



## FAMILY HANDBOOK

Empowered Edge  
Is located at  
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## Empowered Edge Mission

Our mission is to provide a safe and nurturing environment in a home setting where every child is valued and supported. We are dedicated to promoting learning, growth, and social development through individualized care, play-based learning, and fostering meaningful interactions. By embracing diversity and encouraging acceptance, we aim to empower children to build lifelong skills and friendships in a community where they thrive together.

## Our Staff

Empowered Edge operates with a ratio of 1:10. A CPR certified staff member will be on the premises at all times. Every staff member will have completed a drug screen, background fingerprints for criminals as well as DCS. A TB test and physical will be completed within 30 days from the first day.

Safety :

Drills

### **Emergency Preparedness Policy**

At our daycare, we prioritize the safety and well-being of all children and staff by conducting monthly fire drills and monthly tornado drills. These drills are essential to ensure that everyone is familiar with the evacuation procedures and can respond quickly and calmly in the event of an emergency. Regular practice helps children and staff to know their roles, understand the routes to safety, and develop a sense of preparedness. The daycare maintains a schedule of these drills to ensure all safety measures are up-to-date, and all staff are trained to manage emergencies effectively.

## Field Trip and Emergency Transportation Form Policy

Although we do not conduct regular field trips at our daycare, in order for children to attend, each parent must fill out a form granting permission for their child to leave the daycare property for emergency situations only. This form allows for the child to be transported in case of an emergency or to visit neighboring locations under specific conditions. The safety of the children is our top priority, and this form ensures that all parents are informed and have given consent for their child's safety in case of such situations.

### Child Abuse Prevention, Detection, and Reporting

#### Child Abuse Prevention, Detection, and Reporting Policy

At Empowered Edge, we are deeply committed to the safety and well-being of every child in our care. All staff members are considered **mandated reporters** and are legally obligated to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect. This policy outlines our expectations and procedures regarding child abuse prevention, detection, and reporting in accordance with state and federal laws.

#### Mandated Reporting Responsibilities

##### 1. Definition of a Mandated Reporter

All daycare employees, including caregivers, teachers, and administrative staff, are considered mandated reporters under state law. This means they are legally required to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect immediately.

##### 2. What Must Be Reported

Staff must report any suspected or observed:

- **Physical abuse** (e.g., bruises, burns, or other unexplained injuries).

- **Sexual abuse** (e.g., inappropriate touching, exposure to sexual content, or disclosure from the child).
- **Emotional abuse** (e.g., threats, belittlement, or extreme emotional harm).
- **Neglect** (e.g., inadequate supervision, malnutrition, or unsafe living conditions).

### 3. Reporting Requirements

- Reports must be made **immediately** upon suspicion to the appropriate child protection agency or law enforcement.
- Staff are not required to verify or investigate the abuse before making a report. Their role is solely to report suspected abuse or neglect.

### 4. How to Report

- Call the local child protective services hotline or law enforcement.
- Provide factual and objective information, including observations, disclosures, and any relevant documentation (e.g., dates, times, and descriptions of incidents).

### 5. Failure to Report

- Failure to report suspected abuse is a violation of the law and may result in penalties, including fines, loss of licensure, or termination of employment.

### Confidentiality in Reporting

- The identity of the reporter will remain confidential as allowed by law.
- The daycare will support employees who report in good faith and ensure they are protected from retaliation.

### Training for Mandated Reporters

All staff are required to complete annual training on:

- Recognizing signs of abuse and neglect.
- Reporting procedures and their legal obligations as mandated reporters.
- Understanding how to handle disclosures from children with sensitivity and professionalism.

### **Parental Notification**

- If the suspected abuse does not involve daycare staff, parental notification will only occur if authorized by child protective services or law enforcement.

### **Zero Tolerance for Abuse by Staff**

- Any allegations of abuse involving daycare staff will result in immediate suspension pending investigation.
- The daycare will cooperate fully with investigative authorities.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

Empowered Edge is committed to maintaining the confidentiality of all children, families, and staff. Personal and sensitive information, including child records, family details, and staff personnel files, will only be accessed and shared on a strict need-to-know basis to ensure the well-being of the child or compliance with legal obligations. Staff are prohibited from discussing private matters outside of appropriate professional contexts, including public spaces or with unauthorized individuals. In cases of suspected abuse or neglect, mandated reports are handled with confidentiality, and the reporter's identity is protected to the extent allowed by law. We strive to uphold privacy while fostering trust and respect within our daycare community.

