



Family Handbook

Welcome to Welcoming Wonder!!! We ask that you read our handbook within a week of enrolling. At Welcoming Wonder we:

Encourage children to reach their full potential by creating hands on experiences and for you to think of us as an extension of your own family.

Nurture the development of the whole child through interactive play and learning activities, exploration both inside and outside of the classroom, and providing constant love and safety for your child.

Engage children in quality activities designed to capture a love for learning, reviewing the things they have learned so that it sticks with them, and continuously engaging our families so that the learning can continue at home.

Challenge children to reach that next stage of development, to be better leaders, and become more independent as they grow older.

Dedicate ourselves to all families to provide the best care possible. We are committed to providing the best early education for your child and to make your experience with us an amazing one.

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History/Vision

Welcoming Wonder combines the structure of a classroom with the comfort of home in our cozy, privately-owned licensed daycare center in South Buffalo. Our vision is to create a progressive center that redesigns childcare around families providing innovative, flexible care options, embraces community partnerships, and honors our phenomenal teachers by treating them the way teachers deserve to be treated. Welcoming Wonder challenges the rigidity and suffocating confines of traditional childcare by breathing new life, a fresh perspective, and unique ideas into the industry. Relationships are the foundation of our success and the direction of our future.

Mission Statement

Welcoming Wonder understands the innate sense of wonder children are born with and encourages growth and development by manifesting this phenomenon in our daily routines and activities. It is our mission to prepare an environment that motivates curiosity and is conducive to discovery and imagination. We encourage and provide the freedom to discover by identifying and respecting each child's sensitivities, rhythms, curiosity, and the natural phases of childhood so wonder can flourish. Our 'Learning by Doing' philosophy engages children in quality activities designed to capture a lifelong love for learning by creating tangible experiences.

Licensing

Welcoming Wonder is licensed by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Our license is posted by the bulletin board by the main entrance as well as the contact information for the licensor assigned to the center. A copy of the OCFS regulations is located on the wall in the lobby. We conduct comprehensive background checks including 28 years of former addresses, staff household members, medical physical examination, fingerprints, and clearances through state agencies for all prospective staff members and volunteers.

Equal Opportunity Childcare Provider and Employer

Welcoming Wonder is proud to be an Equal Opportunity Employer and childcare provider. We do not discriminate against prospective families or employment candidates of any gender, age, race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, or any other legally protected class during consideration for employment or enrollment. We have a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy for discrimination, bullying, or hate speech to, by and/or about any staff, family member, child, or anyone else. Displaying this type of behavior will result in immediate termination of employment for staff and disenrollment for families.

Mandated Reporting

All employees are mandated reporters. It is our duty to report any suspicion of child abuse and/or maltreatment. According to Section 432 Of the NYS Social Service Law, all directors and staff of a childcare center are to report to the New York State Child Abuse and Maltreatment Register (CAMR) whenever there is a reasonable cause to suspect that a

child is being abused or maltreated. The number to report child abuse or maltreatment is **1-800-342-3720**.

Privacy/Confidentiality

It is Welcoming Wonder's policy to restrict access to confidential and sensitive information of our enrolled children and families. Information is only available on a needed for job function basis. We do not share family information with any outside vendors, partners, or companies except for the Office of Children and Family Services, its designees, authorized therapists, Erie County case workers, or other persons authorized by law and/or contractual obligation. Information may be disclosed to a social service district where the child receives a daycare subsidy from the district, if the child has been named in report of alleged child abuse or maltreatment, or as otherwise authorized by law. Confidential and sensitive information about faculty, other parents and/or children will not be shared with parents, as Welcoming Wonder strives to protect everyone's right of privacy. Confidential information includes, but is not limited to: names, addresses, phone numbers, disability information, health related information, or any other legally protected personal identifiers of anyone associated with our program.

Outside of Welcoming Wonder, confidential and sensitive information about a child will only be shared when the parent of the child has given expressed written consent, except where otherwise provided for by law.

Our confidentiality policy protects every child's privacy. Employees of Welcoming Wonder are strictly prohibited from discussing anything about children other than with the family to which they belong without expressed written consent.

If there are any changes in custody, please notify the center immediately. We will need a copy of the custody papers to keep in our secure files.

Curriculum Information

- **Program Philosophy**

Welcoming Wonder focuses on a 'learning by self-discovery' philosophy because we believe learning should be relevant and practical, not passive and theoretical. Our approach to effective teaching includes many hands-on activities related to the teaching subjects.

- **Curriculum**

Welcoming Wonder has invested in Creative Curriculum, the most widely used preschool curriculum in the country. Creative Curriculum is a comprehensive, research-based curriculum that features exploration and discovery as a way of learning, enabling children to develop confidence, creativity, and lifelong critical thinking skills. It is designed to help educators at all levels of experience plan and implement a developmentally appropriate, content-rich program for children with

diverse backgrounds and skill levels. There are 38 research-based objectives in the categories of social-emotional, physical, language, cognitive, literacy, mathematics, science and technology, social studies, the arts, and English language acquisition that define the path teachers take with their students. All components of the Creative Curriculum were designed to fit together to create a seamless day of teaching and help build an engaging and effective program. *The Foundation* offers insight into the most current research and best practices for early childhood education. *The Daily Resources*, including *Teaching Guides*, *Intentional Teaching Cards*, *Mighty Minutes* and *Book Discussion Cards*, help teachers organize and manage their days intentionally and effectively.

Both classrooms in our program has an age-appropriate Creative Curriculum kit that builds children's confidence, creativity, and critical thinking skills through hands-on, project-based investigations. Every child receives individualized instruction plans once intake assessments are completed to establish a benchmark, learning observations are conducted, families are consulted, and categories of strength and opportunities are identified. Lessons taught at our center recognize the diversity of cultures, linguistic abilities, family units, disabilities, and religions that exist throughout the world and teach a sense of awareness, empathy, understanding, and acceptance of these differences.

