



Dear Parents:

We are very excited to have your child in the Munchkins Preschool program. Please read the attached handbook very carefully. As always, our policies and procedures come with the best of intentions. Our goal is to create a successful program that meets the needs of the children as well as the program. The purpose of this information is to ensure that everyone is aware of the same guidelines.

Please fill out all attached forms and return to Mountain Munchkins Preschool by _____. All forms must be completely filled out in order to comply with State Regulations.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me at 369-6428. Most importantly, we want to thank you for sharing your child with us. We look forward to wonderful, fun filled times with your family.

Sincerely,

**Mountain Munchkins Director
369-6428**

MOUNTAIN MUNCHKINS PRESCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

OUR MISSION

It is our mission to provide high quality child care and preschool to families who live and work in the Telluride and Mountain Village region. Our program offers an experience of the highest quality by:

- ~Providing a consistent, developmentally sound, and emotionally supportive environment for our children
- ~Providing an inviting, friendly, informative environment for parents.

OUR EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Providing strong early learning experiences during the most critical time in a child's brain development is our goal. Research shows that one in five kids are not ready for kindergarten. Research of high quality early childhood education programs confirm lasting positive effects such as greater school success and higher graduation rates. We recognize that children are unique and learn at different rates and in different ways. We provide a diverse, child-centered curriculum with plenty of opportunity for hands-on learning and exploration. We also provide a well-rounded learning environment with a curriculum that focuses on literacy, art, math, music, science and social-emotional development. We offer enrichment activities throughout the year (theater, karate, yoga, gymnastics, Zumba) to compliment our curriculum.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

We create an environment that focuses on the social/emotional growth and development of each child. We also utilize Creative Curriculum philosophies that will help us in achieving our goals to establish nurturing and responsive relationships between children, caregivers and parents. We plan to achieve this goal by establishing solid foundations in the following areas:

- Social-Emotional Development:
GOAL: to help your child develop independence, self confidence, self control, follow rules and routines, make friends, learn what it means to be part of a group, gain a respect for others and a sense of caring. To learn pro-social skills such as sharing and taking turns, and playing cooperatively.
- Physical:
GOAL: to increase children's large muscle skills~running, balancing, jumping, throwing and catching and use the small muscles in their hands to do tasks like buttoning, stringing beads, cutting, drawing, and writing.
- Cognitive Development
GOAL: to acquire thinking skills such as the ability to solve problems, to

ask questions, and to think logically~sorting, classifying comparing, counting, and making patterns~and to use materials and their imagination to show what they've learned.

- Language

GOAL: to use words to communicate with others, listen to and participate in conversations with others, recognize letters and words, and begin writing for a purpose.

Our room arrangement is divided into centers: art, math, toys/games, cozy corner, computer, listening center, imagination station, science, sand/water play. Through games, learning activities, materials and props we use throughout our day of playing and learning we seek to accomplish the goals in each area of development and give your child a successful start in school. Our daily schedule and routines also help foster solid foundations in all areas of development. Our teachers establish weekly themes that will be outlined in a calendar that you will receive monthly. Please read our preschool calendar which outlines various learning activities we will be working on to foster specific skills in all areas of development.

PARENT/STAFF CONFERENCES and CHECKPOINTS

Mountain Munchkins Preschool uses a comprehensive developmental checklist with a strong focus on social/emotional development. Our checklist is comprehensive yet easy to understand with a particular focus on routines, experiences and social/emotional development. Our checklist will help us in achieving our goal to establish nurturing and responsive relationships between children, caregivers and parents. Our checklist will also help our preschoolers become kindergarten ready. Please review the attached example of our Preschool Developmental Checklist. As teachers, we are constantly observing children in various settings and now we have the opportunity to formally document our observations in an easy to use format.

Conferences will be set up at least once a year. We are always available for parent teacher conferences if any concerns arise that need to be addressed.

AGES ACCEPTED

2 years 10 months until Kindergarten

HOURS OF OPERATION

7:45 a.m. to 5:15 p.m. Monday - Friday. The facility will be closed on the following holidays: Thanksgiving, the day after Thanksgiving, 12/24, 12/25, 1/1, Easter, 1 week over school spring break, Memorial Day, 7/4, Labor Day.