### **Discipline/Guidance Policy**

## Discipline Policy

At Empowered Edge, we employ Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) tactics to understand the function behind each behavior and use positive discipline strategies paired with reinforcement to encourage desired behaviors while reducing unwanted ones.

### We Do:

- **Time Ins:** One-on-one support to help children process emotions and learn appropriate behaviors.
- **Positive Reinforcement:** Praising and rewarding desirable behaviors.
- **Clear Expectations:** Consistently communicating rules and boundaries in an understandable way.
- **Redirection:** Gently guiding children toward appropriate activities or behaviors.
- **Problem Solving:** Supporting children in resolving conflicts and learning from their mistakes.
- **Prompting Communication:** Encouraging children to express their needs and emotions appropriately.
- **ABA Tactics:** Determining the function for a child's behavior and using positive discipline paired with reinforcement to decrease unwanted behaviors and increase wanted behaviors.
- **Time Outs:** Calm, brief breaks to help children self-regulate. (Time outs are used as a last resort and will take place at the table or on the couch with 1 minute for each year of age.)

### We Do Not:

- Use corporal punishment (e.g., hitting, spanking).
- Engage in belittling, threats, or humiliation.
- Use bribes to control behavior.
- Withhold food, water, rest, or other basic needs as a form of discipline.

Through these strategies, we promote a supportive and respectful environment that fosters each child's social, emotional, and behavioral development.

## **Steps for Managing Unsafe Behavior in a Daycare Setting**

When unsafe behavior occurs in a daycare setting, it is important to respond in a calm, consistent, and measured way to ensure the safety and well-being of all children. The following steps outline the process for managing unsafe behavior:

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### **Steps for Managing Unsafe Behavior**

#### **1. Identify and Assess the Behavior:**

- **Quickly and calmly assess the situation:** Determine if the behavior poses an immediate risk to the child or others.
- **Identify the nature of the unsafe behavior:** Is it physical aggression, biting, hitting, or self-injury? Understanding the behavior is crucial for the next steps.

#### **2. Schedule a Meeting with Parents:**

- **Contact the child's parents or guardians:** As soon as possible after the incident, schedule a meeting to discuss the behavior.
- **Discuss the incident:** Share the details of the incident, including what happened, who was involved, and how it was managed.
- **Gather parental input:** Seek input from the parents about any recent changes at home, the child's behavior patterns, and any stressors that may be affecting the child's behavior.

#### **3. Develop and Implement a Behavior Support Plan:**

- **Behavior Support Plan:** Based on observations and functional assessments, develop a plan tailored to the child's needs. This may involve adjusting the environment, implementing specific interventions, and teaching alternative behaviors.

- **Consistency in application:** Ensure all staff are trained and consistently apply the plan to promote positive behavior.
- **Involve parents:** Discuss the plan with the child's parents or guardians to ensure consistency between the daycare and home settings.

#### 4. **Implement and Monitor the Plan:**

- **Implementation:** Put the behavior support plan into action, with all staff following the agreed-upon strategies consistently.
- **Monitor Progress:** Regularly observe the child's behavior to assess the effectiveness of the plan. Keep detailed records of the child's progress, including any changes in behavior and responses to interventions.

#### 5. **Schedule a Second Meeting with Parents:**

- **Check-in with parents:** After a period of time (e.g., two to four weeks), schedule a follow-up meeting with the child's parents or guardians to review the child's progress.
- **Discuss outcomes:** Share the data collected during the monitoring period, including any positive changes in behavior and any ongoing challenges.
- **Adjust the Plan:** Based on the feedback and progress, make any necessary modifications to the behavior support plan. This may involve altering interventions, providing additional support, or developing new strategies.

#### 6. **Consider Changes in Schedule or Reduced Days/Times:**

- **Reduced Schedule:** After two weeks of demonstrating no dangerous behaviors, consider reducing the child's hours or days at the daycare. This could be implemented gradually (e.g., reducing one day or 4 hours at a time) to monitor continued positive behavior.
- **Incremental Increases:** If the child continues to exhibit safe behaviors for another two weeks, consider increasing the child's schedule again—adding one day or 8 hours at a time, spread through the reduced hours. This gradual increase helps ensure the child's success in a more challenging environment.



## 7. Provide Continued Support:

- **Ongoing Communication:** Maintain open communication with parents, caregivers, and staff to ensure that everyone is aware of the child's progress and any new strategies implemented.
- **Regular Review:** Schedule periodic check-ins to review the child's progress and adjust the behavior support plan as needed to support ongoing development and address any new concerns.

## 8. Implement Preventive Measures:

- **Proactive Strategies:** Continue to implement proactive strategies such as positive reinforcement, clear rules and expectations, and regular monitoring of behavior to prevent future occurrences of unsafe behavior.
- **Training for Staff:** Provide ongoing training for staff to effectively manage challenging behaviors and promote a supportive environment.

## 9. Termination of Enrollment:

- **Final Meeting with Parents:** If, despite all interventions and supports, the child continues to exhibit unsafe behavior and poses a risk to themselves or others, a final meeting should be scheduled with the child's parents or guardians.
- **Discuss the Situation:** Clearly communicate the concerns regarding the child's behavior and the inability to ensure their safety within the daycare environment.
- **Consider Alternatives:** Explore potential alternatives such as recommending additional support services (e.g., behavioral therapy, specialized programs) that might better meet the child's needs.
- **Termination Notice:** If no suitable alternatives are available, the daycare management may need to terminate the child's enrollment as a last resort. Provide a written notice detailing the reason for termination and a brief summary of interventions and their outcomes.
- **Transition Plan:** Work with the parents to facilitate a smooth transition for the child to another appropriate setting, ensuring continuity of care and support.

By following these steps, the daycare can effectively manage unsafe behaviors while ensuring the safety, well-being, and positive development of all children in their care.

### **Daycare Dress Code Policy**

To ensure the safety, comfort, and well-being of all children, the following dress code policy is in place at our daycare. Children should wear comfortable, play-appropriate clothing that can get dirty, as they will be engaging in activities such as arts and crafts, outdoor play, and other hands-on activities. Parents should send their child in clothes that are okay to get messy, and an extra set of labeled clothing should be brought to the daycare in case of accidents. Children must also have weather-appropriate clothing, including coats, hats, and gloves for colder weather, as well as suitable clothing and footwear for rainy conditions. Labeling all items helps prevent mix-ups and lost belongings, ensuring that each child has what they need throughout the day.

### **Meals**

Empowered Edge will provide breakfast, lunch and PM snacks. Empowered Edge does not allow food to be brought in from home unless the parent is willing to sit at the table with their child until they are finished eating.

### **Hours of Operation:**

Empowered Edge is open from 5am-5pm Monday-Friday. Mercedes does offer babysitting outside of these times separately from the daycare.

### **Daycare Closures:**

Wednesday, January 1, 2026 New Year's Day

Thursday, March 6, 2026 Addison's Birthday

Monday, May 12, 2026 Emmy's Birthday

Friday, July 4, 2026 Independence Day

Monday, September 1, 2026 Labor Day

Wednesday, September 17th, 2026 Elijah's Birthday

Thursday, October 9th, 2026 Hunter's Birthday

Thursday, November 26th, 2026 Thanksgiving Day

Friday, November 27th, 2025 Black Friday

Wednesday, December 24th, 2025 Christmas Eve

Thursday, December 25th, 2025 Christmas Day

Friday, December 26th, 2025 Day after Christmas

Wednesday, December 31st, 2025 New Years Eve

### **Pickup/Dropoff Policy**

At Empowered Edge, the safety and well-being of the children are our top priorities. For both drop-off and pickup, it is required that all children are signed in and out. Only individuals who are listed on the child's birth certificate or who have provided valid ID and WRITTEN PERMISSION from the parent or guardian are authorized to pick up a child. Facetime may also be used as an alternative method to give permission for pickup. Parents may update the authorized pickup list on Brightwheel or in person; however, texts or phone calls are not acceptable

means to change pickup plans. Unscheduled visits by parents or guardians are permitted at any time. Any person who appears to be impaired or intoxicated will be reported to law enforcement. Empowered Edge cannot release a child to anyone not listed on the birth certificate without a court order signed by a judge.

### **Severe Weather Policy**

Empowered Edge remains open during severe weather conditions and will only close if there is a disruption in essential utilities such as water or electricity. Parents are encouraged to use their discretion when deciding whether to travel during inclement weather, but our facility will remain operational to provide care whenever possible.

### **Program Fee Chart**

#### **Full-Time Weekly Rates:**

- **Infants:** \$230/week
- **Toddlers (1st birthday to 3rd birthday):** \$175/week
- **Preschool (Ages 3 to the first day of Kindergarten):** \$160/week

#### **School-Aged Rates:**

- **Before and After School Care:** \$75/week
- **Break Weeks (e.g., summer, holidays):** \$120/week

#### **Grandfathered Rates:**

Families enrolled prior to December 31, 2026, will retain their current rates until their child transitions to the next age group.

### **Late Fee Policy**

Effective January 1, 2025, a late fee of \$1 per minute will be charged for pickups occurring after the designated closing time. This policy ensures that our staff are compensated for their time and that schedules are respected. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

## **Required Documentation Policy**

To attend Empowered Edge, all children must have up-to-date well-child summaries, current immunization records, and all other required forms on file. If these forms are not submitted by the specified deadlines, the child will not be permitted to attend until the forms are completed and returned. Please note that tuition will still be charged during any time the child is unable to attend due to missing documentation.

## **Illness and Pest Policy**

At Empowered Edge, we are committed to maintaining a healthy and safe environment for all children and staff. To reduce the risk of illness and infestation, the following policies are in place:

### **Illness Policy**

- Children may not attend if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:
  - Excessive coughing or cold symptoms
  - Temperature above 100.4°F
  - Vomiting
  - Diarrhea (more than twice in 24 hours)
  - Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Children must be symptom-free for **24 hours** without medication before returning.
- Any rashes or skin issues require a doctor's note confirming they are not contagious.

### **Head Lice Policy**

- Children with head lice will be sent home immediately.
- To return, the child must be free of lice and nits and have their head checked by staff upon arrival.

### **Bed Bug Policy**

- If bed bugs are identified, parents will be notified immediately.
- Children may not attend until the home has been inspected and deemed bedbug-free.

### **Roach Policy**

- If roaches are found on a child's belongings, the child will not be allowed to bring items from home until the situation is resolved.
- If roaches are found on the child after accommodations are made, the child's enrollment will be terminated. Re-enrollment may be possible once the home is certified as roach-free.

**Important Note:** To ensure the daycare remains operational, it is critical that no pests, such as roaches or bed bugs, are introduced into the facility. These measures are in place to protect all families and staff.

### **Medication and Honesty Policy**

The health and safety of all children at Empowered Edge is our top priority. If a parent knowingly medicates their child to mask symptoms of illness and exposes other children to illness, the family will be terminated from the program.

Transparency is crucial to maintaining a healthy environment; therefore, if medication is given to a child before attending daycare, parents must inform staff about the medication and the symptom it was intended to address. This allows staff to monitor the child for any returning symptoms during the day and ensure proper care.

### **Tuition Contract**

**Child's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Enrollment Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Payment Terms:**

### **1. Tuition Rates:**

- Infants: \$230/week
- Toddlers (1st birthday to 3rd birthday): \$175/week
- Preschool (Ages 3 to the first day of Kindergarten): \$160/week
- School-Age (Before and After School Care): \$75/week
- School-Age (Break Weeks): \$120/week

### **2. Payment Schedule:**

- Tuition is due on Monday morning at drop off. **If payment is not made by Monday morning the child will not be allowed to attend until the payment is completed.**
- Payments can be made via **brightwheel**. **No other form of payment will be accepted.**

### **3. Late Payments:**

- A late fee of **\$10/day** will be charged for any tuition not received by the due date.
  - Services may be suspended if payment is not received within **5 days** of the due date.
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## **Additional Fees:**

### **1. Late Pickup Fee:**

- A fee of \$1 per minute will be charged for any pickups after the designated closing time. (5:00 pm) Unless prior arrangements has been and documented.

### **2. Absence Policy:**

- Tuition is charged regardless of attendance, including absences due to illness, vacation, or holidays.

### **3. Enrollment Fee:**

- A non-refundable enrollment fee of \$100 is required upon enrollment.
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**Withdrawal Policy:**

- Parents/guardians must provide **two weeks' written notice** before withdrawing their child from Empowered Edge. Tuition will be charged for this notice period regardless of attendance.
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**Termination Policy:**

Empowered Edge reserves the right to terminate enrollment immediately for the following reasons:

- Failure to pay tuition or fees.
  - Repeated violations of daycare policies.
  - Dishonesty about a child's health or medication.
  - Behavior that endangers the safety of other children or staff.
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**Acknowledgment:**

By signing below, I agree to the terms outlined in this tuition contract and understand my financial responsibilities to Empowered Edge. I acknowledge that I have received, read, and agree to abide by all daycare policies and procedures.

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parent/Guardian Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Daycare Representative Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_