Child Observation & Assessment Policy

Observing and documenting the developmental condition of children upon initial enrollment into Welcoming Wonder is vital information to use as a benchmark to compare their progress and growth throughout their experience with the program. The information collected during observations and assessment results will be used to guide instruction to support each child in reaching developmental milestones and identifying and adapting to areas of special needs.

- **Data to be Collected** The center will observe the child within 45 days of entering the program and collect information regarding his/her development including any social/emotional concerns, dominant language, preferences, and any suspected or confirmed special needs via the administration of the Ages and Stages Developmental questionnaire for screening. We will use this information to determine the child's basic developmental levels to help define individual learning goals and help identify any potential special needs.
- **Data Collection Procedure** The teachers will document the developmental progress of each child regularly using developmental checklists, classroom observations and anecdotal notes to track developmental progress and adjust learning goals. This information will be confidential to other families and will solely be used by teachers

to meet the individual needs of the children. All developmental checklists, observations and/or anecdotal notes and child's areas of strengths and opportunities will be reviewed and discussed with families during parent teacher conferences.

- **Presentation and Application** The information collected will be presented by teachers to families during Parent Teacher meetings regarding each child's physical wellbeing, health, motor development, social and emotional development, approaches to learning, cognitive and general knowledge, language, communication, and literacy. At the conclusion of each meeting, teachers and families will be able to use the shared knowledge to support cohesive learning and growth both at home and at daycare.
- **Training** All teaching staff will receive annual training in child observation and assessment that includes recognition of developmental delays and linking child observation and assessment to curriculum implementation.

Enrollment

Securing a Slot All families, including flex care families, must complete all paperwork before their first day. Spaces are officially reserved when we receive all the following:

- Complete signed enrollment agreement
- NY State registration card
- CACFP Income form (required by the Department of Health)
- Medical clearance statement from pediatrician
- Vaccination records
- \$40 registration fee per child
- Last weeks' tuition deposit (will be applied to last weeks' tuition with 1 week notice)

DSS/Daycare Assistance

Welcoming Wonder provides childcare services to families that qualify for subsidized daycare through Erie County Department of Social Services. Families eligible for assistance must obtain an approval letter prior to subsidized care being provided.

Families applying for assistance must fill out the Childcare - Payment Questionnaire with the director and provide a copy of an approval letter. Any care provided prior to final approval is the financial responsibility of the parent. Childcare rendered on disallowed days will be the financial responsibility of the parent at the regular tuition rate (see tuition section for rates).

Families with daycare assistance are required to pay the \$40 registration fee per child and the first week's family share as assigned by DSS along with an approval letter, and full enrollment packet before attending unless paying tuition expenses out of pocket until approved. Family share payments are due every week on Monday. If payments are not received by Tuesday at 6pm, a late fee of \$10 will be applied to your account Wednesday

morning. If the account is not current by the following Monday, your child(ren) will be subject to dismissal from the program.

As stated in the DSS Child Care Policy, Procedure, and Billing Manual, "The County will not pay activities fees, registration fees, transportation or any other fees." Families that receive daycare assistance are responsible for any late payment and pickup fees incurred under the terms in the enrollment agreement as stated in this handbook. If a family fee becomes 2 weeks past due, Welcoming Wonder must contact DSS to report the past due balance and tuition coverage may be paused or discontinued.

Supplies to be provided by Parents Please be sure all personal items are clearly marked with your child's first and last name. Welcoming Wonder is not responsible for lost items.

- ✓ Disposable diapers or pull ups, wipes, and diaper cream (if needed)
- ✓ Sippy cups/water bottles
- ✓ 2 complete changes of clothing
- ✓ Sunscreen
- ✓ Change of shoes in winter if boots worn in
- ✓ Any applicable medication
- ✓ Jackets/outerwear
- ✓ Blanket for naptime

Clothing

Each classroom will play both indoors and outdoors daily, weather permitting. Please send your child(ren) dressed in clothing that is weather appropriate and suitable for playing both indoor and out. Sneakers or active shoes (**NO** flip-flops or sandals) are required daily for all walking children. They will still have outside activity time in the winter when the wind-chill temperature is above 32 degrees. We are also required by licensing to conduct monthly fire drills, regardless of the weather. Labeled hats, gloves, winter jacket, snow pants and boots can be kept in your child's assigned cubby.

Sick/Holiday/Vacation Days

Daycare tuition is due weekly on Monday regardless of child's attendance or daycare closures. Daycare tuition is an installment payment like rent, mortgage, and car payments in that the contracted amount is due regardless of attendance. Tuition is not prorated for absences because the attendance slot is secured for the child for the length of the contract regardless of how many days physically spent in the space.

By completing an enrollment agreement, Welcoming Wonder is agreeing to make the requested days available for childcare to each family and the family is agreeing to pay for their agreed days regardless of whether their child attends because the slot is unavailable and off the market to other paying families.

Welcoming Wonder provides families the option to post any unneeded, scheduled spots on Hoppingin to give another family the opportunity to book them. If the dropped spot is booked by another family, a partial tuition credit will be applied to the posting family's

tuition for the following week. If the slot is not booked by another family, no credit will be issued.



HoppingIn - Sign Up in 1 Minute

To get started on HoppingIn, register your children by navigating to <https://app.hoppingin.com/#/sign-up/invite?from=Welcoming+Wonder&type=parent>

You will be taken to a registration page where you can enter your details.

You will receive a confirmation link via email which you will need to click on before you can start utilizing the features of HoppingIn.

After registering, if you need to add more children, you can do so using the dropdown menu on the top right of the homepage and selecting **Children > Add Children** in the menu of your Hopping In dashboard. You can also add another parent using **PARENT INFO > Add parent**, so two of you can share the benefits of HoppingIn.

