



PARENT HANDBOOK

1745 Race Street
*Denver, Colorado 80206
303-399-5459

Welcome to Children's Garden Learning Academy

Mission and Purpose

Children's Garden Learning Academy exists to provide premier quality child care to children between the ages 6 weeks and 6 years. Children's Garden Learning Academy is owned and operated by Cynthia Yeldell. Our business objective is to provide services and outreach to City Park West neighborhood, as well as the Downtown Denver and Metro Denver areas. Our goals at Children's Garden Learning Academy are:

- To help meet the needs of working and non-working parents who desire to expose their children to quality educational and social experiences.
- To provide child care at a reasonable cost, so that parents who must work have a premier place for the growth and enrichment of their children.
- To provide a safe, nurturing place for young children to blossom.

Staff

At Children's Garden Learning Academy, we believe children grow best in a supportive, loving home-like atmosphere with dedicated and passionate staff. Children's Garden Learning Academy is an equal

opportunity employer seeking only dedicated and experienced staff to care for our children each day. Our Group Leaders meet or exceed Colorado's licensing requirements. All of our staff have current CPR, First Aid and Universal Precautions training. We also provide them with training opportunities and resources so they can learn more about the children for whom they care. Our small classrooms allow us to help our children become independent and self-confident learners by providing an atmosphere that mixes love, compassion, patience and individual attention.

Our program is based on Creative Curriculum (www.teachingstrategies.com). Students' needs are met through a comprehensive curriculum promoting social/emotional, physical, cognitive, and language development. Creative Curriculum gives our teachers the goals and objectives needed to plan fun and appropriate learning activities.

Do you want the best for your child? So do we! Some of staff's own children attend Children's Garden. Let us care for your children with the same care and compassion.

Goals

At Children's Garden our goal is to provide an environment where all children learn and grow. We incorporate the natural world and encourage children to follow their own path of inquiry towards learning. We

provide structured daily schedules that allow children to develop into self-confident individuals.

Early Learning Ventures Alliance

Children's Garden Learning Academy is proud to be an affiliate of Early Learning Ventures Alliance (also known as the ELV Metro Alliance). The ELV Metro Alliance is a network of early care and education businesses, which include centers and family child care homes, that work together to deliver childcare services in a more streamlined and efficient manner. The ELV Metro Alliance provides business and administrative support, professional development and other support services to help childcare providers improve the quality of their programs.

These services enable our staff here at Children's Garden Learning Academy to focus on our core business of delivering quality service, and remain committed and dedicated to your child and family. At times, ELV Metro Alliance will need to have access to our enrollment data. This information will be utilized in a secure and confidential manner, and will not be used for any other purpose than to make our Center run more efficiently.

Forms

Children's Garden Learning Academy and the Colorado Department of Human Services require that the enrollment

packet be completed prior to your child starting at the Academy. The following forms remain on file at the Academy for each child:

- Child Care Enrollment Application, including a *Getting to Know My Child* Form for teachers use only
- Certificate of Immunization
- Physician's state of medical health
- Individualized Meal Plan Form
- Formula Decision Form (as applicable)
- Food Program Income Eligibility Form
- Signed Parent Handbook Acknowledgement

Reservation Deposit

Families enrolling will be charged a reservation deposit based on the enrollment schedule to reserve a spot for more than two weeks.

The deposit is \$100.00 payable with the Registration Fee. This deposit will be applied to the first week of care. If the child does not start as planned, the reservation deposit is forfeited by the family.

Annual Registration Fee

Children's Garden Learning Academy has a \$75 per child/\$110 per family registration fee that is due and payable at time of enrollment and on September 1st of each year. This is a non-refundable fee.

Sign In/Out Forms

Your child MUST be signed in and out every day! As parents arrive to drop off or collect their children, parents are required to clock in/out at the outside doorway to the building and through the Early Metro Alliance computer application just inside the building's hallway. CCAP Parents must also swipe the Point of Service (POS) device. The administrative staff closely monitors the computer application to account for all children arriving and leaving.

Also, staff members are expected to keep their own records of all children within their classes each day. These records are confirmed with reports from the computer application that the parent's used to sign in and out. The staff carries their attendance report anywhere the class goes.

