Winsted Area Child Care Center, inc.

2017

**Parent Handbook**

Before and After School Education

1 Lake St., Winsted, CT 06098

*This handbook has been prepared in order for you to understand our center policies and gain some general knowledge of our center and its history. Please keep this handbook as a personal reference.*

**General Information**

Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. is a state licensed child care center (License #16183). In addition, we are a United Way Agency and a School Readiness program. The center has been accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) since 1986, which gives us the distinction of being one of the first centers to achieve this recognition.

Our program offers full and part-time care to children ranging from 6 weeks to 5 years. We currently house 4 Infant/Toddler classrooms with up to 8 children per room, with a 1:4 teacher ratio. In our School Readiness and Preschool classrooms we can accept up to 20 children per class, with a 1:10 teacher ratio. Our hours of operation are Monday-Friday, 6:30am to 6pm. Additionally, our Before and After School Education program (BASE) is able to provide services to children from Kindergarten through age 12. It is open from 6:30am to 9am and 3 pm to 6pm Monday through Friday. BASE is also open during school vacations and operates a summer program 6:30am to 6pm from late June to the end of August.

Our program is proud to enroll children of all backgrounds and cultures. Our non-discriminatory policy states that all children are welcome, regardless of their race, financial standing and developmental abilities, including the ability to be toilet trained. It is our belief that children should not be pushed to achieve this milestone, and therefore offers changing facilities throughout the building, including one of our preschool rooms. WACCC has a moral obligation to serve all children, including those with special needs.

WACCC maintains an open door policy; families are always welcome to participate in the program. We believe that early childhood education is a partnership between families and caregivers. Likewise, parents are kept abreast of information daily and offered conferences on an annual and as-needed basis.

**Mission Statement**

Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. (WACCC) is determined to provide the highest quality of care for our smallest community members in a safe, nurturing and educational environment. Our program is committed to meeting the social and emotional needs of each child. We will continuously empower parents to advocate for their children. Our hope is to strengthen the family bond by utilizing community resources to support the families of our Center.

# **Center Philosophy**

I [we] sincerely believe that for the child and for the adult seeking to guide him, it is not half so important to ‘know’ as to ‘feel’. If facts are the seeds that later produce knowledge and wisdom, then the emotions and the impressions of the senses are the fertile soil in which the seeds grow. The years of early childhood are the time to prepare this soil. Once the emotions have been aroused-a sense of beautiful, the excitement of the new and the unknown, a feeling of sympathy, pity, admiration, or love-then we wish for knowledge about the object of our emotional response. Once found, it has lasting meaning. It is more important to pave the way for the child to want to know than to put him on a diet of facts he is not yet ready to assimilate.

“To Develop a Sense of Wonder” The Sense of Wonder By: Rachel Carson

**History**

The Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. is a private, non-profit corporation. It was founded in 1979 as the Winsted Area Public Day Care Center, Inc. by Penelope (Penny) Putnam, Ayrslea Denny, and Evelyn (Lyn) Haskell, all of whom had been preschool teachers for many years. They had been planning and looking for a site for two years before they joined forces with Ron Rosenstein, then a legal service lawyer, who was trying to find affordable child care for some of his clients.

In June of 1979, the group obtained a diminishing three-year grant for Innovative Day Care from the Office of Child Day Care headed by Frances Roberts. John Groppo was instrumental in passing necessary legislation. In August, a Board of Directors was chosen and the first meeting was held.

In October, the lower level of Temple Beth Israel at 74 Park Place East was offered as a site. In November; Penny, Ayrslea and Lyn, with volunteers from the community; began scrubbing and painting to be ready for the January 2, 1980 opening. Ten thousand dollars of the initial $25,000 grant was spent to make the site licensable. In June 1982, the grant ended and the Center became a United Way member agency and also applied for assistance from the Town of Winchester to help underwrite the tuition assistance program.

The center grew steadily in enrollment, staff and reputation. In 1986, the Winsted Area Public Day Care Center was one of the first in Connecticut to become Nationally Accredited. It has maintained its accreditation to date.

Funds from the Neighborhood Assistance Act made possible the onset of a toddler program in 1990. In the fall of 1991, a separate Before and After School program began enabling the Center to now serve community child care needs for children ages 6 weeks through 12 years.

In July of 1995, the Center changed its name to The Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. to better reflect the broad range of child care services being provided.

After years of relentless fund raising and a dream of updated facilities, the Board of Directors, Executive Director and staff, and an abundance of support from our town and local business made their dream come true. In December 2002, we packed up our things and moved into a brand new building, located on Prospect Street in Winsted. We quickly outgrew the Prospect St location and expanded once again to offer our School Age children a location of their own on Lake St. With two locations we currently have enrollment of over 186 children.

We are continuously striving for improvement and are proud to be a quality child care center.

**Program Objectives**

* To provide a comprehensive child care program based upon the fundamental factors of child development in physical, social and emotional growth, as well as cognitive development.
* To create a curriculum that caters to each child’s individual needs and interests.
* To provide a comfortable environment that allows each child to develop self-confidence, self-discipline, and a good self-image.
* To strive continuously for program refinement for the benefit of our children, staff and parents.
* To strengthen the family unit by their ability to work and play together; improving communication between family members and helping families to improve their economic stability.
* To make every effort to develop support for those who financially cannot afford our fees.

**Program Goals**

The goals of WACCC B.A.S.E (Before & After School Education) Program is to provide a comprehensive, well rounded program with the primary goal of meeting the needs of the “whole child”; To recognize that each child and family have different needs and customs, and to do our best to help the families of our community strengthen their family bond. We are dedicated to providing families with the best possible care for their children at the most affordable cost.

