



HANDBOOK

2023-2024

## FACILITY

Creative Explorations is licensed by the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Office of Early Childhood. License number: 724702 & 762000. Creative Explorations is licensed for one hundred and sixty eight children, serving children age six weeks- age ten years.

## CONTACT

Creative Explorations Trail Campus (207) 893-9029

Creative Explorations River Campus (207) 572-1095

Owner/Director, Tabitha Cummings Email: [tcummingsce@gmail.com](mailto:tcummingsce@gmail.com) Cell: (207) 807-6606

Finance manager, Hossein Miremadi Email: [creative.explorationsme@gmail.com](mailto:creative.explorationsme@gmail.com)

## CURRICULUM & PHILOSOPHY

Creative Explorations is a learning institution built to nurture and support the development of children. Inspired by the Reggio Emilia pedagogy and theorists, John Dewey and Lev Vygotsky, we have designed a socio-constructivism curriculum fostering the belief that knowledge is constructed through interactions and relationships with others and the environment.

We appreciate the importance of experiential, interdisciplinary education and believe children learn best by immersing themselves into their natural world where they are free to inquire, explore, and reflect. The environments at Creative Explorations are valued as the "third teacher" and will challenge the children socially, physically, and academically through deep levels of engagement in: literacy, math, science and engineering, arts and humanities, outdoor exploration, health and wellness, and community outreach and citizenship.

We believe a child who has been emotionally supported while fostering and developing their own curiosity and creativity in their early years of development, will become stronger problem solvers, hold higher respect for each other and all living things, and will choose sustainable living throughout life. With this foundation, children will continue to be kind humans, accomplished and unbiased learners, and bring positive change to our society.

## DAILY SCHEDULE

The daily rhythm will vary based on the age group of children, time of year and weather, and will remain flexible as children master skills or tasks.

Children are encouraged to lead their education by making decisions that impact their learning. Throughout the day, we will offer provocations based on our observations of the children. Children will be invited to participate in individual and group child-led explorations as well as structured group time with their educators.

Meal times are structured around the children's needs but happen around 9am, 12pm, and 3pm. Rest time for children in

our toddler programs through EK, occurs between 1pm and 3pm. Infants create their own rest patterns.

## RIGHTS OF CHILDREN

- Children must be free from emotional, physical and/or sexual abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- Each Child has the right to freedom from harmful actions or practices that are detrimental to the Child's welfare, and to practices that are potentially harmful to the Child.
- Each Child has a right to an environment that meets the health and safety standards in this rule.
- Each Child must be provided Child care services without discrimination to race, age, national origin, religion, disability, sex or family composition.
- Children must be treated with dignity, consideration and respect in full recognition of their individuality. This includes the use of developmentally appropriate practices by the Child Care Facility.
- Each Child has the right to the implementation of any plan of service that has been developed for that Child in conjunction with community or state agencies by the Child Care Facility.
- Each Child has the right to Developmentally Appropriate activities, materials, and equipment.
- Children with disabilities have the right to reasonable modifications to Child Care Facility policies and practices.

## REGGIO EMILIA INSPIRATION

The environment at Creative Explorations is designed to act as a third teacher. Our educators create an environment that is safe, engaging, and aesthetically pleasing. The classroom is designed to offer individual and group learning spaces to foster self awareness as well as relationships and communication. Our space exhibits respect towards it's users through thoughtful displays of art, photographs, and cherished pieces from nature.

Each classrooms curriculum is based on the child's interest. We believe that learning must make sense to the child in order to be effective and meaningful. Materials are added and changed based on the educational path of the children. The daily schedule may be flexible at times to allow a child to fulfill an educational stride. Our educators respect each child and their learning process by working alongside them. Our interactions are patient, intentional, and encouraging. We support learning and curiosity by helping the child find an answer rather than simply giving them one.

We hold a great respect for the "hundred languages" of early childhood. We support both verbal and non verbal expression in children. Children engage in creative activities daily. These include the use of traditional art media such as drawing, painting, collage, and sculpting as well as non traditional art media to extend the child's thinking and creativity.

These non traditional activities include dance, music, and yoga. Imaginary play is another form of creativity that is highly encouraged in our classrooms.

