



# Berrien RESA GSRP Family Handbook

2020-2021 School Year  
Northside Child Development Center



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# Welcome!

## **Mission Statement:**

The YMCA of Greater Michiana is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind, and body for all.

## **Great Start Readiness Program Philosophy:**

Our goal is to provide every preschooler with the best educational opportunities through our child-centered, hands-on curriculum set in a rich learning environment which is created through our families, community and professional staff.

We believe that young children learn to the best of their ability when given:

- A safe, healthy, nurturing environment
- Development of strong teacher-child relationships in combination with strong family-teacher relationships in which all are valued
- Many opportunities for play and learning through play experiences
- Families are involved and we work together to help your child
- The activities are geared toward your child's current skills and interests

Our decisions are made from a child-centered focus which includes looking at the Early Childhood Standards of Quality- Prekindergarten, the curriculum, assessment information, feedback from parents and the diverse social, economic, cultural and family needs that exist within the classroom.

# Great Start Readiness Program

## **Great Start Readiness Preschool**

GSRP is a State funded center-based preschool program serving income-eligible four-year-old children. Classes are offered with a variety of family needs in mind. Many programs operate full-day, Monday through Thursday while others offer a half day program (either AM or PM) running Monday through Thursday.

GSRP regulations require staff to make two home visits and two parent/guardian/staff conferences a year. Staff will review other program requirements during the registration process or at the first home visit. This visit typically takes place before your child's first day of school.

Parents are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, attend program events and participate in our Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) and with the Great Start Parent Coalition. The Parent Coalition is a group of parent volunteers who serve as a "voice" for parents in the community and work on service projects, such as diaper drives, book drives, and back to school fairs.

# Staff Qualifications

## **Staff**

The staff of the GSRP is committed to providing a high-quality program for young children and their families. Classroom teachers hold a bachelor ' s degree in early childhood education or child development with a specialization in preschool teaching or a valid Michigan teaching certificate and an Early Childhood Education (ZA) or Early Childhood-General and Special Education (ZS) endorsement or a Bachelor' s degree in Early Childhood or Child Development with a specialization in preschool teaching. Most classrooms will have one teacher and at least one assistant teacher to ensure a staff ratio of one adult to eight children. The classroom associate teacher holds a Child Development Credential (CDA) or an assistant's degree in Child Development. In classrooms that have three adults, the third adult meets the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing, Department of Human Services licensing requirements as a " caregiver."

## **GSRP Support Staff**

Each Berrien GSRP program has the advantage of working with expert staff from Berrien Regional Education Service Agency as well as local district personnel. An Early Childhood Specialist is assigned to each classroom to provide classroom support through regular classroom visits, as well as professional development for the GSRP staff. The Early Childhood Specialist have master's degrees in early childhood education and extensive experience in early childhood programs.

# Important Policies

## **Referrals**

We believe that home and school together form a positive support system for the growing child. Parents are always kept informed of their child's progress. If a referral is needed for additional support, the family will be involved in contacting their local school district and creating a plan and setting specific goals for the child. Families will be informed at any point that the child is receiving one-on-one support services, and classroom teachers will partner with support staff to create an inclusive and supportive environment.

Each site has a Great Start Resource Directory which provides information and contacts for numerous Berrien County programs that support families with young children. GSRP teaching staff are available to assist parents in contacting needed resources and having any need documentation.

## **Inclusion**

Berrien RESA GSRP programs welcome all children and are committed to providing developmentally appropriate early learning and development experiences that support the full access and participation of each and every child. We believe that each child is unique and work in partnership with families and other professionals involved with the child to provide the support every child needs to reach his/her full potential.

## **Grievances**

Our program strives to provide a positive environment for all. However, at times a concern may arise. If you have any questions or concerns you cannot resolve with the teacher directly, please bring the concerns to the attention of the Principal/Director who will work through concerns with you.

## **Child Protection Policy**

All staff are mandated by law to report any suspected case of child abuse, neglect, child sexual abuse or sexual exploitation to the Department of Human Services or immediately over the telephone at 855-444-3911 and that they should also follow the report up in writing within 72 hours. Reporting forms are available online at <http://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs>. Any reasonable suspicion will be reported including a child telling a staff member about abuse, witnessing the abuse, a parent's statement of abuse, or any physical or behavioral signs of abuse. A copy of this law may be obtained from the program director.

**Non-Discrimination Policy**

Niles School District does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, race, disability, color, religion, or national origin. No one will be excluded from participation in, or denied the benefit of, or be subject to discrimination during any program or activity or in employment.

**Confidentiality Policy**

Child and family records will not be disclosed without written consent of the parent or legal guardian, except as needed when child abuse and neglect is a concern. Confidential information is shared only with staff members who need the information to perform their jobs. Families have the right to examine their own records.

