

STEPPING STONES



**PRESCHOOL &
ENRICHMENT
CENTER**

Parent Handbook

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Hartford, SD, 57033
1-605-528-3358

www.steppingstonespreschoolcenter.com

Mission

It is the position of the Preschool to foster a nurturing environment of open-ended exploration, curiosity, and growth for children, teachers, and parents that deepens our connections to our community and the world around us. Activities will be developmentally appropriate and varied for the children. All classes will focus on skills that will better prepare your child or children for the world.

Welcome

We are delighted that your child will be attending Stepping Stones Preschool & Enrichment Center. We are very proud of our program and look forward to having your family become part of our preschool family. Stepping Stones is a place where adults and children grow and learn together in a nurturing and creative environment. Our values reflect our belief that children learn best in a rich environment that focuses on the integration of cognitive and creative ways of thinking and learning. Our staff is truly committed to working in partnership with you and your child to provide for the highest quality early childhood experience. I look forward to getting to know both you and your child and sharing a rewarding preschool experience.

Sincerely,

Melissa Atkins
Preschool Director

melissa@steppingstonespreschoolcenter.com

Qualifications of Teacher

All of our staff is carefully chosen based on the special qualities, experience and talents that they have to offer to the children in our program. We also believe that it is important for our teaching staff to be dedicated learners themselves, and we provide numerous opportunities for continuing education and professional development throughout the year.

All of our teachers go through an interview process with the Director and our current teaching staff. They spend time in a classroom for a working interview as well. We do check references and perform thorough background checks for all staff. They are also CPR and First Aid trained. We offer continuing professional development in the form of training, conferences, mentoring, and classes.

Lead teachers meet the SD licensing requirements and often exceed the necessary qualifications. All have taken formal early childhood education or child development classes, and many hold degrees in early childhood education or a related field.

All staff members receive a criminal background check, Sex Offender Check, and a Child Abuse background Check. These must be cleared before any employee is permitted to work with any children. No staff member will be allowed on the property if they have a conviction of a felony, a sex offense, a crime of violence, or a crime against children. . All suspected child abuse or neglect cases will be reported to DSS.

Stepping Stones Preschool & Enrichment Center is a mandatory reporter of child abuse and child neglect. As such, all employees and volunteers of Stepping Stones who come into contact with the children at Stepping Stones Preschool & Enrichment Center must be trained in all of the following:

- Child abuse and neglect law.
- How to identify children who have been abused or neglected.
- The process for reporting known or suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If there are suspicions of child abuse or neglect, the director needs to be informed immediately. They in turn will inform DSS or law enforcement. All staff members will be required to sign a statement that defines and identifies reporting and the procedures for child abuse and neglect.

If a staff member is investigated in a child abuse or neglect case or allegation, they will be removed from the property and continued employment will be reevaluated upon completion of investigation of incident or allegation.

Each and every employee's primary focus is the happiness and well being of our students. Staff members come with a basic knowledge of early childhood development..

Staff qualifications include:

- Child care workers must be 18 years of age
- Child care workers are supervised by owner /operator, director, assistant director, or teacher
- Secondary child care workers must be at least 14 years of age

- o Secondary child care worker must work under direct and constant supervision of an adult
- o Person who plans and implements the program must have an appropriate degree and experience
- o Volunteers used to fill staff member positions will meet the requirements of the position
- o No staff member or volunteer will have a substantiated report of child abuse and neglect
- o No staff member or volunteer will have a felony conviction on record within the last five years.

The Director is responsible for planning and implementing the preschool program and for the supervising of all staff. This Director is at least 18 years old, and will not have on record a substantiated report of child abuse or neglect. The Director will also have one of the following:

- (1) Have a bachelor's degree in the field of education or human development and at least two years of experience in a child care setting;
- (2) Have a bachelor's degree in elementary education and at least two years of experience in a child care setting if the center cares for preschool-aged children;
- (3) Have a bachelor's degree in elementary education if the center cares for school-aged children only;
- (4) Have a bachelor's degree in the field of early childhood education;
- (5) Have an associate of arts degree in the field of early childhood development;
- (6) Be certified as a child development associate;
- (7) Have a prekindergarten teacher endorsement;
- (8) Hold certification in a Montessori teacher training program and have at least one year of experience in Montessori school or child care setting; or
- (9) Have a child development technician diploma.

The department may waive the requirements of this section if an individual met the requirements of this section before September 29, 2004.

Shaken Baby syndrome - Shaken **baby syndrome** is caused by the brain moving back and forth inside the skull and being bumped, bruised or twisted. Stepping Stones employees, or substitutes who provides care and supervision to children under age 5, to be trained in recognizing what shaken baby syndrome is, how it is caused, what the symptoms of the syndrome are, and how to prevent shaken baby.

Food and allergic reactions – Stepping Stones requires staff to be trained in the area of food and allergic reactions. We require all parents to complete an enrollment application and if there are allergies, to list those allergies. When a parent lists any allergy, they are required to complete a document that lists the allergy, what the allergy is related to (food, pets, etc); what the signs and symptoms of distress are should the child have an allergic reaction; and what the process is for assisting the child should they be in distress due to a reaction. Each staff person who is associated with this child (teacher, cook, etc) is provided an overview of the situation, an overview of the allergy document and the instructions for preventing a reaction; and instructions for handling a reaction.

