

Childcare Policy Handbook

(Effective January 2017)

Please read over this Parent Handbook carefully. It contains very important information regarding your child’s care. This handbook is revised annually, but occasionally we must make changes sooner depending on the needs of our childcare. Any revisions will be given to parents prior to the date any changes are to be in effect.

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About Our Program

Provider Information

Waddlers to Toddlers (W2T) is registered by Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services (DPHHS) as a Group Child Care Home. We have been registered since August 2007.

We are registered to care for twelve children between the ages of six weeks and twelve years old. However, of that twelve, only six children may be under the age of twenty four months. Additionally, we are approved to care for four “overlap” children, who must be at least three years old, between the hours of 2:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

Waddlers to Toddlers is currently participating in STARS to quality through the State of Montana to promote quality in childcare. Through this program we have obtained a STAR 2 and we are working towards a STAR 3.

Staffing Requirements

Our staff is carefully screened and selected before they come into contact with the children at our program. Each staff member is trained in adult and infant CPR and First Aid. They have also each undergone a criminal background check as well a Child Protective Services check.

All caregivers are required by Montana DPPHS to complete eight hours of training in the early childhood field annually. Our caregivers are required to take 16 hours of training in the first six months of employment and they must take an additional eight hours of training within one year of working for W2T. 23 hours of training is required annually each year after.

We understand the importance of continuity in care for the children and strive to provide the highest quality of care for each of the children we care for.

Hours of Operation

W2T provides care Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 5:30 pm.

Daily Schedule

This schedule is tentative. Changes in schedule may vary based on the needs of the children in our care.

6:30-8:30	Arrival, greeting, self-directed and supervised play
8:30-9:00	Breakfast. For infants and toddlers, bottle-feeding and sleep as individual schedules dictate throughout the day
9:00-9:15	Circle time
9:15-9:45	Language arts and music (finger plays, small movement activities, etc.)
9:45-10:30	Large muscle movement activities (such as parachute play, tunnels, or other movement activity). Outdoor as weather permits
10:30-11:30	Science activity and Arts/crafts

11:30-12:00	Math and Manipulatives
12:30-1:00	Lunch. For infants and toddlers, bottle-feeding and sleep as individual schedules dictate throughout the day
1:15-3:30	Nap/quiet time
3:30-4:00	PM snack
4:00-5:30	Departure activity and Good Byes. Self-directed and supervised play. Outdoor play

Enrollment Procedures

Eligibility

No child will be denied admission based on race, religion, or handicap. W2T will do its best to accommodate children with special needs. We reserve the right to deny admission if spots for a particular age (such as infants or after school) are full or if we are unable to accommodate a child with special needs.

Please understand that the completion and execution of any forms and the payment of any tuition, timely or in advance, is not a guarantee of enrollment, continued enrollment or re-enrollment. A child may be refused enrollment or may be dis-enrolled at any time, with or without notice, when it is believed, at W2T sole discretion, that discontinuing or refusing enrollment is in the best interest of the child, the program or the other children receiving W2T care.

Admission Requirements

The admission procedure for your child's enrollment at Waddlers to Toddlers requires an interview. At this interview Erica gets a chance to sit down with the families and be more available for questions about Waddlers to Toddlers, as well as discuss my policies and enrollment procedures. We encourage parents to ask any questions that they feel will help them in making a decision on childcare for their child. We will also provide a checklist made available by DPHHS to help parents choose childcare that fits their needs. Families may observe and take part in the many activities the children participate in throughout the day. We encourage parents to let their child interact with the other children and get a feel for our program, however, children can be intimidated by a new group of people and may choose to observe from a parents lap, which is completely normal. Erica will give out all necessary enrollment forms at the conclusion of this interview, only if the family wishes to enroll.

Forms

Before your child's first day of attendance at Waddlers to Toddlers, the following forms need to be filled out and include the required signatures.

Emergency Contact Information

Current Immunization Records

Pediatric Health Statement (children 2 years and under)

Infant feeding Schedule (children 2 years and under)

Over The Counter (OTC) non-ingestible medication authorization form

Special Needs Form (if applicable)

Personal Care Plan (Infant/Toddler or Preschool)
Reservation or holding agreement
Tuition payment
Deposit (only if holding or reserving a spot)
Childcare Schedule
Childcare Contract
Parent Obligations
Enrollment Agreement
Tuition Form
General Information Form
Child and Family Information Form
Injury notice
Emergency Transportation Permission Agreement
Biting Policy Acknowledgement
Safe Sleep Policy Acknowledgement
Photo Release Form
General Field Trip Form
Food Program Enrollment Form

Supplies

Your child will need the following supplies while at Waddlers to Toddlers. Each item needs to be labeled clearly with a permanent marker. Waddlers to Toddlers will not be responsible for any lost or damaged personal items.

2 - shirts/tops
2 - pants
2- undergarments (for those potty trained)
2- socks
2- bottles (for those under 1)
Blanket for nap (for those over 1)
Pillow for nap (if applicable)
Special animal (if applicable)
Pacifier (if applicable)
Diapers/ training pants
Wipes

Court Orders and Custody Arrangements

If there is a court order keeping one parent or guardian away from a child, we must have a certified copy of that court order on file. If we do not have a copy of this, we cannot deny a parental request to pick up their child.

If you have shared agreement for the custody of your child, W2T must have a copy of the court order on file. We will not deny parental requests to pick up a child without court papers indicating who had the right to do so. Verbal requests cannot be honored without these court papers on file.

Transition for New Children

It takes time for your child to get to know us and for us to learn about your child and build a new relationship. It will be important for us to work together and communicate daily to make the transition smooth for all of us.

Please Note: It is perfectly normal for your child to become upset when you drop them off in the morning. This is a difficult transition for most children, even after they have been attending childcare for a while. We know it can be difficult to leave when your child is upset but most of the time, the second you are out of site; they are back to their happy self!

Withdrawal

Parents must provide W2T with a written notice of **15 business days** if their child is to be withdrawn from Waddlers to Toddlers, as you will be charged for the normal days your child is scheduled to attend. This time does not include weekends, vacations or Holidays.