Release of Children

Every arrival and departure **MUST** be documented. If someone other than the person(s) listed on the admission record is to pick up your child, a request in writing and/or telephone contact is required prior to pick up. These persons must be an adult and will be required to supply photo identification and written authorization or a code word that will be established at the time of your notification to us of an immediate situation. In the instance of a restraining order against any person or a custody situation with someone who may attempt to collect your child, you must

provide the Academy with a valid certified copy of the order so that we may show the authorities if the attempt of an abduction occurs in your absence. Children may only be released to the person on their authorized pick up list.

Attendance

The hours of operation at CGLA are 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. If your child will be absent on a scheduled day of attendance, or if you have a change in your schedule, you are asked to notify staff before the time of usual arrival. We will become concerned if your child does not arrive at the normal time and this also helps us to maintain proper teacher-to-child ratios. We have voicemail, please feel free to leave a message 24 hours a day.

Meals and Snacks

To meet the nutritional needs of your child, we serve well-balanced meals and snacks that meet the guidelines of the Federal Government Food Program. We limit sweets served in the classroom to special occasions. If you would like your child to bring in a special treat for a birthday, please speak with your child's teacher to make arrangements. On occasion, parents may be asked to prepare and provide a snack for their class room as an extension of the curriculum. At all times, special attention must be paid to the preparation of the food noting potential allergies that

the children may have. All ingredients should be noted on each food item.

Children's Learning provides jarred food, baby cereal, and two types of formulas. However, parents may choose to bring their child's own food. All Bottles must be labeled with the child's name and be prepared in advance.

Breakfast is served at 8:00 a.m. We stop serving breakfast at 8:30. Morning Snack is served at 9:30 a.m., Lunch is served at approximately 11:30 a.m. and an afternoon snack will be served between 2:30 and 3:00 p.m. Please refer to the classroom schedule posted in your child's classroom for exact times.

We believe mealtime should be a pleasant time; therefore, children are always offered food but are not forced to eat. Children who choose not to eat, will not be served food until the next meal or snack.

We ask that you do not bring food items into the Academy unless it is for a party or special event. Please make prior arrangements with the Director or your child's teacher before bringing in any food items. We must always be aware of the contents of the any food items being served because of any child's allergies.

Basic Daily Schedule

A basic daily schedule is listed in every classroom.

Tuition Policies

- All weekly tuition is payable in advance and payable Monday by 6p.m. (if your child is part-time, tuition is due the first day that your child attends for the week). If payment is not received on the designated day by 6:00 p.m., your account will be assessed a late fee of \$10.00.
- There is no reduction in payment if your child is absent due to illness. You are responsible for payment of your contracted days regardless of attendance.
- Tuition and fee schedules are reviewed annually and are subject to change. We will do our best to provide parents with 30 days advance notice of any change.
- A year end statement of all childcare fees paid during the past year will be given to each family in January of the next year for tax purposes. However, at any time a year-to-date statement may be requested, but this needs to be submitted in writing.
- Checks should be made payable Children's Garden Learning Academy and placed in the tuition box located at each designated sign-in area.
- Checks returned by the bank for non-sufficient funds will incur a \$35.00 charge each time the check is presented for payment and refused.

Children's Garden Learning Academy reserves the right to determine form of payment. There are no refunds for any payments made.

- Children's Garden Learning Academy closes at 6:00 p.m. promptly. We ask that parents be respectful of staff by picking up their children on time. If you are going to be late, please call. Your call will be taken into consideration when assessing a late fee. A \$5 fee, for every minute late, will be assessed after 6:00 p.m., payable the next business morning. Habitual tardiness can be grounds for disenrollment.

*** If your child is not picked up by 6:30 p.m. and all emergency contacts have been exhausted Denver police will be called.**

Vacation, Holiday and Other Absences

After six months of continuous enrollment and your account being current, each non-CCAP family that is registered on a yearly basis is eligible to receive one week's vacation (five days for full-time) per year without tuition charge, provided that Children's Garden Learning Academy is notified in **writing** at least two (2) weeks in advance. Part-time children will earn vacation equivalent to the number of days enrolled per week. Vacation is granted by paying one-half normal full-week rate for the first two weeks your family takes vacation. Vacations taken beyond the first two weeks are billed at the full-week rate.

