



# Parent Handbook

1701 W. Jester Park Drive  
PO Box 24  
Polk City, IA 50226  
515.984.6146 x 200

[www.beautifulbeginnings.info](http://www.beautifulbeginnings.info)

**Purpose:**

The purpose of Beautiful Beginnings is to support families of the local communities as well as provide quality Christian education & care to children ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. To accomplish these ends, the Center provides a safe, consistent, and enriched environment where developmentally appropriate practice encourages exploration & “hands on” learning.

**Philosophy:**

Beautiful Beginnings Preschool & Childcare Center provides children with a caring, safe, and secure environment that utilizes a Christian learning environment with Creative Curriculum. This curriculum is based on the emotional, physical, social, and cognitive needs of the individual child. The developmental needs of the children are used to plan activities which are developmentally appropriate. Because children grow and develop at different rates, this approach offers them the opportunity to explore each area of development at their own pace.

Center staff create an atmosphere of support & affection as well as providing materials, equipment, and experience required to optimize the experiences of each child. They also serve as examples to the children, because children learn as much by observing others as they do by direct instruction. The teaching staff members act as facilitators rather than directors of activities.

**Goals & Objectives:**

The goals established by Beautiful Beginnings are as follows:

- To provide safe, consistent, & enriched environment where developmentally appropriate practice encourage exploration and “hands on” learning experiences.
- To enhance sense of dignity and self worth within the child & his/her family.
- To encourage spontaneity, curiosity, and self-discipline.
- To enhance patterns and expectations of success for the individual child.

- To provide consistently high quality care by continuous evaluation of center operations.
- To constantly encourage parent visitation, input, and participation.
- To provide a quality Christian program that enhances understanding of Christ.

### **General Operation:**

Beautiful Beginnings provides services to children ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. The center will provide safe, secure, & a stimulating care environment that will center around developmentally appropriate practice. All developmental areas of early childhood are incorporated into everyday activities. These areas include fine & gross motor development, social skills, moral development, self-help skills, cognitive skills, and pre-academic skills. No one skill area will be emphasized over any other.

Beautiful Beginnings is licensed to care for up to a maximum of 120 children.

Infant room: 8

Toddler Room (1s): 12

Transition Room (2s): 16

3 yr. old Preschool: 16

4 yr. old Preschool: 20

School Age: 48

Beautiful Beginnings is a NON-Smoking environment.

### **Security:**

Our facility has a controlled entry system. Each parent will be given a code to enter the building. Be sure to enter or exit the building through the main entrance as you will be required to sign your child both in and out each day. If someone else will be picking up your child, you must contact us in advance. We will ask for identification of any person we are unfamiliar with. We will also verify their name is on the approved pick-up list on your enrollment form. No child will be permitted to leave with an adult without permission.

Children may not be dropped off or picked up from an outside entrance or over the fence. Children must be clocked in and out on our keypad system. Children

must also be taken to your child's classroom, or to your child's teacher before a parent can leave. This is to maintain adult supervision of your child.

When picking up your child, please come to your child's classroom. Let your child's teacher know when you are leaving with your child, as we sign children out at the end of the day. Children should remain in their parent's supervision until safely in the parent's vehicle. Please do not allow children to run free. We do not want any child to become lost or injured. Please see the Signing In/Signing Out procedure later in the handbook.

### **Custodial/Non-Custodial Parent Pickup Policy:**

Beautiful Beginnings respects the rights of both custodial and non-custodial parents. Both parents will be allowed to pick up and to designate pick-up persons for their child(ren) on their assigned days, unless the following are on file at the Center:

1.) Court order contact limitation papers, and 2.) guardianship papers.

If a parent who is NOT allowed to pick up comes to the Center (and the above paperwork is on file), the parent will be asked to leave and told that the police will be called if they do not do so. If the parent tries to leave with the child, the staff will not attempt to physically restrain the parent or the child, or place themselves in undue danger to keep the child at the Center. If the parent leaves with the child, staff will try to get the car/license plate information and call the police.

At the time of the child's enrollment, each parent will complete child care paperwork for the child(ren). The paperwork of the parent who is designated to pick up the child will be honored for that day.

If the custodial and non-custodial parents cannot agree on the above procedure, the enrolling parent will be responsible for all pick-ups from the Center and for delivering the child(ren) to visits with the other parent at a neutral site.

No one will be allowed to be an authorized pick-up person if they are registered on the sex offender registry.<sup>1</sup> This is true even if a parent gives permission or is the parent of the child.

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<sup>1</sup> Updated February 2012, per state guidelines.

## **Open Access**

Beautiful Beginnings has an Open Access Policy. All parents are encouraged to visit their children's classroom whenever they would like, unless they are restricted by court order or are registered on the sex offender registry. We enjoy our parents' involvement in their child's lives, and encourage parents to join us whenever possible.

Parents who wish to observe or interact with their children in their classroom, who have not undergone the background check for volunteering, will not be counted in the ratio of teachers to students. Center staff will remain with those parents in the classroom at all times. At no time will a parent who is observing be allowed to be alone with any child other than their own. Teachers will supervise the interactions of parents with children while in the classrooms. "Supervising" is defined as actively observing interactions within hearing distance of conversations. Observations will be done visually. All parents are asked to behave appropriately while in the classroom. Actions such as inappropriate language, unnecessary roughness, or horse play will not be tolerated. It is the expectation of parents to add to the learning of the classroom, not to be a disturbance. If any of the above mentioned actions, or others inappropriate actions not listed, the parent will be asked to leave. Directors will speak to parents about this type of incident. This policy is included in all handbooks given to parents at enrollment. Parents are encouraged to speak to a Director if they have questions or concerns.