We utilize our outdoor classroom daily, regardless of weather conditions. Children are encouraged to explore their natural world and gain a love and respect for it. Our outdoor classroom supports hands-on learning through experience with nature, seasons, weather, and life cycles. The natural world is also brought into the classroom to enhance the environment and foster curiosity.

We invite children to be an active part of the classroom community. They assist in classroom cleaning, organization, and curriculum planning. More importantly, we help build skills to support partnerships with peers, teachers, and the community. Children and teachers work together to broaden their knowledge, skills, and acceptance that contribute to a more inclusive and peaceful world. Both the local and global community is explored, giving children insight into their world with respect and appreciation of cultural and religious traditions, beliefs, and celebrations.

We encourage families to help us build the bridge from home to school. We welcome families to spend time with their child in their school environment, share family interests, values, and traditions, and link common practices between home and school. We host family involvement events where families are encouraged to make connections with other families, their child's peers, and the educators at CE.

## ADMISSION & ENROLLMENT

Creative Explorations is open year round. The schools hours of operation are between 7 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday, except scheduled school closings, as outlined on the school calendar. We define the year by trimesters which begin in September, January, and June. Depending on classroom dynamics and ages, we typically base transitions on these semesters.

In order to secure and maintain your child's enrollment, full tuition must be paid throughout the entire trimester, regardless of your child start date. Creative Explorations is unable to hold an enrollment space for a child that requires a later start date than the beginning of the trimester.

Creative Explorations holds a deposit of \$300.00 that must be paid in order to secure a child's enrollment space. After acceptance of enrollment, all policies of this handbook apply to any changes of enrollment status. The deposit will be refunded to your account at the end of your time at Creative Explorations so long as appropriate notice has been given, as outlined below, and payments are up to date.

A penalty of \$300.00 will be applied if a family choses to terminate or decrease enrollment during the school year program (September through June), during the summer program (June through September), or prior to starting. Creative Explorations will pursue necessary legal action with respect to non-payment of tuition.

Tuition is based on enrollment (a reserved space), not attendance. No deductions from tuition shall be made for absences, holidays, or family vacations. A one month notice of a schedule decrease or withdrawal of your child is required. You will be

charged your regular tuition rate one month from the day the notice is given.

Prior to your child's start date, all families must complete all admission paperwork and sign the "Enrollment & Policy Acknowledgment Agreement", which outlines the mutual agreement between the family and the school. It is the families responsibility to keep all records updated.

Creative Explorations has the right to make decisions regarding enrollment and classroom placement based on the needs of the individual and program as a whole.

## INCLUSION

Creative Explorations strives to offer quality care and education to children of all ability levels. We will make every reasonable accommodation to ensure all children have the same opportunity to actively participate in our programs.

## SUMMER ENROLLMENT

If you chose to withdraw your child, or decrease their enrollment for the summer program and intend on continuing enrollment the following school year, Creative Explorations will collect a fee of \$500 per child to hold your enrollment space. This fee will be collected no later than the last day of the school year.

## TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

It may be necessary for Creative Explorations to discontinue a child's enrollment. This decision is based on the best interest of the individual and other children in the program. Creative Explorations will implement strategies in an effort to correct undesired behaviors as outlined below, but ultimately can choose to terminate enrollment at any time:

- Abuse of other children, staff, or property by child and or parent/guardian.
- Continued violation of policies by child or parent/guardian.
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior by child or parent/guardian.
- The school's inability to meet the child's need or the parent/guardian expectation.
- The school inability to meet the special needs of a child.

Non-payment of tuition

## TUITION

Tuition payments can be made through Venmo, cash, or check and may be paid monthly or weekly. Payments are always due as selected at the time of enrollment:

Monthly: Full months tuition is due on the first week of each month. Please pay close attention to the number of weeks in the month.

Weekly: Tuition is due by Tuesday at 10 AM each week.

Monthly receipts may be requested via email: [creative.explorationsme@gmail.com](mailto:creative.explorationsme@gmail.com)

## YEARLY MATERIAL FEE

We collect a yearly material fee of \$100 per child. This fee is collected upon enrollment and again each September.

## RETURNED CHECKS

All returned checks will result in a fee of \$35.

## LATE PAYMENT CHARGES

If a payment is not received on the day that it is due, a late fee of \$5 will be collected for each day it is late. If your account has not been paid in full within 5 business days, your child may not attend school until the account has been brought current.