Children's Garden is closed on the following holidays, but you are still responsible for your child's tuition for these days:

- New Year's Day
- President's Day (to be used as a mandatory staff training day)
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving
- Friday after Thanksgiving
- Christmas Eve (1/2 day)
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve (1/2 day)

If any of the above days fall on a Saturday or Sunday, the day designated by the Federal Government will be taken off.

Snow Days

A "Snow Day" may be announced on days when the weather jeopardizes the safety of staff, parents and children. This decision will be made based on the closure of Denver Public Schools. The announcement will be on our Voice Messaging System when you call our phone number and "Children's Garden Learning Academy" will also be listed on Channels 4, 7 and 9. We will not be making phone calls to families. Please check the resources listed above.

FULL TUITION WILL BE DUE ON SNOW DAYS. IT IS A RARE OCCASION AND OUR FINANCIAL OVERHEAD REMAINS UNCHANGED.

Termination of Enrollment

Two weeks notice is required for termination of childcare by either party except in the cases as mentioned below. If a parent does not wish to give prior notice of termination, then two weeks' rates must be paid in full whether the child attends those two weeks or not. Failure to pay the two weeks will result in your account being turned over to a collection agency.

Children's Garden Learning Academy may terminate a child's enrollment effective immediately if the child's behavior threatens the physical or emotional well-being of one or more of the other children at the Academy. Children's Garden Learning Academy may terminate child's enrollment effective immediately if the parent is verbally or physically abusive, or threatening to any of our teachers, other parents (on our property), or the children. This type of behavior will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

Accidents, Injuries & Emergencies

Children's Garden Learning Academy staff makes every effort to ensure the safety of the children in our care. However, minor accidents may occur. First aid will be administered when necessary. Parents will be notified if immediate medical attention is warranted and in writing with an accident/ injury report form.

In the case of an emergency, we will call 911 for assistance and/or possibly provide transportation for your child to the nearest possible hospital for treatment. Or if it becomes necessary for the safety of your child, Children's Garden staff will attempt to transport the sick or injured child to an emergency medical facility. In either case, you will be responsible for any and all charges incurred.

All classrooms have a diagram by the door with exiting procedures in the case of a fire. Tornado and fire drills are conducted at various times throughout the year to practice safety procedures. In the event of a tornado, all children will be moved to a secure area of the building for safety.

Each teacher is well qualified and dedicated to the children. The teacher in each class takes attendance each morning, directly before, during and after each outing (field trip, outdoors or to another area of the center) to ensure that all children are accounted for. Our teachers keep a close eye on the children to ensure they know where the children are at all times.

In the unlikely event that a child becomes lost, the authorities will be notified immediately following the notification of parents.

Field Trip Fees

Field trips and special activities will be planned for the Preschool children.

Occasionally there are extra charges for these events.

If field trip money has not been paid by the specified time, your child will not be able to participate in the field trip. The Director, at her discretion, may add additional activities. You will be required to pay any additional cost for these activities if you wish your child to participate. As much notice as possible will be provided for such additional activities.

Transportation

Children's Garden Learning Academy will contract with an outside bus service on those occasions during the year when a field trip or enrichment program is planned that is some distance from the center.

The bus service that we select will be certified, bonded and appropriately insured. Children will be properly restrained in a child restraint system that conforms to all applicable Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standards. Children will be loaded and unloaded out of the path of moving vehicles.

Parents will be required to complete an appropriate transportation authorization form before a child will be transported.

At any time children are taken on field trips or enrichment activities, the required child to teacher ratio will be maintained. Parents will also be invited as additional support during these activities.

Emergency Procedures- Drivers and all Children's Garden Learning Academy staff will carry a cellular phone on any outing in order to request medical personnel, report an accident or inform parents/director of delays.

Children will not be removed from the vehicle unless it is determined that it's unsafe to remain in the vehicle. In this instance, children will be unloaded out of the path of moving vehicles and moved to an area that is safe from harm.

