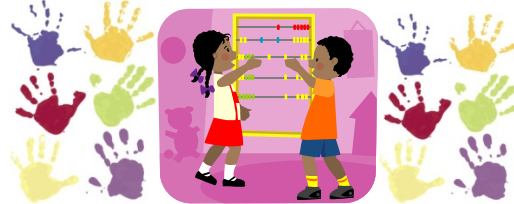


I Think I Can Childcare Center



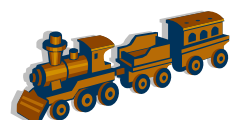
Mission Statement:

I Think I Can Childcare Center will provide a safe, secure learning environment for their families, children and staff with teaching, acceptance, respect and the love for learning.

We are excited for the years to come with you and your child. Please read the following handbook carefully. It has information that is necessary for you and your child to be successful while in the care of our staff. It includes information about payments, conduct, and discipline policy, what to bring, sick policy, what to expect, and more!

Childcare

Ages 6 weeks through 5 years



Welcome to I Think I Can Childcare Center's

Administrative information:

Main Center Location: 705 S Cherry Street Creston, IA 50801

Phone: 641-782-7117

Hours of Operation: 5:30 am until 5:45 pm Monday through Friday

Closed for the following Holidays: New Year's Day, Memorial Day, 4th of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and the following Friday, Christmas

Contact: Luanne Merrill – Acting Director

What to Bring:

- School bag and belongings for school if in preschool (will be left in locker until school or the child is picked up)
- Diapers, wipes, baby goods, bottles and change of clothing, and if necessary formula. (We will provide a milk or soy based store brand formula and rice cereal)
- Clothing appropriate for the weather (we play outside in all weather)
- Child may bring something to nap with for comfort; however, it will be kept in the child's locker until nap and placed back into the child's locker after nap.

What not to Bring:

- Toys or valuables from home (they will be taken once entered the center and not given back until parents arrives. The second time the parent will have to pick the item up from the director)
- FOOD FROM HOME (it will be taken and thrown away upon arrival)

Licensing Requirements

The center is required to be inspected and licensed annually by the Iowa Department of Human Services. This license is displayed to tell the community that the center meets the State of Iowa standards and procedures as established by the Iowa Department of Human Services. The center must also meet additional requirements as established by the Iowa Department of Public Health and State of Iowa Fire Marshall. The compliance of these standards allows I Think I Can to provide a healthy and safe program that promotes the growth and development of the children.

The state of Iowa designates the staff of I Think I Can Childcare Center as mandatory reporters of child abuse and neglect. They are required to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Human Services for investigation. All center staff are required to attend the

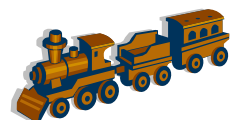


State of Iowa DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES Mandatory Abuse Training and must update this training as required by the State of Iowa. A copy of the law and a toll-free number to report child abuse are posted in the center.

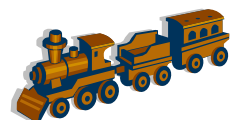
Policies

It is ALWAYS the responsibility of the parent or guardian to sign their child in and out daily. In not doing so, child will be signed out at 5:45pm when the center closes.

1. Child care is provided between the hours of 5:30 am and 5:45 pm Monday through Friday. IF your child arrives between 5:30 am and 6:00 am they will be required to lie down until 6:00 am. They may bring a blanket to be kept in their locker, except during rest periods. IF your child brings an item, please remember that I Think I Can Childcare is NOT responsible for the care, cleaning, or damage of the item may endure while here.
2. Children are required a rest time. Dependent on the age of the child and classroom the child is in, our rest period is between 11:30 am and 2:00 pm. You will need to check with your child's teacher to see your child's specific scheduled rest time.
3. I Think I Can Childcare Center prides itself on the values and education your child will receive when in our care. Our staff is continually trained to help meet the needs of all the children in our center. We provide a curriculum which allows our staff to incorporate age appropriate activities and discipline. All teachers are required to post a daily schedule and keep continued structure in the classroom, which allows the children enjoyment of varied activities.
4. I Think I Can Childcare Center offers four meal periods, and encourages healthy eating habits. All children are encouraged, but not forced to try all food items. In our preschool aged classroom, our lunches are served family style, which allow the children to serve themselves. We will provide a meal menu weekly posting on the parent board near the sign in clock. I Think I Can Childcare Center is a partner in the Child and Adult Care Food Program and parents are required to fill out forms when registering their child.
5. I Think I Can Childcare Center strives for quality childcare and in doing so children's charts MUST be updated annually. This includes filling out an enrollment packet and having an annual doctor visit. Not doing so could lead to the child not attending I Think I Can until the paperwork is updated.
6. Upon arrival, each child **must be clocked in** and then accompanied to the classroom or playground where the group of children is located. Please wait for acknowledgment of arrival by classroom staff. This ensures the safe transition of children to the center. Please do not allow children to run in the building and go directly to the appropriate classroom.



7. No child will be released to a person not authorized by a parent/guardian to pick up the child. We must have written or verifiable authorization for changes in this respect. Upon **clocking out**, please ensure that the classroom staff are informed of the child's departure and **exit through the main entrance**. **DO NOT remove children over the fence surrounding the playground**. Please do not allow children to run in the building or play in any unoccupied room.
8. Smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited in the building and outdoor play areas. Research has linked "second-hand smoke" as contributing to a host of health problems. Infants and toddlers exposed passively to tobacco are at risk of developing bronchitis, pneumonia, asthma, upper-respiratory infections and ear infection. Tobacco smoke can also make recovering from colds more difficult and can cause stuffy noses, headaches, eye irritations, loss of appetite, and fussiness. (411 IAC 109.10)
9. Parents and guardians have unlimited access to their child while their child is in the care of the I Think I Can Childcare staff. Parents are welcomed and encouraged to visit their child's classroom whenever they choose. Tours are available to families during business hours. The only time a parent's right to visit will be revoked is with a court order. (Iowa Code 232.69 and 411 IAC 109.5)
10. I Think I Can Childcare Center volunteers to be rated in the Quality Rating Scale. The program offers providers a guided way to improve the quality of child care they provide. As steps are completed, the provider moves up in levels and is awarded a "star" for each level. Currently I Think I Can Childcare Center has earned 3 out of the 5 stars.



I Think I Can Childcare Enrollment & Registration Procedures:

I Think I Can Childcare Center is required to keep current records on file for each child. Our records include the following:

1. Family Identification Information
2. Child Identification Information
3. Parental/Guardian Medical Emergency Information
4. Food Program Application
5. Child Medical Update
6. Current Physical (see Annual Physical Exam)
7. Certificate of Immunization
8. Parent/Guardian Permission for Field Trips (walking and trolley)
9. Pick up Permission

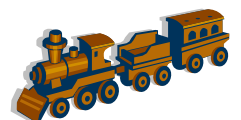
Records will be updated annually or when the parent/guardian notifies the center of a change. (441 IAC 109.9)

➤ **Annual Physical Exam:**

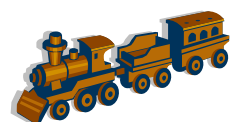
For any children under the age of five and not enrolled in kindergarten, the center requires an admission physical examination report (must have had physical in the past 6 months) submitted within 30 days of admission and annually signed by a licensed medical doctor, doctor of osteopathy, physician's assistant or advanced registered nurse practitioner, and the state of health status form will be provided by the center or a copy of a physical done within the past 6 months of the child's anniversary date will be expected. (411 IAC 109.10)

➤ **Religious Exemption:**

If a child of any person who is a member of a church or religious organization which has guidelines governing immunizations of medical treatment for disease that are contrary to the above rules an official statement from the church or organization shall be placed in the child's file. If a child has not been immunized, in the result of an illness outbreak



these children may not be allowed to return to the center until verification with the Iowa Department of Public Health and/or Union County Public Health Agency.



Fees/Charges:

The administrator and the board of directors plan the annual budget for the center based on fixed cost and projected enrollment. The program's major source of income is generated from parent fees. The general operating budget is not subsidized by government funding. It is important that the income generated from fees be as stable and dependable so monthly expenses for wages and utilities can be met. For this reason, weekly fees have been established with no reduction from the signed fee agreement. This allows the center to establish the fees as low as possible on a year-round basis. Please note that expenses for the infant/toddler program are greater because the ratio mandated by the Iowa Department of Human Services.

- **Registration Fee:** A \$25.00 per child registration fee will be instituted to cover the cost of processing paperwork involved in registration. Parents/guardians of children that drop out of the center will pay \$25 to re-enroll
- **Materials fee:** A \$20.00 per child annual fee will be used to offset the expense of consumables such as crayons, paper, paint, cleaning products, etc.
- **Late Pick up Charge:** After 5:45p.m., the charge is \$1.00 per minute for each child.
- **Late Ill Child Pick-Up Charge:** After the 2 hour grace period (which starts as soon as the parent/guardian/emergency contact is contacted) the charge will be \$1.00 per minute for each child.
- **Field Trips:** Field trips are scheduled as part of the curriculum to provide new experiences or provide a foundation for learning. Parents/guardians will cover the cost of the field trip which will include transportation and admission fees if necessary (NO flip flops are allowed; only water bottles are allowed unless otherwise noted).