It is the specific goal of WACCC BASE program to offer a safe, caring environment, which meets the emotional, social, developmental, health, nutritional, psychological and educational needs of each child. In addition we will;

* Admit children on a non-discriminatory basis.
* Promote and facilitate each child’s individual development and self-esteem.
* Provide care and services for children with special needs.
* Create a happy, healthy, productive experience for each child.
* Provide aid to families in need.
* Encourage children to enjoy their childhood.

**Program’s Expectations of Parents**

* The program expects parents to pay tuition fees on Monday for the current week.
* Parents are expected to keep their child’s records up to date (i.e. home/work/cell numbers, addresses, pick up permission lists, health forms, enrollment schedule, etc.).
* Parents are expected to pick up their children on time (WACCC closes at 6:00 p.m.).
* Parents are expected to follow the health policy.
* Parents are expected to contact the program (860-379-2779) if their child will not be attending BASE on their scheduled day.
* Parents are expected to read any communications from WACCC regarding their child’s behavior, and to cooperate in joint efforts to bring about behavioral improvements.
* Parents are expected to promptly pick up their child from BASE if they are notified that their child has become ill while at the program.
* A completed CACFP enrollment form is required in order for your child to attend WACCC/BASE.

**Parent’s Expectations of the Program**

* Parents can expect their children to be safe at the program.
* Parents can expect their children to be cared for in a nurturing, supportive environment.
* Parents should feel comfortable communicating with the staff about concerns relating to their child or program.
* Parents will be told about any behavioral concerns or problems and will be able to meet with their child’s teacher and/or director in order to bring about improvement in the situation.
* Parents will be contacted immediately if their child does not arrive at the program according to his/her schedule.
* Parents will be notified of any program and/or activity changes.

**Children’s Expectations of the Program**

* Children can expect to have a safe, supportive, and consistent environment.
* Children can expect to be treated respectfully.
* Children can expect discipline that is fair and non punitive.

**Enrollment Procedure**

\*The following policies have been developed by the staff and Board of Directors to assure consistent, high quality care for all children.

**Registration & Enrollment**

* Upon initial interest in WACCC we encourage new families to visit our program, meet the teachers and obtain paperwork. The administrative staff is never too busy to take a prospective parent on a tour of our facility, answer questions and review policies.
* If there is an available spot for a new child, families are asked to return all registration forms and financial information to the main office.
* When your registration packet has been received your weekly tuition and start date will be determined. Tuition is determined based on family income, size and current availability of assistance. Payment of security deposit, registration fee and 1st week’s tuition is due prior to the start date. *Your security deposit will be used as a credit towards your child’s last week*.
* The State of CT Office of Early Childhood requires that we have your child’s up to date immunization records & completed physical signed by your pediatrician **prior to your start date** (Form ED 191). (See immunization requirement in your packet)
* A Registration fee will be required **annually** to keep information current.
* A completed CACFP enrollment form is required or your child may not attend BASE.

**Admission Policies**

WACCC accepts children and families of all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds. We do not discriminate against any child, regardless of their family dynamic. We are happy to provide a safe, caring and diverse environment for local children and for those in surrounding towns. Our School Age Program accepts all children ages 5 (by January 1 of the current school year) to 12 years old regardless of their abilities or backgrounds.

Acceptance to BASE: Children are accepted into on a first come, first serve basis, contingent on our enrollment priorities. These priorities are in numerical order as follows:

1. Siblings of children currently enrolled.
2. Children of single working parents.
3. Children of low-income working parents.
4. Children of working parents desiring child care.
5. Children referred by other agencies.
6. Children of non-working parents desiring socialization.

**Non- Discrimination**

In accordance with Federal Law, The United States Department of Agriculture and the State of Connecticut, this institution does not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, including civil unions, financial status, national origin, ancestry, sex, mental retardation, mental disability, learning disability, lawful source of income, sexual orientation or physical disability, learning disability, including, but not limited to, blindness or deafness.

We will maintain compliance with all laws and regulations of the United States and the State of Connecticut regarding equal employment opportunity and public accommodations with respect to all programs, clients, officers, employees and volunteers.

**Hours of Operation**

BASE is open at 6:30am daily and closes promptly at 6:00pm. We ask that your child spend *no more than a ten hour day* at BASE (during full day programming). **\*\*BASE closes its doors at 6:00pm sharp. If you are late picking up your child more than twice you will be charged $10.00. Your next bill will reflect the late charge.**

**Extended Care**

BASE had extended care hours for school vacations, snow days, early dismissals, holidays, and late openings (commonly referred to as SHEV Days). A separate enrollment form for these days is provided in your registration packet. **\*\*You will be charged for the days you sign up for, regardless of attended, unless we have received written notice two weeks prior to the SHEV day.** (See Changes in Enrollment section)

**Emergency Contacts**

In the event of an emergency or illness, it is important that we are able to locate parents or other persons who can pick up your child. All children are required to have ***two emergency contacts***, other than the parents. You will be asked upon registration to provide this information. Please keep these forms updated if circumstances change. *If your address or phone number changes, please contact the office immediately*.If we do not have the current phone number, it is difficult to notify you should an emergency occur.

**Pick-up Permission**

Children shall not be released for any reason to anyone that is not on their pick-up permission form. When someone new will be coming to pick up your child, a photo I.D. is required. NO EXEPTIONS WILL BE MADE! As with the Emergency Contacts, authorized individuals may also change on the pick-up permission, so please keep us updated.