## **Facility Access Policy**

Centers are responsible for ensuring the safety of children at the center and preventing harm by being proactive and diligent in supervising not only the children, but other people present at the facility.

1. Any person in the center who is not an owner, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer who has had a record check and approval to be involved with child care **shall not** have "**unrestricted access**" to children for whom that person is not the parent, guardian, or custodian, nor be counted in the staff to child ratio.

**\*“Unrestricted access” means that a person has contact with a child alone or is directly responsible for child care.**

**\*It is imperative that centers not allow people who have not had a record check assume child care responsibilities or be alone with children. This directly relates both to child safety and liability to the center.**

2. Persons who do not have unrestricted access will be under the direct “supervision” and “monitoring” of a paid staff member at all times and will not be allowed to assume any child care responsibilities. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the teacher unless he/she delegates it to the teacher assistant due to a conflict of interest with the person.

**\*“Supervision” means to be in charge of an individual engaged with children in an activity or task and ensure that they perform it correctly.**

**\*“Monitoring” means to be in charge of ensuring proper conduct of others.**

3. Center staff will approach anyone who is on the property of the center without their knowledge to ask what their purpose is. If staff is unsure about the reason they will contact their Site Manager or another management staff to get approval for the person to be on site. If it becomes a dangerous situation staff will follow the “intruder in the center” procedures. Non-agency persons who are on the property for other reasons such as maintenance, repairs, etc. will be monitored by paid staff and will not be allowed to interact with the children on premise.

4. A sex offender who has been convicted of a sex offense against a minor (even if the sex offender is the parent, guardian, or custodian) who is required to register with the Iowa sex offender registry (Iowa Code 692A):

a. Shall not operate, manage, be employed by, or act as a contractor or volunteer at the child care center.

b. Shall not be on the property of the child care center, even to transport the offender’s own minor child or ward to and from the center.

**Staff:**

The quality of any child care center is a direct reflection of its staff. Beautiful Beginnings recognizes its employees as the center's most valuable component. The personnel policies reflect the respect felt for staff as professionals in childcare and provide a basis for understanding and meeting the needs of both the center and families.

All staff members are required to obtain certification for CPR, First Aid, Universal Precautions, and are Mandatory Reporters. Prior to hiring, each employee must have a criminal record check through the state of Iowa. Each staff member must also complete a national criminal history check done through the Federal Bureau of Investigation. We do not hire individuals convicted of child abuse and/or neglect. In order to optimize your child's growth and development, we hire teachers who are interested in providing quality care and stimulating environments.

Every staff member must complete 12 hours of Essentials Preservice training through the Iowa State University Extension and the State of Iowa. This certification must remain current the entire time an employee is working with Beautiful Beginnings.<sup>2</sup> All staff also take part in a 16 hour New Staff Orientation program through Iowa State University. By completing both programs, staff gain an understanding of quality childcare initiatives, as well as, rules and policies.

**General Information on Programs:**

Beautiful Beginnings is committed to maintaining low staff to child ratios. We firmly believe that the beginning of any quality environment begins with creating close and nurturing relationships between teachers and children. The following are the teacher/child ratios at our center:

6 weeks–2 years: 1 teacher to 4 children

2 years: 1 teacher to 6 children

3 years: 1 teacher to 8 children

4 years: 1 teacher to 10 children

School Age: 1 teacher to 15 children

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<sup>2</sup> October 2016.

### **Admission/Enrollment:**

Beautiful Beginnings accepts children ages 6 weeks through 12 years of age. The following enrollment policies and procedures have been established to afford your child the maximum protection and to comply with state licensing standards:

1. Pre-registration forms for children who will be attending the Center can be obtained from our website, [www.beautifulbeginnings.info](http://www.beautifulbeginnings.info).
2. The registration forms are to be filled out completely and returned to the Center along with the one-time registration fee before the child's attendance.
3. If you are pre-registering, the deposit will reserve your child's space in the center.
4. The Emergency Medical Consent form signed by parent/guardian, health record signed by a physician, and immunization record signed by a physician MUST be returned before enrollment. These forms must be updated yearly, or if new immunizations are given, a new form is needed.
5. Other forms are highly recommended. Vision and hearing screening forms can be obtained from the Director. The local Lions club chapter does annual vision screenings for all children 6 months and older who are attending the center. Developmental screenings will also be completed by all classrooms. Results are shared with parents.

### **Moving Classes/Transitioning:**

It is our expectation that parents and the Center's staff will work together when a child needs to move from one age group to the next. We would like parents to play an active role in this process.

Teachers, parent or the Director may initiate a class change. Teachers will be notified by the center about when and where a child will move. Your child will be assessed to determine his/her readiness to move from one group to another. Moves are based on the needs of the child, developmental criteria, and the occupancy of the classrooms.

You will receive written and verbal notification of a pending move. Parents are encouraged to interact with the new teacher to learn more about his/her classroom. Your child will have transitioning time for 2 weeks before making the room change permanent. This is when children make regular visits to the new classroom throughout the day.

**Tuition:**

Tuition shall be set by the Beautiful Beginnings Advisory Board, and is due monthly for preschool and weekly for childcare, unless prior arrangements have been made. Tuition is due by the end of the day Wednesday for the week care is being provided.

