



“Watch Me Grow” 2010-2011 Parent/Guardian Contract and Handbook

Watch Me Grow Child Development Center is a childcare program designed to provide creative, integrated, and educational services to children. The program's goals are to:

- Assist every child to maximize his/her academic and social potential
- Raise self-esteem and promote confidence and feelings of self-awareness
- Foster decision-making skills, development of communication, and cooperative resolutions
- Use Creative Curriculum to help children develop a life-long love of learning.

To the Parent/Guardian(s): Please read this handbook carefully. If you do not understand any provision, feel free to ask the Center Director(s). This contract establishes your legal rights and responsibilities and those of the Center regarding your child's participation in the Center. Throughout this handbook the term “the center” will refer to the Watch Me Grow Child Development Center. Please return the “Parent/Guardian/Guardian Signature” page to your Director.

Program Hours: The Center provides care for all children during the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. **Late pick up fee:** Parent/Guardians who arrive at the Center on or after 6:30pm. will be charged a \$10.00 fee plus \$1.00 per minute per family for each minute after 6:30pm. Late fees will be charged to family account. A family is subject to termination if late three times in a thirty day period.

Program Fees: Fees are based on the age of the child, the number of days attending (where applicable), and the programs the child is enrolled in.

Payment: Fees are calculated on a twelve-month schedule, which includes holidays, Parent/Guardian teacher conference days, teacher in-service days and days in which the center may be closed for inclement weather. This means the participants pay a set fee for each month.

- a. **Registration and Deposit:** A non-refundable registration fee of \$120.00 for each child is due with the deposit. The deposit includes the last month's tuition paid in advance.
- b. **Fees:** Payments are due on the 1st of every month and are considered late by the 5th of the month. Payments can be made by check, money order, or credit card. *Payments should not be sent in your child's backpack as there is the potential for it to get lost.* Please mark your check or money order with the name of the child in the program. Fees will remain the same if a child is absent due to family vacation, inclement weather, etc. Please see Center Director for extended absence.
- c. **Returned check policy:** A \$25 charge will be assessed on accounts that have checks returned due to insufficient funds. Child care services will be suspended for the child (ren) until the payment is received in full.
- d. **Late Payment Fee:** Any payment not received by the 5th of every month will be considered late and the family will be charged an additional \$50.00. Payments over 10 days late will result in dismissal from the program. If this occurs, rights to any deposits are forfeited.
- e. **Changes in Tuition:** A 30-day written notice will be given for any change in tuition
- f. **Withdrawal by Parent/Guardian:** Families are required to give the center 30-days notice in writing before withdrawing a child. In turn, the school will use your deposit for your last month's payment. If 30-days notice is not given then the deposit is forfeited.

Holiday Schedule: The Center will be closed on the following holidays: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King Holiday, President's Day, Easter Monday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Thanksgiving Day and the day after, and Christmas. The center will also be closed on two additional days for teacher in-service training during the month of May and December. These dates will be determined by Mid-August for that calendar year.

Inclement Weather Policy: Watch Me Grow Child Development Center’s inclement weather policy is as follows:

- Center closures and delays will be posted by 6:00 a.m. on the Center’s outgoing voicemail, and on NBC4 news (<http://www.nbcwashington.com/>).
- If inclement weather occurs during the Center’s operating hours, then the school will make a decision by noon as to whether or not the school will close early. Parent/Guardians will be contacted by phone, so families should make sure to update their contact information regularly.
- Fees remain the same even if we close due to inclement weather or open late/close early due to inclement weather.

Watch Me Grow Child Development Center reserves the right to close the Center if the safety of the children and /or staff is at risk.

Snacks/Food: Watch Me Grow is a peanut free facility. Please refrain for packing any peanut products in your child’s lunch, including peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and peanut butter crackers. We will make every attempt to ensure that the products served here do not contain peanuts or peanut products. The Center will supply morning and afternoon snacks, and families will need to supply the child’s lunch in the provided **Watch Me Grow** lunch bag. Lunches can be refrigerated if desired, although will not be heated. If your child has special dietary needs, you must supply the morning and afternoon snack. We encourage you to limit the number of “sweets” in your child’s lunch and that you include a fruit or vegetable daily. Watch Me Grow will provide organic milk or water with each snack/meal. The following are recommended websites for healthy lunch ideas: <http://www.momswhothink.com/childrens-health/school-lunch-ideas-for-kids.html>, http://kidshealth.org/parent/nutrition_fit/nutrition/lunch.html, <http://www.usda.gov>

Nap time: Children will need to bring a crib sized fitted sheet or a fitted twin sheet and a light weight blanket for naptime. A small pillow and one “sleep/nap buddy” can also accompany the child, as long as all nap items fit inside the **Watch Me Grow** tote for storage. It is the parent’s responsibility to take all nap items home to wash on Fridays.

