



TowerLight Child Care
An Intergenerational
Program

2026 Parent Handbook

Updated 11-28-25

Welcome to TowerLight Child Care Center!

We are delighted to welcome you and your family to TowerLight Child Care Center. Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing, and high-quality educational environment for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years.

We understand that leaving your child in the care of others is a big decision. Our highly trained and dedicated educators are committed to nurturing and supporting your child in a warm, engaging, and safe environment. TowerLight has eight classrooms thoughtfully designed to meet the individual needs of each child, taking into consideration age, maturity, and developmental stage.

This family handbook outlines what you can expect from TowerLight and what we may ask of you in return. We hope it answers many of your questions. If any additional questions arise after reading it, please do not hesitate to contact our Director of Childcare.

Contact Information:

TowerLight Child Care Center
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We look forward to partnering with your family and making your child's time at TowerLight both enriching and joyful.

Welcome to our TowerLight family!

Michelle Jirik
Director of Intergenerational Child Care

TowerLight Child Care Philosophy

Your child is very special to all of us who have chosen to be educators. Our goal is to provide the best environment to support your child's growth and development. Our program considers key aspects of early childhood development and aims to nurture the whole child.

We offer activities designed to engage the seven learning styles—visual, verbal, aural, tactile, logical, social, and solitary—so every child can learn in the ways that suit them best. Thank you for allowing us to be partners with you on this journey of childhood. Life is a journey—come celebrate it with us!

Our Core Beliefs About Early Childhood Development

1. Positive Self-Image Leads to Healthier, Happier Children

Children should see themselves as successful learners. They must feel safe to take risks, make mistakes, and learn from them. We plan success-oriented activities, provide positive guidance, and interact with children at their level, giving encouragement and reinforcement every day.

2. Healthy Relationships Build Respect for Community

Children learn to relate respectfully to peers and adults. We foster politeness, good manners, and healthy interactions daily. Our intergenerational programming encourages children to form meaningful relationships across generations, including regular, engaging interactions with our "Grandfriends."

3. Physical and Mental Health Support Growth and Happiness

Children who are healthy can grow, explore, and learn optimally. We provide nutritious meals, adequate rest, and daily opportunities for indoor and outdoor physical activity to support both body and mind.

4. Curiosity and Understanding Promote Acceptance of Differences

Children who expand their understanding of the world learn to appreciate diversity. We teach knowledge and respect for many cultures and communities, fostering empathy and helping children bridge gaps through understanding rather than fear.

5. Curiosity and Learning Lead to Creativity and Education

Children are naturally curious. We encourage critical thinking, problem-solving, and exploration through reading, asking questions, observing, and trying new activities. Our curriculum is designed to engage children's creativity while promoting meaningful learning experiences.

6. Independence Prepares Children for Life

Childhood is a journey toward adulthood. Children need opportunities to make decisions and develop self-discipline. We support their explorations while encouraging self-guided and self-directed learning, helping them grow in independence and confidence.

TowerLight Child Care Programming

Licensure and Staff Ratios

TowerLight Child Care Center is licensed by the State of Minnesota through the Department of Childcare, Youth, and Family (DCYF). We comply with all state regulations for childcare centers. Copies of the relevant statutes (9503) and Rule 3 guidelines are available in the Director's office. Parents may contact the Department of Human Services at 651-431-6015 with any questions or concerns.

Our current licensed capacity is 124 children, distributed as follows:

<u>Age Group</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Age Range</u>	<u>Staff Ratio</u>
<u>Infants</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>6 weeks - 18 months</u>	<u>1 teacher: 4 infants</u>
<u>Toddlers</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>18 - 33 months</u>	<u>1 teacher: 7 toddlers</u>
<u>Young Preschool</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>31/33 months - 4 years</u>	<u>1 teacher: 10 children</u>
<u>Preschool</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>4 years</u>	<u>1 teacher: 10 children</u>
<u>Pre-Kindergarten</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>4 - 5 years</u>	<u>1 teacher: 10 children</u>

Intergenerational Programming

Our whole-child approach includes a unique intergenerational program, bringing children and seniors together in a stimulating, co-learning environment. Through shared activities such as storytelling, games, and creative projects, children form meaningful connections with older adults, while seniors gain a renewed sense of purpose. For children without nearby grandparents, these interactions can be especially impactful.

Daily intergenerational activities may include:

- Rock-a-bye Baby
- Storytime
- Music and movement
- Playground activities
- Gardening and arts & crafts
- Special events and games
- MacPhail Lifelong Music Program
- Exercise programs
- Field trips

Conferences and Classroom Transitions

Children are placed in classrooms based on age, developmental milestones, and space availability, in compliance with DHS licensing requirements. When it is time for your child to transition to the next classroom, you will be notified by your child's teacher or the childcare director.

TowerLight offers biannual parent-teacher conferences to discuss your child's development. Conferences may also be scheduled at any time during the year, as needed.

Outdoor Play

We plan to take children outside daily, weather permitting. Parents are responsible for providing season-appropriate clothing such as jackets, hats, mittens, boots, and snow pants for winter months. Please ensure all items are labeled with your child's name.