Tuition payments may be paid in advance. Tuition will remain the same regardless of absence or holidays during the week. Tuition can be paid online, through our website [www.beautifulbeginnings.info](http://www.beautifulbeginnings.info), or at our center. Payment can be paid by check or cash at the center. No credit cards will be taken.

Overdue tuition will have a \$25/week late fee. If two weeks of tuition payments are overdue, the child may be dismissed until payment is made in full. Accounts that are not paid will be sent to a collection agency.

Refunds cannot be made for absence or illness. PLEASE let the Director know at least one week in advance if the child will be absent due to a holiday or vacation.

Daycare Parents will also have one week of vacation time during the year without tuition cost. Please let a Director know when you would like to use your vacation time, no advance notice is necessary.

We request 2 weeks written notice when your child will no longer be attending Beautiful Beginnings.

You will be charged a \$25.00 fee for each check that doesn't clear (insufficient funds). **If the Center receives a second check returned due to NSF, future payments must be in cash, money order or cashiers check.**

Children must be picked up by the closing time at the Center or a late fee of \$10.00/ 5 minutes, plus \$2.00 for each additional minute, will be assessed. This must be paid within 24 hours.

The tuition for the highest-rate child will be full price, but each sibling will receive a \$10.00 discount.

**Tuition Rates:**

Please see our Operations Director for current tuition rates as well as any fees that may accompany your child's attendance at Beautiful Beginnings. Additional fees may occur for select groups, such as No school days (school agers) or Late Starts (school agers).

**Hours:**

Beautiful Beginnings Preschool and Child Care will be open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Center is open year round, however we do observe certain holidays. The week between Christmas Day – New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day & the day after Thanksgiving. Preschool classes will be held from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. Monday through Thursday. The preschool will follow the North Polk Community School District schedule for vacation and snow days. If North Polk is starting 1 hour late, preschool will also start one hour late. If North Polk delays more than one hour, preschool is cancelled for the day. You can call the Center (984-6146 x 200) or look at our web site ([www.beautifulbeginnings.info](http://www.beautifulbeginnings.info)) or check the local radio and television stations for closings or delays. Beautiful Beginnings will strive to be open during inclement weather, safety permitting.

**Signing In/Out:**

*The parent or the adult bringing the child is to sign the child in/out each day on the check in/out sheet at the front table as well as clock them in/out on the fingerprint reader. This will ensure your child's safety when an emergency occurs.*

If you call about a change of adult picking up your child, we will ask for identification of the adult when he or she arrives. Please keep the Director updated on the adults allowed to pick up your child from the Center.

Your child should be taken to their room by their parent. Children should not be left unattended. Please make sure they are delivered to their teacher before exiting the building.

**Curriculum:**

Creative Curriculum is used in all classrooms in our center. This is a scientific, researched-based curriculum. This is also the curriculum used by the North Polk School District, so it makes for an easier transition for our children to school.

We use the standards set by North Polk Community School District as well as the State of Iowa Early Childhood Learning Standards. Our Older Preschool room also follows Iowa Quality Preschool Program Standards, per the Universal Preschool Grant. <sup>3</sup>

#### **Termination (By choice)**

We request 2 weeks written notice when your child will no longer be attending Beautiful Beginnings.

#### **Termination (Financial)**

Beautiful Beginnings will work with all families who are having financial hardships. If your account is delinquent, the Director will regularly meet with you to work out a payment plan. We will make every effort to work with the changing financial situations of our families; however, once a payment plan is agreed upon, completion of the plan is expected. Families who fail to comply with a payment plan, or who acquire a large balance on their account, will receive a final warning. If payments are not made, the account will be turned over to collections. At this time, the child will no longer be able to attend Beautiful Beginnings.

#### **Termination (Behavior)**

Beautiful Beginnings does reserve the right to end services for children with severe disciplinary issues. Beautiful Beginnings will work with families and outside partners, such as Heartland AEA and Child Guidance, in an attempt to curb behaviors. It is the wish of Beautiful Beginnings staff to meet the needs of every child; however, if it is determined that our center cannot meet the needs of a child, enrollment can be terminated.

#### **Other Termination**

There are several reasons for termination of services, although Beautiful Beginnings makes every effort to avoid these situations. Some examples are failure of the family to follow center policies, threatening a staff member or another child by a parent, or physical injury to a staff member or another child by a parent. If such a situation would occur, the parent will be asked to attend a meeting with the Director and the Beautiful Beginnings Board. At that time, the

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<sup>3</sup> Updated January 2011.

matter will be discussed and a decision will be made whether or not to allow the family to continue to attend.

### **Termination (inability to adjust)**

If your child is not yet ready for the group experiences, or if his/her needs are not met best in the group setting, we may ask for a confidential conference with you. We do not believe the child should remain in the Center unless deriving some benefit from the program and therefore together we may decide to postpone this educational experience. If you decide that your child's needs are not being met by his/her experience in the group setting, please feel free to request a conference.

A child may be discharged from the Center due to the inability of the child to adjust to group experiences, or by being a threat to other children, to staff members or to self. The child would be discharged only if there is an inability to remedy the situation after numerous conferences with the family.

### **Change of Address:**

Please notify the Center *immediately* if you have a change of address or telephone number. This information *must* be kept up to date, particularly in case of any emergency. Please notify us if your family experiences change – e.g. a new sibling, new job, serious illness or any traumatic change. We can better meet your child's needs, if we are aware of what they are experiencing.

### **Accidents/Injuries:**

Recording incidents. Incidents involving a child, including minor injuries, minor changes in health status, or behavioral concerns, shall be reported to the parent on the day of the incident. Parents will receive a written report document the event that occurred. Parents are asked to sign a copy of the report to be put into your child's file. Parents will be given a copy of the report for their records.

