



Parent Handbook

Effective July 2025

Administrative Office

4094 W. Chinden Blvd.
Garden City, Idaho 83714
(208) 954-5454

Giraffe Laugh on Grand

1191 W. Grand Ave.
Boise, Idaho 83702
(208) 954-5461

Giraffe Laugh on State

3641 N. Market Lane
Boise, Idaho 83703
(208) 954-5465

Giraffe Laugh at Garden City Preschool

Located inside The Boys & Girls Club
610 E. 42nd St.
Garden City, Idaho 83714
(208) 954-5462

Giraffe Laugh on Franklin

203 S. Orchard St.
Boise 83705
Info Ph: (208) 954-5460

Giraffe Laugh in Kuna

Located inside The Boys & Girls Club
470 W. Mendi Place
Kuna, Idaho 83643
(208) 954-5450

Hablamos Español TTY: 1 (800) 377-3529

Giraffe Laugh is an equal opportunity provider and employer. Giraffe Laugh, Inc.
Employee Policies and Guidelines

Our Mission

To provide quality early care and education to young children by ensuring school readiness, empowering families, and building strong futures.

Our Vision

Every child in the Treasure Valley has access to quality early care and education, and all parents are supported through the early years of parenthood, regardless of age or income.

Our Locations

Giraffe Laugh on Grand

- Provides care for up to 64 children
- Ages 6 weeks to 5 years
- Hours of operation: 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday

Giraffe Laugh on State

- Provides care for up to 75 children
- Ages 6 weeks to 5 years
- Hours of operation: 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday

Giraffe Laugh in Garden City

- Provides care for up to 20 children
- Ages 3.5 to 5 years
- Hours of operation: 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday

Giraffe Laugh in Kuna

- Provides care for up to 66 children
- Ages 6 weeks to 5 years
- Hours of operation: 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday

Giraffe Laugh on Franklin

- Provides care for up to 80 children
- Ages 6 weeks to 5 years, and school-aged children during the summer.
- Hours of operation: 7:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday through Friday

Each center and its staff will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, income, religion, sex, nationality, disabilities, non-disabilities, age, appearance or family status.

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Registration and Fees

Completed registration forms, a signed payment contract, and up-to-date immunization records are required to enroll.

Annual Registration Fee

An annual registration fee of \$75 will be charged at the time of enrollment, then each September for the duration of enrollment.

Part-Time and Full-Time Schedules

Part-time is defined as (1) your child attending only half days, or (2) your child attending full days, but less than 5 days a week. Full-time is defined as your child attending 5 full days per week.

- Part-time schedule must be determined upon enrollment.
- Families will be charged for all days scheduled, whether or not they attend.
- Part-time schedule days cannot be “switched” unless the change is permanent.
- Scholarships are available for families living in low-to-moderate-income households. If you feel you may qualify for a reduced rate, please contact your Site Director.

Any schedule changes must occur on the first of the month, meaning you must request a schedule change prior to the first day of the new month.

Drop-in Care

If you need short-term, short-notice care, please call the center you'd like to attend. If the center has an opening, we will accommodate your child and put them on the schedule once paperwork is complete, payment is made, and immunizations are verified. If the center does not have an opening, we will put them on a waiting list and notify the parent as soon as possible should the schedule open up. If we do schedule a child, it is expected that the spot is paid for, whether or not the child attends. With adequate notice, this charge will be suspended.

Tuition Payment Expectations

- Payment is expected on the 1st of each month for all children on a PT or FT schedule.
- For drop-in children, payment is expected on the day childcare is provided.
- If tuition is not paid in full by the 15th of the month, a \$25 late fee will accrue.
- We adhere to strict business hours. Families will be charged \$1 per minute for every minute a child is picked up after closing time.

Accounts must be paid in full by the end of each month for your child to continue care the next month, unless previous arrangements have been made.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available to families who meet income guidelines. If you'd like to see if you qualify for an income-based scholarship, please contact your Site Director.

- If you need further assistance beyond the scholarship tuition rate, please request the Emergency Funds form.
- This form can be used in the event of major life/financial changes such as divorce, high medical bills, etc.

Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP)

We are able to accept ICCP. Recipients of the Idaho Child Care Program are expected to make payments that are equal to the approximate pending co-pay. If you need assistance with your co-pay, please contact your Site Director.

Vacations, Sick Days, and Absences

Absences

It is very important for us to know when children will or will not be present.

- The number of children scheduled to attend each day determines the number of staff scheduled to work.
- Please contact your center if you will be arriving more than one hour late.
- If your child is more than one hour late, and you did not contact your center to let them know, it is assumed your child is absent and we will remove them from the schedule for that day.

Vacation

You may request to have days removed from your regular schedule in advance so you do not have to pay for expected absences.

The number of vacation days available to you is based on the number of days your child is scheduled per week. Vacation days can be used for illness, a scheduled Giraffe Laugh closure, or personal vacations. You are awarded half of your allotted vacation days to be used between January and June, and your second half between July and December. Any unused time from the first half of the year may be carried over to the next half of the year.

In order to receive a credit on your tuition, please submit your request to your Site Director. The vacation credit will show up on the following month's tuition. Vacation days do not roll over to the next year.

→ Full Days

- ◆ 5 Days = 10 days of vacation
- ◆ 4 days = 8 days of vacation
- ◆ 3 days = 6 days of vacation
- ◆ 2 days = 4 days of vacation

→ Half Days

- ◆ 5 half days = 10 half days of vacation
- ◆ 4 half days = 8 half days of vacation
- ◆ 3 half days = 6 half days of vacation
- ◆ 2 half days = 4 half days of vacation

For families attending Garden City preschool, vacation credits are pre-determined and align with winter break.

Age Group Information

Infants

What You Provide:

- Bottles
- Wipes
- Breast milk if applicable
- Crib sheet
- Sleep sack
- Pacifier
- Extra clothing
- Diaper rash cream

What We Provide:

- Baby food
- Snacks
- Table food for breakfast, lunch, and snack when it's decided your infant is ready
- Formula based on the guidelines of The Child and Adult Care Food Program via the Department of Education for non-breastfeeding parents

Breastfeeding Information:

- Giraffe Laugh trains both staff and families on the importance of parents being able to breastfeed wherever they have a legal right to be.
- We provide a designated, comfortable breastfeeding area.
- Staff will follow the parent's feeding plans.
- Bottles will not be given when a parent is expected for breastfeeding.

Feeding Information:

- All baby foods are served as a single item only.
- There are no mixed meals so you know exactly what your child is eating.

Safe Sleep:

- Infants must sleep on their backs on a flat sleep surface.
- Bed linens used under children on cots, cribs, and playpens must be tight-fitting.
- If an infant turns over while sleeping, the child care provider must return the infant to their back until the infant is able to independently roll from back to front and front to back.
- When infants are able to roll over on their own, they will no longer be swaddled.
- We do not allow loose blankets, stuffed toys, pillows, crib bumpers, or similar items inside a crib.

Toddlers

What You Provide:

- Diapers
- Wipes
- Sippy cup
- Comfort item for naptime, blanket, and sheet for their cot
- Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor play, such as coats and closed-toe shoes

- A change of clothes in case of accidents or messy play (or several if needed)
- Sunscreen if necessary

Potty Training:

- When potty training, we expect parents to provide several clean changes of clothes.
- We emphasize the importance of children finding success at home with potty training before attempting it at school.
- We do not recommend pull-ups for waking hours, as they don't provide the same awareness of wetness as underpants.
- Pull-ups for naptime are acceptable.
- We do not shame, scold, or embarrass a child when they have accidents or are not successful using the toilet - we believe accidents are part of the learning process.
- When a child has an accident, we encourage children to change their own clothing to reinforce the benefits of using the toilet. However, they are still closely supervised, encouraged, and cleaned up by their teacher.
- If a child attempts potty training and is not finding success, we may suggest returning to diapers.

Preschool

What You Provide:

- Weather appropriate clothing for outdoor play such as coats and closed-toe shoes
- A change of clean clothes in case of accidents or messy play
- A comfort item for naptime/quiet time
- Water bottle
- Sunscreen if necessary

Items from Home:

- Comfort items such as a blanket or stuffed animal can help make a child's transition to school easier.
- All items must be labeled with your child's name.
- We strongly discourage bringing in toys from home.
 - We will not be responsible for the toy if it is lost or damaged.
 - We find that children more successfully learn the concept of sharing with Giraffe Laugh toys that are neutral, rather than with toys that belong to themselves or others.

Preschool Program:

- Preschool hours are 9:30 am - 12:30 pm.
- Preschool is child-led and play-based, and incorporates teacher-led activities throughout the day.
- Creative Curriculum is used to create weekly lesson plans surrounding various studies including trees, simple machines, clothing, water, etc.
- Our primary goal is kindergarten readiness by integrating STREAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Reading, and Math) with ongoing social and emotional development.
- Please see the following page for more information on STREAM education.

Social and Emotional Development:

Research suggests that strong social and emotional skills are the biggest indicators of success for children in school. Here are examples of skills that we develop and foster in preschool:

- Learning to make a friend through successfully entering and engaging in play
- Standing in line
- Taking turns
- Expressing feelings
- Recognizing emotions in others
- Sitting and engaging in circle time

STREAM Education

Science: Using children's natural curiosity, teachers can promote discovery, experimentation, hypothesis, and prediction to build on their scientific skill set. The goal of science at this age is not to memorize facts but to gain knowledge through experimentation, observation, and play.

Technology: We understand that technology is deeply embedded in society, and prepare children for the way it impacts how we communicate, work, learn, and live. We introduce technology through puzzles and games, recognizing shapes, and having hands-on opportunities to tinker with machines.

Reading and Literacy: The ability to read is the foundation of all future learning, communication, and critical thinking. We introduce children to language and expand their vocabulary through stories, songs, and conversation. We also use Zoophonics to reinforce letter recognition, letter sounds, and pre-reading skills.

Engineering: Preschool is a critical time for laying the foundation for engineering skills. We promote hands-on, open-ended play with Legos and manipulatives to allow children to design and build freely. Trying, failing, and trying again builds persistence and a growth mindset.

Art: Art fosters creativity, self-expression, and fine motor development. We value process over product, praising children's effort rather than the "success" of the result. Through different media such as drawing and painting, children learn to express themselves, make choices, and develop confidence in their ideas.

Math: Math allows children to make sense of the world. By introducing basic concepts like counting, shapes, sizes, and patterns, children have the foundation for concepts such as time and money. Through hands-on activities, games, and play, children develop their problem-solving and reasoning skills.

Behavioral Guidance Policy

The purpose of behavioral guidance is to help children develop self-control and become responsible for their own behavior. Knowing what behavior is appropriate or acceptable in a situation is an important skill. We are committed to helping children learn to express feelings appropriately, to consider other people's feelings, and to negotiate their own conflicts. Partnering with families is very important to determine which methods work best for each child.

Our Goals:

- To provide a safe environment for all children
- To work with children and families to foster positive behavior
- To help every child feel successful

Our Commitment to You:

- We will always share the positive aspects of your child's day to reinforce the concept that adults focus on appropriate behavior as opposed to inappropriate behavior.
- We will not speak about your child in front of them, especially when discussing misbehavior. Attempts to discuss negative behavior will be politely declined, and time will be scheduled to talk without the child present.

Our Guidance Process:

- When unacceptable behavior occurs, children are spoken to gently but firmly.
- Words are chosen carefully and a positive tone of voice is used to help the child feel confident and reassured rather than guilty and ashamed.
- For more serious or continuing misbehavior, a child may be removed from the group for a brief period and will have the opportunity to do a calming activity such as look at a book, do a puzzle, or snuggle with a soft toy.
 - We call this *redirection*, meaning children's attention is shifted from an undesirable behavior to a more positive and constructive activity or behavior.
- Teachers will model and assist with conflict resolution. In these interactions, language building occurs to help children with the nuances of social skills while building the vocabulary that is key to positive interactions with one another.

Challenging Behaviors

A challenging behavior can be defined as any behavior that interferes with children's learning, development and success at play and is harmful to the child, other children or adults. Examples of challenging behaviors include but are not limited to:

- Hitting
- Biting
- Scratching
- Screaming
- Spitting
- Punching
- Kicking
- Throwing objects
- Breaking classroom materials
- The use of any object or body part with the intent to cause physical harm

Teachers identify challenging behavior through observation and documentation. The goal of observing and documenting is to identify which events, activities, and interactions may contribute to a child's challenging behavior. Once the source of the behavior is identified, teachers and parents determine strategies to support positive behavior both at home and at school.

Child Inclusion Plans

Also known as Behavior Modification Plans or Individualized Action Plans. Child inclusion plans support children's inclusion and success in a program if continually challenging, disruptive and/or unsafe behavior is not resolved through appropriate behavior management strategies. All reasonable attempts will be made to work with children and families to resolve behavioral issues. Staff will keep families informed of the progress made and referrals to community resources or an outside evaluation may be suggested.

Suspension and Expulsion

We reserve the right to limit, deny, or suspend a child when the health and safety of the individual, other children, or staff is at risk. Decisions will be based on the following behavioral criteria:

- Repeated and unresolved challenging behaviors that require staff to spend considerable time away from other children
- Failure of parents/guardians to follow through with referrals to intervention services
- Lack of parental support for behavioral strategies developed by our staff and/or intervention services

Our policy complies with federal and civil rights laws

Meals and Food Pantry

Meals

All meals include a grain, vegetable, fruit, protein, and dairy product. All meals are USDA approved and adhere to the Child and Adult Care Food Program via the Department of Education. Children under the age of two will receive whole milk with meals. After the age of two, they will be served 1% milk. Giraffe Laugh is a nut-free environment.

- Breakfast is served at 8:30 am
- Lunch is served at 11:30 am
- Snack is provided at 2:30 pm
- Children are not forced to eat certain foods or certain amounts of food
 - The "one bite rule" is prohibited
 - Withholding food is prohibited
- Children engage in family style meals, meaning they serve themselves from serving bowls on their table
 - This helps with fine motor development, self regulation skills, and self-confidence

Food Pantry

- Every Giraffe Laugh center has a food pantry on site.
- These are available to all families during business hours.
- There is no income limit - all enrolled families are welcome and encouraged to use the food pantry.
- There is no limit on how often you may use the food pantry.
- There are no limits on how much you may take from the food pantry.

Outside Food and Drink

As a health and safety matter, we do not allow outside food or drink in the building in order to mitigate the risks of food allergies.

- Water bottles may only be filled with water - milk, juice, or soda will be dumped out.
- The only exception is for birthdays. Families may bring in store bought, allergen free treats for their child's birthday.

The U.S. Dept of Agriculture prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees, and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases will apply to all programs and/or employment activities.) If you wish to file a Civil Rights program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program

*Discrimination Complaint Form, found online at:
http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust or at any USDA office, or call (866)6329992 to request the form. You may also write a letter containing all of the information requested in the form. Send your completed complaint form or letter to us by mail at U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 202509410, by fax (202)6907442 or email at program.intake@usda.gov. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800)8778339; or (800)8456136 (Spanish). USDA Child Nutrition Programs recognize the following protected classes: race, color, national origin, sex, age & disability. USDA is an equal opportunity employer.*

Parent Involvement

We welcome parent and family involvement in many forms and provide many opportunities for participation in center and classroom activities.

Volunteering

- We ask that families contribute 20 hours of volunteer time per year. Examples include:
 - Chaperoning a field trip, doing a classroom story time, organizing the food pantry, etc.
 - Using talents or expertise for projects such as yard improvements, building classroom or playground equipment, or building maintenance.
- Volunteer time can be pooled amongst your family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors and count toward your 20 hours.
- The family that volunteers for the most hours in a year gets a free week of childcare equivalent to their normal schedule.

Family Communication

- Please refer to center/classroom bulletin boards to see the following:
 - Upcoming activities or events
 - The monthly or weekly lesson plan
 - Important reminders
 - The daily schedule
- You will also receive a weekly newsletter from your Site Director with the above information.

Social Media

- Website: www.giraffelaugh.org
- Facebook: Giraffe Laugh
- Instagram: GiraffeLaughELC
- X: GiraffeLaugh
- Indeed: GiraffeLaugh
- LinkedIn: Giraffe Laugh Early Learning Center
- YouTube: GiraffeLaugh

Visiting

- Giraffe Laugh has an open door policy. You are welcome anytime!
 - That said, naptime/quiet time is at 12:30 p.m.
 - We recommend avoiding visitation at this time as it can be more difficult for children to separate from parents during this transition period.

Parenting Classes

- Parenting classes vary from center to center but are often available for all parents and families of enrolled children.
- Most parenting classes are free.
- To ensure our hosted classes aren't further burdening parents, we always provide food (either snacks or a meal depending on the class time) and childcare.
- Examples of parenting classes include but are not limited to:
 - Strengthening Families
 - Love and Logic
 - Cooking Matters
 - Ready! For Kindergarten
 - Jai Institute for Parenting

Parent/Family Conferences

- All centers host at least one conference per year.
- Parents and families can connect with teachers about their child's development, academic progress, and social/emotional skills.
- We view parents as their child's expert, so we prioritize parent's input and questions during conferences.
- Our aim is partnering with parents and families to set goals for their child, then achieving them together as a team.

Our teachers use a variety of tools to assess, monitor, develop and plan for your children. These tools vary from center to center and include but are not limited to:

- Creative Curriculum
- Teaching Strategies Gold
- Ready! For Kindergarten
- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)
 - Please see the following page for more information on the ASQ

Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) Policy

Giraffe Laugh uses the Ages and Stages Questionnaire to provide reliable and accurate developmental screening. Parents or guardians will use this screening tool with their child at home to answer a series of basic questions about their child's communication, gross motor, fine motor, problem-solving, and personal-social skills.

- Within 60 days of your child's enrollment, you will receive an ASQ for your child's age range. ASQs can be filled out either online or on paper.
- You have 7 days to complete your ASQ and either return it to your Site Director or fill it out digitally.
- Site Directors will either receive a summary of the assessment or score your hard copy and the results will be discussed within 7-10 days. The results of your child's ASQ are confidential and will only be shared amongst the Site Director, Assistant Site Director if needed, and your child's Lead Teacher.

You and your child's teacher will use the results of the ASQ to determine how your child can best be supported.

If there are no concerns:

- Your child will be rescreened either when they move up to the next classroom, or before the next Family/Teacher conferences.
- Your child's lead teacher will use the results of the ASQ to guide lesson planning and individualized instruction to foster development in specific areas.

If there are concerns:

- ASQ results can be shared with primary care providers should your child need a referral for vision, hearing, or behavioral screenings.
- Your child can be referred to intervention services such as the Infant Toddler Program or the school district.

The ASQ is a tool to help determine whether a child is developing on schedule. It also assists parents and teachers in identifying specific areas where support may be needed.

The ASQ provides general information regarding developmental milestones; it does not diagnose delays or disabilities.

The ASQ is designed to help all children be successful, and Giraffe Laugh believes that each child is a unique and capable learner. If a concern exists, your Site Director will provide you with the necessary information to seek outside resources and services.

Field Trips and Extracurriculars

Field trips vary from center to center. Common choices are the Zoo, the Aquarium, local parks, the pumpkin patch, etc.

Transportation

- Giraffe Laugh has two vans to transport children to and from field trips.
- If/when the vans are unavailable, we will rely on parent and family volunteers.
- Parents must provide their driver's license and proof of insurance in order to drive other children to and from field trips.
- All parents driving other children must also be accompanied by a Giraffe Laugh staff member.
- Families must sign the booster seat/car seat waiver before any form of transportation.
- Please provide a labeled car seat or booster seat for your child on field trip days. If your child weighs less than 39 pounds, they must use a carseat per Idaho Code 49-672 "Idaho's Child Passenger Safety Law will require that all children 6 years of age or younger be properly restrained in an appropriate child safety restraint." (current as of 2024)

Field Trip Fees

- There is often a small fee associated with field trips.
- Field trip costs should not be a burden to families, and all children are welcome on field trips regardless of their family's ability to pay.
- Please reach out to your Site Director if you need financial assistance with a field trip fee.

Extracurriculars

Extracurricular activities vary from center to center, and activities are often seasonal. Common extracurriculars include gymnastics, athletics programs, dance, and swimming.

- Extracurricular activities often occur once a week.
- Parents are typically billed monthly through the extracurricular organization.
- We provide scholarships for families who are unable to pay. Please contact your Site Director for more information about this.
- Extracurriculars may have certain requirements such as age and toileting abilities.

Illness and Medication

Illness

Children cannot attend Giraffe Laugh if any of the following conditions are present:

- Fever - a temperature of 100.4 or above is a fever
 - Child must be fever-free for a full 24 hours without medication before returning
- Vomiting* - one occurrence will result in immediate pick up
 - Child may not return until vomit-free for at least 24 hours
- Diarrhea* - extremely loose stool will result in immediate pick up
 - Child may not return until diarrhea-free for at least 24 hours

*in the event of Rotavirus or Norovirus, children with these symptoms may be asked to stay home for at least 48 hours after the last occurrence