Termination by Waddlers to Toddlers

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the Director to decide that a child needs to be removed from our program. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of that child, the other children in the program and the overall operation of the child care to terminate enrollment. Every effort will be made to correct any problematic situations before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be the result of the following, but not limited to:

*non-payment of tuition (immediate termination) * abuse of children, staff or property *disruptive or dangerous behavior *continued violation of W2T policies by the child or parents

NOTE: If legal action is necessary, the parent will assume all of the costs associated with legal actions, including but not limited to collection fees of 35%, attorney fees, and court costs.

We reserve the right to terminate services at our own discretion at any time.

Financial Responsibilities

Waddlers to Toddlers accepts full time and part time enrollment for children ages six weeks to twelve years.

Tuition Rates

Full time: \$725.00 per month for children six weeks to 47 months of age
 \$670.00 per month for children four years and older

Part time (3 days per week):
 \$495.00 per month for children 23 months – 47 months of age
 \$455.00 per month week for children four years and older

Part time (2 days per week):
 \$355.00 per month for children 23 months – 47 months of age

\$325.00 per month for children four years and older

Afterschool care:

\$360.00 per month for children school-age

Early drop off (before 6:30 a.m.) / Late pick up (after 5:30 p.m.)

\$2.00 per minute per child

Payment of Tuition

All payments and fees are non-refundable.

W2T requires payment be made before we provide care. Parents have the option of paying monthly or bi-monthly. If you choose to make payments monthly, your payment will be due at drop off on the last business day of the month. If you prefer bi-monthly, your payments will be due at drop off on the last business day of the month and the 14th of each month. If your child is absent on the payment due date, ***for any reason***, we ask that you make arrangements for payment to be dropped off by 10 am that day or the day before payment is due. If your payment date falls on a weekend or Holiday, your payment is expected the business day prior.

If your payment is not made on the date agreed upon at the signing of the contract, we charge \$10 per day until the payment is made ***in full***. W2T begins assessing this fee if the payment is not made at drop off on the date the payment is due. Meaning if your payment is due on a Monday at drop off and you come by after dropping off your kids to make a payment, you will still be assessed a \$10 late charge. Waddlers to Toddlers can take cash or check.

If a check is returned for any reason, you will be charged a \$35 fee and a late payment fee for each day the check is not made sufficient. Your child may not return to child care until all payments have been settled.

All payments need to be placed in the payment box.

Please pay on time as it affects all of our staff's ability to provide for our own families and purchase supplies and/or food for the children in our program.

Child Care Scholarships

W2T encourages all families to apply for Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship. These scholarships from the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services can help you pay for child care. To get more information, please contact the child care resource and referral agency that serves our region.

If you receive a Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship, it is your responsibility to renew your contract on a timely basis and return any paperwork requested in a timely manner or you may lose this scholarship. You will be responsible for all child care costs if your scholarship is not renewed. You must provide me with verification that you have received a scholarship before your child begins childcare at Waddlers to Toddlers.

If your certification plan ends and we haven't received any letters or renewal papers from the Best Beginnings program stating you have been recertified, your child may not return to W2T unless a new

contract is signed stating you as the responsible party in paying for your child's childcare costs and you will be required to pay for care in advance. We cannot hold spots for your child if your certification plan ends and you are still waiting for new paperwork without payment of tuition for the days being held.

If you receive a Best Beginnings Scholarship, it is also your responsibility to make monthly co-payments on a sliding fee scale determined by the state. You are also responsible for all child care charges and fees that the scholarship doesn't cover. It is very important that you look over your child care certification plan so that you are aware of the hours that the state will cover each week and keep track of the hours your child is in childcare. You have a contract with the state and any discrepancies in hours or payments by the scholarship need to be discussed with your assigned case worker. However, we give out tuition reminders a week in advance and any discrepancies must be taken care of before tuition is due and will not conflict with paying your tuition on time.

If you choose to terminate care with Waddlers to Toddlers, you will be held to our termination policy. You will also still be responsible for any charges the State did not cover for your child and must pay tuition on the payment dates listed. Your account will be credited towards money owed to W2T before you will receive credit for making a copayment. If we do not submit that you have made your copayment, your scholarship will be immediately suspended until Waddlers to Toddlers receives all money owed to us and signs off on the copayment being made.

Co-payment for those with the Best Beginnings Scholarship is due at the end of business on the last business day of every month. Any charges and fees not covered by the scholarship are due at drop off on the 14th of every month. If either of these dates falls on a weekend or Holiday, payments are expected the business day prior.

Fees

If your tuition payment is not made on the date agreed upon at the signing of the contract, we charge \$10 per day until the payment is made ***in full***. W2T begins assessing this fee if the payment is not made at drop off on the date the payment is due. Meaning if your payment is due on a Monday at drop off and you come by after drop off to make a payment, you will still be assessed a \$10 late charge. Waddlers to Toddlers can take cash or check.

If a check is returned for any reason, you will be charged a \$35 fee and a late payment fee for each day the check is not made sufficient. Your child may not return to child care until all payments have been settled.

Unless arrangements have been made ahead of time (at least 24 hours) and agreed upon by both the parent and Erica, W2T will assess a late fee of \$2 per child every minute per child for children not picked up by 5:30 p.m., which must be paid when you pick up your child. If for some reason you cannot pay at that time, your child may not return to daycare until the fee is settled and a \$10 late payment charge will be assessed each day the payment is not made and the fee assessment will begin the same evening if payment is not made in full.

Families of children still in diapers or training pants must provide enough diapers or training pants and wipes every day. You are welcome to leave a package of diapers and wipes at W2T or bring a minimum of six diapers and a travel pack of wipes with your child every day. If you leave a package of diapers or wipes at W2T, it will only be used for your child and you will be notified when we are running low so you can replenish it. If you do not bring diapers or wipes and your child runs out, we will use our 'emergency'

diapers and wipes. However, you will be charged \$2 for every diaper used and \$0.50 for every wipe used. Those charges will be due at the time your child is dropped off the following day.

Waddlers to Toddlers may occasionally charge additional fees for special craft supplies, field trips, damaged property, etc. If we will be charging any additional fees, you will be given advance notice as well as a note on your monthly invoice. However, in the event that the additional fee was not anticipated (damaged property); we will notify you as soon as the amount is known.