**Legal Custody**

BASE cannot refuse to release a child to the child’s parent or legal guardian who has or shares legal custody of the child. In most cases, both parents have equal custody rights unless a court or valid written separation agreement proves otherwise. If you are experiencing custody difficulties we strongly urge you to keep the center administration fully advised of circumstances that affect your child and their drop-off and pick-up routines at the center. Divorced or legally separated parents are required to provide copy of custody documentation. Parent records will be kept confidential, in the child’s file.

Calendar

We are closed on the following Holidays. Those marked by an asterisk (\*) are Holidays on which parents will be charged:

New Year’s Eve - Close at 12:30pm\* New Year’s Day\* Memorial Day\*

Independence Day\* Labor Day\* Thanksgiving Day\*

Day after Thanksgiving\* Christmas Eve – Close at 12:30pm

Christmas Day\* 2 additional floating holidays

WACCC will be closed on a date (to be determined) the last week of August for Staff Development. Please see current schedule of holidays in enrollment packet for floating holidays and staff development date.

**Security Features**

The Winsted Area Child Care Center is a secured building. In order to gain access to the building all parents/guardians will need to ring the bell at the front door and be buzzed in by office staff. All other doors to the building are locked from the outside at all times. Any unknown person will not be permitted to enter the building unless accompanied by office staff. Local public school systems instill the same protocol and it is to keep everyone, especially our children, safe. This give our staff better control of who has access to our building.

Please be advised that all property of Winsted Area Child Care Center is under video surveillance at all times.

**Weather and Closings**

We understand that even in stormy weather, our parents need to work. This is why we try to stay open when the weather is bad. However if the weather is so extreme that it makes travel impossible or too dangerous WACCC will close. \*\*Under other unusual circumstances (e.g. water problems, prolonged power outage) we may need to make the decision to close the center.

Closing Procedure:

1. Center closings, delayed openings, and early closings are broadcasted on ABC, CBS, and NBC by 5:30a.m.
2. If the center has been operating for the day and we determine that the weather is deteriorating we will close the center early.
3. Parents will be notified by phone of our decision and you will need to pick up at the designated time. If we are unable to reach you, we will contact someone from the emergency pick-up list.

**Tuition and Fees Policy**

**Payment**

Weekly tuition is due each Monday for the upcoming week. Statements are generated from the Office on Mondays and placed in student mailboxes or emailed to families (families may elect to get statements emailed on first page of registration form). Effective September 1, 2015; an account more than 30 days in arrears is cause for withdrawl until the balance is paid. A last day notice will be given when an account is over 30 days past due. If an account is 30 days in arrears more than three (3) times in a 12 month period, the child(ren) will be permanently withdrawn from the program. After three (3) months families may petition the Board of Directors for re-admission into the program. In order to enroll or re-enroll in the program, all accounts must be current and have a zero balance. All costs associated with collection of past monies owed to WACCC, including but not limited to, court costs, attorney’s fees and/or any other expenses incurred will be the responsibility of the family. Please be advised that tuition is based on enrollment not attendance. **Failure to make payments may result in termination of Tuition Assistance and exclusion from the program.** Payment can be made in the form of cash, check, or card.

Changes in Enrollment

Please inform the Education Manager of any changes to enrollment. All enrollment changes requires *two weeks written notice* to avoid being charged. Due to our enrollment, we will do our best to accommodate the changing needs of our families, but are unable to guarantee availability of space.

Withdrawal

We require two weeks written notice if you choose to withdraw your child from the Center for any reason. If two weeks notice is not given, the parents will be responsible for two weeks tuition from the date notice is given. WACCC reserves the right to request the withdrawal of any child whose presence is detrimental to the well-being of the whole group or any child whose best interest is not being served by this Center.

Scholarship/Tuition Assistance

Tuition fees are determined by the Board of Directors and Executive Director and reviewed on an annual basis. A Tuition Schedule for the current year is provided at the time of enrollment. BASE offers a limited amount of tuition assistance based upon income, family size, and the availability of funds. Assistance is available through funding by the United Way of Northwest Connecticut, Office of Early Childhood, and Care4Kids. Also, limited scholarship funds are available for children whose parents are enrolled in a program of higher education, demonstrate financial needs, and satisfy the scholarship requirements. Please check with the office for more information. If any parent has a problem with their fee, they may present their concerns, in writing, to the Executive Director to present to the Board of Directors. All financial information provided with regard to financial assistance is held in the strictest confidence*. Prompt payment and current accounts are required to remain eligible for our School Readiness and OEC grants.*

United Way of Northwest Connecticut Tuition Assistance

Funding is provided by the United Way of Northwest Connecticut to families enrolled who are not eligible for any other assistance program. Adjusted Gross Income from the family’s most recent IRS Form 1040 or current consecutive paystubs will be used to determine eligibility. A copy of this form must be provided as proof of income and income is verified on an annual basis. Families that qualify for this program will receive a $20 discount off their tuition rate. A Second Child Discount is available to full time families only. The first child will pay the full rate and the second child will received a $20 discount off the full rate.

Office of Early Childhood Tuition Assistance

CT Office of Early Childhood provides BASE with funding to assist parents with Tuition payments. Funding is provided for children who attend BASE on a full time basis and is based on a sliding scale using the family’s income and size. Family Fee Schedules are provided by the Office of Early Childhood each year. Eligibility is determined by using the family’s most recent IRS Form 1040 or a months’ worth of current consecutive paystubs. A copy of this form must be provided as proof of income and income is verified annually. A copy of the child’s birth certificate MUST be provided.

