Footsteps Child Care, Inc.
Serving the community since 1994

FAMILY HANDBOOK 2026-2027

INFANT-TODDLER-PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS

Including General Child Care and Development (CCTR) and California State Preschool Program (CSPP) Information

FOOTSTEPS CHILD CARE, INC.
Administrative Office & Mailing Address
374 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002

Phone	**650-610-0715**	**Fax**	**650-683-1592**
Email	**office@footstepschildcare.org**		
Website	**footstepschildcare.org**		
License	**410518969**	**Tax ID**	**94-3206278**

***Updated** 9/18/2026*

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FOOTSTEPS CHILD CARE DIRECTORY

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. Administrative Office
Office 374 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002
Direct Line 650.610.0715 **Fax** 650.683.1592
Website www.footstepschildcare.org **Email** office@footstepschildcare.org

Karen Haas-Foletta - Executive Director
Lori Ottolini Geno – Deputy Director
Christine Rudolph – Director of Human Resources
Stephen Finn – Director of Programs
Nick Foletta – Director of Finance
Dr. Nili Luo – Quality Program Director
Kenzie Bauer – Human Resources Coordinator
Trisha Valbusa – Payroll Administrator
Javier Munoz – Enrollment Coordinator

Footsteps Child Care Programs

CIPRIANI SITE	**650.592.3262**	**Hours: 7:00-9:00 AM & 12:30-6:15 PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**License # 410518969**	
Chris Geno	**Site Director**	**chris.geno@footstepschildcare.org**			
Darlene Luna	**Assistant Director**	**darlene.luna@footstepschildcare.org**		**2525 Buena Vista Avenue 94002**	
Chris Bates	**Assistant Director**	**chris.bates@footstepschildcare.org**			
				Head Teacher: Jamie Madiagn	
NESBIT SITE	**650.592.0522**	**Hours: 7:00-9:00 AM & 12:30-6:15 PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**License # 414001160**	
Cnotra Nichols	**Site Director**	**cnotra.nichols@footstepschildcare.org**		**500 Biddulph Way 94002**	
JR Pablo	**Site Director**	**jr.pablo@footstepschildcare.org**			
				Head Teacher: Dany Tobar	
SHORES SITE	**650.394.4123**	**Hours: 7:00-9:00 AM & 12:30-6:15 PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**License # 414002640**	
Christian Castillo	**Site Director**	**christian.castillo@footstepschildcare.org**		**225 Shearwater Parkway Redwood City 94065**	
Brandy Bennett	**Assistant Director**			**Head Teacher: Caroline Finn**	
BARRETT SITE	**650.594.9654**	**Hours: 7:00-9:00 AM & 12:30-6:15 PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**California Heritage School-Spanish**	
Stephen Ish	**Site Director**	**steve.ish@footstepschildcare.org**		**1835 Belburn Drive 94002**	
				Head Teacher: Yesenia Andrade	
PUMA CUBS	**650.226.3356**	**Hours: 7:30AM-6:00 PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**License I/T 414001948**	**License # Preschool 414001947**
Dedra McFarland	**Site Director**	**dedra.mcfarland@footstepschldcare.org**		**500 Biddulph Street Belmont 94002**	
Mimi Casillas	**Assistant Director**	**mimi.casillas@footstepschildcare.org**			
				Head Teacher: Lourdes Lopez	
REDWOOD CREEK	**650.362.3132**	**Hours: 7:45AM-5:30PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**License I/T 414004780**	**License # Preschool 414004779**
Jennifer Foletta	**Site Director**	**jennifer.foletta@footstepschildcare.org**		**715 Bradford Street Redwood City 94063**	
				Head Teacher: Hiri Gonzalez-Contreras	
LITTLE FOOTSTEPS	**650.389.2616**	**Hours: 7:30AM-6:00PM**	**Monday - Friday**	**License # 414004607**	
Graciela Padilla	**Site Director**	**graciela.padilla@footstepschildcare.org**		**1501 S El Camino Real San Mateo 94402**	

WELCOME TO FOOTSTEPS CHILD CARE, INC.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, welcome! We share a common goal - quality programming - creating a safe, trusting, and challenging environment where children are encouraged to pursue new and familiar interests, develop friendships, grow in confidence and independence, and continue to develop respect for themselves and others. Footsteps Child Care, Inc. offers safe, supervised, quality care, designed to meet the developmental, cultural, and social needs of the children and youth enrolled.

Footsteps operates seven infant, toddler, preschool, and school-age programs in the local communities of Belmont, San Mateo, Redwood City, and Redwood Shores. We are a private, non-profit corporation governed by an Executive Board of Directors composed of parents or guardians and community members.

MISSION STATEMENT

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. provides infants, children, youth, and their families quality programs in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment, through caring and professional staff and family involvement.

PROGRAM GOALS AND PHILOSOPHY

Footsteps Child Care's philosophy and approach is based on research and best practices, which includes play-based curriculum, child, teacher, and family-initiated experiences, continuity of care and consistency in routines. The heart of our programs is the belief of respect for children, families and their point of view.

- We believe children learn through play, exploration, and discovery. We have an integrated approach to our play-based curriculum, focusing on children's development and emerging interests.
- We support and enhance a child's learning day by providing and creating opportunities for children and youth to learn and experience new things through physical activity, social experience, hands-on participatory activity, and choice.
- The curriculum includes a variety of age and developmentally appropriate group and individual activities, both structured and unstructured.
- The program provides the children with the space and time to discover and learn and practice new skills.
- We believe the staff enhance children's play in the role of facilitator, guide, partners, and initiators.

We provide the children and youth with supportive and encouraging staff, striving to assist children in developing and maintaining a positive self-image and encourage children to take responsibility for themselves and their actions while learning social skills, such as problem solving and cooperation with others.

We achieve this through the following objectives:

- Create a Safe and Nurturing Learning Environment: Provide a welcoming, healthy, and secure space that fosters a sense of belonging and confidence, including access to daily breakfast, lunch, and snacks.
- Promote Holistic Child Development: Implement a developmentally appropriate, play-based curriculum that supports children's physical, cognitive, social, and emotional growth.
- Ensure School Readiness: Prepare children for success in kindergarten through a curriculum aligned with the California Preschool Learning Foundations.
- Provide Comprehensive Support Services: Offer nutritious meals and snacks while connecting families to community-based health and social services.
- Advance Inclusion, Equity, and Early Intervention: Ensure access to inclusive education for children with special needs and provide support for dual language learners.
- Support Working Families and Self-Sufficiency: Deliver affordable, full-day, full-year childcare that enables parents to work, pursue training, or seek employment, with a focus on low-income families.
- Foster Family Engagement and Support: Empower families through education, resources, referrals, and opportunities to participate in the classroom or serve on advisory committees.

- This handbook outlines the partnership we want to have with each family enrolled in our programs by identifying what to expect, and what is expected from you at our Footsteps Child Care, Inc. Preschool and School Age Program Sites. If, after reading this handbook and attending the orientation, you have additional questions, please contact us so we can answer your questions.
- This Family Handbook, along with your signed enrollment and financial agreement, outlines that you have agreed to abide by Footsteps Child Care policies, procedures, and program requirements.

ADMISSION POLICY

We want families to feel welcome and to understand the organization and its program policies, so we do have an enrollment process and orientation process required by parent or guardian before your child attends to adhere to Community Care Licensing requirements, including attending a formal orientation (online or in-person) and submitting a completed Admission packet including gathering necessary immunizations, TB test results, completed health and safety forms, and signed agreements for all enrolled children.

The enrollment process includes these steps

1. Complete the Enrollment & Waitlist Information Form available on the website, footstepschildcare.org, or Administrative office or program site.
2. Tour of the program
3. Once a space has been offered complete the Enrollment Packet, including Community Care Licensing forms and State Subsidized Forms if applicable.
4. Program Visit – We encourage families, if their schedule allows, to include time for the child and parent/guardian to spend in the classroom and if possible, have a separate time for the child to visit with the class while the parent/guardian meets with the Site Director for the family orientation session. These sessions are arranged to a family's scheduled and availability but does not preclude enrollment.

- We want every child and their family to feel welcome and for your child to have the best opportunities for growth and development.
    - During enrollment and orientation, we partner with the family to identify needs a child or the family may have, and offer resources and support through community agencies, and we may conduct follow-up meetings with a family to ensure needs are being met.
    - For families with children with exceptional needs it is important to meet prior to admission to partner with Footsteps Child Care to determine the best environment for the child and their family. Generally, families will meet with the Site Director and if recommended, either the Deputy Director or the Program Director, and will continue to meet regularly about the child's progress and discuss how best to support the child and family. Footsteps Child Care does acknowledge there may be instances when our program may not be the best fit for a family.
- **Non-Discrimination Policy:** We are non-discriminatory in admission, on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, genetic information, ethnic group identification, race, ancestry, national origin, age, religion, color, mental, or physical ability in determining which children are served and welcomes the enrollment of children with exceptional needs or disabilities; understands the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) to make equal access and reasonable accommodations; implements those accommodations.

  Footsteps Child Care, Inc., refrains from religious instruction or worship at all of our program locations. Footsteps Child Care helps to respect, protect, and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, and to attract diverse and qualified candidates for employment.

COMMUNITY CARE LICENSING INFORMATION

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. sites are licensed through the State of California Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing or a registered State of California Heritage School.

- Our Infant-Toddler and Preschool Teacher and/or Adult to child ratio is approximately 1:3 for Infant-Toddler, 1:4 for Older Toddlers, and 1:8 for Preschool.
- Our School Age adult to child ratio is approximately 1:10 for children in grades TK-Kindergarten to Second, 1:12 for grades Third through Fifth, and 1:14 for middle school youth.
- All children are covered by an individual accident policy while attending our programs.

Infant-Toddler & Preschool Programs

Little Footsteps	2.0-entering TK/Kindergarten	**#414004607**
Nesbit Puma Cubs Infant/Toddler	6 weeks - 24 months	**#414001948**
Nesbit Puma Cubs Preschool	2.0-entering TK/Kindergarten	**#414001947**
Redwood Creek Infant/Toddler	6 weeks – 24 months	**#414004780**
Redwood Creek Preschool	2.0-entering TK/Kindergarten	**#414004779**

School Age Programs

Cipriani Site	TK/Kindergarten to Fifth Grades	**#410518969**
Nesbit Site	TK/Kindergarten to Eighth Grade	**#414001160**
Shores Site	TK/Kindergarten to Fifth Grades	**#414002640**
Barrett Site	TK/Kindergarten to Fifth Grades	**California Heritage School-Spanish**

- The Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, has the right to interview children or review their records without parent or guardian notification.
- The Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing, has the right to interview staff and to inspect or audit facility records without prior consent.
- The licensee shall make provisions for private interviews with any children or staff member and for the examination of all records relating to the operation of any Footsteps Child Care program site.
- The Department has authority to observe the physical condition of the child or children, including conditions that could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement.
- If you have any questions about Community Care Licensing, please reach out to us.

To file a complaint regarding a state licensed community care facility or child care facility, please call 1-844-LET US NO (1-844-538-8766). If you wish to email your complaint, you can email it to: letusno@dss.ca.gov, or for more information, you can contact your local regional office

SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY

Every child and staff member at Footsteps Child Care, Inc. has the right to be free from sexual harassment from adults and/or children. All harassment is unacceptable and prohibited. Conduct such as making derogatory comments, including epithets, jokes, etc; graphic commentary about an individual's body; suggestive or obscene notes or invitations; leering, making sexual gestures; inappropriate touching or impeding one's movement are prohibited. Footsteps Child Care, Inc. prohibits retaliatory behavior against any person who files a complaint or against any participant in the complaint process. Each complaint of sexual harassment will be promptly investigated. Pursuant to Local, State, and Federal regulations.

UNLAWFUL HARASSMENT

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. is committed to providing an environment free of unlawful harassment. The policy applies to all persons involved in any of our programs and prohibits sexual harassment and harassment based on race, religion, gender, genetic discrimination, perceived gender identity, national origin, or ancestry, physical or mental disability, age, sexual orientation, or any other basis protected by federal, state, or local law. For the purposes of this policy, harassment must be based on one of the protected categories identified above, and means any unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct, or unwelcome sexual advances by someone from or in the environment. Pursuant to Local, State, and Federal regulations. For the purposes of this policy, harassment must be based on one of the protected categories identified above, and means any unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct, or unwelcome sexual advances by someone from or in the environment under any of the following conditions:

- Conduct is explicitly or implicitly made a condition of the enrollment, status, or progress.
- Rejection of conduct by the individual is used as the basis for decisions affecting the individual.
- Conduct has the purpose or effect of having a negative impact upon the child's performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive learning or work environment.
- Submission to, or rejection of the conduct by the individual is used as the basis for any decision affecting the individual regarding the benefits and services, and activities at or through the environment.

FAMILY PRIVACY AND IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT

Footsteps Child Care is a safe place for every child and family. As required by California law (AB 495, Health and Safety Code Section 1597.640), Footsteps has adopted the California Attorney General's Model Policies for early care and education programs. You can read the Model Policies at oag.ca.gov/ab495, or ask your site director for a printed copy in your preferred language.

Information we collect. Footsteps does not ask about or record the citizenship or immigration status of children or family members, unless state or federal law requires it to run our program. When we verify eligibility, we accept other documents that do not show immigration status.

Keeping your child's information private. We do not share information about your child or family without your written consent, unless the law requires or allows it. If any agency asks for your child's records, we will tell you before we respond and give you copies of any documents they provide, unless a court order prevents us from doing so.

If an immigration or law enforcement officer comes to a site. Staff will immediately contact the Executive Director and/or Deputy Director. Footsteps will not allow any officer into areas where children are cared for without a valid judicial warrant or court order signed by a judge. Footsteps is required by law to report these requests to the California Department of Social Services and the California Attorney General.

Emergency contacts and your child's care plan. Please keep your emergency contact list current and let us know as soon as anything changes. We will ask you to review it at least once a year. If you are ever unable to pick up your child, we will release your child only to an adult listed on your emergency card, and we will follow any instructions you have given us. Footsteps will not contact child protective services or law enforcement just because a parent has been detained or deported.

Questions and support. Please talk with your site director or our Executive Director and/or Deputy Director if you have questions. We can also connect you with free, confidential legal resources and a Know Your Rights guide.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. has an open door policy, families are welcome to visit our programs at any time during the course of the program day.

Family Engagement and Education

First Five states Family Engagement is *"A relationship-based, mutual, respectful, and responsive partnership between families, early learning and care providers, and other related professionals to promote children's development, learning, and wellness. Family engagement happens when early childhood professionals and families actively participate in an ongoing process of building and maintaining these meaningful relationships."*

Footsteps Child Care's Family Engagement is evident through four strategies

- Build strengths-based relationships.
- Respect the family's role in the child's development.
- Show cultural respect. Learn what matters most to families.
- Take a shared approach to family engagement.

In an effort to enhance their Family Education and Engagement programs, Footsteps has decided to take advantage of the SMCOE (San Mateo County Office of Education) Family Education Workshops and Trainers, our Todos Juntos Early Childhood and Family Therapy Services, community resources, and Footsteps staff to ensure maximum participation and engagement, Footsteps conducts surveys to obtain feedback from the families on the topics they would like to see covered.

How Can You Participate?

- Footsteps Child Care, Inc., thrives with the help, talent, and skills of the family volunteers who participate in a variety of ways. If you have skills, talents or contacts to share, please let us know. Families are invited to participate in special events and field trips. Please let the staff member in charge of your child's site know in advance if you would like to join us!
- Footsteps Child Care, Inc. is a non-profit organization, governed by an Executive Board of Directors. Family and guardians volunteer to serve on Family Connection Teams. The Family Connection Team is an advisory committee supporting the daily operation at the site level. Individuals are elected to the Board of Directors. The term alternates so new members are elected at the beginning of each school year. The Executive Board of Directors has fiduciary oversight of the organization, establishes general policies, and acts as a clearinghouse for concerns affecting the entire organization.

Child Assessment Tool for Infant-Toddler-Preschool Children: Ages & Stages Questionnaire – ASQ Assessment Tool

The ASQ is an accurate, reliable developmental and social-emotional screening for children between birth and age 6. Drawing on parents' expert knowledge, ASQ has been specifically designed to pinpoint developmental progress and catch delays in young children—paving the way for meaningful next steps in learning, intervention, or monitoring. ***We ask all families entering our infant-toddler-preschool programs complete the ASQ online survey within the first thirty days of enrollment.***

Screening young children is an effective, efficient way for professionals to check a child's development, help parents celebrate their child's milestones and know what to look for next, and determine whether follow-up steps are needed. It is also an essential first step toward identifying children with delays or disorders in the critical early years, before they start school.

Social and emotional development in early childhood: more important than ever. Children's ability to regulate their emotions and skillfully manage social interactions is critical to their healthy development and future success. If social-emotional problems are identified and addressed early, children are less likely to be placed in special education programs—and later in life, they are also less likely to experience school failure, unemployment, and incarceration.

What is developmental screening and why is it important? Not every delay is visible to the eye. Developmental delays and disabilities, such as autism, emotional disturbances, and speech and language disorders, often go undetected until a child enters elementary school.

Screening with ASQ: how does it work?

1. Select the questionnaire.
2. Ask the family to complete the questionnaire.
3. The family answers the questions.
4. Score the questionnaire.
5. Discuss results with family and determine next steps.
6. Share activities and resources with family.

FAMILY COMMUNICATION

Communication: We encourage the partnership between staff and families to support your child and we want families and staff to get to know each other so you can share information about your child during drop off or pick up. Staff will wear Footsteps Child Care photo ID badges and make themselves available to speak to you. However, we ask you understand the staff are supervising children and must concentrate on this task primarily.