Nap/Rest Time

All children will participate in a rest/nap period each day. Children will be required to rest quietly for 30 minutes on a cot or in a crib, depending on their age. After 30 minutes of quiet rest time, a child that does not sleep will be offered quiet activities while the rest of the children finish napping.

- Naps and rest time are provided in a quiet area physically separated from children engaged in activities that will not disrupt a napping or resting child. All cots and cribs are placed so there are clear aisles and unimpeded access for both children and adults on at least one side of each cot or crib. Cots and cribs must be placed directly on the floor and cannot be stacked when in use.
- Separate bedding is provided for each cot and crib and cleaned weekly or when soiled. Each child (over the age of 1 year) may provide a blanket during nap/rest time. Each blanket will be sent home at the end of the week for launder.
- Each infant is provided with an individual crib. The equipment is safe and made of sturdy construction that conforms to federal crib standards under code of Federal regulations, title 16, part 1219 for full-size cribs. Monthly crib inspections are completed, and an annual recall inspection notice is completed.
- All staff receive annual training on the reduction of sudden unexpected infant death pursuant to MN statutes section 245A.1453
- All infant children will be placed on their back, unless we have documentation from the infant's physician directing an alternative sleeping position. We will use the Physician's Directive for infant sleep position form and will remain posted on wall above crib.
- Any infant who independently rolls onto their stomach, after being placed on back, may be allowed to remain sleeping if the infant is over the age of six months or we have a signed statement from parent indication that the infant regularly rolls over at home.
- Each infant will be placed in a crib on a firm mattress with a fitted sheet appropriate to the mattress size. Nothing will be placed in crib except for infant pacifier.
- If an infant falls asleep before being placed in crib, we will move infant to crib as soon as possible and will be keep in sight until the infant is placed in crib. If an infant falls asleep while being held, we will consider the supervision needs of the other children in care when determining how long to hold the infant before placing in crib. The sleeping infant must not be in a position where the airway may be blocked or anything covering the face.
- Riley Crossing does not swaddle infants.

A Sample Schedule of A Child's Day

7:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Arrival/Learning center exploration
8:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.	Breakfast
9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.	Circle Time
9:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	Learning Centers/Art/Science/small group
10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.	Gym/Outdoor/Indoor
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Story Time/Music
11:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.	Lunch Time
12:00 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Reading/Quiet Time preparation/Bathroom breaks
12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	Nap time/Quiet Time
3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.	Snack Time
3:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	Intergenerational Activities
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	Outdoor Play
5:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.	Going Home/Free Play

*This is a general schedule and activities, and the schedule could vary per classroom.
Infant's schedules are based on their individual needs. Toddler diapers are changed to a minimum of three (3) times each day.*

Nutrition

TowerLight provides **two meals and one snack** each day as part of your tuition. Mealtimes vary by classroom; please refer to your child's classroom schedule for specific times for **breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snack**.

If a child arrives **after** a scheduled mealtime, parents are responsible for providing that meal.

Parents of infants are encouraged to discuss their child's individual feeding needs with their infant classroom teacher. TowerLight provides **rice cereal, infant baby food, fruits, and vegetables** for infants.

Monthly menus are posted in the center. If your child requires **dietary modifications** for medical, cultural, or personal reasons, please discuss these needs with your child's teacher. Parents may supply meals as needed in accordance with the posted menu.

Food Allergies and Allergy Awareness

TowerLight Child Care is an **allergy-aware center**. For children with known food allergies, avoiding exposure to allergens is essential to preventing reactions.

Families of children with allergies must provide:

- A completed **Allergy Action Plan** from the child's health consultant
- All required medications (e.g., EpiPen, antihistamines)

These must be on file **before** the child begins attending TowerLight.

TowerLight will provide an **alternative lunch option** when a menu item contains a known allergen. For **breakfast and snack**, families are asked to provide substitutions when allergens are listed on the posted menu.

Current Year - 2026`

<u>Age served</u>	<u>Fulltime</u>	<u>4 days</u>	<u>3 days</u>	<u>2 days</u>
<u>Infants</u>	<u>550.00</u>	<u>441.00</u>	<u>365.00</u>	<u>240.00</u>
<u>Toddlers</u>	<u>475.00</u>	<u>378.00</u>	<u>354.00</u>	<u>229.00</u>
<u>Preschool</u>	<u>420.00</u>	<u>336.00</u>	<u>316.00</u>	<u>216.00</u>

Families with a second child will receive 10% off full-time tuition of the oldest child. Ask for information on discounts for Fairview, Park Nicollet, or Ebenezer employees.

Days and Hours of Operation

The Center is open **Mondays through Fridays: Hours: 7:00-5:30 pm**

Days Center is Closed

Below are ALL paid days. You are still required to pay normal fees on the weeks these closed days occur.

Major Holidays which include:

- **New Year's Day**
- **Good Friday**
- **Memorial Day**
- **Juneteenth Day**
- **July 4th**
- **Labor Day**
- **Thanksgiving Day**
- **Day after Thanksgiving**
- **Christmas Eve**
- **Christmas Day**

(If a holiday falls on the weekend, the center will be closed on the Friday before the holiday or the Monday after the holiday.)