Disposal of bio-contaminants – Stepping Stones requires all staff to be trained in the area of Universal/Standard Precautions. Universal/Standard Precautions are guidelines issued to prevent disease transmission for people in all walks of life, including child care providers. The Universal/Standard Precautions require persons to have a barrier between any infectious substance and the workers skin, eyes, nose, and mouth. Stepping Stones requires any care provider, employee, or substitute who provides care and supervision to children to follow the universal/standard precautions recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in handling any fluid that might contain blood or other body fluids. Universal/Standard Precautions require treating all blood and fluids that may contain blood or blood products as potentially infectious.

Facility and Ownership Changes- The Director is responsible for overall administration. The Director supervises all of the teaching staff, trains and supervises staff on the Reggio & project approach curriculum, organizes teacher trainings and professional development opportunities, and sets up enrichment classes and registration for them. The Director is responsible for all preschool billing and record keeping and is the person to contact if you have any questions about financial issues or any forms that are in your child's records. The Director is responsible for reporting any changes which may affect the ability to comply with licensing rules. This includes: new program location, building renovations or remodeling, suspected in-house child abuse or neglect, ownership change, employee felony convictions, or a new director. The Director also handles the scheduling duties for staff schedules and coverage for staff on leave and is available to discuss any issues or concerns that you may have.

Daily Class Schedule

The daily schedule consists of Open Play Time (Table activities and centers), Circle Time (Stories, Math Development, Sharing Time, Helpers, Songs, etc.), Art, Outdoor Play/Large Motor Development, Science activities (exploring nature, comparing different substances, watching different animals/insects, etc), Language Development (retelling stories, letter recognition, writing, letter formation), Math Development (sequencing short stories, one-to-one correspondence, number recognition, patterns, and counting), Snack and Story time.

Toddler Room	Preschool Room	Pre-K Room
6:30-9:00 Child led discovery 9:00-9:30 Scheduled diaper change 9:30-10:00 Snack 10:00-11:00 Teacher guided learning 11:00-11:45 Outside/Gross motor 11:45-12:00 Music 12:00-12:15 Scheduled diaper change 12:15-1:00 Lunch 1:00-3:00 Rest 3:00-3:15 Scheduled diaper change 3:15-3:45 Snack 3:45-6:00 Child led play/Outside play	6:30-8:30 Child led discovery 8:30-8:45 Family meeting 8:45-9:00 Snack 9:00-10:00 Outside/Gross motor 10:00-12:00 Teacher guided learning 12:00-1:00 Lunch 1:00-3:00 Rest/ Quiet exploration 3:00-3:30 Snack 3:30-6:00 Child led play/Outside play	6:30-8:30 Child led discovery 8:30-8:45 Family meeting 8:45-9:00 Snack 9:00-10:00 Teacher guided learning 10:00-11:00 Outside/Gross Motor 11:00-12:00 Teacher guided learning 12:00-1:00 Lunch 1:00-3:00 Rest/ Quiet exploration 3:00-3:30 Snack 3:30-6:00 Child led play/Outside play

Class Days & Times

Monday/Wednesday/Friday Class – 8:30 – 11:30
 Tuesday/Thursday Class – 8:30 – 11:30
 Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday Class – 8:30-11:30
 Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/ Friday Class – 8:30-11:30

Full Day Options (includes preschool) – 630am – 6 pm

Before Care & After Care Options
 We will follow the West Central School District Calendar

Tuition

Tuition is due on the first day of the month for part-time classes and on the first of the week for full day classes. A late fee of \$5.00 will be added to your account if your payment is not made by 6pm Monday of your billing plan . If we receive any returned checks, the direct result to that person will be cash only payments for the remainder of the school year. There will also be a \$30.00 return check fee. No exceptions. Payments can be made directly through our Bright Wheels App, or by cash or check in person.

Those enrolled in full day classes, you will be charged a weekly minimum rate depending on the contract you choose. Switching back and forth between rates is not permitted. If your child comes on non scheduled days, you will be assessed drop in fees. You will be billed your weekly minimum fee on Monday of the current week and then any hours over your scheduled hours will be billed at an hourly rate and added to your next week's payment which will be due the following Monday. Fees are subject to change to reflect the current economic climate and parents will be notified prior to changes.

Fees are as follows:

	2- ½ Days (Mornings only)	2 Full Days	3- ½ Days (Mornings only)	3 Full Days	5 -½ Days (Mornings only)	5 Full Days
Toddler (6m-3y)	NA	2 Days per week is \$110.00/wk	NA	3 Days per week is \$140.00/wk	NA	5 Days per Week is \$185.00/wk.
Preschool	\$200.00/ month	2 Days per week is \$95.00/wk	\$250.00/ month	3 Days per week is \$125.00/wk	\$350.00/ month	5 Days per Week is \$170.00/wk
School Age Summer Only	NA	2 Days per week is \$70.00/wk		3 Days per week is \$100/wk		5 Days per week is \$145.00/wk

-Drop- In: \$5.00 hour at directors discretion-

<p>Before & After School \$80.00/wk (includes WC early-out and late start) After School Only \$65.00/wk (includes WC early out) Before School Only \$45.00/wk (includes WC late start)</p> <p>No school days due to WC being closed will be an additional charge: Before & after-\$20/Day, After only-\$25/Day, Before only- \$30/Day</p> <p>***In Town Bussing is at the expense of the parents. It will need to be set up with the Transportation Department at West Central***</p>	<p>For 5, 3 & 2 Day enrollment options only (Excluding school kids): All parents must request within 1 week prior to using.</p> <p>5 Day Enrollment per week each child will get 8 vacation days per year 3 Day Enrollment per week each child will get 6 vacation days year 2 Day Enrollment per week each child will get 4 vacation days per year</p> <p>***Vacation days start at the beginning of the preschool year and are not carried over***</p>
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All registration fees required by Stepping Stones are nonrefundable. To receive a refund on tuition paid, the center must receive a two week notification. Failure to do so results in ineligibility for a refund. Refunds will be prorated based on tuition fees and time care was provided. Sick and Vacation days are not included in refund eligibility.