**Drug Free and Smoke Free Zone**

Our facilities and grounds are drug free and smoke free zones. Please extinguish cigarettes and properly discard smoking products prior to entering the parking lot and building. This includes chewing tobacco. Help us stay a drug free and smoke free zone by informing anyone that will be escorting your child to and from school of our policy.

If your child is using our transportation to and from school, please help us set a good example to all children on the bus by also keeping the bus stop a drug free and smoke free zone.

**Cell Phone Use**

If you find it necessary to use your cell phone while in our building, please remember that we have many children and staff in our classrooms that are focused on learning activities. You may not want others to hear your conversation or it may not be an appropriate conversation for the public. We may have children napping depending on the time of day. Please limit cell phone use to emergency use only in our lobby area or outside the building.

**Background Checks**

A comprehensive background check is required to be completed in the Michigan Child Care Background Check System (CCBC) on all licensee/licensee designees, program directors, child care staff, and volunteer staff with unsupervised access to children.

- Unsupervised Volunteers—Will be required to complete a TB test if volunteering more than 4 hours over a 2-week period and be responsible for additional training.
- Supervised Volunteers will not have a comprehensive background check and will always be under the supervision of the child-care staff (volunteers must ALWAYS be in line of site and in ear-shot of staff).

# Just Playing

**When** I'm building in the block area,  
Please don't say I'm 'Just playing."  
For you see, I'm learning as I play,  
About balances and shapes.  
Who knows, I may be an architect  
someday.

**When** I'm getting all dressed up,  
Setting the table, caring for the babies,  
Don't get the idea I'm 'Just playing."  
For you see, I'm learning as I play;  
I may be a mother or father someday.

**When** you see me up to my elbows in  
paint or standing at an easel, or molding  
and shaping clay, please don't let me  
hear you say, "He is just playing."  
For you see, I'm learning as I play.  
I'm expressing myself and being  
creative. I may be an artist or an  
inventor someday.

**When** you see me sitting in a chair  
"Reading" to an imaginary audience,  
Please don't laugh and think I'm 'Just  
playing." For you see, I'm learning as I  
play. I may be a teacher someday.

**When** you see me combing the bushes  
for bugs, or packing my pockets with  
choice things I find, don't pass it off as  
'Just play." For you see, I'm learning as  
I play. I may be a scientist someday.

**When** you see me engrossed in a puzzle  
Or some "plaything" at my school,  
Please don't feel the time is wasted in  
"play." For you see I'm learning as I play.  
I'm learning to solve problems and  
concentrate. I may be in business someday.

**When** you see me cooking or tasting foods,  
Please don't think that because I enjoy it, it  
is 'Just play." I'm learning to follow  
directions and see differences.  
I may be a cook someday.

**When** you see me learning to skip, hop,  
Run and move my body,  
Please don't say I'm "just playing."  
For you see, I'm learning as I play.  
I'm learning how my body works.  
I may be a doctor, nurse or athlete someday.

**When** you ask me what I've done at school  
today, and I say, "I just played,"  
Please don't misunderstand me.  
For you see, I'm learning as I play.  
I'm learning to enjoy and be successful in  
my work. I'm preparing for tomorrow.  
Today, I am a child and my work is play.

-Anita Wadley



# Curriculum and Assessment

GSRP classrooms provide a safe, secure and happy place for children to grow and learn. The curriculum provides intentional instruction to meet each child's needs through a play-based and developmentally appropriate philosophy; meaning attention is given to social, cognitive and physical development. All of the learning areas are created to support the "Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Pre-Kindergarten" updated in 2013 by the Michigan State Board of Education. Children interact in both large and small groups and the environment and activities are designed to assist in the development of pre-reading, pre-math, science, social studies and the arts.

Through use of The Creative Curriculum (the State approved curriculum used in our classrooms), the Standards of Quality are met. Teachers monitor children's progress regularly and parents/guardians will meet with their child's teachers twice a year for conferences. The conference is a time for families and teachers to come together to discuss the child's accomplishments and to answer any developmental questions a family may have. The conference includes information about where your child is functioning as well as ideas for you to assist in your child's development in the home. Families also participate in two home visits during the year, allowing teachers, children and families to develop a warm and trusting relationship.

Children are screened within the first thirty days of school. This provides information about a child's physical development, language, and other skills and is used as a baseline to determine each individual child's needs. Families are informed of any concerns the screening tool may show and parents/guardians will need to provide consent if the child requires further evaluation.