Should any tuition payment be past due for a period of ten days and arrangements for prompt payment have not been agreed upon by the director, Creative Explorations shall have the right to terminate enrollment. Creative Explorations will pursue necessary legal action with respect to non-payment of tuition.

## HOURS OF CARE

For the benefit and safety of the children in our care, Creative Explorations offers three enrollment time slots. Families requiring care from 7 AM- 5:00 PM must apply for extended care. This policy is based on child/teacher ratios as mandated by licensing and quality care guidelines set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. This policy also helps control traffic flow in our classrooms and allows our educators to touch base with each family.

All families must choose a consistent schedule of 7 AM-4:15 PM, 7:30 AM-4:45 PM, or 7:45 AM-5:00 PM. This schedule must be approved by the director.

## DROP-OFF & PICK-UP

Creative Explorations opens at 7 AM. Entrance into the building before this time is prohibited, even if staff is present. Please allow time for you and your child to wash hands, sign in, and settle in accordingly.

The school closes at 5:00 PM. All pick up procedures must be completed by your scheduled pick up time. Allow enough time to arrive, sign your child out, review the day with your child's teacher, and leave by your scheduled time. Late fees are severe and will be collected.

The main door to your child's classroom should be used for all pick up and drop offs. The doorways that connect the classrooms are to be used by staff only. All doors and playground gates MUST be shut and latched behind you. All children must be accompanied into and out of the building by an adult. Please remove shoes prior to entering the classrooms. All children must be signed in and out every day.

Your child will only be released to the contacts listed on the Emergency Contact Form. All unknown parties will be asked to provide photo identification.

If a child is not picked up after closing and we are not able to reach you, we will contact those listed on your Emergency Contact Form. If, after two hours, your child has not been picked up and we are still unable to reach you or a person listed as an Emergency Contact, we will call the local child protective service agency.

## LATE PICK-UP FEES

Late pick-up negatively impacts the children and staff and will be heavily fined. If you realize you are unable to complete your pick up by the end of your time slot, please contact the staff as soon as possible to alert us. A late fee of \$25 will be collected if the child is picked up past the scheduled pick up time. If the child is at Creative Explorations more than 15 minutes past scheduled pick up time, an additional \$5 per minute from then until the child is picked up will be applied on top of this fee. Late pick-up fees are due and collected at the time of pick up and is made payable to the staff on duty.

## ABSENCE

If your child will be absent from school, please call, email, or send a message via the classroom app by 9 AM so that we can plan accordingly.

## TARDINESS AND DISMISSAL

Children may not be dropped off past 10:00 AM. This will allow the child enough time for exploration and stimulation prior to the daily quiet structured time. If a child leaves the school for an appointment, we ask they do not return until the following day.

We understand children have appointments, but to respect all of the children in our classroom we ask that all appointments are scheduled around this policy.

## CENTER CLOSINGS

Creative Explorations observes twelve holidays per year. Full tuition is due during these weeks. If a holiday falls on the week of vacation, the holiday will be observed prior to, or following, the vacation.

Families should consult the school calendar for dates when the school is closed. There are no discounts during weeks when the school is closed.

## EVACUATION

In the event of an emergency the following procedures have been put in place:

Lockdown procedure:

All doors will be locked and shades will be drawn. Depending on the situation, we may move children and educators into the basement where there is food, water, blankets, flashlights, and first aid. We will contact families when all children are safe. We will release children only to their immediate family unless otherwise directed, via phone, by the primary guardian(s) of that child. We will not check phone messages at this time.

Compromised Building:

All children and staff will evacuate to: Trail campus- Pats Pizza, River Campus- opposite building. We will contact families when all children are safe. We will release children only to their immediate family unless otherwise directed, via phone, by the primary guardian(s) of that child. We will not check phone messages at this time.

Fire Safety:

Creative Explorations fire safety system is equipped with hardwired fire alarms, pull stations, emergency lighting, and evacuation cribs. Fire drills are preformed and reviewed monthly.

## STAFF QUALIFICATIONS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Our educators are carefully selected based on their education, experience, dedication to the profession and like mindedness of our philosophy.

Professional development is important and necessary to maintain quality and educated teachers. All employees of Creative Explorations are required to participate in at least thirty hours of training per year, including first aid and CPR.

