportation for children, in the event of a planned field trip, with written parental or guardian approval. A bus will be rented from the Treasure Valley Children's Relief Nursery and utilized for field trips outside of the walking distance mentioned above. All Oregon Department of Motor Service rules and regulations will be followed and maintained.

Meals and Snacks

At Giggles & Grace, children are provided a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack. We follow the USDA/CACFP Meal Pattern rules. Giggles & Grace follows the nutritional guidelines established by the Child and Adult Care Food Program. Menus will be posted near the parent sign-in area. If you would like, you may request a copy of the weekly menu to post at home.

Children will be encouraged to sample all foods and drinks they are offered; however, they will never be forced to eat or drink they choose not to. Please inform the office and teacher of your child if they cannot consume food or drink or have strict dietary needs. Such as, but not limited to, vegetarian, vegan, gluten and or lactose free diets. In addition, dietary restrictions/substitutions, due to a documented disability, will be honored. Please see the office for USDA CACFP Paperwork. Food substitutions will be made when a product is readily available and within a reasonable and relative cost to the original menu item. However, you may be asked to provide food or drink from home for your child.

FOOD FROM HOME

Children are welcome to bring in special treats to celebrate a birthday, holiday, or another special event. Due to various food allergies and dietary restrictions, within our classrooms, they must be store-bought snacks contained in the original packaging. A list of healthy snack options approved by the USDA can be made available upon request from the office or kitchen.

FOOD ALLERGY ACTION PLAN

If your child has a food allergy, you must complete a Medical Statement for Food Substitutions Form, available in the office. This form will be made accessible in your child's classroom and the kitchen. If medication for a food allergy is prescribed to your child, please have the prescribing physician sign the Medical Statement for Food Substitutions as well and provide any addition notes necessary. **Medical Release Forms must be completed prior to prescriptions being administered to your child.**

Infant, Toddler and Two-Year-Old Program Information

The following information is specific to the infant and toddlers under the age of 36 months:

- Parents must supply diapers, wipes, diaper cream, bottles, extra clothing, pacifiers, blankets, and medication. Please label all items with name. Also, prescribed medications must have a legible label with the name of the infant/toddler that will be taking the medicine. Also, the expiration date must be valid. Lastly, every parent or guardian must sign and complete a Medication Authorization Form before medicine can be administered even if it is over the counter.
- Children may use pacifiers during rest time. To reduce the likelihood of spreading illness, pacifiers must be kept in a child's cubby or diaper bag during all other times of the day. Blankets may not be in a crib at any time; however, they can be used outside of a crib according to **Safe Sleep Requirements mandated by the Office of Child Care**. Exceptions may be made per a written doctor's order regarding sleep aides and such permitted in the crib.
- If you are breastfeeding, please discuss with your child's teacher when your child should be fed breast milk, or you would like to come in and feed your child.
- Breast milk must be brought in labeled ready-to-use containers. For health reasons, we are not able to store bags of frozen milk beyond a two-week period.
- We recommend that all new foods be tried at home first since a child could have an allergic reaction to foods they have not had before. Please inform your child's teachers on the daily charts of any new foods your child has tried.
- Through the USDA CACFP we offer Kirkland Infant Formula with Iron brand formula. We also will supply baby food that has been tried at home and is approved by the USDA CACFP.

SIDS

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected, sudden death of a child under age one for which a cause of death cannot be identified. It is not known what causes SIDS; however, several sleeping practices have been linked to an increased risk for SIDS. Therefore, Giggles & Grace has strict policies and regulations to follow for infant sleep placement that is compliance with **Safe Sleep Requirements mandated by the Office of Child Care**

All infants, less than a year, will be placed on their back to sleep in a crib with no more than a pacifier.

Infants shall not be allowed to sleep in a car seat or swing.

Once a child has been placed in his or her crib for nap, if the infant rolls from back to front and from front to back, it is acceptable to leave the infant sleeping on his or her stomach. **NO blankets, pillows, or toys should ever be placed in a crib.** A request for alternative sleeping positions must be accompanied by a signed and dated doctor's order stating the reason for the request.

CLOTH DIAPERS

Commercially available disposable diapers or pull-ups are only to be used at Giggles & Grace Learning Center, Inc. The only exception would be a child who has a documented medical reason that does not permit the use of disposable diapers or pull-ups. Documentation from the child's physician must be provided to the business office before cloth diapers will be used while the child is at the Center. If a doctor's note is provided, families must provide a container for storage of soiled cloth diapers.

Clothing and Items from Home

PLAY CLOTHES

Please send your child to Giggles & Grace in comfortable and seasonably appropriate play apparel. Play is often active and can be messy due to outdoor play or learning activities. Thus, comfortable and washable clothes are important if your child is to fully participate in planned program activities. Outdoor play is scheduled every day, weather permitting, as an essential part of our planned curriculum. We expect all children to be dressed appropriately for both indoor and outdoor activities.

In general terms, most preschool aged children get their clothes dirty, wet, and or have toileting accidents on any given day. When this occurs, it is best to change the child into an extra set of clothing, provided by the family, to ensure the comfort and sanitary needs of your child is maintained. Therefore, expect that your child's teacher will request that you bring a complete change of clothes to be kept at the Center, in their cubby, and replenished as needed. Please be sure to clearly label all items of clothing for appropriate return. If your child goes home in clothes provided by Giggles & Grace, should their extra set of clothing not have been replenished by you, we expect that you wash and return the clothes as soon as possible.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Toys, stuffed animals, or other items from home may help your child feel more comfortable at school during certain activities or transitions. However, it is often difficult for young children to share their special "treasures" with their classmates. We ask that all items brought to Giggles & Grace, from home, be placed in your child's cubby shortly after arrival. **Please clearly label all belongings brought from home.** It is recommended that child items of value, such as but not limited to, audio equipment or handheld gaming systems, be left at home due to the risk of damage or theft. Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged items. If toys from home become a continued problem in the classroom, we will ask parents to not allow their child to bring that specific toy(s).

Arrival and Departure

ARRIVAL

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center opens at 7:30 AM Monday through Friday except for holidays. **The Oregon Office of Child Care requires that a child be escorted into the Giggles & Grace Center, by a parent or guardian, as a child will only be accepted directly by the teacher/caregiver.** Children will be released only to the parent or a person, at least 16 years of age, whom the parent has authorized on the Child Enrollment and Authorization Form or is listed on their SmartCare account.