Incidents resulting in a serious injury to a child or significant change in health status shall be verbally reported to the parents, guardian, and legal custodians immediately, as well as, 911 if necessary. The parents, guardians, and legal custodians of any child included in incidents

involving inappropriate, sexually acting-out behavior shall be notified immediately after the incident.

### **Dental Emergencies**

In case of a dental emergency, first aid will be administered immediately to any child. If a tooth has been knocked out, the tooth will be placed in milk. Parents will be notified immediately. Using the dental information provided by the parents, a dentist's office may be notified in extreme cases. An accident report will be filled out for dental emergencies.

### **Clothing:**

Your child should wear clothing in which you do not care if it gets dirty every day -- something comfortable that does not need special care and allows the child independence at restroom time. We recommend that all children have a backpack or school bag (with their name in it) to carry school projects and papers home with them.

Weather permitting; the children will also play outside throughout the year. Please be sure to dress your children accordingly.

We require a complete change of clothing – including socks, marked with their name on it – to be left at the Center. We also suggest a small pillow & blanket for nap/rest time marked with the child's name. Children may also bring a security toy to use at rest time.

Parents of young children (ages 2-3) need to furnish diapers, changes of clothing as necessary when potty training, and any personal items needed.

Parents of infants and children under age two need to furnish bottles, diapers, changes of clothing, and any personal items needed. Discuss with the Director other state requirements regarding infant care.

We also request that your child have appropriate play shoes e.g. tennis shoes. Please do not bring or wear shoes that have heels or flip-flops. These are a safety concern. Please label jackets, coats, boots, etc. with the child's name inside to avoid a possible mix-up of clothing. The children **must** wear shoes at all times at the Center.

**Communication:**

We encourage frequent and informal communication with the staff. Please feel free to talk to any staff member at any time. A conference may be requested for any reason as well. Upcoming events, field trips and special activities will always be announced with a special note placed in your child's cubbie. Daily sheets will be sent home each evening for children 0-2yrs. These sheets will let you know all the important events of your child's day. Preschool teachers send home weekly emails or newsletters about the upcoming preschool events taking place. You are welcome to observe or visit our Center unless parental contact is prohibited by court order.

**Guidance & Discipline Policy:**

Anticipatory guidance will be used to prevent behavior problems. Positive encouragement to build self-esteem and self-control is helpful in developing appropriate social skills.

**Discipline Policy:**

Purpose: To allow teachers to teach and children to learn within a caring, positive, and enthusiastic environment.

Plan: The policy will be given to all parents at the beginning of each year as well as discussed with the children. This will be reinforced as necessary.

**Procedure:**

- A cheerful, positive, and enthusiastic environment will be set up to encourage and promote appropriate behavior.
- Guidance will be given to help the child to take responsibility for his/her behavior and to accept the appropriate consequences.
- Children will be guided to always have respect for God, themselves, peers, adults, and for the property of others.
- Children will be guided to help build appropriate social skills and self-control.
- Children will be guided to talk out problems and find acceptable solutions.
- Children will be supervised at all times by members of the staff.
- Staff will be consistent and fair with all children.
- Corporal punishment shall never be used.

- Staff will emphasize appropriate behavior.

*For inappropriate behavior:*

- Staff member will speak to the child one–one if possible, redirect the child’s behavior, give warning, and occasionally an age–appropriate short time–out will be used (School Age only).
- Staff member will refer child to Director only in extreme cases.
- Director will speak to the parent if inappropriate behavior continues.
- If behavior persists or becomes more aggressive, partners may be called in to assist staff (pending parental permission to do so). Beautiful Beginnings often works with Heartland AEA and Child Guidance.
- If no remedy can be found, or families are unwilling to work with Beautiful Beginnings or our partners, termination of enrollment may be necessary. It is the wish of the Staff at Beautiful Beginnings to meet the needs of all children; however, if it is determined that our center is not the most appropriate place for a child, discharge may occur.

All staff will comply with Iowa Code Human Services 441, chapter 109 for discipline, which regulates how to deal with discipline issues.

**Biting Policy:**

Even in the best child care center, periodic outbreaks of biting occur among infants, toddlers and sometimes preschoolers and occasionally older children. This is an unavoidable consequence of grouping young children together. When it happens, it can be scary and very frustrating for children, parents and teachers. Understanding the reason for biting is the first step to changing a child’s behavior. Children bite for a variety of reasons: teething, simple sensory exploration, cause and effect, imitation, crowding, seeking attention, frustration and stress. Childcare group situations are difficult: dealing with others constantly around, sharing attention and toys, and too much or too little stimulation are all very difficult for children. Biting is not something to blame on children, their parents or their teachers. When biting breaks out, a high quality childcare program immediately takes action, not to blame the biters but to change the environment and help children change their behavior.

It is important that the caregivers remain calm and in control of their emotions when biting occurs. Staff should not show anger or frustration towards the child. The caregiver should calmly respond to the child, letting them know that biting is not ok. In addition, the following steps will be taken.

1. The teacher will remove the child from the situation and focus caring attention on the child who was bitten.
2. Encourage the biter to help take care of the child that was bitten (hold ice pack, comfort the child).
3. The care giver should talk to the child who bit (if able to communicate) and talk about different strategies that the child can use next time (give them appropriate words–if able) instead of biting. This should be done in a short simple way.