Staff Education Days

TWO days per calendar year

The childcare staff are required to obtain a certain percentage of continuing education hours each year. We will be closed TWO days per calendar year to allow staff training.

2026 Staff Training Closed Dates: Monday, February 16 and Monday, October 12.

Enrollment Procedures

Before a child is enrolled in our childcare program, the parent(s) should meet with the Director to visit the facility, meet the teachers, and discuss the needs of both the child and the family.

When the child is accepted into the program a one-time registration fee of \$300.00 per child or \$400.00 per family is paid. These fees are non-refundable and are used to hold a spot for your child in our program.

These forms must be on file before a child's first day in the childcare center.

- Enrollment Form – Client information form
- Immunizations Form (must be signed by physician if under 16 months of age)
- Health care Summary (must be signed by physician and returned within 30 days of enrollment)
- Individual Behavior Form
- Emergency Form

Health Record Information

Reexamination: A new health record/summary is required for children already admitted to the program. At a minimum, an updated report of physical examination signed by your child's source of health care is required at least annually for children under 24 months of age, and whenever a child 24 months or older advances to an older age category. Immunizations- TowerLight requires all children to have immunizations form before the child starts and an updated form every time your children receive new shots.

Personal Items Brought to Childcare

We ask that you leave your child's toys at home or in your car. We have many exciting toys to engage with at the center. We cannot be responsible for lost or broken toys brought from home. Toys will only be allowed with permission from the classroom teacher for sharing days or special events.

TowerLight Policies and Procedures

10 Hour Rule

Upon enrolling your child at TowerLight, you agree that you will not have your child/ren in attendance more than 10 hours per day. This is for the benefit of you and your child's relationship. Due to regulations by the state, if children are here on a consistent bases over 10 hours, a fee of \$1.00 per minute will be applied to the account.

Fees and Payments

All families are required to sign up for ProCare ACH autopayments. Payments are withdrawn on Tuesdays and applied to the account. If you are on childcare assistance the appropriate authorization must be current and any copays due are on the first of each month. A late fee of \$10 per week will be assessed for all accounts not paid on time. If payment is not received within 5 days of the due date, your child will be disenrolled until which time all payments and late fees are current. Your child's tuition will not be adjusted should your child not attend on a regularly scheduled day. The parent or guardian will pay any legal fees incurred while collecting a debt. There is a \$30.00 returned check fee for all return payments.

Late Fees: Our Center closes sharply at 5:30 pm. A late fee of \$2.00 per minute per child will be charged to your account every minute past 5:31 pm a staff has stayed with your child. If you are late on a continuous basis, we will need to discuss if our center can meet your childcare needs.

Late and Emergency Pick-up procedures

We understand that any number of unforeseen things can prevent a timely pick-up. Parents are required to phone the center if they are delayed picking up their child. Any late fees must be paid immediately and placed in the tuition box.

If prior notification of a late pick-up has not taken place, the following will occur:

- Ten (10) minutes after scheduled pick-up time, the parent(s) will be called. If they cannot be reached, the emergency contact person will be phoned. The child will remain with a staff person until the child is picked up. Late fees will be assessed upon pick-up.
- If no contact has been made regarding pickup within a Half (1/2) hour after closing time, the police will be notified. A staff member will remain with the child until a Social Services representative arrives to get your child. You must then contact the local authorities to pick up your child. Staff members are forbidden from taking a

child home. In the situation of an abandoned child or one who is chronically late to pick their child up will be the cause for termination of childcare services. A child will not be released to a person not listed on the authorized pick-up list unless the childcare director receives written authorization from the responsible parent. A driver's license or other form of picture ID must be presented before a child is released to anyone other than a parent or the regular responsible adult.

Vacation Credit

Each child will receive 1 week per calendar year that they can use as their vacation week if they are not in attendance. Notify the Director to use the vacation allowance 2 weeks before the week. Vacation credit can only be used Monday-Friday and cannot split between weeks. Children must be enrolled 6 months before requesting the vacation credit. If families use a Leave of Absence during the year, the vacation credit will be used for month.

Transportation and Sign-in

Transportation to TowerLight is the responsibility of the parents. You must accompany your child to and from the childcare classroom each day. You must sign your child in and out each time you drop off and pick them up. Responsibility of your child transfers to our staff members once your child has been signed up and accompanied to their appropriate classroom. Staff members are never allowed to transport their children in their vehicles.

Schedule Change Policy

Families experiencing a temporary need for a schedule change may dis-enroll their child and will need to reserve a spot back into the Center. To reserve a spot back into the Center Registration Procedure will be followed and the registration fee, first week's tuition and enrollment date is required.

Currently enrolled parents wishing to secure a spot in our infant program, provided we have space, may do so by following the Registration Procedure and paying their newborns registration fee.

Insurance Coverage

TowerLight carries liability insurance for our children and staff while they are in attendance, whether they are in the building or on a field trip.