Parents, or other persons authorized to pick-up, MUST ENTER the child's, and or children's, code into the SmartCare app on the tablet near the media area when signing each child in or out. Each parent will be provided with a child specific code they assist in creating. **DO NOT ALLOW YOUR CHILDREN, OR ANYONE ELSE NOT AUTHORIZED ACCESS, TO ENTER YOUR CODE IN THE SMARTCARE APP.**

Furthermore, parents are encouraged to speak with a teacher in their child's classroom, if only briefly, to ensure the teacher is aware the child is present and update them on any matters pertaining to the child such as temperament that particular morning/day, how he/she slept the night before, whether he/she has eaten recently, or any other pertinent information.

Most children go through periods of difficulty with separating from their parent(s). This is common and developmentally appropriate. Try these tips for a successful drop-off:

- **Establish a regular and predictable routine.** Whether you give your child a kiss, hug, or help your child put his/her belongings in their cubby first before you go, do it the same way every time. What often makes separating stressful for children is uncertainty and a lack of routine. If your child can predict what will happen, separation issues are far less likely to occur on a regular basis.
- **Separate once from your child.** If you come back into the classroom repeatedly, it will increase your child's stress and possibly distract other children. Remember the moment of separation is the worst part for your child; thus, doing it more than once makes it more stressful for your child.
- **Be reliable for your child.** Pick-up when promised if possible. Children who are picked up later than expected may have more difficulties separating. Attempt to phrase time in terms your child will understand whenever possible. For example, you will be back after snack time or before nap time.

DEPARTURE

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center closes at 6:00 PM Monday through Friday except for holidays. We ask that all children be picked up by 6:00 PM sharp, to avoid a late charge of \$1.00 per minute over the allotted time. Moreover, the Infant/Toddler Classroom closes at 5:30 PM Monday through Friday. All infants/toddlers must be picked up by 5:30 PM sharp to avoid a late fee and or continue receiving child care. Late fee charges are in place to offset unexpected staffing cost, such as overtime, and to compensate our teachers for their time lost outside of work. However, Giggles & Grace does understand that emergencies and circumstances can occur that hinder a timely pick-up. With that being said, we ask that you keep a clear line of communication as they occur to allow us to work with you as best possible. If someone we are not familiar with is to pick-up your child in an emergency or extenuating circumstance, it is essential that you update your SmartCare account to make this possible. Also, an email or text confirmation from the parent/guardian of a child is also acceptable in this case. Lastly, please remind the authorized person that they will be asked for identification such as a driver's license to ensure your child's safety. Even if the individual has picked-up before, he or she may still need identification if the staff on site do not recognize them.

Be sure to check your child out of the SmartCare App and their classroom roster clipboard. Also, attempt to say good-bye to your child's teacher(s), once you have reunited with your child and are departing, so they know you are leaving with your child. At this point, Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center, Inc. is no longer responsible for your child. For safety reasons, please do not let your child run ahead of you inside or outside the building. Please do not allow your child to enter other classrooms unsupervised once they are in your care.

If parents do not arrive to pick-up their child from Giggles & Grace, staff members will first try to contact the parents using all phone numbers provided on the Child Enrollment & Authorization form in addition to the Emergency Medical Release. If parents are unable to be reached, staff members will then try to contact all other emergency contact persons. In the event the list of emergency contacts is depleted, after staff have made an effort to call each number at least once and without any contact made, the acting Executive Director will be notified and they will then notify the Department of Human Services and Ontario Police Department.

ATTENDANCE

Regular attendance is strongly encouraged for the benefit of the child as well as the classroom dynamics. If your child will be absent, please inform the Giggles & Grace office or your child's classroom. **An absence should be relayed via phone, text, or email the day before or by 8:00 AM on the date of absence, so your child's teacher may make accommodations to the lesson plan if needed and staffing can be adjusted.** In doing this, Giggles & Grace can ensure the best quality preschool experience for the classroom as a whole and keep your rates down.

If your child will be absent for an extended period of more than three days, the Giggles & Grace office must be notified in writing of the date the absence will begin and the expected date your child will return. Enrollment will be terminated if a child is absent for a period of two weeks or more, and no notice has been received or contact made by the family.

Health and Safety Policies

ILLNESS

Our top priorities at Giggles & Grace are to provide a healthy and safe learning environment for all children. A child will be sent home as soon as possible if a staff member observes an illness is preventing a child from participating comfortably in activities, illness results in a greater need for care than the staff can reasonably provide without compromising the health or safety of other children in the classroom and center, or a child is experiencing any of the following conditions:

- **Fever:** (100 degrees under the arm) accompanied by behavior changes or other signs/symptoms of illness; must be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of a fever reducer, to return to Giggles & Grace.
- **Diarrhea:** (not associated with diet changes or medication) until diarrhea stops or the continued diarrhea is deemed not to be infectious by a licensed healthcare professional.
- **Vomiting:** (two or more instances in past 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a healthcare provider determines the cause of vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration.
- **Pink Eye (conjunctivitis):** until after treatment has been initiated for 24 hours.
- **Head Lice or Nits:** until treatment has been completed and there are no nits.
- **Strep Throat:** until 24 hours after initial antibiotic treatment and cessation of fever without fever reducer.
- **Influenza A-C:** until 24 hours without fever, fever reducer, or any other medications to treat the illness.

- **Tuberculosis:** until a health care provider states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care.
- **Impetigo:** until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated.
- **Chicken Pox:** until all sores have dried and crusted (usually six days).
- **Pertussis:** until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment has been completed.
- **Mumps:** until nine days after onset of symptoms.
- **Hepatitis A Virus:** until one week after onset of illness.
- **Measles:** until four days after onset of rash.
- **Rubella:** until six days after onset of rash.
- **Herpes Simplex:** with uncontrollable drooling or other mouth sores unless a health care provider determines the sores are not contagious.
- Unspecified respiratory tract illness accompanied by another illness which requires exclusion.
- Persistent abdominal pain (continues more than two hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs/symptoms of illness.
- Rash with fever or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease.

A child who becomes ill while at Giggles & Grace must be removed from the classroom in order to limit exposure of other children to communicable disease(s). We will send a child home when they have a fever of 100 degrees under the arm, diarrhea, vomiting, pink eye or head lice. An ill child will be sent to the office to wait for his/her parent or guardian to arrive. For this reason, we ask families to make every effort to pick up a sick child as soon as possible.