It is important to explore the reasons for biting when it occurs. Staff will work with parents to gather information about the child's behavior and begin observations to determine the reasons for biting. Examples of some triggers would be: communication deficits, transitions, hunger, lack of sleep, need for oral stimulation or teething pain. Once triggers are identified, staff can work on prevention strategies and start teaching replacement skills. Below are some examples of how the teacher will begin this assessment.

1. The teacher will examine the context in which the biting is occurring and look for patterns. The teacher will use the Center Action Plan for documentation and ask the following questions:
  - Was the space too crowded
  - Were there too few toys
  - Was there too little to do or too much waiting
  - Was the child who bit getting the attention and care he/she deserved at other times, other than when he/she was biting
2. The teacher will change the environment, routines or activities if necessary
3. The teacher will work with the child who is biting to resolve conflicts and frustrations in more appropriate manners, including using words, if they are capable of them.
4. The teacher will observe the child, to get an idea of why and when they are likely to bite.
5. The teacher will identify children likely to be bitten and make special efforts to reduce their chance of being bitten.

6. The teacher, parent and administration will meet regularly to regulate an action plan and to measure the outcome of these changes.
7. If biting continues the teacher will observe the group more closely and work with the parents to seek out additional resources as necessary to shadow the child who is biting.

First Aid in response to biting when skin is not broken. (both child and adult)

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over wound.
2. Apply ice or cool compress to help reduce the pain or swelling.
3. Bandage the wound as necessary.
4. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.

First Aid if bite breaks the skin. (both child and adult)

1. Wear gloves, clean wound with soap and water. Run water over the wound for 5 minutes.
2. Control the bleeding.
3. Cover the wound with sterile dressing and bandage.
4. Contact parents of BOTH children involved and encourage them to contact their healthcare provider to determine if they need to be seen.
5. Write a detailed incident report for both children involved with the incident.
6. Follow procedures outlined in our Exposure Control Plan.

When children bite, their parents are informed personally and privately the same day. All information is confidential and names of the children involved in the incident are not shared between parents. In addition, biting is always documented on our standard incident form which is completed and signed by teacher, parents and an administrator is notified. One copy is give to the parent and one copy is kept a file cabinet in office.

When biting occurs, here's what you can expect from us:

- We will put the child's safety first and provide first aid as well as comfort, support and advice to any child who is bitten.
- We will provide appropriate programming for children to help prevent biting.
- We will make current information and resources on biting available to you.
- We will provide teachers with adequate knowledge and training to deal properly and effectively with biting.

- We will take your concerns seriously and treat them with understanding and respect.
- We will tell you what specific steps we are taking to address biting and explain the reasoning behind those steps.
- We will respond to your questions, concerns and suggestions.
- We will work to schedule conferences about biting with you, at a time you can attend.
- We will keep your child's identity confidential if he or she bites. This helps avoid labeling or confrontations that may prolong the behavior.
- We will not exclude a child for biting.

We wish we could guarantee that biting will never happen in our program, but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting so it will end as quickly as possible. We want the best for all the children in our program. If you want more information on biting or have questions or concerns, please let us know—we are here to help you and your child on their journey to independence!

### **Naptime Policy**

State licensing standards require a minimum of 20 minutes of quiet time for each child daily. In accordance with this standard, each classroom (with the exception of the infant room) has a scheduled naptime. During naptime, children will be asked to sit or lay on a cot for a minimum of 20 minutes. This time allows the children to rest. During this time, they can read a book or another quiet activity that does not disturb other children around them. While children are not required to sleep, those who do fall asleep will be allowed to rest. Rest time will not exceed 2 hours. Children who do not sleep will be allowed to participate in other activities away from their cots, provided they remain quiet to allow the resting children a peaceful napping environment.

### **Safe Sleep Policy (infants)**

Beautiful Beginnings wants to promote practices that ensure safe sleep while infants are napping or sleeping. Recommendations of the SIDS Foundation have been implemented to make sure our center utilizes the most up-to-date information for infant safety. The following practices will be used:

- Infants up to 12 months of age will be placed in the supine position (on their back) to sleep, unless written documentation from a pediatrician

and a signed waiver stating that an alternate sleep position is required for the child are given to.

- Infants will be placed for sleep in safe sleep environments; which includes: a firm crib mattress covered by a tight-fitting sheet in a safety-approved crib (the crib should meet the standards and guidelines reviewed/approved by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission [CPSC] and ASTM International [ASTM]), no monitors or positioning devices should be used unless required by the child's primary care provider, and no other items should be in a crib occupied by an infant except for a pacifier;
- Infants will not nap or sleep in a car safety seat, bean bag chair, bouncy seat, infant seat, swing, jumping chair, play pen or play yard, highchair, chair, futon, or any other type of furniture/equipment that is not a safety-approved crib (that is in compliance with the CPSC and ASTM safety standards);
- If an infant falls asleep in any place that is not a safe sleep environment, staff will immediately move the infant and place them in the supine position in their crib;
- Only one infant should be placed in each crib (unless following emergency fire evacuation procedures). Each infant will be assigned their own crib.
- Soft or loose bedding will be kept away from sleeping infants and out of safe sleep environments. These include, but are not limited to: bumper pads, pillows, quilts, comforters, sleep positioning devices, sheepskins, blankets, flat sheets, cloth diapers, bibs, etc. Also, blankets/items should not be hung on the sides of cribs. Swaddling infants when they are in a crib is not necessary or recommended, but rather one-piece sleepers will be used;
- No toys, including mobiles and other types of play equipment that are designed to be attached to any part of the crib will be used in safe sleep environments;
- When staff place infants in their crib for sleep, they will check to ensure that the temperature in the room is comfortable for a lightly clothed adult, check the infants to ensure that they are comfortably clothed (not overheated or sweaty), and that bibs, necklaces, and

garments with ties or hoods are removed (clothing sacks or other clothing designed for sleep can be used in lieu of blankets);

- Infants will be directly observed by sight and sound at all times, including when they are going to sleep, are sleeping, or are in the process of waking up;
- Bedding will be changed weekly, unless an accident occurs– then bedding will be laundered the same day. Cribs will be sanitized weekly as well.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy:**

Beautiful Beginnings Preschool and Child Care admits students of any race, creed, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or made available to students at the Center. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship, athletic and other Center-administered programs.