PRESCHOOL FEES

Please see our agreement for our most recent rate structure.

NO half days are offered at Mountain Munchkins Preschool.

There is a \$100 enrollment fee upon enrollment and \$60 re enrollment fee every year thereafter.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Our maximum capacity is 16 children. A waiting list will be kept if we are booked and the parent/guardian will be notified when spaces become available. Parents who work and/or live in the Mountain Village will receive enrollment priority. Siblings also receive enrollment priority at Mountain Munchkins Preschool. All parents are required to enter an agreement for services (see attached). This agreement requires a commitment to a certain number of days per week for the full term of the agreement. The number of days will be determined based on days requested and spots available. A special care form must be completed before the child's first day. At the time of admission, each child's parent or guardian must submit a statement dated and signed by an approved health care professional. The statement must include information about the child's health status, immunizations, and special needs. Please provide the center with an updated immunization record. All information will be updated annually.

If a parent of a child wishes an exemption from the requirement for immunization due to religious or personal beliefs, a written statement signed by the child's parent which states the reason for such an exemption and that the child is in good health must be submitted to the center. The center has the right to refuse to admit the child if a statement from an approved health care professional is not submitted.

Parents with other children in care must be notified if a child enters the program without having received the appropriate immunizations. Children's confidentiality must be maintained in accordance with state law.

LABELING YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS

All lunch bags (including everything in the bag) and other belongings must be labeled with your child's first and last name. **WE ARE NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR LOST ITEMS.** Please label EVERYTHING with 1st and last name. Each child has a locker and cubby to store belongings.

TOYS FROM HOME

Please do not bring toys to school. Your child will have the opportunity to share a special toy from home during specified days such as show and tell.

EXTRA CLOTHING

Please bring extra clothing and underwear in case your child has an accident. Also, bring warm clothing so we can play outside on chilly days. During the winter season, we must have a snowsuit, hat, gloves and boots for EVERY child.

LUNCHES/SNACKS

ALL LUNCH ITEMS, including beverages, **MUST BE LABELED BY THE PARENT ON A DAILY BASIS!!!** We provide water throughout the day. If you have a special drink (juice, milk, smoothie...) please put it in your child's lunch box. Healthy snacks will be offered (thanks to parent donations) every day. **The snacks offered will be provided by parent snack donations.** Every parent in the program is responsible

to sign up for at least one snack and supply item every month. Our morning snack is served around 9:30, lunch is at 12:00 and afternoon snack is served around 4:00. If your child arrives after 9:30 am, please assure that he/she has had a health snack prior to arrival. We do not offer breakfast so please feed your child a healthy breakfast before bringing them to MM. Please pack a healthy lunch for your child along with a drink of your choice. We have a refrigerator for food storage and microwave for re-heating (winter only). During summer months we ask that you bring your child with lunch items that do not need to be heated up as we will be going on field trips several times a week. All employees handling food will wash their hands before and after food preparation and distribution. We offer water throughout the day.

BULLETIN BOARD, CALENDAR

Your child's daily activities will be posted on the dry erase board above the sign in sheet in the lobby. Please take a minute everyday to look at our board so you can talk with you child about what he/she did at school. There will be a monthly calendar sent home with field trips and other preschool activities. Make sure to refer to the calendar daily so your child can come to school prepared for our daily activities.

ADD ON POLICY

If you would like for your child to participate in an enrichment activity on a day he/she isn't schedule to come to preschool, we request that you add on. If the day is available, we would love to accommodate you.

RATIOS

All children shall be under direct supervision of a Mountain Munchkins Preschool staff at all times. The State of Colorado ratio for preschoolers, 1 caregiver : 10 preschoolers. Our ratios are 1 care giver to every 7 toddlers.

SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

The facility will offer care to special needs children unless it drastically changes the way we operate.

FAMILY PARTNERSHIPS

It is our goal for you to feel comfortable with our program and philosophies. We have an open door policy so please visit anytime! We encourage and support our families by offering gatherings at least 4 times a year. Events typically offered include pizza parties at MM, Pot luck lunches with our kids and families, fundraising events, open houses to network with other families, trick or treating in the MV and days when you can participate in making a craft or leading group time. We are always looking for new ideas on how to best include your family in our program so please share any suggestions with us.

