



Welcome To Our Program!

We are so pleased that you selected Go Kids, Inc. /Estrella Family Services (hereafter referred to as, “the agency”) to provide your child with a high quality educational experience. We have spent many years building relationships in the communities we serve and can’t wait to include you in our journey. Our programs are committed to fostering social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development while recognizing the importance of the family, culture, and the community.

You will find our Site Supervisor/Site Director and teaching staff are very open to ongoing communication. They will check in with you regularly about your child’s progress. We want to encourage you to ask questions, share ideas, or raise concerns about any of our program components.

Please read the extensive information contained in this *Parent Handbook* carefully and keep it on hand for your future reference. We believe this document is very informative and will assist you with navigating our program requirements.

Thank you for choosing our program. We look forward to a fruitful partnership with you and your family.

Sincerely,

*Larry Drury
Chief Executive Officer
Go Kids, Inc. /Estrella Family Services*

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HISTORY

The agency was established in 1975 when it was awarded a grant from the city of Morgan Hill to provide early childhood education training services to unemployed women from low-income backgrounds. Since its incorporation as a nonprofit agency in 1978, the agency budget and service area has continued to grow. Go Kids now provides services in Santa Clara, San Benito, Monterey, and Santa Cruz counties. We have a long history of a diverse funding base that has included financial support from the California Department of Education, San Benito County United Way, Santa Clara County, San Jose City, Santa Clara County First 5, San Benito County First 5, Monterey County First 5, Santa Cruz County First 5, the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation and the Packard Foundation.

In 2015, Go Kids acquired Estrella Family Services creating a most welcome opportunity to add 4 long established child care centers and 33 professional early education staff to the high quality services of Go Kids. The addition of Estrella Family Services also gave Go Kids a prominent presence in San Jose.

VISION

We envision communities where every child has the support they need to reach their greatest potential.

MISSION

We enhance the lives of children and families through the delivery of comprehensive child development services and community involvement.

VALUES

PASSION

People get involved and contribute because of their passion

RESPECT

All people deserve to be treated with respect

INTEGRITY

A strategic, inquiring and informed perspective promotes a high standard of quality and objectivity

QUALITY

Best practices define the quality of service delivery to families with young children

SENSE OF HUMOR

Joyful interactions help families with young children flourish

PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

The agency is committed to creating and maintaining quality comprehensive programs for children that foster social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development while recognizing the importance of the family, culture and the community.

GUIDING PRINCIPALS

SAFE AND HEALTHY/NURTURING

The program is licensed, and in compliance with health and safety codes. Early care professionals are qualified, trained and passionate about meeting the individual needs of every child.

DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE PRACTICE

The program is respectful of, and values each child's individual rates and patterns of physical/motor, psychosocial, cognitive, language and literacy development, personality, learning style, and family and cultural background.

SCHOOL READINESS

All children will have access to developmentally appropriate experiences that encourage their optimal development across the developmental continuum.

ASSESSMENT

Early care professionals gather information from several forms of evidence in order to complete a Desired Results Developmental Profile on each child.

INTENTIONALITY

Early care professionals plan meaningful activities based on the data collected from the Desired Results Developmental Profile.

SOCIAL COMPETENCE

Children are provided opportunities to foster their ability to understand the thoughts, intentions, and behaviors of oneself, and others.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This handbook was designed to assist participants with understanding the requirements to participate in this program. We look forward to serving you!

We are a private, non-profit organization funded by federal, state & local governments.

Parental Choice

It is the parent's right and responsibility to choose an eligible licensed facility that meets their child's needs. For assistance in choosing a child care facility at any time, contact your county's Child Care Resource and Referral program.

Equal Access

We operate on a non-discriminatory basis, giving equal access to services without regard to race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, and/or sexual orientation.

Confidentiality

The use or disclosure of any information maintained in the basic data file concerning children and their families is limited to purposes directly connected with administration. No other use of the information will be made without prior written consent or through a subpoena. Participants shall have access to information in their basic data file within 5 business days after receiving a written request.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Our educational program is based on sound principles of child development. Our overall goal is to give children a sense of self-worth and to help them develop according to their own individual styles. We want them to feel confident and secure so that they can explore and grow in a stimulating educational, social and home like environment. We are committed to supporting all aspects of a child's growth in an atmosphere of respect. Your child is seen as an individual who is an important member of a group, and whose uniqueness is acknowledged by that group.

INFANT/TODDLERS

All children between the ages of 6 weeks and 24 months will be assigned to a primary caregiver. The primary caregiver will be responsible for providing most of the care giving for their small group of children. Primary care giving promotes the teacher child relationship, and works to support a strong teacher family connection. Age appropriate learning experiences, both indoors and out, help infants and toddlers grow and develop to successfully transition into preschool. Parents and caregivers will work in collaboration to complete an individualized Infant/Toddler Needs and Services Plan tailored to their child's specific eating, sleeping and toilet training needs.

Bottles, diapers and wipes are provided for all infants 6 weeks to 24 months.

Our programs promotes and follows practices that reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). SIDS is greatly reduced through these measures, and we actively encourage our parents to follow them at home:

- All infants are required to be on their backs to sleep when placed in the crib
- Not allowing blankets, pillows, quilts, stuffed toys and other soft items in cribs
- Infants heads remain uncovered while they are sleeping
- Infants are never left unattended, even while sleeping

Parents will be required to complete the Individual Infant Sleeping Plan form (LIC 9227).