# Enrollment and Withdrawal

## Enrollment Policy

### **Enrollment of Students will be Based on:**

Availability of an opening in the appropriate class. A wait list of eligible students will be maintained and openings filled based on eligibility factors and the order in which they were received. The primary qualification is age 4 on or before September 1.

### **The Parent or Guardian Must:**

Meet the enrollment guidelines;

Return ALL completed forms which includes the following:

- All families must complete an enrollment packet prior to the first day of attendance in GSRP. The packet includes an application, health requirements and emergency contact.
- Families will need to provide a copy of the child ' s birth certificate and immunization card along with other important enrollment requirements.
- GSRP requires proof of family income for eligibility.

### **To Maintain Enrollment in the Program, the Family Must:**

- Agree to keep the Child Emergency Information up to date, i.e. telephone numbers, workplace, address, emergency contact, etc.
- Support staff in maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment through a positive, preventive discipline approach.
- Attend and participate in scheduled parent/guardian/teacher home visits and conferences.
- See that students are in school unless absence is absolutely necessary. Families are responsible for informing the teachers when a child is ill or absent for some important reason.
- Respond to teacher recommendations concerning physical conditions, i.e. scheduling appointments with appropriate professionals. Families are requested to provide teachers with results.
- Respond to requests for information or assistance needed to promote student success.

***\*\*The child must turn four years old by September 1 for the school year\*\****

# Withdrawal and Fees

## **Withdrawal Policy**

Parents/guardians should notify the classroom staff of the intent to withdraw their child from the Program at least two weeks prior to the withdrawal date. Parents/guardians should leave a forwarding address or school contact if the child will be enrolled in another school program.

## **Center Withdrawal Policy**

This program and team reserve the right to disenroll children. Reasons for disenrollment could include poor suitability of the program for the child, repeated unacceptable behaviors that may be harmful to the welfare of other students such as biting or aggressiveness, excessive absences or inappropriate behavior from the parent or family. Disenrollment is at the discretion of the Director.

## **Fee Policy**

The Great Start Readiness is a free program for those who qualify. A sliding scale fee may apply for a limited number of over income families as set by the State of Michigan and the Federal Poverty Guide. When space is available an over income family will be provided with the fee schedule (pending state approval-MDE-Great Start).

# Attendance Policy

## Program Attendance Policy

Regular attendance at school is important for kindergarten readiness and your child's attendance habits. If it is necessary for your child to be absent, please notify the office the morning of the absence to explain the reason and when you expect your child to return to school. If you do not have a phone, please send a note to the teacher as soon as possible.

We are required to document absences in order to comply with regulations; so if we do not hear from you, you may receive a note or phone call asking about your child's absences. Preschoolers who are absent from class for 10 consecutive school days may be dropped from the program to make space available for a child on the waiting list.

### **To Maintain Enrollment in the Program, the Parents/Guardians Agree To:**

- Keep the Child Emergency Information up to date, i.e. telephone numbers, workplace, address, emergency contact, etc. (If parents move from one residence to another, change telephone numbers, or wish to add or delete an individual 'Emergency Contact' person, it is the parent's responsibility to notify classroom staff IMMEDIATELY so the parent may be reached in case of emergency or other communication need.)
- Support staff in maintaining a safe and enjoyable environment through a positive, preventive discipline approach. (Staff and family should work as partners in providing a consistent approach in assisting a child to adjust problematic behavior such as excessive aggressiveness.)
- Attend and participate in scheduled parent/teacher home visits and conferences. (Parent/teacher meetings are a requirement of the state funded GSRP and an expectation of all families.)

Late Pick-up or Early Drop-off: When a parent/guardian or other designated adult is picking up or dropping off a child from school, it is important that they be on time. Teachers and other school personnel have other responsibilities **before** and **after** programming and cannot be available to ensure your child's safety.

# School Closing and Weather Policies

## **Weather Policy**

GSRP classrooms will follow the building weather policy. Please send your child to school with the appropriate outdoor clothing (coats, hat, mittens, snow pants, boots, etc.) Your child will be going outside in light rain, snow, sleet, and wind so please plan accordingly.

The State of Michigan "Department of Human Services" states that:

- Playing outdoors in cold weather does not cause illness in children. Colds, flu and illness are caused by viruses and bacteria. Children confined in warm, stuffy rooms with several other children have greater exposure to germs causing sickness.
- Frequent exposure to fresh air, exercise, and sunshine increases a child's general fitness and resistance to infections.
- During active play outdoors, the viruses and bacteria are dispersed into a larger, more mobile air space decreasing the risk of spreading to others.
- Physical activity actually increases the air exchange in children's lungs and improves blood flow through the body giving germs shorter contact with respiratory surfaces.