FUNDRAISING

We have an annual fundraiser; Touch a Truck, in June. It is coordinated by our wonderful MM parents. It is a ton of fun for the entire community and a great opportunity for all of us to get together outside of Munchkins. Please let us know if you

would like to be part of planning and coordinating this fabulous event. Beginning in 2011, for our annual Touch a Truck fundraiser, each family is responsible for selling raffle tickets. The raffle tickets buy you an opportunity to win a toddler jeep wrangler, season ski pass and a Blues and Brews pass. Your July bill will be assessed the amount of the raffle tickets you are responsible for.

MOUNTAIN MUNCHKINS PRESCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

It is our goal to continue our efforts in reaching out to low to moderate income and/or at risk families who would not otherwise be able to afford quality childcare. Families may be eligible based on income level and factors that could put a child at risk of not being school ready (families who do not speak English as their 1st language and/or single parent families). Families who fall at or below 225% of poverty level will seek funding from Social Services.

We are very pleased with the programs success and look forward to its continued growth. Please contact Kathleen at 369-6428 with any questions regarding tuition assistance.

RESERVATION POLICY

MM can only guarantee the days you request at the time of enrollment. You are responsible for all of your reserved days through the end of your agreement

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

You will be billed in advance for the upcoming month. Pre-payment is required. Please refer to Parent/Munchkins Agreement.

If you are going on vacation, please let a supervisor know so another child may add on for that day or we can staff accordingly.

LATE PAYMENT FEE

Please refer to Parent/Munchkins Preschool Agreement

LATE PICK UP FEE

A late charge of \$15.00 will automatically be charged for any portion of **every** fifteen minutes after 5:15 p.m. If you are late more than three times in one year, the center reserves the right to terminate services.

CANCELLATION and SWITCHING POLICY

Munchkins will not issue credits for missed days. Please notify us if your child will be absent for any reason. If there is someone (enrolled in the program) on the waitlist we can fill your spot as an add on to benefit the program.

DISCIPLINE

Corporal or other harsh punishment, including but not limited to pinching, shaking, spanking, punching, rough handling, hair pulling, or any other humiliating or frightening method of disciplining to control the action of any child or groups of children is not allowed.

Punishment will not be associated with rest time, eating or toilet training. Threats and/or

coercion shall not be used to encourage children to follow directions.

We focus on redirecting the child's attention, removing the child from the situation that is causing frustration and gently redirecting their attention towards a more positive, rewarding situation.

Recognize a child's aggressive behavior can often be directly related to a frustrating situation in which they do not have the skills to cope.

The word "no" is typically not used in this facility unless a child is in danger of hurting him/herself or another child.

Promote success for a child, NOT FAILURE.

Use positive reinforcement to help build new patterns of behavior.

Remind children of rules and consequences, encourage children to think about the impact their behavior has on people, objects, and events.

Guide children to resolve their own conflict through communication.

Use positive language - tell a child what they CAN DO, not what they can not do.

Peace outs (our term for time-outs) are a last resort and we use them sparingly.

GENERAL CARE

A child shall be released only to the parent or guardian who signed the liability form or persons listed under "**other adults authorized to pick up my child.**" In the event of an emergency, parents can authorize "other" adult verbally. If the staff does not recognize the parent and/or the specified person to pick the child up, we will ask for identification.

In the event a person NOT authorized attempts to pick up a child, the facility will NOT release the child and the parents and possibly the authorities will be called for assistance. A staff will stay with that child until an authorized adult arrives.

Outdoor activities are a priority but are optional for children. Outdoor play will depend on the weather; if weather drops below 20 degrees Fahrenheit, children will play indoors.

All children remaining at Munchkins Preschool for more than four hours shall have a quiet time for 30 minutes.

All food and drink and art supplies are distributed and used in the **kitchen area only**.

During outside time, children will be offered water.

Staff will shadow children who exhibit aggressive behavior such as kicking, hitting and biting.

If a child is distressed by their parents departure, we attempt to distract the child with a toy, a book, going outside, holding and/or speaking calmly about the things they will do today etc.

Children may not stand on any furniture at Munchkins Preschool.

All children will be supervised at all times.