We serve children 18 months to three years of age in our toddler option program. Children who are less than 18 months of age or more than 36 months of age will not be eligible to enroll in the toddler program. Parents will be required to complete a Need and Service Plan (6 weeks 0-30

Months) prior to attending the center. This plan must be signed by the authorized representative. The plan shall be updated quarterly or as often as necessary

PRESCHOOL

The agency operates full day and part day preschool programs for potty trained children ages 2 years 9 months to entry into kindergarten. Our programs emphasize the development of social and emotional skills as the basis for all learning. Our selected teaching model, *The Creative Curriculum 6th Edition*, provides a blueprint for planning and implementing a developmentally appropriate program. Our classroom settings are designed in an environmental approach, encouraging children to explore eleven learning areas- Blocks, Dramatic Play, Toys and Games, Art, Library, Discovery, Sand and Water, Music and Movement, Cooking, Computers, and Outdoors. Children learn through their own interests and opportunities provided by our quality teaching staff who guides them through a variety of experiences in six content areas- literacy, math, science, social studies, the arts and technology. Activities are aligned with California K-12 teaching standards to ensure kindergarten readiness.

SCHOOL-AGE

Our school-age programs provide children opportunities for homework, recreation and pursuing of individual passions while establishing partnerships between the center, families, school and the community. Teachers and children work collaboratively to create activities and clubs based on the interest of the children. Qualified staff also provides daily homework support while emphasizing K-12 classroom standards. Full day camps are offered during the summer. Our camps are a balance of fun activities and new experiences that foster leadership, teamwork and independence which may include field trips, special events and/or community visitors.

DESIRED RESULTS SYSTEM

To ensure the delivery of quality program services, the agency implements the Desired Results for Children and Families established by The California Department of Education (CDE), Early Learning and Care Division. The Desired Results System provides tools for program administrators to evaluate the effectiveness of physical settings, qualifications of staff, and training opportunities provided to parents and our early care professionals. The agency conducts an agency self-review using the Desired Results System on an annual basis and the California Department of Education conducts a Contract Monitoring Review every three years. The information we gather and assess helps the agency improve its child care and development services.

DESIRED RESULTS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

The Desired Results System consists of 6 Desired Results outcomes for our children and families:

- Children are personally and socially competent.
- Children are effective learners.
- Children show physical and motor competence.

- Children are safe and healthy.
- Families support their children’s learning and development.
- Families achieve their goals.

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSESSMENTS

Twice a year, teachers will complete a Desired Results Developmental Profile (DRDP) for every child. Teachers use the DRDP to look at children’s growth and development. The DRDP informs teachers of a child’s progress and provides information for planning for the child’s learning activities. After each DRDP is completed, a parent conference will take place where teachers will share the results of the DRDP with families. During this time, teachers and families plan together on how to best meet the needs of the child. Parent conferences take place at least twice a year, however additional conferences may be requested at any time.

PROGRAM EVALUATION

The agency utilizes the Environmental Rating System (ERS) to evaluate the quality of our child development programs as required by the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division. In addition, the agency relies on the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) to measure and improve the quality of teacher-child interactions. Program quality is assessed on an annual basis and outcomes are used to enhance program quality.

PARENT SURVEY

Parents will be asked to complete the Desired Results Family Survey on an annual basis. Results are used to enhance the services received by you and your child and to ensure that families’ needs are being met.

CENTER CLOSURE DAYS

PART DAY PROGRAMS

The Part Day Pre-School Program generally follows the calendar of the local school district(s); therefore, the program will be closed on most school holidays and breaks during the regular school year. A calendar of all closure days is available from your Site Supervisor/Site Director.

FULL DAY PROGRAMS

The agency publishes a Holiday and In-service calendar annually. Please refer to this calendar for a list of center days of closure.

MEALS & NUTRITION

The agency participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). All foods purchased, prepared and served at the agency centers are in accordance with USDA CACFP requirements and are under the direction of a nutritionist. Providing nutritious meals, promoting healthy eating and introducing new foods to the children are important aspects of the Nutrition Program. Menus are posted at each center and copies are available upon request. Meals are

limited in the amount of salt, sugar and fats and provide a variety of whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

The agency offers a variety of programs and provides appropriate meals throughout the day. Depending on the center and program, the agency meal options include: Breakfast, AM Snack, Lunch and PM Snack. Children enrolled in full day programs will receive Breakfast, Lunch and PM snack. Children enrolled in part day programs will receive either AM or PM Snack.

It is very important for the agency staff to know if your child has a food allergy or special dietary needs. All food prepared for the children is made without the use of tree and ground nuts or nut oils, but may be prepared or processed in the same spaces and with the same equipment as these products. A Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations Form must be completed and signed by your child's physician. We also request that the physician include a list of suitable alternative foods so that reasonable accommodations can be made for your child. In some cases parents may be asked to provide meals for their child. These meals **MUST** follow written guidelines and be approved in advance by the Site Supervisor/Site Director. In the event that dietary needs or accommodations change, a new Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations Form must be completed by your child's physician.

In an effort to ensure the health and safety of all children at the agency, we ask that **parents refrain from sending unapproved food** to school with their child (ren). This will help the center staff ensure that children with allergies will not come into contact with food that may cause them to have dangerous allergic reactions.

The agency practices family style meal service during all meals. This style of meal service promotes healthy eating habits and positive attitudes towards food and eating. Children are encouraged to sit at a table with their teachers in a relaxed atmosphere and try all components of the meal. As appropriate, children are also encouraged to serve themselves and to help clean up after meals.

Please review the *Infant feeding—An Overview* in the Infant Family Handbook for more in-depth information on infant feeding. Baby formula (for infants 6 weeks to 12 months) is provided by the agency unless the parent elects to provide an alternate formula or breastmilk. Breastmilk brought from home must be labeled in accordance with the information in the *Breastmilk Protocol for Families*. As the babies grow and show signs of readiness, solid foods will be offered to them in the center. Prior to introducing solids to the babies, the teachers will work closely with the families to create an individual feeding plan for each infant.

The U.S. Department 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.html, or at any USDA office, or call (866) 632-9992 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. 20250-9410, or by fax (202) 690-7442 or by e-mail 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) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish).