## FAMILY INVOLVEMENT & COMMUNICATION

Creative Explorations recognizes that the parents/guardians are the primary educator and nurturer of their child. The ideal early childhood experience is a result of cooperation between the parent/guardian and our staff at Creative Explorations. We encourage your involvement in our classroom and value your input.

We will host family involvement events throughout the school year. We may need to close up to an hour early to provide these opportunities. We will notify you of these closings at least one month prior to the event.

In an effort to reduce paper waste, most communication will be sent via email, the school app, and/or posted in the entry of your child's classroom.

## EXTENDED FAMILY VISITS

Creative Explorations recognizes there may be many people in your child's life who want to see your child on a monthly, weekly, or daily basis. However, we are unable to provide a safe environment for children in our care when adults, who have not been through the proper screening process, are present in our classrooms. In addition to safety concerns, the



classroom dynamic and routine are greatly impacted during visits and therefore are not permitted during the school day.

## CONFERENCES AND CHILD ASSESSMENT

Children will be assessed by observations in the natural classroom setting. We do not use standardized testing. Observations are an ongoing piece of our center's curriculum and various observation tools will be applied. Observations will be used for curriculum planning, setting future goals, and assessing the classroom environment.

Creative Explorations will close one day in the fall and one day in the spring to offer families uninterrupted time to meet with their child's teacher(s). Conferences will be held between 7 AM and 4 PM, in 45 minute increments. Up to nine conferences per time slot will be available. There will be no childcare available on these dates. Full tuition is expected during these weeks. All parent/teacher meetings must be scheduled during these dates.

## EARLY INTERVENTION REFERRALS

Based on observations in the classroom setting, your child's educator may suggest an early intervention screening. These conversations are usually introduced at parent/teacher meetings, unless the child is exhibiting a strong need for supports sooner.

If you agree to screening, Creative Explorations will make a referral to the Maine Child Development Services (CDS). CDS will contact you after the initial referral and you will report any concerns (if any) you have noted at home and they will schedule a time for an evaluator to come to Creative Explorations for an observation and/or testing. After the initial evaluation, CDS will schedule an eligibility meeting to determine if your child qualifies for services based on their scores during their screening. A classroom teacher and a director will be present for these meetings.

## GUIDANCE & DISCIPLINE

Staff working at Creative Explorations will always use positive methods of child management which encourage self control, cooperation, and promoting positive self esteem. Child management shall meet the individual needs of each child. Rules, expectations, and limits are applied consistently and explained in a clear manner. No form of physical punishment, withholding food, or verbal disrespect is permitted within the center.

If a child's actions are deemed unsafe for themselves, their peers, or the staff, a staff member will place them in a safe area until their body is calm and they are able to talk/work through the situation. Parents/ guardians may be notified depending on the severity of the behavior.

## BITING

Though families tend to express a strong emotional response to biting, it is a typical and normal stage of toddler development. Many toddlers bite due to teething or growing communication skills.

In the event of a bite, staff will ensure the child that has been bit is comforted and tended to. We will provide the child that bit with tools to help them understand the consequence of the behavior and redirect them to a more desirable means to communicate. It is never our goal to punish the child biting, but to help them overcome this phase of development safely. Both families will receive an incident report.

In the event a child older than three results to biting on more than three occasions per week for two consecutive weeks or biting persists over a period of a month, a formal meeting will take place and could be grounds for enrollment dismissal.

## TOILET TRAINING

We work in collaboration with home during the transition from diapering to toileting. Research indicates a child must be ready physically, psychologically, and emotionally in order for them to fully grasp the concept of toilet training. It is our philosophy that children should not be forced into this transition. We believe verbal encouragement is important and that the child will feel a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction driven by reflection of their inner-self as well as peer support. We will not use stickers or reward charts in the classroom.

If a child is soiling their underwear more than four times a week or unable to communicate that their underwear is soiled, we will request the child wears a diaper or pull up until he/she shows signs of physical control or awareness of their bodily functions.

Children who are toilet trained must wear underwear at all times.

## HEALTH

To reduce illness in our facility, we care for children only when they are healthy enough to participate in the daily schedule. Children will be sent home immediately when showing signs or symptoms as listed. The child is expected to be picked up within an hour of notice. If we are unable to reach the parent/guardian, we will call the emergency contacts provided.

Please use your best judgement when your child is ill. Keep your child home if he/she has the following symptoms:

- An elevated temperature of 100.0 or higher within the last 24 hours. Child must be fever free without fever reducing medication such as acetaminophen or Ibuprofen for 24 hours before returning to the center.
  - Two or more episodes of diarrhea and/or one episode of vomiting in the previous 24 hours.
  - Discharge from the eyes or ears. Child must remain at home for 24 hours with medication in the case of conjunctivitis.
  - Any unexplainable or contagious rashes, bacterial infections, or viral infections.
  - Chicken Pox: We require a one week absence and sores must be scabbed and dry prior to the child's return.
  - HFM: Child must be fever free for 24 hours and sores must be scabbed and dry prior to the child's return.
  - Head Lice: Child may return as soon as treatment has been given and all nits (eggs) have been removed.
- Staff will take appropriate measures to ensure this process is complete and will do so as discretely as possible.
- Strep throat: Child must remain at home for 24 hours after the start of antibiotics.
  - Any injury that, if left untreated, could potentially affect the child's well being.
  - Anesthesia: Child must remain at home for at least 24 hours after anesthesia was administered.
  - Antibiotics: Should your child be placed on an antibiotic, he/she may not return to the center until they have been on the

medication for at least 24 hours. If the doctor is willing to provide documentation that the child has been on this medication before, we will waive this policy.

We may require a doctor's note upon returning to the classroom for any reason.

## VACCINATION

The state of Maine requires your child's most recent vaccination record to be filed at Creative Explorations. Failure to have this in your child's file, will result in a citation for Creative Explorations. If your child's file does not have a current vaccination record at any time, there will be a penalty fee of \$50. In addition, your child will be suspended until the documentation is provided.

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Creative Explorations follows all health/communicable disease policies as outlined in the American Academy of Pediatrics Model Health Policies and Procedures Manual. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis immediately, so that the parents of the children in the school maybe notified that a communicable disease is present. DHHS requires that notification be given to the agency as well. In all cases, we will keep strict confidentiality regarding your child's information.

## MEDICATIONS

We will not administer any medications, including over-the-counter, without written permission from a physician. This document must also be accompanied by a signed permission form by a legal guardian. This permission form will be provided by the center and will be kept on file. All medications must be kept in their original containers with the child's name, name of medication, dose to be given, as well as indication of how long and how often medication is to be given. It is your responsibility to update if needed.

## ASHMA AND ALLERGY CARE PLANS

If your child has been prescribed an asthma or allergy care plan that requires any medication (including Benadryl, albuterol, and epinephrine) all medications must be provided by the parent/guardian and remain at CE. Medications can not go from school to home daily.

## INJURIES

The safety of the children in our care is our greatest priority. The environment is evaluated on a daily bases to

eliminate any potentially dangerous materials and/or hazards.

If your child sustains a minor injury they will receive first aid from a trained staff member. Each classroom is equipped with a first aid kit that meets the state of Maine regulations. If any injury produces swelling or may require medical attention, you will be notified by phone. An incident form will be completed by a staff member that was present during the time of incident. This form will address in detail the incident and course of action taken.

In the event of a serious medical emergency, Creative Explorations reserves the right to call 911 and arrange for transportation via ambulance to Maine Medical Center in Portland, Maine. As soon as it is safe to do so, a staff member will contact parents/guardians by phone. A staff member will escort the child to the emergency room if the parent/guardian is unable to arrive at Creative Explorations prior to the ambulance departure.

In the event of death, the owner will contact the following in proceeding order: local emergency department, the child or staff members emergency contact, all families enrolled at Creative Explorations, and childcare licensing. All children will be moved into a separate, on site location. Creative Explorations will close immediately until further notice, as coordinated with DHHS.

## SUNSCREEN

Between May 1st and October 1st, is expected that all children arrive with sunscreen applied. Please be sure to do this prior to entering the building. Sunscreen will be reapplied as needed throughout the day. For the safety of staff and other children, staff members will not apply sunscreen provided by parents/guardians unless approved by the director. A doctors note may be required.

Each family is responsible for paying a \$20/per child sunscreen fee that will be collected in May each year.