Clothing: Your child should be comfortably dressed depending upon the weather, including *secure* footwear. This eliminates flip-flops, “croc” and clog-type footwear. The children will go outside twice a day unless there is inclement weather and it is important that they be dressed appropriately. The children have art activities, water play and often have accidents, please send a complete change of seasonally appropriate clothing (including shoes if possible), marked with your child’s name to leave at the Center.

Behavior Policy: The goal of the Center’s behavior policy is to make the experience positive for every child and to help the child recognize their abilities to make appropriate choices and develop self control. Children are experiencing an important period of growth and development during early childhood and their potential to learn is unbounded. The Center will provide a caring and patient environment. Children will be encouraged and helped to make age appropriate decisions. The children are expected to:

- g. Follow directions
- h. Use appropriate language
- i. Show respect for each other, adults, and the property of others. If a child should break any equipment or damage any facilities, the Parent/Guardian(s) will be informed and payment arrangements will be made with the Center Director.
- j. Keep their hands and feet to themselves
- k. Treat others the way they want to be treated
- l. Solve problems without becoming angry or violent
- m. Refrain from participation in any type of violent play including play fighting, tackling, wrestling, and use of pretend weapons. Our program philosophies and goals center on the promotion and necessity of non-violent methods.

Staff will set limits and redirect behavior to encourage self regulation. If a child engages in behavior that is physically or verbally harmful to others, an incident report will be generated for the child’s Parent/Guardian and the center. If a child has harmed another child, the Parent/Guardian of the harmed child will be informed of the incident, but not the identity of the aggressor. If a child repeats the physically or verbally harmful behavior, the Parent/Guardian will be called and the child will need to be picked up immediately. A Parent/Guardian/staff conference may be scheduled if the inappropriate behavior persists. The purpose of this conference is to develop a joint strategy between the Parent/Guardian(s) and staff, which will have a positive effect on the child’s behavior.

Termination by Center: The Center may terminate a child's position effective immediately depending if the child or Parent/Guardian's behavior threatens the physical or mental health of other children/staff in the Center.

Emergencies: Should your child have a medical emergency, the following steps will be taken:

- First Aid will be administered.
- If necessary, 911 will be called.
- The Center Director will call the Parent/Guardian/guardian or the listed emergency contact.
- If needed, a staff member will accompany the child to the nearest hospital.
- The Center Director will file an incident report.

The Center is not responsible for any cost incurred for such injuries or treatment.

Absences: If you will be late dropping off your child and/or your child will not be in the program for any reason, you must notify the Center by 9:00 a.m. We will contact Parent/Guardians if we do not know in advance that your child will be absent. All families are responsible for paying the full month's tuition even if a child is absent due to illness, vacation, or other causes such as bad weather, power outages, or holidays.

Sickness: It is in the best interest of children for them to remain outside of the Center when they exhibit any of the following:

- A temperature of 101 degrees or more
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea (2 or more episodes within a 24hr. period)
- A persistent cough and/or purulent drainage
- **Any** contagious illness: such as conjunctivitis, chickenpox, Fifth disease, head lice, impetigo, etc. If your child exhibits any of the above, or they are unable to participate in all aspects of the program, you will be notified and must arrange for your child to be picked up within one hour of notification.
- If your child is excluded from care due to illness, they may not return until they have been symptom free, and without any medication for 24 hours. If your child has a contagious illness, there must be written documentation giving permission to return to the center.
- If your child is absent from the center for 3 or more days, there must be written documentation giving permission for your children to return to the center from your child's pediatrician.

Administering Medication: If a child requires any medication to be administered while in the care of Watch Me Grow, the medication (prescription and/or over-the counter) must be in the original container with the exact directions for administering the medication on the container. The medication (prescription and/or over-the-counter) must be accompanied by a prescription order and a signed Medication Administration form (to be completed by both parents and physician). Medications will not be stored at the center or administered on an as needed basis, unless otherwise specified by the physician with instructions of when to administer the medication and a definitive start and stop date that the medication will be as needed, not to exceed 6 months. Children may not carry any medication on their possession or in their backpacks.