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

HOLIDAYS and CELEBRATIONS

With respect to the diversity of children and families we serve, and in compliance with state law, the agency refrains from religious instruction and or worship. Therefore religious holidays will not be celebrated in the classrooms. Should you wish to celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom, please coordinate with your child's teacher and or Site Supervisor/Site Director in advance.

Food items brought in for celebrations must be store bought and in accordance with our nutrition standards. Please speak to the Site Supervisor/Site Director prior to the celebration to verify any food allergies.

FIELD TRIPS POLICY

The agency incorporates field trips into our programs. Parents will be advised about the particulars of such field trips in advance. All parents are required to sign for permission/denial for their child to attend field trips. The agency will provide transportation via bus or the agency vans for field trips that are not within walking distance. On field trip days, children must be present at the center prior to departure for the field trip. Children may not be dropped off or picked up at the field trip site unless prior approval has been arranged with the Site Supervisor/Site Director. The agency staff is not permitted to drive children in their personal vehicles. Children who are not enrolled in our program are not allowed to participate in field trips.

STAFF

The agency is committed to providing quality early care and education services for every child and family it serves. Each agency employee's references, physical health (including TB clearance) and criminal record clearance are verified prior to employment. The childcare centers are staffed by qualified Site Supervisors/Site Directors, Master Teachers, Teachers, Teacher Assistants and support staff. All teaching staff is required to obtain a "Child Development Permit" issued by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing and are CPR and First Aid certified. All staff meet the requirements set forth by the State of California and operate within their guidelines to ensure a quality learning environment for your child. Adult-child ratios are maintained at *1:3 for infants (6 weeks– 24 months), 1:4 for toddlers (18 months to 36*

months), 1:8 for preschool (36 months to kindergarten), and 1:14 for school age children (kindergarten – 12 years old).

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Once hired, employees are required to participate in a new hire orientation program. In-service trainings are held each year, please refer to the agency Holiday and In-service calendar for dates. The centers are closed on these days to allow all staff to participate. Additional trainings are held throughout the year for all agency employees. Written performance evaluations are conducted on each employee annually to assess areas of strength and areas requiring additional support/training. Individual goals are set with each employee and their manager.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT & EDUCATION

The agency has an open door policy and supports strong parent involvement in all of our early care and education programs. Communication and participation is very important and will enhance a feeling of a partnership in the education of your child. Agency staff are dedicated to working with you to provide learning opportunities, both at home and at the center. It is important that you share any family changes, questions or concerns with us as they arise.

Here are some ways to get involved in your child's program:

- Ask you teacher about your child's progress
- Participate in parent conferences
- Offer your time and or talent in the classroom
- Donate materials for the classrooms
- Organize a fundraiser
- Help with a classroom project at home
- Attend center functions such as parent meetings, gatherings and fieldtrips
- Participate in the agency self-review process
- Participate in the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

Parents are encouraged to attend parent meetings and parent education opportunities. The agency provides ongoing parent education workshops throughout the year. The agency staff will distribute information to parents about these trainings as they occur.

The agency has established a Parent Advisory Committee (PAC). This committee of parents meets 4 times per year (at a minimum), is involved in the agency self review process, and makes recommendations regarding the operations of the programs to the agency staff. If you are interested in being a member of the PAC, please contact your center Site Supervisor/Site Director.

HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES

The agency provides parents with a local community resource guide at time of enrollment. The agency is happy to offer additional referrals for families in need. This service is a complimentary service and is included in the child development services we provide. Please contact your Site Supervisor/Site Director or Family Service Worker for additional referrals.

CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The agency welcomes and encourages the participation of children with varying needs and abilities in our programs. We comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The agency will make every effort to provide children with special needs reasonable accommodations to participate in activities, programs and services. If you feel your child requires a reasonable accommodation to participate in activities, please contact your Site Supervisor/Site Director. If your child has an Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) or Individualized Education Plan (IEP), we encourage you to share it with your Site Supervisor/Site Director and Family Service Worker. This will allow us to incorporate your child's needs and goals into our program, to support an optimal early care and education experience for your child.

ARRIVING AND LEAVING THE CENTER

The manner in which a parent arrives and leaves a child at school is very important. Starting the day in a positive manner will assure a good day for the child and teacher. Please be sure that your child is dressed and ready for the day. Take the time to bring your child into the center, make contact with a teacher and spend a few minutes before you leave. At pick-up time, take a few minutes to talk about the day with the teacher, and your child. Allowing your child time to finish their activity will provide a smooth transition for you and your child.

DAILY HEALTH SCREENING, EXCLUSION AND READMISSION POLICY

Children must remain home if they have a contagious illness and/or are not well enough to participate in daily activities. In order to maintain healthy environments for all of our children, staff will conduct a daily health screening of all children upon arrival for visible signs of illness. Children will be screened prior to the parent signing their child in for the day.

Staff will look for the following symptoms:

Vomiting or Diarrhea

Throat and Neck - redness, spots, sore throat, infected tonsils, (white deposits), swollen glands, etc.

Eyes - Discharge and/or redness

Skin - Rashes, spots, eruptions, vermin, etc.

Nose and Ears - Opaque and/or bloody discharge

Temperature - Fever within 24 hour period - over 100 F

Lice - Children must be appropriately treated and nit free for readmission

In the case of a lice outbreak, Go Kids will inspect for 10 days and deny care to any child with nits

Lethargic – unable to participate in daily activities

Children who have the above symptoms will be sent home and may return when:

1. Symptoms have disappeared; or
2. A doctor certifies with a signed, dated note that the child is not communicable. The note indicating when and why the child was excluded will be put in the child's file.

Children who become ill during the school day will be isolated from other children. Parents will be called and asked to pick their child up as soon as possible.