How To Contact the Site: You can reach staff via Procare Connect, email, text, or the site telephone. We use Procare Connect and email to communicate with families and the site has a direct telephone line, a site email address, and each site director has email and a cell phone. You are welcome to use Procare Connect, email, or call with your questions or concerns. You may also call or email the Administrative Office regarding enrollment, tuition and billing, or family fees questions. Contact Karen Haas-Foletta, Executive Director, or Lori Ottolini Geno, Deputy Director, with concerns and suggestions.

Procare Connect: Procare Connect along with our website, footstepschildcare.org, are our main methods of communication to families, both includes newsletters, enrollment information and paperwork, licensing paperwork, state subsidized program information, updates and program news, and calendar events, along with child specific information and messaging between staff and family. ***Procare Connect is also the way all families will Sign In and Out on a daily basis.***

Newsletters and Organization Messages: The site newsletter and organization messages are sent through Procare Connect and contains pertinent information about the site, the organization, and upcoming events to keep you informed. **Please read the site newsletters and organization messages, both contain important and informative information.**

Communication Accommodations: We strive to accommodate the written and oral communication needs of children, youth, and their families by providing or arranging for translation in the family's preferred language when necessary. Staff speak a variety of languages, and the organization has access to translation assistance. We will arrange for the use of communication technology as needed, including telephone amplification, sign language services, or other communication methods for deaf or hearing-impaired persons, to the extent possible. We will provide or arrange for communication assistance for persons with special needs who have difficulty making their needs known, including considering a person's literacy level.

Dual Language Learners: Dual Language Learners (DLLs) are children birth to age 5, who are learning two (or more) languages at the same time or are learning a second language while continuing to develop their first (or home) language. To assist with Footsteps Child Care in the support of a child's dual language learning, we identify a child's Dual Language Identification using the Family Language Instrument and a Family language and interest interview and survey to identify and understand each child's language background in order to strengthen their language development. When Footsteps Child Care understands child's past experiences with language(s), build upon those experiences and better support your child's development, by affirming and fostering your child's home language and culture to support the child in becoming multilingual and multi-literate in both English and their home language(s).

COMMUNITY AGENCY RESOURCES

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. works with agencies such as the 4Cs of San Mateo County, San Mateo County Office of Education and Todos Junto Early Childhood Mental Health, along with other community agencies to provide both the organization and families with resources and support services such as mental health consultation and counseling, observations of children with challenging behaviors, and tuition assistance. Footsteps Child Care, Inc. also collaborates with these community agencies to provide support, resources, and training for the staff. Please contact the Administrative Office or your Site Director for more information.

BABY-SITTING BY FOOTSTEPS STAFF

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. strongly suggests against approaching staff members for babysitting.

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

We provide professional development and training opportunities throughout the year and prior annually. Training may involve the entire organization, be site-specific, community training, educational training, or individual training. Staff are encouraged to grow professionally, continue their learning, and to develop leadership skills.

Footsteps Child Care has conducted staff training on health and safety practices, best practices in caring for children, behavior guidance, curriculum implementation, and staff are CPR-First Aid-AED Certified. Training has also included our annual hand hygiene, food handling safety, infection control, airborne precaution, and transmission borne precautions, along with social-emotional and behavior topics, including Teaching Pyramid and PBIS topics. Subsequent to participation in formal training which is conducted in-person, via online seminar, or through online training modules, staff shares their reflections and new information at staff meetings.

ORGANIZATION HEALTH AND WELLNESS POLICIES

Footsteps Child Care wants children, families, and staff to be healthy and we have developed and instituted Health and Wellness policies for our staff, children, and their families covering nutrition, health, sun safety/sunscreen policy, and wellness issues. Footsteps Child Care formed a Wellness Committee, including staff and input from our Board of Directors and adopted our Wellness Policies in April 2013.

TRANSPORTATION

- We do not provide transportation to or from care, except for children attending the Footsteps@Barrett School Age Site.
- For field trips and outings, we have vehicles with seat belts and car or booster seats that may be used for children preschool–school age.
- All children must have a signed Transportation Waiver & Authorization Form on file to ride in our vehicles.

- Staff who drive a Footsteps vehicle are authorized and cleared to operate a Footsteps vehicle and participate in annual driver training, including car and booster seat requirements.
- **California Safety Seat and Seat Belt Law:**
  - Children under the age of 8 must be secured in a car seat or booster seat in the back seat.
  - Children who are 8 years of age OR have reached 4'9" in height may be secured by a booster seat, but at a minimum must be secured by a safety belt. (California Vehicle Code Section 27363.)
  - Passengers who are 16 years of age and over are subject to California's Mandatory Seat Belt law.

DONATIONS

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. encourages and accepts donations from families, businesses, or philanthropic organizations. Donation to Footsteps Child Care, Inc., is not a condition of enrollment in a Footsteps Child Care, Inc., program.

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. A copy of our IRS Determination Letter is available in the Administrative Office. Footsteps Child Care, Inc. Tax ID Number - 94-3206278

Ways you can donate:

- Donation directly to Footsteps Child Care, Inc. or to a specific site.
- Corporate or business matching gift programs.
- Donations of goods
- Donations of services, time, and/or talent.

QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

A family may have specific questions, suggestions or concerns and we want to be able to meet your needs in the most efficient way possible. This guide will help you direct your question or concern.

Questions or Concerns?	Please Contact
Tuition, Payments, Bills, Receipts, Enrollment **Office Hours: 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM**	Footsteps Child Care, Inc. Administrative Office Tel: 650.610-0715 Fax: 650.683-1592 Email: office@footstepschildcare.org
Concerns About The Program Or Your Child You have the right to file a grievance without interference or retaliation. In this case, you will receive timely written notification of the resolution and an explanation of any further appeal, rights, or recourse. You have the right to file a complaint to the supervisor of the person who the grievance is about and you have the right to be heard by a panel of board members.	1. Your Child's Teacher 2. Site Director 3. Executive Director - Deputy Director 4. Family Connection Team 5. Footsteps Child Care, Inc., Board 6. Community Care Licensing
Concerns About Staff	1. Site Director 2. Executive Director - Deputy Director 3. Site Council 4. Footsteps Child Care, Inc., Board 5. Community Care Licensing
Suggestions Or Comments	1. Site Director 2. Executive Director - Deputy Director 3. Site Council 4. Footsteps Child Care, Inc., Board
Community Resources	1. Site Director 2. Executive Director - Deputy Director

REQUIRED ENROLLMENT FORMS

The enrollment process includes these steps

1. Complete the Enrollment & Waitlist Information Form available on the website, footstepschildcare.org, or at the Administrative Office or Program Site.
2. Tour of the program
3. Once a space has been offered complete the Enrollment Packet, including Community Care Licensing forms and State Subsidized Forms if applicable.
4. Program Visit – We encourage families, if their schedule allows, to include time for the child and parent/guardian to spend in the classroom and if possible, have a separate time for the child to visit with the

class while the parent/guardian meets with the Site Director for the family orientation session. These sessions are arranged to a family's scheduled and availability but does not preclude enrollment.

Once a space has been offered there are several forms required by Footsteps Child Care, Inc., the State of California Department of Social Services (Community Care Licensing), and the California Department of Education. All forms must be completed and on file the first day of a child's enrollment.

These forms are available on our website, footstepschildcare.org, under the Enrollment Forms tab, or through the Administrative Office or Program Site.

Note: Accommodations may be made for a family experiencing homelessness or a life event that may cause interference with securing some documentation.

Should there be a need for an accommodation regarding these necessary forms, please contact the Enrollment Coordinator who work an individual family to complete these required forms.

Once the forms have been completed, including signature on all required documents:

- Online: Save the file, and email the file to enrollment@footstepschildcare.org
- Paper Copy: The form can be completed at home or at the Administrative Office or Program Site.

If at any time you have any questions about any of the forms or required paperwork you may contact the Administrative Office or the Site Director for assistance.

Families enrolled in our State Subsidized Programs, CCTR or CSPP, will provide the required additional forms and paperwork as necessary and required for participation. Enrollment in the State subsidized CSPP or CCTR program is completed along with the Footsteps enrollment paperwork through Footsteps' Enrollment Coordinator.

If your family receives state-subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR), please review the website or family handbook for Family Fee payment information. Please also see your Welcome Letter for Arrival & Departure, Health & Safety, and Behavior Expectations.

ACCESS OF CHILDREN'S FILES

- A Child's Enrollment File is only available to authorized members of Footsteps Child Care's management team. Only Footsteps Child Care's Senior Administrative staff is authorized to release information about current or former children on behalf of the organization.
- However, Footsteps Child Care will cooperate with - and provide access to a child's file to – Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing, law enforcement officials or local, state or federal agencies in accordance with applicable law, or in response to a subpoena, in accordance with applicable law.
- A child's file is made available to the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing for review at any time even without parent or guardian notification.
- Additionally, families receiving subsidy through State Funding, CCTR – California Department of Social Services, or CSPP, California Department of Education, may have their files reviewed by our Fiscal Lead Agency, San Mateo County Office of Education (SMCOE), the Department of Social Services or the California Department of Education.

IMPORTANT

To make sure we are providing a safe program we do ask that families

- ***Update contact information as it changes; we must be able to contact you in case of emergency.***
- ***Let your Emergency Contacts know that they have been designated as an emergency contact for your family.***
- ***Make sure you have our contact information stored for easy access in case of an emergency.***

Forms On File The First Day Of Care

- Current Year Application & Financial Agreement
- Identification and Emergency Information (LIC700)
- Pre-Admission Health History-Parent's Report (LIC702), with current immunizations noted
- Physician's Report (LIC701), *within the first 30 days of the first day of enrollment*
- Proof of current immunizations & TB Screening or waiver

- Needs and Services Plan for Infants and Toddlers – updated quarterly
- Infant Sleeping Plan (LIC9227)
- Consent for Medical Treatment (LIC627)
- Family Rights Form (LIC995A)
- Personal Rights (LIC613A) – Enrolled child's rights
- Transportation Waiver and Authorization Form
- Media Consent Waiver
- Sunscreen Form
- ***Any child with a Food Allergy or at risk of an Anaphylaxis Emergency must have a Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Care Plan on file.***
- State Subsidized Program Forms as required

Note: Accommodations may be made for a family experiencing homelessness or a life event that may cause interference with securing some documentation.
Should there be a need for an accommodation regarding these necessary forms, please contact the Enrollment coordinator who work an individual family to complete these required forms.

At any time, you are able to update your emergency contacts or authorized pick up list, please complete a new contact form on our website or through the Administrative Office or the program site in person, email, or telephone.

The three Footsteps Waivers can be updated at any time if a family wants to change their selections, as well as the Emergency Contact Information (LIC700) and the Authorized Pick-Up to make changes, corrections, or additions.

How to Complete Forms
- Once you have been offered a space for your child you will be emailed the online Sign link or will come to the Administrative Office or Site to complete the forms
- Complete the forms only in Adobe Sign or in-person.
- When you have completed the forms, submit the forms through Adobe Sign or given to the Site Director or the Administrative Office.

Non-Refundable Registration Fee
A non-refundable registration fee of $75 is required for all children and siblings. This registration fee is due and payable at the time of registration. The 5% sibling discount is not applied to the registration fee.
The registration fee is waived for families receiving state subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR) or Alternative Payment Programs (4Cs, County, etc.) or Footsteps Internal Fee Subsidy.

Waitlist
Footsteps maintains a waitlist online. This waitlist is free and does not guarantee that a space will become available.
Families interested in receiving state subsidized care (CSPP or CCTR) or Alternative Payment Programs (4Cs, County, etc.) are offered space in programs based on eligibility and if a program or classroom has space available based on classroom size limits. Please refer to the Family Selection Process section.

Enrollment Deposit
- A $500 enrollment deposit is charged upon accepting the space, the deposit is applied to the final month's tuition, with proper notification.
- When your child no longer attends a Footsteps Child Care, Inc. program and you have provided the Administrative Office notification, in writing VIA EMAIL or IN—PERSON, thirty (30) days before the child is withdrawn from the program, and your account is settled in full, your deposit is credited to your final tuition bill, or a refund sent to you for the remaining amount.

The deposit is waived for families receiving state subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR) or Alternative Payment Programs (4Cs, County, etc.) programs.

INFANT-TODDLER & PRESCHOOL FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Monthly Tuition or Family Fee

- Tuition or Family Fee is charged via monthly statements.
- Tuition or Family Fee is not adjusted on a monthly basis due to fluctuations in the number of school days, and no adjustments are made for absence due to illness or vacations
- No adjustments will be made to tuition payments if child care is mandated to close for no more than 4 weeks. If a closure extends beyond 4 weeks, tuition may be discounted or forgiven.
- Tuition is to be paid whether my child is absent due to illness, holiday, vacation, or any other reason, and failure to pay the monthly tuition will result in my child's termination from the program.
- Programs are closed on federal holidays and during part of winter break, see the calendar for the full schedule.

Families receiving state subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR) may have a Family Fee and for Family Fees and Payment of Fees information, Please refer to the Family Fees section.

Sibling Policy

A 5% sibling discount, per child, is given to families enrolling two or more children, applicable to each child enrolled in a Footsteps Child Care, Inc. site. The sibling discount is for tuition only and does not apply to full-day care or any other charges. Children must attend a minimum of 3 days per week to be eligible for discount.

Fee Subsidies

We strive to meet the needs of all children enrolled in our programs, within the limitations of our budget. Fee subsidies are awarded to qualifying families, provided a subsidy is available at the time of the request.

- Families must apply for financial assistance yearly and all financial information given to Footsteps Child Care, Inc. must be true and correct.
- Families are responsible for providing updated information regarding income if it changes during the year.
- Fee subsidy applications must be received and processed before the first day of care.

Alternative Payment Programs For Tuition Payments

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. accepts payment for child care through Alternative Payment Programs (4C's and Social Services). The contracting parent or guardian is responsible for making sure the contract is correctly negotiated, with all anticipated child care needs calculated. All contracting forms must be signed in a correct and timely manner. The contracting parent or guardian understands they assume financial responsibility if fees are not paid through the Community Service Agency program. Any family fee is due before the end of each month, or the end of the last month attending.

California State Subsidy Programs: CSPP-California State Preschool Program & CCTR-General Child Care and Development

We have a number of CSPP/CCTR State subsidized spaces at Nesbit Puma Cubs, Little Footsteps, and Redwood Creek sites for children who are eligible.

The spaces are available through our sub-contract with the San Mateo County Office of Education. Eligibility for the full-day state preschool program is based on need and income. The terms and conditions for eligibility in the subsidized component are established by the California Department of Education. We are required to request parent income and family information. Enrollment is based on eligibility and need priority rather than "first-come, first-served basis."

If your family receives state-subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR), please review the website or family handbook for Family Fee payment information. Please also see your Welcome Letter for Arrival & Departure, Health & Safety, and Behavior Expectations.

Internal Fee Subsidies

We strive to meet the needs of all children enrolled in our programs, within the limitations of our budget. Fee subsidies through Footsteps Child Care's internal fee subsidy program are awarded to qualifying families, provided a subsidy is available at the time of the request.

- Families must apply for financial assistance on an annual basis and all financial information given to Footsteps Child Care, Inc. must be true and correct.
- Families are responsible for providing updated information regarding income if it changes during the year.

- Fee subsidy application must be received and processed before the first day of care.

PAYING TUITION

Payment Is Due and Payable the Tenth Day of The Month

- All tuition is considered late if payment is not **received by the 10th of the month or the following business day**. On that date, a late fee of $20 is assessed to your account.
- If payment is not received by the last workday of the month, your child will be removed from the program and your account will be sent to our collection agency. This policy is strictly enforced.
- Repayment Plan: When a family is unable to pay for their family fee, a reasonable payment plan can be requested within one month of the missed payment. The family must comply with the payment plan and failure to do so may result in termination of services.

If your family receives state-subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR), please review the website or family handbook for Family Fee payment information. Please also see your Welcome Letter for Arrival & Departure, Health & Safety, and Behavior Expectations.

Payment Options

Families choose a payment option: Automatic Payments through Tuition Express or Payment by the 10th of the month.

- **Automatic Payments -** Payment is automatically deducted on the third of the month from a checking/savings account or credit card. To enroll, complete and sign the Tuition Express Form. The authorization form to deduct monthly tuition and other charges from your account. Returned ACH payments will be subject to a charge of $25.
- **Manual Payment Methods**
  1. **Online Payment** - Payments can be made using the Procare app
  2. **Payment by Check** - Due on the tenth day of the month. Returned checks will incur a $25 penalty.
     - Tuition payment is made payable to: Footsteps Child Care, Inc.
     - Your child's first and last name and site must appear on the check/money order.
     - For banking bill pay systems, use your child's last name and site as the account number
       Example: Foletta - Nesbit
     - Payments can be given to the Site Director or mailed directly to:
       Footsteps Child Care, Inc. 374 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002
     - ***Do Not Mail Checks to Program Site/School Addresses***
  3. **Cash Payment** - We discourage cash payments. Payment must be given directly to the Site Director or Administrative Office. Large cash payments over $500 must be turned in directly to the Admin Office. A receipt will be immediately issued. A family paying by cash assumes responsibility to make sure payment is received and credited to the account.

Tuition or Family Fee Invoices & Receipts

- Footsteps Child Care, Inc. generates an invoice for tuition monthly via email.
- Receipts for paid invoices and/or required FSA statements payments are available at myprocare.com
- Receipts for cash and point of sale credit payments are issued at the time of payment.
- The receipt contains our tax identification number and is appropriate for most reimbursement accounts.
- Year-To-Date accounting statements are issued via email in January for tax purposes. Please save this email for your records.

Drop-In Policy

- Footsteps Child Care, Inc., does not provide drop-in care on a regular basis. Drop-in care is available in case of emergency, provided space is available, and the Site Director agrees to accept an additional child for the day.
- Fees will be discussed if drop in is authorized.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE - SIGN IN AND OUT - ABSENCES PROCEDURE & POLICY

Footsteps Child Care Preschool Programs are year-round, open Monday – Friday, except for the week between Christmas and New Year.