Parent Involvement

Parental involvement is a particularly important part of our program. Parents and children working together with Teachers is an important element in a quality childcare program. Visitation is encouraged by parents. A solid relationship with TL employees at the school, built on mutual trust and respect, is key to making your childcare arrangement work well for everyone. Keep these tips in mind as you begin to build your relationship.

- ✓ Keep the lines of communication open at all times. Let your teacher or director know if there is something going on in your child's life that may be affecting the behavior.
- ✓ Be aware of program policies and honor them. Respect drop-off and pick up times.
- ✓ Get involved with the program. The more you participate, the stronger the relationship will be.

There are bound to be certain topics or situations that are difficult to talk about with your child's teacher. Here are a few helpful tips when discussing difficult issues:

- ✓ Raise issues when they first develop.
- ✓ Avoid confronting TL staff in front of other parents or children. Set up phone conference or person conference.
- ✓ Think about what you want to discuss ahead of time.
- ✓ Be specific about your concerns, give examples.
- ✓ Never discuss a problem when you are feeling angry or not in control of your emotions.
- ✓ Remember that conflicts are a normal part of a relationship. They usually can be resolved when both parties see the other's view and are willing to compromise.

Communication Tools

ProCare

TowerLight childcare uses ProCare as their billing and communication application. Families will receive an invitation, once enrolled, for the system. Teachers will use this as a way of communicating daily activities and updates. Each Monday, families will receive a billing email letting them know how much will be withdrawn on the weekly ACH.

Monthly Newsletters/emails go out to families giving information about upcoming events and classroom information,

Parents are responsible to notify the Center regarding absences, schedule changes including drop off or pick up times that is different than their regular schedule.

Telephone calls to your child's classrooms during naptime is an effective way to communicate updates/concerns or schedule changes. Call the Center at (952) 920-8112 and ask for your child's classroom. All communication to staff regarding your child should be in person, by email or via Center telephone. Non-work-related communication with staff must be done when staff are off the clock.

E-mail is available to the director. Michelle.jirik@fairview.org

Formal conferences are offered twice each year to discuss your child's development and any concerns that you may have regarding your child. A written assessment will be provided to the parents after 6 months of enrollment at the conference time.

If you wish to discuss concerns regarding your child at any time, please schedule a time to meet with your child's teacher or the center's Director. Drop off times and Pick times are very busy and a difficult time for staff to accommodate questions and concerns.

TowerLight will obtain written parental permission from parents before each occasion of research, experimental procedures or public relations activity involving a child.

Open Door Policy

Parents are welcome and encouraged to visit at any time.

Special Needs

Parents and guardians are responsible for informing the center if their child has any special medical conditions, developmental needs, or allergies so we can provide appropriate care and support.

If your child has a special need and meets one or more of the following criteria, additional documentation will be required:

- Is eligible for case management through the state and has an Individual Service Plan (ISP)
- Is receiving services through the local school district and has an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)
- Has been evaluated by a licensed physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or consulting psychologist and determined to have a condition related to physical, social, or emotional development

Families will be asked to share a copy of the ISP and/or IEP with us. In addition, state licensing regulations require the creation of an Individualized Child Care Plan (ICCP). This plan is completed with the family and approved by the child's licensed health care provider.

The ICCP must be:

- Signed by the parent/guardian and the child's licensed health care provider
- Kept on file at the center
- Reviewed and updated annually, or sooner if needs change

If your child's special needs require staff to learn a new medical or care-related skill, families may be asked to help arrange appropriate training for staff.

Child Allergy Policy

If your child has a food or environmental allergy, TowerLight Child Care will work closely with your family to create an individualized allergy action plan based on the type and severity of the allergy.

For children requiring an EpiPen, TowerLight requires that:

- An EpiPen provided by the parent is kept on-site at all times
- The EpiPen is not expired and replaced before its expiration date
- The child's individualized allergy plan is signed by a licensed health care provider

If an allergic reaction requires the use of an EpiPen while your child is in attendance, staff will follow these steps:

1. A trained staff member will administer the EpiPen.
2. 911 will be called immediately after administration.
3. The parents/guardians will be notified.

Procedures concerning children: Illness

TowerLight Child Care follows the health guidelines of the State of Minnesota. For the safety and well-being of all children, the child who has any of the following symptoms must remain at home:

Fever - Axillary temperature of 100 degrees or higher

Respiratory Symptoms - Difficult or rapid breathing or severe coughing: Child makes a high-pitched croupy cough or whooping sign while coughing.

COVID- We will follow the MDH guidelines for childcare for exclusion.

Diarrhea - An increased number of abnormally loose stools in the previous 24 hrs., more than 2 loose stools in a 2-hour period, or 3 or more abnormally loose stools since admission that day, abdominal pain, or vomiting.

Sore Throat - When fever or swollen glands are present.

Skin Problems - Rashes on the skin, which are undiagnosed, itching, weeping, or draining.

Appearance/Behavior - If a child looks or acts differently. Or is showing any of the following signs: unusually tired, unexplained lethargy, pale, irritable and not able to participate in regular daily activities or require more care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in care.