Parents are required to notify the center immediately of any contagious conditions to allow teaching staff to notify other parents in the center. Names will remain confidential at all times.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

MINOR ACCIDENTS/INJURIES AND EMERGENCIES

The agency policy requires written incident/accident reports for falls, scratches, bruises, bites and scrapes that occur while your child is in our care to include emergency situations.

Parents/guardians will be informed of the incident/accident and will be asked to sign the report. All reports are kept in the child's folder. Should an accident or injury occur to your child, the following steps will be taken:

1. A staff member will remain with your child to keep the child calm.
2. Accepted first aid practices of the American Red Cross Program will be administered.
3. In the case of a minor injury the wound will be washed with water and then protected with sterile bandages or ice will be applied.
4. In the case of a major injury, a staff member will immediately contact the parent/guardian and emergency services (911) to treat and transport the child

If we are unable to reach a parent/guardian, we will contact the authorized representatives listed on your child's emergency procedure card. If your child must be transported to a hospital, whenever possible the agency staff member will accompany your child and remain with your child until you arrive.

It is extremely important for staff to have current contact information for you and your child's authorized representatives at all times. Please update this information on your child's Emergency Procedure Card as often as needed.

MEDICATIONS

Ideally, medication should be administered at home. Please inform the physician that your child attends a Go Kids, Inc. program and to schedule administration of medication at home when possible. If not possible, Go Kids, Inc. staff will administer medication to children as long as the following procedures are followed:

PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

1. A Consent to Administer Medication Form must be completed and signed by the parent.
2. All prescription medication must be current with a clear, readable, unaltered label from the pharmacy showing the name of child, name of doctor, type of medication, amount to be administered and time of day to be administered.

OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATION

1. A Consent to Administer Medication Form must be completed and signed by the parent and physician.
2. All over the counter medications must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name.

SUNSCREEN

1. A Sunscreen Permission Slip must be completed
2. All sunscreen must be in its original container and labeled with the child's name.

HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

Children are required to have a physical examination, which may include a TB test prior to the 1st day of attendance and annually thereafter. Failure to comply may result in termination from the program. The agency will accept documents that are less than 1 year old to fulfill this requirement. Immunizations must be up to date and stay current during enrollment with the agency. These documents must be submitted before the child is allowed to receive services.

EMERGENCY DISASTER PLAN

In the event of an earthquake or other serious disaster, you may not be able to get to your child's center or make contact with the center by phone. An Emergency Disaster Plan is posted in each classroom indicating emergency evacuation, temporary relocation sites and staff assignments. If you would like to review your classrooms specific Disaster Plan, please speak with your child's teacher or Site Supervisor/Site Director. All center staff are certified in First Aid/CPR and trained in Emergency Disaster Preparedness.

An emergency backpack is maintained and Earthquake/ Fire Drills are conducted monthly in each classroom.

REST TIME

The agency provides every infant, toddler and full day pre-school child an opportunity to rest during the afternoon. A napping space, cot, or mat will be provided for each child. We encourage toddler and preschool children to bring their favorite blanket labeled with their name to help with self-regulation. For further clarification on self-regulation, please speak with your child's teacher or Site Supervisor/Site Director.

CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

1. The agency values children's freedom to play and learn. Playing and learning at the center often involves materials such as paint, glue, sand, water etc. You should expect that your child will get dirty throughout the day so please dress you child in play clothes that are easy for him/her to manage without much adult assistance.
2. We believe that an important part of a child's learning experience consists of being able to care for his/her own clothing. For that reason, we recommend that you mark clothing with permanent ink or name labels.
3. Parents are asked to keep extra sets of clothing in their child's cubby at all times. This will ensure that your child will be in dry clothes.
4. In the event your child wears someone else's clothing or shoes home, please call the center. Another parent or teacher may be searching for that item. Be sure to return all items to the center the following day.
5. For the safety of your child, open toed shoes, strapless shoes, flip flops, and high heels are not allowed. Please be sure your child's shoes fit well, as poorly fitted footwear is uncomfortable and can cause accidents.
6. Toys and other belongings from home are not allowed at the center. Please check with your child's teacher about "share days" and items that are appropriate to share.

The agency does not take responsibility for lost or damaged items brought from home.

BEHAVIOR POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The agency early educators and parents work in partnership to support each child's individual needs. With more children in childcare, challenging behavior- aggression, tantrums, defiance among young children is an increasing concern. We address the social and emotional concerns of children on a case by case basis as we know one strategy or method will not work for all children.

When confronted by ongoing challenging behavior(s) in a child (or adult), we use a reflective thinking process to examine what the challenging behavior is communicating to us and what strategies might be useful in addressing it. The term *Challenging Behavior* is used to mean any behavior that interferes with a child's ability to learn or develop and maintain relationships with others.

As a California licensed program the agency ensures the personal rights of all children which means; all children are accorded dignity in their personal relationships with peers and teachers, and they are provided safe, healthful and comfortable accommodations, furnishings and equipment to meet their needs. All children are free from corporal or unusual punishment (section 101223 Title 22 Regulations).

In the event, a challenging behavior exists; teachers will follow these procedures to address the issue:

- 1) Observe the behavior (s) and document program elements (e.g. environment, curriculum, relationships, time of day, patterns of the behavior).
- 2) The teacher will inform the Site Supervisor/Site Director of the situation.
- 3) The primary teacher will discuss the issue with the parent. If necessary, the teacher will meet with the parent to learn more about the child's home environment and any relevant information that might provide insights for understanding the behavior.
- 4) The teaching staff and parents will discuss strategies to address the behavior and develop a plan.
- 5) In cases of severe behaviors, or in the event that attempts to correct the behavior have not resulted in change, or the behavior may cause harm to the child, peers or staff, a formal behavior plan will be completed with specific timelines.
- 6) When all attempts have failed to result in desired behaviors,
- 7) Go Kids, Inc. will explore the following options:
 - Alternative placement will be determined for Toddlers and Preschool children.
 - Alternative placement and/or termination of services will be determined for school age children.