Classroom Centers

The children will be participating in an open-ended form of learning through "Learning Centers" which teach through playing, experimenting, and discovering. Each day the children will be given time to explore the centers with the staff's guidance. The centers are as follows: Library, Writing Table, Manipulative/Blocks Center, Dramatic Play, Art Table, Easels, Sensory Table, Puzzles & Games, and Math Center, Puppets, Writing on White Board, and Science.

Curriculum

Our educational vision is based upon the emergent curriculum principles of the world-renowned schools for young children in Reggio Emilia, Italy. As a school community, we are committed to values based on an image of children as curious, competent and capable of co-constructing knowledge. Our journey begins as our staff asks questions, listens to children, collaborates with them and documents their work. As children discover and explore, they may work on investigations that may last a few days to a few months. All projects must be meaningful to them and their world. By creating a classroom environment that allows for open-ended learning and discovery, we give children a chance to express themselves and understand their world. We also believe that learning is a cooperative venture which includes other children, their teachers, their families and our larger community. Literacy, math, social studies, science, music and arts are all emphasized through a framework of hands-on experiences.

- Large motor skills are developed through activities such as running, skipping, and creative movements. Large motor skills will be developed outside when the weather permits or in the gym.
- Fine motor skills and hand-eye coordination are promoted through finger plays, puzzles, manipulative toys, cutting, writing, and art activities.
- Sensory experiences are provided by comparisons of similarities and differences, colors, shapes, weight, and sizes. These are seen throughout the classroom at the art table, easel, sensory table, and writing table.
- Language development, number concepts, and reading readiness (letter recognition, letter/sound relationship) will also be explored.
- Field trips are taken and different community helpers come for visits periodically.

Since play is the work of children, play is the heart of our preschool curriculum. Your child is naturally creative and will have an opportunity to satisfy this characteristic.

Before & After Care Program

Transportation will be provided to and from West Central Hartford Elementary School through in town busing. Please contact West Central to set up your bussing and complete your registration. Stepping Stones is permitted a bus stop on the grounds of a certain number of kids enrolled in the bussing program. If that requirement is not met transportation will be the responsibility of the parents. The after school program will consist of a homework time, and an activity or play time A snack will be provided for after care students.

Self-Help Skills

There are some skills that necessitate parents assistance at home.

- Putting on and taking off shoes, jackets, boots, hats and mittens. (We will assist with tying, zipping, snapping, etc.)
- Toileting skills should be handled by your child with the exception of a snap or zipper. **Your child MUST be potty trained in order to attend Preschool or Pre-k. Potty training will occur in the 2 year old classroom.**
- Cooperating during clean up time.
- All children will be required to wash hands before and after snack and after bathroom.

Discipline

Our policy is to redirect a child to a more appropriate behavior, activity or language. "Time out" will be enforced for issue(s) that involve injuries to another student(s). If the child has continued issues with behavioral problems, a parent-teacher conference and action plan will be adapted for the child. Failure to insure safety for all children due to an ongoing problem and a failed action plan, the child will be expelled from Stepping Stones. Discipline involving humiliation, frightening a child, or allowing peers to administer discipline is strictly prohibited.

Aggressive behaviors that create an unsafe environment to themselves, other children, or teachers will result in the child being removed from the classroom. Parents will be called immediately for your child to be picked up for the remaining of the day. Multiple occurrences may result in termination of care.

Late Pick-Up Fees

In the event that a parent or caregiver arrives late (after 6pm according to our bright wheel app) , there will be a late fee of \$50 for any portion of the first fifteen minutes and \$1 per minute thereafter. After 30 minutes have passed, Child Protective Services will be contacted. The Director will notify you of the prior week's charges on Monday, and payment is due on Friday. We can often charge the account on file for your convenience and will do so in case of late payment of late fees.

Beginning Preschool

We are eager for all of our children to make a successful adjustment to preschool. Talk to your child about school and all of the great things to look forward to. Tell him or her about the wonderful things that they are going to explore. Children often enjoy being able to go to the store for a lunchbox and school bag before school begins. We will offer opportunities to visit the school with your child before she/he starts. Tell your child the teacher's name and remind her/him that you will be coming to pick her/him up at the end of the day.

Separation is natural and affects different children in different ways. One child runs into the classroom and never looks back. Another may take several weeks to feel comfortable in a new setting. Some children make an easy transition in the beginning and show separation difficulties later in the year. All situations are normal, and we are well prepared to help your child in a way that is best for him or her.

Parents also separate from their children in different ways. It will be helpful to both you and your child if you say goodbye happily and reassure your child that he or she is going to have a wonderful day. Your show of confidence will enable your child to do that. If you need to check on your child's progress during the day, please feel free to do so!

Saying Goodbye

When leaving your child at school, it is helpful to direct him/her to an activity in the room or to a teacher. When it is time to leave, give him/her a clear goodbye. The teachers will take over and engage your child and start developing a relationship of trust and comfort. Many children have difficulty separating and feel anxious either about their new environment. The separation may well have the same effect on you! It is important to have a positive attitude to convey the expectation that your child will have a wonderful time at preschool.