### **Illness**

Beautiful Beginnings works with nurse consultants and state licensing agents to determine our illness policy. We strive to find a balance between caring for children with mild illness and preventing illness from spreading to healthy children. All parents want their child's best interests to be met, and we work hard to find a happy balance. **If your child is sick, please do not bring him/her to the Center.** Your child needs to be feeling well enough to participate in activities as usual, but they need to be home while contagious. Beautiful Beginnings asks parents to respect this policy for the safety of all children at the Center. Remember, all children get sick, but we can all do our part to prevent the spread of disease as much as possible. Please notify us when your child will be absent. If possible, please call by 7:30 a.m.

Our policy is to send a child home if:

1. They vomit (not because of excessive coughing, choking, etc).
2. They have 3 instances of diarrhea. Especially if it is not contained within a diaper, as this makes an unsanitary

environment for other children and can lead to faster transmission of viruses/bacteria to other children.

3. They have a fever of 101.0 or higher. All temperatures are taken under the arm (for safety of your child). A degree must be added to this temp (per American Association of Pediatrics guidelines).
  4. They have head lice. Children can return after being treated.
  5. They have pink eye. (see below)
- If your child is sent home due to one of the above mentioned criteria, **your child may not return until they are free from the ailment for 24 hrs. This includes fever (the child may not be using fever reducing medications, such as Tylenol, when they return).**

If your child is treated with **antibiotics**, the child cannot return unless a doctor has given a written release. State licensing requires all medications must be labeled with the child's name and be in the original bottle, accompanied by a physician's note indicating how much and how often to administer the medication. Parent's will be asked to sign a Medication Authorization form, and staff will complete a medication log for any doses given at the childcare center. Please give the medication to a staff member so that it can be stored in the appropriate place. Please take the medication home every day when you pick up your child.

For cases of Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis), as it is a common virus that is spread among children, **a child must have been given medicated eye drops for 24 hours before they can return to childcare.** This is very important because children are contagious until that point. Drops can be brought to the center, with a doctor's note, and should be continued to be given for up to 10 days (2 or 3 times a day depending on the prescription). More helpful information can be found at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov).

If your child becomes ill during the course of the day, you or another authorized person will be contacted. Out of respect for the health of other children and staff, children should be picked up within **one hour** of being contacted.

## **Sunscreen**

Parents will need to bring sunscreen for their child during the summer months (required for all children 6+ months of age). Staff will apply sunscreen before going outside each morning and again after lunch time. Parents will fill out an authorization form annually for sunscreen. Each child is to have his or her own sunscreen with his/her name on it, to stay here at the Center.

## **Communicable Disease**

Parents should notify the Center if the child has contracted a communicable disease. The Center will post notices of exposure of children to communicable diseases on the bulletin board outside the Director's office. Parents will also be notified if there is a confirmed case in their child's room.

## **Infection Disease Control**

Beautiful Beginnings has a Exposure Control Plan (ECP) that is kept in the office. All center staff are trained in Universal Precautions. This training will allow them to safely address any situation involving bodily fluids. Please ask a Director to see the ECP if you have questions. Protective Equipment is also kept on hand to protect staff and children during such events.

## **Iowa Nondiscrimination Statement**

The Iowa statement includes more protected classes than the USDA statement and is listed below:

"It is policy of this CNP provider not to discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, disability, or religion in its programs, activities, or employment practices as required by the Iowa Code section 216.7 and 216.9. If you have questions or grievances related to compliance with this policy by this CNP Provider, please contact the Iowa Civil Rights Commission, Grimes State Office Building, 400 E. 14<sup>th</sup> St., Des Moines, IA 50319-1004; phone number 515-281-4121, 800-457-4416; web site: <http://www.state.ia.us/government/crc/index.html>."

## **Civil Rights Statement**

This explains what to do if you believe you have been treated unfairly. In accordance with Federal Law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this

institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice). Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

### **Nutrition:**

The Department of Human Service requires nutritious snacks and meals. Snack suggestions are defined by CACFP guidelines. Breakfasts (optional), morning snacks, noon lunches, and afternoon snacks will be provided as suggested by CACFP guidelines. On occasion, children may do cooking projects as part of their daily activities.

There are occasions where classes will take a field trip to a park and teachers ask parents to bring a sack lunch. This is not required, Beautiful Beginnings will provide a sack lunch if a parent chooses not to. If sack lunches are provided by families, nutritional guidelines need to be followed. No pop or candy is allowed.