Then, you can start using Hopping In to either:

- Book spots with your daycare center when you need them (see Flex Care)
- Drop spots you don't need to potentially earn partial tuition credit

Drop Spots to Earn Partial Tuition Credit

If you are an enrolled family, you can earn partial tuition credit dropping daycare spots you don't need and allowing other families to book them. If a spot you drop is booked by another family, you will receive partial tuition credit for the spot.

To drop a spot, log in to app.hoppingin.com, select your **child** and the name of your child's **classroom** from the dropdown menus on the home screen, and then click on **Drop Slots**. This takes you to the Drop Slots screen where you will see a calendar. Click on the dates your child will be absent and select the **Drop Slots** button. If the spot sells, you will receive partial credit off your next week's tuition invoice. The amount at the top left of the screen tells you how much this will be for each full day or half day.

If there are already open spots in my child's classroom, should I bother dropping a spot I won't need?

Yes! Parent initiated drops get credited first if they sell. For example, if a classroom has a capacity of 8 and there are only 6 students attending so the daycare opened 2 spots to book, and then a family with an attending student drops their spot, that family will get credited first if a spot sells.

Which family gets credit first for dropping slots?

Families are credited on a first-come, first-served basis. So, if 2 families drop a spot on the same day and one of the spots sells, the family who dropped the spot first will receive the credit first and so on.

How is the family notified if the spot sells?

As soon as a spot sells, the family who dropped the spot will be notified via email that it sold!

How does reimbursement work?

The partial tuition credit amount will be deducted from the next tuition invoice.

Families receiving daycare assistance should contact the center directly with schedule adjustments and to report absences and not use HoppingIn since we cannot provide tuition credits for tuition paid for by the Department of Social Services.

Hours of Operation

Welcoming Wonder is open Monday-Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm, unless specified by a Holiday. The center will be closed the following days:

- Memorial Day
- Juneteenth
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving and the Friday that follows
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Day

*****Welcoming Wonder will have early 3:00pm dismissal on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Afternoon half day slots will be from 11:30am - 3:00pm on days that we close early.*

In the event one of these holidays falls on a Saturday, the center will be closed in observance the preceding Friday. If the holiday falls on a Sunday, the center will be closed in observance the succeeding Monday.

In addition, there may be occasional professional development days scheduled for teachers to complete training hours required by the Office of Children and Family Services. If/when we need to adjust a closing time or add a closure for training purposes, families will be given at least 30 days written notice. Review the school calendar for all pre-scheduled professional development days.

Care Options

Flexible Part-Time - Created for working families to allow a guaranteed slot for the number of days needed each week. Rate based on age and duration of care. (See tuition schedule)

Benefits

- Flexibility to have care based on your schedule
- Guaranteed slot for your child

Requirements

- Provide schedule in advance to allow for proper staffing, including pick up/drop off times
- Tuition due weekly before childcare service is provided
- Anticipated drop off and pick-up times required for each day

Full-Time - The best value for working families who work regular, Monday-Friday schedules. The weekly tuition rate is due every Monday regardless of attendance.

Benefits

- Guaranteed slot for your child every day of the week

Requirements

- Tuition due weekly, regardless of attendance
- Anticipated drop off and pick-up times required for each day

Flex Care - Flex Care is for enrolled families to book additional, unscheduled days and families that do not need consistent childcare. This is the most flexible care option and is paid per individually booked day. Flex Care days can be booked via HoppingIn anytime 24/7 up until 7:00am the day care is needed and payment is required at the time the slot(s) is booked. An available slot must be selected in the age-appropriate room for each child needing care and payment must be completed for the slot to officially be reserved. If there is a desired day that appears unavailable in HoppingIn, please waitlist that day to receive updates in the event the slot becomes available from families dropping slots. All children must be current with all registration information, including most recent vaccination records, to attend daycare.

- Half day or full day care options available
- Based on classroom availability. Slots are not guaranteed week to week.

Book Spots When You Need Them

You can sign your child up for half or full days when you need them by logging in to app.hoppingin.com, selecting your **child** and the name of your child's **classroom** from the dropdown menu on the home screen, and then click on **Book Spots**.

This takes you to the **Book Spots Screen** where you'll see a calendar. Dates with a green circle around them are available to book. If you see AM or PM for that day, then only half days are available for the morning or afternoon.

Gray dates have no spots available for that day. If a spot isn't available, you can **waitlist it** by selecting the date and clicking Book Spots. You will be notified via email if/when the spot becomes available.

Once you have selected which days you wish to book, simply click on 'Book Spots' to proceed to the payment screen. You will see a summary of your booking before clicking 'Checkout' and completing the transaction.

Tuition Rates

These rates are subject to increases at the discretion of the management team.

	5 Full Days	3 Full Days	2 Full Days	1 Full Day	Half Days
Toddlers	\$320.00	\$225.00	\$150.00	\$75.00	\$55.00
Pre-K (3+)	\$300.00	\$204.00	\$136.00	\$68.00	\$45.00
Drop-in	N/A	N/A	N/A	\$75.00	\$55.00

Half days are considered 5 or less hours per day with AM spots typically between 6:30am - 12:00pm and PM spots between 12:00pm - 6:00pm.

In the event an enrollment schedule changes, the deposit amount on file for the "last week's tuition" must match the child's latest enrollment schedule. There will either be a balance due for the difference or a credit owed depending on if enrollment increases or decreases in frequency. Any balance due must be made current prior to an enrollment schedule change. Enrollment changes are based on slot availability and may not always be possible to accommodate.

Payments

Tuition is due every Monday for care that week. If payment is not received by 6pm on Tuesday, a late fee of \$10 per day will be applied for each day the payment is late.

Any checks returned for non-sufficient funds will have a fee of \$15.00 in addition to any bank fees charged to Welcoming Wonder by the bank (NSF fees vary per bank) applied to the tuition balance owed.

Families with tuition balances more than 2 weeks past due will forfeit their slot(s) until payments are caught up or the space is filled permanently by another family. Additionally, frequently past due accounts will be reviewed for possible disenrollment at the discretion of management.