Forms Needed Before your Child's First Day

We cannot accept responsibility for your child if these forms are not complete and current!

Registration Form:

- This physical health and immunization
- Emergency Contact and Pick-Up Form
- Registration Form and Fee
- Media Permissions

- Permission Slip
- Authorization for Child's Emergency Medical Treatment
- Signed Handbook Form

These forms must be updated annually. For your child's safety, if there is a change in address, home or work phone numbers, emergency contacts, authorized pick-up persons or caregiver, please notify us in writing immediately.

Cleaning and Sanitation

We firmly believe that regular cleaning decreases the spread of illnesses and germs. General housekeeping chores are part of the teachers' daily routine. Toys are sanitized often. A room should never be left "messy" at the end of the school day. Teachers also take care of cleaning, vacuuming and mopping on a nightly basis. They also clean windows, rugs/carpets, and the floors as needed.

Bottle Handling

Parents are always welcome and invited to bottle or breastfeed their child at the center. Children will be held while feeding. Bottles of breast milk and formula will be labeled with the child's full name and the date that it was brought in. Bottles of formula are brought in daily and stored in the refrigerator upon arrival if prepared. Powdered formula will be mixed according to the label and for the amount that the child usually drinks. Any formula left in the bottle will be placed in the refrigerator immediately. This bottle may be warmed up once more and used for the next feeding. Any remaining formula that is not used on this second feeding will be discarded immediately. Bottles of breast milk will be prepared for the amount the child usually drinks. Breast milk will not be placed back in the refrigerator after it has been warmed up. Breast milk may be stored up to 4 hours at room temperature and can be re-warmed a total of two times. Any breast milk that not used after 4 hours will be discarded. Bottles of breast milk and formula will be warmed in water and never in a microwave. Bottles of breast milk and formula if unused will be sent home with parents upon departure. Bottles will be rinsed and sent home with parents for sanitizing each evening.

Absences and Illnesses

Any physical or emotional disturbances, which might affect the child's attitude toward the children, activities, or teacher, should be brought to the Teacher's attention before a class session by note, phone call, or personal contact.

If your child is not feeling well, or is running a fever, please do NOT send him/her to school.

Children with fevers above 100.5, severe coughs, severe nasal drainage, or fatigue should not attend school until symptoms have resolved. Children should be fever-free without medication (Tylenol or other fever reducing medications) for 24 hours before returning to school. If a Child has a temp of 100.5 parents will be contacted and the child will need to be picked up immediately.

Please contact the Teacher immediately if your child comes down with a contagious disease. A child's place cannot be filled during an absence due to vacation or illness; therefore there will be no allowance or refund of tuition due to absences. Please call to let us know your child will be absent. Please leave a message on voicemail if no one answers the phone or message on Brightwheel.

Childhood Communicable Diseases

	Incubation:	Transmission:	Signs/Symptoms:	School Policy:
"Pink Eye" Conjunctivitis	Usually brief	While signs/symptoms are present – eye to hand to eye	Bloodshot eyes, tearing, irritation, puffy eyelids, mucous and pus like drainage (crusted eye lid), light sensitivity.	Child is to stay home until drainage stops or after 24 hours of appropriate antibiotic treatment.

Ringworm	Scalp: 10-14 days Body: 4-10 days	As long as lesions are present and living spores persist on contamination materials.	Scalp: small pimple spreading to leave scaly patches or temporary baldness. Body: flat, spreading ring-shaped lesions.	Child is to stay home as long as lesions are present and living spores persist.
Impetigo	4-10 days	As long as lesions continue to drain. Self-infection may continue for the period of nasal colonization or duration of active lesions.	Superficial, vesicular pustules and encrusted stages.	Child is to stay home during draining stages of infection.
Chicken Pox	2-3 weeks or 13-17 days	As long as 5 days before eruption and not more than 6 days after last eruption.	Elevated temperature and rash.	Child may return to preschool when all lesions are completely crusted over.
Strep Throat	2-5 days	During acute phase of respiratory illness.	Sore throat, difficulty swallowing, swollen glands (Strep may affect the heart if left untreated.)	Child may return to preschool after antibiotic therapy for at least 24 hours.
"Head Lice" Pediculosis	Usually eggs of lice hatch in a week	As long as lice or eggs remain alive on the infested person or in clothing. Lice may be passed by sharing hats and combs, as well as from children's coats hung close together or lice passed into upholstery and carpet.	Head scratching – especially behind ears and near the hairline. Adult lice and nymphs are very small 1-2mm long, gray-tan in color. Eggs are about 1/2 the size and attach firmly to the hair shaft.	It is recommended that the child be treated via his/her family physician. The child may return to preschool following treatment. When two children in the same age group are identified, a notice to all parents in that age group will be sent, encouraging them to be especially observant for the presence of infection. Remember to inform any member of the board or the teacher if your child gets Head Lice, as preventative action will have to be taken at the school.
Influenza	Symptoms start 1-4 days after the virus enters the body. Adults can pass the virus for 3-7 days after symptoms start. Children can be contagious for longer than 7 days after symptoms start. It can spread 1 day before they get sick!	Very Contagious! Transmitted by inhaling particles from an infected person coughing, sneezing, or speaking.	Comes on suddenly; may include fever, headache, tiredness (possibly extreme), dry cough, sore throat, nasal congestion, or body aches.	Child may return to school after 5 days have passed since the last vomiting or diarrhea, and there is no fever above 100*.
Fifth Disease (Erythema Infectiosum)	Variable: 4-20 days to development of rash	Most cases are most contagious before onset of illness.	Fever, intense flush on face, followed by lacy rash on arms and legs, rash on inner surfaces, fingers, toes, trunk and buttocks	Child may attend school once the rash is determined to be Fifth Disease.
Mumps	While infection runs its course, incubation usually will last 12-26 days with 18 days being common.	Usually by direct contact with respiratory secretions for 1-2 days prior to onset until 9 days after.	Swollen glands in the face and neck, fever, headache, earache.	Providing there are no complications, child may return when signs/symptoms subside.
Measles (Rubeola)	8-12 days	Highly contagious while infected person is present. Infection may occur from "breathing in particles of the measles virus that an infected person has expelled while coughing, sneezing or simply talking"	Fever, dry cough, runny nose; red watery eyes; tiny white spots appear inside of cheeks; dull, red slightly raised rash beginning on forehead and behind ears and spreads downward.	Children who have not been immunized (up to 15 months) must stay home for 12 days from exposure to a child with measles or 4 days after onset of breakout.
Rubella (German Measles)	12-21 days, usually 18 days	Infection occurs with the spread of rubella virus particles. Person is contagious one week before	Slight fever, swollen glands, small, flat reddish pink spots on face, rash spreads	Children who have not been immunized (up to 15 months) must stay home for 21 days after exposure or 5 days after onset of rash.