GENERAL RULES FOR SAFETY AND CONDUCT

Smoking is prohibited by State Law at all early care and education centers, playgrounds, parking lots and offices.

When transporting your child to and from the center:

- California Law requires children to ride in the back seat in a properly secured child passenger safety restraint until they are at least 8 years old or 4'9" in height. Children under the age of 1 weighing less than 20 pounds may not ride in the front seat of a vehicle with an active passenger side airbag in a rear facing infant seat.
- Drive slowly and park in designated agency parking spaces or in the surrounding neighborhood.
- DO NOT park in restricted, handicapped, and no parking (red) zones. Parking in these areas may result in your car being towed.
- NEVER leave a child alone in a parked car.

The agency should be a safe and pleasant environment for staff, children and families. Hostile, aggressive behavior such as yelling, hitting and/or the use of offensive language or gestures will not be tolerated and may result in immediate termination of services.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY

As mandated by California Department of Social Services and Child Protective Services, the agency staff is required to contact Child Protective Services if there is a reason to believe or suspect that a child is being neglected or abused. Please contact your Site Supervisor/Site Director if you are in need of community resources that can offer assistance in protecting your child's emotional or physical safety.

ENROLLMENT

As vacancies become available, families will be contacted for potential enrollment. It is the responsibility of the enrolling parent(s) to accurately complete and sign all enrollment documents and complete the parent orientation process prior to the child being admitted into a program. By signing the enrollment documents, the enrolling parent is also certifying that they have legal authority for the child. Parents must attend an orientation at the selected center prior to the child's first day of enrollment.

DAYS AND HOURS

For Subsidized Programs, see "Hours of Service"

Each center operates within the hours authorized by Community Care Licensing and reflects the greatest need in a specific community. Your Notice of Action will specify the days and hours your child is authorized to attend care. Any change needed in your child's schedule requires a written request to your Family Service Worker at least 2 weeks in advance. Schedules may **NOT** be changed without prior approval from your Family Service Worker. Changes in a child's schedule will require that a new Enrollment Contract be completed and signed.

ANNUAL REGISTRATION

For Subsidized Programs, see "Recertification of Eligibility and Need"

An initial Registration Fee is charged at the time of enrollment in the program. An annual Registration Fee will then be charged each year to re-enroll your child and to guarantee your child a place in the program for the upcoming year. There is no guarantee of re-enrollment if your child leaves the program during the year. A re-enrollment fee will also be charged if your child leaves and re-enters the program during the year. Registration Fees are listed on the Center's Tuition Schedule and are non-refundable.

TUITION

For Subsidized Programs, see "Family Fees"

Tuition is due on the first day of the month and considered delinquent after 7 calendar days. If payment is not received by 6:00pm on the 7th calendar day, child care services will be terminated until payment is received. If the 7th calendar day falls on a weekend or an agency observed holiday extending the weekend, tuition is due by 6:00 pm on the preceding Friday.

PAYMENTS

The agency accepts checks, money orders, cashier checks, Visa and Master Card. All checks and money orders shall be made payable to *Go Kids, Inc.* and may be submitted via US mail to the Executive Office in sufficient time to be received by the 7th calendar day of each month or delivered in person at the Executive Office by 6:00 pm on the 7th calendar day of the month. Please be sure to list your Go Kids, Inc. account number on all checks. There will be a fee of \$25.00 for returned checks. If more than one check is returned, money orders will be required for payment.

The Executive Office address is 885 Moro Dr. Gilroy, CA. 95020.

TERMINATION FOR NON-PAYMENT/LATE PAYMENT OF FEES

Tuition/Family Fees paid late 3 times within a six month period will result in the termination of childcare services. In addition, the family will be ineligible for services with the agency for a period of six months and any outstanding balance must be paid in full prior to readmission. Readmission for services will be determined by placement on the agency Waiting List.

FEES

ACTIVITY FEE

An annual activity fee of \$25 per child will be due in June. These fees are non refundable.

LATE PICK UP FEE

The agency, policy states that a parent pays a fee of \$15.00 (per child) for any part of each 15 minute period they are late picking up their child. (Example: 1 minute - 15 minutes late = \$15.00 per child, 16 minutes - 30 minutes late = \$30.00 per child). Parents or designated representative will be required to sign the Late Pick up Notice which documents occurrences of late pick up. Parents will be charged late pick-up fees in the month following the occurrence.

TRANSPORTATION FEE

The agency may arrange transportation for school-age children at an additional fee. Parents will need to complete a transportation agreement prior to receiving transportation services. Fees will be billed quarterly. In the event that fees are not paid by the due date, transportation services will be terminated until fees are paid in full. This is an OPTIONAL service to our center based families and is not offered at all sites.

REFUND OF TUITION/FAMILY FEES

All overpaid tuition/family fees will be refunded within 90 days of the child's last day of enrollment.

ATTENDANCE

SIGNING IN AND OUT

It is the requirement of California's Department of Social Services, Community Care Licensing Division and California's Department of Education, Early Care and Education Division, that a Full Legal Signature and times are listed on the attendance sheet. A Full Legal Signature is defined as the signature represented on the Confidential Application for Child Development Services and Certification of Eligibility (CD9600) or by the Full Legal Signature of an Authorized Family Representative as documented on the appropriate agency Emergency Card or

Release Form Addendum record. The exact arrival and departure times must be recorded on a daily basis. Signatures must be in ink and any discrepancies must be noted on the back of the attendance sheet. The use of white out or other correction materials is not permitted.

Notices will be mailed to the families who fail to use Full Legal Signature. The family will be required to attend a mandatory training upon the receipt of a 3rd and final notice. Failure to attend the mandatory training will result in termination from the program.

All children are required to be brought INTO the child care facility by their parent or parent's adult designee (must be 18 or older). Likewise, agency staff will only release a child to the parent or parent's adult designee (must be 18 or older). If pick-up is to be by someone other than those listed on the emergency card, please notify the center staff in writing. Children will not be allowed to leave with any other person without written authorization from the parent or guardian. Parents are required to keep the Emergency Card current with 3 emergency contacts. **The person picking up MUST be prepared to present a picture I.D.**

Children will not be released to an adult who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

If there is a court order that specifies that a parent is not allowed to pick up or contact the child without the consent of the custodial parent, the order must be on file with the agency. Any exceptions or special circumstances must be requested in writing and submitted in advance to the agency.

The agency is not responsible for children arriving on a bus or walking from school until they enter the doors of our facility.

Parents are required to notify the center within one hour of the contracted arrival time if a child is going to be absent. Parents must identify specific reasons for absence on the attendance form.

SUBSIDIZED PROGRAM SECTION – PAGES 20-24

This program has limited openings for eligible families. The first step to access these services is to be placed on our waiting list.

Enrollment into our program is determined by specific family eligibility and need criteria. In addition, a child's parent must live in California. Families complete a certification process at initial enrollment and must recertify their eligibility every 12 months thereafter, with the exception of Pilot Counties who are certified for 24 months

Note: The family can be terminated prior to the 12 months or 24 months they are eligible if either of the following items apply:

- Families who are certified as income eligible & during their certification period, their income exceeds the maximum income threshold, which is 85% of the state median income
- Families who do not follow agency policy (Attendance policy, delinquent fees, etc.....)

ELIGIBILITY AND NEED

INCOME ELIGIBILITY

A family's total countable income must meet the income guidelines as established by the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division. This is a sliding scale that takes into account family size and income.

NEED AND ELIGIBILITY

Please Note: This section does not apply to Part Day Pre-School Programs

Eligibility is based on either child or family eligibility. Participants must provide documentation of eligibility in at least one of these categories:

Child Eligibility

- Child protective services (Referral letter from CPS unit)
- At-risk of abuse, neglect or exploitation (Referral letter from legally qualified professional)

Family Eligibility

- Homeless (Referral Letter or Self-Declaration)
- Current aid recipient (Proof of current aid)
- Income eligible (Documentation of all income)

In addition to meeting the eligibility criteria, all Parent's must meet at least one need criteria. Note: Families whose eligibility criteria is CPS or At Risk are not required to meet a need criteria.

- Employment Verification
- Declaration of Self-Employment
- Request & Plan to Seek Employment (Max 5 days per week, for less than 30 hours per week).
Pilot exception: 32.5 hours
- Training Verification (Training leading to a vocational goal & must make adequate progress. In addition, services are limited for up to 6 years from the date participant starts classes or until participant reaches 24 units after the attainment of a bachelor's degree)
- Educational Program Verification (English Language Learner, High School Diploma or High School Equivalency Certificate)
- Request & Plan to Seek Permanent Housing (Max 5 days per week, for less than 30 hours per week). *Pilot exception: 32.5 hours* Homelessness Referral Letter
- Statement of Parental Incapacity (Max of 50 hours per week)
- Welfare to Work Plan Activity Assignment (CalWORKs programs)

RECERTIFICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND NEED

After initial Certification and Enrollment, California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division requires your declared need and eligibility to be recertified annually (except for Part Day Pre-School). At the time of recertification, you will be required to update your file with current income documentation and other supporting documentation as requested.

Any changes in the contracted hours of care must be supported by the necessary documentation requested prior to the changes in service becoming effective. Recertification and changes will not be approved without the appropriate documentation on file. Failure to comply with the recertification requirements may result in termination.

STATE MIGRANT PROGRAMS

To receive State Migrant Program services, the family shall have earned at least fifty percent (50%) of its total gross income from employment in fishing, agriculture or agriculturally related work during the twelve (12) month period immediately preceding the date of application for child care and development services. Families shall also meet all eligibility and need criteria.

ADMISSION PRIORITY

The agency policy for enrolling families adheres to the California Department of Education, Early Learning and Care Division-Admission Priorities. Priorities for enrollment may vary depending on the funding source and eligibility requirements. Children receiving Child Protective Services have first priority to be enrolled in the program

HOURS OF SERVICE

The childcare hours of service are determined upon certification. If hours of care are modified within the 12 months or 24 months of eligibility the Confidential Application (9600) must be revised to reflect the new approved hours and a Notice of Action will be sent specifying the new approved hours of care.

NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES

Once eligibility and need have been established a participant may keep their current service level, regardless of changes in their family. The only exception is if the family who is certified as income eligible & during their certification period, their income exceeds the maximum income threshold, which is 85% of the state median income threshold for ongoing eligibility.

Participants may voluntarily request to change their child's service level. If a participant needs to change their service level during their certification period the following must be submitted to your Family Service Worker:

- Declaration Statement and
- Documentation to support the request

It is important that the agency maintain current and accurate records on each child. These changes include, but are not limited to: home address, work address, home/work telephone numbers, cell phone numbers, work location, contact information for persons 18 years old or older authorized to pick up your child, and emergency contact information.

FAMILY FEE PROVISIONS

Please Note: This section does not apply to Part Day Pre-School Programs

DETERMINING FAMILY FEES

Some families enrolled in the program may have a family fee based on their gross monthly income, family size and certified hours of care. You will be notified by your Family Service Worker if and when you are responsible for paying a family fee.

Family fees will always be assessed according to the child's schedule with the greatest number of certified hours in a one month period, regardless of the number of children enrolled in the program.

Family fees are determined using the California Department of Education family fee schedule.