If bi-weekly, monthly, or quarterly tuition payments are preferred, please speak with the Director to customize a payment arrangement. Bi-weekly and monthly payments are subject to the same late fees and due date rules as weekly payments. Please contact the director or owners via admin Brightwheel message with any payment-related issues.

Tuition Payment Options



Parents can make payments of any amount at any time utilizing any of the verified payment methods that they have added to Brightwheel. The payment flow makes it clear how much you currently owe and how much will be owed once a payment is made.

- 1.) Navigate to **Payments** section on the app
- 2.) Click **Make a Payment**
- 3.) Enter amount you want to pay (default amount will be total balance due)
- 4.) Choose your payment method from the dropdown list
- 5.) Confirm and click **Pay Now**



Go to our Paypal URL and follow the prompts to make a payment

<https://www.paypal.com/paypalme2/firstfriendsdaycare>



We accept all major credit cards. The Director can assist with credit card transactions.



By the entrance in the hallway before the desk on the wall is a black mailbox where cash payments can be deposited. Please put bills in an envelope and write the name of the student the payment is for on the front of the envelope.



Please make checks payable to Welcoming Wonder and write the name of the child or children the payment is for on the memo line. Deposit check payments into the black mailbox located under the computer by the front door.

***Please do not leave payments with teachers or in the classrooms**



Daily updates

Real-time news feed of your child with photos, videos and activities throughout the day.



Photos

Watch your child's day unfold with snapshots delivered to your mobile device.



Stay connected

Stay in touch with your teacher with secure and private direct messaging and strengthen school learning with activities at home.



Digital check-in

Easy digital check-in with personal passcodes. Add approved adults to pick up your child and see when your child is checked in or out.



Paperless billing

Digital payments directly from your bank account or credit/debit card. Paperless invoices and email receipts. Automatic payments available.



Your child's community

Invite grandparents, nannies, and friends - with control over what they can do and see on Brightwheel.

We know how tough it is to be away from your little one, especially in their early years. Brightwheel is an all-in-one app that allows you to stay connected and engaged with your child's development on a whole new level! It's free and only takes a couple minutes to sign up!

Getting started

1. Download the Brightwheel app in the Play Store/App Store to your mobile device.
2. Choose **Create Account, Parent**, and then sign up.
 - If you do not see your child upon account creation, click "Add a child" and enter the 10 digit code provided in the e-mail from Welcoming Wonder.

After Signing Up

1. Enter your info: Tap your profile in the main menu (left side of app) to add a profile photo and update your contact information.
2. Choose a check in code: You can set a custom 4-digit code in My Profile to check-in and check-out of the center.

3. Update your child's info: Tap "edit" on your child's profile to view and update information.
4. Add family or approved pick-ups: You can invite parents, family, and approved pickups within your child's profile. For example, a nanny or friend who has permission to pick-up your child from daycare or a grandparent who would like to see updates and pictures on Brightwheel.

Brightwheel notes:

- There are full schedules of fun, learning and activities all day! We will try our best to keep you informed and updated.
- Giving the children our full attention is our number one priority. As a result, updates and photos will happen with varying frequency.
- Although Brightwheel is an open line of communication between families and teachers, please be respectful of our family time and refrain from using Brightwheel to contact teachers outside of regular business hours. The center is open Monday through Friday from 6:30am to 6:00pm.

Arrival/Departure

The center is open to accept students as early as 6:30am. Children should arrive to daycare ready for the day with proper play clothes, shoes, fresh diaper/pull-up (if applicable), and with any morning hygiene routine already completed. Parents/guardians are required to sign their child(ren) in/out of Brightwheel at the tablet by the main entrance.

- **Checking your child in and out at daycare**
 1. Open the Brightwheel app on your phone and click Check-in/out.
 2. Scan the QR code on the screen.
 3. Use the switch to check your child in or out.
 4. Tap "done" then tap your 4-digit PIN on your phone.

Allow enough time at drop off to share any important information to the staff member welcoming your child. Please inform staff of any changes in routine, sleeping habits, or eating schedule and if someone other than a usual parent or guardian will be picking/dropping off.

Any unrecognized person picking up will be asked for photo I.D. and must be listed as an approved pickup person. Without proper photo I.D. a child **will not** be released from the center. Please make sure your pick-up list and contact information is up to date. If you need to have someone pick your child up unexpectedly, you will need to call the center **AND** email permission to the Director. Anyone picking up a child must be 18 years or older.

Late Pickup Policy

Welcoming Wonder closes each night at 6:00pm. Please allow enough time to pick up your child and collect any belongings before 6:00pm. Please call the center if the estimated time of arrival will be later than 6:00pm. If no contact is made and the child is still at the center at 6:15pm, we will attempt to contact the parents and emergency contacts. If our attempts

to make contact are still unsuccessful by 6:45pm, Child Protective Services will be contacted to take possession of the child(ren).

There is a **\$1.00 per minute per child late fee** for children in the building after 6:00pm. Late fees also apply for children enrolled for half days and are not picked up by the 5-hour half day limit. On Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve, the same late fee policy applies for children picked up after the 3:00pm closing time. Please be courteous and arrive on time. All late fees are collected and distributed to the staff members who stayed after hours.

Absence/ Late Drop offs

If your child will be absent, please notify the Director via Brightwheel, phone, email, or in person as soon as possible but no later than 9am on the day care is scheduled. Although program rates will still apply, you can drop your spot on Hoppingin and potentially receive a credit back if your spot is booked by another family. You will be notified via email if your dropped slot is sold and credit will be applied to your tuition bill for the following week. Once a slot is dropped, it is made available for other families to claim so please only drop a scheduled slot when it will definitely not be needed.