Open Door Policy

Parent/Caregiver Communication

At Children's Garden Learning Academy, you can always be assured that the door is open to you. Please feel free to drop in and check on your child. Keep in mind that a child just adjusting to a new surrounding will want to leave with you if you pop in for a visit.

Our newsletter, **In the Garden**, is published monthly. This is our primary means of communicating Children's Garden Learning Academy information to you. You are always welcome to* contribute to our newsletter. PLEASE READ IT CAREFULLY. Other notices will be distributed or posted as necessary.

Parent/Teacher Conferences will be scheduled in the spring and fall. Your child's teacher will notify you in advance to

allow ample time to sign up for your child's conference.

Parental Participation

In order to facilitate your child's self-esteem and sense of security, as well as capitalize on parental talents (which we know you all possess) for the development of all the children, we request parent participation of all families enrolled at Children's Garden Learning Academy.

Throughout the year we have many opportunities for you to lend a hand, such as for Spring Clean Up and field trips/enrichment activities. If you have talents that you would like to donate please share them with us. Your participation is integral in promoting the sense of community and cooperation within our center.

Special Needs

Children's Garden Learning Academy does not discriminate against race, religion, ability, etc. If your child has special needs, we will accommodate to the best of our ability and ADA regulations. We welcome therapists and social workers who are actively working on your child's IEP to come into our center and work with your child in a natural classroom setting.

Discipline

Our philosophy is that you use discipline to teach a child. We achieve this through

love, consistency and firmness. We stress three main patterns of behavior: respect for others, respect for property and respect for self. The children are explained the rules of the Academy / classroom frequently, so they are familiar with the guidelines.

Please keep in mind that there will be disagreements between children. Young children, especially, who are not adept at communication, have a hard time expressing their feelings. Sometimes they hit or throw toys, etc. Although teaching children appropriate behavior is what we will be doing, remember that this behavior is normal in most cases. The following methods of discipline will be used:

- Encourage children to solve problems themselves
- Intervention and discussion
- Re-direction to another play area
- Loss of privileges
- Time-out (as a last resort)

If the teacher feels there is a chronic behavioral issue that needs attention, you will be notified so that we are all handling it in the same way and your child has continuity in discipline between your home and the Academy. These types of behavior might include such things as biting, use of bad words, chronic hitting, etc.

Together, we will try to find a solution. You might be called to remove your child if his/her behavior prevents the teacher from being able to properly care for the other children. If the problem persists,

other arrangements for the care of the child will have to be made for the safety and well being of all.

Under NO CIRCUMSTANCES will there be any spanking, physical abuse, verbal abuse, name-calling or isolation used. Neither food nor sleep will ever be withheld from children as a means of punishment.

Parents must abide by the same policy when in the Academy. Children are subject to suspension for a period of two weeks should parents violate Academy policy. Tuition will be required during the two-week suspension to ensure the child's slot is available at the end of the suspended period.

As required by our child care license, we have a responsibility by law to recognize and report any evidence of child abuse—physical or emotional—or neglect. This is strictly for the benefit of your child.

Standard Practices

Supervision: All children will be under the direct supervision of a responsible staff member at all times while at the Academy or participating in off-premises center activities.

Closing center & ensuring children have been picked up: When scheduled to close the center for the evening, employees will check all rooms (under toys, behind toys, etc.) to ensure that all children have been picked up (and are not hiding in the

facility), will check the sign out sheet to make sure every child has been signed out, and search the playground to make sure that no child is on the grounds.

Missed Outing: Any child who arrives at the center after his or her classroom has left the premises for an enrichment activity or field trip, will be taken to another class that is on-site provided that there is proper ratios and space permitting. The teacher of the classroom will give your child age-appropriate activities, until his or her class returns to the center.

Outdoor Play: There will be time scheduled each day for outdoor play except on days of severe weather (including temperature extremes). Please dress your child appropriately for the day's weather. If a child is not dressed for the weather then no one in his/her class will be able to go outside to play.