Waddlers to Toddlers reserves the right to change our childcare tuition as we see fit. We try to abide by the Montana childcare market rates for Yellowstone County. We will review our tuition rates in August of each year and will give a two week notice of any changes to parents. We ask that parents be prepared for any changes by expecting an increase in tuition each September. As with any other job, we see a cost of living increase and must be able to provide for our families.

Holidays, Vacations and Other Facility Closures

Waddlers to Toddlers celebrates all major Holidays and birthdays. If you would like to bring a special treat for the children on one of these special days, please let W2T know in advance so that we can let you know of any food allergies. We encourage all parents or guardians to participate in any of our celebrations.

W2T closes for the following Holidays during the course of the year:

New Year's Day
MLK Jr. Day
Presidents Day
Good Friday
Easter Monday
Memorial Day
July 4th
Labor Day
Columbus Day
Veterans Day
Thanksgiving Day and the following Friday
December 23rd – January 2nd for Christmas/New Years

W2T will also be closed **August 21st, 2017** for a Professional Development Day in order to prepare for the upcoming years curriculum.

These dates are subject to change at any time.

You **WILL** be charged for the Holidays in which Waddlers to Toddlers is closed.

Our caregivers take vacations throughout the year and W2T will provide as much notice as possible of those vacations. These vacations will not overlap and should not affect W2T ability to provide childcare. We do have substitute caregivers available should we need them.

Please have a backup provider in the event W2T must close the child care due to multiple staff illness, emergency or professional training. We will give you as much notice as possible so that you can find

alternate care.

In the event of the public schools closing for a Snow Day for extreme weather conditions, W2T will also close to avoid unnecessary travel for all families and employees.

If your child is absent for any reason (including vacation, illness, etc.), you will still be responsible to pay for the days in which your child is absent. You are paying for a position as well as a service.

Scheduled and Unscheduled Child Absences

If you anticipate you child will be absent for any period of time, please let Erica know as soon as possible.

Families are required to call by 7:30 a.m. if there child will be absent. This allows for notification of staff if they are not needed that day, as well as unnecessary meal or activity preparations.

Waddlers to Toddlers **will not** take any child after **10:00 a.m.** unless it is scheduled in the contract or notice has been given 24 hours in advance and agreed upon by the parent and Erica. If you show up to drop your child off after **10:00 a.m.**, you will not be able to leave your child in our care and will still be charged for that day. It is very difficult to transition children in the middle of an activity and disrupts the other children's learning.

For the health and safety of the other children, the Montana Child Care Regulations require us to ask the reason your child was absent. In some cases, you may need to bring a note from your child's doctor before your child can return to care. Children who have been absent cannot return to child care until the reason for the absence is known and there is assurance that the child's return will not harm other children.

If your child is absent for more than three consecutive days without notice to W2T, your child may not be guaranteed a spot when they return. On the third consecutive day that W2T has not received any kind of notice that your child will be absent, W2T will consider that day to be the first day of the fifteen business day notice that is required when withdrawing your child from W2T. You will be responsible for any tuition during that time period regardless of your child's attendance.

Schedule Changes

Please give W2T a **15 business day** advance notice of any changes you need to make in your child care schedule, such as vacation or other extended time when your child will be absent from child care. This does not include weekends, vacation or holidays.

If you need to change your childcare schedule from full-time to part-time, we require a **30 day** notice. This will give us enough time to find a family to fill the full-time spot without any sudden change in income.

We will do our best to accommodate any child care schedule changes, but it is not guaranteed that we will have that availability for your child.

Extended Absences

In the event that you are needing to hold your Childs spot in child care for any reason that requires an

extended absence such as maternity leave, job loss, etc., W2T will still require payment for the time your child is absent from child care. We do have a waiting list of families needing child care and by holding any spot free of charge we would be losing a substantial portion of our income. If you choose to be placed on the waiting list, Waddlers to Toddlers cannot guarantee a child care opening will be available when you need it.

Waiting List

Families placed on the waiting list are on a first come, first serve basis. In the event that W2T has a childcare opening, we will contact the first family on the waiting list. If that family no longer needs childcare, we will continue contacting families on the list until the opening is filled.

Placement on the waiting list is no guarantee that an opening will be available when you need it.

Reservations

For children beginning care within one week of reserving a spot, their spots may be reserved by paying a deposit equal to one-half of one month's tuition. The deposit will be applied to the first two weeks of care.

If the time between the date the deposit is paid and the date the child begins care is longer than one week, tuition payments equal to one-half of the child's tuition rate must be paid by 5:30 pm on the date you wish to reserve to hold the spot for the upcoming week. **Because W2T's reserving the spot and is unable to give it to another child, if you decide not to bring your child to W2T, the deposit and any tuition paid become nonrefundable.**

Child Care Policies

Open Door Policy

Waddlers to Toddlers maintains an open door policy. You are welcome to come visit us during business hours and spend as much time as you wish observing your child. The backdoor will remain unlocked at all times and you are welcome to come in without knocking or ringing the doorbell. You are also free to call at any time to check on your child, if there is no answer, please leave a message and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

We encourage parents to spend time playing with their children before leaving and when picking them up after work. We also welcome parents that want to join us for lunch or volunteer their time in the childcare setting. If you decide you want to join us any time throughout the day, we ask that you keep in mind that your child may become upset when you're done with your visit and leave without them. Also, the children behave in an excited manner when we have visitors in the program and can act differently than they do while they are just with us. Please also keep in mind nap/quiet time when planning your visit.

Drop Off and Pick Up

While on Waddlers to Toddlers property, do not leave ANY child unattended in your vehicle without an adult.

No one under the age of 18 is allowed to pick up a child from childcare. Your child must leave with an authorized adult that is listed on your child Emergency Contact Form. Please do not allow your child to

leave the building without an adult. This ensures the safety of everyone.

Waddlers to Toddlers assumes responsibility for children only while they are in our care. Parents are responsible for their children at all times when they are present. Parents are expected to uphold Waddlers to Toddlers rules while they are present.