## **School Closings and Delays**

In the case of inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances that cause a school delay or closing, alerts will be broadcast on WNDU / WSBT stations. The School Reach telephone alert system is also available to all enrolled children and parents.

## **Physical Activity**

GSRP guidelines require children to be engaged in a minimum of thirty minutes of outdoor play where they can be active and physical. This includes but is not limited to running, jumping, climbing, etc. The outdoor environment is an extension of the classroom and provides students with many opportunities to explore and continue to build social skills. Research states, "Good physical health and well-being, and a safe environment contribute to improved learning. Gross motor development enhances body awareness, understanding of spatial relationships, and cognitive growth." [Michigan Department of Education]

# Materials from Home

## **Appropriate Clothing for Preschool**

Preschool clothing should be comfortable and washable so that it does not interfere with any activities. Tennis shoes are suggested for all children to wear indoors. Please remember your child's clothing will be exposed to paint, sand, and markers. It is important that you put your child's name on all of his or her belongings. Many children have similar clothing and it is sometimes impossible to identify ownership without a name. We cannot be responsible for lost items that are without a name label. Children participate in outdoor time every day except in heavy rain or extremely cold weather. Please dress your child accordingly. Warm mittens, coats, hats, boots, and snow pants are necessary every day once cold weather begins!

It is suggested that each child bring a large bag or backpack to class every day to carry home their artwork, papers, and notes from the teacher. Accidents can happen; it is a good idea that an extra change of clothes be sent and kept in your child's classroom. We have a limited supply of clothing for emergency use. If your child should come home wearing an item provided by his/her teacher, please wash and return it to school promptly.

## **Toys from Home**

Please leave all toys at home. Toys brought from home can easily get misplaced or even broken. We prefer that your child enjoy them at home or bring them only on special sharing days.

# Health and Safety Policies

## Medication Policy

A Doctor must complete and sign the Medication Permission and Instruction fom1 available in the school office for prescription medication required during school hours (or use the link below). The doctor should be very specific about instructions for administration of medication. "As needed" is NOT specific enough. Medicine CAN NOT be dispensed without required forms.

<http://www.neola.com/niles-mi/> or Form 5330ft

- Prescription medication MUST be in its original container labeled with a date, the child' s name, and the exact dosage.
- Medication should never be transported to and from school by the child. An adult should bring the medication, along with the completed permission /instruction form directly to the school office.

Children with ASTHMA must have an "asthma action plan" on file, signed by a physician.

<http://www.neola.com/niles-mi/> or Fom1 53J0flc

Children with DIABETES must have a "diabetes action plan" on file, signed by a physician.

<http://www.neola.com/niles-mi/> or Form 5330fl c

It is the policy of Niles Community Schools GSRP that we do not administer medications unless needed for safety (allergy-related) or behavioral purposes. In these instances, please speak with your child' s classroom teacher for further instructions including completion of a Medication Fom1 and instructions for storage and administration.

## Injuries, accidents, or Safety Issues

Parents MUST inform the program staff of any health or safety needs of the child that the program may be required to address. If your child has had an injury or illness that may prevent activity, please call the school.

If your child is injured while in our care, parents/guardians will be notified by either a note home or a phone call. If the injury is more than a minor issue, parents/guardians will be contacted immediately. If parents/guardians are not available, another adult listed on the child's emergency information form will be contacted.

Program staff are trained in First Aid and CPR and will secure medical and/or emergency surgical treatment for your child in possible emergency situations.

## Incidents

An incident includes, but is not limited to, the following: A child is lost or left unsupervised. Alleged sexual contact between children or a child and a staff member or volunteer. Physical discipline of a child by a staff member or volunteer. In the event this occurs

- Parents will be notified immediately by phone or personal contact
- If deemed appropriate the local authorities will be notified
- LARA agency will be notified using the appropriate reporting form [BCAL 4605](#)

## Hand Washing

Hand washing is probably the most critical element in reducing the spread of germs. Children should learn about hand washing early in life to help them develop healthy habits.

Children will be required to wash their hands before eating, after using the restroom, when returning from outdoors and other times as determined necessary by the staff. We ask that you encourage and reinforce this behavior to keep everyone as healthy as possible. Staff also follow this policy and wash their hands before any food preparation.



### **Mask Policy**

Mask policy will be in effect as long as guidelines are given from governing bodies

- Staff will wear masks when distance cannot be attained
- Masks will be worn by all in common areas
- Masks will be worn while being transported
- Staff will encourage masks to be worn in class

### **Illness Policy**

Should I Keep My Child Home Today?

To insure a positive, healthy school experience for children, the following policy regarding illness is followed: Parents/guardians will be asked to come and take home any child arriving at school with signs/symptoms of being ill or who become ill while at school. Children will be kept comfortable while awaiting pick-up.

The school staff has the authority to exclude children from the preschool for illness or other health-related problems. All children in attendance will be expected to participate in all parts of the daily schedule; including outdoor play.

\*Children need to be free of all symptoms below for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medicines, before returning to school.\*\*

#### **Your Child Should Stay Home When He/She Has:**

- Temperature above normal (100.4)
- Earache
- Excessive runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Red or watery eyes
- Diarrhea
- Chills or fever
- Coughing
- Skin rash
- Sore throat
- Head lice

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to notify the teachers when their child will be absent from school. **Please call your child's teacher as soon as you know your child will be absent.**

***\*\*Adults/volunteers who are present with GSRP  
must also follow the above policies\*\****

# PEST Management

As required per Licensing rules each classroom has an integrated pest management program and parents will be notified prior to the pesticide applications.

## NILES COMMUNITY SCHOOLS & GSRP NOTICE OF PESTICIDE USE

Pesticides are periodically applied to school district property as part of the district's pest management program. Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school or day care center are entitled to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least 3 days before the pesticide application, if they so request. If you prefer to receive notification by first class mail, please obtain a form from your building director. General notifications will include

- A posting will be displayed at the entry point on the facility with at least a 48hour notification.
- Hand delivered notification through the child's backpack.

Please understand that emergencies do arise and that pesticides may be applied without prior notice to parents or legal guardians. Parents or legal guardians that have requested prior notification, however, will be notified after pesticide application.

Application of pesticides will be performed only by certified or registered applicators where and when required. If a pesticide is applied in a building, students will not occupy the room for a minimum of four hours. Forty-eight hours prior to the time of application notification will be posted near the building's primary point of entry and in a common area of the building. When a pesticide is applied to school district grounds, the application will not be made within 100 feet of occupied classrooms, and flags will be inserted in the ground to mark the application area.

This notice was given in compliance with Regulation 637, as amended by Public Act 131 of 1993.

Any questions regarding pesticides should be addressed to:

Lewis Evans Director of Operations  
Niles Community Schools  
1214 Airport Road  
Niles, MI 49120

# Parent Notifications

## Licensing Reports

All child care centers must maintain a licensing notebook which includes all licensing reports, special investigation reports and all related Corrective Action Plans (CAP). The notebook must include all reports issued and CAPs developed on and after May 28, 2010 until the license is closed.

- This center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
- The notebook will be available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspections and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Child and Adult Licensing website at: [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare)

## Program Measurement

Berrien Regional Education Service Agency and funded GSRP programs are required to work with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) to measure the effects of the state-wide Great Start Readiness Program. Information is sometimes collected about staff, enrolled children, and their families. Program staff or a representative from MDE might:

- Ask parents questions about their child and family.
- Observe children in the classroom.
- Measure what children know about letters, words, and numbers.
- Ask teachers how children are learning and growing.

Information from you and about your child will not be shared with others in any way that you or your child could be identified. It is protected by law.

Questions? Contact: [mde-gsrp@michigan.gov](mailto:mde-gsrp@michigan.gov) or 517-373-8483 or MDE, Office of Early Childhood Education and Family Services, 608 W. Allegan, PO Box 30008, Lansing, MI 48909.

## Safety Drills

Our programs are required to practice safety drills several times a year for fire evacuation, tornado safety and any other threat that may occur. If in the event that our school is evacuated, staff will notify you or another adult on your child's emergency contact form.

# Food Service and Nutrition Policies

## **Breakfast, Lunch, and Snack**

Mealtimes are learning experiences where children are encouraged to try new foods and engage in conversations about different foods, where they grow, or how they are made. Children are encouraged to participate in mealtime activities that may include setting the table, preparing food, serving themselves, and cleaning up.

Meals and/or snacks are served in a pleasant atmosphere with adult supervision at all times. All children are expected to feed themselves. Staff will not demand that any child eat, but children will be encouraged to taste new foods.

Depending on the length of your child's day in the program, breakfast, lunch and a snack may be available. Most of our programs participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for assistance in funding meals. Menus are reviewed by a registered dietitian and parents to ensure healthy low fat, low sugar, low salt meals and snacks. Menus are available with noted food substitutions and will be posted in the classrooms and online at Nutrislice. Children that have special dietary needs will consult with their lead teacher and food service director.

Breakfast is generally served upon arrival, lunch is served between 11:30-12:30 and an afternoon snack occurs around mid afternoon (2:00).