- Footsteps@Nesbit Puma Cubs 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM Monday – Friday
- Footsteps@Redwood Creek 7:45 AM – 5:30 PM Monday – Friday
- Little Footsteps 7:30 AM – 6:00 PM Monday – Friday

The programs close for holidays and for Professional Development Days throughout the year. These dates are listed on our calendar July 1 annually and the calendar is made available to all families through our website, newsletter, and the site.

Footsteps Child Care takes the safety and well-being of the children in our care very seriously and to assist us with the safety of the children we ask:

- Children be signed in and out daily by their parent, guardian, or authorized adult, using a full signature, first and last name, either with personal phone or with a center tablet. The Procare Connect app captures arrival and departure times to the minute. Those who occasionally pick up will sign in or out using a staff tablet or their personal phone (Scan QR Code and use their unique 4-digit PIN and sign with their full name).
- ***At drop off and pick up families will use Procare Connect to sign a child in or out, using a full signature, first and last names. Procare Care connect is available on tablets at the program sites***
- Families and visitors drop off and pick up at the defined area each site coordinates based on the site configuration. Your Site Director will provide this information during the orientation. Drop Off and Pick Up accommodates walkers, bikers, and vehicles.
- Children to be picked up by older siblings, babysitter, or family member: Written permission must be on file at the site office or in Procare, and the sibling, babysitter, or family member must sign them out daily. *The sibling, babysitter, or family member must be at least 18 years or older to pick up a child in our preschool programs.*
- If your child is to be absent, please contact the Site Director through Procare Connect, call, or email to let them know of the absence, preferably before the start of the program day.

If your family receives state-subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR), please review the website or family handbook for Family Fee payment information. Please also see your Welcome Letter for Arrival & Departure, Health & Safety, and Behavior Expectations.

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. takes no responsibility for children before or after they are signed out of the program.

LATE CHILD PICK UP

All care ends promptly at the stated closing time:

- Footsteps@Puma Cubs 6:00 PM
- Footsteps@Redwood Creek 5:30 PM
- Little Footsteps 6:00 PM

- **A family is considered late if your child is picked up after the stated closing time.**
  - We will make every effort to reach you if your child is still in our care after closing time. If we cannot reach you, we will telephone the names listed as your child's emergency contacts to reach someone.
  - If we are unable to contact you or the emergency designee one hour after closing time, we are legally required to contact the Police Department.
- **Footsteps Child Care expects families to pick up their child on time every day; continual late pick up may be grounds for dismissal from the program.**
- **In some instances a family may be subject to a late charge of $1.00 per minute late.** If a late charge is assessed it is billed to a family through the Administrative Office, and failure to make prompt late pick-up payments may result in dismissal from the program.

If your family receives state-subsidized funding (CSPP or CCTR), please review the website or family handbook for Family Fee payment information. Please also see your Welcome Letter for Arrival & Departure, Health & Safety, and Behavior Expectations.

RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION

A Child's Enrollment File is only available to authorized members of Footsteps Child Care's management team. Only Footsteps Child Care's Senior Administrative staff is authorized to release information about current or former children on behalf of the organization. However, Footsteps Child Care will cooperate with - and provide access to a child's file to – Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing, law enforcement officials or local, state or federal agencies in accordance with applicable law, or in response to a subpoena, in accordance with applicable law.

When we receive a request for the release of confidential information regarding a child, we take the following action:

1. Determine if the request to release information is "valid." Valid meaning is justifiable, legitimate, convincing, legally permissible, and in the best interest of child or youth.
2. If the reason is valid, we will obtain written authorization from the child's parent or legal guardian, will provide a copy of the signed authorization to the parent or legal guardian, and will place a copy in the child's file.
3. When permitted or required by law, regulation, or court order, confidential information may be released without the authorization of children and youth and their family or legal guardians. However, you will be informed that the information will be released.
4. If we deem it necessary, we will obtain legal counsel regarding the confidentiality of records and the conditions under which it may be subpoenaed.

SUSPECTED NEGLECT AND/OR CHILD ABUSE
SUSPECTED INFLUENCE UNDER A CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

All Footsteps Child Care staff are legally mandated to report any instance of observed or suspected child abuse or neglect of a child.

A mandated reporter, who in his or her professional capacity, or within the scope of his or her employment, has knowledge of or observes a person under the age of 18 years whom he or she knows, or reasonably suspects has been the victim of child abuse or neglect must report the suspected incident. Suspected abuse that must be reported

- Physical injury inflicted by other than accidental means on a child.
- Sexual abuse meaning sexual assault or sexual exploitation of a child.
- Neglect meaning the negligent treatment, lack of treatment, or the maltreatment of a child by a person responsible for the child's welfare under circumstances indicating harm or threatened harm to the child's health or welfare.
- Willful harming or injuring or endangering a child meaning a situation in which any person inflicts, or willfully causes or permits a child to suffer, unjustifiable physical pain or mental suffering, or causes or permits a child be placed in a situation in which the child or child's health is endangered.
- Unlawful corporal punishment or injury willfully inflicted upon a child and resulting in a traumatic condition.

This includes a parent or pick-up person who appears to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal/other controlled substance when picking up a child at any Footsteps Child Care, Inc. site.

- We will not release a child to anyone who is suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or illegal/other controlled substance.
- We will attempt to call the names listed as an emergency contact to arrange alternative pick-up.
- If the pick-up person insists on leaving the premises with the child, we will call 911 immediately.

CHILD PICK-UP SECURITY

- If the contracting parent or guardian would like another person to pick up their child, the contracting parent or guardian must list all designated person or persons on the **Child Release Authorization Form**. This form should be regularly updated.
- If someone other than the regular pick-up person or persons is to pick up your child, please notify the Site Director of the change before the scheduled pick-up time, messaging via Procare Connect App or email is the most efficient way to communicate this to the Site Director.
- Staff will request proof of identity for any pick up person unfamiliar to them, even if they are a parent, guardian, or an authorized pick up person.

- If the contracting parent or guardian chooses not to list the divorced or separated parent, pursuant to licensing regulations, we cannot release the child without a court-signed order. Staff cannot deny access to a biological parent.
- If the non-custodial, biological parent or other such person arrives to pick up the child, and they are not listed on the Child Authorization Release Form, and we do not have information on file, the staff will:
    - Contact the contracting parent or guardian.
    - Explain to the non-custodial, biological parent or other such person that we cannot release the child to them without permission from the contracting parent or guardian. Staff will explain the release procedure.
    - If the contracting parent or guardian cannot be reached and/or permission is not given, staff may need to call the police; and/or,
    - The police will then confirm the identity of the non-custodial, biological parent. In all probability, the police will then release the child to the non-custodial biological parent.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. is a place that is safe, respectful, and friendly. We are inclusive and we are healthy. These are our behavior expectations, which staff models these behaviors, and we respect the dignity of all children, their families, and our staff.

- Staff strives to encourage children to become socially competent and emotionally literate, are able to talk about their feelings, regulate their strong emotions, solve their own conflicts, and model the language and tools of the Teaching Pyramid and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

In the Infant-Toddler-Preschool Programs we use the Teaching Pyramid. The Teaching Pyramid approach provides a systematic framework that promotes social and emotional development, provides support for children's appropriate behavior, prevents challenging behavior, and addresses problematic behavior.

The Teaching Pyramid is based on evidence-based practice originally developed by the Center on the Social Emotional Foundations in Early Learning (CSEFEL), authorized by California Department of Education (CDE), and aligned with California's Early Learning and Development System.

The overarching goal of the Pyramid Model is to create a positive experience for each child through evidence-based practices that promote child engagement and learning while focusing on teaching children the appropriate social skills they will use to develop friendships and regulate their emotions.

Outcomes from the Teaching Pyramid

- Programs that implement the comprehensive program-wide approach to the Teaching Pyramid will have a successful and sustainable approach for ensuring healthy social and emotional development of the children they serve.
- An effective leadership team that continues to meet regularly serves as a guide for implementation of Teaching Pyramid concepts, and champions and supports implementation and sustainability.
- Competent, well-trained staff who understand the Teaching Pyramid concepts are equipped with Teaching Pyramid tools and strive to implement the practices.
- Staff who are able to reflect on and adjust as needed their use of Teaching Pyramid practices in the classroom through support from coaching and competent internal coaches who can support staff in reflecting and implementing Teaching Pyramid practices in the classroom.
- Staff who are trained to facilitate sessions for family who subsequently are then able to implement Teaching Pyramid concepts at home.
- Children who are socially competent and emotionally literate are able to talk about their feelings, regulate their strong emotions, solve their own conflicts, and model the language and tools of the Teaching Pyramid.

Corporal punishment or harsh discipline techniques which may include but not limited to threats, shaming, bribing, with holding or rewarding with food, time outs are not permitted within our program.

While Footsteps Child Care works to establish partnerships with the families to support the children enrolled in the program, to address behavioral concerns Footsteps Child Care will

1. Continue regular daily communication with the family. This is done in person, through Procare, email or telephone call.
2. Use a progressive system to help us assess children's progress; including daily communication and check-ins with the children and family, Behavior Observation Reports to help the staff understand the specific care and learning needs of each child and use this information to plan the next steps with the family.
3. Request a conference with the family to discuss the behavior or concern. Together, a plan of action will be instituted.
4. Footsteps Child Care and/or family may consult with outside services or agencies for resources or support.
5. The Site Director will apprise and consult with the Executive Director or Deputy Director concerning the situation, action taken, and plans of action up to and including:
    - Suspension: meaning any removal of a child from all or part of the program day, or the prevention of a child from attending the program for one or more days, in response to the child's behavior.
    - Expulsion: meaning the permanent dismissal of a child from a program in response to a child's behavior.

When persistently challenging or unsafe behavior occurs, it is dealt with immediately through various strategies such as individual guidance between teacher and child, an invitation to work with a staff member in order for child to receive individualized attention or redirection to alternative activities if necessary.

- In all cases when a child displays persistent, serious, challenging behavior, program staff will request a meeting with the child's parent(s) to discuss the behavior.
- The center staff and parent(s) will collaborate on the development of strategies to resolve the behavior.
- If the child has an IEP or IFSP, and with the parent or guardian's written consent, consult with the local educational agency (LEA) or the local regional center on how to serve the child.
- If the child does not have an IEP or IFSP, consider (a) completing a universal screening including social and emotional development, (b) referring the parent or guardian to local community resources, and (c) implementing behavior supports, before referring the child to the LEA to request an assessment to determine the child's eligibility for special education support and services, including a behavior intervention plan

If behavior does not improve during the above process, other resources and options may be explored:

- Program staff and parent will explore community services/referrals as necessary, which may include early childhood mental health consultation.
- If the program determines that the child's continued enrollment would present a continued serious safety threat to the child or other enrolled children the contractor shall refer the parents or legal guardians to other potentially appropriate placements such as Resource and Referral agencies and programs, or other local referral services available in their community.
- When program has exhausted all possible resources and child persistently exhibits safety threats to themselves or other enrolled children, disenrollment may be recommended.

Other instances when a family's participation in Footsteps Child Care's CCTR or CSPP subsidy program may require disenrollment:

- When a recalculation of income indicates the family's adjusted income exceeds the income threshold, and the family does not meet the requirements for another eligibility basis.
- When the parent changes residency outside of California
- When there is substantiated evidence of fraud that invalidates the initial certification, and the family is not otherwise eligible
- When the family has abandoned care

Footsteps Child Care welcomes and encourages developing positive partnership with families, and to encourage a positive partnership with families, we do expect a family to adhere to all Footsteps Child Care rules and regulations to maintain a standard of safety to ensure that children are safe and in a healthy environment

- The staff and family have the right to request a conference at any time.

- There is no behavior of an aggressive or violent nature to other children, staff, or to anyone who is on the premises of a Footsteps Child Care, Inc. program. This includes bullying, teasing, threats, or taunting.
- Families are requested not to confront another child or family regarding an issue but should utilize staff to help resolve conflicts or difficulties.
- We request that a family does not discuss problems, concerns, or confidential situations in front of children or other adults. Instead, families are encouraged to make an appointment to speak with the Site Director to discuss any problems, concerns, or suggestions.
- Picking up a child within the scheduled program hours.
- Signing in and out on a daily basis using a full signature, first and last names.
- Compliance with Footsteps Child Care, Inc.'s health and safety policies
- Compliance with the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing requirements for enrollment in the program; and,
- If a parent or guardian confronts or is verbally or physically abusive to staff, administrative staff, other children, their own children, or other adults on the premises; or confronts staff while children are present.

Electronic Communication Free Zone

We feel it is important for the teachers to be able to connect with a family at drop-off and pick up time and for a family to be able to focus on their child. In the best interest of the families and children in our programs, our Preschool Programs are cell phone-texting-emailing free zones. Please complete your electronic conversations before entering the classroom.

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Medical or Dental Emergencies

- If your child has an accident, such as a hard head bump or cut, the Site Director or staff will administer first aid. We attempt to build trusting relationships with the children, so a child feels comfortable informing staff about their physical well-being on a regular basis. Staff routinely notify a family of an injury or accident when staff has seen, or staff has been informed about an injury or accident.
- If your child experiences a serious medical or dental emergency when in our care, we take the following steps:
    1. Call 911.
    2. Call the parent or guardian; if we are not successful, we call the names listed as emergency contacts.
    3. Call the listed doctor or dentist; and,
    4. Notify Footsteps Child Care, Inc. Executive Director.
- If a child must be transported by ambulance, a staff member accompanies the child until a parent or guardian arrives. Emergencies of this nature are exceedingly rare; we make every effort to provide a safe program.

IMPORTANT – We must always have current telephones numbers on file for family, guardians, and emergency contact person (s). We MUST be able to reach someone in case of an emergency!

Illness

The health and well-being of the children in our care is a primary goal of Footsteps Child Care. To help achieve this, the Footsteps staff do a daily observation of the children upon arrival and observe children throughout the day for signs of illness, injury, or other situations. We do ask families to partner with Footsteps in maintaining the health and well-being of the children on our care by

- Updating and confirming a child's emergency and medical information is correct and current before their first day of enrollment in the program or whenever there is a change in information.
- Your child's immunizations are up to date before their first day of enrollment.
- Families speak to their healthcare provider about the flu or influenza vaccine for those over six months of age.

Should a child become ill while in our care with symptoms that include, but are not limited to, inability to participate in routine activities, needing more care than staff can provide, fever (100.4 F/38 C or higher with temporal thermometer), fever with behavior changes, difficulty breathing, uncontrolled coughing, diarrhea, vomiting, open sores, rashes, signs of infection, runny nose with colored mucus, or any other sign of communicable

illness we will contact you to pick up your child **within 30 minutes of a parent or guardian being informed their child is exhibiting symptoms of illness.**

We insist that as a member of the Footsteps community and for the well-being of all, families and staff participate in informing us of communicable illnesses and exposures as soon as possible, such as, but not limited to COVID, influenzas, noroviruses, head lice, strep throat, pink eye, fever over 100.4F/38C, hand-foot-mouth disease, chicken pox, or slapped cheek syndrome.

Care with Footsteps Child Care may be at risk by a family's inability to comply with Footsteps Child Care's policies and procedures, including with regard to health mandates and guidelines, procedures, and protocols.

- Please inform your Site Director of your child's absence by the start of care on any day your child is absent via Procare Connect, email, or telephone.
- We understand the challenges working family face; however, in the best interests of the children and staff in our programs, we must have a standard and reasonable framework determining why a child may not attend our program.
- If your child has been ill or injured, we reserve the right to request a note from a healthcare professional before your child returns to our program.
- If there is a difference of opinion between the parent, the personal physician, and Footsteps Child Care, the judgment of Footsteps Child Care must prevail.
- Do not send your child to the program with any of the following symptoms: fever, open wound, undiagnosed rash, vomiting, diarrhea, head lice, discharge from the eyes, severe cold, or sore throat.
- If a child becomes ill during child care, we:
    1. Place the child in a quiet area isolated area of a room to await pick up.
    2. Contact you by telephone or Procare that your child is ill. **Footsteps Child Care does expect a child to be picked up within 30 minutes if a child exhibits symptoms of illness during the day.**
    3. If you cannot be reached, staff will call the emergency contacts you have designated. Please make sure your Emergency Contacts are aware they are listed as an emergency contact and may be contacted in case of emergency when you are not available.
- ***Children MUST be fever free for 24 hours (without the use of fever reducing medication) before returning to the program. We classify a fever as a temperature of 100.4 F/38 C or higher.***
- ***If a child is sent home from one of our programs due to a contagious illness, they MUST remain home the entire following day or if fever is present for 24 hours, there are no exceptions.***
    1. Diarrhea is a symptom of intestinal problems and can be very contagious. Mild diarrhea is the passage of a few loose or mushy stools. Moderate diarrhea involves many abnormally loose or frequent stools. Children with diarrhea may NOT remain in the program and must stay home until they are symptom free and have had a normal bowel movement.
    2. Rashes may be a minor allergy or a reaction to an insect bite and may be caused by chicken pox, impetigo, or other bacterial and viral infections. If a new rash appears, you must take your child to a doctor so that we may eliminate the possibility of infectious diseases.
    3. Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye) is very contagious and may be caused by bacteria or a virus. Children may not return to the program until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has begun AND eyes must be clear and free of discharge. If discharge reappears after your child has returned to the program, we will send your child home.
    4. Covid – We follow the California Department of Public Health guidelines for positive Covid infections and exposure.
    5. Head Lice - Footsteps Child Care follows the Center on Disease Control recommendation; children diagnosed with live head lice do not need to be sent home early; they can go home at the end of the day, be treated, and return to class after appropriate treatment has begun.
        - **Children and the household MUST be treated and the child nit-free to return to the program.**
        - Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice. Cases of head lice are predictable in children's programs. Head lice can be a nuisance, but they have not been shown to spread disease. Personal hygiene or cleanliness in the home or school has nothing to do with getting head lice.