Drop off times are between 6:30am - 9:00am (or 12:00pm for PM half day). Circle times and the classroom structured daily schedule begins at 9:00am and late drop-offs create disruptions for the classmates trying to learn and cause late students to miss important learning content. If drop off will occur at a time outside the typical drop-off window for a rare and valid reason, please notify the center so we can prepare the appropriate number of meals and prepare the classroom materials for the accurate number of children. If a family misses their typical drop-off time and does not communicate a late drop off or absence, the center could drop the spot to make it available for another family to book through Hoppingin.

*****Reminder: If you have a PM Half Day spot, please bring your child in fed and ready to nap. As per State Regulations, every child will receive a rest time of at least 20 minutes. If your child already slept or does not usually nap, bringing them at 2:30 pm when everyone will be up and ready to play will make more sense than bringing them in during nap time.*

Transitions

Transitioning to a new daycare or school, older classroom, or meeting a new teacher can be a stressful and emotional time for both parents and children. It is normal for children to cry during drop off during a transition phase as they acclimate to the new environment, people, and routines. Our teachers are aware some children need extra space during this time, and some need more comfort. We will prioritize Brightwheel communication and updates specifically for families during transitions. Please feel free to message or call the center as much as needed, we are happy to provide any support needed.

******Please see additional information and support resources in the back of this packet about separation and attachment for more information.*

Children must be developmentally prepared for the challenges of a new classroom. The classroom teaching teams will work to prepare them to be ready for the next stage in development. It is important to remember that age and size are not the only components of development. We want to make sure children are physically, emotionally, and mentally prepared for the schedule of the next class before completing a transition.

It is important for children transitioning to the Pre-K room at 3 years old to be potty trained, or at least working toward potty training. Our Toddler Room teachers are prepared to work with families on achieving this milestone.

Toileting /Diapering

Parents will provide diapers/pull-ups, wipes, and any diapering creams used. Gloves are always worn to change each child's diapers and are changed in between children. The surface for changing will be sanitized after each diaper change as well with a diluted bleach solution as regulated by the OCFS. Soiled clothing will be sealed in a bag and placed in your child's cubby to take home and wash. Diapers/toileting occur every two hours or as needed per state regulations.

Potty-Training

Potty-training is a big step for your child in gaining more independence. It requires consistency and lots of effort from both the parents and teachers. When you start potty training at home, notify the teacher of times you have noticed that your child uses their diaper, any cues/hints that your child may use when they have to go, and any other information that will be helpful. Please bring lots of extra clothes and transition the diapers to pull ups/underwear. We encourage families to help us potty train prior to transitioning to the Pre-K room to best prepare them for the environment.

Nap and Rest time

Welcoming Wonder has a rest time between 12:30pm - 2:30pm. During a very busy day, it is important for the children to rest. Each child will be provided a cot to rest on and each can use their own sheets and/or blankets, which parents may provide. Sheets and blankets should be taken home on occasion to be laundered. Please be sure to clearly label your child's sleeping materials.

We realize that not every child naps every day. Children who are not sleeping after 20 minutes of rest time will be offered quiet activities at the table. Children will not be forced to stay on their cots.

Withdrawal from the Program

Upon disenrollment parents/caregivers are required to provide the Director with one full week written notice (Brightwheel or email is preferred). The last weeks' tuition that was paid during initial enrollment will be applied to the final week of enrollment. There will be no refund for unused days if you choose to remove your child without the required written notice.

Belongings must be picked up within 30 days of a child's last day in attendance. Belongings remaining at the center beyond this point will be discarded via donation to Goodwill or a similar organization.

Families leaving the program will be asked to complete an exit interview and checklist to confirm that the property owned by the center is returned to the center, the property owned by the family is returned to the family, tuition is made current, and the family receives any applicable transition paperwork with developmental findings and assessments for the next program they will attend.

Emergency Procedures

As part of OCFS and Fire Department regulations, Welcoming Wonder conducts monthly fire and emergency/evacuation drills. Parents, staff, and children will not be made aware of drill dates or times, as this is the most accurate way to assess effectiveness of fire and emergency evacuation. In the event of a real fire or emergency situation, the director will inform each classroom teacher of the emergency and, if evacuation is required, which of the emergency relocation sites to take the students. All parents/guardians or emergency contact persons will be notified by telephone of the situation and pickup location. As with the sick child pick up policy, children must be picked up within 1 hour of the telephone call.

- **Fire Drills**

During emergency drills the children are escorted to different exit routes, and we record the length of time it takes for the entire building to be safely evacuated. In the event of a fire, Welcoming Wonder is equipped with a brand new (2023) fire alarm system that is hardwired directly to emergency services. There are easily accessible fire extinguishers and a fire inspector visits the center annually to monitor safety compliance.

If you arrive during a fire/emergency drill or real fire or emergency situation, parents may not sign child in or out of the program. Parents must wait until the drill is complete and children have returned to the building to sign their child in to or out of the program. Parents may feel free to wait with the child's class in the designated safe zone outside of the building until the drill is complete.

- **Emergency Closing information**

In the event of a severe storm forecast, we may need to close the center for the safety of the children and staff. This decision will be made the night before the expected storm. The closing will be posted on Brightwheel and announced on Facebook. If the center needs to close during the business day, the staff will contact parents via Brightwheel and phone.

- **Shelter in Place**

In some situations, it may be necessary to remain on-site while taking special precautions to ensure the safety of the children (*i.e. travel ban, chemical spill, severe*

weather, etc.). This may include keeping children in care beyond normal program hours, or short-term restriction of movement in or out of the program. In the event of a real Shelter in Place situation, the Director will call the shelter in place action, secure the children in designated areas of the building away from windows, and notify parents and guardians of the children in attendance of the situation. In the event of the Director not being able to contact the parents/guardians, the Director will contact people on the authorized pick-up list. The center has an additional supply of food and beverages to keep everyone in the building safe until the Shelter in Place has been lifted. We are required to complete two shelter in place drills per year for approximately 15 minutes each. Parents and guardians will be notified in advance of a shelter in place drill. Please note, no one may enter or depart the building during a shelter in place drill and no drop offs or pick ups may occur until the conclusion of the drill.