Vomiting - If a child vomits while in our care.

Unusual Color - Eyes or skin yellow or pale / stool-gray or white urine-dark tea colored.

These symptoms can mean hepatitis and should be evaluated by a physician.

Children must be **fever free for a full 24 hours** prior to returning to childcare. Please do not give your child medicine to mask symptoms while at childcare. If they have any of the above symptoms the evening before your child must remain at home the following day.

Please call the center as soon as possible to let us know your child will not be attending childcare that day. You are still responsible for payment even when your child is ill.

Exclusion of Ill Child

The MN Department of Health requires that we exclude a child from an illness or condition that the Commissioner of Health determines to be contagious, and a licensed health care provider determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others.

We will follow the exclusion guidelines listed below which are taken from *INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS AND SCHOOLS: INFORMATION FOR DIRECTORS, CAREGIVERS, AND PARENTS OR GUARDIANS*, prepared by Hennepin County Community Health Department, Epidemiology and Environmental Health. **We must exclude** a child from any of the following conditions:

<u>Chicken pox</u>	Until all the blisters have dried into scabs and no new blisters or sores have started within the last 24 hours; usually by day 6 after the rash began.
Eye drainage	Until 24 hours after treatment begins when purulent (pus) drainage and/or fever or eye pain is present, or a medical exam indicates that a child is not infectious and may return.
Diarrhea	Until diarrhea stops or a medical exam indicates that it is not due to a communicable disease. Diarrhea is defined as an increased number of stools compared with a person's normal pattern, along with decreased stool form and/or watery, bloody, or mucus-containing stools.
Mouth Sores with Drooling	Until a medical exam indicates the child is not contagious and may return or until the sores have healed.
Fever	<u>Axillary</u> (armpit) temperature: 100 ⁰ F or higher; or Oral temperature: 101 ⁰ F or higher. Measure temperature before giving medications to reduce fever.
Impetigo	Until treated with antibiotics for 24 hours and sores are drying or improving.
Lice (head)	Until the first treatment is completed and no live lice are seen.
Rash	Until a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not those of a communicable disease that requires exclusion (i.e., chickenpox, measles, roseola, rubella, shingles, strep throat).
Respiratory Infections (Viral)	Until the child is without a fever for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in normal activities. No exclusion for other mild respiratory infections without fever as long as a child can participate comfortably.
Ringworm (skin & scalp)	Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
Scabies	Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
Signs/Symptoms of Possible Severe Illness	Unusually tired, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing, or other unusual signs for the child; should be evaluated by the child's health care provider to rule out severe illness.
Streptococcal Sore Throat	15-minute test results will not be allowed. You must have the 24-hour test results. Until 24 hours after antibiotic treatment begins and the child is without fever for 24 hours.
Vomiting	Until vomiting stops for 24 hours. Vomiting is defined as two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours.

- Who is not able to participate in childcare program activities with reasonable comfort, including outdoor play.
- Who requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in care.

When a child in our care has been medically diagnosed with a communicable disease, we will follow the appropriate health authorities' recommendations to provide information to

parents/guardians of all exposed children. The childcare program will notify the parents/guardians of exposed children on the same day or within 24 hours by posting a written notice by each classroom.

Parents/guardians are required by State laws and our center policies to inform the center within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends/ holidays, if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease.

First Aid

In the event of any injury or illness, trained staff will administer first aid. If staff decide this is an emergency, 911 will be contacted to provide emergency first aid. If necessary, the emergency medical service will transport your child to a medical facility as designated by emergency services. A parent/guardian or alternate listed on the Emergency Card will be contacted as soon as possible. An attempt to contact your child's source of health care may also be made. **Staff will not transport children in the event of an emergency.**

Care of Ill or Injured Children

If your child becomes ill or injured while in our care, you or your designated alternate will be contacted to pick up your child immediately. Until you arrive, your child will be monitored, and comfort measures provided according to program procedures. If staff think it necessary, the child's health care provider will be contacted.

If your child is sent home for any reason during the day, they automatically cannot return the entire next day. You cannot bring a sick child in for a part day when they appear better. 24 hours means an entire next day, not 1:00 to 1:00.

Parents are encouraged to secure back-up care for the times when your child will not be allowed at childcare because of illness. If your child becomes sick while at daycare, one parent will be notified to make arrangements for their child to be picked up. Your child will then be provided with a blanket and cot while they wait to be picked up. You will have one hour from the time of the call to pick your child up.

If neither parent can be reached, we will contact the child's emergency contact to pick up the child. If at any time we feel that a child requires medical attention, your child will be transported via ambulance to Methodist Hospital. Parents are responsible for any bills incurred during their child's visit.

In the event of an epidemic, such as the flu or other illness that is becoming hard to manage for our staff and children, we reserve the right to close for a 24-hour period for cleaning, recuperation, and sanitation of the childcare.

Notification of Communicable Diseases

The director will notify all parents regarding any communicable diseases going through the center. A notification will be posted outside the classroom that is affected, and all parents will receive an information sheet regarding any communicable disease. The Director will also notify the proper health authorities if any suspected case of reportable diseases.