Payment of Fees and Overdue Accounts

Full payment is expected on a weekly basis for payment of all child care fees. If you are unable to pay, your account shall not be allowed to go more than 30 days past due or reach \$500.00. If an account is 30 days past due, child care services will be terminated. Reinstatement of child care services will be evaluated once payment is made in full. If an account falls into delinquent status three times within a 12 month period, they will not be considered for reinstatement.

Vacation/Sick Leave:

If a child is enrolled in full or part-time fee category for six months they shall earn vacation/sick days. A child attending full-time will be entitled to 5 consecutive days of vacation/sick per year. A child in attendance part-time would be entitled to 3 consecutive days of vacation/sick per year. A day is based on normal attendance hours. The days may be used for vacation or illness. For



drop-in status, no vacation/sick are earned. **Please notify center prior to vacation for staff scheduling purposes.** Vacation/sick days must be used within one year when issued.



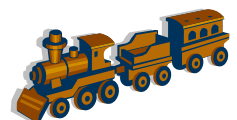
Keeping our kids healthy

Each child will be observed upon arrival for the early detection of illness, communicable disease, unusual condition or behavior that may adversely affect the child or group. The staff may request that the child not attend the center that day. After the parent/guardian leaves the center, if a child exhibits any of the following symptoms or illnesses, the parent/guardian/emergency contact will be notified to pick up the child as soon as possible. Whenever possible a child will be isolated from the group. **IMPORTANT NOTE: Parent/guardian will be assessed an \$1.00 per minute fee for any child remaining past a two-hour grace period (Time will begin with personal contact notifying the parent/guardian/emergency contact of child's illness).**

Symptoms/Illnesses when a child shall not attend the center

1. A temperature of or over 101 degrees. Temperatures will be taken under the arm with 1 degree to be added for correct temperature. The child may return after 12 hours of 100 degrees or less temperature without medication.
2. Untreated conjunctivitis-eye infection, commonly called pinkeye. The child may return after 12 hours of medication.
3. Rashes that caregivers or you cannot identify must be diagnosed by a physician.
4. Untreated impetigo. The child may return after 24 hours of treatment with medication.
5. Unusual diarrhea, unchecked by a physician. Child may return after 24 hours with no repeated diarrhea or a physician's statement that the virus is no longer active or contagious. Please advise staff if special diet is requested.
6. Vomiting (more than the usual spitting up). The child may return after 12 hours of no vomiting.
7. Severe cold with fever, sneezing, and/or nose drainage.
8. Contagious diseases such as measles, chicken pox, mumps, roseola.
9. Head lice or nits

At this time, I Think I Can Childcare Center is **not licensed** to care for mildly-ill children. **Please keep your child at home if they exhibit any of the symptoms listed above.**

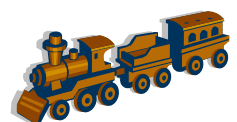


Excused Illness:

- If a child has missed four or more days because of sickness, the administrator may require a doctor's note excuse before returning to the center.
- If a physician diagnoses a non-contagious infection, the child may return per doctors written recommendation.
- If a contagious infection is diagnosed and medicine is prescribed, then the child may return after 24 hours on the medication. **After a physician's visit, please bring written documentation from the physician on the diagnosis for the center. Contagious illnesses must be posted at the main entrance where it is visible to parents and the public.** (411 IAC 109.10)

Medicines:

- **All medicines must be brought in their original containers, labeled by a pharmacist with the child's name, the name of the medication; the date the prescription was filled; the name of the health care provider who wrote the prescription; the medication's expiration date; and administration, storage and disposal instructions.**
- Nonprescription medicines must be labeled with the child's name and can be administered only according to package directions for no more than five consecutive days unless a doctor's written permission is obtained and written authorization by parents is given. Medicines must be age and weight appropriate for the child.
- Medicines must be dispensed by designated center staff only.
- In the case of medication that is administered on an on-going, long-term basis, authorization by a physician must be obtained for a period not to exceed the duration of the prescription.
- **IMPORTANT The designated staff responsible for dispensing medicine will not give any formula, juice or breast milk which has had medications added to it.**



Meal Policy

I Think I Can Childcare Center participates in the Child and Adult Food Program (CACPF). The use of this program ensures that the children at our center receive nutritional meals and snacks. Candy and gum are not permitted in the center. If found these items will be held at the office until the child leaves the center. Questions about food or the food program should be directed to the administrator.