Policy for prevention of child abuse: Staff Recruitment, Training, and Supervision

- Prospective employees and program volunteers will have thorough reference and background checks.
- All new staff and volunteers will be made aware of their legal requirements to report child abuse to the appropriate authorities.
- Staff and volunteers will be trained in signs of possible child abuse and neglect.
- Administrative staff from Family Services, Inc. will make unannounced visits to the program site to assure that standards regarding policies, program quality, and staff performance are being followed.

Use of Car Seats: Maryland Child Passenger Safety Law states that:

- **Every child** under 8 years old must ride in a booster seat or other appropriate child safety seat.
- (Unless the child is 4ft. 9in. or taller, or weighs more than 65lbs.)
- **Every child** from 8 to 16 years old who is not secured in a car seat must be secured in the vehicles seat belt.
- The back seat is the safest place, and children under 13years old should ride in the back seat.

Watch Me Grow is under the reviews and control of the local law enforcement, and we will inform local authorities if we feel a child is not being restrained properly or being left unattended in a car. Please take every precaution to ensure the safety and well being of your child.

NOTE: Please remember to turn off your car engine when picking up and/or dropping off your child to ensure everyone's safety.

Additional Information:

- Children must be potty trained before entering the 3's program. We ask parents of young children to supply a change of clothing, to be kept onsite, for accidents. A child wearing pull-ups is not considered potty trained.
- Children are not allowed to bring money, matches, pocketknives, weapons, or expensive items to the program. These items will be confiscated and returned to the parent/guardian. Children may wish to bring toys from home, but they will be asked to keep their toys in their cubby, unless otherwise specified by the classroom teacher. WMG will not be responsible for lost, stolen, or broken items. If a child is found with a weapon or dangerous item, or makes dangerous threats, the proper authorities will be contacted.
- You are welcome to help your child celebrate his/her birthday at school. All birthday celebrations will take place at 3:30 p.m. during afternoon snack. We ask that celebrations be limited to cake or cupcakes and milk, water or juice (no soda please). All food product brought into the center for special events must have the ingredients label and be peanut-free. Please do not distribute party favors. Please do not exchange invitations and presents at school unless all children in the classroom are included.
- Unclaimed clothing and miscellaneous supplies are kept in a bin labeled "Lost and Found" located in the center's library. Periodically, items without nametags that are not claimed will be donated to a charitable organization.
- Parents/Guardians should use their 4-digit ID code to gain access to the building and to clock their child in/out. The 4-digit codes should not be shared with friends and/or family that may drop off and/or pick up your child on occasion. Parents should accompany their child in the halls at all times during drop off and pick up. Children should not run in the hallways, as it can be very dangerous.

Watch Me Grow Parent Handbook Receipt Acknowledgement

I have received a copy of the **Watch Me Grow** Child Development Center _____ (school year) Parent/Guardian Handbook and Contract. I have read and agree to abide by the policies.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

I, _____, give permission to **Watch Me Grow** Child Development Center to perform CPR and First Aid to my child as needed and if deemed necessary to call a doctor or obtain medical and/or surgical care for my child, _____, should an emergency arise. I understand and approve my child to be transported off the center premises for medical emergencies. It is understood that a conscientious effort will be made to locate me and that any expense incurred herein will be accepted by me.

Parent/Guardian/Guardian Signature

Date

I give **Watch Me Grow** Child Development Center permission to take photographs of my child for purposes of labeling my child's belongings, my child's portfolio, and understand that any photographs taken will not be sold or used for marketing purposes for the Center.

Parent/Guardian/Guardian Signature

Date

I understand that my child will not be released from the Center's care to anyone other than the Parent/Guardian or the person listed on the child's emergency card. In the event that my emergency contact will be picking up my child, I understand that this person will need to provide the Center with a photo ID as well as with my family password. The password I have assigned for my family is _____. I also understand that my families' security code to enter the building is confidential and should not be shared with anyone including my emergency contact.

Parent/Guardian/Guardian Signature

Date

I understand that my current tuition is _____. I agree to pay it every month. I understand that my tuition is late after the 5th of the month and that I will be charged a \$50.00 late fee. There is a \$25 charge for returned checks.

I understand that the center closes a 6:30 p.m. I understand that there will be a \$10.00 charge after 6:30 p.m., and (in addition to) \$1.00 per minute for each minute beginning at 6:31p.m.

Parent/Guardian/Guardian Signature

Date

Center Director Signature

Date