Procedure concerning an Injured Child

All qualified staff are trained in CPR and First aid. If your child receives a minor injury, the teacher will wash the wound with soap and water and apply a bandage. Any further treatment must be done at home or the doctor's office. All incidents and accidents must be kept in a log for review by the Department of Human Services.

Medications

- **Prescription medications** will only be given with **written authorization** from the child's licensed health care provider (i.e., prescription label) and parent/guardian. Please let your child's teacher know about the medication your child is taking at home, too. Staff will help you look for side effects from the medication and let you know if any are seen.
- Please **complete** the Medication Permission Form if your child needs medication while in our care. We suggest keeping a blank copy of this form at home so it can be completed before coming to the center. This will allow you time to speak to your child's teacher about the medication.
- Prescription medications will be given only as prescribed by a licensed health care provider (physician, physician assistant, dentist, or certified nurse practitioner). The prescription must be current, in the original container and may be given only to the child whose name appears on the label. This includes over the counter dietary supplements.
- Please ask the pharmacy to **split the medication into 2 containers** -- one for home and one for the center. Bring a copy of the drug information sheet that comes with the medication or write the common side effects on the Medication Permission Form.

Nebulizer medications that are in single dose containers must be brought to the center in the original container with a current, clearly written prescription label on the container. The prescription label must indicate the child's name, prescribing licensed health care provider's name, name of the medication, medication strength, amount to be given, how often to give and what it is to be mixed with, if applicable.

For medications which are to be given long term we will need an Individual Child Care Plan signed by you and the child's licensed health care provider. This includes as needed over the counter medication such as Tylenol (acetaminophen) and Ibuprofen used for a child with a history of febrile seizures. See the previous section on Special Needs.

Over the Counter Medication:

We will give **over the counter** medications with written parental permission and instructions as long as the child is over 2 years of age, and the medication lists the dosage needed for the child's age. If they are under 2 years of age, we will need written permission and instructions from a licensed health care provider and the parent/guardian.

These products must be used according to the manufacturer's instructions. If the dosage or instructions differ from the manufacturer's instructions, written instructions from a licensed health care provider will be needed.

Diaper rash products, insect repellents and sunscreens are an exception, and need written parental approval only. Powder and cornstarch preparations will not be used because they may promote or hide infections and can be inhaled.

Containers and ointments must be labeled with child's full first and last name and date. Outdated medications will not be given. All medications must have a legible label on the container. Your medication container will be returned to you when it is completed.

Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect - Mandated Reporter

All childcare staff are required by Minnesota law to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect to the authorities. All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at 651-461-6600.

Severe Weather Days

We reserve the right to call a snow day if the neighboring school districts close because of heavy snow and unsafe conditions, TowerLight Child Care will also be closed for the day. The reason is that if the roads are unsafe, the emergency vehicles cannot effectively service our area, thus making travel conditions unsafe for your child and our staff. Please pay close attention on winter storm days if it is announced the schools are closing early. You will be notified through the ProCare app to come to pick up your child so that all families can arrive safely at home before the storm hits. This will not affect your tuition, as these are unavoidable days.

Storms

In the event of a weather emergency such as a tornado or sever storm warning, the staff will follow the evacuation procedures listed below. Severe weather and tornado drills are held once per month from March through October.

All children in the center will be escorted to the inner wall main corridor (This has no windows), all doors to the rooms will be closed and children will remain in a crouched position, protecting their heads until all clear notice is given by the Director or teacher in charge. Instructions will be followed according to the weather instructions given by **830 WCCO A.M.** radio.

Fire

In the event there is a fire at our center the procedure will be as follows. We have a working fire system that will automatically close fire doors as soon as the alarm goes off. Once this happens Infants, Toddlers and Preschoolers will be evacuated out to the far fence of the playground until all clear sign is given. Infants will be placed in evacuation cribs and wheeled out the doors and out the Toddler room doors to the playground.

Fire drills are held unannounced once per month and are logged by the director.

Safety and Security

Parents wishing to enter childcare must have an authorized code to unlock the door; in addition, they must also sign their children in and out each day. All fire doors are armed with alarms and are locked from the outside. They will only open in the event there is a fire and must be used as an escape route.

Children will only be released to the parent or guardian listed in the emergency form. All others must present a valid picture ID and have a written note from the parent authorizing this. Children will never be released to anyone appearing under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Public Health Nurse

The Department of Human Services requires us to have a Public Health Nurse. The nurse will be going over our health procedures and policies and will be available for questions you may have regarding your child's health records.

Health Consultation Services

Our program receives monthly health consultation services from MN Child Care Health Consultants.

Food for Celebrations and Parties

If food is brought from home to share with other children (i.e., for special occasions) it must be commercially prepared and packaged. It is becoming more and more common to have food allergies in our center. To help our children be safe, please avoid anything that is peanut related when sharing snacks with your child's class.