Care 4 Kids

Care 4 Kids provides funding to low and moderate income families who are enrolled on a part time or full time basis. Care 4 Kids is a partnership working with the Center and the Office of Early Childhood to provide this assistance. Families wishing to apply for this Program may obtain an application in our Office. Our Office Staff are available to provide assistance in completing the application process and forwarding completed applications to Care 4 Kids. Care 4 Kids will review the applications and determine the family’s level of eligibility and the amount Parents will be responsible to pay to the Center. Once Care 4 Kids accepts a family into the program, their portion of assistance payments is sent directly to the Center. Parents are responsible for paying the full tuition rate until a certificate is awarded. A refund will be issued if there is an overpayment on the account.

\*\*The Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc., reserves the right to change tuition rates. Parents will receive at least 30-day written notification of any changes. \*\*

##### **Collaboration with Community Programs**

Throughout the years we have collaborated with outside agencies, to pursue all necessary avenues for children with special needs. These programs include, but are not limited to, the Connecticut Birth to Three System, Winchester Public School’s Family Resource Center, and Northwest Center for Mental Health and Connecticut’s Early Childhood Consultation Partnership. Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. is a member of Cradle to Career, Winchester’s Early Care and Education Council.

**Community Agency Support**

Some of the Services Referred through Winsted Area Child Care Center:

* Batcheller School’s Pre K, Family Resource Center and Early Childhood Team
* EdAdvance
* Head Start

###### Birth to Three

###### Northwest Center for Family Services and Mental Health

* Department of Social Services
* Department of Children and Families

Thanks to these collaborations, Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. is able to provide a safe and nurturing early childhood experience to hard working families in the community, regardless of their background or financial standing.

**Children with Existing Individual Education Programs (IEP)**

Children with existing IEP’s upon acceptance to BASE, will be mainstreamed into the classroom. Their teacher will take appropriate action (teacher may consult with special needs specialists, the child’s pediatrician and family) to incorporate IEP into weekly curriculum and coordinate goals and objectives. WACCC will do the following to gather necessary information to provide appropriate services to the child with disabilities in our setting:

##### Inquire at registration if the enrolled child has an IEP or other special need.

1. Request a copy of the child’s IEP and all supporting documents from the parent.
2. Request to be a part of the process to ensure continuity between programs when appropriate.
3. Obtain a signed copy of an “Information Release” form from the parent.
4. Ask the parent to be invited to scheduled PPT meetings.
5. Request periodic meetings when necessary with the Winchester Public School (WPS) teacher.
6. Consult with other specialists when necessary.
7. Request a time to make a site visit when necessary to observe the child in the primary setting.
8. Allow for WPS staff to make on site visits for observation purposes.
9. Maintain open communication with WPS staff and parents.

##### **Health, Safety, and Nutrition**

**Notification of Absence**

Please notify BASE if your child is going to be absent on his/her assigned day. This will help in our schedule so we do not have to contact your child’s school to obtain information as to where your child is. We do NOT substitute days if your child is absent. ***Tuition is charged whether your child is here or not.*** The space is held for your child and continues to be held when your child is not here. If a child has a lengthy illness and must be absent for a long period; please speak to the Education Manager or Executive Director to discuss a temporary tuition adjustment.

**Health Practices**

WACCC consults with a registered nurse who reports to the main office weekly. Our Nurse is familiar with all the children and any special health or care requirements they may have. The nurse will monitor the children’s health, and keep immunization records up to date. In addition, all of our staff are trained in CPR, First Aid, and the administration of emergency medication.

Every child enrolled at WACCC must have a current health physical filled out by their pediatrician, as outlined by the State of CT form ED 191. Together with WACCC’s office assistant, our nurse keeps track of physicals, their expiration dates and tracks to ensure that proper immunization have been given. All allergies are highlighted on each child’s file and listed on a center-wide allergy list, which is posted in each classroom and in our kitchen.

Should the nurse discover any pertinent missing information, she is authorized to contact the family directly. Likewise, with parental permission, the nurse is able to contact the child’s physician in the event the staff has questions regarding a child’s personal care or health. In such an instance, a care plan is developed between families, the administration and the nurse.

WACCC has implemented a universal sick policy which is referred to when a child’s good health is in question. Proper steps are followed by all employees to ensure that each child is healthy enough to participate in the program.

WACCC networks with local programs specializing in pediatric dentistry. WACCC collaborates with the Winchester Family Resource Center to assist with vision and hearing screenings.

In order to assist families in securing medical insurance, applications for Connecticut’s HUSKY program can be found on site. Administrative Staff provide support in completing the application process and assisting parents with paperwork.

**Nutrition**

WACCC is proud to participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which grants funds to our food service program. We have a full time Food Service Manager (FSM) on board at our facility. We are able to offer breakfast, lunch and an afternoon snack to every child, at no additional cost to our families. Sound health is essential to wholesome development. Annually, our FSM attends a statewide training to keep on top of nutrition policies and procedures regarding food preparation, kitchen maintenance and CACFP menu planning. At our annual staff training, the FSM educates the Center staff, in the knowledge of these components as well as sanitary and preparation policies and procedures.

When your child is here they will receive meals that are nutritionally well balanced in accordance with the CACFP meal pattern. Meals are served family style, in an effort to teach children the value of togetherness and to encourage self-help skills in feeding and passing food to one another. WACCC will never use food as punishment. Children will never be denied participation in breakfast, lunch, or snack time for behavior reasons. We have found this policy to yield positive results among children and their families. We ask you *do not send your child to WACCC with food from home*.