SICK CHILDREN

It is very important for the children and the staff to remain healthy in order to maintain a fun learning environment. Please keep your child home if he or she is showing **any** signs of illness (including the common cold). Your child must be well and free of symptoms for 24 hours before returning to the center. If your child is taking antibiotics he/she must be at least 24 hours into the medication. We reserve the right to exclude your child if we have any concerns regarding his/her health.

We must be able to contact at least one parent/guardian in the event your child becomes ill at Mountain Munchkins Preschool. If your child becomes sick while at Mountain Munchkins, he/she will be sent home. Your child needs to be well and free of symptoms for a full 24 hours before returning to school.

SUNSCREEN POLICY

Please sunscreen your child daily. The center must obtain authorization for applying sunscreen prior to outside play. Refer to "Special Permission" on the Registration form.

ALLERGIES

Parents are to record ANY allergy the child has on the Special Care Sheet. That information is transferred to the allergy board located in the kitchen area. The allergy board must be checked before all food preparation. **Please attempt all new foods at home for several days prior to sending it to school.**

MEDICATION

For the protection of the children, no staff shall administer non-prescribed medication to any child in our program. If a child is taking antibiotics that must be administered during the day, the parents are advised to return to Munchkins Child Care and Preschool so they can administer the medication themselves. Regarding children who need to receive medications for chronic illnesses such as asthma, seizures, and allergies: Specified/ delegated staff members can administer these medications. In order to administer asthma and anaphylaxis medications, the parents must provide:

Written orders by a health care provider

Written authorization by parent/guardian

Assure that the medication is appropriately labeled by a pharmacist or prescribing doctor. Munchkins will keep a medication log of all medications administered for chronic conditions.

ACCIDENTS/ILLNESSES DEVELOPED AT THE PRESCHOOL

When accidents or illnesses occur, the staff member in charge shall notify the parent or guardian by telephone. The First Aid kit is kept on site.

At the time of admission the parent/guardian must submit a phone number where they can be reached, their emergency hospital of choice, and their physician's phone number. The center must have written permission to arrange for medical care in the event of an emergency.

When children have been exposed to communicable diseases such as hepatitis, chicken pox, measles, or strep infection, all staff members and parents shall be notified immediately by the preschool staff. The Director will contact local health department.

HAND WASHING

All children's hands shall be washed before and after eating and after diapering and/or toileting.

All employees shall wash his/her hands as follows:

1. Wet hands
2. Wash with soap under warm running water.
3. Rub your hands vigorously.
4. Wash backs of hands, wrists, between fingers and under fingernails.
5. Rinse well
6. Dry hands with a single service paper towel.
7. Turn off water using a paper towel instead of bare hands.

When do we wash hands?

After diapering

After helping a child with toileting

After wiping a child's nose,

After using the rest room

Before food preparation or the serving of food.

Before and after eating

Before and after sand and water play

Returning from outside play time

Disposable gloves will be worn for soiled diapers.

DIAPER CHANGING PHILOSOPHY

This time should be used as continued quality time. Talk in a soothing voice, sing a song, ask the child questions, talk about the toys the child may play with when the changing is over, bring a toy for the child to look at, etc... NEVER act in a negative manner during the changing. Healthy, accepting attitudes about children's bodies and their functions will be expressed in this facility.

POTTY TRAINING

We have “Pull-up only” policy, no diapers please. We will work with your child on potty training if they are not yet potty trained. Children are encouraged to go every hour and will be assisted if need be. Children will go through the process of “pottying” every time they use the rest room. This consists of pulling down their pants, sitting on the toilet, redressing themselves, flushing, and washing their hands. We do not use candy or food treats to encourage toilet training. When accompanying a child to the toilet, the door is to remain open at all times. Staff will assist children with hand washing after he/she goes potty. If your child will be using Pull-ups please provide a package upon the child’s first day. We will notify you as supply runs low.

EVACUATION PROCEDURES

In case of fire, all children will be evacuated by the closest exit. Preschoolers are escorted out by staff. The supervisor in charge must check all nap rooms and the sign in sheet to assure all children have been evacuated prior to leaving the facility. We conduct monthly fire drills.