Seat Belts and Transportation

When planned activities at our program (i.e., field trips) require transportation, the methods used will be in accordance with the Department of Human Services regulations and Minnesota law. Minnesota law requires federally approved appropriate car seats and seat belts to be used to transport children, unless they are in a school bus.

Field Trips

Parents will be notified ahead of time and asked to sign a permission slip for their child to go.

Guidance and Discipline

Our goals in guiding young children are to help them feel confident, develop self-discipline, and learn to consider the needs and feelings of others. To support these goals, we follow the guidelines below:

1. We prepare the environment for success.

We ensure that children have a variety of developmentally appropriate activities and enough materials to minimize conflicts and keep children engaged.

2. We communicate rules clearly and positively.

Expectations are stated in simple, positive language. When a child behaves inappropriately, we focus on what they *should* do rather than dwelling on what they should not have done. We also make a point to acknowledge and reinforce cooperative, kind behavior.

3. We explain reasons and guide them through redirection.

Children are given simple explanations for why certain behaviors are expected. Redirection is our first step. If needed, a child may be briefly removed from a situation to help them regain control. We do **not** hit, shame, or threaten a child.

4. We offer choices when real choices exist.

When appropriate, children are encouraged to make decisions to build independence and confidence.

5. We avoid comparisons between children.

We do not use one child's behavior as a model for another. Cooperation is emphasized, and competition is minimized.

6. We support emotional expression.

Children are encouraged to express all feelings—including frustration and anger—in safe and healthy ways. Staff help children identify (or "label") their emotions and learn constructive ways to manage them.

7. We respond promptly to aggressive behavior.

At TowerLight, the safety of all children is our top priority. Aggressive behavior includes actions that cause injury to another child, a teacher, or oneself (e.g., hitting, pinching, biting). While we understand that some of these behaviors can be developmentally typical, they require immediate attention and prevention strategies.

- If a child causes an injury that results in an **open wound**, TowerLight reserves the right to send the child home to ensure a safe environment for all children.

Separation From the Group

Separation from the group is used only as a last resort and for short periods. If a child is separated due to aggressive behavior:

- A written notice will be sent home to inform the parent/guardian.
- All separations are documented in a classroom log.
- If a child is separated **more than five times in one week**, the teacher will contact the family to schedule a meeting to discuss the behavior and develop a plan for support and improvement.

Bitting Policy

Bitting is one of the most challenging behaviors in group childcare. It can happen suddenly, is difficult to anticipate, and often brings strong emotional reactions from the biter, the victim, families, and staff.

For many toddlers, biting is a **developmentally typical and temporary** behavior. Young children often bite to communicate needs, express frustration, gain possession of an object, or respond to overwhelming feelings. Over time, with guidance and support, they learn more appropriate ways to express themselves.

For other children, biting can be more **persistent and complex**, influenced by factors such as teething, stress, frustration, limited language skills, environmental changes, or a desire for control. Because biting affects everyone involved, it is important to have a clear, consistent plan. TowerLight's approach is based on guidance from childcare experts and best practices.

Before Bitting Occurs

To help families understand our approach:

1. The topic of biting is discussed with all families during enrollment.
2. A written copy of the biting policy is included in every enrollment packet.

When a Child Is Bitten

For the Child Who Bit:

1. The child who bit is removed from the situation calmly and without strong emotion. Staff use simple, clear words such as, *“Biting is not okay—it hurts.”* The focus is kept on the injured child, not the biter.
2. The child is reminded, in developmentally appropriate language, why biting is not acceptable.
Examples:
 - o *“I know you want the truck, but I can’t let you hurt him.”*
 - o *“That hurts Johnny. He is sad.”*
3. The child is redirected to another activity.
4. An accident report is completed, and the parents of the biter are notified.

For the Victim:

1. The victim is removed from the situation.
2. Staff comfort and reassure the child.
3. Appropriate first aid is administered.
4. An accident report is completed, and the parents of the victim are notified.

If Biting Continues

1. Classroom staff meet regularly with the director for guidance, support, and strategy planning.
2. Every incident—including attempted bites—is documented, noting the time, location, participants, staff present, and surrounding circumstances.
3. All parents in the classroom are informed that a biting issue is occurring and provided an overview of the procedures being followed.
4. **Children who tend to bite are closely “shadowed”:**
 - o Staff work to prevent situations that may lead to biting.
 - o Children are taught alternative ways to express needs and frustration.
 - o The classroom environment and routine may be adapted to better meet the child’s needs.
5. **Children who tend to be bitten are also shadowed:**
 - o Staff work to prevent repeated incidents.
 - o Children are taught simple, assertive phrases such as “No!” or “Don’t hurt me!”
6. Staff and parents of both the biter and frequent victims work together as partners to share information and develop a consistent strategy.
7. A conference is scheduled with the parents of the child who is biting to create a plan of action, with follow-up conversations as needed.
8. If developmentally appropriate, an early classroom transition may be considered to offer a new environment and reduce biting behavior.
9. Parents will be prepared for the possibility that the child may need to be temporarily removed from care.
 - o **Removal for the day will occur if:**
 - The bite causes an **open wound** to another child or teacher, **or**
 - The child has **three biting incidents in one day**.
 - o Parents will be called to pick up the child, who may return the following day.
10. If it is determined to be in the best interest of the child, the classroom, and the center, **temporary termination of enrollment** may occur for the duration of the biting stage. Written notice will be provided prior to this action.