Nutrition Education is provided to the families by participating in the CT Food Bank backpack program and the 5210 Initiative.

If your child has a food allergy; with written documentation from the pediatrician we can develop menu substitutions within the guidelines of the CACFP meal pattern. A list of all children with food allergies or special nutritional needs is presented to all staff within the building and alternate food choices are provided.

**Sick Policy**

To prevent the spreading of illness from child to child we have implemented the following sick policy.

**We ask that you do *NOT* bring your child to the center if he/she has:**

1. A fresh cold (clear, uncontrollable discharge)
2. A Fever of 100.5 degrees or higher
3. Diarrhea and/or Vomiting in the last 24 hours
4. A Persistent cough
5. Red, crusty eyes (this may mean infection)
6. Discharge from ears
7. Any unknown rash

**When a child becomes ill while on the premises and is unable to participate in the program, parents are notified and required to pick up their child. Symptoms for exclusion include vomiting, diarrhea, a fever of 100.5 or higher, and any contagious symptoms listed above. Please note that when a child is sent home he/she cannot return to BASE the following day.** In addition, we reserve the right to request a note from the doctor indicating that they have been examined and the child is not contagious, should we suspect a contagious illness.

* Please keep children home at least 24 hours after starting a new medication
* If a child is dismissed twice in one week for the same illness, we will require a doctor’s note before the child may return
* If your child is taking any medication it must be logged in the child’s classroom
* If you administer medicine to a child during their time at BASE, you must do so in the office, and log the information in the office
* If a fever is suspected, temperatures are taken under the arm. We do not add a degree.
* If a confirmed case of contagious illness is evident, an exposure notice will be posted outside the classroom door to notify parents.
* On occasion we may need to consult with your child’s doctor or with one of our medical advisors about general medical problems.

**Emergency Medications**

Our staff is certified in the administration of emergency medications. This certification allows us to administer Epi-Pen injections in the case of anaphylactic reactions or rescue inhalers in the case of diagnosed asthma or breathing complications under the following conditions:

1. We have written authorization from the prescribing physician using the approved form “Authorization for the Administration of Medication by School, Child Care, and Youth Camp Personnel”.
2. We have an “Emergency Care Plan” (for anaphylactic reactions) or “Asthma Action Plan” on file, filled out by the prescribing physician.
3. We have signed permission from the parent. Parent signature and information is required on both of the above mentioned forms.
4. The medication is in the original container with the pharmacy label that bares the child’s name, prescribing physician’s name, the name of the medication, dosage, method of administration, date of expiration, pharmacy name, and prescription number.

Each year, the employees are trained by our RN in the administration of emergency meds. Likewise, all staff is trained in CPR and First Aid. The office personnel keep track of each employee’s current certificates as well as their expiration dates.

**Prescription and Non-Prescription Medications**

Staff is not permitted to administer any oral non-prescription or prescription drug. We are only permitted to apply non-prescription topical preparations with signed consent from parents*. Aerosol sprays will not* be accepted and administered by staff.

In the event that a child is taking medication, we ask that the parents document the name of the medication, the date it was started and the time of the most recent dose on the medication log found in each classroom. A parent or caregiver may come to BASE to administer the child’s medication, provided they do so in the main office, and record the information on our medication log.

**Accidents**

We strive to prevent accidents, but they do occur. All staff on-site are first aid trained. When a child has an accident at school the parent receives written notification. The attending teacher will write up an accident report. Accident reports do require a parent signature. If deemed necessary, parents may be notified at work.

##### **Emergency Procedures**

WACCC has established policies and procedures, which are dedicated to the support of WACCC’s mission of teaching, educating, and safety of all children, staff, and visitors on WACCC’s property. WACCC provides access to facility grounds for students, staff and visitors consistent with WACCC’s priorities and safety in mind. Access to WACCC’s grounds imposes certain responsibilities and obligations on the part of WACCC to ensure the safety of all who visit with respect to federal, state, and local laws. It is WACCC’s policy that proper security and emergency procedures be in place and established to ensure the safety of all who visit. Best practices to date are utilized for emergency planning and procedures.

**Emergency Procedure For Staff**

At least one staff member, if not all staff members, trained in Emergency Med., First Aid, and CPR, must be on site at all times from open to close.

In case of Emergency Staff follow this procedure:

1. Calmly assess problem.
2. Give Child necessary first aid.
3. Ask another adult to call parent.
4. If the problem is serious, call 911
5. Inform parent of this decision.
6. A staff member will accompany the child to the hospital, bring along emergency permission card.
7. Remain calm and reassuring at all times.
8. Fill out incident/accident report form after child is under medical care and the parent has been contacted.

**Fire Drills**

For the safety of the children and staff and by State law, we practice fire drills and evacuation procedures, as well as disaster drills with the children once a month.

**Evacuation Procedure**

In the event of any emergency requiring evacuation from the building, we follow the same procedure as for fire drills. All children exit out the door leading directly outdoors and the children line up at a specific area in the outdoor area, where attendance is taken.

If it is determined that the children cannot safely re-enter the building, the staff and children will walk by way of sidewalk to the Fire House on Prospect Street or our to our Center on Prospect Street. From there, the staff will contact parents to pick up their children. First aid kits, emergency medications, and a traveling emergency file, which includes emergency phone numbers, will accompany the staff and children whenever they leave the premises.