3-day Measles)		rash appears and up to 5-7 days after.	to body and sometimes to roof of the mouth.	
Non-genital herpes Simples (Cold sores/fever blisters)	Approximately 2-12 days	Person to person by direct contact with oral or eye secretions or the lesions themselves. (Virus can be shed when no sores are visible.)	Watery appearing blisters around eye, nose, mouth, fever, sores on the gums and inside the mouth may be painful and oozing, headache, eye infections.	Child may not attend preschool until lesion is well crusted.
Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease	Approximately 3-7 days	Spread person to person by direct contact with nose and throat discharges or the stool of infected persons.	Fever, sores in the mouth and rash with blisters, sore throat. Flat or raised red spots, some with blisters on the palms of the hands, soles of the feet and possibly on the buttocks.	Child may return to school once a physician determines that the child is no longer contagious.
Rotavirus	Approximately 2 days	Spread through fecal and oral secretions.	Vomiting and water diarrhea, fever, abdominal pain.	Child may return to school after a full 24 hours have passed since the last vomiting or diarrhea, and there is no fever above 100°.
Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Usually 5-10 days but can be up to 21 days	Spread person to person by coughing or sneezing into the air.	Running nose, sneezing, dry cough, light fever.	Child may return to school after being on medication for 5 days.

In the event one of the staff members is sick, a replacement must be found in order to have class. This is due to ratio guidelines. If a replacement cannot be found, classes will be cancelled for that day. If 2 or more staff members are sick, classes will be cancelled. Classes to be cancelled at the director/teacher's discretion due to an overwhelming number of student illnesses.

If a student becomes ill during class, the student will be removed from the classroom. They will have a quiet place to rest until child is picked up by parent/guardian. The teacher will contact the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian has approximately 30 minutes upon notification to pick up their child. If the student is not picked up within the 30 minutes, the Preschool will charge the parent/guardian \$5 for every 15 minutes the student remains in Preschool. The fee must be paid before the student returns to class.

If medicine is needed to be administered to a child, a medical consent form needs to be completed by the parent and guardian. The storage of this medicine will be kept in the office where children do not have access to it.

A Doctors note is required to return to preschool if any of the above illnesses occurred.

Health Care Policies

The teacher needs a copy of each student's Immunization Record on file in case of emergency. All immunizations need be kept current. Please also inform the Teacher of any allergies. If your child needs to have any type of Epipen, Nebulizer, Inhaler, etc with them at all times, please inform the teacher.

In order to better protect all of the students, please check the previous list of communicable diseases and follow the appropriate school policy if your child fits any of the criteria. All reported cases of contagious diseases will be reported to the Department of Health. Once again, please call the preschool phone number at 605-528-3358 to notify the teacher if your child comes down with a contagious disease. If your child comes down with a contagious disease, you will also need to provide a doctor's note approving child/children's entry back in to school.

Parent Responsibilities

Communication

Each child that attends Preschool is very important to the staff. Our preschool strives to meet the needs of each child as an individual. It is imperative to maintain good communication with each child's family.

• **Open Door Policy:** We have an open door policy for parents. You may drop in any day, at any time, to observe your child or join in our activities. Please remember that during the school day, the teachers must focus on the children, so please do not use this as a time for a conference. We reserve the right to limit visits if we find they are disruptive to the class or your child.

Classroom Visitation/Participation

Parents are welcome to visit the classroom for observation and participation any time to help in the class or to be with the children. **Please NO visits the first month of preschool, as we all need to adjust to the environment, the schedule, and each other.**

Clothing

The preschool ask that each child come to preschool dressed comfortably in washable play clothes. The children will be using paint, markers, etc. In the late fall and during the winter, children should come dressed to play outside. Mittens, boots, hats, snow pants, coats, etc. should be plainly labeled on the tags. Send snow clothes every day after the first snowfall. The children will be playing outside as long as the temperature is warm enough.