Giggles & Grace reserves the right to make the final determination of exclusion due to illness. Any exceptions to our illness policy will require a written note from a licensed health care professional stating that the child is not contagious.

Please contact the Giggles & Grace office at (541) 889-6141 of a sick absence by 8:00 AM during the week or leave a message over the weekend.

NOTICE OF EXPOSURE & REPORTING DISEASE

If your child is exposed to a communicable disease, a notice will be posted in the classroom and or a letter will be given to you regarding the matter. If your child or anyone in your household becomes ill with a communicable disease, please notify the acting Executive Director immediately via phone.

In the event a child is reported to have a communicable disease, the Executive Director will notify the Malheur County Health Department for guidance in handling the situation.

HAND WASHING

Frequent hand washing with soap and warm running water is the most effective way to reduce and prevent the spread of illnesses commonly found in child care such as the flu, common cold, and pink eye. Parents are encouraged to assist their child in the hand washing process upon arrival. The following are a list of times your child, with the guidance of staff or assistance as age appropriate, will be expected to wash their hands:

- Upon arriving at the center or when changing classrooms
- After **each** diapering or using the toilet
- After handling bodily fluids (i.e. mucus, blood, or vomit)
- Before and after meal times
- Before and after administering medication
- Before and after using the sensory materials
- After coming indoors from the playground
- After assisting with classroom cleanup
- After handling pets and other animals

Warm, running water, no colder than 60 degrees Fahrenheit, and soap must be used. Hands must be rubbed vigorously for at least 20 seconds, including the backs of hands, between fingers, under nails, and under any jewelry or accessories. A disposable paper towel should be used to dry hands and turn off the faucet. Please help reinforce the importance of hand washing by encouraging frequent hand washing at home as well. If a child is too young to wash their hands themselves, staff will wash the children's hands for them.

MEDICATIONS

Prescription and over-the-counter medications must be given to a staff member in the original container, clearly labeled, with the child's full name, birth date, and valid expiration date. Giggles & Grace staff will not administer any medication without a signed Medication Authorization Form. Forms can be obtained from your child's teacher or from the office.

While in use at Giggles & Grace, medications are stored in a locked cabinet, or refrigerated if necessary, and accessible by staff only. A Medication Authorization Form must always be kept with the medication. Unused medications must be immediately returned to the family and will not be stored at Giggles & Grace.

Medications are administered only by Head Teachers, Office Manager, Executive Director, or Program Coordinator. When a medication is given, the teacher will document the type of medication administered, the dosage, and the time it was given along with their signature.

IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

Each child must have a current immunization record on file at the Giggles & Grace Center prior to their start date. Failure to provide up to date immunizations records will result in child care or preschool being delayed unless you have obtained an exemption and provided the necessary documentation. Thus, immunization records must be updated and shared with the office whenever a new immunization is received. Updated immunization records may be faxed to the Giggles & Grace office directly from your healthcare provider or you can bring in your child's current Immunization Record Card to the office. **The Giggles & Grace's fax number is (541) 889-6142**

DOCUMENTATION OF ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS

Staff members shall document accidents and incidents that occur at Giggles & Grace using an Accident/Incident Report. We document accidents such as, but not limited to, a slip, trip, or fall and incidents such as, but not limited to, biting, scratching, or hitting. For example, if a child bites and breaks the skin of another child, an Accident/Incident Report will be completed for both children. Although we use detail when explaining events in such reports, we do not include other children's name(s) besides the name of your child to maintain confidentiality. If the injury is serious or severe in nature, a parent or emergency contact will be called as soon as possible. The parent shall sign the report the same day as the incident or accident. A copy can be made available to the parent per their request. All Accident/Incident Reports must be given to the office to be placed in the child's permanent file.

DOCUMENTATION OF ALLERGIES

It is required that any allergies be included in the Child Enrollment Form when registering your child; additionally, any changes to a child, in regard, to allergies will require the office to be informed and changes made to the form mentioned above. If an allergy is food related, such allergies will be posted in the kitchen area via a Child Allergies Report to ensure a child is not served a food they are allergic to. If an allergy is environmental related, such allergies will be posted in the classroom via a Child Allergies Report to minimize exposure to allergies and prevent allergic reactions. In the event of an allergic reaction, staff will follow their CPR/First Aid Training. All allergic reactions must be documented in an Accident/Incident Report.

DOCUMENTATION OF SPECIAL HEALTH CARE NEEDS

A Shared Plan of Care will be on file for any child with special health care needs. A copy of the plan must be kept in the red classroom emergency binder. All staff working in the classroom must familiarize themselves with this such plans in an effort to prevent and or prepare for an emergency. If necessary, staff will receive training regarding a child's specific health care needs.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL/DENTAL PROCEDURE

It is important that parents complete and update, as needed, their child's Emergency Medical Release Form. This form contains contact information for both the parents as well as the individuals authorized to pick up the child in the event of illness or emergency. In addition, the form allows Giggles & Grace Learning Center, Inc. staff to seek emergency medical or dental care from authorized care providers in the event of a serious injury. **It is the responsibility of the parent to complete this form and to make corrections to this information when necessary.**

- If a child becomes ill or injured after arriving at the center, a Head Teacher will attempt to contact the parent(s) at all available telephone numbers provided to them. If a parent cannot be reached, the individuals listed as emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons on the Emergency Medical Release Form or in our SmartCare system will be called.

- Children who are ill or seriously injured will be sent to the office and remain under the supervision of the acting Executive Director until a parent arrives.

If the child requires immediate medical attention:

- The Giggles & Grace staff member, who witnessed the emergency, will remain with the injured child and instruct another staff member or volunteer to call 911. If no one is directly available, they will bring the child with them to call 911 if a head, neck, or back injury is not suspected.
- The Executive Director will contact the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the injured child once 911 has been dispatched.
- The staff member who witnessed the emergency will accompany the child to the hospital and take a Red Book with the child’s information and Emergency Medical Release Form.

All other emergencies will be handled through the Giggles & Grace Emergency Plan posted in each classroom such as a fire, shelter-in-place, or lock-down. This plan will be updated periodically as needed to ensure the utmost safety for the children we serve.

SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLANT

Between the months of March and October, all children 6 months and older, will have sunscreen applied before outdoor activities throughout the day. If a parent prefers to supply their own sunscreen, it must be SPF 15 or above and will be applied by classroom teachers as needed. The sunscreen cannot be in an aerosol can. Please label your child’s sunscreen with their first and last name. Parents are encouraged to apply insect repellent to their child before arriving at Giggles & Grace for the day. Giggles & Grace staff are not permitted to apply insect repellent unless a Medical Authorization Form has been completed and it has been provided by a parent or guardian.

VISITING ANIMALS

Visiting animals that are brought into the classroom must be carefully considered for their temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. No animal may be brought into Giggles & Grace Learning Center, Inc. without first notifying and receiving written permission from the Executive Director. Once approved, visiting animals must have documentation from a licensed veterinarian, or animal shelter, to show that the animal(s) is fully immunized and that the animal is suitable for contact with children. Parents and guardians will be informed two (2) weeks prior to the animals visit to the Center in writing. If a child handles an animal, they will immediately wash their hands after handling the animal with the assistance of staff.

MANDATORY CHILD ABUSE REPORTERS

As a certified child care center, Giggles & Grace Learning Center, Inc. staff are required to be mandatory child abuse and neglect reporters; thus, we must contact the Oregon Department of Human Services, or the Ontario Police Department, whenever abuse or neglect is suspected.

TOBACCO USE

Cigarettes, e-cigarettes, vapor pens, and smokeless tobacco products are prohibited on the Giggles & Grace premises, which include the sidewalks, parking lot area, and any other outdoor play areas.

ACCESS/VOLUNTEER POLICY

Aside from a parent, guardian, or authorized individual for child pick up, access to the children in the Center is only granted to Giggles & Grace staff members, subcontracted employees, education service partners, or documented volunteers. Furthermore, they must have a background check for approval to be involved with child care and counted in the ratio of staff to children. If a staff member is under the age of 18, a background will be conducted on their 18th birthday. In the interim, staff under the age of 18 are not allowed to be with children unsupervised.

As for volunteers, they are required to provide an application and sign in as a visitor on the clipboard next to the sign-in area. Most importantly, they will not be left alone with children nor counted in ratio.

Giggles & Grace staff will approach anyone, who is on the property of the Center and or St Paul Lutheran Church, without knowledge of whom they are to ask what their purpose is. If a staff member is not provided a valid answer or is unsure about the validity of the reason, the acting Executive Director or Program Coordinator will need to provide approval for the person to remain on site. If there appears to a potential for a dangerous situation, staff will call the Ontario Police Department immediately and 911 if necessary. Non-agency persons, as described in the first sentence of this section who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, or inspections, will be monitored by Giggles & Grace staff members.

A sex offender that has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor, even if the sex offender is a parent or guardian, is required to register with the state sex offender registry and shall not:

- Operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the Center.
- Be on the property of the Center, without written permission from the Giggles & Grace Executive Director and Board of Directors, for any reason except for the time reasonably necessary to transport the offender's own child to and from the Center if permitted by the law. The Executive Director and Board of Directors are not obligated to provide permission and must consult with the Ontario Police Department and DHS if applicable prior to providing written permission outside of the law or a court order.

AFFIDAVIT POLICY

At times, the families Giggles & Grace serves may be dealing with difficult homelife situations. When legal matters are present in the home, families may need to collect affidavits from their legal team. Due to the nature of the relationship between a caregiver and child, families may choose to ask a Giggles & Grace Learning Center, Inc. staff member to provide such a statement. As a part of our Mission, we seek to provide the best possible care when children are away from home. Our focus will remain on the child and making sure all their needs are met during child care. However, Giggles & Grace Learning Center, Inc. staff members will not provide written statements or affidavits of a professional nature.

Parent Communication and Participation

NEW FAMILY ORIENTATION

Each family is strongly encouraged to schedule a time with the Executive Director, and or Head Teacher, to complete an orientation. This orientation is a great time for parents or guardians to ask questions and provide input prior to the start date of care. The Enrollment Packet, Office of Child Care Rules & Regulations for Certified Centers, and Giggles & Grace policies and procedures will be reviewed at this time as needed per parent or guardian questions. The Enrollment Packet is a mandatory requirement before child care or preschool services can be rendered. Typically, this orientation is scheduled at least one week prior to the first day of care.

LETTERS & SURVEYS

Letters and or surveys will regularly be provided to parents or guardians via children's cubbies to provide updates or gather input. Returned surveys are greatly appreciated as the feedback assists in the way services are rendered, changed, or if and how certain events will be conducted. **The biggest event of the year is our annual fundraiser Fall Fun Fest. It is a family event that takes place on the first Thursday of October and proceeds go directly back to the children in specified ways from year to year.**

ROOM TRANSITIONS

A child will transition to a new classroom when they have reached the appropriate age to do so. As the time for a transition to a new room approaches, a meeting will be provided or conducted. Both the child's current and future teacher will be available to address any questions or concerns you have during the transition process. Before the transition into a new classroom has been completed, parents or guardians are encouraged to schedule a meeting with the new teacher in order to familiarize themselves with the new classroom setting and curriculum. **Children turning four will not transition until the following fall.**

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parent participation is strongly encouraged in our programs! The following are a list of potential opportunities to participate and contribute to your child's learning experience:

- Volunteering in your child's classroom
- Assisting with special projects
- Eating lunch or snack with your child
- Field trip supervision
- Kindergarten Readiness Program
- Fall Fun Fest

Please note that such opportunities must be scheduled at least one week in advance to allow for the necessary paperwork to be completed and for adequate accommodations to be made.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-teacher conferences will be conducted once a year for Red Birds or available upon request and conducted each time your child transitions classrooms. The goal of the parent-teacher conference is to gain insight into a child's development both in the center setting as well as the home setting. During conferences, a child's development and any desired or necessary goals for that child will be discussed. Parents and guardians are encouraged to request conferences whenever they feel it necessary.

Fees and Billing Policies

FINANCIAL AGREEMENT

Upon enrollment and any changes to services or tuition, families are provided a Financial Agreement Contract. This agreement should be carefully reviewed and checked for errors prior to signing. Once the agreement is finalized, it is a legally binding contract and will be carried out as such.