**911 Emergency Lockdown**

In the event that Winchester Police Department issues an emergency broadcasts or a 911 situation is happening within the building (i.e. Eminent danger, unstable person or suspected armed individual), Administration will lock down the building. Teachers will calmly occupy children until the order is lifted and wait for updates with further instructions (i.e. Evacuation to Fire House on Prospect Street).

**In Case of Disaster**

The plan of action for weather related emergencies are as follows: Children are gathered in the main hallway, outside of the office, away from all exterior doors and windows. Children in the infant and toddler one room are placed in evacuation cribs for prompt removal from the classroom. All other emergencies such as gas leak, malfunctioning furnace, excessive smoke or fire, etc., we will move from the Center to the Fire House located adjacent to the Center.

In the event of interrupted service, extra office staff will take the children’s emergency numbers to the firehouse or to the Center to contact parents.

**Mandated Reporter**

**What is a Mandated Reporter?**

Connecticut law requires certain citizens to report suspected child abuse and neglect. These mandated reporters are people in professions or occupations that have contact with children or whose primary focus is children. The law requires that they report suspected child abuse or neglect. Under Connecticut General Statute, Section 17a-101, the following are considered mandated reporters:

* Any person paid to care for a child in any public or private facility, child day care center, group day care home or family day care home which is licensed by the State.

We stress that when a call is made to DCF it is in good faith and strictly for the protection of the child. We are not required to inform parents or guardians if such a report is made.

**What Must Be Reported?**

Mandated reporters are required to report or cause a report to be made when, in the ordinary course of their employment or profession, they have reasonable cause to suspect or believe that a child under the age of 18 has been abused, neglected or is placed in imminent risk of serious harm. (Connecticut General Statutes §17a-101a)

Child Abuse occurs where a child has had physical injury inflicted upon him or her other than by accidental means, has injuries at variance with history given of them, or is in a condition resulting in maltreatment, such as, but not limited to, malnutrition, sexual molestation or exploitation, deprivation of necessities, emotional maltreatment or cruel punishment. (Connecticut General Statutes §46b-120)

Child Neglect occurs where a child has been abandoned, is being denied proper care and attention physically, emotionally, or morally, or is being permitted to live under conditions, circumstances or associations injurious to his well-being. (Connecticut General Statutes §46b-120)

By Connecticut State law, employees of The Winsted Area Child Care Center are mandated reporters for all suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect or a child at risk and receive training annually. The Connecticut Abuse and Neglect “Careline” number is 1-800-842-2288.

**Parent/Guardian Substance Abuse Policy**

Should an adult arrive to pick up a child whom is suspected to have consumed alcohol or other impairing substance the child will not be released. Staff will call an authorized adult on the pickup permission to pick up the child. By Connecticut State law, mandated reporters must report repeat offenders to the Department of Children and Families.

**Day to Day Information**

Your child’s classroom is designed to provide a stimulating environment which encourages the child to solve problems, make decisions, begin activities, ask questions, and explore and experiment with educational materials.

**Cultural Diversity**

WACCC stresses the importance of cultural heritage. Classroom materials reflect diverse cultures and provide experiences that stimulate children’s natural curiosity about the world around them. Parents are encouraged to share their family’s cultures and customs. If you have music, food, clothing, art, etc. that reflect your family background please let a teacher know. The more we know the more we grow!

**Daily Schedule**

BASE opens daily at 6:30 a.m. Upon arrival, please sign your child in on the classroom sign in/out sheet. If your child is on any medication, please update the medication log and inform the teachers. If the child has any bumps/bruises etc., please let the teachers know.

Our schedule is posted in each classroom and changes seasonally. The schedule is flexible to allow for a daily variety of indoor and outdoor activities and quiet play. Some activities are self-directed and some are directed by the teacher. Children are continuously encouraged to play and work independently and collaboratively. These child-directed activities help to promote self-confidence, and self-discipline.

At pick up please remember to sign your child out on the classroom sign in/out sheet.

**Bus**

Children who are Winsted residents will be transported to and from BASE by the local bus company. (All Star Transportation, Manager: Jodi Audia; 860-379-0020)

**Curriculum**

While your child’s classroom is made up of mixed age groups, curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all children and is planned weekly by his/her teacher. The weekly curriculum is posted in each classroom.

**Toys from Home**

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are not permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child.

All toys brought in for use as part of the curriculum, and/or for nap/rest time will be inspected by the classroom teacher for safety and appropriateness, and may be prohibited at the sole discretion of the teacher. Please do not allow your child to bring in any toys that represents inappropriate or violent actions, character, or words.

If your child will be bringing to BASE a toy from home to share at school, for a school project, or for recess, the toy must remain in their backpack at all times. It is highly encouraged for the child’s name or initials to be written on all toys in permanent marker. WACCC is not responsible if the item is lost, broken, or stolen.

**Positive Discipline**

Building a child’s self-esteem and a positive self-worth is key in early development. The main goal we wish to reach when disciplining young children is to instill inner self-controls in the place of teacher-maintained external controls. Positive discipline allows children to focus on their good behaviors rather than negative. A child who fears adults may never be able to form proper attachments. Our ultimate objective is to help the child achieve responsibility for him/herself.

We begin by arranging the environment to prevent discipline problems. This includes planning interesting activities, not asking children to be still for too long, and meeting their needs for food, rest, and active play.

When disputes arise among children or between a child and teacher, the teacher will encourage a talking out process among those involved. The goal of this talking out process will be to acknowledge feelings and find solutions using children’s ideas whenever possible. If your child has had a difficult time, the staff will give you a verbal or written note which summarizes your child’s day. We will work together with the family to assure consistency at home and at school in working with the child, and all will be discussed in a confidential manner that is respectful to your family.