Childcare children and their families **ARE NOT** permitted in the upstairs of the facility without permission.. Childcare children and their families are also not permitted in the downstairs office. This is Erica's family home and the privacy and respect that you would expect from visitors in your home is expected. Please **DO NOT** allow your children to enter the upstairs or office at drop off and pick up times. We understand that the rooms have intriguing items that the childcare children aren't allowed to play with because they belong to Erica or her children and could either be broken or could cause a safety hazard to younger children due to small pieces. If you allow your children to enter the upstairs or office during a non-approved activity, you will assume all responsibility for any broken or missing items and it is cause for immediate termination of our childcare contract.

Please be in control of your child during drop-off and pick-up times. This is a time of testing when two different authority figures are present (parent and provider) and this situation will be tested at one time or another to see if Waddlers to Toddlers rules still apply. Please uphold our rules.

It is normal for children to cry on arrival at childcare, especially for the first few weeks. The crying usually stops within seconds of their parent's departure. Please make goodbyes cheerful and brief and tell children when you will be returning. Never leave without telling your child goodbye.

Children of all ages adjust to transitions from one activity to another differently. Most do not like to be too rushed and most do not like to wait too long once they are ready to depart. If you need your child to be ready to leave immediately upon your arrival, please call ahead and we will prepare them for your arrival.

Waddlers to Toddlers will not take any child after 10 a.m. unless it is scheduled in the contract or notice is given at least 24 hours in advance. If you show up to drop your child off after 10 a.m. you will not be able to admit your child but will still be charged for that day. Staffing schedules, menus, and activities are planned in advance according to our childcare schedule you fill out prior to admittance.

Unless arrangements have been made ahead of time (at least 24 hours) and agreed upon by both the parent and Erica, W2T will assess a late fee of \$2 every minute for children not picked up by 5:30 p.m., which must be paid when you pick up your child. If for some reason you cannot pay at that time, your child may not return to daycare until the fee is settled and a \$10 late payment charge will be assessed each day the payment is not made and the fee assessment will begin the same evening if payment is not made in full. **Please be courteous and arrive on time. After hours is time with our own families.**

Daily Attendance

It is important for children to have consistency in their everyday routine. We ask that you keep that in mind when bringing your child to childcare. W2T has created a daily schedule so that the children know what to expect in their daily routine.

If your child is enrolled full time and is only brought to childcare a few days per week and at different times each day, it may be more difficult for them to adapt to the childcare routine and can complicate drop off and

pick up times for your family.

We understand things come up and it's not always possible for every family to have a set schedule for childcare every day. We just ask that you please give us as much notice as possible if your child is not going to be here on any given day or if you will be running later than your usual pick up time, so long as that time is during business hours. We will do our best to prepare your child for any schedule changes.

Sign In/Out Sheets

It is required by DPHHS and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) that W2T maintains a daily attendance of the times each child attends our program.

We have a sign in/out sheet for each child located directly inside the entrance on a clipboard at all times. It is required that anyone dropping off or picking up your child is to sign them in and out **EVERY** day.

If we are visited by either DPHHS or CACFP and your child's sign in/out sheet is not filled out properly but we have claimed a meal for them, we do not get credit for that meal, which results in a deduction from our next CACFP payment. If your failure to properly sign your child in or out results in a deduction from a CACFP payment, you will be notified of the amount and it will be your responsibility to pay that amount on your next payment date.

Authorized Pick Up

On your child's Emergency Contact form, W2T asks that you list all individuals you authorize to pick up your child. If we are not familiar with those people, we will require them to show photo identification before allowing them to take your child. If you need to change the list at any time, please provide us with a signed and dated note listing the name, address, and phone number of the people authorized to pick up your child.

Please let W2T staff know if someone besides the child's parent or guardian will be picking up your child on any day. This is required before we will release any child into non-parental custody.

Waddlers to Toddlers reserves the right to assure the safety of your child while in our care. If we feel that it is unsafe to release your child into your or another authorized persons custody, due to erratic behavior or the appearance of being under the influence of alcohol or drugs, we will attempt to call another authorized adult to pick up your child. If you or another authorized adult under these conditions remove your child despite my objections, we will call the police or sheriff as you leave child care. If a family member or other adult behaves in an aggressive or threatening manner, we will call the police or sheriff immediately.

Visitors to Our Program

W2T is a regulated child care facility and we are subject to state licensing inspections routinely, some are scheduled and some are not.

As part of the CACFP, we also get quarterly visits to review meal preparations and menu reviews.

STARS to Quality participants must also have routine visits with trainers from the State, as well as observations from State workers to evaluate our program.

Please understand that your child may be include in childcare evaluations by State licensing officials, Head Start Program, CACFP personnel, State trainers, and other parents exercising their right to our open door policy.

Please be assured that we take every precaution necessary to prove identity of State workers and anyone else who may be admitted into the facility during childcare hours.

Clothing and Belongings

Please dress your child every day in a complete set of clothing and shoes appropriate for the weather. Please also provide two complete sets of labeled clothes including socks, underwear, and a sweatshirt or jacket in case your child needs to change while at daycare or the weather turns colder. Any clothing left after the last day of daycare will be considered a donation.

Parents of infants and toddlers still in diapers need to provide a sufficient amount of diapers and wipes each day for your child. **(Between 6-8 diapers for a 9-10 hour day.)** We try to change diapers every hour and anytime in between, as needed, throughout the day.

Toys and Other Items from Home

Please leave your child's toys at home. It is difficult for young children to understand that their toys from home are to be shared with the childcare children and this causes a lot of problems for our staff and the children in the program. However, if your child has a special stuffed animal, blanket, or pillow he or she likes to sleep with, please bring it to child care. This item will help in the transition from home to child care during napping and sleeping.

Please do not allow your child to bring gum, food or candy to child care.

W2T will not be responsible for lost, damaged, or broken toys or personal belongings.

Transportation and Field Trips

Currently, Waddlers to Toddlers offers transportation to and from Boulder Elementary, Poly Drive Elementary and Arrowhead Elementary. However, space is limited. We also provide transportation to children that attend field trips with our program.

We do go on walks (weather permitting) to the parks around the neighborhood as often as possible. If we leave the facility at any time, parents will be notified immediately and we will always have a cell phone for emergencies, as well as a copy of each child's Emergency Contact form and a First Aid kit.