- Bacterial infections - i.e., UTI, ear infection, or Strep throat
 - Children must be on antibiotics for at least 24 hours before returning
- Rashes - all rashes require a physician's clearance to return
- Chicken Pox - children must stay home until sores are dry
- Head lice/scabies - children must be nit-free to return and staff will perform a health check upon arrival
- Nasal Discharge - children will be encouraged to stay home if exhibiting ongoing discharge or the discharge is green
- Pink eye - due to pink eye's highly contagious nature, children cannot return until they have been treated and the eye is no longer draining
- Surgical procedures - any child undergoing general anesthesia
 - must be out of the program for the entire day of the procedure, and an additional 24 hours to ensure complete recovery
- Miscellaneous symptoms that result in a request for immediate pickup:
 - Persistent cough
 - Eye drainage
 - Ear pain
- Miscellaneous symptoms that will require further monitoring and may result in a call to parents:
 - Extreme irritability
 - Listless behavior
 - Lack of appetite/refusal to eat or drink

Doctor's Notes

If we require a doctor's note for one of the above symptoms, and you are unable to see a doctor due to underinsurance or lack of insurance, please contact your Site Director.

- We reserve the right to deny readmittance until our qualifications are met, even with a doctor's note.

Illness-related Pick-up Procedures

- You are required to pick up your child within 60 minutes of notification regarding an illness. If you cannot be reached, an emergency contact will be called.
- We reserve the right to determine when a child should be sent home due to illness.
- Siblings of ill students are encouraged to stay home as well to prevent illness transmission.

Medication

Giraffe Laugh is able to administer prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs such as Tylenol, Albuterol, and topicals such as Neosporin with a signed medication form.

- Please contact your Site Director for a medication form.
- You can request a separate medication for childcare from your pharmacist to ensure their medication is always available to use when needed.
- All medication must be given directly to a Giraffe Laugh employee on your site. Please do not leave it in your child's bag where it could be forgotten or accessible to other children.

Immunization Policy

Giraffe Laugh respects every family's right to make their own healthcare decisions. To attend Giraffe Laugh, your child must be fully immunized or up to date on their immunizations to begin/continue receiving care. As a private non-profit, we enforce our policy so parents who enroll know their child will be among others who have chosen to vaccinate.

Licensing

All staff must maintain current licensing mandates at the federal, state, and local levels if applicable.

Giraffe Laugh meets or exceeds all regulations regarding the following:

- Adult-to-Child ratios
- Health and Safety standards
- Nutrition guidelines
- Record-keeping regulations

Regulatory bodies include, but are not limited to:

- Idaho Child Care Program (ICCP)
- Idaho STARS
- Healthy Child Care Initiative
- The State of Idaho
- The City of Boise (when relevant)

All staff are required to obtain and maintain:

- Enhanced background checks
- First Aid/CPR
- Enrollment and participation in the IdahoSTARS professional development program, as well as 20 hours of professional development and training annually
 - The purpose of this program is to further the education and professionalism of our staff

Babysitting

Giraffe Laugh staff members are not allowed to take care of enrolled children, whether or not they attend that staff member's site, outside of working hours, under any circumstances. Please refrain from asking staff to babysit.

Injury or Harm

Minor Injuries

- All staff are required to be CPR and First Aid certified.
- Staff will address any minor injury in accordance with First Aid certification standards.
- An incident report will be filled out and shared with parents to be signed. Parents will receive a copy of the incident report if they so choose, and center staff will file it in our records.
- Minor injuries include but are not limited to:
 - Shallow cuts, scrapes, bumps, and bruises

Major Injuries

- In the case of a serious accident or injury, parents and families will be notified immediately.
- If parents are unreachable, we will attempt to reach the child's emergency contact.
- In the event of a medical emergency, we will call an ambulance.
- Major injuries include but are not limited to:
 - Broken bones, suspected concussions, severe bleeding, and severe allergic reactions.

Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, and Sexual Abuse

In an effort to prevent child abuse and neglect, all Giraffe Laugh staff are required to participate in an annual training that addresses strategies for preventing abuse and neglect, including sexual abuse.

Recognition of abuse and/or neglect is vital to the safety of all children in our care and in our community. We adhere to the Idaho Code as follows:

Idaho Code, Section 16-1605: requires all childcare personnel to report any indication of child abuse. We are obligated by law to inform the Child Protection Offices of the Department of Health and Welfare within twenty four (24) hours of any conditions or circumstances which would reasonably result in physical injury to a child. Persons who act upon reasonable cause in reporting child abuse are protected from any liability by Idaho Code, Sec 16-1606.