Confidentiality

A child's records are available to the parents at any time. If for any reason, an organization or individual requests access to the children's file for statistical or research purposes, parents will be notified first and asked to sign a release.

We may at times take pictures of your children for art projects and display them within the center, if you do not want pictures of your children displayed, please let the Director know.

Toilet Training and Diapers

If your child is still in diapers, we ask that you, the parent, provide them. The easiest way is to send a package with your child's name on them on the first day of care. We will let you know a couple of days before we need a new supply.

When a child is ready to start toilet training the parent should discuss a plan with the child's teacher. Any questions regarding your child's readiness should be addressed to the child's teacher.

When it is determined that your child should begin, please do not send them in pull-ups, although this is easier, it sends the wrong message to the child and ultimately leads to regression. We recommend that the parents try it over a weekend, and if they are fairly successful the parents should bring lots of extra pairs of clothing and a note regarding methods used at home. Children are never punished or shamed when accidents occur, we will focus on your child's successes.

Presence of Pets

We would like to reserve the option of having classroom pets. Loving and caring for these pets are a good life-learning lesson. We will limit our pets to fish or other small animals. A notice will go out to parents when pets are obtained in our classrooms.

We may at times bring in educational programs that may include animals such as farm animals, zoo animals etc., parents will be notified of these programs ahead of time.

Grievance Procedure for Parents

If for any reason a parent wishes to file a complaint, he/she is to present it in writing to the Director explaining the nature of the complaint. The Director will act upon the complaint within one week and return a written reply to the parent. A copy will also be placed in the child's file. You may talk with the Director at any time regarding issues you may have.

If the parent disagrees with the outcome, he/she may then submit the complaint in writing to the Authorized Agent from Ebenezer, who will then investigate the issue and work towards a resolve for all parties. The parents will be given a written reply within a month. All communication will be placed in the child's file.

Termination of Care

1 month written notice must be given to the Director when parents wish to terminate care. Failure to comply will result in the assessment of a fee equal to 1 month of their child's current tuition. Should a position be terminated by the center, the parents will be provided with a written notice of two (2) weeks before the center terminates care. The two weeks' notice may be waived at TowerLight option if abandonment or chronic dangerous behavior is a concern.

Infant Sleep Positions

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development and the Minnesota SID Center at Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota recommend back sleeping for babies.

Licensed providers must place an infant in a crib to sleep. Minnesota law requires that licensed providers place infants to sleep in a crib, directly on a firm mattress, and must position the infant on his/her back for sleep unless the provider has a signed directive from a parent or legal guardian for an alternate sleep position. Car seats, swings, couches, the floor on a blanket, etc. are not acceptable as an alternative sleep position. **Placing babies on their back to sleep is the No. 1 way to reduce the risk of SUIDS.**

Supply Policy

Infants:

- Diapers
- Bottles (3 labeled with first/last name)- if receiving formula
- Breast Milk in ready serve bottles (labeled first/last name and date expressed)
- 3 changes of clothes (please no hoods on clothing)
- Diaper ointment
- Sleep Sack

Toddlers:

- Diapers
- Blanket for nap time
- 3 changes of clothes
- Outside clothing
- Family photo

Preschool:

- Blanket for nap
- 2 changes of clothes
- Outside clothing
- Family photo

It is important that you label all of your child's belongings that come to the center. A notice will be sent home when your child's supplies are low.

Blankets and pillows will be sent home weekly (usually Friday) for cleaning and should be brought back the next attendance day for your child.

Children who wear diapers must have diapers covered by clothing (i.e. shorts cover diapers if in a dress)

Research Opportunities

TowerLight will have written parental permission before any research, experimental procedure, or public relations activity involving children happens at TowerLight or TowerLight Senior Campus.

TowerLight Child Care Emergency Plan

TowerLight has developed an emergency plan for the following situations:

1. In an event of an Intruder, our teachers have been trained to Shelter in place as the initial safety process. Teachers access, as needed, during the situation to provide the safest environment for the children and themselves. Drills on these safety measures take place throughout the year and under the category of “Safety Drills” to prevent any concern with our children.
2. Evacuation and Relocation: If for any reasons, TowerLight childcare needed to evacuate and relocate, our new location would be building at 3801 Wooddale Ave St. Louis Park. Once children are safely placed at new location, families will be communicated by Email and Phone on the situation and when/how to pick up their child. Assessment will be made, and families will be informed, if TowerLight childcare services will continue during the “Continuing Operating” process.

Peace time Emergency situations:

TowerLight will follow any federal or state peace time emergency orders put into place. We are a service offered to Tier 1 employees and will remain open for these families as long as it remains safe. TowerLight will work with the Health Consultant, MDH, and DHS to implement new policies and procedures needed during this time periods. Families will be communicated, by written notification, of any changes in procedures or policies.

Notes: