



Readiness Program

Michigan's Nationally Recognized Pre-K Program

Berrien RESA GSRP Family Handbook



BERRIEN

R E S A



Northside Child Development Center

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Welcome!

Welcome to preschool! We are dedicated to providing a nurturing and stimulating environment where children can learn, grow, and have fun. Our team of experienced educators is committed to fostering a love of learning and encouraging children to explore the world around them. We look forward to partnering with you in your child's early education journey.

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 that 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 eligible four-year-old children. Classes are offered with a variety of family needs in mind. Many programs operate full-day, Monday through Thursday or Monday through Friday 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 on the first home visit. This visit typically takes place before your child's first day of school.

Parents/Families are encouraged to volunteer in the classroom, attend program events and participate in our Family Engagement/Advisory Council meetings.

Staff Qualifications

Program 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. 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 associate 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."

Berrien Resa 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 and professional development for the GSRP staff. 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 your 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, creating a plan, and setting specific goals for the child. Families will be told 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 staff are available to assist parents in contacting needed resources and having any need documentation.

Inclusion

At the YMCA, we understand that each family and child have unique needs, and we strive to accommodate and support them in every way possible. We offer a range of services and resources to ensure that families and children feel welcome, safe, and supported in our programs. This includes providing access to specialized equipment and materials and collaborating with families to create individualized plans for their child's learning and development when needed. Our dedicated team of educators and staff work closely with families to ensure that every child has the best possible experience in our programs.

Social Emotional Health

Our staff policy emphasizes the importance of observing and supporting the social and emotional health of children in our care. We believe that a child's emotional well-being is just as important as their physical health, and our staff are trained to recognize and respond to signs of distress or emotional needs.

We also place a strong emphasis on communication with families regarding their child's social and emotional development. Our staff regularly communicates with families about their child's progress and any concerns that may arise. We encourage open and honest communication with families so that we can work together to provide the best possible care for each child.

Overall, our goal is to create a safe and supportive environment where children can thrive emotionally, socially, and academically.

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 Director who will work through concerns with you.

Important Policies Continued

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>. Form number DHS-3200. 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

The YMCA of Greater Michiana 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 school premises. This includes chewing tobacco. Help us stay in a drug-free and smoke-free zone by informing anyone who will be escorting your child to and from school of our policy.

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 who 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.

Important Policies Continued

Background Checks

A comprehensive background check is required to be completed in the Michigan Childcare Background Check System (CCBC) on all licensee/licensee designees, program directors, childcare staff, and volunteer staff with unsupervised access to children. Supervised volunteers are required to have a public sex offender registry (PSOR) clearance with results located at the facility. All staff and volunteers are also required to sign abuse and neglect statements.

- 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. Unsupervised volunteers shall provide appropriate care and supervision of children at all times and act in a manner that is conducive to the welfare of children.
- Supervised Volunteers will not have a comprehensive background check and will always be under the supervision of the childcare staff. Supervised volunteers must always be in the line of sight and sound of staff and shall provide appropriate care and supervision of children at all times and act in a manner that is conducive to the welfare of children.

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 our 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 while the environment and activities are designed to help develop pre-reading, pre-math, science, social studies and the arts.

Home Visit and Conferences

Teachers will regularly monitor children's progress, and parents/guardians will have the opportunity to meet with their child's teachers twice a year for conferences. These conferences are a time for families and teachers to come together to discuss the child's accomplishments and to address any developmental questions the family may have. The conferences will provide information about where your child is in terms of their development and offer ideas for how you can support it at home. Additionally, families will participate in two home visits during the year, which will allow teachers, children, and families to build a warm and trusting relationship.

Screenings

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 PARENT/GUARDIAN MUST:

Meet the enrollment guidelines;

Return ALL completed forms which includes the following:

- All families must complete an enrollment packet before the first day of attendance in GSRP. The packet includes an application, health requirements and emergency contact.
- Families must provide a copy of the child's birth certificate and immunization card along with other 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. *(If parents move from one residence to another, change telephone numbers or wish to add or delete an individual contact person, it is the parent's responsibility to notify the office.)*
- 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. *(Parent/teacher meetings are a requirement of our state-funded program.)*
- See that students are in school unless absence is necessary. Families are responsible for informing the teachers or office when a child is ill or absent.
- 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.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal Policy

WITHDRAWAL: Parents/guardians should tell the Director of the intent to withdraw their child from the program at least two weeks before the withdrawal date. Parents/guardians should leave a forwarding address or school contact if the child is enrolled in another school or program.

CENTER/SITE 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, inappropriate behavior from the parent or family or excessive absences. Disenrollment is at the discretion of the Director.

Child Release Policy

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 the Emergency Contact Information card.
- 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.
- 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, a photo identification will be required. If the director or designee has any doubts about the documentation presented, a decision not to release will be made.
- **Where applicable, parents with sole or joint custody should inform the school of court custody arrangements and provide court documents, which will be kept on file in the school office. Without these court documents, the school cannot legally prevent the non-custodial birth parent from taking the child from school.**

Attendance

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 on 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 must document absences to comply with regulations. If we do not hear from you, you may receive a note or phone call asking about your child's absences. Preschoolers who have an excessive number of absences may be dropped from the program to make space available for a child on the waiting list. Disenrollment is at the discretion of the Director.

DID YOU KNOW... Showing up on time every day is important to your child's success and learning from preschool forward. Missing 10% of school (1 or 2 days every few weeks) can make it harder to:

- *Gain early reading and math skills.*
- *Build relationships.*
- *Develop good attendance habits. High quality preschool and kindergarten has many benefits!*
- *The routines your child develops now will continue throughout school.*
- *Make the most of early grades by encouraging your child to attend every day.*

School Closing and Weather

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. *Make sure to label all clothing with your child's name.*

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 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, families will receive an alert via text through their designated classroom app and will also be posted on social media. **Northside Child Development Center will follow Niles Community Schools for inclement weather closings.**

In the case of a two-hour delay class times are as follows:

AM GSRP – closed

Full Day GSRP – 10:20am-3:20pm

***Buses will also run on a two-hour delay**

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. 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 their 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! If you need assistance with cold weather clothing, please contact your child's teacher.

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 enjoys them at home or brings them only on special sharing days.

****The center is not responsible for any lost or broken items that are brought from home.***

Health and Safety Policies

Accident/Injuries

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 an activity, please call the school. A doctor's note may be required.

If an accident occurs resulting in the injury of a child, staff will complete an incident report. This report will include the name of the child, date of the incident, witnesses, and medical professionals consulted if applicable. If other children are involved in the incident, they shall **not** be identified by name in the report. This report will be given to the director to be kept in the center file.

If the injury is not serious, staff will report the incident to the parents/guardians when the child is picked up at the end of the day. Parents/guardians will be notified immediately by phone in case of serious injury. The emergency contact will be notified if the parent/guardians do not answer. In an accident involving emergency care, a medical attention report will be completed and returned to the director.

- MAJOR injuries include: a head injury, a broken bone, severe laceration or any other injury that requires a doctor's visit or emergency attention.
- MINOR injuries include: scratches, bruises or bumps.

Incidents

An incident includes the following: a child is lost or left unsupervised, alleged sexual contact between children or a child and a staff member or volunteer or physical discipline of a child by a staff member or volunteer. In the event this occurs, the following will take place:

- 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

Health Documents

All students must have a copy of their updated immunization record in their center file before their first day of attendance. If a parent chooses not to have his/her child immunized, an immunization waiver may be obtained through the local health department.

A well-child exam must be submitted within the first 30 days of school for continued enrollment. If a well-child exam is not on file by the required date, your child will be disenrolled and placed on a waitlist.

Health and Safety Continued

Medication Policy

A Doctor must complete and sign the Medication Permission and Instruction form for prescription medication required during class hours. 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.

- 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.

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

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

Medication Communication Policy

It is the YMCA of Greater Michiana GSRP program's policy that we do not administer medications unless needed for safety (allergy-related) or behavioral purposes. In these instances, we ask that parents keep communication open with teaching staff regarding changes in medication and/or dosing.

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.

Illness Policy

Should I Keep My Child Home Today?

When parents are debating whether it is okay to attend, remember that the most contagious time is just prior to the emergence of full-blown symptoms. Parents may want to keep children home for a day to ensure the illness is not contagious.

Upon arrival, if a child seems too ill to be at the Center (determined by Center Director or person in charge), parents will be asked to take him or her home. If we disagree about the child's health, please understand that it is a judgment aimed only at trying to keep everyone healthy.

A parent will be notified, and the child sent home for these reasons:

- Fever over 100.4 degrees (ear) or 99.5 degrees (axillary)
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (2 loose stools within an hour)

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

A child should stay home if experiencing:

- Are feverish or have had a fever in the last 24 hours
- Hacking cough or sore throat
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- Have pink eye symptoms which might be pink eye
- Have been on antibiotics for strep or other contagious infections less than 24 hours
- Are too "out of sorts" to participate in class activities
- Unexplained rash
- Skin rash

*These guidelines apply for staff and volunteers as well

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.

PEST Management

As required by State Licensing, each program has an integrated pest management program and parents will be notified prior to the pesticide applications.

YMCA OF GREATER MICHIANA NOTICE OF PESTICIDE USE

Pesticides are periodically applied to school district property or center as part of the 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 48-hour 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 at least 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.

Parent Notifications

Licensing Reports

The center keeps a licensing notebook containing a summary sheet, all licensing inspections and special investigations, and related corrective action plans for the last 5 years. The licensing notebook is available to parents/guardians during regular business hours. Reports from at least the past three years are available at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.

OR

The center does not keep a licensing notebook, but internet is available onsite. Reports from at least the last three years are available at 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 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 our school is evacuated, staff will notify you or another adult on your child's emergency contact form.

Food Service and Nutrition

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. Snacks and meals in GSRP reflect the home and community and are served family style.

All children eat the same foods unless there is a doctor-documented allergy or special need for individualization. Our center complies with rule 400.8330(3) that ensures children with special dietary needs receive meals/snacks in accordance with their needs.

All children are expected to feed themselves. Staff will not demand that any child eat, but children will be encouraged to taste new foods.

Our program adheres to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)/National School Nutrition Programs nutritional guidelines, DHS Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing and the GSRP Implementation Manual. Foods served reflect the home and community cultures and are high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt.

Menus are posted inside the center and will note food substitutions if necessary.

Breakfast is generally served upon arrival: lunch is served between 11:30am – 12:30pm and an afternoon snack occurs mid-afternoon.

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 and among children. Teachers provide ongoing support as children learn social and problem-solving skills. Program staff are 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).

Our program recognizes that challenging behaviors can be addressed through daily routines and activities. We believe that providing structure and consistency to a child's day can help to reduce anxiety and uncertainty, which may be contributing factors to challenging behavior. Our program is designed to have consistent daily schedules for our students and our curriculum provides opportunities for children to engage in activities that they enjoy and that align with their interests. We believe this approach can help foster a sense of fulfillment and reduce the likelihood of challenging behaviors. We strive to create a positive and supportive environment that promotes growth, development, and overall well-being through ongoing communication and collaboration with our staff, students, and families.

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 their 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. The consequences are met with calmness and empathy for the child. (Example: "This is sad. Remember I asked you not to throw sand? Throwing sand hurts his/her eyes. What can you do to help?")

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 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 teaching staff's direct supervision when children are present, with at least one staff person per class.

Field Trips

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 of your child's school.

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

Safe Arrival and Departure

Upon arrival at the Center, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Children must be signed-in by staff upon arrival.
- Children must be escorted by the parent/guardian into the Center or to the designated classroom meeting area.

Note: Please do not allow your child to enter the Center while eating any food.

Upon departure at the Center, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Parents/guardians picking up children will be signed out by a staff member.
- Older siblings may pick up younger siblings, but they must be at least 18 years of age.
- Children will be released only to those persons listed on the Child Information Record as authorized to be picked up by the parent/guardian. If you are picking your child up, please be prepared to show ID.
- If the parent/guardian wants to change the pick-up person over the phone, the new person must show proof of identification. The parent/guardian must sign a written permission for the new person at the first available time.
- ***If a parent/guardian or person authorized to pick up a child is intoxicated OR substance-impaired when they come to the Center, staff will offer to call another person to transport them. If the person insists on leaving with the child, they will be informed that the police will be notified about an intoxicated or substance-impaired driver leaving our premises. Additionally, Child Protective Services will be called.***
- If the pickup person does not have a proper car seat in their vehicle, staff are legally obligated to hold the child at the Center.

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.

Bus Transportation

We work in close collaboration with First Student to provide the safest possible trip to and from school for your child. If your bus address changes, please notify the Northside office. Northside will communicate the change with First Student. *Please note; bus changes may take up to 3 days to process and will be permitted based on route length and current bus capacity.*

Parents or their designee must come out to the bus with the child to assist them on and off of the bus. *When children are entering or leaving the motor vehicle, the children shall be carried or helped into the vehicle. The driver shall ensure that the children are received by a staff person, parent or other person designated by the parent. (6) R400.5611*

Parents, please have children ready and waiting outside 10 minutes before the scheduled pick-up time and be available for the bus 10 minutes before the drop-off time. **Bus times will fluctuate due to weather, other stops, etc.** If a parent/designee is not home to take the child off the bus, the child will be brought back to school, or the Transportation Department and emergency procedures will be activated.

Community Resources

The process of connecting families to community resources involves assessing the family's needs, identifying appropriate resources, providing referrals to those resources, and following up with the family to ensure that their needs have been met. This process may vary depending on the specific community resources and the needs of the family, but in general, it involves a collaborative effort between our program and families to ensure that referrals are made in a respectful, helpful, and safe manner. Resource books are also available in the main Northside office and main entrance.

If you or your family needs extra resources or support, please contact Michelle Skalla or Kristin McKay-Parrish at 683-1982.



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

Important Phone Numbers

Northside Child Development Center | Phone 269-683-1982 | Fax 269-684-9542
2020 N. 5th Street Niles, Michigan

Michelle Skalla, Director | mskalla@ymcagm.org
Kristin McKay-Parrish, Assistant Director | kparrish@ymcagm.org
Sue Benjamin, Program Specialist | sbenjamin@ymcagm.org
Ginny Ftacek, Administrative Assistant | vftacek@ymcagm.org

Jennifer Maurer, Lead Teacher | jmaurer@ymcagm.org
Maureen Pliley, Lead Teacher | mpliley@ymcagm.org
Stefanie Obenchain, Lead Teacher | sobenchain@ymcagm.org
Kennedy Crow, Lead Teacher | kcrow@ymcagm.org
Lindsay Byers, Lead Teacher | lbyers@ymcagm.org
Michelle Becraft, Lead Teacher | mbecraft@ymcagm.org
Olivia Clemons, Lead Teacher | oclemons@ymcagm.org

Sample Daily Schedule

8:20 Parent Drop off/Buses
8:30-8:45 Check in/Tub Toys
8:45- 8:55 Morning Circle (greeting, wish you well, weather, 100 days)
8:55-9:00 Wash Hands
9:00-9:20 Breakfast
9:20- 9:30 Book Time
9:30-9:50 Circle Time (numbers, study, and SEL/story if time.)
9:50-10:00 Bathroom
10:00-10:30 Outside
10:30-10:40 Lockers
10:40- 10:55 Small Group
10:55-11:00 Planning
11:00-12:00 Choice (use bathroom and wash hands)
12:00- 12:10 Clean Up
12:10 – 12:15 Recall
12:15- 12:35 Lunch
12:35-1:00 Tub toys/Journal writing and Read aloud
1:00-1:40 Rest Time
1:40-1:50 Clean Mats, Put away blankets
1:50-2:00 Bathroom
2:00-2:30 Outside time
2:30-2:40 Backpacks, Mail, wash hands
2:40-2:55 Snack
2:55-3:10 large group math activities daily reflection
3:20 Parent Pick up/Busses