OUTSIDE PROCEDURES

All children will be offered their drink during outside play. Prior to outside play each child must get a diaper change/chance to go potty, hands washed and sunscreensed. Again, **all** children must have proper clothing (depending on the season) in order to go outside.

During inclement weather we will not go outside. Instead we will plan special indoor activities.

FIELD TRIPS/ MOVIE POLICY

Parents will need to sign a permission slip in the event we take a field trip (walking to the fire station, walking to the gondola, taking gondola rides). We will maintain if not exceed our ratios during field trips. If field trips consist of vehicle transportation only licensed drivers will be used and all safety/seatbelt requirements will be met. A first aid kit will be with staff at all times, along with children’s medical/emergency forms.

In the event we need parent volunteers during a field trip or other special event, please be aware that each volunteer will be assisting the facility in the supervision children. Other functions as a volunteer may include lunch prep, serving lunch, feeding, clean up.

If a child arrives late during a field trip day, the parent needs to take the child to the location of the event. It is the responsibility of the parent to transport the child to the location of the group if they are late. A staff member should be notified if you will be bringing your child late during field trip days. The staff’s contact number will be posted on the preschool door. If a child is brought to a field trip location, the parent must sign the child in.

WITHDRAWAL OF SERVICES

Please refer to Parent/Munchkins Preschool Agreement

VISITORS

All persons wanting to tour the facility should make an appointment with the Manager/Supervisor. Walk in visitors will be shown around if possible. All visitors must sign our visitors book. All visitors will be accompanied by staff at all times. Parents of children enrolled in the program are welcome to visit anytime.

REPORTING LICENSING VIOLATIONS

If you are suspicious of any facility licensing violations, please mail the complaint to:

Colorado Dept of Human Services
1575 Sherman St.
Denver, Colorado 80203-1714

...Or call them at (303) 866-5958.

OTHER

It is the Directors'/Supervisors' responsibility to know who is present at the facility. The Director/Sup will check the sign in sheet to identify all children enrolled each day and conduct a head count through out the day. Caregivers also conduct head counts throughout the day. **Parents, please sign your child in and out everyday.**

At the end of every day, the Supervisor will check the sign in sheet to assure all children have a departure time. An appointed staff member will walk through the facility and outside play area to ensure all children have been picked up.

If a child is not picked up by 5:15 p.m. a staff will notify parent or "person authorized to pick up" and stay with the child until the child has been picked up.

In regards to a lost child; the facility will notify the local authorities and the parents immediately.

Each staff member is responsible for disinfecting the facility. A chore list is posted daily and each chore must be completed prior to leaving the facility.

Mouthed toys and miscellaneous manipulatives are sterilized daily.

Big toys must be cleaned at least twice a week.

In the unlikely event that a child is lost while at Munchkins Preschool, immediate notification of the MV Police Department will occur (at that time, Town of Telluride and the County Sherriff's Dept. will be notified as well). The child's parent will be notified immediately as well. An officer will be immediately dispatched to Mountain Munchkins to gather more information and establish a parameter search from that location. In addition, all TMV employees who carry a radio will be dispatched to assist with locating the lost child.

STAFF PROCEDURES

BACKGROUND CHECKS

All Mountain Munchkins Preschool staff will have reference checks, a background check, and fingerprints on file with Colorado Bureau of Investigation.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The State requires one staff per 30 children to be CPR and 1st Aid certified. Mountain Munchkins offers this certification every year and at that time all current staff gets certified.

All staff must complete at least 1.5 hours of training in Universal Precautions within 3 months of employment at Munchkins and at least every 3 years thereafter.

All staff must complete at least 19 hours of early childhood ed training each year.

All management level staff completes a college level course every 5 years.

Offering all of our staff the opportunity to pursue formal early childhood education is a priority at Munchkins. Formally trained caregivers further our mission to provide high quality childcare to working families in our region.

REPORTING SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE

All suspicions of child abuse must be reported to the Director immediately. All suspicions of child abuse will be reported to the local Sheriffs department or the social service department in which the child resides. Any and all unusual behaviors that could possibly be associated with child abuse must be written and reported to the Director/Supervisor.

I have carefully and thoroughly read, understand and have a written copy of the handbook for Mountain Munchkins Preschool. I understand that I am responsible for all of the information included in the handbook.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