The following are exempt from monthly fees

- Families receiving CalWORKs cash aid
- For At-risk children & CPS children fees may be waived for up to 12 months if the referral determines the fee waiver to be necessary. *Pilot exception: 24 months*

Family fees are only assessed at:

- Initial Certification
- Recertification
- Voluntarily request to have fees re-assessed
 - Decrease: Effective on the first day of the month that follows the issue date of the Notice of Action
 - Increase: No increase during 12-month certification. Pilot: 24-month.

When a family's child is assigned both a School & Vacation schedule, families will be assessed both a flat monthly part & full time fee. The family's part time-time and full-time fee will be noted in the family fee note section of the Application for Services (Form EESD 9600). The full time fee months will be individually listed.

FAMILY FEE PAYMENT

Family fees are **due in advance** of services. Family fees are due on the first day of the month and are considered delinquent after 7 calendar days. If the 7th calendar day falls on a weekend or agency observed holiday, family fees are due by 6:00 pm on the preceding Friday. A notice of termination will be issued by the end of the 2nd business day after the payment due date each month and mailed via certified mail. If a payment plan has been submitted and approved by the fiscal department prior to the date of termination, the Notice of Action will be rescinded. Failure to meet the terms of your payment plan will result in termination from the program.

CREDIT FOR FEES PAID TO OTHER CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

If our agency cannot meet all of a family's needs for child care, we can grant a fee credit equal to the amount paid to your other provider for child care services.

- Copies of receipts or cancelled checks must be submitted in order to receive a credit for fees paid to another provider
- We will apply the fee credit to the family's subsequent billing period (Example: Submit receipt for May & a credit for June will be applied)
- We do not allow carry over of any fee credits beyond the subsequent billing period

ABSENCE POLICY

Parents must notify center staff by phone or in advance in writing regarding their child's absence no later than the time the child is scheduled to attend that day. The reason for absence and a **Full Legal Signature** must be written on the sign in and out sheet by the parent(s) or authorized agency representative. Family fees remain the same whether or not the child attends.

In addition to excused absences, children are allowed 10 best interest days and 15 unexcused absences. After all 15 unexcused absences have been used, childcare services will be terminated after the 15th day.

EXCUSED ABSENCE

- Illness of child or parent/guardian, ailment, communicable disease, injury, hospitalization or quarantine
- Appointment of child or parent/guardian, which includes doctor, dentist, mental health, social service, welfare, education, special education services, counseling or therapy
- Court ordered visitation for time spent with a parent or relative as required by law. (Court order must be on file)
- Family emergency for unplanned situations of a temporary nature including court appearance, death, accident, hospitalization of a family member, no transportation or illness of sibling

BEST INTEREST

Parent/Guardian determines that another activity is better for the child to attend, such as:

- Visiting relative or close friend
- Vacation time with family

- Child attending a party
- Family moving
- Religious observance, holiday or ceremony
- Personal or family business

*Maximum of 10 days per child within the fiscal year.

15 UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

- An absence, which has not been documented
- Any day beyond the allocated 10 Best Interest Days

FRAUD POLICY

The agency is required by the California Early Learning and Care Division to inform all families receiving subsidized child care services through state funds that if child care funds are obtained by providing fraudulent information or incomplete information, the agency shall actively pursue recovering the funds paid out from the family in question.

Any fraudulent, false, or misleading information provided to the agency regarding employment, income, status as a student, enrollment in a training program or eligibility relating to medical incapacitation will be grounds for program termination and will be justification for the agency to begin to recover funds.

Knowingly providing false information or documents to verify Eligibility and Need such as:

- Family size/intentionally inflating family size by reporting family members who do not physically reside in the household
- Family monthly income-intentionally underreporting family income in order to remain eligible for services or reduce family fee (wages, child support, cash aid, or other relevant income)
- Intentionally providing false Social Security Numbers, tax I.D or other false monthly family income documents.
- Family source of income and family size- intentionally withholding information regarding second parent/spouse residing in the household.
- Intentionally falsifying and providing documents to verify needs for services including, but not limited to: forged employment verifications or medical incapacity statements, and/or falsified school records
- Untrue self declaration statements

Any family terminated for alleged fraud is entitled to a fair hearing. See Parent Right to Appeal procedures (see below) or on the reverse of the Notice of Action. If they lose their appeal, they will also be responsible for any money paid by the agency for care during the time of the appeal process. The agency will pursue all fraudulent matters to the full extent of the law, including district attorney's office. Each case will be handled on an individual basis. Any family found guilty of fraud will be ineligible for services for 3 years or until the funds are repaid.

PARENT'S RIGHT TO APPEAL

Appeal Information: If you do not agree with the agency's action as stated in the Notice of Action, you may appeal the intended action. To protect your appeal rights, you must follow the instructions described in each step listed below. If you do not respond by the required due dates or fail to submit the required appeal information with your appeal request, your appeal may be considered abandoned. Provide the information outlined in steps 1-5 listed below or complete the appeal form on the back of the Notice of Action.

STEP 1: Submit your appeal in writing with the following information:

Name or Parent/Caretaker, Telephone, Address, and a written explanation as to why you disagree with the agency's decision. Please be sure to sign and date your appeal. If you require interpretation, please indicate in your request

STEP 2: Mail or deliver your local hearing request within 14 days of receipt of this notice to:

Go Kids, Inc. /Estrella Family Services Executive Office
885 Moro Drive
Gilroy CA 95020
Attn: Appeals Coordinator

STEP 3: Within ten (10) calendar days following the agency's receipt of your appeal request, the agency will notify you of the time and place of the hearing. You or your authorized representative is required to attend the hearing. If you or your representatives do not attend the hearing, you abandon your rights to an appeal, and the action of the agency will be implemented.

STEP 4: Within ten (10) calendar days following the hearing, the agency shall mail or delivery to you a written decision.