In order for your child to attend a field trip, we must have a signed permission slip in your child's file. We also ask that you provide the car seat for your own child. Parents are always welcome to join us for field trips. We will always have a cell phone for emergencies as well as a copy of each child's emergency contact form and a first aid kit.

It is the parents' responsibility to get their child to and from daycare, unless your child is contracted for school pick up.

Naps

W2T provides all children with a rest/nap period every day from 1:00-3:30. To avoid disturbing napping children, please try to schedule pick-up times before and after this time. If you have to pick-up your child during nap/rest time, please notify us in advance.

Infants under the age of 18 months will each have their own crib with a crib sheet that is labeled with their name. No child will share a crib with any other infant. Infants will be placed to sleep as outlined in our Safe Sleep Policy.

Toddlers and older children will be placed on a cot during rest/nap times. If your child is under 18 months of age and you would like to transition them to a cot, please let us know and we will provide you with a form to fill out.

W2T will provide each child with a sheet that will be used only by them during their care. We purchase these sheets new for each child and old bedding from children no longer attending W2T will be donated to a local charity. All sheets will be laundered by W2T staff weekly or as often as needed. All blankets and stuffed animals brought from home will be sent home for laundering by parents at the end of the week.

Older children, who no longer nap, will be required to rest for a short period each day. After resting, they may participate in quiet activities, such as puzzles, books or educational videos.

The bedrooms upstairs and downstairs are for infants napping in cribs and the downstairs playroom is for children napping on cots. Baby monitors are in all bedrooms and infants under 12 months are physically checked on every 15 minutes. Toddlers and older children are visually monitored.

Potty Training

Waddlers to Toddlers believes that toilet training should start when a child is ready physically and psychologically. Each child begins to learn this important and independent skill on his or her own timetable. If you feel your child is ready, we will work with you to begin this process.

Curriculum

Curriculum Overview

Waddlers to Toddlers follows Montana Early Learning Guidelines in planning and implementing curriculum for the children in our care. We know that young children learn by getting involved and using their hands. W2T provides a wide range of hands-on activities and materials allowing children to experiment and explore their surroundings.

W2T offers an age-based curriculum: Buttercups for children six months to three years and Fireflies for children three years to five years.

We understand that each child learns and develops at their own rate and will work with each child's parents to create developmental goals.

Infant/Toddler Curriculum

Buttercups is for children six months to three years old. We order this quarterly and each quarter provides three monthly themes to explore.

Every week the program offers activities and materials to promote and enhance physical, mental, and social growth in four areas -Language Development, Physical Development, Cognitive Development, and Social-Emotional Development. Language Development activities include songs, rhymes, finger plays, vocabulary, and communication skills. Physical Development focuses on gross and fine motor skills. Cognitive Development introduces basic concepts and opportunities to develop problem solving skills through art projects, sensory activities, and dramatic play. Social-Emotional Development explores relationships, self-awareness, self-regulation, and trust.

Preschool and After School Curriculum

Fireflies is designed for children three years old to five years old.

This preschool program consists of monthly kits centered on two themes. Daily activities are offered for your child's and may be individually selected for children as we work to enhance growth and school readiness for early learners. Fireflies' activities are built around seven developmental domains, Social/Emotional Development, Approaches to Learning, Language/Literacy, Creative Arts, Physical Development/Health, Science, and Math.

Guidance and Socialization Policies

"Childcare Family" Rules

W2T feels a special connection with each of the children we care for. After spending so much time with the children each day, we begin to view them as extension of our own families. We see it fitting to begin referring to ourselves as a "childcare family".

As with every family, we have a set of rules that each member of our "childcare family" must follow. Our "childcare family" rules are:

1. Keep your hands, feet and other body parts to yourself. (This includes not using a toy to injure others.)
2. Be respectful of others
3. Tell the truth
4. Use inside voices inside the house, outside voices may be used outside.
5. Treat all property with respect. There is no throwing toys (except balls when outside) and no putting toys in your mouth (infants and toddlers that are teething will be given consideration)
6. "Walking feet" are used inside
7. Use good manners
8. No violent games (pretend weapons and fighting will not be allowed)
9. Pick up your messes (this includes messes that are made before parents arrive)
10. Food and drinks need to stay in the kitchen or outside

11. Sit down while eating
12. Shoes off inside the house
13. Couches are for sitting, not jumping
14. Have fun

These expectations will be communicated to the children throughout the day. If there are concerns about how children are doing with these expectations, these concerns should be addressed immediately.

Guidance and Discipline

To provide a safe and nurturing environment for your child and others, W2T uses methods of Positive Guidance and Discipline as well as implementing Conscious Discipline methods into the program.

We strive to offer children methods of guidance and discipline that will help them learn to take care of themselves, be sensitive to other people, and become aware of the world around them.

We use several strategies to provide positive guidance:

- * We have arranged stimulating and well organized indoor and outdoor environments to reduce frustration, congestion, and confusion for children.
- *The schedule incorporates uninterrupted blocks of supervised self-directed playtime.
- *The curriculum includes active, large muscle play and quieter, small muscle play during the day.
- *Our routines and transitions between activities are clearly defined to help children know what to expect.
- *We use age-appropriate rules and discuss the reasons for them to the children.
- * We model appropriate behavior and reinforce positive behavior.
- *We acknowledge a child's successes and frustrations.
- *We teach children the lessons of making choices and the consequences of those choices.
- *We redirect attention in disputes between children over a toy.
- *We teach children to use their words to express their feelings instead of hurting each other by hitting or biting.

Discipline will be age appropriate. The actions that will be taken to discipline are as follows:

1. The child will receive a verbal warning and will be redirected.
2. The child will be removed from the activity involved and will be allowed to rejoin when we feel they are ready.
3. The child will be placed in a time out and we will call the parent to discuss the behavior.
4. A call will be placed to the parent for mandatory pick up.

We try to stay consistent so the children know what to expect from us and what their boundaries are. We may give more than one verbal warning. If a child is showing aggressive or physical harm to any of our staff members, parents will be called immediately for a mandatory pick up. If the child has 3 mandatory pick-ups, it is grounds for immediate termination.

Corporal punishment, isolation, shaming, or humiliating a child in this child care facility is against Montana child care licensing rules. No child will ever be punished or disciplined for bathroom/toilet accidents.