Everyone is required to report suspected abuse, not just teachers. Please call 211 if you suspect a child is being abused or neglected. Your identity can remain confidential and it is our collective responsibility to ensure safety for children in all areas of their lives.

Center Closures

Holidays

- We are closed for the following holidays:
 - Memorial Day
 - Fourth of July
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving Day & Black Friday
 - December 25th-January 1st

If the holiday mentioned occurs on a weekend, the center will be closed either the Friday before or the Monday after the holiday.

The Garden City Preschool follows the Future Public School year calendar and has the above closures, as well as the entire week of Thanksgiving, the entire week of New Year's day, and Spring Break. Dates vary year to year.

Snow Days

In the event of severe weather conditions, please be aware that the centers may be closed for the day. Our protocols are as follows:

- If the Boise School District declares a snow day or severe weather day and closes school for the day, Boise Giraffe Laugh centers will also be closed.
- If the Kuna School District declares a snow day or severe weather day and closes schools for the day, Giraffe Laugh in Kuna will also be closed.
- If the Boise or Kuna School Districts are not in session (i.e. Thanksgiving Break or Christmas Break), Giraffe Laugh will make its own determination.
- In some cases, we may opt to have a late start or early dismissal rather than close for the entire day.

Additional Assistance for Families

Giraffe Laugh is partnered with and connected to many resources for families who are in need. Please contact your Site Director if you need any help.

Self Rescue Manual

Self Rescue Manual is a guide to all community resources and supports in Ada County. There is a manual located at every center, as well as online.

The Self Rescue Manual includes resources pertaining to clothing and furniture, counseling and mental health services, dental services, education, employment, financial and utility assistance, food pantries, crisis assistance hot-lines, housing assistance, legal assistance, medical assistance, substance abuse treatment, support groups, transportation and vision services.

Findhelp Idaho

Findhelp is an online database for community resources. Families are able to connect with a network of programs that offer social services including therapy programs, dentistry, debt assistance, legal assistance, transportation, etc. All programs are verified through FindHelp.

2-1-1 Idaho CareLine

The 2-1-1 Idaho CareLine is a free, statewide community information and referral service through the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. The comprehensive database includes programs that offer free or low-cost health and human services or social services.

If you have any other questions pertaining to you or your family's need for services not mentioned here, please feel free to contact your Site Director for more information.

Diversity and Inclusion

Vision

Giraffe Laugh aims to build a diverse and inclusive staff and Board of Directors that accurately reflects the families we serve. Our goal is to achieve an enriched and equitable learning environment for children and employees of Giraffe Laugh.

Supervisors must reflect diverse backgrounds and understand how to support diversity and inclusion. They must lead a committed team, each of whom must contribute to a respectful and inclusive environment, and ensure a caring, inclusive space for all children and families.

We aspire to provide every child with the opportunity to interact with and learn from people of all walks of life. We aim to foster well-rounded children who accept others for their differences, as well as their similarities. We envision a staff and Board of Directors that reflect the diversity of the community we serve in order to better empathize, support and anticipate the variety of needs of our families.

Mission

Diversity is a priority at Giraffe Laugh Early Learning Centers as a part of its mission to ensure school readiness, empower families, and build strong futures for all children and their families we serve. We value the importance of having a diverse constituent base, providing services to families at all income levels and of different backgrounds. We propose to build an environment in which children from all experiences can help one another succeed and grow into well-rounded individuals. In addition, we serve family structures of all types including teen parents, homeless parents, single parents, regular and high-income parents, foster parents, and parental guardians. We work to provide a stable and safe space for a child, especially as home life can become tumultuous and ever-changing.

To successfully serve a wide base of needs, it is important that the Giraffe Laugh staff and Board of Directors reflect the diversity that we treasure in our stakeholders. Our staff currently consists of many different ethnicities, ages, incomes, religions, and areas of expertise with one common thread: a passion for early childhood education to prepare our Giraffe Laugh children for success in the future.

Thank you for choosing us!

We look forward to partnering with you in your child's developmental and educational journey. Please keep us informed on how we can continue caring for you and your family! It is our goal to ensure school readiness, empower families and to build strong futures.

I have read and understand the content of the Giraffe Laugh Early Learning Centers Parent Handbook:

Parent Name and Signature _____

Child's Name _____

Date _____