- Please do routine lice checks on your child.
- Look for nits (eggs) as well as lice. The nits fix on the hair and do not flake off like dandruff. If nits are found, please let us know immediately
- You must treat your child and your house for lice before your child can return to child care. We will require proof of treatment.
- When a case of lice is reported we will check all children, notify family, treat the center; and,
- We will recheck the children in a classroom for up to two weeks after the last reported instance of head lice.
- For more information or resources about head lice, contact your Site Director

Medication Administration

Footsteps Child Care, Inc., will only administer medication prescribed by a health care provider such as a doctor, physician's assistant, or nurse practitioner. If your child is taking medication during child care hours, we can dispense medication only if it is in the original container and a completed and signed Medication Form is on file. The Medication Form requires:

1. Name of the medication and for what it is prescribed.
2. Dose amount and time dose is to be administered; including any special instructions; and,
3. Signature authorization of a parent or guardian and teacher.
   - ✓ All prescription medications must be in their original prescription bottle, with the prescription label attached.
   - ✓ Non-prescription medications-if the child's age and weight is not on the container must include a doctor's note verifying correct dosage amount. Non-prescription medications include over the counter items such as Tylenol, lip balm, lotions, hand sanitizer, and sunscreen.
   - ✓ Child's medication and dosage container is labeled with child's first and last name.
   - ✓ The label on the medicine bottle must indicate a stop date for the medication; the stop date cannot exceed 12 months from the issue date.

- All medications will be kept in a locked container or locked cabinet at the site. Medication requiring refrigeration will be kept in a designated, lockable container in the refrigerator that is clearly labeled "medication."
- Epi-pens will always be available during program hours and will be clearly marked with the child's name. At the end of the program day, the epi-pen will be locked in the medicine cabinet.
- Children/youth may administer prescription medications to themselves with written permission from the family. The child/youth must be under adult supervision and away from other children.
- Injectable medications will not be administered except for medications necessary to counteract severe allergic reactions or provide emergency glucagon for children/youth with diabetes. Additional and specialized training is required for any staff member responsible for the administration of injectable medications.
- Any child who has had a diagnosis, including asthma or diabetes, will require an individualized medical services plan on file.
- Any child with a Food Allergy or at risk of an Anaphylaxis Emergency must have a Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Care Plan on file. This plan must include a physician/HCP authorization signature and the parent or guardian signature.

Please do not send medicine in a child's lunch or backpack.
Please give medications directly to a Footsteps Teacher or to the Site Director.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Safety is our priority. To ensure the safety and well-being of the children and youth enrolled in our programs, Footsteps Child Care, Inc.:

- Will be responsible in the event of an emergency closing or disaster, for all children enrolled in the program, until such time as an authorized adult can pick up the child.
- Updated disaster and mass casualty plan posted at each site; the plan is reviewed by staff on a regular basis. Emergency evacuation sites are specific to each program site and are coordinated in consultation with local public safety entities.

- Prior to hiring, staff are fingerprinted and must receive clearance through the Department of Justice and FBI.
- Most staff members are First Aid, CPR and AED certified.
- Staff receive training in emergency and disaster procedures and management.
- Programs have regular emergency drills in compliance with Community Care Licensing.
- Staff is trained in Blood-borne Pathogens and Infectious Diseases.
- Staff receive training in suspected child abuse and mandated reporting.
- Staff receive on-going staff development opportunities in a variety of topics, both onsite and off-site; and,
- Coordinate disaster and mass casualty planning and coordination in the event of an emergency. We collaborate with the San Mateo County Big Five and local emergency agencies.

HEALTHY MEALS & SNACKS - FOOD SERVICE

Children enrolled in our programs are served nutritious snacks and lunches, if provided, daily. Snack and lunches include foods appropriate to the ages and cultures of the children and follow licensing guidelines and regulations set forth by Community Care Licensing. Snack and lunch will include protein, fruit and vegetables, whole grain foods, cheeses, yogurt, bread, and other healthy foods served with water or milk. A monthly menu is provided. Vegetarian options are available.

- **Footsteps@Puma Cubs –**
  - **Infants:** Food is provided by the family for all meals. Please label bottles, containers etc. with your child's first and last name, the contents inside i.e., breast milk, formula, peas, and the date.
  - **Young Toddlers:** All food from home should be labeled with your child's first and last name, contents inside, and the date. Snacks and Vitamin D/whole milk or soy milk are provided twice daily. ***Licensing requires all food items brought in from home be labeled with the child's first and last name, date and contents.***
  - **Toddler-Twos & Preschool:** *All snacks and lunches are provided by Footsteps free of cost through our outside food provider, School Foodies. For CCTR or CSPP participants, all food is provided free of cost.*

- **Footsteps@Redwood Creek –**
  - **Infants:** Food is provided by the family for all meals. Please label bottles, containers etc. with your child's first and last name, the contents inside i.e., breast milk, formula, peas, and the date.
  - **Young Toddlers:** All food from home should be labeled with your child's first and last name, contents inside, and the date. Snacks and Vitamin D/whole milk or soy milk are provided twice daily. ***Licensing requires all food items brought in from home be labeled with the child's first and last name, date and contents.***
  - **Toddler-Twos & Preschool:** *All snacks and lunches are provided by Footsteps free of cost through our outside food provider, School Foodies. For CCTR or CSPP participants, all food is provided free of cost.*

- **Little Footsteps –**

All snacks and lunches are provided by Footsteps free of cost through our outside food provider, Chefables.

- Please make sure staff are aware of any food allergies your child might have. ***Any child with Food Allergy or at risk of Anaphylaxis Emergency must have an updated Care Plan on file.*** This plan must include a physician/HCP authorization signature and the parent or guardian signature.
- **We are a tree-nut and peanut free environment. Please do not send your child tree nut or peanut-based foods, foods made from or containing tree nuts or peanuts.**
- Meal menus are posted in Procare Connect and on the Family Board at each program site.
- Any food you have sent with your child, and they have not eaten during the day, will be sent home.
- If your child is particular about foods, you might choose to send additional foods.
- Please see Footsteps Health and Wellness Polices, including sun safety for more detailed information.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS – CANDY & SWEETS & SODA

If your child will celebrate their birthday during school, you have the option to celebrate your child's birthday by choosing a non-food birthday option. Please let the Site Director know in advance of your child's birthday plans. We have a list of non-food party ideas.

We do not allow children or youth to bring candy or sweets to the program and we are soda free.

CLOTHING AND SHOES

Clothing: We want children to feel comfortable participating in all activities offered, please dress your child accordingly by having your child wear clothing appropriate for a variety of activities and weather, both indoors and outdoors. Many activities can be messy; so please have your children dress so they feel ready to participate in all of our offered activities. We take children outside daily all year long.

- ***All clothing is to be labeled with your child's full name.***
- Please send extra clothing for your child to change into as needed.

Diapers and Pull-Ups: We provide all diapers, pull ups, and wipes for all children enrolled in our program, unless a parent has a specific diaper/pullup or wipes for their child, which they will provide, such as cloth diapers. Diaper creams and ointments are considered over-the-counter medications and require a completed and signed Medication Consent Form with instructions to administer.

Shoes: Proper footwear is important so that the children may fully participate in outdoor activities. Tennis shoes are preferred footwear for all children and youth. Sandals should have back straps on them.

The following footwear is discouraged: Flip Flops, Crocs/Croc-type shoes, Shoes with heels, or Sandals without straps at the back of the foot.

SUNSCREEN

Information about the sunscreen Footsteps Child Care uses: Brand: Coral Isles (Rocky Mountain Sunscreen)
Link to Coral Isles letter to families: link to a letter SPF 50 Kids Lotion & Spray Ingredient List
https://cdn.shopify.com/s/files/1/0673/9830/4018/files/SPF50_Spray_Ingredients.pdf?v=1719945588

- Oxybenzone and Oxinoxate-free - Broad Spectrum UVA/UVB protection - Greaseless / Nut Oil-free
- Paba & Fragrance-free
- Water Resistant (80 minutes)
- Dermatologist Tested

REST OR NAP TIME

Rest or nap times in early education is essential for academic development because it supports memory consolidation, increases cognitive function, and improves emotional regulation. Consistent rest contributes to better physical health, meaning fewer absences and more consistent opportunities for learning.

Naps and rest time allow children to process information learned in the morning, enhancing long-term memory retention and improving performance on spatial tasks. Even when children do not sleep, "quiet time" or resting provides a necessary mental break that allows them to return to activities refreshed and ready to learn.

- **Nesbit Puma Cubs**

Infants - Have their own cribs and a separate sleep area, they sleep as needed
Per Community Care Licensing – crib may not have loose articles or soft objects, no sleep sacs that restrict arms or legs, nothing attached to a pacifier, may not be swaddled while in care, and if infant regularly rolls from back to tummy while sleeping, must be noted on sleeping plan
Toddlers – Nap daily on a cot, up to 2.5 hours/day, one nap time
Preschool & Pre-K - Nap Daily, Up to 2 Hours/Day

- **Redwood Creek**

Infants - Have their own cribs and a separate sleep area, they sleep as needed
Per Community Care Licensing – crib may not have loose articles or soft objects, no sleep sacs that restrict arms or legs, nothing attached to a pacifier, may not be swaddled while in care, and if infant regularly rolls from back to tummy while sleeping, must be noted on sleeping plan
Toddlers – Nap daily on a cot, up to 2.5 hours/day, one nap time
Preschool & Pre-K - Nap Daily, Up to 2 Hours/Day

- **Little Footsteps** Nap Daily, Up to 2 Hours/Day

1. All children shall be given an opportunity to nap, rest, or sleep without distraction or disturbance from other activities at the center. No child shall be forced to stay awake or to stay napping longer than the normal napping period.
2. Each child will be provided their own crib or cot with a crib mattress cover or cot sheet and a blanket that is laundered regularly by the program. Each program has access to a washer and dryer and can regularly wash crib and cot sheets. Infant and Toddler sheets are laundered daily. Car seats or swings are not allowed to be used for napping or sleeping.
3. Nap cots will be up to three or more feet apart with head-to-toe orientation. Infants are located in a separate sleep area in cribs.
4. We follow all Community Care Licensing requirements for Safe Sleep in the Infant-Toddler Classrooms, including but not limited to, Service Plans, monitoring sleep at specific intervals, and crib requirements.

ELECTRONICS, TOYS, & GAMES FROM HOME

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. provides many opportunities and activities for all children which are culturally and developmentally appropriate for all ages and interests. Classrooms are equipped with materials and equipment to allow for exploration and learning, and we ask families to help their child leave their special toys at home. These items can easily be lost or damaged. We do not allow any type of toy gun or war toy.
In the best interest of the children, staff, and program philosophy, a teacher may take the item away from the child and set it aside. It will be returned to the family at pick up time.

Footsteps Child Care, Inc., does not take responsibility for lost or stolen property.

FIELD TRIPS

- You will receive advance information, in writing, about the field trip. Any child going on a field trip must have a signed and dated permission slip. There is no fee or charge for field trips.
- Sometimes classrooms will take neighborhood walks or go to nearby playgrounds and parks, a family will be asked to sign a Neighborhood Field Trip Permission Form.
- If transportation is needed, the transportation will vary depending on the destination and length of the trip and can include a Footsteps Child Care, Inc. vehicle, rented bus, or public transportation. We never use private cars for field trips.

FOOTSTEPS CHILD CARE INFANT-TODDLER AND PRESCHOOL CURRICULUM

Footsteps philosophy and approach is based on research and best practices, which includes play-based curriculum, child, teacher, and family-initiated experiences, continuity of care and consistency in routines. The heart of our programs is the belief of respect for children, families and their point of view.

- We believe that children are competent, curious, self-motivated learners who are ready to explore the world around them.
- We believe the child's family and its culture and language are central to a child's development and learning. In high-quality programs, relationships between the family and the child's teachers are central to its success.
- We believe in a family-oriented approach to infant toddler care and education. For infants and toddlers, the family's influence on development and learning is paramount.
- We believe that a responsive relationship between the child and their caregivers/teachers is the basis for early care & learning. Nurturing relationships that meet the child's needs is the foundation for children's early emotional security.
- We acknowledge children innately know how to learn by interacting with their social and physical environments.
- We believe children learn through play, exploration, and discovery. We have an integrated approach to our play-based curriculum, focusing on children's development and emerging interests.
- We understand children have unique needs and capabilities and they learn at their own developmental timetable.
- We provide children with supportive and encouraging staff, striving to assist children in developing and maintaining a positive self-image and encourage children to take responsibility for themselves and their actions while learning social skills, such as problem solving and cooperation with others.

- We believe that teachers enhance children's play in the role of facilitator, guide, partners, and initiators.
- We believe in continual learning and improvement for our staff and programs.
- We believe in collaborating with local community resources.
- We believe in high quality and affordable child care for all income levels.

Play is an active, child-initiated process that supports children's learning. Our activities are selected based on the foundations and frameworks we use to guide the design and implementation of our curriculum and to measure a child's development & growth over time.

- Infant-Toddler: Social-Emotional Development, Language Development, and Perceptual & Motor Development
- Toddler-Twos & Preschool: Approaches to Learning Self-Regulation, Social & Emotional Development, Language & Literacy Development, English Language Development, Cognition including Math & Science, History & Social Science, Physical Development & Health, and Visual & Performing Art.

By taking advantage of the highly engaging nature of children's self-sustained play and using this as a jumping off point for a deeper exploration of the science concepts involved, teachers can generate curriculum units that both integrate child-centered play and maximize children's learning. Through thoughtful planning and the use of significant strategies to enhance children's play experiences, they can integrate specific learning goals and objectives for the group and for individuals, dramatically enhance children's learning, and meet standards for preschool outcomes in all areas.

- Play assists us in offering quality programming - The classrooms are composed of children in specific age ranges or in multi-age groupings enabling us to exemplify our commitment to provide an experience to enhance the development of each child's whole self: creative, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional. As each of these facets develops at different rates, the children seek activities and experiences that meet their individual needs. In addition, children with different knowledge and abilities stimulate one another's thinking and encourage pro-social behaviors amongst themselves. But, perhaps most importantly, this enables families, children, and teachers the chance to build strong and consistent relationships with one another. Play is the channel we most often use to achieve these outcomes.
- Foster life-long learners - The classroom environment offers a rich variety of spaces, material, and activities organized to promote children's active exploration and mastery. Although the classroom often appears informal, they are the result of careful planning and structuring to ensure that the needs of each child are met in a supportive and nurturing way. Children spend the majority of their day involved in a variety of activities: art, block building, dramatic play, music, sorting and matching games, listening to stories, movement activities, science activities, and large motor play.
- Foster improved social interaction and cooperation – Using play our teachers encourage curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, promote cooperative social interactions, support individual creativity and diversity, and provide opportunities for children to use their growing bodies to develop a sense of autonomy and self-worth.

Footsteps Child Care currently uses Learning Beyond Paper Curriculum to support our classroom's curriculum. Learning Beyond Paper is a coordinated curriculum that support the California Learning Foundations and Frameworks and is connected to our Procare system. You will see the activities your child participated in during the day through the Parent Connection section of the app. Home activities and parent-guided questions will also be available to allow you to continue to engage your child beyond the classroom.

With infants and toddlers, we work to provide an environment as home-like as possible – warm and welcoming, cozy spaces, photos of family, and so on. In the classroom, infants develop intimate relationships with a stable caregiver. Care giving activities such as feeding and diapering are warm, consistent, and individualized. These routines are viewed as opportunities for the infants to receive undivided adult attention and to promote language, self-awareness, and social skills. The infants' preexisting patterns for feeding and sleeping are respected and incorporated into the child's daily routine. Consistency in routines and schedules allow children to anticipate what is coming next; thus transitions are predictable.

The older toddler and preschool classrooms are composed of children 2 years to entering TK/Kindergarten. These multi-age groupings exemplify the Center's commitment to provide an experience to enhance the development of each child's whole self: creative, intellectual, physical, social, and emotional. As each of these facets develops at different rates, the children seek activities and experiences that meet their individual needs. In addition, children with different knowledge and abilities stimulate one another's thinking and encourage pro-social behaviors amongst themselves. But, perhaps most importantly, this enables families, children, and teachers the chance to build strong and consistent relationships with one another.

All of the Center classroom environments offer a rich variety of spaces, material, and activities organized to promote children's active exploration and mastery. Although classrooms often appear informal, they are the result of careful planning and structuring to ensure that the needs of each child are met in a supportive and nurturing way. Our teachers encourage curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, promote cooperative social interactions, support individual creativity and diversity, and provide opportunities for children to use their growing bodies to develop a sense of autonomy and self-worth. Children spend the majority of their day involved in a variety of activities: art, block building, dramatic play, music, sorting and matching games, listening to stories, movement activities, science activities, and large motor play.

Footsteps Child Care uses the State of California Department of Education Infant-Toddler Learning Foundations and the Preschool Transitional Kindergarten Learning Foundations to inform our curriculum planning, implementation, and assessment. These are divided by Infant-Toddler, 0-36 months, and Preschool-Transitional Kindergarten, 3-5 Years.

For Infants-Toddler (0-36 Months) the guiding principles include

- The family and its culture and language play a central role in early learning and development.
- Infancy is a unique stage of life that is important in its own right, described by three age periods—birth to eight months, eight months to 18 months, and 18 months to 36 months.
- Infants and toddlers are competent yet vulnerable at every stage of development.
- Emotions drive early learning.
- Early development includes both quantitative and qualitative change.
- Early development reflects an interplay of differentiation and integration.

With the Infant-Toddler (0-36 Months) the curriculum includes the learning foundations:

- Social-Emotional Development: including self-identity in relation to others, relationships with adults and peers, interactions with adults and peers, recognition of ability, expression of emotion, empathy, emotion regulations, impulse control, and social understanding
- Language Development: including receptive language, expressive language, communication skills and knowledge, and interest in print
- Cognitive Development: including cause-and-effect, Spatial Relationships, problem solving, imitation, memory, number sense, classification, symbolic play, attention maintenance, understanding of personal care routines
- Perceptual and Motor Development: including perceptual development, gross motor, and fine motor

The Preschool – Transitional Kindergarten (3-5 Years) guiding principles

- Relationships are central
- Play is a primary context for learning
- Learning is integrated
- Intentional teaching enhances children's learning experiences
- Family and community partnerships create meaningful connections
- Individualization of learning includes all children
- Responsiveness to culture and language supports children's learning
- Time for reflection and planning enhances teaching.