Inclement and Excessively Hot Weather: At Children's Garden we believe in being outside and engaging daily in active play. We try on a daily basis, to spend time outside during morning and afternoon sessions. However, we do not go out during rain showers, periods of heavy snow or excessive winds.

We stay inside when it is below 32 degrees or if it is hotter than 98 degrees. Our outside area provides lots of shade and we carry our water bottles out as needed.

Diapering: Diapering procedures are as follows: (1) supplies are kept readily available; (2) gloves are put on staff member; (3) child is placed on the diaper changing surface and held in place; (4) soiled diaper is removed & disposed of in a plastic lined receptacle; (5) child is cleaned with baby wipe and the wipe disposed of; (6) plastic gloves are disposed of in the same way as diaper; (7) child is dressed and child's hands are washed; (8) surface is cleaned with bleach & water; (9) caregiver's hands are then washed with warm water and soap; (10) move child to a safe place.

Diapers and baby wipes are to be supplied by the parents.

Toilet Training: When your child is older than eighteen months, begins to ask questions about using the toilet and is able to dress and undress unassisted, we can begin toilet training. Our Toddler Two room is equipped with a toilet that is at the child's level. Our staff will support your family's chosen method of toilet training. We encourage you to potty train at home and allow us to support your efforts. You will need to provide underpants and plenty of extra clothes. We do not have a specific method as experience has shown us that each child's experience is unique.

However, please let us know if you would like suggestions about how to start potty training. It is important for all of this child's caregivers to be consistent with the toilet training. We value open communication between home and school,

especially during this time. Toilet training is carried out in a non-disciplinary manner only. There is a tuition rate change after your child has been accident free for two weeks.

Clothing & Personal Belongings: Child's play is messy work. Your child may be painting, playing on the grass, in the sandbox, playing with chalk, and other various activities. Please dress your child appropriately.

Each child will be assigned a cubby for personal belongings. All removable clothing, such as coats, hats, gloves/ mittens, boots, jackets, sweaters, and all other personal belongings must be plainly marked with the child's name.

Each child needs at least one complete change of clothing to be kept at the Academy. Please include underwear, pants (or shorts), shirt and socks.

Children's Learning Garden Learning Academy does not take responsibility for rips, tears, stains or lost personal belongings.

Television Viewing: Television and video viewing is not a regular part of our daily program. However, there may be times when we would like the children to be allowed to watch a particular television program or video as a privilege or educational activity.

Staff will supervise the children and will monitor all programs/videos viewed by the children.

If you wish your child not to watch television even on infrequent occasions please notify us in writing.

Visitors: All visitors to the center are required to fill in our Visitor's Log with their name, address and purpose for visit. Proof of identification will be inspected for any individual not known to the personnel at the center.

Other Personal Items: Money and toys should not be brought to the Academy. If a child brings these items, they will be taken and placed in an envelope and placed in the child's cubby until the child is picked up for the day.

Bedding: Each child will need a blanket for naptime. Please mark all of your child's belongings with his/her name.

Sheets are provided by the Academy and mats/cots are assigned to each child. Bedding is washed on a weekly basis or more frequently as needed.

Medical Records

The State of Colorado requires that each child have a current health statement on file within **14** days after admission to the Academy. This health statement must be updated annually.

The Academy must also have an immunization card on file for each child and it must be updated after each immunization received. This card is required upon enrollment.

Illness and Medicine

Parents are expected to notify the center when the child is not attending due to illness. (See Rates and Payment Policies section.)

We will provide care for minor illness such as a minor cold and administer some medications provided the Medical Consent form is completely filled out and on file. If the child is required to take a prescription medication, the medication must be in its original container with the child's name clearly identified as the recipient of the medication.

In addition to the written statement, there is a medication log that the parent must sign daily for medicine to be given. Medications are administered as prescribed on the label of the container. Children who are too sick to participate in daily activities should be kept at home.

If a child becomes ill or is injured at Children's Garden Learning Academy and the parent cannot be reached, the physician on the Emergency Form will be contacted. The parent or legal guardian is responsible for any and all costs incurred for medical care and transportation provided during the medical emergency.