# Discipline Policy

We have positive expectations for the children who are in our care. We concentrate on the behavior we want and model what is needed to build positive relationships between adults and children, as well as among children. Teachers provide ongoing support as children learn social and problem-solving skills. Program staff is not allowed to use any form of punishment (i.e. spanking, threatening, humiliating, and withholding of basic needs including food and outdoor play, or isolation from the group).

**CHOICES:** Throughout the school day, children are recognized and encouraged to make choices. Choices within limits allow a child to feel empowered and feel part of a decision-making process. The more choices a child has, the more likely he or she will cooperate with adults.

**INTERVENTION:** Conflict can occur when a child is trying to assert control over a situation. Teachers diffuse conflict by using statements such as, "You may play in the gym after you put the trucks away." When children are experiencing a conflict, the teacher will approach the children calmly and acknowledge feelings ("you are feeling really angry"). Next the teacher will gather information from the children and find out why there is a conflict ("what happened?"). The teacher will help each child use empowering words and problem-solving strategies to resolve the conflict ("Ask your friend, 'Can I use this truck?' Tell your friend, 'I am using this truck right now. I'll give it to you when I am done.'") As children learn and practice using problem solving words and strategies, they often begin to use these without adult intervention as the year goes on.

**REDIRECTION:** When a conflict has been resolved, the child/children will be redirected with new choices (example: "Would you like to play in the sand or with play dough?")

**NATURAL CONSEQUENCES:** Sometimes children make choices that have consequences. Children who experience logical, natural consequences learn that they have control in situations. Consequences are met with calmness and empathy for the child. (Example: "This is sad. Remember I asked you not to throw sand? Throwing sand hurt his/her eyes. What can you do to help?")

# **No Bullying Policy**

Even preschool aged children can display behaviors that bully. Saying things like, "You can't play with us" or pulling a learning toy away from another child is a form of bullying. Whispering secrets and excluding someone is a form of bullying. Making faces or sticking out your tongue at someone is a form of bullying.

GSRP staff will promote an environment in which all children will play and work together. We are all welcome at all times. We share and take turns. We will use kind words towards our classmates and staff.

Parents can help stop bullying by observing children while they play. If children are showing signs of bullying behaviors, parents can help to explain how friends feel sad or hurt when we are not sharing or using kind words toward each other.

# Family Involvement

The family involvement component of the GSRP is based on the belief that the best environment for children exists where there is close family-school interaction. We encourage parents to come volunteer in the classroom, attend family events and accompany their child on field trips. Anyone interested in volunteering in the classroom or attending a field trip will need to give consent to program staff to complete a Central Registry Request. All volunteers and parent volunteers are under the direct supervision of the teaching staff at all times when children are present, with a minimum of one staff person per class.

**We hope you plan to visit soon and would love to have you!**

## Field Trips

Several field trips are generally taken during the school year. In the event a classroom does take a field trip, families will receive notice in writing prior to the event. Trips may include visiting local businesses or community parks and some are done within walking distance to your child's school.

Parents/guardians may attend as long as they meet the classroom volunteer requirements. Please note these requirements may involve paperwork which may take time so please plan ahead.

# Transportation

## **Parent/Guardian Responsibility:**

- TO MEET STATE LAW, parents/guardians (or adults over 18 years of age) must accompany their child to the bus and physically help the child up the steps. Parents/guardians must meet the bus when the child returns home and physically help the child off the bus.
- Supporting the school in the enforcement of the car and bus safety rules.
- Never leave your child or other children unattended in the car while coming into school to pick-up or drop-off your child.
- Preschool students are not permitted to walk to and from school alone. The parent/guardian or other designated adult, 18 years or older, must bring a child to and from school.
- For safety reasons, you (or designee) must bring your child into school, sign him/her in on the attendance form, and make the teacher aware of his/her arrival.
- The same procedure must be followed when picking up your child from school.

## **Please discuss these transportation safety rules with your child and talk about why they are important:**

- Stay in your seat & follow mask policy as guided by governing agencies
- Buckle your seatbelt (if applicable)
- Use a quiet voice
- Use helping hands
- Listen to and follow the directions given by the driver



# Child Release Policy

Because of our concern for the safety of our students, these guidelines will be followed.

- No child will be released to a person other than a parent or guardian during school hours without the prior permission of parent or guardian as provided on Emergency Contact information.
- If a parent/guardian desires that his/her child be released to another person not indicated on the Emergency Contact information, the following must be received in WRITING: 1) the name of the person to whom the child is to be released; 2) the time of the release and the length of time for which the child is to be released; 3) the purpose of the release.
- Exceptions will be made only in times of emergency. The Program Director or Designee will make the determination of whether an emergency exists.
- The person to whom the child is to be released will be required to sign a log indicating the time and purpose of the release. If the person is not known/recognized by the staff person, **photo identification** will be required. If the principal or designee has any doubts about the documentation presented, a decision to not release will be made.
- No preschool child will be permitted to walk home alone. The parent/guardian, or authorized adult, must pick up the child at school.
- With regards to divorced or separated parents:
  - A birth parent without custody may have access to his/her child or have the child released to him/her.
  - Where applicable, parents with custody should inform the school of custody arrangements and, if necessary, provide a court order (restraining order), which will be kept on file in the School Office. Without this court order, the school cannot legally prevent the non-custodial birth parent from taking the child from school.