- **Emergency Evacuation**

If we must evacuate the building for an emergency, we will contact parents immediately and we have two relocation sites that your child can be picked up.

Primary Location Buffalo Fire Station #35 1512 Clinton St Buffalo, NY 14206 Phone number: (716)851-5333	Secondary Location Tim Hortons 647 Bailey Avenue Buffalo NY 14206 Phone Number: (716)381-8466
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Discipline Policy

Welcoming Wonder is committed to helping children with social emotional skills using age-appropriate guidelines for behavior including positive reinforcement, redirection, and reflection.

Staff will explain the rules of Welcoming Wonder to the children throughout the day and to the families to provide consistency. Teachers will also model what the expectations are since children learn best by observing and practicing. Teachers will use positive reinforcement and redirection to redirect unwanted behavior.

- **Positive Reinforcement:** The child will be encouraged when he or she is demonstrating acceptable behavior.
- **Redirection:** The child is redirected to another activity and given an opportunity to try again at another time. Teachers focus on the use of age-appropriate language and facial expressions to explain why a behavior is not acceptable. How that behavior makes others feel, and what they should do differently next time. They are encouraged to practice the preferred behavior before moving on to the next activity.

If the unwanted behavior continues despite implementing the above techniques and a child continues to be disruptive to the learning environment and/or puts others or themselves at risk of getting hurt, teachers will:

- Keep a behavior log for parents to see what the unwanted behavior is, when it is happening, and how often it is happening. Parents are required to review and sign the pages. At this time, parents and teachers should discuss ways to correct the behavior together and share methods that will be practiced at both home and school.
- After 30 days (it takes 21 days to learn a habit) if the behavior has not improved, parents will have a meeting with the Director and discuss a behavior contract. A behavior contract will outline the behavior causing harm, the results of the behavior, and a plan of action to move forward/ correct the behavior.
- If the behavior contract is broken and/or the child's behavior poses a threat to the safety of themselves, the other children, or the staff, Welcoming Wonder management reserves the right to terminate the family from the program. The center will provide the terminated family a list of resources and other prospective programs that may be more equipped and a better fit for them for childcare services.

Nutrition

Welcoming Wonder will provide breakfast, lunch, and a snack daily. Children who arrive before 9:00am will be provided breakfast. If they arrive later than 9:00am, they are expected to have already eaten. Lunch will be served between 11:30am - 12:30pm. Snack is provided after the children wake from naptime.

CACFP Participation

Nutritious meals are prepared by our staff daily to follow CACFP guidelines. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federally funded nutrition education and partial meal reimbursement program administered by the New York State Department of Health (DOH) to help participating providers serve nutritious and safely prepared meals and snacks to children and adults in daycare settings. Included in the Enrollment Packet is an Income Eligibility form to complete so we can remain eligible for the CACFP program and continue to provide the children with healthy meals and balanced meals at no additional cost to our families.

Food from home

In accordance with the CACFP, we ask that you refrain from bringing food from home unless otherwise discussed with the director. This is to minimize the potential allergens to other children and reduce the time required to prepare and serve meals. Exceptions will be made for children with food/drink allergies. Our 4 weeks of nutritionist-approved meals focus on developing healthy, well-balanced eating habits. We provide breakfast, lunch, and snack at no additional cost and the menus are posted on the bulletin board for infants under 12 months and children over 12 months. Any food items brought from home will be served in addition to the scheduled menu item for that day and then discarded.

******Our center is peanut and tree nut free, DO NOT bring food products that contain peanuts and tree nuts.**

For birthdays or holiday celebrations, families may bring in non-food trinkets (stickers, temporary tattoos, books, goodie bags, etc.) for the entire class or store-bought edible treats to pass out as long as all ingredients are listed and the item(s) do not contain any ingredients that are known allergens for children or staff within the center. Please inquire with the director prior to bringing edible store-bought items in for a current list of existing allergens in the program and for the number of children expected to attend on a given day.

Physical Activity

At Welcoming Wonder, our teachers support the social-emotional, health, physical, and fine and gross motor development of children through active play. Multiple daily opportunities are offered for structure and unstructured physical activity both inside and outside, weather permitting.

- Screen time is minimal and only used for educational purposes related to the current lesson plan. The teachers use children's songs to encourage dancing and physical movement in the room daily. Any audio media used is always movement-based and commercial-free.

Obesity Prevention Program

Instilling the importance of healthy living to both the children and their families by providing them with the tools, knowledge, and practice to adopt healthy habits is one of our priorities. We encourage at least 30 minutes of regular physical activity during program hours and offer healthy, balanced, and nutritious meals as recommended and approved by the CACFP and certified nutritionists to do our part in preventing obesity in the children at our program. Our teachers and staff receive training regularly regarding obesity prevention using the latest research and resources available for classroom instruction.

Health and Safety

Allergies

Our center is sensitive to the needs of children and families with food and environmental allergies. Please let the staff know upon enrollment of any life-threatening allergies. You will need an Individualized Healthcare Plan that will need to be completed by your doctor. All students with these allergies must have an allergy action plan on file. Welcoming Wonder supplies healthy and balanced breakfast, lunch, and snack in accordance with CACFP guidelines and with nutritionist approval. By doing so, we control the food items within the center and request that families refrain from bringing outside food items to the center unless discussed with the director. Items brought to the center must be store-bought with a clear list of ingredients. Any food brought to the center that is not within the allergy guidelines will be disposed of. Our center is peanut and tree nut free, so please refrain from bringing in food items that contain these items.

Illness

We ask that you do not bring a sick child to daycare to prevent the spread of illness to staff and other children. Children will be excluded from participation if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease during their health check upon arrival. They will not be permitted to return to the program until they are no longer contagious. Guidelines for determining the contagious period for a specific illness are based on the recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics. Please see chart below for exclusion information specific to a variety of communicable diagnoses.