With the Preschool – Transitional Kindergarten (3-5 Years) learning foundations:

- Approaches to Learning
- Social & Emotional Development
- Foundational Language Development
- English Language Development
- Mathematics
- Science
- Physical Development
- Health
- History-Social Science
- Visual & Performing Arts

Because we want the Centers to be an extension of a child's family life, we offer a variety of ways for the family to become involved in children's classroom experience and in Center concerns. Conferences are scheduled. A family is invited to share their child's daily activities, to volunteer for field trips, special events or to visit the classroom. The organization and the individual centers plan several social events, parent meetings, and work parties each year. In addition, family are invited to join the Family Connection Team, which meets monthly.

Concepts of the Outdoor Classroom

In concert with modern child development research findings, the concept of the Outdoor Classroom is built upon the premise that children are complex beings. To nurture the whole child, early childhood education follows the fundamental principle that children are learning everywhere and all the time. The focus is on the real needs of children, offering activities that are personally meaningful to them, and fully embraces developmentally appropriate practices.

One of the key benefits of outdoor play is the range of sensory experiences the children will encounter.

- Children who are exposed to nature can connect with the environment in a more meaningful way.
- Children will be able to develop a wide range of physical skills, including balance, coordination, and dexterity, in a natural environment.
- Outdoor play can provide an opportunity for children to take reasonable risks and challenge themselves, which is essential for healthy child development.
- The regular use of creativity, critical thinking and problem-solving skills in an unstructured outside setting means that children are more likely to have these skills in the classroom and future careers

Characteristics of the Outdoor Classroom

- Most activities that can be done indoors can be done outdoors. Some activities occur best outdoors; some can only occur outdoors.
- Children spend substantial periods outside, and it is easy and safe for them to get there; they are free to move easily between the indoors and outdoors.
- There is a full range of activities for children to participate in, including many activities traditionally thought of as "indoor activities."
- The outdoor space offers a balance of areas for physically active and less active play.
- While outside, children frequently have the opportunity to initiate their own learning experiences and activities, with teachers available to support them.

Program Self-Evaluation Process

Footsteps Child Care conducts an annual self-evaluation of all of our Footsteps Child Care programs to address our efforts towards our ongoing quality program improvements. The self-evaluation includes family surveys, interviews, and evaluations and our program must do a **self-review** each spring based on the components above. An action plan to maintain or raise the quality of the program is developed and includes the listed formal assessment and evaluation systems:

- **Desired Results For Children and Families:** San Mateo County Office of Education Child Development State subcontracted program services (CCTR/CSPP) include a Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) assessment completed twice a year. The system has been established by the California Department of Education, Child Development Division and the California Department of Social Services and is used throughout the state. The Desired Results System
    - Emphasizes results for children and families
    - Results-based accountability for state-funded center based and family child care homes

- Set of tools for helping administrators and staff systematically review, evaluate and reflect on the program practices

System providing concrete information, based on structured observations and parent feedback, for improving programs for children and families. The DRDP has three components used to improve program quality in early care and education programs:

1. **Desired Result Developmental Profile** for each child enrolled in the program, completed within 60 days of enrollment. Profiles completed by staff are based on observation and family feedback.
2. All families complete annual **parent surveys**.
3. Observations of each room are conducted as part of **The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale.** Each item in the rating instrument must receive a score of "4" or above. The program strives for an over-all rating of "5".

- **Environmental Rating Scales (ERS):** San Mateo County Office of Education Child Development State subcontracted program services (CCTR) include an Environment Rating Scales (ERS) assessment completed once a year. The system has been established by the California Department of Social Services and is used throughout the state.
  - The Environment Rating Scales (ERS) are designed to assess process quality in early childhood groups. Process quality consists of the various interactions that go on in a classroom between staff and children, staff, parents, and other adults, among the children themselves.
  - There are four Environment Rating Scales (ERS), each designed for a different segment of the early childhood field. Each one of the scales has items to evaluate: Physical Environment; Basic Care; Curriculum; Interaction; Schedule and Program Structure; and Provisions for Parent and Staff.
  - The ERS provides a system for assessing the learning environment and making improvements to the learning environment across a comprehensive set of items. The program self-evaluation reveals areas for program improvement that can be addressed by program staff and administrators.

  There are Environmental Rating Scales tools for Infant-Toddler, Preschool, and School Age classrooms and programs.
- **CLASS – Classroom Assessment Scoring System:** CLASS is a tool for analyzing the quality of teacher-child interactions in the classroom. CLASS defines teaching quality through the lens of interactions; it provides the ability to measure and improve the interactions that matter most for children's outcomes.
  - Developmental theory and research suggest that interactions between children and adults are the primary way of supporting children's development and learning, and that effective, engaging interactions and environments form the foundation for all learning in early childhood classrooms.
  - CLASS includes three domains or categories of teacher-child interactions that support children's learning and development: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support.
  - Within each domain are dimensions that capture more specific details about teachers' interactions with children.
- **QRIS – Quality Rating Improvement System:** Footsteps Child Care preschool programs participate in the Quality Rating Improvement System (QRIS) and national quality improvement system. Participation includes an annual assessment and ongoing coaching and mentoring for classrooms and programs.
  - A QRIS is a systemic approach to assess, improve, and communicate the level of quality in early and school-age care and education programs.
  - Similar to rating systems for restaurants and hotels, QRIS award quality ratings to early and school-age care and education programs that meet a set of defined program standards.
  - By participating in their State's QRIS, programs embark on a path of continuous quality improvement. Even programs that have met the standards of the lowest QRIS levels have achieved a level of quality that is beyond the minimum requirements to operate.

  QRIS are intended to improve the quality of early and school-age care and education programs through the alignment and coordination of systemwide initiatives. QRIS are composed of five common elements:

1. **Program Standards**: QRIS standards are used to assign ratings to programs that participate in QRIS, providing parents and the public with information about each program's quality.
2. **Supports for Programs and Practitioners**: QRIS include provider supports, such as training, mentoring, and technical assistance, to promote participation and help programs achieve higher levels of quality.

3. **Financial Incentives**: QRIS uses financial incentives to help early and school-age care and education providers improve learning environments, attain higher ratings, and sustain long-term quality.
4. **Quality Assurance and Monitoring**: Accountability and monitoring processes provide ways to determine how well programs meet QRIS standards, assign ratings, and verify ongoing compliance.
5. **Consumer Education**: QRIS provides a framework for educating parents about the importance of quality in early care and education.

CALIFORNIA STATE PRESCHOOL PROGRAM – CSPP ***UPDATED 09.16.2026***

GENERAL CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT – CCTR SUBSIDIZED PROGRAM

We have a number of CSPP and CCTR State subsidized spaces at Nesbit Puma Cubs, Little Footsteps, Redwood Creek, and our School Age sites for children.

Child Age Eligibility:

An eligible enrolling child's age must be on or before June 1, 2026.

- Redwood Creek CCTR 2-36 months & CSPP 24 Months +
- Puma Cubs CCTR 2-24 months & CSPP 24 Months +
- Little Footsteps CSPP 24 Months +
- School Age Programs CCTR Transitional Kindergarten (4 Years) – Eighth Grade (12 Years)

The spaces are available through our sub-contract with our Lead Fiscal Agent, San Mateo County Office of Education. Eligibility for the full-day state preschool program is based on need and income. The terms and conditions for eligibility in the subsidized component are established by the California Department of Education. We are required to request parent income and family information. Enrollment is based on eligibility and need priority rather than "first-come, first-served basis."

CALIFORNIA STATE SUBSIDY – CSPP & CCTR ELIGIBILITY & ENROLLMENT PROCESS

APPLYING FOR SUBSIDIZED SERVICES

Each family interested in applying for subsidized services must fill out a program interest application to begin the enrollment process. The application can be obtained from the Child Development office. Once the application is complete, the parent/guardian can return the application for processing. An eligibility rank will be assigned to the family based on income and family size reported on the application. Families will be contacted based on the identified priorities and ranking established by Department of Social Services. Additional documentation will be required to verify income and family size when a space is available.

FAMILY SELECTION PROCESS FOR SUBSIDIZED SERVICES

When a family submits an eligibility interest application, priority will be identified, and/or a ranking number will be issued based on the parent/guardian's initial reporting of their family size and gross income or other eligibility criteria.

Based on the initial reporting of family size and income, the program staff will refer to the California Department of Social Services income eligibility ceiling chart to issue a ranking number. Families will be enrolled based on priority and/or the lowest ranking first until all spaces are filled.

When 2 or more families have the same ranking number, with the lowest gross monthly income in relation to family size, as determined by a schedule adopted by the department, shall be admitted first.

If two or more families are in the same priority regarding income, the enrollment order will be as follows:

1. The family with a child with exceptional needs shall be admitted first.
2. If there is no family of the same priority with a child with exceptional needs,
3. follow by the family in which the primary home language is a language other than English and lastly, the family that has been on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first.

For purposes of determining the order of admission, grants of public assistance recipients shall be counted as income.

Our program maintains an eligibility wait list when spaces are filled. Families will be contacted based on the ranking number issued at the time the wait list form was submitted. If income and/or family size change after the wait list form submission, please contact the office to update your information. Based on the change(s) reported, the program staff will update the ranking number as needed. Families will be contacted as soon as spaces become available.

ADMISSION PRIORITIES

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. uses a waitlist to determine admission priorities and contact families for enrollment

1. Child Protective Services (CPS) and At Risk
2. Families admitted based on family income, lowest income ranking families will be admitted first
3. Children with exceptional needs
4. Families whose primary home language is other than English, after families that have a child with exceptional needs when two or more families have the same priority.

CCTR Enrollment Priorities:

- First Priority:
  - Must be given to families whose children are recipients of child protective services, or who are at risk of being neglected, abused, or exploited, upon written referral from a legal, medical, or social services agency
  - Within this priority, children receiving protective services through the local county welfare department shall be enrolled before children identified as at risk of being neglected or abused or exploited.
  - If an agency is unable to enroll a child in this first priority category, the agency shall refer the child's parent or guardian to local resources and referral services so that services for the child can be located.
- Second Priority:
  - All children and families who are not within the first priority for admission shall be admitted in accordance with family income, with the lowest income ranked families admitted first.
  - For purposes of determining the order of admission, families with the lowest gross monthly income in relation to family size as determined by the income ranking schedule adopted by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) shall be admitted first. Public assistance grants are counted as income.
  - When two or more families have the same income ranking, families shall be admitted in the following order:
    - The family that has a child with exceptional needs shall be admitted first.

    If there is no family with a child with exceptional needs, the family in which the primary home language is a language other than English shall be admitted first,
  - If there is no family with the same income ranking that meet the criteria in (c) above, the family with the same income ranking that has been on the waiting list the longest shall be admitted first.
- Contractors shall not deny service to nor assign a lower priority to a family that needs less than full-time services.
- Except for situations where not all of the children in a family are certified based on child protective services, a family that has a child or children enrolled in a program shall be allowed to enroll additional children provided there exists an appropriate program opening such as infant care or services to school age care children in which to enroll the child.
- When not all of the children in a family are certified based on child protective services, the other children or the parents in the family must meet both eligibility and need criteria as specified in section III, paragraphs A, *Eligibility Criteria* and B, *Need Requirements* prior to enrollment and shall be admitted in accordance with priorities specified in this paragraph.

CSPP Full-Day Enrollment Priorities:

- 1st Priority: CSPP three-year-old or four-year-old children who are who are recipients of child protective services or who are at risk of being neglected, abused or exploited
- 2nd Priority: All three- and four-year-old children with disabilities whose family's income is at or below the income eligibility threshold
    - Priority will be given to children with families with the lowest income according to the most recent schedule of income ceiling
    - Second priority is given to children with disabilities enrolling in CSPP outside of the enrollment set aside
- 3rd Priority: Eligible CSPP three- and four-year-old children not enrolled in Transitional Kindergarten
    - Priority will be given to children from families with the lowest income
        - If two or more families have the same income ranking, the child who is identified as dual language learner shall be admitted first
        - If there are no children that are dual language learners, the child that has been on the waitlist for the longest time shall be admitted first
- 4th Priority: Children from families whose income is no more than 15 percent above the eligibility income threshold. Within this priority category, children shall be enrolled in the following order:
    - Three- and four-year-old children with disabilities interested in enrolling beyond those already enrolled in the percent of funded enrollment set aside (pursuant to Education Code section 8208)
    - Three- and four-year old children without disabilities shall be enrolled in income ranking order according to the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling eligibility table at the time of enrollment
    - If two or more families have the same income ranking, according to the most recent Schedule of Income Ceiling eligibility table, the child that has been on the waiting list for the longest time shall be admitted first
- After all otherwise eligible children have been enrolled, the following children in the order listed may be enrolled:
    - Contractor may enroll CSPP three-and four-year-old children from families that meet eligibility criteria without establishing a need
        - Within this priority, contractors shall enroll families in income ranking order, lowest to highest
- After all families have been enrolled in the priorities above, children with disabilities that are not income eligible and have not been enrolled pursuant to any of the priorities above shall be enrolled

FAMILY SIZE

The size of the family, or composition of the family size, is initially determined by the number of adults and children that the applicant's parent presents to the agency or who is identified on the application.

"Family" means the parents and the children for whom the parents are responsible, who comprise the household in which the child receiving services is living.

"Parent" means a biological parent, adoptive parent, stepparent, foster parent, caretaker relative, legal guardian, or domestic partner of the parent or any other adult living with a child who has responsibility for the care and welfare of the child.

The parent shall obtain and provide supporting documentation regarding the number of children and parents in the family as listed on the application for service.

The number of children shall be documented by providing any **ONE** of the following documents, as applicable:

- Birth certificate or other live birth records.
- Court order regarding child custody
- Adoption documents.
- Records of Foster care placements
- School or medical records
- County welfare department records or

- Other reliable documentation indicating the relationship of the child to the parent

For purposes of income eligibility and family fee determination, when a child and that child's siblings are living in a family that does not include their biological or adoptive parent, "family" shall be considered the child and related siblings.

SELF-CERTIFICATION, ABSENT PARENT, OR SINGLE PARENT STATUS
If only one parent has signed an application and the information indicates the child(ren) in the family has another parent whose name does not appear on the application, then the parent who has signed the application shall self-certify the presence or absence of that parent under penalty of perjury and shall not be required to submit additional information documenting the presence or absence of the second parent.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT
To be eligible for services the child must live in the State of California while services are being received. Evidence of a street address or post office address in California will be sufficient to establish residency. A person identified as experiencing homelessness is exempt from this requirement and shall submit a declaration of intent to reside in California.

The governing board of any school district, community college, or a County Superintendent of Schools may accommodate children residing outside the district boundaries in accordance with WIC§ 10332(a).

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA
The parent is responsible for providing documentation of the family's total countable income, and the contractor must verify the information. The parent(s) shall provide total countable income for all individuals counted in the family size. The contractor will calculate income based on income information reflecting the family's current and ongoing income.

Eligibility is based on documentation and verification of at least ONE of the following:
- The family has a child who is in Child Protective Services (CPS) **OR** is at risk of abuse, neglect, and/or Exploitation
- The family is experiencing homelessness. The definition of homeless aligns with the federal McKinney-Vento Act. (See specific enrollment criteria on page 29)
- The family is a current CALWORKS cash aid recipient
- The family is Income eligible
- A member in the family is certified to receive benefits from specific means-tested government programs such as Medi-Cal, Cal-Fresh, WIC, Head Start etc.

Upon establishing initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility for services, **a family shall be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for those services for no less than 24 months** before having their eligibility or need to be recertified and shall not be required to report changes to income or other changes for at least 24 months. The program will notify the family in writing within the final thirty days of the initial certification as notification to prepare for upcoming recertification. The recertification appointment will occur within 50 days after the initial certification ends.

When a family voluntarily requests a reduction to certified schedule, the parent shall: 1. Submit a written request that includes days and hours per day requested and date of the proposed reduction of their certified schedule. The parent will attest acknowledgement in writing that they understand that they may retain their current certified schedule and that a decrease to their certified schedule would replace their current schedule. Once the new schedule is certified, parent will be required to provide additional documentation should they choose to increase their certified schedule at a later time. The program will issue a Notice of Action within 10 business days of receiving appropriate documentation informing the program's decision.

Should the change in schedule result in a family fee reduction, it will take effect on the first of the month following the receipt and approval of the required supporting documentation. This documentation may not be used to make any other changes to the family's service agreement.

The parent may also request for increase service hours by providing documentation to support the reported change. The program staff shall request for all necessary documentation to verify the requested need. The program will issue a Notice of Action within 10 business days of receiving appropriate documentation informing the program's decision.

The program will provide a current Schedule of Income Ceiling at 85% of the State Median Income (SMI) with the Parent Enrollment Packet. The program will provide the parent with a copy of the income calculation worksheet used to verify income eligibility and the maximum income threshold for their family size. The family is required to notify the program within 30 calendar days of any income that causes the family's income to go above the maximum income threshold. The program will recalculate the family's income to determine the family's continued eligibility for services.

CHILD PROTECTIVE SERVICES (CPS) OR AT RISK

At Risk of Abuse or Neglect - When the basis of Eligibility is At Risk of Abuse or Neglect, a child who a legally qualified professional has identified in a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter as being at risk of abuse neglect, or exploitation, and referred for childcare and development services. At-risk families may receive a fee exemption when a legally qualified professional from a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter specifies in the referral that it is necessary to waive the family fee. For families with a fee exemption, income information will not be required, and fees will not be assessed or collected.