Child and Adult Care Food Program

General Information

Our program participates in the Montana Child and Adult Care Food Program. This program ensures that we provide healthy meals and snacks for the children in our care.

Breastfeeding

Waddlers to Toddlers will support any mother who chooses to breastfeed their child and acknowledges that it is a personal choice for mother and child. We will gladly store breast milk for your child and give it to them as instructed throughout the day. If arrangements need to be made so that you can come during childcare hours and feed your child, we have a private and quiet room for you to do so as you wish.

Breastfed infants need to have an adequate supply of expressed breast milk daily that is provide in dated containers.

Mealtimes

We provide breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack for the children in our care.

We will post a weekly menu of the food your child will be served. If your child has severe food allergies or you have them on a special diet, such as an all organic or vegan diet, we ask that you provide the food for them for their own protection as well as submit a special diet form that is signed by your child's doctor.

Meal times are as follows:

Breakfast: 8:30 am
Lunch: 12:30 pm
PM Snack: 3:30 pm

*If your child arrives after any of the meal times, you need to make sure they are fed *before* they arrive at childcare.

Infants will be fed according to your instruction. W2T will provide Target Brand formula and Gerber baby foods and boxed grain cereals for infants. If your child needs a bottle or pacifier, you need to provide those items for your child. You will need to update your child's infant feeding schedule every time there is a change to your child's diet until your child turns two years old. You will also need to verbally inform all W2T staff of any changes in formula, feeding schedules and food allergies.

Please note that CACFP recommends the following schedule for children birth through eleven months:

Birth-4 months:	Breast milk or formula only
5-7 months:	Breakfast: Infant cereal, breast milk or formula Snack: Breast milk or formula Lunch: Infant cereal, fruit or veggie, breast milk or formula Snack: Breast milk or formula
8-11 months	Breakfast: Infant cereal, fruit or veggie, breast milk or formula

Snack: Crackers, breast milk or formula,
Lunch: Infant cereal, meat, veggie or fruit, breast milk or formula
Snack: Cracker, breast milk or formula

At 10 months, with parent permission W2T will begin to substitute infant foods with table food so that they are ready to transition to table food at age one year.

If you are going to bring a special treat for your child on their birthday or other celebration, please check with staff to make sure **ALL** the children can have the item you intend on bringing and be sure to bring enough for all the children to enjoy. If not all children can have the treat, please bring something they all can enjoy or nothing at all.

Working Together

Daily Communication

Your child is important to us. Our partnership in your child's learning is important. To ensure that your child gets the best out their time at W2T, it is important that we are all on the same page when it comes to your child's needs. Daily communication between parents and W2T staff is imperative to your child's success.

We understand that drop off and pick up times can be rushed and that it may be difficult to discuss all of your child's day during those times. To help insure that important information is received by the parents, we will send home a daily communication sheet with each child that includes meals, potty times, bottles, activities enjoyed and important reminders up to age 3. At age 3, children are able to communicate those things to you and any additional information such as potty accidents, naps and supplies will be discussed at pick up.

We ask that you inform us if your child had a rough night's sleep, symptoms of illness, injuries or changes in appetite.

Scheduled Parent Conferences

Waddlers to Toddlers will have three scheduled parent conferences each year. These conferences will take place in October, February, and May.

These conferences are a valuable way for W2T staff and parents to develop a partnership that benefits each child's care. The purposes of these conferences are:

- Developmental Review- Waddlers to Toddlers will complete observations and assessments for each child in our care after the child has been with our program for at least two weeks. This gives staff an idea of where children are developmentally and give us an opportunity to set goals and create individual care plans for each child in our care. W2T will set monthly goals for each child and will work individually with each child to help them reach the goals that are set. Parents will be given progress reports each month and assessments will be reviewed at conference time.
- Privacy- Again, we know how stressful drop off and pick up times can be. Setting aside time every few months for parents and caregivers to sit down together to discuss their child in a

private setting, away from the ears of other children and families. We may also use this time to discuss any concerns that may come up.

- **Goal Setting-** W2T strives to involve parents as much as possible in setting the goals for your children and getting the most out of your child's experience in their early childhood years. We know that parents want the best for their child. What kind of things do you want your child to experience during the day? Are you transitioning your child from crib to toddler bed? When will you start potty training? We want to work with you as a team to help your child's transition between home and childcare. We will also look at your child's developmental assessment and monthly progress reports to help set more goals for your child.
- **Mutual Understanding-** We have the same thing in mind- what's best for your child. Having the parents and staff on the same page plays an important role in your child's development and learning. We want to increase all understanding about your child, your family and our facility.

Conferences are to be a relaxed but constructive. We prepare for these conferences for a significant amount of time so that we can get the most out of our time with you. If there are any questions or concerns you have about your child's day or about the program as a whole, we suggest preparing a list of things you would like to discuss. We will have a portfolio of your child's artwork, progress reports and stories to share with you. We may also revisit previous conference content to see if we resolved any issues that could have been addressed.

Developmental Screenings

We highly recommend that each child has a developmental screening for children birth to five years of age. The screening will provide an overall developmental check of your child, help you determine if he/she is developing appropriately for his/her age, and identify potential or existing problems which may interfere with learning.

Early Childhood Intervention Services (ECI) provides these screenings numerous times throughout the year free of charge. The screenings are usually done at the Shrine Auditorium. If you are not able to attend a screening but feel that your child would benefit from these screenings, please contact ECI at (406)281-5885.

The sooner that a child's delay is detected, the better their chances of success!

Newsletter and Other Communications

Each month, W2T sends home a newsletter with any important updates about the program. The newsletter is a great way for W2T staff to communicate with parents about current events and important dates that could be coming up in the near future.

The Firefly curriculum program also offers a newsletter:

- **Fireflies:** You will receive a monthly Parent Newsletter. This includes ideas to build upon the themes and concepts introduced, songs from our "Music and Movement" CD (available from FunShine Express™), a recipe, Spanish words, and a few book suggestions. Consider gathering some of the suggested book titles to supplement the program.

Daily communication sheets- or “daily’s”, will be filled out by W2T staff and will be sent home with each child under 3 years old every day. Information shared on these sheets will include what and how your child ate, when diapers were changed, what your child enjoyed today, and any information pertaining to supplies your child may need restocked.