MONTHLY STATEMENTS

Statements will be issued on the 25th of each month. All tuition is **due in advance of services from the 1st through the 10th of each month**. Any other arrangements need to be made through the Executive Director or Office Manager. **A \$15.00 late fee will be added after the 10th of the month.** Care may be terminated after 30 days of non-payment and a strict payment plan will be implemented.

REGISTRATION FEE

There will be a \$50.00 registration fee charged for the first child enrolled within an immediate family. Each additional child will be charged \$35.00.

MONTHLY RATES

Fees	January 1, 2020	January 1, 2020
	1st Child	2nd Child
Monthly (More than 3 days/week)	\$500	\$475
Monthly: 13 days /week	\$470	\$440
Daily Rate (Includes 2 meals, and is to be used if less than 13 days/month)	\$32	\$28
Half Day (Includes 1 meal)	\$25	\$22
*Infant (6 weeks)-Toddler	\$625	
Preschool (Flat Rate)	\$212	
Before & After School	\$208	\$192
After School	\$185	\$168
Before School	\$162	\$146
Registration Fee (One Time Cost)	\$50	\$35
Potty Training Fee applicable for 3 and over (\$25 increase every two months)	\$50-100	\$50-100

**School fees are a flat rate fee. If a child attends on a no school day, an additional daily rate will be charged. No School days are charged the following month.*

PRESCHOOL ONLY MONTHLY FEE

Preschool M-TR	\$212.00
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LATE PICK-UP FEE

Giggles & Grace Early Learning Center location closes at 6:00PM on Monday through Friday. Parents will be charged **\$1.00 for each minute** a child is present after 6:00PM in the Center. Infant/Toddler Room closes at 5:30 PM. The Parents will be charged **\$1.00 for each minute** a child is present after 5:30 PM in the Infant/Toddler Room. Teachers or staff will record late fees for processing in the Business Office. The late pick-up fee will be added to the account of the parent or guardian, of the child picked up late, and included in the next statement. Frequent late pick-ups may result in termination of child care services.

RETURNED CHECKS/INSUFFICIENT FUNDS

Returned checks rejected or card payments declined, due to insufficient funds, will be charged a **\$25.00 penalty**. Missed payments and late fees must be paid within 2 weeks of the first attempt to make payment. Repeated incidents of returned checks or card payments declined, due to insufficient funds, may result in termination of child care services. The process of a payment plan will need to be implemented, via an updated Parent Financial Agreement, if a family is having trouble making tuition payments on time. This process can be completed through the Business Office.

DELINQUENT ACCOUNTS

Families that are 30 days behind or more in payments may have their child care services terminated at any time without notice. For information about assistance programs that will help cover the cost of child care tuition, please speak with the Business Office. A payment plan must be mutually agreed upon between family and Center and followed before an account will be considered “in good standing” and no longer in jeopardy of termination.

Holidays and Vacation

HOLIDAYS

Giggles & Grace will be closed in observance of the following holidays:

<i>New Year's Day</i>	<i>Memorial Day</i>	<i>Independence Day</i>
<i>Labor Day</i>	<i>Thanksgiving (2 days)</i>	<i>Christmas (2 days)</i>

If the holiday falls on a weekend day, Giggles & Grace will close during the week. For example, if New Year's Day falls on a Saturday, Giggles & Grace may close on Friday or Monday. Families will be given one month's notice in the event of additional closure dates without regard to inclement weather conditions, such as Snowmageddon 2017, random acts of God, or safety concerns. Due to training requirements imposed by the Office of Child Care and to ensure Giggles & Grace staff continue to further their education practice and knowledge of early child care, the Center may impose two training closure dates, of our choice, in a calendar year. However, a month's notice will be given to families as stated above.

Termination of Care

QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

If you have a question or concern, do not hesitate to bring it to the attention of the teacher and staff member most directly involved. If the concern is not resolved, you must follow the Parent Concern/Complaint Policy posted in each classroom.

Giggles & Grace reserves the rights to terminate care at any time on a case by case basis. All considerations for termination will be brought to the Giggles & Grace Board of Directors for a final determination. If you are terminating care, we require a two-week paid notice. The notice must be in writing and include when your child's last day will be.

Guidance Strategies

Every adult whom cares for children has a responsibility to guide, correct, and socialize children toward appropriate behaviors. These adult actions often are called child guidance and discipline. Positive guidance and discipline are critically important to children because they promote self-control, teach them responsibility, and lead to thoughtful choices by children. As a caregiver, the more effective one is at encouraging appropriate child behavior the less time and effort they will spend correcting children's misbehavior. This in turn will allow for more time to focus on various areas of child growth and development.

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 acknowledges the child's efforts and progress, no matter how slow or small, are likely to encourage healthy child development. Teaching children self-discipline is a demanding task. It requires patience, thoughtful attention, cooperation, and a good understanding of the child. Giggles & Grace staff will **only** use positive guidance techniques. There will absolutely be no physical discipline used by Giggles & Grace staff.

When interacting with young children, staff should ask themselves the following questions:

“Am I...”

- Validating feelings?
- Asking open ended questions?
- Encouraging problem solving?
- Respecting choices?
- Using praise and positive reinforcement?
- Talking with children and not at them?
- At eye level?
- Circulating throughout the classroom?

PREVENTING MISBEHAVIOR

Child misbehavior is impossible to prevent completely. Children, usually curious and endlessly creative, are likely to do things parents and other caregivers did not expect. However, there are many positive steps caregivers can take to help prevent misbehavior.

- Set clear and consistent rules such as walking feet or gentle touches.
- Make certain the environment is safe and as stress-free as possible.
- Show interest in the child's activities by participating in them with children so they stay engaged for longer periods of time.
- Encourage self-control and independence by providing meaningful choices.
- Focus on the desired behavior rather than the one to be avoided.
- Build children's images of themselves as being trustworthy, responsible, and cooperative.
- Give clear directions.
- Say "Yes" whenever possible.
- Notice and pay attention to children when they do things right.
- Encourage children often and generously.
- Set a good example in being a good role model and mentor.
- Help children see how their actions affect others.

RESPONDING TO MISBEHAVIOR

Below are strategies Giggles & Grace staff will use to respond to child misbehavior. Moreover, it is always a good idea if rules are fully explained and clearly understood to mitigate misbehavior. Whenever possible, involve children in making the rules for the classroom to set them up for success.