Infant/toddlers: Parents need to provide baby bottles, formula, or baby food until the child is able to eat most table food. **Please mark all items with child's name.**

Meals and Snacks are scheduled below:

AM Snack:	6:30am to 6:45am
Breakfast:	8:30am to 9:00am
Lunch:	11/11:30am to 11:30am/12:00pm
PM Snack:	2:30pm to 2:45pm

Allergies: A copy of the physician's food allergy statement must be on file with the center. (411 IAC 101.9)

Special Diet: If a child requires a special diet because of medical reason, a written copy of the diet, including instructions by a licensed physician or healthcare provider must be submitted to the kitchen. (411IAC 109.15). If special foods are needed that the center does not typically have on hand, parents may be asked to provide them for their child.

Food for Special Occasions: Celebrating of birthdays is during snack period. If you wish to provide a special treat, please consider only store-bought goods. Cookies and miniature cupcakes are easy to handle and are considered by children as a special treat. (Please note that many children have common food allergies to milk, soy, peanut, tree nut and wheat.) Your child's teacher will add special stories and songs to make this a special time. (411 IAC 109.15).



Expectation and Discipline Policy

I Think I Can Childcare Center believes all children should be treated with warmth and respect. The staff will foster cooperation by giving praise and positive reinforcement for acceptable behavior, giving children choices, making sure the group rules are simple and clearly understood by the children. Every effort will be made to handle behavior problems positively and consistently. Goals for children include:

- Achieve self-control
- Increase their self-esteem
- Solve problems in creative and positive ways
- Maintain a safe environment
- Promote sharing and feeling of belonging to the group

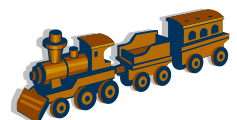
Staff are taught to prevent behavior problems by providing a structured environment and planned activities. Spanking and other forms of physical punishment are *never* used.

Inappropriate behaviors will be dealt with in the following ways:

- Ignore minor attention-getting behaviors such as whining.
- Redirect to more acceptable behavior
- Time out for aggressive acts, tantrums, non-compliance and inappropriate language.

Should a child experience persistent or serious problems, a conference with parent/guardian will be called to discuss the problem and determine a plan of action. The discussion may include the appropriateness of a referral to an agency such as Green Valley AEA, or other appropriate agency or individual additional support or information. A family may need to find a more appropriate child care setting if the child's behavior is a danger to the safety and well-being of the other children and staff. Specialized one-to-one attention due to an inappropriate behavior problem is not available at the center.

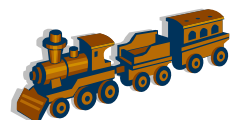
Human Biting: Children who are biting are very common between the ages of zero to three. Our staff will make sure not to single out the child who is biting, rather give them an adult they can see as a primary provider. Biting is almost always a response to the child's needs not being met or coping with a challenge or stressor (Zero to Three, 2010). It could be from teething, needing oral stimulation, over-tired, needing more playtime, choices, access to materials, experimenting to see what will happen, overwhelmed by the sounds, light or activity level in the



setting, lack of language skills, being in a large open/undefined spaces, cared for in a larger group, too many transitions throughout the day, do not have a strong attachment with caregiver, or not providing developmentally appropriate care and guidance. Staff will observe/ report what is going on in the environment before, during and after the biting incident to make a clear judgment. By noticing these signs ahead a time will hopefully help decrease the number of incidents in the future. As a parent, you will receive an incident report stating what happened. If the biting does not get under control within a month, I Think I Can Childcare Center will ask for your child to be removed from our care. We need to make sure we are providing a safe, positive environment for all our children in our care. We are willing to work with you in any way possible to eliminate biting and we will be able to provide information on request.

Communicating with I Think I Can

- Parent/guardian/staff conference will be held upon request. Please feel free to offer suggestions, comments, and constructive criticism.
- Any concerns or problems regarding the policies and procedures listed above should be submitted in writing to the center administrator. If a concern is not resolved then a written submission may be sent to the I Think I Can Board of Directors.
- The center will not release any information on file to anyone without the parent/guardian's written permission.
- The center strives to communicate with parents through personal contact, by placing notices at the main door, classroom message areas, sending notes home with children and the center newsletter. We appreciate any and all feedback from parents/guardians about the center's policies and programs. Good communication between all staff and families helps us provide better service and improves the quality of care your child receives.
- The center is committed to providing quality early care and education for its children and their families. We are committed to providing this service for the community and surrounding area.



I Think I Can Childcare

Acknowledgement of Parent Handbook

I, _____, The parent of,
_____, have fully read and understand the policies and
procedures of I Think I Can Childcare parent handbook. If I have any questions or
concerns I will bring them to the attention of the I Think I Can Childcare staff of director.
I realize there is a procedure to direct my concerns and I will follow it as necessary. I
have gone over the expectations with my child.

Signature of Parent/Guardian _____ Date _____

Signature of I Think I Can Staff _____ Date _____