Our methods of Positive Discipline Include:

* Encouraging children to solve problems through the use of words learning to acknowledge feelings and associate feelings with actions
* Redirect children to focus on a different activity in a positive manner
* Tell children what they can do, rather than what they can’t do
* Continual focus on building self-help skills in order to strengthen self-esteem and positive self-image
* Positive reinforcement and acknowledging appropriate behavior that should be continued in the future
* Assisting children in planning actions and language for similar situations in the future
* Modeling kind, patient, and gentle actions, words and behaviors

**Aggression Policy**

WACCC is responsible for the care and safety of all children attending the center. To this end, injuries to children by accident or as a result of aggression on the part of another child, are given full and immediate attention. Center staff recognizes that aggressive acts are often a developmental issue, and most children resolve this behavior in a timely manner.

A child who may be overly aggressive or is repeatedly destructive of other children’s work may be asked to make an activity choice in another area if talking things through has not resulted in better self-control. Staff will continuously supervise children during disciplinary actions.

In the event, however, that a child is repeatedly aggressive, including biting, hitting, kicking, and/or use of foul language, the teaching staff will discuss the behavior with the Education Manager and/or Executive Director. Each child involved in such behavior will be discussed confidentially, and the consequences for each child will be determined in an independent manner. Teachers will follow-up with parents regarding suggestions and strategies for halting the behavior. If determined necessary, the child and family will be connected to the proper agency for support or go through the referral process.

Staff will never be abusive, neglectful, or use corporal, humiliating, or frightening punishment under any circumstances. Staff will never threaten to withhold or withhold food as a form of punishment. No child shall be physically restrained unless it is necessary to protect the safety and health of the child, another child, or adult.

**Mailboxes**

Every child has a mailbox for notes or artwork. Please learn where your child’s mailbox is located and check it daily. There is always important information that needs your attention!

**Outdoor Play**

Except in very wet or extremely cold weather, the children go out doors at least twice a week. If a child is well enough to be at the center we assume he or she is well enough to participate in outdoor activities. Also, occasionally children will go for walks around town. Please dress for the conditions, snow pants for winter, and sturdy sneakers are the best bet for summer weather. Sandals tend to slip off and get wood chips from the playground stuck in them. Please NO flip-flops.

**Professional Teaching Staff**

**Teaching Staff**

Our highly qualified and screened teachers and staff meet all requirements and regulations set by the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Licensing Division Statutes and Regulations. Each teacher in your child’s classroom is certified in first aid, CPR, and to administer emergency medications.

**Staff Development**

It is our belief that by professional development obligations, staff make a positive impact on the quality of the program. By increasing their knowledge of early childhood education and best practice guidelines, they are better suited to educate young minds.

The State of CT requires all child care employees to engage in professional development opportunities. For instance, a full time employee works 2080 hours per calendar year and would therefore need 20 hours of continuing education. (1% of hours worked annually)

WACCC maintains a professional development policy, in which each employee is required to not only complete their hours but to also provide a Professional Development Plan, outlining what they hope to accomplish in the year to come. This includes anything from workshops that would interest them and college courses they plan on taking in the upcoming semester. These are workshops that the teacher feels would advance their knowledge in the field. We also ask that the plans include goals that each teacher has set for themselves and their classroom.

**Confidentiality/Non-Disclosure Statement**

The Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. (WACCC) has an ethical and legal obligation to respect the privacy of families, students, donors, prospective donors, volunteers, directors, and staff, and to protect, safeguard, and maintain any information it acquires that is deemed confidential by its nature or definition.

The protection of confidential business and client information is vital to the interest and success of the Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. Such confidential information includes but is not limited to the following:

* Any information about children attending WACCC
* Compensation data
* Family information
* Matters that pertain to labor relations
* Pending projects and proposals

All employees are required to sign a confidentiality and non-disclosure agreement as a condition of employment. Employees who improperly use or disclose confidential business or client information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to an including termination of employment and legal action, even if they do not actually benefit from the disclosed information.

**Parent Participation and Responsibilities**

**Parent Involvement, Education and Outreach**

WACCC believes that the family is the foundation for each child’s success throughout their education. Therefore, it is our priority to continuously strive to assist parents in the complex job of raising their children.

Whenever possible, our program will provide information regarding opportunities in the community for parent education classes. Our capable staff is equipped with educational resources for parents, including articles regarding child development and a lending library containing parenting books and videos. Often parents are invited to attend staff workshops, should the topic be relevant.

WACCC maintains an open-door policy; parents and family are always welcome at the center. Parents are able to drop in at any time to visit their children, participate in classroom activities or mealtimes and are always welcome on field trips or at special events.

Parents serve in an advisory capacity through our Board of Directors and through our Fundraising Committee. It is stated as policy in our WACCC by-laws that some members of our Board shall be parents.

**Parent Teacher Communication**

It is our philosophy that daily parent communication is key in any child care setting. We feel that it is important for teachers and parents to have open communication. If you have a concern about the program, feel free to address any issue with the teachers. If teachers have any concerns they will communicate with you on a daily basis to address the issue. Close parent-teacher communication helps the teacher know and understand each child, as well as helping the parent understand what activities their children are involved in while at BASE.

**Family Outreach**

Within the program there are often families who find themselves in crisis. WACCC is committed to community outreach and philanthropy, financial or otherwise. Thanks to the kindness of our staff and other families, we have been able to assist those in need by providing food, clothing and supplies. Our parents are aware that they can turn to us for help, should they need it.