If the referral from a legally qualified professional (a legal, medical, social services agency or emergency shelter) does not waive the fee, income information must be obtained from the family. Fees must be assessed and collected, as applicable, based on the most recent fee schedule issued by the CDE, CDSS. Fee assessment and collection will begin on the first day of enrollment unless the fee is waived. Family fee waiver is active for 12 months. The legally qualified professional will need to complete the fee exemption for another 12 months once the waiver expires.

Child Protective Services (CPS) - When the basis of Eligibility is CPS, a written referral from a legal, medical, social service agency, or emergency shelter is required. The written referral shall include a statement that the child is under Child Protective Services and that childcare services are needed to reduce or eliminate that risk. CPS shall certify that the child is receiving protective services and that childcare is a necessary part of the CPS plan and the probable duration of the CPS service plan or the at-risk situation. The referral must be signed by a legally qualified professional, and include the name, address, telephone number, email address, and license number

CPS families may receive a fee exemption when a legally qualified professional from a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter specifies in the referral that it is necessary to waive the family fee. Family fee waiver is active for 12 months. The legally qualified professional will need to complete the fee exemption for another 12 months once the waiver expires.

Note: A "legal qualified profession" means a person licensed under applicable law and regulation of the State of California to perform legal, medical, health or social services for the general public.

Current Cash Aid Recipient

If the basis of eligibility is a current CalWORKs cash aid recipient, the parent shall provide documentation of public cash assistance.

INCOME ELIGIBLE

When an opening is available, we will contact families from the waitlist. Income Eligibility is one way that applications are prioritized. Income thresholds are updated by CDSS annually. Families are eligible for the Childcare and Development Program (CCTR) when the total family's gross income is 85% SMI or lower. Below is the maximum income eligibility based on family size.

Family Size	Total Countable Monthly Gross Income
2	$6,860
3	$7,785
4	$9,020
5	$10,463
6	$11,906
7	$12,177
8	$12,447
9	$12,718
10	$12,988
11	$13,259
12	$13,530

HOMELESSNESS

If the basis of eligibility is homelessness, one of the following is required:

- To meet the eligibility requirements, the family must obtain and provide documentation, which includes either of the following:
  1. A written referral dated within three months prior to the application for services from one of the following entities identifies the child as experiencing homelessness.
     a) A legal, medical, or social services agency;
     b) A local educational agency liaison for children and youth experiencing homelessness;
     c) A Head Start program or
     d) An emergency or transitional shelter

  The referral shall include the following:

  - 1. The name of the identifying entity;
  - 2. The physical address;
  - 3. Telephone number; and
  - 4. Title and signature of the person identifying the family as experiencing homelessness.

  2. A written parental declaration, signed under penalty of perjury, that the family is experiencing homelessness

The McKinney-Vento Act defines homeless children and youths as individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes:

- Children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason.
- Children and youths who may be living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to a lack of adequate alternative accommodations.
- Children and youths living in emergency or transitional shelters or are abandoned in hospitals.
- Children and youths who are a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- Children and youths who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; or
- Migratory children who qualify as homeless because they are children who are living in similar circumstances listed above

INCOME ELIGIBILITY

Families must meet the 85% State Median Income (SMI) to be income eligibility. Families must provide documentation for "Total Countable Income" for all individuals counted in the family size. Documentation of

Income eligibility shall be provided for parents/guardian who are employed, self-employed or receives non-wage income.

WHAT IS COUNTABLE INCOME?
Total countable income means all income of the individuals counted in the family size.
For Example:

- Gross wages or salaries, commissions, overtime, tips, bonuses, gambling, or lottery winnings;
- Wages for migrant, agricultural, or seasonal works;
- CalWORKs cash aid;
- Gross income from self-employment, less business expenses, with the exception wage of draws;
- Disability or unemployment compensation;
- Workers' compensation;
- Spousal support, child support received from the former spouse or absent parent, or financial assistance for housing costs or car payments paid as part of or in addition to spousal or child support;
- Survivor and retirement benefits;
- Dividends, interest on bonds, income from estates or trusts, net rental income or royalties;
- Rent from room within the family's residence;
- Financial assistance received for the care of a child living with an adult who is not the child's biological or adoptive parent;
- Veterans' pensions;
- Pension or annuities
- Inheritance;
- Allowances for housing or automobiles provided as part of compensation;
- Insurance or court settlements for lost wages or punitive damages;
- Net proceeds from the sale or real property, stocks or inherited property; or
- Other enterprises for gain

If the basis for eligibility is employment income, documentation shall include but not be limited to…

- A release authorizing the program to contact the employer(s) that includes, to the extent known, the employer's name, address, telephone number, email address, and usual business hours
- Payroll check stubs, independently drafted letters from the employer on company letterhead, or other records of wages issued by the employer from either month of the two-month window immediately preceding the initial certification or the recertification of eligibility for services.
- When a family's income reflects **fluctuation of income**, the parent must provide a minimum of 2 preceding months of income information. The program will average the total countable income to determine income eligibility and family fee. The family may choose to provide up to 12 preceding months of income if the additional time of income provided contributes to an affirmative eligibility determination and/or reduces applicable family fee.
- When contacting the employer may adversely affect the parent's employment or the employer fails or refuses to provide documentation, the parent shall provide other means of verification that may include a list of clients and amount paid, or other records of income to support the reported income along with a self- certification of income.
- If a parent in the family size does not have income, the parent shall provide a self- certification of income.
- The parent shall also provide documentation of all non-wage income. For example: child or spousal support. If no documentation is possible, the parent shall complete a self-certification of income to verify all non-wage income.

The program has the right to request additional documents to determine eligibility.

Self-Employment Income
If the basis of eligibility is self-employment, you shall obtain and provide a combination of documentation necessary to establish current income from either month of the two-month window immediately preceding the initial certification or recertification of eligibility for services. The documentation shall consist of a self-certification of income and as many of the following types of documentation as necessary to determine income:

- An independent drafted letter from a source of income or
- A copy of the most recently signed and completed tax return with a statement of **current estimated income** for tax purposes **OR**
- Other business records, such as ledgers, receipts, or business logs

If documentation of income is not possible, you may provide a self-certification of income.

Mean-Tested Government Program
If any member of the household, counted in the family size, is a recipient of a means-tested government program, the parent shall provide the application for the means-tested government program, for the purposes of calculating family fees. If the applications for means- tested government programs are not available to the family, the family shall self-certify that they do not have access to the application, and to the best of their recollection, the income declared on the application for the means-tested government program.

FAMILY FEE
Families receiving childcare will be assessed whether a family fee applies based on income and family size. The family fee is a flat monthly full-time or part-time fee based on the hours of care certified for the month. Families with a certified need of fewer than 130 hours per month will be assessed a part-time fee, while families with a certified need of 130 or more hours per month will be assessed a full-time fee. The agency can charge a part-time fee or the cost of care (calculated by multiplying the days of enrollment by the rate), whichever is less, depending on the number of hours of certified enrollment for the month.

Exceptions for Family fee:

- CPS or At Risk – these services may be exempt from family fee under the recommendation of the case manager completing the CPS/At Risk form for up to 12 months at a time.
- Families receiving CalWORKs cash aid
- Income and family size combination less than the first entry in Family Fee Schedule

The family fee is paid at the beginning of each month before services are rendered. No adjustment is made for absences from the program. The family fee is assessed based on the child enrolled for the longest period of childcare. Family fees shall be considered delinquent after seven (7) calendar days from the date the payments are due. A Notice of Action shall be issued for a delinquent family fee.

Child care services shall be terminated 14 days from the date of the Notice of Action (NOA) unless all delinquent fees are paid or a payment plan has been established. If the NOA were mailed to the family, the termination would occur after 19 days. Upon termination of services for nonpayment of delinquent fees, the family shall be ineligible for childcare and development services until all outstanding fees are paid. The program shall accept a reasonable plan from the parent(s) to pay delinquent fees. Childcare services shall continue to be provided to the child, provided the parent(s) pays current fees when due and complies with the provisions of the repayment plan.

The fee for the initial certification is due upon the first day of school. For new family fees due as the result of recertification and updates to the family file, an NOA will be issued to the family showing the new fee to be imposed and contain an effective date of either 14 or 19 calendar days after service of the NOA, depending upon whether the NOA was personally served or mailed to the family. The new fee will be in effect on the first day of the month following the effective date of the NOA.

When the initial enrollment is not on the first day of the month, the program can assess a fee based on the certified hours for the partial month and another fee for each subsequent month based on the certified hours as

documented in the application for services. For example, a family works 40 hours per week or full-time, and their initial enrollment date is May 20. For the month of May, the family will utilize less than 130 hours of services. In this example, the family will be assessed a part-time fee for May and a full-time fee for each subsequent month of service. If a new family fee is assessed, the fee will become effective on the first day of the month following the issue date of the NOA.

DOCUMENTATION OF NEED ELIGIBILITY

Upon establishing initial eligibility or ongoing eligibility for services, a family shall be considered to meet all eligibility and need requirements for those services for no less than 24 months before having their eligibility and need recertified. The family shall not be required to report changes to income or other changes for the 24-months.

Each adult counted in the family size must have a need for childcare services. If it is determined by the enrollment specialist that there is no documented need for subsidized childcare, a Notice of Action to deny services will be issued. The following are the categories of documentable need for childcare.

At any time during the family's certification period, a parent may request an increase or decrease of their certified schedule. Requests to change the certified hours must be provided in writing. If the request is to decrease hours, the program will notify the family of the right to maintain the current certified schedule.

At Risk of Abuse or Neglect - When the basis of need is At Risk of Abuse or Neglect, a child who a legally qualified professional has identified in a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter as being at risk of abuse neglect, or exploitation, and referred for childcare and development services. At-risk families may receive a fee exemption when a legally qualified professional from a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter specifies in the referral that it is necessary to waive the family fee. For families with a fee exemption, income information will not be required, and fees will not be assessed or collected. If the referral from a legally qualified professional (a legal, medical, social services agency or emergency shelter) does not waive the fee, income information must be obtained from the family. Fees must be assessed and collected, as applicable, based on the most recent fee schedule issued by the CDE, CDSS. Fee assessment and collection will begin on the first day of enrollment unless the fee is waived.

Child Protective Services (CPS) - When the basis of need is CPS, a written referral from a legal, medical, social service agency, or emergency shelter is required. The written referral shall include a statement that the child is at risk of abuse or neglect and that childcare services are needed to reduce or eliminate that risk. CPS shall certify that the child is receiving protective services and that childcare is a necessary part of the CPS plan and the probable duration of the CPS service plan or the at-risk situation. The referral must be signed by a legally qualified professional, and include the name, address, telephone number, email address, and license number

CPS families may receive a fee exemption when a legally qualified professional from a legal, medical, social services agency, or emergency shelter specifies in the referral that it is necessary to waive the family fee.

Note: A "legal qualified profession" means a person licensed under applicable law and regulation of the State of California to perform legal, medical, health or social services for the general public.

Employment - When the basis for need is employment, means of verification may include but is not limited to: Pay Stubs with days and hours or Paystubs with total hours per pay period.
When the parent has an employer, the parent shall obtain one of the following documentations: written statements from the employer indicating the days and hours of employment, or employment verification form completed by the employer. Parent will need to sign a release to contact employer form which allows the enrollment specialist to verify employment, as necessary.

Parent may notify the enrollment specialist if contacting the employer will adversely affect employment.

Travel Time: Travel time applies to parents who are working or in school. Parents **must request** for travel time to and from the center to the place of employment/school. Travel time cannot exceed 4 hours per day and cannot be more than the time from center to work/school and back.

Sleep Time: Sleep time is available for parents who work between 10:00 PM and 6:00 AM. Parents **must request** for sleep time if the work hours fall between the allowable hours. Sleep time can be equal to the authorized work and travel time between the identified work hours. Sleep time shall NOT be provided when:

a. There is a parent in the family available to providing care for the family's child(ren) during the time care is requested.
b. Supervision of the family's child(ren) are otherwise being provided by a public educational program or a private school that the child is enrolled in or a time when the child(ren) are receiving any other childcare and development services.

Employment in Home or Licensed Day Care Home; Service Limitation: If the parent's employment is in the family's home or on property that includes the family's home, the parent must provide justification for requesting subsidized child care and development services based on the type of work being done and its requirements, the age of the family's child for whom services are sought, and, if the child is more than five years old, the specific child care needs. The contractor shall determine and document whether the parent's employment and identified childcare needs preclude the supervision of the family's child.

If the parent is a licensed family day care home provider or an individual license-exempt provider, the parent **is not eligible** for subsidized services during the parent's business hours because the parent's employment does not preclude the supervision of the family's child.

If the parent is employed as an assistant in a licensed large family day care home, and is requesting services for the family's child in the same family day care home, the parent shall provide documentation that substantiates all of the following:

a. A copy of the family day care home license indicating it is licensed as a large family day care home.
b. A signed statement from the licensee stating that the parent is the assistant to the staffing ratio requirement.
c. Proof that the parent's fingerprints are associated with that licensed family day care home as its assistant, which the contractor may verify with the local community care licensing office.
d. Payroll deductions withheld for the assistant by the licensee, which may be a pay stub.

Self-Employment: When the basis of Need is self-employed, the parent shall provide a declaration of need under penalty of perjury that includes a description of the employment and an estimate of the days and hours worked per week; AND as many of the following document needed to support the days and hours of employment:

a. Appointment logs, client receipts, job logs, mileage logs, a list of clients with contact information, or similar records; or
b. As applicable, a copy of a business license, a workspace lease, or a workspace rental agreement.

Vocational training or participation in an educational program - When the basis of need is training, childcare services may be authorized for six years from the initiation of services, or twenty-four-semester units, or its equivalent after attaining a bachelor's degree. A parent may request additional study time and travel hours to support their educational needs with appropriate documentation.

Educational program – The parent shall obtain and provide documentation of enrollment in an English Language Learner/Englis as a Second Language (ELL/ESL) program or a program to attain a high school diploma or General Education Degree/High School Equivalency (GED/HSE) certificate.

When the educational program is not based on academic units, the contractor shall determine the hours approved for study time but in no case may the number of study hours exceed the number of class hours per week.

Parent shall provide documentation of the days and hours of the vocational training which shall include the name of the training institution, the current class schedule that is either an electronic print-out from the institution or a representative from the institution will complete the SMC vocational training form.

Online or televised instructional classes that are unit bearing classes from an accredited training institution shall be counted as class time at one hour a week for each unit. The parent shall provide a copy of the syllabus or other class documentation as applicable. The accrediting body of the training institution shall be among those recognized by the United States Department of Education.
At recertification, the continuation of services is contingent upon the parent making adequate progress. To verify adequate progress, the program will request additional documentation to assess progress that has been made. In a graded program, the parent must achieve a minimum of a 2.0 grade point average in the last enrollment period. In a non-graded program passing at least 50% of the class requirements or meeting the institution's standards. If adequate progress has been made, then that parent is eligible to recertify under this need.

If adequate progress has not been made, the parent may be recertified to receive services for another 24 months. If at the end of this enrollment period, adequate progress has not been made at recertification, the family will be disenrolled unless another need is established. Once disenrolled, the family remains ineligible for service based on vocational/educational programs for six months.

Study Time - When the educational program, on-line, or televised instructional classes are based on academic units, study time is determined at two hours per week per academic unit in which the parent is enrolled. Additional time for studying may be approved by the contractor, on a case-by-case basis, if the parent provides a declaration signed under penalty of perjury as to why the additional time is needed for the specified course(s). Additional time, if approved, shall not exceed one hour per week per academic unit for the specified course(s) in which the parent is enrolled.

Travel Time – Travel time shall be determined based on to/from center to the location of the vocational/educational program, based on the actual travel time needed, not to exceed a maximum of four hours per day.

Seeking employment - When the basis for need is seeking employment, the parent may be approved to seek employment for up to 32.5 hours per week. A parent seeking employment will provide the program with a general seeking employment plan for the requested hours.

Family is Experiencing Homelessness – A family experiencing homelessness may establish both Eligibility and Need. To be eligible, the child must live in the State of California while services are being received. The family must obtain and provide documentation which includes: a written referral dated within three months prior to the application for services, from one of the following: A legal, medical or social services agency; a local educational agency liaison; a Head start program or an emergency or transitional shelter OR a written parental declaration signed under penalty of perjury that the family is experiencing homelessness. If the Need is a family experiencing homelessness, services shall be as requested by the parent and shall occur no more than five days per week for less than 30 hours per week.

Seeking permanent housing for family stability – When the basis of need is seeking permanent housing, a parent may be approved to seek permanent housing for no more than 5 days and up to 32.5 hours per week. Documentation for seeking permanent housing shall include completing the SMC Seeking Permanent Housing form signed under penalty of perjury that the family is seeking permanent housing. The declaration shall include the parent's general search plan to secure a fixed, regular and adequate residence. If the family is residing in a shelter, services shall be provided while the parent attends appointments or activities necessary to comply with the shelter participation requirements within the certified schedule.

Parental Incapacity - When the basis of need is Parental Incapacitation, childcare and development services shall include a signed release from the incapacitated parent authorizing a legally qualified health professional to disclose information necessary to establish that the parent meets the definition of incapacity and needs for services.
The documentation shall include completing the SMC Parental Incapacitation form which a statement that the parent is incapacitated and incapable of providing care and supervision for the child for part of the day. The documentation must identify the days and hours per week that services are recommended to accommodate the incapacitation, considering the age of the child and the child's care needs. This may include time for the parent's regularly scheduled medical or mental health appointments. The health professional must complete all the information on the form which includes the name, business address, telephone number, professional license number and sign and date the form. Childcare services shall not exceed 50 hours per week.
Eligibility for subsidized spaces is not based on "first-come, first-serve" but is determined by CDSS guidelines.

Documentation of Child with Exceptional Needs – The family shall provide documentation of the child's exceptional needs. The documentation shall include:

1. A copy of the portion of the active individual family service plan (IFSP) or the individualized education program (IEP) that includes the information and
2. A statement signed by a legally qualified professional that:
    a. The child requires the special attention of adults in a childcare setting; and
    b. Includes the name, address, license number, and telephone number of the legally qualified professional who is rendering the opinion.