- **Redirection**
This strategy should be used most frequently when working with children. If a child is not following the rules or being uncooperative, quickly get the child's attention and introduce another activity. For example, "Peggy, please help me water the flowers now. You've been riding the tricycle for a long time and it's now Shawn's turn."
- **Logical consequences**
These are structured consequences that follow specific misbehaviors. The child should be able to see how the behavior and the consequence are directly related. For example, if you lean your chair backwards at lunch, you might fall and get hurt.

- **Participate in the solution**
If a child damages property that is not theirs, he/she needs to help in fixing it or in cleaning up the mess they have created. If a child causes someone distress, he/she should help in relieving the stress. For example, "It made James very sad when you told him he wasn't your friend anymore. Please come apologize and help me make him feel better."
- **Natural consequences**
Allowing children to experience the consequences of their behavior is known as a cause and effect manner of learning. For instance, Laura does not put her books back in her school bag after she finishes reading. One day she loses a book, and therefore must find a way to replace it. *Only use natural consequences when they will not endanger the child's health or safety.*
- **"Time away" or "Quiet area"**
In some instances, a child may need to be removed from a situation in which he/she has become overstimulated or violent. The child should be directed to "time away" or sit in the "quiet area." This strategy gives the child a chance to calm down, regain control, process the situation, and independently reflect quietly upon his/her behavior. Once the child has calmed down, staff should talk with the child about the actions that led up to and resulted in needing time away or to visit a quiet area. For example, "Delilah, we have talked often about how hitting is not acceptable. You hit Sam. Please leave play time and go to a quiet area. I will talk to you when you are ready and have control over your actions."

If these actions do not impact a child's behavior, in a positive manner, the following will take place:

1. Staff will report behavior and what strategies have been attempted to the Executive Director.
2. The Executive Director will observe the child and meet with the Head Teacher to develop a Behavior Support Plan (BSP).
3. The BSP will be discussed with the parent and then put into practice.
4. The Executive Director, Head Teacher, supporting staff, and parents will evaluate the BSP. If needed, adjustments will be made.

*** If a child's behavior becomes threatening to themselves, other children, staff, or teachers, the child will be removed from the classroom or program as needed.*

USEFUL PHRASES

The following phrases are useful when problem-solving with children.

Instead of Say	"No" or "Don't"
	"Please stop", "I don't like that", "That's not OK", or "That is not a choice"
Instead of Say	"That's not nice"
	"That's not OK", "Please use gentle touches", or "That hurts"
Instead of Say	"No running"
	"I need you to use your walking feet" or "You may run when we go outside"
Instead of Say	"Stop crying"
	"I need you to use your words to tell me what is wrong"
Instead of Say	"Can you put away your toys?" (If it is not a choice, do not pose it as a question)
	"You may help me pick up these toys or help put away another play station with your classmates"
Instead of Say	"I said yes" (when a child tells you "no")
	"No is not a choice, I need you to..."

Biting Policy

Biting is a behavior that usually occurs most often 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 child care environment. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, sensory exploration, cause and effect, mimicking, crowding, seeking attention, frustration, stress, and overstimulation. Biting is not something to blame on children. There are a variety of strategies we implement at Giggles & Grace to prevent and stop biting from frequently occurring. The process below is to be followed when a child is biting:

- The biting child is removed from other children and told, "You don't bite others. Biting hurts" in a firm voice. Teachers should remain calm, being careful not to show frustration towards the child.

- The biting child is removed from the situation. Depending upon the observed motive that led to the biting, the separation may include redirection or meeting the child's needs. Minimize attention on the biting child, to avoid reinforcing the behavior for attention seeking purposes.
- Appropriate first aid will be provided to the child who was bitten. The bite(s) will be washed with soap, water, and a cold compress will be applied to reduce pain and swelling. A bandage will be applied if necessary.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Teachers 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 could be communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, routine changes, or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start implementing supports. Below are the steps a teacher will take to identify triggers and replace the behavior:

1. The teacher 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 manipulatives?
 - Was there too little to do or too much going on?
 - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she was seeking?
 - Was there a power struggle?
2. The teacher will adapt the environment, routines, or activities if necessary.
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts or frustrations in more appropriate ways
4. The teacher will observe the child to get an idea of why and when, the antecedent, they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.
6. The teacher, parent, and Executive Director will meet regularly to regulate a behavioral action plan and measure outcomes.
7. If biting continues, the teacher 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 or outside the organization. In addition, biting is always documented in an Incident/Accident Report which is completed and signed by a teacher and parent. A copy is provided to the parent and the original kept in the child's permanent enrollment file in the G&G office.

Plan for Addressing Challenging Behaviors

Addressing challenging behaviors in the classroom requires three tiers of prevention and intervention supports.

- **Tier I: Implementing universal practices/strategies- Assessing Behavioral Support in Early Childhood Settings.** The first tier involves establishing universal practices to support and promote emotional and social development for all children. Practices include promoting positive relationships, setting up supportive environments, and providing instruction on emotional literacy, regulating emotions and problem solving.
- **Tier II: Collecting Data and Implementing targeted strategies.** The second tier involves targeted support for children with emotional and social developmental delays or other risk factors who need more practice and assistance in order to understand emotions and learn and apply social skills. At the second tier, having staff and families come together to gather data to describe children's challenging behavior in order to

identify specific skills and situations that require more attention and specific strategies to improve behavior.

- **Tier III: Planning the Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Support Plan.** The third tier of supports are implemented when children continue to exhibit challenging behaviors after the first two tiers of practice have been implemented to fidelity. At the third tier, a 'behavior support team' assembles to conduct a "functional behavior assessment,' including a review of the data collected at the second tier and other information that describes the antecedent, contextual events, and consequences of persistent challenging behavior. With this information, the team develops a 'behavior support plan' which includes specific strategies for replacing the challenging behavior, assuring that the challenging behavior is not inadvertently rewarded, and eliminating or decreasing triggers associated with the challenging behavior.

Giggles and Grace Early Learning Center will have in place a written plan and set of procedures so that teaching staff and administrators will know what to do when challenging behaviors occur. Written plans should include the specific procedures to be implemented, including documentation that procedures have been followed, at each tier of the three-tiered framework. All teaching staff should review and understand the program-wide plan for addressing behaviors so that they will be aware of the process, recommended strategies, and plan for communicating a need for support.