### **Nut Free Center**

Due to a high number of nut allergies, Beautiful Beginnings has become a nut free center. This means we will not serve anything containing tree nuts or peanuts to our students. This also means that parents will not be permitted to bring snacks, birthday treats, or sack lunch items that contain tree nuts or peanuts. Unfortunately, some of these allergies are life threatening, and it is our mission to ensure the safety and health of every child enrolled at the center. <sup>4</sup>

### **Food Brought From Home**

Beautiful Beginnings has a responsibility to follow feeding practices that promote optimum nutrition that supports growth and development in infants, toddlers, and children. Nutrition is a vital component of good health. Children learn about good food choices from a young age, and we wish to encourage those good food choices during their time at our center, which extends to food brought from home. Treats brought to Beautiful Beginnings to celebrate special events (birthdays, holidays, etc...) are allowed; however, food brought to

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<sup>4</sup> Updated August 2012.

supplement or replace meals or snacks should follow the same guidelines as the meals and snacks provided by the center. Please do not send items that would be considered “junk” food, such as soda, candy, potato chips, etc... By utilizing best feeding practices, we hope to provide proper nutrition for growing minds and bodies. <sup>5</sup> These items must be store bought items in store packaging. Please do not bring any items that are homemade. <sup>6</sup> Also, no items may contain tree nuts or peanuts.

### **Screen Time Policy**

Beautiful Beginnings strives to provide quality activities for the proper development of all children. It is with this understanding, that screen time (TVs, Computers, etc.) will be limited. For children under 24 months, screen time is restricted. Children ages 24 months and older, screen time is extremely limited. Classrooms do not use any screen time during a normal week. This is reserved for special occasions that only occur a few times per week. This policy will ensure the best practices for all children. <sup>7</sup>

### **Physical Activity Policy**

Beautiful Beginnings strives to promote wellness in all classrooms. One way in which Beautiful Beginnings works towards wellness and healthy living is by promoting physical activity for all children. Every classroom has opportunities for large motor activities built into their schedule. Toddlers through school age children will have 1–2 hrs. of physical activity daily. This includes outside play (weather permitting), gym time, and activities in the classroom. It is our desire to meet the needs of all children. Children with special needs will also be given the same opportunities, and modifications will be made for them as necessary.

### **Water Policy**

Children will always have access to fresh drinking water while at Beautiful Beginnings. Parents are encouraged to send water bottles for children to take with them on field trips or out to the play ground. Children will also have the opportunity to drink water with meal, along with milk. Young children will be given sippy cups of water during active play and throughout the day. All bottles will be sanitized regularly, and fresh water will be put in them daily.

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<sup>5</sup> Updated August 2010.

<sup>6</sup> Updated August 2011.

<sup>7</sup> Updated December 2011.

### **Zero Tolerance for Guns/Weapons/Drugs:**

Please do not allow your child to bring toy/pretend weapons (i.e., plastic guns, knives) to the child care center. If a staff member finds a toy/pretend weapon in your child's possession, the weapon will be confiscated and you will be reminded of our Zero Tolerance for weapon policy. If a real weapon is found in your child's possession, the weapon will be confiscated and the police and Child Protective Services will be called. The child may be suspended or expelled from the child care center.

Additionally, do not allow your child to bring any medication/drugs to the child care center. If a prescription or over-the-counter medicine for the child is found in the possession of the child, you will be notified and we will determine an appropriate source of action. If an illicit drug is found in your child's possession, the drug will be confiscated and the police and Child Protective Services will be called. The child may be suspended or expelled from the child care center.

Note: Consequences to weapons/drugs being brought to the Center may be made on a case by case basis and will depend on the age and intent of the child.

Note: Staff has the right to search children's belongings at the Center if they have reason to believe that the child has weapons or drugs in their possession. All searches will include at least two staff member searching together.

### **Smoke-free Workplace Policy**

The Beautiful Beginnings facility and grounds, including Beautiful Beginnings vehicles, are off limits for tobacco and nicotine use including but not limited to cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, snuff, pipes, snus, Electronic Smoking Devices (ESD) and nicotine products that are not Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved for tobacco cessation. This requirement extends to students, employees and visitors. Persons failing to abide by this policy are required to extinguish their smoking material, dispose of the tobacco/nicotine product or leave the Beautiful Beginnings premises immediately. It is the responsibility of the administration to enforce this policy.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Updated September 2017.

**Field Trips**

Beautiful Beginnings will take children in our preschool and school age rooms on field trips throughout the year. Parents will be given a permission slip from the child's teacher or the Director authorizing the child to attend the field trip. Permission slips and any field trip fees must be turned into the child's teacher or the Director before your child will be allowed to attend. If state law requires your child to ride in a car seat, the car seat must be brought and left at the center for your child. We will attempt to contact parents who forget, but Beautiful Beginnings will not transport children without a car seat when a car set is required. If a car seat can not be acquired, the child will not be allowed to attend the field trip. Any child who is not attending, or if a parent does not wish their child to attend, will join the other preschool classroom until their class returns. Ratios in the classrooms will still be maintained. Seat belts will be used by all children not requiring a car seat.

**Transportation Policy**

All parents must sign a Travel Authorization, which will be kept in their child's folder. If state law requires your child to ride in a car seat, the child's car seat must be brought to the center to be used in the center's vans. School aged children will be transported to and from school and field trips using the center's school bus.

Only the Director and center staff who are 25 years of age or older are allowed to drive the center vehicles. All staff must have also passed a driving safety certification through the center's insurance company. All staff must also have a valid driver's license. Only staff with a valid CDL will be allowed to drive the school bus. A special license is not required to drive the vans.

Seat belts will be utilized by any staff or children who do not require a car seat when riding in the vans. The driver will wear a seat belt in the school bus. All vehicles are routinely inspected to insure the safety of all occupants. A bus inspection log is kept in the bus.