Children often get dirty through the use of paint and other hands-on material, toilet accidents or playing outside. Please take this into consideration when planning your child's preschool wardrobe. **Please send in a change of clothes to keep in your child's cubby in case they need to change during the day.**

Labeling is extremely important. Please keep track of these clothes and their seasonal appropriateness. If a child needs a change of clothes and one is not available in their cubby, we will go to a sibling's cubby, our stash of clean, extra clothes or a classmate's cubby to dress the child. Parents are expected to return any borrowed clothes clean and within one day. We take the children outdoors in all types of weather. Raincoats with hoods/hats, boots, warm snow apparel and sneakers (not party shoes or shoes which do not provide support) are all essential, depending upon outdoor temperatures and conditions. You may want to keep a "playground safe" pair of shoes, such as sneakers or other closed-toe shoes, in your child's cubby. We do not recommend Crocs or flip-flops except during swimming and water play times.

Weather

The Preschool will follow the West Central school schedule of early dismissals and late starts when dealing with adverse weather conditions. Morning classes will have NO class if there is a late start. This includes 1 and 2 hour late starts. The afternoon class will NOT have class if the West Central School has an early dismissal at any time of the day due to weather. If your child is already at school you need to pick them up immediately. Please be advised through KELO TV, or contact the center, when you have concerns whether or not we are open or will be closing early that day.

Stepping Stones is a Nature Based preschool program. Connecting with the outside world is a major part of our program philosophy. Weather permitting, the majority of our time will be spent outdoors. To keep our staff and children safe we follow the recommended guidelines provided by the Department of Public Health for play in appropriate weather.

Items From Home

Please have your child's name on all items including coats, jackets, mittens, hats, snow pants, boots, books, book bags, etc. **Please discourage your child from bringing small toys and items from home, unless directed to by the teacher.**

Field Trip Chaperoning

The Preschool will take field trips during the year. If transportation is provided, Stepping Stones will use child passenger restraint systems for children in care, follow current laws and each vehicle will only carry the number of children allowed by vehicle passenger capacity determined by the number of safety belts installed in the vehicle. All the children will be required to wear seatbelts or sit in an appropriate child safety seat, depending on his/her weight requirement. At the beginning of the year we'll ask for parent volunteers. Due to our insurance policy, we are only able to have a limited number of drivers. All drivers must have a copy of their license on file. Drivers will receive a list of the children that will be riding with him/her. All drivers will use passenger restraint systems: car seats etc. Each vehicle will only carry the number of children allowed by vehicle capacity (the number of seatbelts)

A few keys to a successful field trip include: provide encouragement, participate in the activities, remember you are a role model, help supervise all children, assist your group with restroom visits, drive the speed limit, and dress appropriately.

If there are not a sufficient amount of drivers and supervision, the field trip will be cancelled.

Thank you for helping with this very important part of preschool!

Snacks

Any special Dietary needs due to allergies, we are asking parents to provide for their child. Children feel so proud and confident when they bring in special snacks. They have such ownership when passing out their snacks and love the opportunity to share. We are posting a sign up sheet in the lobby for you to sign up for a snack day each month. This is optional, as we always have snacks on hand. Each class has 20 children, so enough snacks would be needed to provide for their entire class.

We are also a PEANUT FREE environment. Items with Peanut Butter will be discarded.

Please notify the teacher of any food allergies. We require that parents provide snacks for their child if they have any specific dietary needs such as allergies.

Lunch

Lunch time is from 11:30 and 12:30. Lunch is not provided. If your child is enrolled in a full day program: please provide a cold sack lunch, or sign up for subway or hot lunch options.. Please have all lunch boxes labeled with your child's name. Nutrition is very important to your child's development. Please keep this in mind when creating your lunches. **We are also a PEANUT FREE environment.**

Book orders

Book orders are provided as a service to you. It is firmly believed that having quality books in the home promotes reading. This is a great way to have quality children's books at a very reasonable price. There is no pressure to buy. Book orders will be once a month. They will be put in your child's cubby on a Monday and need to be returned by the date indicated. Make checks payable to Scholastic Books.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

Fire Escape plan will be posted at both the front exit and the back exit. There will be four fire drill performed throughout the year and one tornado drill. These will be performed annually. Stepping Stones has a written emergency preparedness and response plan in place. Please see the director for additional information.

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Termination of Care

If any of these policies or forms are falsified Stepping Stones has the right to terminate care. **Failure to pay will result in termination of Care. If there is continuous aggressive behaviors (after behavior plans have been in place), will result in termination of care.**

Bright Wheels App

All families will be required to download Bright Wheels. This is the tool that we will use communicate, parent notes, pictures, incidents, snow days, field trips, etc.. At the start of the preschool year parents will be given direct invitation on how to get started.

Non-discrimination Policy

Stepping Stones Preschool & Enrichment Center, Hartford, SD admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its education policies, admissions policies, programs or student activities.

Welcome to Our Stepping Stones Family. Here are a few notes about our upcoming school year.

There is a lot of important information regarding center policies, and classroom:

Door Code~ Our building is secured with a code that the parents use to enter. This is for your child's safety. We are asking that you please DO NOT share this code with your child or other family members. Only the primary guardians are to have it. Any other users are to use the doorbell. The code is subject to change at the Director's discretion. If that happens you will be notified through the app.

Check in/ Check out~ It is very important that you check in and out each day. We use this to total hours at the end of each week to see if there is any drop in. We want to make sure we are not charging you for drop in fees, because you didn't get signed out. After entering your code, please indicate if they are in or out.