STEP 5: If you disagree with the written decision of the agency, you have 14 days from your receipt of the written decision to file an appeal with the California Department of Education (CDE). Your appeal to CDE must include the following documents and information: (1) a written statement specifying the reasons you believe the agency's decision was incorrect, (2) a copy of the agency's decision letter, and (3) a copy of both sides of this notice. Mail your appeal to the following address:

California Department of Education

Early Learning and Care Division
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814
Attn: Appeals Coordinator

STEP 6: Within 30 calendar days after the receipt of your appeal, CDD will issue a written decision to you and the agency. *If your appeal is denied, the agency will stop providing child care and development services immediately upon receipt of CDE's decision letter.*

THE AGENCY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Step 1

The complainant wishing to file a grievance shall contact the appropriate agency representative and discuss their concern verbally.

- For program related concerns, please contact The Site Supervisor/Site Director for the center.
- For alleged violations of the agency Parent Handbook, Admission Agreement issues, or concerns related to enrollment and eligibility, contact the Family Service Manager.

In the event the issue remains unresolved, move to step 2.

Step 2

The complainant shall file their grievance in writing to the Executive Office with attention to The Grievance Committee. The written complaint shall include the following information;

- Name
- Date of complaint
- Nature and location of alleged incident
- Names (if applicable) of witnesses to alleged incident
- Written summary of attempts made to resolve the issue from the point of origin.
- Name of the agency representative you contacted from Step 1.
- Signed and dated

The written complaint must be filed within 10 days of the verbal discussion with The agency representative in step 1. The Grievance Committee will review the grievance and attempt to resolve the matter. A response will be provided in writing within 14 days of the date of the signed letter.

If the issue remains unresolved, move to step 3.

Step 3

The complainant shall contact the Chief Executive Officer, in writing within 10 days of the date of the Grievance Committee's written response in order to request a review of the grievance and attempts made to resolve the matter. The Chief Executive Officer will review all documentation related to the grievance from step 1 and 2.

The Chief Executive Officer will issue an opinion (or otherwise resolve) in writing within 14 days of receipt of the documentation.

If the issue remains unresolved, move to step 4.

Step 4

The complainant shall request in writing that the grievance be placed on the agenda of the next agency Board of Directors meeting (which are scheduled on the 4th Monday of each month). The Board of Directors shall render an opinion (or otherwise resolve) in writing within 14 days of the board meeting. The decision shall be final

UNIFORM COMPLAINT PROCEDURE NOTICE

It is the intent of the agency to fully comply with all applicable laws and regulations. Individuals, agencies, organizations, students and interested third parties have the right to file a complaint regarding the agency programs alleged violation of a statute or regulation that the California Department of Education is authorized to enforce. This includes allegations or unlawful discrimination (Education Code, Sections 200 and 220 and Government Code, Section 11135) in any program or activity funded directly by the State or receiving federal or state financial assistance.

Complaints must be signed and filed in writing with the California Department of Education:

California Department of Education
Early Learning and Care Division
Complaint Coordinator
1430 N Street, Suite 3410
Sacramento, CA 95814

If the complainant is not satisfied with the final written decision of the California Department of Education, remedies may be available in federal or state court. In this event, the complainant should seek the advice of an attorney of his/her choosing.

A complainant filing a written complaint alleging violations of prohibited discrimination may also pursue civil law remedies, including but not limited to, injunctions; restraining orders; or other remedies or orders.

THE AGENCY OFFICE LOCATIONS

Executive Office

885 Moro Drive
Gilroy, CA 95020
408.843.9000

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Administration Office

9015 Murray Avenue
Gilroy, CA 95020
408.779.6553

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Santa Clara County

San Jose Office

24 N 14th Street Suite 700, 7th Floor
San Jose, CA 95113
408.269.7827

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Santa Clara County

Go Kids Child Development Resource Center

1101 San Felipe Rd. Suite D,
Hollister, CA 95023
831.637.9205

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Enrollment and Re-Certifications for San Benito County

Salinas Elwood Office

415 Elwood Street
Salinas, CA 93906
831.757.5437

Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm

Enrollment and Re-Certifications for Monterey and Santa Cruz County

Watsonville Office
567 Auto Center Dr.
Watsonville, CA 95076
831.707.2331 Days/Hours: M-F 9:00am-5:00pm
Closed for lunch from 12:00pm-1:00pm
No drop-in service available. Must schedule an appointment

THE AGENCY CENTER LOCATIONS

Go Kids Los Arroyos Center

885 Moro Drive
Gilroy, CA 95020
408.843.9005
Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm
Ages served: 2 years to 12 years

Go Kids Ochoa Center

902 Arizona Circle
Gilroy, CA 95020
408.842.2201
Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm
Ages served: 6 weeks to entry into Kindergarten

Go Kids San Martin

13745 Llagas Avenue
San Martin, CA 95046
408.683.0600
Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm
Ages served: 3 years – 12 years

Estrella Family Services @ Gardner

611 Willis Avenue
San Jose, CA 95125
408.998.1343
Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm
Ages served: 3 years – 12 years

Estrella Family Services @ Galarza

1610 Bird Avenue
San Jose, CA 95125
408.287.3447

Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm
Ages served: 3 years – 12 years

Estrella Family Services @ Paseo

1908 Senter Rd. #80

San Jose, CA 95112

408.947.7149

Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm

Ages served: 3 years – 5 years

Go Kids San Benito CDC

1101 Community Parkway

Hollister, CA 95023

831.637.9205

Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm

Ages served: 3 years - 5 years

Go Kids RO Hardin

761 South Street

Hollister, CA, 95023

831.636.8171

Days/Hours: M-F 7:00am-6:00pm

Ages served: 3 years - 5 years

PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE

My signature below indicates that I have read and agree to comply with all of the policies and procedures contained within the Parent Handbook.

Parent Name (please print)

Parent Signature

Date