**Licensing:**

Beautiful Beginnings Preschool and Child Care is licensed by the Iowa Department of Human Services and will operate according to all state rules and regulations.

~Beautiful Beginnings Preschool and Child Care~  
Emergency Evacuation Policy

**Note:** All parents are required to sign up for our Emergency Alert System for text or email notification. This system will be utilized by Beautiful Beginnings staff whenever an emergency arises. This will be the main form of communication with parents if the situation requires evacuation of classrooms, and/or the center.

**Blizzard:**

- Determined by weather reports and North Polk School if cancellation or early closure is necessary.
- Parents will be contacted as soon as possible to pick up children.
- We will have quiet playtime until all children have been picked up.
- Staff will stay with children until all have been picked up.
- If seven children or fewer are present, only one staff member is necessary.

**Fire:**

- When a fire emergency is detected, we will evacuate according to fire drill instructions posted on the doors.
- Children and staff will assemble by the garage.
- Children will be counted.
- Emergency buckets will be taken by staff. Parents will be notified.
- If weather is inclement, or the fire department decides children and staff will NOT be permitted to re-enter the building, children will be transported to the Polk City Community Center until parents pick up.
- Staff will remain with children until all parents have picked up.

**Tornado:**

- When tornado drill is sounded or other determination of danger is verified, children will be moved to the restrooms. Children will be counted.
- Children will be instructed to cover their heads in a crouching position, as previously practiced.
- If there is a loss of power and the center director decides an early closing is necessary, parents will be notified.
- If structural damage occurs, police will be notified. Parents will also be notified. Children and staff will be transported to the Polk City Community building until parents pickup.

- Emergency buckets will be taken to the restrooms, and to the Community Center if a move is necessary.

#### **Earthquake:**

- As determined by staff, children and staff will go to the hallway near the restrooms. Children will be counted.
- If outside, children and staff will move away from the building and playground equipment. Children will be counted.
- If there is structural damage to the building, children will be transported, by bus, to the Polk City Community building.
- Parents will be contacted to pick up children.

#### **Bombs:**

- Any staff informed of a bomb threat will communicate with all other staff members in the building through telephone or personal contact.
- All children will be taken to the open field across the parking lot. Children will be counted. Emergency buckets will be taken.
- Police will be contacted and further evacuation procedures will be followed under police direction. Parents will also be contacted.
- If cold or inclement weather, children and staff will be transported, by bus, to the Polk City Community building. Parents will be contacted.

#### **Power Failure:**

- Children will remain in classrooms.
- We will continue to follow scheduled activities if possible.
- We will contact parents to pick up children if early closing is necessary.

#### **Intoxicated Parents:**

- A staff member will attempt to detain the parent.
- Another staff member will contact another person from the emergency contact list and request pick-up.
- Staff will inform intoxicated parent of the pick-up plan.
- If unable to contact another pick-up person, child must be allowed to leave with parent. Staff will then inform the parent that the police will be called.
- Staff will call the police to inform them of the situation.

**Intruder:**

- If it is determined that an intruder may be harmful, then staff members will be notified to “lock down.” All staff will lock classroom doors, turn off lights, close curtains, and instruct children to keep quiet.
- Staff member will attempt to assist intruder.
- Another staff member will contact police.
- We will proceed as instructed by the police.
- If determined necessary, staff member may be instructed to take the children away from BB to safety (if situation becomes volatile or as instructed by police).
- If children are moved, the staff members will count them. Staff will communicate with each other by cell phones.
- Parents will be contacted.

**Lost or Abducted Children:**

- One staff member will remain with children.
- A second staff member will alert others in the building to assist in the search.
- If the child is not found in ten minutes, staff will contact parents and the police.
- Staff will proceed as directed by the police.

**Chemical Spills:**

- Staff and children will leave the area immediately. Children will be counted.
- A staff member will contact Polk City Fire Department and follow their directions.
- Staff and children will evacuate the building, and they will be transported, by bus, to the Polk City Community building.
- the building.
- Emergency Buckets will be taken.
- Staff will call parents for pickup.

Beautiful Beginnings has a written procedure for fire and tornado safety. Emergency plans shall be practiced and documented at least once a month for fire and tornado drills. Emergency plan procedures for fire shall be practiced using varying exits and times. Records of practice drills will be maintained.

### **Inclement Weather Policy**

Beautiful Beginnings will make every effort to remain open during our regular business hours, keeping the safety of our employees and children in mind. However, in the event of inclement weather, information will be immediately posted on our website [beautifulbeginnings.info](http://beautifulbeginnings.info) and on our phone system. Text messages or email messages will be sent to parents who sign up for the free service. An update is also posted on KCCI Channel 8. Information will be updated throughout the day on our website and phone system to keep our parents informed. If we need to close early, parents will be notified by phone, text, or email.

It is our intention to remain open every day that we can. We understand that closing the center is a burden to our families. Therefore, Beautiful Beginnings will credit for two closings a year. This credit will be based on the number of days each family pays to attend our center. For example, if a family pays the 5-day rate, they would only be charged the 4-day rate for that week. Any additional closings will not be credited. This policy will renew with each calendar year.

Please understand that there have been many years where no closings are necessary, and unfortunately, there are some years we have more than we would like. We are always trying to make the safest decisions for our employees and the children we serve.

### **A FINAL WORD**

It is our hope that your child will have positive experiences learning, caring, and sharing with us. If at any time you have questions or suggestions about any part of our program, please speak to the director.