Difficult Drop Offs~ When leaving your child at school, it is helpful to direct him/her to an activity in the classroom or to a teacher. When it is time to leave, give him/her a clear goodbye. The teachers will take over and engage your child and start developing a relationship of trust and comfort. It is very important to do this with the classroom teachers so that a trusting relationship can begin with them. Children have difficulty separating and feel anxious either about their new environment. The separation may well have the same effect on you! It is important to have a positive attitude to convey the expectation that your child will have a wonderful time at preschool. Sometimes lingering can make that transition harder on the child. **When you drop off, please drop off in the classroom versus the lobby. Your classroom teacher cannot watch both places at once, and we always want to keep your child safe.**

Bright Wheel~ Bright Wheel is an incredible tool that we use in the classroom. This year it is mandatory for our families to use. It is used to capture moments throughout the day and helps parents begin conversations about the day with their child. It serves as documentation and observations of growth and development for both parents and teachers. We also use it to communicate with the parents. However, the app is used for quick communications between the teachers and the parents. Longer conversations should be done in person with the teachers. When they are face to face, understanding is clearer, and conversations are more meaningful. Regarding the app, teachers may not respond to messages after hours, but they will get to you the following morning. We are asking that each family please take the time to fill out your child's profile... primarily emergency contact information, parent information, and medical information. This will be very helpful in case we are on a field trip and need to get a hold of someone.

Billing~ All payments must be set up on the app (unless you have something else set up with Miss Melissa & Mr. Jeremy). An automatic invoice will be sent to you through brightwheel, based on your plan. Payments will be due the first of the week or the first of the month, depending on your enrollment.

Weather~ We follow West Central snow days. If WC has a 1-hour late start, preschool remains the same. A 2-hour late start means our am preschool session is closed. Early out due to weather, afternoon preschool is cancelled, and we will remain open until everyone is picked up. If WC is cancelled, we will be open if teachers can make it in. If only some of the teachers can make it in due to road conditions, we will be open with limited availability.....These events will be communicated through the app.

Calendar~ We follow the WC school calendar. There are days that WC is closed for in services, holidays and events. On most of those days, there is NO PRESCHOOL, but the center is open for care. There will be a sign up sheet at the front desk. This is for school age children. For the Preschool and Toddler Classrooms if you are scheduled full days and it is your day- we are planning on you joining us. **If there is not enough space to sign up, please consult with Miss Melissa or Mr. Jeremy to see if there is still room. Space is limited. Our Preschool Calendar is located on our website.**

Lunches~ There are 3 options for lunch for those who stay all day.

- Cold Lunch. You may bring a cold lunch. We ask that you include an ice pack to help keep lunches cool. We do encourage independence and responsibility with our kids throughout the year, and we will teach them to clean up their messes.
- Hot Lunch. The Goat will cater hot lunches. Each month you will get a calendar to sign up. Just circle the days that you are choosing and return to Stepping Stones by the due date. Attach a check to your menu made out to The Goat. Each meal is \$3.50. These are ordered out weeks in advance. If there are changes that need to be made these are done through the Goat and then let your teachers know as well.
- Subway. Subway meal plans are options too. **Payments: Cash or Checks made out to Stepping Stones.** These can be ordered on the daily with a signup sheet at the front desk. However, orders must be in by 9:00. Just let your teachers know each morning that you need one. If you forgot to order one by 9:00 and your child needs one an additional fee will be applied.

Toys~ We ask that all toys remain at home. Please tell your child no before they arrive at the center. This will make for an easier transition once you get here.

Extra Clothes~ Please bring in extra clothes to keep in your child's backpack. It is completely natural for a child to still have accidents, and we sometimes get messy when we are painting. In the Toddler room we do potty training, so please bring multiple sets of clothes. This may need to be changed out seasonally. **Please write your names on all items.**

Snack~ Any special Dietary needs due to allergies, we are asking parents to provide for their child. Children feel so proud and confident when they bring in special snacks. They have such ownership when passing out their snacks and love the opportunity to share. We are posting a sign up sheet in the lobby for you to sign up for a snack day each month. This is optional, as we always have snacks on hand. Each class has 20 children, so enough snacks would be needed to provide for their entire class.

Family Pictures~ The teachers have requested that your child bring in a family picture. You may bring one in or you can email one to Julie@steppingstonespreschoolcenter.com and Miss Julie will get it to your teacher.

Mailboxes & Cubbies~ Each child has a mailbox. This is for their art work, parent notes. Please empty each day. The same goes for your child's cubby. In some cases, your child may share a cubby with another student. Please be sure to bring your belongings back and forth each day.

Child Sign In~ Just like the parents have a sign in, so do the children in the preschool classes. This encourages your child to get engaged in something to ease the drop off transition. It is also a great opportunity for us to practice writing and recognizing our names.

Classroom Activities~ The Pre-K Class have plans to have star of the week, and Secret Readers. For Star of the Week each child will have a chance to showcase their families, and themselves. When your child is chosen a letter will be sent home to you. Secret Reader- Our kids love to be

read to. We ask for volunteers throughout the year (parents, grandparents, etc..) to secretly show up and share a story with our kids. Miss Julie is our secret reader coordinator. Connect with her to sign up for a time.

Covid~ We want to communicate with our families about COVID-19 pandemic. Please be assured that we are following recommendations given by the Childcare Services and the Department of Health and/or Centers for Disease Control (CDC). At this time we are not requiring masks for our staff or children. As per our handbook please keep your child home if they are sick. If you or your child are diagnosed with COVID-19 we will follow the guidelines given by the CDC.