W2T also has a Facebook account and a website that can be accessed by parents. Our website has our weekly menu, newsletter and parent handbook for parents to access.

We also use an app called Seesaw that allows you to log into your child’s account and view pictures and activities your child is doing throughout the week.

Waddlers to Toddlers has numerous bulletin boards throughout the facility that has important information regarding your child’s time spent here.

Parent Participation

W2T provides numerous opportunities for parent involvement and we encourage every parent to spend some time in our program getting to know some of the children your child plays with every day.

Our curriculum offers a lot of opportunity for parents to come into our program for story-time, to help set up a specific project, gathering of materials (books from a library), or to teach children a special skill. Parents are always invited to join us for parties or field trips away from the facility.

Waddlers to Toddlers also has open houses, bbqs, ice cream socials, carnivals, bake sales, and garage sales each year that we encourage all families to take part in. Proceeds from these sales either benefit a project for our program (such as new equipment) or a community charity (Women and Family Shelter, Family Services).

Please be assured that we understand that every family’s financial situation is different and we will NEVER require families to donate to any of the causes that we support.

Donations

Waddlers to Toddlers knows that children grow out of toys they once loved, clothing they once fit into and equipment that used to entertain them for hours at a time. These items that once furnished your home now sit in storage and take up space in the corners of your house.

If you have any items that you would like to donate to our program, we would greatly appreciate it. If you make any donations, we will gladly give you a receipt for tax purposes. We ask that items that are donated be in good repair and ask that you check the national recall list so that items aren’t a potential safety risk.

If you would like to donate, please contact Erica.

Discussing Sensitive Issues

We ***will not*** discuss payment issues, your child’s behavior, or other sensitive subjects in the presence of your child or other children. Please set up another time we can talk about these types of issues.

Please understand that staff may not be able to give you our undivided attention while you are at Waddlers to Toddlers. We still need to attend to the children that are in our care.

Changes at Home

Please keep us informed of any changes within your family. Your child is affected by even the smallest change and can act out because he or she doesn't have the ability to cope with or communicate about this change. We are partners and want the best experience for your child.

Mandatory Reporting

As state registered child care providers, all staff is required to report any suspected child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services. Child abuse can be physical, sexual, or emotional abuse, or neglect. The phone number for CPS is 1-866-520-KIDS (5437).

Health and Safety Policies

Smoking

Under Montana state law, the indoor child care areas and outdoor play areas are non-smoking. No one in the child care facility smokes.

W2T ask that no one smoke within 10 feet of the facility grounds to ensure clean air for the children.

Cleanliness

We take the well-being of your child very seriously and work hard to provide an environment that is as safe and clean as possible. We do ask that **no shoes** be worn inside the facility unless you are on the rug by the door. This will help to keep the play areas free from debris and dirt from shoes.

We vacuum the carpet areas daily and spot clean the carpet as needed. We do hire a professional carpet cleaner to come in twice per year. We sanitize toys and surfaces that the children come in contact with using a bleach solution daily. Surfaces such as high chairs and tables are cleaned between each use. The diaper changing area is cleaned between each diaper change. Water-play tables and wading pools are drained after each use and disinfected before each new filling of water and are carefully supervised while in use by the children.

Our outdoor play environment is checked daily for hazards such as large sticks, rough equipment surfaces, sharp objects, choking hazards such as small rocks, and broken toys. We also check for animal droppings each time we go outside.

Hand-washing is the single most effective way of reducing the spread of germs. We wash our hands many times throughout the day as we participate in various activities. We also teach the children to wash their hands before and after eating, after playing outside, after toileting or diapering, after wiping a nose, before and after handling food, after participating in painting, play dough activities, and after using glue. We also make sure their hands are washed immediately after they arrive each morning and before going home each day.

Blankets, Pacifiers, and Stuffed Animals

We do not allow the children to walk around with their blankets, stuffed animals or pacifiers as a safety precaution. Your child's blanket or stuffed animal, if left lying on the floor or being carried around, may cause a tripping hazard for your child or other children in care. Your child will be allowed to access his/her blanket or stuffed animal at nap time and any time that they are in need of a special security while being rocked or cuddled by staff. A child who has a pacifier and toddling around may fall and cause damage to his/her mouth. It is also common for children to drop their pacifiers around the facility and another child may pick it up, causing the spread of germs. ***Infants who do not crawl or walk may be given a pacifier throughout the day to soothe them.***

Outdoor Policy

We spend time outdoors every day except in the most extreme weather which according to the State Childcare Regulations book is weather that is freezing or has a wind chill of below zero. This time is important for your child's health, growth and development. Every day please make sure your child has the appropriate clothing to play outdoors—including shoes, coat or jacket, hat, swimsuit, mittens, snow pants and boots. If you do not supply appropriate clothing for outdoor play, we will ask that you return home to retrieve them. If your child is too ill to go outside, he or she is too ill to be at child care and needs to be kept home.

Depending on the season, we ask that you supply the following for your child:

- Winter: Stocking hat, waterproof mittens or gloves, winter coat, snow pants and snow boots
- Spring: round tipped umbrella, water proof jacket, rain boots, extra socks
- Summer: wide brimmed hat, towel, swimsuit, sunscreen, bug spray
- Fall: round tipped umbrella, light jacket, rain boots, extra socks

Immunization Records

All children who attend child care must be current in their immunizations and be able to provide a copy of their immunization records. At the time of admission, Erica will calendar when future immunizations are due and provide you with those dates so that pediatric appointments can be made as close to them as possible. Records must be updated each time a new immunization is administered. If we do not receive an updated immunization record within 7 calendar days of the administration of a new immunization, your child will NOT be allowed to attend childcare until the updated immunization record is received.

W2T will review immunization records at least every 6 months. It is your responsibility to keep your child's records current and inform us of any changes. If your child's record is reviewed and it is found that they are behind on their immunizations, they will be immediately removed from childcare until their immunization records are brought current.