The purpose of this document is to develop consistent practices and procedures when addressing challenging behaviors (see definition) in preschool setting. To successfully implement a plan for addressing challenging behaviors, teaching staff in preschool programs and the preschool program must have established program-wide behavior support team. The behavior support team is responsible for taking the lead in assuring that the program wide plan for addressing challenging behaviors is implemented. A behavior support team should include a member or members who provide initial consultation to a teacher once a persistent challenging behavior is identified and give guidance and support for conducting a functional behavior assessment if the need arises. All teaching staff should review and understand the program-wide plan for addressing challenging behaviors so they will be aware of the process, recommended strategies, and plan for communicating need for support. It is important to emphasize that throughout the process of addressing the challenging behaviors, teaching staff/ or the behavior support team must be in close communication with the families involved so the families are well informed and can offer their own information strategies, and data to support the process.

Program Wide Support Team for Giggles and Grace Early Learning Center:

- Traci Duff (**Site Coordinator**)- (208)-739-2641; tracigigglegrace@gmail.com
- Corina Perez (**Education Coordinator**) -(541)-216-3059; corinapgigglegrace@gmail.com

What is challenging behavior?

Any repeated pattern of behavior, or perception of behavior, that interferes with or is at risk of interfering with optimal learning or engagement in pro-social interactions with peers and adults, that put a child at high risk for later social problems or school failure. Challenging behavior is thus defined based on its effects. While some children's challenging behaviors are developmentally or culturally or normative and effectively addressed by adult vigilance and the use of appropriate guidance procedures, other children need more targeted evidence-based practices (Tier II) to prevent and/or address challenging behaviors that are persistent or unresponsive to universal evidence-based approaches.

Examples of persistent challenging behaviors for preschool children may include: (1) physical aggression such as hitting, kicking, punching, spitting, throwing objects forcefully, pinching, pushing, and biting; (2) climbing on things in the classroom that are not permitted; (3) destroying property, destroying what another child is working on regardless of the other child's response; (4) taking toys away from another child forcefully; (5) running that poses a safety risk for the child or others or elopement from the classroom; (6) tantrum behaviors that might include behaviors such as kicking, screaming, pushing an object or person, stomping feet, or head banging; (7) verbal aggression including yelling, threats, screaming at another person, calling children bad names, and saying bad words; (8) ordering an adult to do something (e.g., "leave me alone"); (9) persistent or prolonged crying that is loud and disruptive or ongoing crying that interferes with the child's engagement in activities; (10) inappropriate use of materials (e.g., jumping off chairs, slamming materials, throwing objects.); (11) statements that are noncompliant (e.g., "I am not going to do it") or clear and explicit verbal or physical refusal to follow directions. (12) inappropriate touching, stripping, and other behaviors that are hurtful, disruptive or dangerous to self or others.

For infants and toddlers, challenging behavior must be considered within the context of the relationship of the child caregivers. Behavior that is challenging, for an example, may manifest as attachment difficulties, sleeping and eating difficulties, excessive crying, and difficulty soothing. Challenging behaviors may be defined as behaviors that interfere with the development as behaviors that interfere with the development and maintenance of reciprocal, positive and nurturing relationships with the parent or caregiver.

What is a program-wide behavior support team?

A behavior support team consists of people who are responsible for taking the lead in assuring that the program-wide plan for addressing challenging behaviors is implemented. Suggested members include education coordinators, Exceptional Children Program directors, childcare program directors, principals, professionals with behavior expertise, such as behavior specialists, psychologists, social workers, etc., resource professionals, teacher, and any other key stakeholders.

- Miranda Spivey (**Program Coordinator Site 2**) -541-889-5325 Ext 1535; mirandagigglegrace@gmail.com
- Shawn Reynolds (**Executive Director**)-541-889-6141 gigglegraceoffice@gmail.com

Behavior Support Team Members Conducting Functional Behavior Assessments (FBAs) – if the need arises at the third of support:

Traci Duff (**Site Coordinator**)- (208)-739-2641; tracigigglegrace@gmail.com

Corina Perez (**Education Coordinator**) -(541)-216-3059; corinapgigglegrace@gmail.com

Tier I: Implementing Universal Practices/Strategies

The best way to prevent serious and persistent challenging behaviors is to implement a tiered framework of prevention and intervention practices and strategies. In the Social-Emotional Foundations for Early Education model, this framework has three tiers. Implementing strategies at each tier of the model with fidelity greatly decreases the occurrence of out of control behavior. The first tier involves establishing universal positive relationships, setting up supportive environments, and providing instruction on emotional literacy, regulating emotions, and problem solving. Once a teaching staff member identifies a need for support with responding to challenging behaviors, he/she will complete a self-assessment using the *Preliminary Pyramid Assessment* (PPA) checklist (See Attachment I: Preliminary Pyramid Assessment). Teaching staff will also consult with Education Coordinator or another identified member of the program-wide behavior support team. This support person will work with the teaching staff to develop a **precision statement** of challenging behavior and schedule time to observe the classroom using the PPA checklist. After the observation, the support person will develop a plan for support which may include training, coaching support, consultation, or other strategies and will follow up to determine the effectiveness of the support. The support person will also view and discuss the **Classroom Behavior Record** and the **Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report** with the teaching staff. IF the child has an IFSP, the IFSP team must be involved once the challenging behaviors persist so they can follow established guidelines and procedural safeguards for reviewing and updating the IFSP accordingly.

What is a precision statement of challenging behavior?

In order to begin the process of addressing challenging behavior, the behavior needs to be clearly defined. The guidance for developing a precision statement for problem behavior can be used to clearly define and communicate the behavior. (See Attachment II: *Developing Precision Statement for Problem Behavior*.)

What is the Classroom Behavior Record?

The classroom behavior record is used to record data for children who have been identified as needing Tier II interventions. It is a data collection tool that helps to measure the occurrence of challenging behaviors and track progress once targeted strategies are implemented to address the behaviors. See Attachment III: Classroom Behavior Record.

Why is the Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report reviewed at the beginning of the process?