Return To School~ Please return the following things to preschool:

- Sept. menu
- forms: handbook update, media release,
- school supplies
- a family photo
- picture day

Thank you,
Miss Melissa



PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION 2022-2023

Stepping Stones Preschool & Enrichment Center 412 E SD HW 38 Hartford, SD, 57033 (605) 528-3358

www.steppingstonespreschoolcenter.com

Child's name _____ Date of Birth _____ Start Date _____

Circle one: male female E-mail address _____

Parents' names _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____ Home phone _____

Mom Work _____ Dad Work _____

Mom Cellphone _____ Dad Cellphone _____

Please mark your first choice for class:

Registration Fee is \$35.00 (new families only) This is needed to hold your child's spot.

Summer registration and pricing go into effect on 05/22/2022. You will be charged a weekly minimum rate depending on the contract that you choose (5, 3, or 2 day). Please indicate below the days and times your child will attend. Switching back and forth between rates and days is not permitted. You will be billed your minimum weekly fee on Monday of the current week. Occasionally we will go on a field trip. This could be to the library or even an event in Sioux Falls. All Families will be notified in advance. All Field Trips will depend on drivers. Field trips are at the family's expense. If you can drive let us know. Children may be pulled from field trip based on behavior. This is at the teacher's discretion. All children must bring a cold lunch or the subway plan and hot lunch plan is an option for your family.

If you are planning on enrolling in both this summer and the upcoming school year, please complete both columns.

Summer 2022	School Year 2022-2023
<p><u>Toddler Class (ages 6mo - 3yr)</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 days per week is \$185.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days per week is \$140.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days per week is \$110.00</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>	<p><u>Toddler Class (ages 6mo - 3yr)</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 days per week is \$185.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days per week is \$140.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days per week is \$110.00</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>
<p><u>3-5-year Full Day Preschool Class</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 days per week is \$170.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days per week is \$125.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days per week is \$95.00</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>	<p><u>3-5-year Full Day Preschool Class</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 days per week is \$170.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days per week is \$125.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days per week is \$95.00</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>
<p><u>Drop in</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$5.00 per hour</p> <p>***Drop in is considered any hours outside contracted hours ***Must be pre approved by the director</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>	<p><u>3-5-year Preschool Class 1/2 Day Options Only Available during the School Year; Does Not include summer</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 ½ days per week \$350.00 month Monday - Friday: 8:30-11:30 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 ½ days per week \$250.00 month Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 8:30 - 11:30 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 ½ days per week \$200.00 month Tuesday, Thursday: 8:30- 11:30</p> <p><u>West Central JK & Early Childhood Enrollment</u> <input type="checkbox"/> \$125.00 per week</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>
<p><u>School Age Summer</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 5 days per week is \$145.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 days per week is \$100.00 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 days per week is \$70.00</p> <p>Monday: _____ Tuesday _____ Wednesday _____ Thursday _____ Friday _____ Total Hours _____</p>	<p><u>Before & After School (School Age)</u></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Before & After School \$80.00/wk (includes WC early-out and late start) <input type="checkbox"/> After School Only \$65.00/wk (includes WC early out) <input type="checkbox"/> Before School Only \$45.00/wk (includes WC late start)</p> <p>No school days due to WC being closed will be an additional charge: Before & after-\$20/Day, After only-\$25/Day, Before only- \$30/Day ***In Town Bussing is at the expense of the parents. It will need to be set up with the Transportation Department at West Central***</p>

Registration & Tuition:

All registration fees are required at time of registration in order to guarantee a space in the class. All fees are non-refundable. Registration fees are for new families only. Tuition is due by 6 p.m. Monday for the current week, or the first of each month. Advance payments are accepted. Payments can be made by use of our Brightwheel app. If a check is returned due to insufficient funds, a \$30 charge will be added for the returned check. Following a second occurrence, all subsequent payments must be made with cash or money order. Overpayments to the Center will be credited to your account, no refunds will be granted. A late fee of \$5.00 will be added to your account if payment is not made by 6 p.m. Monday of every week. If tuition becomes more than two weeks late, you may be asked to withdraw your children until your account is paid in full. For families with multiple children, the child with the highest weekly rate will be charged the full amount; all others will receive a 10% discount.

Brightwheel App & Classes:

All families will be required to download Bright Wheel. This is the tool that we use to communicate, parent notes, pictures, incidents, snow days, field trips, etc.. At the start of the preschool year parents will be given an invitation on how to get started. All classes are filled based on first come, first serve basis. Children will be placed on a waiting list and families will be notified if a class is filled.

Please initial each box for consent:

	Photo Release - Consent is hereby granted to Stepping Stones Preschool for the use of photographs involving my child as stated in the Stepping Stones Preschool Handbook.
	Permission to take your child on field trips.
	I have read and agree to uphold the policies set forth in the Stepping Stones Preschool Handbook, as well as, any policy changes that may be noted as the school year progresses. Please view Handbook at www.steppingstonespreschoolcenter.com

Emergency Medical Authorization

I hereby give permission for emergency medical treatment for my child _____ if requested by _____, who is our child care provider.

Please note that my child is allergic to the following items; or has the following medical conditions;

Primary Physician _____

Clinic _____ Phone Number _____

Emergency Contact Information

Emergency Contacts: (Must Have 3 excluding parents)

Name _____ Phone Number _____ Relationship to Child: _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____ Relationship to Child: _____

Name _____ Phone Number _____ Relationship to Child: _____

Custody Information: _____

Individual(s) allowed to pick up child _____

Individual(s) NOT allowed to pick up child (please provide a copy of legal document) _____

Please sign below acknowledging all consents and registration:

Signature _____ Date _____