NOTICE OF ACTION (NOA)
The Notice of Action (NOA) is a written notification of your child care status with the state subsidized program for approval, change and termination of services.
Parent/Guardian will receive a Notice of Action (NOA) at:

- Initial certification to approve or deny services
- Recertification
- Changes in service
- When your family fee payment is delinquent
- Disenrollment from the program

APPROVAL FOR SERVICES
Families must first meet the program's specific California Department of Social Services (CDSS) approved requirements for eligibility.

Families are certified for services for no less than twenty-four (24) months at the time of initial enrollment or recertification. A Notice of Action (NOA) will be issued on the status of the enrollment.

GRIEVANCE/COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Complaint Procedure
Program staff work to ensure that you and your family have a positive experience in the program. If you have concerns that are not addressed to your satisfaction and would like to file a complaint, please follow the escalation process, so that concerns can be addressed and resolved in the correct manner.

- Step 1: Concern is brought to the teacher.
- Step 2: If concern is not resolved, request a meeting with the site administrator.
- Step 3: If concern is not resolved, request a meeting with the Program Director.

Uniform Complaint Procedure
Our program follows the California Department of Social Services (CDSS) Uniform Complaint Procedure to ensure that all families are treated fairly and respectfully.

- Parents/guardians have the right to file a complaint if they believe the program has violated a state or federal child care and development law or regulation, including issues related to services, eligibility, enrollment, fees, discrimination, or health and safety requirements.
- Complaints may be submitted verbally or in writing to the Program Director or designated staff. The program will investigate and respond to the complaint within required timelines.
- If a parent/guardian is not satisfied with the resolution, they may appeal directly to the California Department of Social Services. Information on how to file a complaint and contact information for CDSS is available upon request and posted at the program site.

CCTR:
California Department of Social Services
Child Care and Development Division
Attn: Appeals Coordinator
744 P Street, MS 9-8-351 Sacramento, CA 95814
CCDDappeals@dss.ca.gov

CSPP:
California Department of Education
California State Preschool Program
Attn: Appeals Coordinator
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

PARENT APPEAL INFORMATION
Notice of Action (NOA)
Whenever the program makes changes to childcare services (for example, by approving or denying services, by changing the approved hours of care, or by terminating services), the program must notify you by giving you a document called a "Notice of Action" (NOA). The NOA will inform you of the type of action taken, the reasons for the action, and the date when the action shall take effect. Parents must file a notice to appeal the action within fourteen (14) days from the date the NOA is given to the parent or nineteen (19) days if mailed to the parent. Your Notice of Action provides you with specific instructions for appealing an action. Please keep a copy of your NOA. If you, the parent, disagree with the local hearing appeal decision, the parent may appeal for a state review of the local hearing decision. The Parent Appeal Information Pamphlet (attached) provides information regarding the two levels of appeal described above. Please see your Notice of Action and/or the pamphlet for specific instructions on how to appeal.

APPEAL PROCEDURE FOR SUSPENSION OR EXPULSION DUE TO PERSISTENT AND SERIOUS BEHAVIOR

1. If the parent(s) disagree(s) with the suspension or expulsion issued in a Notice of Action (NOA), the parent(s) may file an appeal directly to the CDSS within 14 calendar days of the date the Notice of Action was received.
2. The NOA shall be delivered to the parent(s) no less than 24 hours before the effective date of action. Because the action to suspend or expel a child involves persistent and serious behaviors that impact the safety of children, the child may not attend the program during the appeal process.
3. If the parent(s) do(es) not submit an appeal request within 14 calendar days, the parents' appeal process shall be deemed abandoned and the program will implement the intended action.
4. The parent(s) shall submit a written request using the form on the back of the NOA, specifying the reason(s) why they believe the program's decision to suspend or expel the child was incorrect.
5. A copy of the program's notice of intended action shall be submitted by the parent(s) with the appeal request.
6. Upon receipt of an appeal request, the CDSS will schedule a hearing within 10 days. CDSS may request copies of the family data file and other relevant materials from the program. The CDSS may also conduct any

investigations, interviews or mediation necessary to resolve the appeal.

7. The decision of the CDSS shall be mailed or delivered to the parent(s) and to the program following the 10 days after the hearing.

REINSTATEMENT OF SERVICES AFTER A FAMILY VOLUNTARILY DISENROLLS

Families that voluntarily disenrolls from the program shall retain their rights to their original 24- month certification period. When a family requests reinstatement within the original 24-month certification period, the program shall enroll the family, if spaces are available, without collecting any new documentation or another application for services from the family. The certification period shall be extended by the number of months the family was disenrolled. A Notice of Action shall be issued extending the certification period by the number of months the family was disenrolled.

If the program is full, the family may be put on the waitlist until a space becomes available. The family may also be connected with the County Resource and Referral Agency or any other Child Development contractor that may have a space to provide services. If the family chooses to receive services from another contractor and space is available, the family shall be transferred with the current certification documentation and shall be reinstated.

FAMILY'S RIGHT TO VOLUNTARILY REPORT CHANGES

A family may at any time voluntarily request a reduction or increase to their service level or a re-evaluation of their family fee. Before a contractor may take any actions, a parent shall submit a written request for the requested changes, which may include the days and hours per day requested, the effective date of a proposed reduction of service, or the parent's income status change. If the request is a reduction of services, the parent must acknowledge in writing that he/she understands that they may retain their current certified childcare service level.

Upon receipt of the parent's written request, the contractor shall notify the family in writing of the parent's right to continue to bring their child pursuant to the original certified service level, and collect documentation to support the changes requested, and not later than 10 business days after receipt of applicable documentation, issue a Notice of Action for the requested change in service level. No other changes to the service agreement shall be made using the received information.

FRAUD POLICY

A family may be disenrolled when there is substantiated evidence of fraud that invalidates the initial certification or recertification. This includes but is not limited to:

- Not reporting family's actual gross income
- Increased earnings over 85% of State Median Income (SMI) not reported
- Cash aid fraud
- Parent/Employer collusion to falsify work
- False statements that affect eligibility or payment
- Child is not dependent of enrolled family
- Falsifying employment schedules

The participant's services will be terminated, and s/he may no longer be served by the program The case will be referred to the appropriate agency for investigation and possible prosecution.

FAMILY FEE

Families receiving full-day service will be assessed whether a family fee applies based on income and family size. The family fee is a flat monthly full-time or part-time fee based on the hours of care certified for the month. Families with a certified need of less than 130 hours per month will be assessed a part-time fee, while families with a certified need of 130 or more hours per month will be assessed a full-time fee. The agency can charge a part-time fee or the cost of care (calculated by multiplying the days of enrollment by the rate), whichever is less, depending on the number of hours of certified enrollment for the month. Families assessed with a total family income below the 75% State Median Income (SMI) will not be assessed a family fee. For all families with a total

family income above the 75% SMI will be charged a family fee based on the Family Monthly Fee Schedule provided by the CA. Department of Education. Family fees will not be increased during the 24 month certification period. Fees may be recalculated with the written request from the parent. The family will need to provide supporting documentation to assess if the fee shall be decreased. There is no fee assessed when CPS or At-risk referral includes to waive the fees (limited to 12 months).

The family fee must be paid at the beginning of each month before services are rendered. No adjustment is made for absences from the program. When a family has more than one child enrolled in CSPP and/or childcare programs administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the family fee must be assessed based on the family's child who is certified for the greatest number of hours. Family fees shall be considered delinquent after seven (7) calendar days from the date the fees were due. A Notice of Action shall be issued for a delinquent family fee.

The family fee is expected to be paid by the Tenth Day of The Month

Payment Options
Families choose a payment option: Automatic Payments through Tuition Express or Payment by the 10th of the month.

- **Automatic Payments -** Payment is automatically deducted on the third of the month from a checking/savings account or credit card. To enroll, complete and sign the Tuition Express Form. The authorization form to deduct monthly tuition and other charges from your account. Returned ACH payments will be subject to a charge of $25.
- **Manual Payment Methods**
  1. **Online Payment** - Payments can be made using the Procare app
  2. **Payment by Check** - Due on the tenth day of the month. Returned checks will incur a $25 penalty.
     - Tuition payment is made payable to: Footsteps Child Care, Inc.
     - Your child's first and last name and site must appear on the check/money order.
     - For banking bill pay systems, use your child's last name and site as the account number
       Example: Foletta - Nesbit
     - Payments can be given to the Site Director or mailed directly to:
       Footsteps Child Care, Inc. 374 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002
     - ***Do Not Mail Checks to Program Site/School Addresses***
  3. **Cash Payment** - We discourage cash payments. Payment must be given directly to the Site Director or Administrative Office. Large cash payments over $500 must be turned in directly to the Admin Office. A receipt will be immediately issued. A family paying by cash assumes responsibility to make sure payment is received and credited to the account.

Tuition or Family Fee Invoices & Receipts

- Footsteps Child Care, Inc. generates an invoice for tuition monthly via email.
- Receipts for paid invoices and/or required FSA statements payments are available at myprocare.com
- Receipts for cash and point of sale credit payments are issued at the time of payment.
- The receipt contains our tax identification number and is appropriate for most reimbursement accounts.
- Year-To-Date accounting statements are issued via email in January for tax purposes. Please save this email for your records.

No adjustment is made for absences from the program. When a family has more than one child enrolled in CSPP and/or child care programs administered by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS), the family fee must be assessed based on the family's child who is certified for the greatest number of hours. Family fees shall be considered delinquent after seven (7) calendar days from the date the fees were due. A Notice of Action (NOA) shall be issued for a delinquent family fee.

Child care services shall be terminated 14 days from the Notice of Action (NOA) date unless all delinquent fees are paid, or a payment plan has been established. before the end of the period for NOA appeal. If the NOA was mailed

to the family, the termination would occur after 19 days. Upon termination of services for nonpayment of delinquent fees, the family shall be ineligible for childcare and development services until all delinquent fees are paid. The program shall accept a reasonable payment plan to pay delinquent fees. Child care service shall continue to be provided to the child, provided the parent(s) pays current fees when due and complies with the provisions of the repayment plan.

The fee for the initial certification is due upon enrollment. For new family fees due as the result of recertification or updates to the family file, a NOA must be issued to the family showing the new fee to be imposed and contain an effective date of either 14 or 19 calendar days after service of the NOA, depending upon whether the NOA was personally served or mailed to the family. The fee is due on the first of the month following the effective date of the NOA.

When the initial enrollment is not on the first day of the month, the Footsteps Child Care, Inc. can assess a fee based on certified hours for the partial month and another fee for each subsequent month based on certified hours as documented in the application for services. For example, a family works 40 hours per week or full-time, and their initial enrollment date is May 20. For the month of May, the family will utilize less than 130 hours. In this example, the family will be assessed a part-time fee for May and a full-time fee for each subsequent month of service. If a new family fee is assessed, the fee will become effective on the first day of the month following the issue date of the NOA.

CREDITS FOR FEE PAID TO OTHER PROVIDERS

This section shall apply to child care and development services provided by someone other than the Footsteps Child Care, Inc.:

a) When a Footsteps Child Care, Inc. cannot meet all of a family's needs for child care for which eligibility and need have been established, the Footsteps Child Care, Inc. shall grant a fee credit equal to the amount paid to the other provider(s) of these childcare and development services.
b) The Footsteps Child Care, Inc. shall apply the fee credit to the family's subsequent billing period. The family shall not be allowed to carry over the fee credit beyond the family's subsequent fee billing period.
c) If the fees paid to other service providers exceed the assessed fee for CSPP, no payment will be made to the family for the excess fees
d) Footsteps Child Care, Inc. shall obtain copies of receipts or canceled checks for the other child care and development services from the parent each month. The copies of the receipts or canceled checks shall be maintained in the Footsteps Child Care, Inc.'s fee assessment record.

WHEN FAMILIES VOLUNTARILY REQUEST A REDUCTION OF THE FAMILY FEE

A family may voluntarily request a reduction to their family fee by reporting a change such as family income, days and hours of care needed, or family size. The program must reassess the family fee by requesting documentation to support the reported change. The family fee reduction takes effect on the first of the month following the receipt and approval of the required supporting documentation. **This documentation may not be used to make other changes to the family's service agreement.**

A Notice of Action (NOA) must be issued immediately upon receipt and approval of the required supporting documentation so that the new family fee will become effective on the first day of the month that follows the issue date of the NOA. For example, if an NOA is issued on July 28, 2026, the effective date of the reduced fee would be August 1, 2026.

When a family is initially certified or recertified based on income eligibility:
Within thirty (30) calendar days, the family shall report changes to ongoing income that causes their adjusted monthly income, adjusted for family size, to exceed ongoing income eligibility.

Once determined and certified as income eligible for services, families remain income eligible until their adjusted monthly income exceeds 100% percent of the most recent SMI, adjusted for family size.

The program must notify the family at the time of initial certification, and at recertification, the dollar amount that equals 100 percent of the SMI, based on their family size. Family must report when their family income exceeds the 100%-dollar amount for their family size.

When family income exceeds the identified 100% of SMI for the family size, the program must dis-enroll the family and issue a Notice of Action (NOA) citing the family has exceeded 100 percent of the SMI adjusted for family size.

Specifically, the program must inform the parent in writing of the maximum adjusted monthly income the family could earn, based on the family size most recently certified before the family is no longer income eligible for services. To do this, the program must provide the family with a copy of the most recent Schedule of Income Ceilings (100 percent SMI) for Recertification,

Families with incomes up to 15 percent over the income threshold are eligible for state preschool; however, the program is limited to enroll no more than 10 percent of the total contract under this provision. The families under this provision must provide a Need for Services.

DISENROLLMENT POLICY – SUSPENSION AND EXPULSION

Definition:
"Suspension" means any removal of a child from all or part of the program day, or the prevention of a child from attending the program for one or more days, in response to the child's behavior.
"Expulsion" means the permanent dismissal of a child from a program in response to a child's behavior.
"Persistent and serious behaviors" means either repeated patterns of behavior that significantly interfere with the learning of other children, or interactions with peers and adults that are not responsive to the use of developmentally appropriate guidance. This includes, but is not limited to, physical aggression, property destruction, and self-injury.

Suspension
Suspension must only be used as a last resort in extraordinary circumstances when there is a serious safety threat that cannot be reduced or eliminated without removal of the child. To the greatest extent possible, a program must endeavor to ensure the full participation of enrolled children in all program activities.

Footsteps Child Care will not suspend a child due to the child's behavior or encourage or persuade a child's family to prematurely pick up their child due to behavior before the day ends.

When the program determines that suspension is necessary, the program will collaborate with the child's parents or legal guardians to determine the best course of action to improve the situation, and/or use appropriate community resources, as needed.

If suspension is deemed necessary, a CSPP Footsteps Child Care, Inc., must help the child return to full participation in all program activities as quickly as possible while ensuring child safety by doing at least, all the following:

- Continuing to engage with the parents or legal guardians and continuing to use, and provide referrals to appropriate community resources, such as, but not limited to, an early childhood mental health consultant and the local resource and referral agency.
- Developing a written plan to document the action and supports needed.
- Provide referrals and information to appropriate communities agencies and resources.
- If the child has an individualized family service plan (IFSP) or individualized education program (IEP), the CSPP Footsteps Child Care, Inc., with written parental consent, must contact the agency responsible for the IFSP or IEP to seek consultation on serving the child.

When it is determined no other reasonable option is appropriate, the program will provide written notice through a Notice of Action to the child's parents or legal guardians. The effective date of the action will be no less than 24 hours after service of the notice.

Expulsion

If a child exhibits persistent and serious behaviors, the program will:

- Expeditiously pursue and document reasonable steps to maintain the child's safe participation in the program, including, but not limited to, consulting with the child's parents or legal guardians, and, if available, engaging an early childhood mental health consultant.
- Document details of the child's persistent and serious behaviors. This will include a description of the behaviors of the child and the program's plan for maintaining the child's safe participation in the program.
- For child with an IFSP or IEP, the CSPP, with written parental consent, will make every effort to contact the agency responsible for the IFSP or IEP to seek consultation on serving the child. The program may request assistance from the parent if contract is unsuccessful.
- Conduct a comprehensive screening to identify the needs of the child, including, but not limited to:
    - "Ages & Stages Questionnaires: Social-Emotional" or any other recommended tool
    - Referring the child's parents or legal guardians to community resources
    - Implementing behavior supports within the program.

When it is determined that no other reasonable option is appropriate, the program will refer the parents or legal guardians to other potentially appropriate placements, the local childcare resource and referral agency, or other referral service available in the local community, and, to the greatest extent possible, support direct transition to a more appropriate placement.

The determination to expel the child will be made in consultation with the parents or legal guardians of the child, the child's teacher, and, if applicable, the local agency responsible for implementing the IFSP or IEP, as described above. The program will provide written notice through a Notice of Action to the child's parents or legal guardians.

In the event that you disagree with the action taken, you may file an appeal following the procedure on the Notice of Action within fourteen (14) days of receiving the NOA directly with CCTR or CSPP. You may e-mail, mail, fax or deliver your request to:

CCTR:
California Department of Social Services
Child Care and Development Division
Attn: Appeals Coordinator
744 P Street, MS 9-8-351 Sacramento, CA 95814
CCDDappeals@dss.ca.gov

CSPP:
California Department of Education
California State Preschool Program
Attn: Appeals Coordinator
1430 N Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5901

Since the action to suspend or expel a child involves persistent and serious behaviors impacting the safety of children, the child may not attend the program during the appeal process.

ABSENCE POLICIES

Footsteps Child Care, Inc. highly encourage consistent attendance in order for your child to maximize Your child's learning, however, we understand that at times absences are inevitable.
If your child will be absent from school, you MUST contact the office to report your child's absence.