Sick Child and Illness Exclusion Policy

Waddlers to Toddlers is required to follow the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services Sick Children Policy. Children who are ill with the symptoms listed on the policy below will not be permitted to attend child care until they are symptom free or have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

However, if your child is unable to perform normal daily routine or is inconsolable, they should be kept home. Staff will check your child's health status each day as he or she arrives. A child showing any symptoms of illness cannot stay in child care.

If your child is requiring immunizations, we ask that you keep them home the day your child receives them. Please do not bring them to childcare after their appointment. They are sore, tired and often fussy after getting shots and wants some extra snuggles from Mom and Dad.

If a child becomes ill at child care, we will isolate them from the other children (still within sight and hearing of us) and phone the family to pick up the child. A family member will need to pick up the child within 1 hour of the phone call. If the family member cannot get away from work, they must make arrangements for the child to be picked up by a friend or family member on the authorized list. The sick child cannot stay at child care according to state law. W2T will provide a form for the parent or authorized person picking up the child to sign stating they understand that the child cannot return to child care until the given date. A copy will be placed in the child's file and a copy will be sent home with the child. This ensures the unnecessary spread of illness to other children in care. If the child is not picked up within 1 hour from the phone call, you will be charged a \$2 fee for every minute past the hour given.

Please notify us if your child has been exposed to Chicken Pox, Measles, or other communicable diseases so we can notify the families of other children. This policy will prevent the spread of illness to the other children and staff (which could result in having to close the facility for several days). W2T especially appreciates your cooperation in complying with this policy.

Montana Department of Health and Human Services Sick Child Policy

According to Montana Child Care Regulations, no child may remain in child care if he or she shows the following symptoms:

- Fever greater than 100.5 F rectally or 100 F orally in the past 24 hours*
- Vomiting or diarrhea within the past 24 hours*
- Strep throat; scarlet fever; impetigo; skin infections; generalized rashes.*
- Pinkeye (bacterial conjunctivitis)*
- Head lice or scabies (until treated and all nits removed)*
- Chicken Pox (until sores dry up, usually 5 to 7 days)*

Children with symptoms of severe illness, such as uncontrolled coughing, breathing difficulty or wheezing, stiff neck, irritability, poor food intake, or a seizure, must be evaluated by a health care provider before they may return to the child care facility. Families are required to transport children home if their child shows any of the above symptoms. Children with these symptoms may attend daycare once the child has been free from the symptoms or have been on antibiotics for at least 24 hours.

Your child will be sent home if they have 2 or more watery stools or if the stool cannot be contained in a diaper.

Medication Administration Policy

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the health and safety of all the children in our care. This policy will be discussed with families of the children we currently care for at each contract renewal and will be

discussed with any potential families at the time of admission.

Most medications that children need, such as an antibiotic, are prescribed for twice a day and can be given before and after child care hours. If this is not the case and the child requires medication during child care, you will be asked to fill out a Medication Authorization form giving permission to administer the medication. The medication must be in the original container with the written instructions attached. If the medication is long term, you will need to provide a physician's current written instructions script.

Over the counter (OTC) non-digestible medication such as diaper rash ointment, bug spray or sun screen, etc. must be labeled with the child's name and a written authorization form for OTC products must be on file. All medication brought to the facility must be in the original container and must leave the facility each day. W2T cannot store any medication.

Only staff that has received the Medication Administration Part 1 and Medication Administration Part 2 training certificate may administer medications (including OTC medications) to children attending W2T and only after all of the procedures outlined in this policy have been followed.

Medical Emergencies and First Aid

All staff is certified in Adult and Infant CPR and First Aid.

We will handle minor injuries with Band-Aids, ice packs, kisses and hugs. We will inform you of any injuries when you pick up your child. You will be given a copy of an injury report form and a copy will be kept in your child's file. If we feel that the injury is more serious, we may call you and inform you of the situation to let you decide which action should be taken.

If your child is seriously injured, we will call 911 and administer first-aid until the emergency personnel arrive. We will call you and inform you of the situation. Staff will accompany the child if he or she must go to the hospital. Another staff member will stay with the other children if possible or they will accompany us to the hospital. If the children must accompany us, we will call all of the children's parents from the hospital or have another adult do so to inform them of the situation and where to pick up their child.

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of a fire, there are 2 fire extinguishers located inside the facility. On the first floor, the extinguisher is mounted behind the kitchen door. In the basement, the extinguisher is mounted on the wall in the playroom.

If the fire isn't extinguishable by us, we will evacuate the building using whichever point of egress that is available. Once outside, we will meet as a group at the mailbox at the end of the driveway. At that time, we will do a head count to ensure that everyone is accounted for.

If we are not allowed inside the building after the fire is put out, we will call parents to come pick up their children.

As required by the State of Montana Childcare regulations, we practice fire safety monthly and have at least 8 fire drills per year to ensure the children are prepared for an emergency.

Miscellaneous

Confidentiality

Any information you provide to Waddlers to Toddlers is kept confidential. We will respect your privacy at all times as well as the privacy of other families in our care. Before your information is released to an outside party, you must sign a release form. This does not apply to law enforcement, DPHHS, and CACFP staff.

Final Note

It is important that you feel comfortable with all of the policies and procedures in this Parent Handbook. If, for any reason, you need more clarification about anything in this Handbook, please feel free to express this to us before you enroll your child in our program. It is imperative that every parent of the children in our care understand and follow these policies at all times.

We are always open to suggestion and feel that communication is a very important part of quality childcare. If you ever have a concern or feel there is a problem that needs our immediate attention, please set a time before or after childcare hours, as the other children in care still need our attention.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with and care for your little one.

Contract Adherence

This is my home as well as my business, so please be respectful of my family and home by adhering to the policies and procedures in the parent handbook. I realize this is a lot of information to absorb. Because of this, **please keep your parent handbook accessible at all times so you can review my policies and procedures as needed throughout your child's enrollment at Waddlers to Toddlers.** We reserve the right to change and amend any portion of this handbook at any time. If changes are made, you will be given a new copy of the handbook and a two week notice of the changes. If you do not understand or have questions regarding any of the policies or procedures in this handbook, please ask about them before you sign the contract. This contract is legally binding and by signing this contract, both parties understand and agree to the policies and procedures in the Waddlers to Toddlers Parent Handbook.

I have read these policies and agree to follow them.

Signature Date

Signature Date