Communication between school and home is a key piece to working together to understand behaviors. Throughout the year, if there are any transitions at home please let us know. This might be severe illness, a relative in the hospital, parents going away, anticipated move or house for sale, death of a relative or pet, fire in home or neighborhood, witnessing or being in an accident, etc. Even though your child may not seem to be affected, we may see that he/she is upset.

**Fundraiser Participation**

WACCC is a private non-profit corporation. Although we are a United Way member agency, we must also raise money ourselves. We would appreciate every parent to take part in our fund-raising events in some way.

**Family Literacy**

For many years, WACCC has had a lending library in an effort to promote family literacy and parent-child interaction

We are fortunate to have a community college minutes down the road, with which we have a great professional relationship with. We are happy to communicate with the college for information, per parents requests. EdAdvance, a local agency that provides adult education is also within reach should the need arise for parents. We are ready and willing to provide this information to our families.

The community college has an impressive library available to students. Additionally, the Beardsley Library is nearby and offers a variety of programs for children and adults.

**Volunteer**

Families are always welcome and encouraged to volunteer and spend time in the classrooms. Way for families to help out include:

* Volunteering in the Classroom – make sure to coordinate with your child’s teacher(s) to ensure that you have something to do while in the classroom (reading to the children, working on a project, helping with a walking field trip, etc.)
* Making things like play dough, labels, signs, etc. for your child’s classroom
* Donating items (recyclables, extra art supplies, gently used toys, etc.)
* Cleaning or maintenance projects in and around the center
* Fundraising Committee
* Board of Directors

**Babysitting**

We strongly discourage our employees from making independent child care arrangements with families at the program. However, in the event that you enter into an agreement with a WACCC employee to babysit for your family outside of the employee’s normal work hours and/or outside of the program hours, it must be done away from the program and with the full knowledge and understanding that the sitter enters into such an agreement as a private citizen and not as a WACCC employee. We cannot be responsible for our employees away from the program, outside their working hours, and will not be liable for their acts or omissions when not on our property including the transportation of children. You will be required to sign acknowledgement and waiver to this effect – Release of Responsibility Form.

**BASE Camp Summer Information**

**Attendance**

Please notify BASE by 9:00 a.m. if your child is going to be absent. We have an active summer schedule and it helps in planning our day to know which children will be attending. Activities and programs are scheduled throughout the day so we ask that all children arrive at BASE by 9:00 a.m. (earlier on some field trip days), and stay until 3:30 p.m. As we spend lots of time off site, any student that needs to be picked up and/or dropped off outside these hours will need to have transportation to offsite locations arranged by parents.

**Calendar**

Please post the program calendar in your home where you can refer to it quickly. Please be aware of the weeks you have registered your child to attend.

**Clothing**

For safety reasons, all children MUST wear sneakers. If your child is wearing inappropriate shoes you will be asked to bring your child home and return with proper footwear. On field trip and lake days your child is required to wear their BASE Camp t-shirt. It is good practice to have your child pack a full change of clothes, including socks, shoes, underwear, bathing suit, and towel to keep at BASE.

**Field Trips**

A general permission slip for all summer field trips is included in the registration packet. It must be signed for your child to go on any trip. On the days where a field trip is scheduled please have your child arrive at BASE by 8:30 a.m. (sometimes earlier if specified). All children must wear their BASE Camp t-shirts. We ask that you do NOT give your child spending money for the trip. All BASE Camp staff attend the trip, so therefore we CANNOT accommodate any child who cannot attend, please make other arrangements for their care.

**Sunscreen & Insect Repellant**

We ask that all children bring a bottle of sunscreen with an SPF of 30 or higher. The bottle will be labeled and kept in the classroom. We will apply the sunscreen in the morning and afternoon, as well as bring sunscreen to the lake and on field trips. Children cannot share sunscreen (other than siblings), so please make sure to provide a bottle for your child. You may also provide bug repellent which will be applied to your child once daily. When you are running low on sunscreen, BASE Camp staff will send home a notice in your child’s mailbox. *Aerosol sprays will not* be accepted and administered by staff.

**Swimming at Highland Lake**

Each week the children will walk to the lake for swimming. A parent or guardian must sign the permission slip in the Summer Sensation Registration Packet. Each child is required to have a bathing suit, towel & sunscreen. The children will go to the lake with their classroom teachers on a specified day of the week. The groups are made up of one staff member to every 6 children for school-age children. The maximum swimming group size is 20 children. We ask that all children wear their BASE Camp shirts on swimming days. A detailed schedule of lake times will be provided to the parents. Per state regulations, children will not be allowed to swim if a certified lifeguard is not present.

**Summer Hours of Operation**

BASE Summer Sensation is open Monday-Friday, 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Office hours are Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. In the event of an emergency outside these hours, you can reach our Main office at 860-379-0006.

**Parent Agreement to Policies**

I\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ have carefully read and fully understand all the policies and procedures detailed in the Winsted Area Child Care Center, Before & After School Education Parent Handbook, including:

* Registration Requirements
* Illness Guidelines
* Closing Procedures & Emergency Plans
* Tuition Payment Policies
* Daily Operating Procedures
* Summer Sensation Polices
* CACFP Enrollment Form Requirement

I also understand that The Winsted Area Child Care Center, Inc. reserves the right to change any of these policies or change tuition rates at any time. Parents will be informed in writing of any changes to policies, procedures or tuition a minimum of 30 days in advance.

Childs Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Director/Program Manager Initials: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_