Scratches and scrapes are inevitable when children play. These injuries will be treated with soap, water and a Band-Aid. With anything more serious you will be informed by the center at once. There are some illnesses that exclude the child from attending childcare. Some of those illnesses are, but are not limited to:

- Strep Throat
- Infectious Diarrhea
- Hepatitis A
- Scarlet Fever
- Pink Eye
- Head Lice

Certain symptoms mean a child must be kept at home. A child who develops any of these symptoms during the day will be isolated and the parent notified immediately.

Arrangements are to be made for the child to be picked up as soon as possible. Some of these symptoms are:

Fever

A temperature of 101 degrees or higher means a child should stay home. In the event of this type of temperature, the child should not come to daycare until the temperature has been down for 24 hours without the aid of a fever reducing medication such as Tylenol.

If your child's temperature reaches 101 degrees or higher while at daycare, you will be called to immediately pick up your child.

Vomiting

A child who has been vomiting can easily spread germs. If your child vomits while at daycare, you will be expected to immediately pick up your child from daycare.

If you are not able to come as soon as you are called, please arrange for someone else to pick up your child.

Diarrhea

When a child has a single loose stool, he/she does not need to be at home. However, if a child has very runny stools that cannot be contained in a diaper, or the child cannot reach the toilet in time, the stool may contaminate the daycare setting and this child must remain at home. Please use your discretion with this. If the child has diarrhea that's not contained, you will be called to come pick up your child from daycare.

Or any of the following:

- Pink eye, eye infection
- Chicken Pox, measles, mumps, rubella, impetigo, general rash
- Any contagious illness
- Head Lice

****Your child MUST be fever free, diarrhea free and vomit free for 24 hours before returning to the Academy**

Some features that help to ensure your child's health are:

- No smoking on the premises (We are a non-smoking center).

- Current immunizations are required.
- Good hygiene is stressed at all times.
- Every attempt is made to keep toys and play areas sanitized.
- Food preparation is done in a safe and hygienic manner.
- Menus follow Federal Nutritional Guidelines.
- Hand washing before eating, after diapering, use of toilet, outside play, messy crafts or projects, etc.

MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION

The following requirements will be met before an employee may administer medications: (1) written authorization from the health care provider has been received; (2) parent written authorization has been received; (3) medication is in the original labeled container; (4) documentation has been received (5) proper care and storage of medication.

Nebulized medications and emergency injections (EpiPen®) require an individualized health care plan completed by the RN consultant and/or the child's health care provider. These medications are delegated and supervised by the RN on an individual basis. Parents are responsible for providing all medications and supplies to the childcare facility.

Children may NOT transport medications to and from the childcare facility; this includes medication left in a diaper bag or backpack. Staff will not deviate from written authorization from the health care

provider. Staff will count and record (e.g. Ritalin) received from the parent or guardian.

Medication will be stored in a locked, clean container and kept under conditions as directed by the health care provider. Medications that require refrigeration will be stored in a leak-proof container (lock box) in a designated area in the center's refrigerator separated from food.

Medication administered will be documented on a medications log by the individual administering the medication.

Medications that have not been picked up by the parent, as requested by staff, will be disposed of by flushing it down the toilet. Staff and a witness will document on the disposal log (date, time name of the medicine(s), amount of medication and the signature of the person and witness.)

Right to Refuse Service

We reserve the right to refuse or cancel service at any time with no notice to anyone that is unable to comply with established policies and procedures, or is a danger to themselves or others.

We reserve the right to ask you to make alternative arrangements for the care of your child if we feel that is necessary.

No smoking on the premises (We are a non-smoking center).

To file a complaint about this facility

contact: Colorado Dept. of Health and
Human Services

Division of Child Care

1575 Sherman Street

Denver, CO 80203-1714

Or call: 303-866-5958

If you suspect abuse of your child

contact: Denver County Child Abuse
Reporting Hotline Call: 720-944-3000

Please return this page to the Director of Children's Garden Learning Academy.

I, _____, have read, understand and agree with the policies and procedures described in the Children's Garden Learning Academy Parent Handbook.

Child(ren)'s Name

Parent or Guardian's Printed Name
Date

Signature