If your child becomes sick while in daycare, we will call you to pick him/her up within 1 hour of our call. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the emergency contact form until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up. Sick students will remain on a cot or in a chair in the office area, away from the other children until picked up. Failure to respond/communicate with the staff regarding concerns about an ill child and/or failure to pick up an ill child from care may result in late pickup fees assessed after the 1 hour window and/or termination of enrollment.

Upon picking up, you will receive an early dismissal form documenting the reason for early dismissal including symptoms/concerns observed and the steps/time needed to return to daycare.

A child exhibiting any of the following symptoms will need to be picked up:

- The child is too ill to participate in program activities
- The illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children
- Temperature of 100.4 ° or above
- Any fever that is accompanied by: a deep cough, earache or ear drainage, spasms of cough, or sore throat
- Diarrhea or loose bowels which occur 2 or more times in a 24-hour period of time, regardless for the reason for the condition. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume
- Vomiting
- A rash of any kind until diagnosed by a Physician to be harmless.
- Red, runny or matted eyes
- Severe cough

*****Please note, unless written released is obtained by a Physician, your child must be symptom free, non-contagious, and **without medication** for 24 hours before returning to school.*

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify the director. This enables our faculty to keep track of any illnesses that may occur at the center. This information will only be shared with faculty on a "need to know" basis. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the center director, so that everyone in the center may be notified that a case of a communicable disease was confirmed

within the center. Welcoming Wonder will take all measures necessary to protect each child's medical information. You are not required to disclose this information by law, and your continued enrollment will not be based whatsoever on your decision to share, (or not) the reason why your child is absent from school.

If your child is seen by a medical professional and diagnosed with an illness, please follow the below chart for instructions:

Condition	Spread by	Early Symptoms	Time From Exposure to Sickness	Exclude from Care
Rashes & Skin Infections				
Roseola	Coughing, sneezing, sharing cups.	Several days of high fever followed by a rash, runny nose, sore throat.	9-10 days	1-2 days after fever subsides without medication.
Chickenpox	Coughing, sneezing and contact with weeping blisters	Fever and spots with a blister on top of each spot	10-21 days	1 week from rash or until all blisters have dried
Hand, foot, and mouth disease	Coughing, sneezing and poor hand washing.	Fever/flu-like symptoms, rash on feet, palms, & mouth.	3-5 days	Exclude until blisters have dried.
Head Lice	Direct contact with an infested person's hair, and less commonly by contact with contaminated surfaces and objects.	Itchy scalp, especially behind ears. Occasionally scalp infections that require treatment may develop.	N/A	When live bugs are visible. Treatment recommended to kill eggs and lice.
Measles	Coughing and sneezing. Direct contact with infected person. Highly infectious.	Runny nose and eyes, cough, and fever, followed a few days later by a rash.	7-21 days	5 days after the appearance of rash.
Ringworm	Contact with infected skin, bedding, and clothing.	Flat, ring-shaped rash.	4-6 weeks	None if skin can be covered and contact can be avoided.
Rubella	Coughing and sneezing. Direct contact with an infected person.	Fever, swollen neck glands, and a rash on the face, scalp, and body.	14-23 days	Until well and for 7 days from appearance of rash.
Scabies	Contact with infected skin, bedding, and clothing.	Itchy rash.	4-6 weeks (or 1-4 days if second occurrence)	Exclude until the day after appropriate treatment.
Impetigo	Direct contact with infected sores.	Blisters on the body which burst and turn into scabby sores.	Variable	Until sores have dried up or 24 hours after antibiotic treatment has started. Keep all sores on exposed skin covered.
Slapped Cheek	Coughing and sneezing. The virus may be passed from mother to child during pregnancy.	Red cheeks and lace-like rash on body.	4-20 days	Unnecessary unless unwell. Once symptoms develop,

				child is no longer contagious.
Diarrhea & Vomiting Illnesses				
Salmonella	Undercooked food, contaminated water. Direct spread from an infected person or animal.	Stomach pain, fever, nausea, diarrhea and/or vomiting.	6-72 hours	Discuss exclusion of cases and contacts with public health service.
Hepatitis A	Contaminated food or water, direct spread from an infected person.	Nausea, stomach pains, general sickness, jaundice a few days later.	15-50 days	7 days from the onset of jaundice.
Norovirus	Contact with secretions from infected people.	Nausea, diarrhea, and/or vomiting.	1-2 days	Until well & 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhea/vomiting.
Rotavirus	Direct spread from an infected person.	Nausea, diarrhea, and/or vomiting.	1-2 days	Until well & 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhea/vomiting.
Shigella	Contaminated food or water, direct spread from an infected person.	Diarrhea (may be bloody), fever, stomach pain.	12 hours-1 week	Discuss exclusion and contacts with public health service.
E. coli	Contaminated food, water, or unpasteurized milk. Direct contact from an infected person or animal.	Bloody diarrhea, stomach pain. High rate of hospitalization and complications.	2-10 days	Discuss exclusion and contacts with public health service.
Other Infections				
Conjunctivitis	Direct contact with discharge from the eyes or with items contaminated by the discharge.	Irritation and redness of eye(s). Sometimes there is a discharge.	2-10 days (usually 3-4 days)	While there is discharge from the eyes.
Meningococcal Meningitis	Close contact with oral secretions. (Coughing/sneezing)	Unwell, fever, headache, vomiting, sometimes a rash. Urgent treatment is required.	3-7 days	Doctor's note required to return.
Meningitis	Spread through different routes including coughing, sneezing, etc.	Generally unwell, fever, headache, vomiting.	Variable	Doctor's note required to return.
Mumps	Coughing, sneezing, and infected saliva.	Pain in jaw, then swelling in front of ear and fever.	12-25 days	At least 5 days after facial swelling develops or until well.
Respiratory Infections/Viruses				
Coronavirus	Coughing, sneezing, contact with infected person.	Fever, chills, sore throat, difficulty breathing, body aches.	2-14 days	At least 5 days after exposure or positive test.
Influenza	Coughing and sneezing. Direct contact with an infected person.	Sudden fever, cough, sore throat, muscular aches, and headache.	1-4 days (average about 2 days)	Until well.
Streptococcal sore throat	Contact with secretions of a sore throat. (Coughing, sneezing, etc.)	Headache, vomiting, sore throat. An untreated sore throat could lead to rheumatic fever.	1-3 days	Exclude until well and/or has received antibiotic treatment for at least 24 hours.