# Annual Training Plan

The center shall provide an orientation about the center's policies and practices and these administrative rules for all personnel hired after the effective date of these rules and before unsupervised contact with children. The following topics include:

Placement of first aid equipment.

- a. Who to contact with questions?
- b. Health policies and procedures.
- c. Fire prevention.
- d. Diapering procedures (if applicable).
- e. Planned daily activities and routines.
- f. Developmentally appropriate practices and expectations for the age group with which the staff will work.
- g. Administration of medication.
- h. Prevention of and response to emergencies due to food and allergic reactions.
- i. Building and physical premises safety.
- j. Emergency preparedness and response planning.
- k. Handling and storage of hazardous materials and appropriate disposal of bio-contaminants. Precautions in transporting children, if applicable.
- l. Child development.

All child care staff members who work directly with children shall complete 16 clock hours of professional development annually on topics relevant to job responsibilities that include, but are not limited to, any of the following subjects:

- a) Child development and learning.
- b) Health, safety and nutrition.
- c) Family and community collaboration.
- d) Program management.
- e) Teaching and learning.
- f) Observation, documentation, and assessment.
- g) Interactions and guidance.
- h) Child care center administrative rules.

\*MiRegistry Courses 1 and 2

**Course 1 includes:**

- Prevention and Control of Infectious Diseases (including Immunizations)
- Administration of Medication
- Prevention and Response to Emergencies due to food and allergic reactions
- Child Development (birth to 5 years) Health and Safety Training for Licensed Child Care Providers

**Course 2 includes:**

- Building and Physical Premises Safety
- Prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome, Abusive Head Trauma, and Child Maltreatment
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Training
- Handling and Storage of Hazardous Materials and the Appropriate Disposal of Biocontaminants
- Precautions in Transporting Children
- Recognition and Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Child Development (school age)

**GSRP Training Plan (see attachment)**

# Community Resources



**berriencountyParentNET.org helps** connect parents to the resources in Berrien County that are available to families -whether it be healthcare, schools, fun activities or parenting support. The development of this website has been made possible through a grant given to Berrien County to promote positive parenting through county-wide implementation of Triple P (Positive Parenting Program).

Triple P is a program that supports parents by offering simple, practical parenting strategies for a wide range of parenting concerns. TRIPLE P (Positive Parenting Program) can help! Triple P is a program that suggests simple routines and small changes that can make a big difference for families. Every family is different. Yet parents all over the world face problems that are surprisingly similar. The issues you deal with in your home affect families everywhere.

Triple P Positive Parenting helps parents to:

- Create a stable and harmonious family environment
- Encourage behavior they like
- Build positive relationships with their children
- Deal positively, consistently and decisively with problem behavior

**Read more at [berriencountyParentNET.org](http://berriencountyParentNET.org)**

# Important Phone Numbers

## **Berrien RESA Great Start Readiness Program**

The Great Start Readiness Program is a state funded preschool program for four-year-olds and is free for those who qualify. Your GSRP is a cooperative effort of the Berrien Regional Education Service Agency, local school districts, and other local child care/preschool providers. The programs receive funds from the Michigan Department of Education and every classroom is licensed by the Michigan Department of Human Services.

### **Northside Extensions/Room Numbers:**

Northside office: 269-683-1982  
Michelle Skalla (Preschool Coordinator) - Extension 11609

Jessica Stevenson	Extension 11613 - Room 9
Ashley Neff	Extension 116__ - Room 9A
Kennedy Crow	Extension 11608 - Room 10
Maureen Pliley	Extension 11619 - Room 11
Stefanie Obenchain	Extension 11618 - Room 11A