Although it is rare for a child in a preschool program to be suspended, it is important to review the Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report Form and note strategies implemented to address challenging behavior throughout the process. In the event that a child is suspended, the documentation of strategies used to prevent suspension will

Tier II: Collecting Data and Implementing Targeted Strategies

The second tier involves providing targeted support to children who need more practice and assistance with learning and applying emotional and social skills. The children who tend to fall within the second tier usually have emotional and social developmental delays or are have other risk factors that lead to displaying challenging behavior. At the second tier, teaching staff and families work together to gather data on challenging behavior in order to identify specific skills and situations that require more attention and specific strategies for improving challenging behavior for a period of at least six weeks. As part of data collection, teaching staff should continue to use the Classroom Behavior record and Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report to document persisting behavior and strategies used to address behavior. If the child has an IFSP, the IFSP team must be involved so they can follow established guidelines and procedural safeguards for reviewing and updating the IFSP accordingly.

What data needs to be collected at the second tier?

Observation data will need to be gathered to identify possible triggers for behavior and identify skills needing more direct instruction, targeted support, and progress monitoring. The Classroom Behavior record and Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report should also continue to be used to document behavior observed and strategies implemented and to note progress or changes over time. If a child has an IFSP, the IFSP team should be consulted to determine any other necessary data collection.

What are some ways in which families can be involved with data collection and implementing strategies to improve behavior?

Families can help with data collection by noting occurrences of challenging behavior and strategies implemented in the home and community settings and by tracking any progress or changes. Families can be valuable resources when developing strategies to address behavior by providing examples of what works in the home and community,

Giggles and Grace staff will collect, and record data as challenging behaviors persist even when the universal strategies have been implemented at tier one. Giggles and Grace staff will collect data using the behavioral logs and record characteristics of challenging classroom behavior and track effectiveness of strategies. Behavioral logs may be given to families, to help record behavior in the home setting. If the child has an IFSP, the child's IFSP team should be consulted to determine any other necessary data collection.

Giggles and Grace staff will receive ongoing support from the Behavioral Support team as he/she collects data, identifies skills and situations requiring more attention and targeted instruction, and implements strategies.

Updates and progress will be shared with the program- wide behavior support team in a scheduled monthly meeting, unless sooner updates are needed.

Tier III: Planning the Functional Behavior Assessment and Behavior Support Plan

The third tier includes children who display persistent challenging behaviors even after the first two tiers have been implemented to fidelity. At the third tier, the behavior support team assembles to plan a functional assessment of the behavior which includes a review of the data collected at the second tier and other relevant information related to the antecedent, contextual events, and consequences of persistent challenging behavior. This information is used to develop a behavior support plan which includes specific strategies for replacing the challenging behavior, assures challenging behavior is not inadvertently rewarded, and eliminates or decreases triggers associated with the challenging behavior. Community mental health resources available to the child and family should be explored and shared with the family. An individual or individuals with behavioral expertise should be identified for coaching staff and families throughout the process of developing individualized intensive interventions for children in need of behavior support plans. If the child has an IFSP, the IFSP team must be involved once challenging behaviors persist so they can follow established guidelines and procedural safeguards for reviewing and updating the IFSP accordingly. As part of data collection, teaching staff should continue to use the Classroom Behavior Record and Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report to document persisting behavior and strategies used to address behavior.

How does data collected during the second tier inform planning at the third tier?

All the data collected at Tier II can be used to inform the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA) that occurs at Tier III. By collecting data throughout the process, the FBA can often be a more streamlined process since the data collected includes information on the challenging behavior and strategies that have been implemented up

Safety Plan for Dangerous Behavior and Considerations for Suspension and Expulsion

Even with the implementation of strategies at each tier, it is possible that very serious, violent, out-of-control behavior can occur. When this happens, the safety of all children must be protected by attempting to deescalate the violent, out of control behavior. The teaching staff should maintain a calm, quiet and supportive tone and may eye contact with the child while positioning him/herself so that the child can't run away or hurt others. He or she should validate and name the child's emotional state and provide clear directions about what to do next. If the child does not respond to verbal support and directions and is displaying aggressive, harmful behavior, it may be necessary to remove other children so that they are at a safe distance while the teacher continues to stay close to the child and offer support to calm him or her.

Usually, teaching staff can deescalate potentially harmful, dangerous, or destructive behavior through positioning themselves, guiding and/or assisting the child using gentle touch, or blocking off and rearranging the area around the child so that no one can get hurt. In rare cases, the dangerous behavior may persist, and the teaching staff must use restraint in order to keep the child and/or others around the child safe from immediate danger. Restraint should rarely be used and only be used when the child or others near the child are in immediate danger of being injured. The purpose of the restraint is to protect the child and help the child calm. It is not to be used for the purpose of forcing a child into a certain position or to be used as a form of punishment. The **Safety-First** curriculum developed in Oregon provides clear instruction and guidance on first response strategies to use before using restraint and a four-step process for providing restraint and a four-step process for providing restraint called the **LEAD** process. Teaching staff should be trained and certified before using restraint. Anytime restraint is used, the incident must be documented and reported to the behavior support team and the family immediately.

A meeting will also be scheduled to review the incident and revise the behavior support plan and/or IFSP, if needed. If the child does not already have a behavior support plan, the behavior support team should complete a functional behavior assessment and develop a behavior support team. The Giggles and Grace teacher should contact the Education Coordinator and/or the Executive Director and request to convene a meeting of the behavior support team and the team should complete a functional assessment and develop a behavior support plan. If a child has an IFSP, the IFSP team must be involved in all communication and planning so they can follow established guidelines and procedural safeguards for reviewing and updating the IFSP accordingly.

In very severe cases, when a child persists in exhibiting serious challenging behavior that is likely to harm him or herself or others even after the above strategies have been implemented over time, the behavior support team will review the information noted on the Early Childhood Behavioral Engagement Report and discuss whether or not suspension or expulsion is necessary. If the child has an IFSP, this discussion should include the IDSP team which will then decide how to proceed. These cases should be rare.

What does LEAD stand for?

Label the behavior by acknowledging the child's emotions (e.g., "You are feeling angry. You are mad at Sally and you want to hurt her")

ENVELOP the child in a temporary, supportive restraint to provide protection and to contain and stabilize the child's disruptions (e.g. "I need to help you be safe"). For example, an adult might do this by standing behind the child, wrapping her arms around the child's chest, walking backwards to a wall, and gently sliding down the wall while holding the child until both adult and child are in a sitting position.

Assist the child to calm down (e.g., "I'll let you go when your body is quiet, and you can stop hitting and yelling")

Debrief and Direct the child to return to the group in a manner reflecting self-control