Subsidized absences fall into three categories:

- **Unlimited Excused Absences** – Absences due to illness or quarantine of the child, the illness or quarantine of the parent/guardian, family emergency, and court-ordered visitations are considered excused absences and **are not limited in number per year**. (Examples: illness of child or parent, family emergency and court-ordered visitations.)
- **Limited Excused Absences** - Absences "in the best interest of the child" are limited to
  CCTR: 10 days per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), e.g., vacation, visit relatives, stay home with parent, etc. All other absences are unexcused.
  CSPP: 20 days per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30), e.g., vacation, visit relatives, stay home with parent, etc. All other absences are unexcused.

Examples of "Excused" absences:

- Illness/quarantine of child or parent, may include child or parent medical appointments
- Family Emergency – A family emergency is a sudden situation that makes it difficult or unsafe for you to bring your child to the program.
  - ✓ Parent must notify the office if you cannot bring your child into the program as soon as you are able to do so.
  - Examples of Family Emergencies:
    (a) Natural Disasters – fire
    (b) Transportation problems – flat tire
    (c) Hazardous weather condition
    (d) Sibling /Parent illness
    (e) Hospitalization of a family member
    (f) Death of a family member
    (g) Sudden change in residency
    (h) Others – on a case-by-case basis
- Court-ordered visitation – court order must be on file
- Best Interest of the Child Days. Except for children who are recipients of protective services or at risk of abuse or neglect, excused absences "in the best interest of the child" shall be limited to ten (10) days during the fiscal year (July 1 – June 30). Best Interest absences are from the standpoint of the parent, considered to be in the best interest of the child.
  - ✓ Parent must notify the office of planned or unexpected Best Interest Days when possible.
  - Best Interest Days for the child may include:
    (a) Family vacation
    (b) Time with relatives
    (c) Special events for the child
    (d) Cultural or religious celebrations
    (e) Enrichment opportunities
    (f) Others

- **Unexcused Absences** – A maximum of **10 unexcused absences** are allowed per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). Unexcused absences of more than 10 will result in Footsteps Child Care, Inc. providing support and resources to encourage improved attendance.
- **Absences 7-Days or More:** Footsteps Child Care will attempt to contact the family after seven days of no contact from a family. Communication methods will include telephone, email, text, postal mail communication.
- **Absences 30-Days or More:** In cases where there is no contact from the parent or guardian after 30 days of absence a Notice of Action, Termination of Services will be issued.

ABANDONMENT OF CARE

Families are required to communicate with the program on all absences. Consistent communication allows the program to keep track of your child's well-being as well as reason for the absence. When a family has high absenteeism, the program may be able to support you, the family, with community services. It is utmost important to keep close communication with the program.

When the program has not heard from you, the parent, for seven consecutive calendar days of the reason the family is not using the services, the program staff will use a variety of communication methods to reach out to you. (Examples of the outreach methods are telephone call, email, text, postal services

When all communication methods have failed and there is no communication for thirty (30) consecutive calendar days, the program shall issue a Notice-Of-Action (NOA) to disenroll the family on the basis of Abandonment of Care.

SUBSIDY FAMILY FILE

Information obtained during the enrollment will be maintained in a confidential basic data file for each family receiving child care services from Footsteps Child Care, Inc. The basic data file will contain:

- Application for Child Development Services - signed by the parent and registrar, completed to document eligibility and need (CD-9600-9600A/CDD-26)
- Verification of monthly income of <u>all</u> family members (including child support if applicable)
- Notice of Action to Recipient of Child Care and Development Service (CD7617-A)
- Emergency and Identification Information (CD-9607)
- Child's Pre-Admission Health History – Parent's Report (CD-2206)
- Referral document from Family Protective Services if applicable
- Training Verification (form CD-9605) if applicable
- Medical Statement (CD-9606) if applicable
- All forms required by Community Care Licensing
- All forms required by Footsteps Child Care, Inc.

Name of Child Enrolled _____

Program Site _____

As a family enrolled in a Footsteps Child Care, Inc. program, I understand that my dated signature below acknowledges and agrees to abide by the written policies and procedures of the program, this includes acknowledgment of the consequences for failure to abide by those policies and procedures.

Name of Parent or Guardian _____

Signature of Parent or Guardian _____

Date _____

Footsteps Child Care: Wellness Policy

BACKGROUND

Our mission is to provide infants, children, and their families with quality programs in a safe, nurturing, and enriching environment. One of our goals is to create an environment ensuring the optimal health of your children and of our staff.

Child Care programs, such as Footsteps Child Care, are uniquely positioned to contribute to improving the nutritional health and physical activity of children and adolescents. Footsteps Child Care is an important venue to improve health behaviors and outcomes for many reasons:

- Our programs occur during a time of day when many children are likely to be sedentary if not given active options.
- Children are at a developmental stage when they are forming health habits they will carry into adulthood. Promoting healthy behaviors in after school programs can have benefits for a lifetime.
- Our sites offer a supportive, safe environment in which children can feel comfortable trying new activities and building skills.
- Our staff is caring, knowledgeable, and well trained – they serve as role models that positively influence children's health and nutrition choices.[1]

Footsteps Child Care must also ensure the wellness of our staff. Like many Americans, our staff spends much of their waking hours at work. Therefore, creating a healthy environment for our employees is an important way to improve their health.

In order to ensure that we maximize the benefits of our programs, we have created a Wellness Policy to guide our efforts to create a healthy environment for youth, their families, and our staff. It includes guidelines regarding nutrition, physical activity, and promotion of healthy behaviors for your children while they are at Footsteps Child Care, as well as guidelines for the food and physical activity environments for staff at our sites. Using these guidelines, we seek to ensure that all youth and staff have access to:

- Healthy foods and beverages.
- Regular, fun, and inclusive physical activity (or, for staff, the flexibility to get activity on their own).
- Appropriate and understandable health information; and
- Positive, healthy role models.

We recognize that healthy eating and physical activity are not all or nothing decisions, they are about balancing choices. Our goal is to make the healthy choice an easy choice.

NUTRITION GUIDELINES

These guidelines are meant to inform food and beverage selection for all program-related activities, including snacks, beverages, and meals provided to youth, as well as food and drinks served at staff meetings and events.

YOUTH NUTRITION GUIDELINES

These guidelines cover regular snacks and meals served to youth at Footsteps Child Care. Monthly birthday celebrations are excluded from strictly following these guidelines. Likewise, food served or purchased by youth off-site may not meet the criteria. We aim to implement the guidelines fully over the next 12 months. Staff at each site will be responsible for implementation, with periodic checks by the Executive Director.

Promoting Physical Activity and Healthy Nutrition in Afterschool Settings: Strategies for Program Leaders and Policy Makers. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: August 2006.

Food Served to Youth at Footsteps Child Care. Food items served to youth at Footsteps will meet the following criteria:

For infants under 1 year:

- We encourage breastfeeding. Mothers may express milk into bottles to be served to their infants while they are at Footsteps Child Care. For babies not breastfeeding, formula will be served following manufacturers' instructions.[2,3]
- For infants who have begun to eat solid foods, we aim to introduce a wide variety of soft, safe foods, including fruits and vegetables and lean meats, as appropriate. We aim to offer new foods one at a time to check for allergic reactions.[4]
- Avoid serving cow's milk, as it is not recommended for children under 1 year of age.[5]

- For young children 1 to 2 years old:

- Provide a variety of foods, including fruits and vegetables, grains, dairy products (including whole milk), and lean meats.
- Fat content will not be restricted, as very young children need additional calories from fat to ensure growth and development.[6]

For children 2 years older:

- For children aged 2-3, no more than 30-40% of total calories are from fat; for children aged 4 and above, no more than 25-35% of total calories are from fat.
- For children aged 2 and above, food items will have no more than 10% of total calories from saturated fat.
- For children aged 2 and above, food will contain no trans-fat.[7]

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http://www.brightfutures.org/nutritionfamfact/pdf/ColorEng/INB5color.pdf
http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/feed13m.html#
http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/feed47m.html#
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002448.htm
Kliegman RM, Behrman RE, Jenson HB, Stanton BF, eds. *Nelson Textbook of Pediatrics*. 18th ed. Philadelphia, Pa: Saunders Elsevier; 2007: chap 42. See http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002455.htm

For total fat, saturated fats, and trans-fat recommendations, see http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/Chapter3.pdf pages 24-26.
See http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/nutrition_factsheet_schools.pdf Standard 2 (page 4).
See http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/Chapter3.pdf page 23 and http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/nutrition_factsheet_schools.pdf Standard 4 (page 4).
See http://pediatrics.about.com/od/nutrition/a/0508_food_prtns.htm for more information about appropriate portion sizes for children.
See http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ for more information on this initiative.

- For children aged 2 and above, no more than 35% of calories are from total sugars, with the following exceptions:
    - Yogurt and milk with less than 25g of sugar per 8oz serving.[8]
- For children aged 2 and above, snacks should have 200mg of sodium or less and entrées/meals should have 480mg of sodium or less per serving.[9]

In general, we will aim to:

- Offer appropriate portion sizes and regular meal/snack times to prevent both hunger and over-eating. Toddler portion sizes are about one-quarter of adult serving sizes. For children 4-8, portion sizes should be about one-third of adult serving sizes. For children 9 years and old, portion sizes about the same size as for adults.[10]
- Focus on whole grains (ensure ≥ 50% of grains served are whole grains).
- Emphasize colorful and varied produce. Include at least one serving of fruits or vegetables at each snack (can be fresh, frozen, canned or dried; ensure no items with added sugar). Vary produce offered to maximize nutrient diversity. At meal times, about half of plate should be produce, following USDA's "My Plate" initiative[11]. Whenever possible, purchase produce that is grown locally.
- Vary food items and meals served, and encourage youth to try different foods, especially fruits and vegetables.
- Focus on lean proteins such as egg whites, poultry, fish, and soy products.
- Select healthy fats (mono- and poly-unsaturated fats and omega-3 fatty acids) over unhealthy fats (saturated fats).
- Avoid foods that are deep fried, par fried, or flash fried.
- Minimize sweet baked goods (cookies, cake, etc.) served. Any sweets that are served will be trans-fat-free.
- Accommodate dietary restrictions due to allergies, religion, or culture.
- Encourage students to participate in selecting, preparing, and cleaning-up food, as appropriate.

MyPlate is part of a larger communications initiative based on *2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans* to help consumers make better food choices. The guidelines recommend making about half of your plate fruits and vegetables.

Beverages Served to Youth at Footsteps.

For infants and children less than 2 years of age:

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http://www.brightfutures.org/nutritionfamfact/pdf/ColorEng/INB5color.pdf
http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/feed13m.html#
http://kidshealth.org/parent/growth/feeding/feed47m.html#
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002448.htm
Kliegman RM, Behrman RE, Jenson HB, Stanton BF, eds. *Nelson Textbook of Pediatrics*. 18th ed. Philadelphia, Pa: Saunders Elsevier; 2007: chap 42. See http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/002455.htm

For total fat, saturated fats, and trans-fat recommendations, see http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/Chapter3.pdf pages 24-26.
See http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/nutrition_factsheet_schools.pdf Standard 2 (page 4).
See http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/DietaryGuidelines/2010/PolicyDoc/Chapter3.pdf page 23 and http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/nutrition_factsheet_schools.pdf Standard 4 (page 4).
See http://pediatrics.about.com/od/nutrition/a/0508_food_prtns.htm for more information about appropriate portion sizes for children.
See http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ for more information on this initiative.

- We encourage breastfeeding for infants less than 1 year old; those not breastfeeding will be served formula following manufacturers' instructions (see above). Children 12 months to 2 years will be served water and whole milk.

For children aged 2 years and above, we will:

- Offer healthy beverages, including low- or non-fat milk, and non-carbonated water.
- Always have water easily available at no cost to students. Serve water in bulk (e.g., in a pitcher) during snack and meal times.
- Serve only 1% or fat-free milk. Limit milk consumption to 12-24 oz. per day.
- ☐ Never serve beverages that contain caffeine or non-nutritive sweeteners.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY FOR YOUTH

To ensure that youth meet national recommendations for daily physical activity, we will:

- Dedicate at least 20% or at least 30 minutes of morning and after-school program time to physical activity (60 minutes for a full day program).
- Ensure that daily physical activity time includes age-appropriate aerobic, muscle- and bone strengthening activities.[12]
- Provide physical activities in which students engage in moderate to vigorous aerobic activity for at least 50% of the physical activity time.
- Provide activities that help children strengthen muscles, such as tug-of-war, push-ups, sit-ups) or climbing on play structures.
- Include a variety of physical activity options that are fun, promote learning and skill building, and are accessible and enjoyable to students of all abilities. Ensure that activities are inclusive.
- Provide short physical activity break between and/or within learning or sedentary activities to invigorate children and eliminate long periods of sitting, and to incorporate physical activity into transition time.
- Select field trips and off-site events that promote physical activity and introduce youth to new ways to stay active.
- Encourage students to participate in selecting, organizing, and leading activities, as appropriate.

In addition, we seek to reduce the amount of time youth are sedentary. We will:

- Limit time spent watching television or movies, playing video games and digital devices (computer, etc.) to less than one hour per day to allow for other activities. Exceptions include video games that incorporate moderate to vigorous physical activity (e.g., Dance-Dance-Revolution) and use of computers and other devices for schoolwork.

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FOOTSTEPS CHILD CARE SUN SAFETY GUIDELINES

The following information provides sun safety guidelines for family and introduces California's laws related to sunscreen application in a school or out of school program environment.

Skin Cancer Facts

Skin is the largest organ of the body and skin cancer is the most common of all cancers.

- It accounts for nearly half of all cancers in the United States
- More than 3.5 million cases of basal and squamous cell skin cancer are diagnosed in this country each year
- The Skin Cancer Foundation reports that one blistering sunburn in childhood more than doubles a person's chances of developing melanoma later in life

Source: American Cancer Association
http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/sunanduvexposure/skin-cancer-facts

Footsteps Child Care Recommends:

- All families are asked to give Footsteps written permission annually to apply sunscreen to their child while in our care, considering any allegories. Older children may apply sunscreen themselves.
- Family apply sunscreen every morning to their child's skin. Applying it to any part, which will be exposed to the sun (i.e., face, arms, and legs)?
- Sunscreen labeled with your child's name should be in your child's school bag.
- Your child should reapply sunscreen to exposed areas mid-day, either when transitioning into Footsteps after school or at lunch. For younger children staff will reapply sunscreen when needed.

Throughout the year, Footsteps Child Care will have dedicated days focused on sun safety and education.

The American Cancer Association Recommends:

- Avoid direct exposure to the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.
- Teach children the shadow rule: if your shadow is shorter than you are, the sun's rays are at their strongest.
- Seek shade, especially in the middle of the day when the sun's rays are strongest.
- Follow the Slip! Slop! Slap! and Wrap! ® rules:

  Slip on a shirt: Cover up with protective clothing to guard as much skin as possible when you are out in the sun.

  Slop on sunscreen: Use sunscreen and lip balm with broad-spectrum protection and a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Apply a generous amount of sunscreen (about a palmful) to unprotected skin at least 30 minutes before outdoor activities. Reapply every two hours and after swimming, towel dry, or sweating. Use sunscreen even on hazy or overcast days.

  Slap on a hat: Cover your head with a wide-brimmed hat, shading your face, ears, and neck. If you choose a baseball cap, remember to protect your ears and neck with sunscreen.

  Wrap on sunglasses: Wear sunglasses with 100% UVA and UVB absorption to provide optimal protection for the eyes and the surrounding skin.

Source: American Cancer Association
http://www.cancer.org/cancer/cancercauses/sunanduvexposure/skin-cancer-facts

State Law aligns with Sun Safety Guidelines

In 2002, the California state government amended the Education Code as follows: **Section 35183.5 (b)**

1) Each school site shall allow pupils the use of sunscreen during the school day without a physician's note or prescription.
2) Each school site may set a policy related to the use of sunscreen by pupils during the school day.
3) For purposes of this subdivision, sunscreen is not an over-the-counter medication.
4) Nothing in this subdivision requires school personnel to assist pupils in applying sunscreen.

Source: http://www.sunsafetyforkids.org/sunprotection/sunscreen/

EFFECTS OF LEAD EXPOSURE

Children 1-6 years old are the most at risk for lead poisoning.

- Lead poisoning can harm a child's nervous system and brain when they are still forming, causing learning and behavior problems that may last a lifetime.
- Lead can lead to a low blood count (anemia).
- Even small amounts of lead in the body can make it hard for children to learn, pay attention, and succeed in school.
- Higher amounts of lead exposure can damage the nervous system, kidneys, and other major organs. Very high exposure can lead to seizures or death.

LEAD POISONING FACTS

- Buildup of lead in the body is referred to as lead poisoning.
- Lead is a naturally occurring metal that has been used in many products and is harmful to the human body.
- There is no known safe level of lead in the body.
- Small amounts of lead in the body can cause lifelong learning and behavior problems.
- Lead poisoning is one of the most common environmental illnesses in California children.
- The United States has taken many steps to remove sources of lead, but lead is still around us.

IN THE US:

- Lead in house paint was severely reduced in 1978.
- Lead solder in food cans was banned in the 1980s.
- Lead in gasoline was removed in the early 1990s.

LEAD IN TAP WATER

The only way to know if tap water has lead is to have it tested.

Tap water is more likely to have lead if:

- Plumbing materials, including fixtures, solder (used for joining metals), or service lines have lead in them.
- Water does not come from a public water system (e.g., a private well).

To reduce any potential exposure to lead in tap water:

- **Flush the pipes in your home**
  Let water run at least 30 seconds before using it for cooking, drinking, or baby formula (if used). If water has not been used for 6 hours or longer, let water run until it feels cold (1 to 5 minutes.)*
- **Use only cold tap water for cooking, drinking, or baby formula (if used)**
  If water needs to be heated, use cold water and heat on stove or in microwave.
- **Care for your plumbing**
  Lead solder should not be used for plumbing work. Periodically remove faucet strainers and run water for 3-5 minutes.*