**Great Start Readiness Program**  
**School-Day Sample Routine**

- 8:00 – 8:40** **Arrival/Breakfast/Greeting Time** – Children enter the classroom at their own pace. Parents/guardians are encouraged to stay until children are ready for them to leave. Children have choices about whether to eat, spend time with books, or interact with adults and one another. If children are not eating at arrival, a mid-morning snack is substituted for breakfast. Once all children have arrived, adults and children spend 3-5 minutes together sharing daily announcements.
- 8:40 – 8:55** **Large-Group Time/Music and Movement** – All adults and children participate in activities planned around children's interests, developmental levels, music and movement, cooperative play and projects; and events meaningful to children.
- 8:55 – 9:05** **Planning Time** – Children indicate their plans to adults in a place where intimate conversations can occur and where people and materials are visible. Adults use a range of strategies to support children's planning (e.g., props, area signs, tape recorders, singing, planning individually, in pairs, in small groups).
- 9:05 – 10:05** **Work Time** (children's hour of uninterrupted Choice Time) – Children always initiate activities and carry out their intentions. Children make many choices about where and how to use materials. During Work Time, adults participate as partners in child-initiated play and encourage children's problem solving both with materials and during times of social conflict.
- 10:05 – 10:15** **Cleanup Time** – Children and adults clean up together keeping the spirit of play and problem solving alive. Children make many choices during clean up. Adults accept children's level of involvement and skill while supporting their learning.
- 10:15 – 10:25** **Recall Time** – Gathered in small group settings, children choose Work Time experiences to reflect on, talk about, and exhibit. Adults provide a variety of materials and strategies to maintain interest as they follow children's lead and encourage children to share (e.g., individual props such as puppets, telephones or periscopes, group games using a hula hoop, ball or spinner, re-enacting, drawing, showing and describing a structure or painting). Adults are unhurried in their approach and may complete Recall Time with four or five children each day.
- 10:25 – 11:10** **Outside Time** – Children have many choices about how they play in the outdoor learning environment, much as they do during Work Time indoors. Adults supervise children for safety and also join in their active outdoor play, supporting their initiatives and problem solving. Outside time is minimally 30 minutes each day, excluding time for dressing and transitioning outdoors.
- 11:10 – 11:20** **Bathroom/Wash Hands/Prepare for Lunch** – Children assist in preparation and set up. Children choose where they would like to sit and are encouraged to serve themselves.
- 11:20 – 12:05** **Lunch** – Family-Style meals support children doing things for themselves (e.g., serve themselves, pour beverages, distribute napkins, wipe up spills). Children choose whether to eat, what to eat, and how much to eat. Adults eat and have meaningful conversations with the children. Children are encouraged to clean their own meal space including disposal of leftovers, wiping of tables, and pushing in their own chairs.
- 12:05 – 12:15** **Brush Teeth/Prepare for Rest** – Children brush teeth and prepare their sleeping area for rest.
- 12:15 – 1:15** **Quiet/Resting Time** – Resting is a time for sleeping or quiet, solitary, on-your-own-cot play. Rest Time plans should be individualized to meet the needs of each child. Quiet play could include books, soft music, baby dolls, or fine motor manipulatives.
- 1:15 – 1:25** **Wake/Bathroom** – As children wake up, adults and children work together to put away cots and set up for snack.
- 1:25 – 1:40** **Small Group Time** – An adult-initiated learning experience based on children's interests and development where children explore, play, work with materials, and talk about what they are doing. Individual children explore and use the same set of materials in their own way.
- 1:40 – 2:40** **Work Time** – A second work time cycle, while essentially the same as morning work time, may vary slightly from morning expectations while ensuring that children are primarily involved in planning and carrying out their own intentions. Teachers may implement activities with various grouping strategies (individual, very small groups, homogenous) to support children's learning of targeted skills. At least one member of the teaching team will be assigned to support the majority of children working in open centers. A collaborative curriculum-planning approach helps to ensure that the teaching team will meet individual child needs by supporting and extending development, knowledge and skills within children's play themes rather than pulling them aside for teacher-directed activities. GSRP expectations for active, play-based learning must be met at all times.
- 2:40 – 3:00** **Prepare for Snack/Snack** (refer to Lunch description)
- 3:00 – 3:30** **Outside Time/Dismissal** (refer to AM descriptions).



**Family Handbook Received**

I have received a copy of the Great Start Readiness Program Handbook and are aware that the licensing notebook is available for review during regular business hours.

**PARENT NOTIFICATION OF THE LICENSING NOTEBOOK**

Child Care Organizations Act, 1973 Public Act 116

**Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs**

All child care centers must maintain a licensing notebook which includes all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans (CAP). The notebook must include all reports issued and CAPs developed on and after May 27, 2010 until the license is closed.

- This center maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans.
- The notebook will be available to parents for review during regular business hours.
- Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from at least the past two years are available on the Bureau of Community and Health Systems website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

I have read the above statement issued by (Northside) \_\_\_\_\_

Child(ren)'s Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

LARA is an equal opportunity employer/program. Licensing Form found at: BCAL-5053 (10-16) MS Word

These materials were developed under a grant awarded by the Michigan Department of Education