## NUTRITION

Please send your child with a lunch box that is labeled with their name. Morning, afternoon snacks, and lunches must have a high nutritional value. We will encourage children to eat at least half of their entree before moving on to the other choices in their lunch boxes. There must also be at least one fresh fruit or vegetable option. Juice, flavored milk, store bought treats, fruit snacks, and candy will be left in child's lunch box to be eaten at home. Please send your child with an ice pack and keep their lunches in their cubbies. All bottles must be provided by the family. Bottles must be prepared daily and brought home for washing. Children are required to sit at the table during meal time, but we never require a child to eat. Your child's leftovers will be left in their lunch box so you are able to see what and how much they ate.

We take necessary precautions to protect children with allergies. If your child has an allergy, please inform

us on your introductory forms.

## FOOD ALLERGIES & RESTRICTIONS

If your child has a food allergy, you must have a physician fill out the Allergy Notification form and indicate all restrictions as well as an action plan in the event of an allergic reaction.

## OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS

Our outdoor classrooms support social-emotional and cognitive development. Children will be encouraged to explore their natural world daily, which includes: naturally enhanced play spaces, trails, nature paradises enriched by fallen trees and large boulders, vernal pools, rolling hills of grass and berry bushes, puddles and mud made from precipitation and ice melting.

We model and teach respect for our eco- systems and the biodiversity within them. Children in all programs at Creative Explorations will experience relationships with animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms. Educators will participate in developmentally appropriate conversations about climate change, global warming, pollution, and other environmental concerns and their affects. Curiosity and drive for advocacy will be child led and supported with literature and community outreach. Our programs work with the children and their families to limit single use plastic, recycle, compost, and garden in an effort to minimize our carbon footprint.

## MUD AND WATER PLAY

Children will be encouraged to explore their natural world daily, which includes puddles made from precipitation and/or snow/ice melting, dirt, and mud. We require outdoor clothing to promote safe exploration for the season. A full rain suit and rain boots are required. Rain mittens are also highly recommended. We will not ask children to avoid getting wet.

There are many benefits to messy outdoor play which includes the exploration of mud and water year round. Some benefits include peer cooperation, problem solving, critical thinking and expressive language. Other benefits can be accomplished on a more intimate level as children mature their sensory skills, artistic expression, and imagination. There are even health benefits such as boosting the immune system and promoting mental health.

# CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

At Creative Explorations we enjoy many hands-on experiences throughout the day. Please send your child ready to explore! Footwear should be safe, comfortable, and functional.

We will send soiled clothes home. Please replenish your child's change of clothes as necessary.

Your child will participate in outdoor experiences twice daily unless the weather is hazardous to the child's health. Be sure to bring appropriate clothing for the season. B&A Enrichment, Early Kindergarten and Preschool children will go outdoors so long as it is 15 degrees or warmer. Toddler children will go outdoors so long as it is 20 degrees or warmer. Infants will go outdoors so long as it is 25 degrees or warmer.

Creative Explorations is not responsible for lost or damaged clothing. We recommend labeling your child's clothing. If you notice another child's clothing has mistakenly been sent to your home, please return it the following day.

The messages and images on your child's clothing must be appropriate. Violent images and characters that promote violence are prohibited.

## WHAT TO PACK

First Trimester:

<p><b>September</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Labeled sunscreen face stick</li> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-short sleeved shirts</li> <li>-long sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of long pants</li> <li>-pairs of shorts</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 sweatshirt/ light jacket</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable walking shoes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>October &amp; November</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-long sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of long pants</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 sweatshirt/ light jacket</li> <li>-1 heavy jacket</li> <li>-1 hunter orange hat</li> <li>-light mittens or gloves</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable walking shoes</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p><b>December</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-long sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of long pants</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 sweatshirt</li> <li>-1 heavy jacket</li> <li>-1 pair of snow pants</li> <li>-1 warm hat</li> <li>-1-2 pairs of waterproof mittens or gloves</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable waterproof boots</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
--	--	---

Second Trimester:

<p><b>January- March</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:</li> <li>-long sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of long pants</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 sweatshirt</li> <li>-1 heavy jacket</li> <li>-1 pair of snow pants</li> <li>-1 warm hat</li> <li>-1-2 pairs of waterproof mittens or gloves</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable waterproof boots</li> <li>-Bike or ski helmet</li> </ul>	<p><b>April &amp; May</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Labeled sunscreen face stick</li> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:</li> <li>-short sleeved shirts</li> <li>-long sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of long pants</li> <li>-pairs of shorts</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 sweatshirt/ light jacket</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable waterproof boots</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable walking shoes</li> </ul>	<p><b>June</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Labeled sunscreen face stick</li> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:</li> <li>-short sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of shorts</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 sweatshirt/ light jacket</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable waterproof boots</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable walking shoes</li> <li>-sun hat</li> </ul>
--	--	---

Third Trimester:

<p><b>July- August</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Labeled sunscreen face stick</li> <li>-Crib sheet &amp; blanket (or sleep sack) appropriate for the season.</li> <li>-Wet bag</li> <li>3-5 of the following:</li> <li>-short sleeved shirts</li> <li>-pairs of shorts</li> <li>-pairs of underwear</li> <li>-pairs of socks</li> <li>-1 light jacket</li> <li>-rain gear for the entire body</li> <li>-safe &amp; comfortable walking shoes</li> <li>-bathing suit</li> <li>-beach towel</li> <li>-sun hat</li> </ul>
--

## HOLIDAYS & CELEBRATIONS

Throughout the year we offer opportunities for children to explore themselves as individuals while also respecting others. Our goal is to expose children to many traditions, holidays, and celebrations in an authentic way, minimizing exposure to commercialism. Holidays will be explored using literature, manipulatives, classroom discussion, and developmentally appropriate activities.

We would love for you to be involved in our explorations. We ask you to be mindful that not all of the children and staff at our school share the same beliefs.

## BIRTHDAYS

Each child is celebrated on their birthday. They may choose to wear the special birthday crown and at circle we celebrate their space on Earth while their friends sing to them and share what they enjoy about them. Families are invited to send in a healthy snack to share with the class. We ask that sugary treats, balloons, and other decorations and gifts are not brought into the school.

All party invitations must be distributed off school grounds unless the entire class is invited.

## CAR SEATS

We highly recommend all five point harness carseats remain in the vehicle when possible. Removing carseats on a daily bases can jeopardize the effectiveness of the carseat. However, there is a carseat closet available for storing carseats during the day. All carseats must be brought home daily. For more information on carseat safety, please visit <https://www.healthychildren.org>.

Staff members are not authorized to install or assist with the installation of a carseat.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE

We would love to share what we do during the day through photos, work samples, and brief anecdotes on our website, Facebook, and our blog. Photographs are not used for any such purpose without written consent of the child's parent or guardian on the photographic release form.

## PROGRAM APP

We will use an app to communicate and update you on important notes! At the beginning of the school year, you will be expected to download this app to your mobile device. Please do not message staff through social media or text messaging.

## CHILD CUSTODY

Without court documentation, both parents/guardians have equal rights to custody. We can not withhold a child from their legal guardian without court documentation. We are legally bound to follow any court documentation in regards to custody, visitation schedules and restraining orders.

## CHILD ABUSE

Staff is mandated by the State of Maine to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Parents and guardians will always be notified of these concerns and if there is the need to make a report. If a parent or family member suspects abuse, they too, should contact local law enforcement or the Maine Office of Child and Family Services at 1-800-452-1999.

If a member of Creative Explorations is suspected of child abuse, a report will be made immediately to the Maine Office of Child and Family Services. The staff member will be suspended immediately pending



further investigation.

## ALCOHOL/ ILLEGAL SUBSTANCE POLICY

If a staff member has reason to believe that the adult responsible for transportation is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the staff member will address their concern and offer assistance in arranging for alternative transportation for the adult and child.

Reason for concern may include the odor of alcohol or drugs, slurring of speech, confusion and/or unusual behavior which may indicate impaired judgment or risk to safety. Staff members will take any and all steps necessary to protect the safety of the child in our care, including informing local or state police.

## IDLING VEHICLES

For the safety of the children in our care, all vehicles must remain off during drop-off and pick-up. We value the opportunity to breathe clean air and wish to keep it as clean as possible for our friends.

## SMOKING

Smoking within 100 feet of the building is strictly prohibited.

## ANIMALS

All animals need to be approved by the director prior to entering any learning environment.