Whooping cough (Pertussis)	Coughing. Adults and older children can pass the infection to babies.	Runny nose, persistent cough followed by "whoop," vomiting or breathlessness.	5-21 days	Five days after antibiotic or 21 days from onset of illness or until no more coughing, whichever comes first.
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Medical Requirements

Parents are required to provide documentation of their child(ren)'s annual medical examination including immunization records after each pediatrician visit. Parents will be updated quarterly for any missing/late immunizations. Additional medical forms are available at the office.

*******As of June 13, 2019, there is no longer a religious exemption to the requirement that children be vaccinated against measles and other diseases to attend school/childcare.**

- Any child missing 1 or more immunizations because of a medical condition must submit a written statement provided by the child's medical provider stating that the immunizations would be detrimental to the child's health.
- NYS Department of Health recommends that all children be tested for lead at their first and second birthdates. Please provide documentation from your child's pediatrician that this has been completed.

Incident Reports

Anytime a child is injured, or an incident occurs, an incident report will be filled out describing the details of the event. Parents of all children involved in the incident will be notified and asked to sign and date the report description. The center will keep a copy in the child(ren)'s file(s). Please remember, names of children involved must remain confidential and will not be disclosed to either family.

Medical Emergencies

In the event of a medical emergency, the Director/Teacher will call 9-1-1. We will notify the parent/guardian immediately after calling 9-1-1. If a trip to the hospital is necessary, a member of the staff will accompany your child. Your authorization for the center to take any medical measures is deemed necessary as part of this agreement.

Firearms and Weapons Policy

Other than registered law enforcement, at no time is any person permitted to carry any type of firearm, ammunitions, and/or weapon on the Welcoming Wonder premises for any reason. Violation of this policy will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Security

Welcoming Wonder facility is secured with an electronic lock that is set to allow approved families and staff to access the building during business hours with the use of a secured phone app or keypad code.

Cameras

Welcoming Wonder is equipped with security surveillance cameras that are for security and safety purposes with a secure feed that is only accessible to the owners and director.

Parking

For the safety of the children and staff all cars should be parked in the parking lot, with the engine off. New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law 1210a prohibits leaving an automobile running while it is unattended. Please do not leave children unattended in a car while you are in the center.

Visitors

All visitors must sign in at the front desk, with the purpose of their visit and have valid photo I.D. If someone we are not expecting or are unfamiliar with approaches the center, we will direct them to call the number to the center and state the purpose of their presence or leave the premises immediately and proceed accordingly.

Family Communication

Brightwheel is the communication app used to provide families with access to teachers and their child(ren)'s classroom. Parents can message staff during open hours, and receive photos, videos and updates throughout the day via personal mobile device. The tablet by the main entrance can be used to check children in/out of the program with the barcode on the screen. Parents & Guardians must sign their child(ren) in and out of the center using Brightwheel. Attendance information including time stamps and pickup/drop-off person is important documentation for our licensing requirements and we appreciate your cooperation.

- Staff will update the app in their downtime. To ensure proper supervision, some message responses may be delayed. In case of an emergency, call the center to contact the Director.
- Note: Open hours are 6:30am- 6:00pm. Messages sent outside of business hours may not be received or responded to by teachers until the next business day during business hours. Any immediate updates or changes for the following day must be communicated to the staff before 6:00pm.

Welcoming Wonder Center has a Facebook page and a Google page in which information about the center is shared as well.

Our bulletin board in the hallway is changed and updated regularly. Please review them periodically. The information we will share may include:

- Upcoming events
- Monthly menus
- Urgent announcements or updates
- Volunteer opportunities
- Art projects

Parent Resources

We have many parent resources available in the office. We offer information regarding availability of childcare assistance, parenting resources, pamphlets from the department of health, telephone numbers for needed assistance, and much more, so please do not hesitate to ask!

Babysitting Policy

The center does not encourage staff members to babysit past or present client's children at any time, however, if a staff member and a client choose to enter a babysitting relationship both parties agree to hold the center harmless and the center will not be responsible for anything that occurs within the context of a private babysitting arrangement. If a family disenrolls from the center and procures childcare services from an employee of Welcoming Wonder, the center may impose a \$2,500 finder's fee which must be paid by the family within 10 business days of receiving request from the center.

We cannot make exceptions to these policies, so please feel free to contact the center Director for clarification if needed. Welcoming Wonder reserves the right to change these policies and rates, when necessary. It is the Parents responsibility to maintain the most current copy of the Family Handbook, and additional copies are available at the office.

We thank you for being part of the Welcoming Wonder Family and look forward to providing the best learning experience for your child(ren), developing relationships with families, and being the support that you need. Always feel free to ask questions, voice concerns, and utilize our resources.

Supporting Materials

- Separation and attachment support
 - <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/ages-stages/toddler/Pages/Soothing-Your-Childs-Separation-Anxiety.aspx>
 - <https://www.stanfordchildrens.org/en/topic/default?id=separation-anxiety-disorder-90-P02582>

- DSS information
 - www2.erie.gov/socialservices

- Biting
 - <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/understanding-and-responding-children-who-bite>
 - <https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/stop-biting.html>

- CACFP Information
 - <https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/cacfp/>
 - <https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program>

- Other Resources
 - <http://www2.erie.gov/socialservices/index.php?q=daycare>
 - <https://wnychildren.org/>
 - <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/joyful-parenting/201708/25-simple-self-care-tools-parents>
 - <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/for-families>