Parent Handbook

26-27 School Year

Address: 16575 SE Webster Rd, Milwaukie, OR 97267

Emergency Contact: Desiraé's Cell (see below)

Website: www.thetreehouseaforestgardenschool.org

Tax ID: 46-2885106

Security Key for door padlock: Will be provided upon enrollment

Important Contacts

Desiraé Ritz: Director and Founder
Email: desirae.thetreehouse@gmail.com
Only to be used in case of emergencies: 541-990-6520 (Desiraé's Cell)

Sydney Steiner: Education and Community Director
TreehouseTeacherSydney@gmail.com
[contact for: curriculum, classroom questions/concerns, behavioral concerns]

Jenna Beakes: Office Manager
office.thetreehouse@gmail.com
[contact for: enrollment, tuition/billing, forms, contact updates, contracts, scheduling, immunizations]

The Treehouse Team

For a complete list of our Teaching and Administrative Team, please visit our website.

Sign Up for Flash Alerts: stay informed about inclement weather and emergency closures

To sign up for the alerts see HERE. The Treehouse will follow the North Clackamas School District closures for Snow Days and Inclement Weather.

Social Media

You can like us on Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/TheTreehouseaforestgardenschool
Follow us on Instagram at: @thetreehouseforestgardenschool

Google Photos

The Treehouse utilizes Google for sharing school photos of your children with you. Once the school year begins you will receive an invitation via email.

Brightwheel

Treehouse uses the Brightwheel App for signing in and out, notes about a child's day and messaging with parents. In Brightwheel you'll also be able to access your child's classroom calendar to view closures and events for the school year. The Treehouse also uses Brightwheel for our enrollment process and document sharing with families. Please review this Brightwheel User Guide to get started!
Please note: Brightwheel is used to sign children in and out of class so all persons authorized to pick up or drop off your child need to create a Brightwheel account.

If you have questions about Brightwheel or need help getting set up please contact our Office Manager, Jenna: office.thetreehouse@gmail.com.

Parent Volunteer Hours

There is an annual community requirement of volunteering at The Treehouse. Oaks and Saplings are required to volunteer 5 hours, while Acorns are required to volunteer 2 hours. If for any reason volunteering 2/5 hours during the school year does not work for your family, you can opt out and pay $20 per hour not volunteered, up to $100. All volunteer hours must be documented by the parent fulfilling the hours at the time of volunteering, and a teacher will sign off on those hours. The document will give further instructions about who to contact to do tasks. You can find the volunteer document here.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

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26-27 Calendar of Festivals and Events

September 1 - First Day of School Year
September 7 - Labor Day Closure
September 9-11 - Gear/Toy Swap
September 12 - Rummage Sale 10 am-6 pm + Autumn Festival | 4:30-6 pm

November 10 - Lantern Walk | 4:30 pm
November 11 - Veterans Day Closure
November 20 - Parent-Teacher Conferences/In-Service
November 23 - Staff In-Service Day
November 24-27 - Autumn Closure

December 21-January 1 - Winter Break Closure

January 4 - Staff In-Service Day
January 18 - Martin Luther King Jr. Day Closure

February 15 - Presidents' Day Closure
February 22 -Staff In-Service Day

March 6 - Winter Open House | 9:30-11:30 am
March 22-26 - Spring Break Closure

April 9 - Rainbow Run Fundraiser | 3:30-4:30 pm
April 12 - Parent-Teacher Conferences/In-Service

May 1 - May Faire | 10:30 am-12:30 pm
May 3-7 - Teacher Appreciation Week
May 31 - Memorial Day Closure

June 11 - Last Day of School Year | **3:30 pick up for all**
June 11 - Rainbow/Graduation Ceremony | 5-6 pm

September 2026

M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30			

October 2026

M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	31

November 2026

M	T	W	Th	F	S
2	3	4	5	6	7
9	10	11	12	13	14
16	17	18	19	20	21
23	24	25	26	27	28

December 2026

M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12
14	15	16	17	18	19
21	22	23	24	25	26
28	29	30	31		

January 2027

M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2
4	5	6	7	8	9
11	12	13	14	15	16
18	19	20	21	22	23
25	26	27	28	29	30

Legend

School Closure
Early Pickup Tuesday
First/Last Day of School
Festival/Event

February 2027

M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27

March 2027

M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6
8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31			

April 2027

M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	2	3
5	6	7	8	9	10
12	13	14	15	16	17
19	20	21	22	23	24
26	27	28	29	30	

May 2027

M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1
3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15
17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	28	29
31					

June 2027

M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5
7	8	9	10	11	12

Early Pickup Tuesdays: no 4:30 pickups (2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month)

The Treehouse Staff comes together on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday each month for staff meetings to ensure a well-functioning program! Please see your Enrollment Contract for more details.

- September 8th & 22nd
- October 13th & 27th
- November 10th
- December 8th
- January 12th & 26th
- February 9th & 23rd
- March (th & 30th
- April 13th & 27th
- May 11th & 25th
- June 8th
- **Friday June 11th will be a 3:30 pm pick up for all students so our staff can prepare for our Rainbow Ceremony**

Our Philosophy

About Us

The Treehouse is a nonprofit, licensed early childhood center through the Oregon Department of Education's Department of Early Learning and Care. While we operate as a center, our daily rhythm reflects the heart of a Forest Garden School. The term "Forest Garden" is synonymous with "Food Forest," and our Saplings and Oaks spend the majority of their day outdoors, learning and growing within our Forest Garden ecosystem. Our youngest learners—our Acorns—also enjoy a dedicated "Little's Garden," where they engage in outdoor play as their unique developmental rhythms allow.

The Treehouse began in the spring of 2010, when Desiraé opened our first in-home school. Four years later, a second in-home program blossomed. In 2021, we expanded into a center and became the caretakers of a ⅓-acre space that was once only grass. Today, that land is transforming into a thriving food forest—an ecosystem alive with learning, stewardship, and community.

Our school is unique in that, as a licensed center, we are able to partner with state and federal financial aid programs to support families across a wide range of economic backgrounds. At the same time, as a private Forest Garden school, we are free to offer an alternative educational approach that nurtures the hands, head, and heart of each child. This blend of accessibility and intentional pedagogy allows us to honor childhood, support families, and steward the land with care.

Land Acknowledgement

The Treehouse: A Forest Garden School is located in Milwaukie, Oregon, on the border of Gladstone. This land is deeply connected to the Clackamas people, one of the 20 tribes of the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde. They are the original stewards of this region, living in harmony with its abundant natural resources for millennia.

The landscape here was once a thriving intertribal hub, rich with pine, fir, cedar, and oak trees, and undergrowth like currant and salmonberry bushes. Long before colonization, Indigenous communities practiced Earth-based education rooted in ecological knowledge and reciprocal relationships with the land and water.

At The Treehouse, we honor this legacy. Since 2020, we've been restoring the land we steward—transforming a lawn into a biodiverse Forest Garden (food forest) as a living tribute to Indigenous ecological wisdom.

We encourage families to learn more about the tribes whose land we occupy:

- Cayuse, Umatilla and Walla Walla,
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians,
- Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde

Waldorf Inspired

Developed by Rudolf Steiner in 1919, Waldorf Education is based on a profound understanding of human development that addresses the needs of the growing child. Waldorf teachers strive to transform education into an art that educates the whole child - the heart and the hands, as well as the head.

The Treehouse is inspired by Waldorf teachings. You will see this with our oral storytelling, daily songs, verses and blessings, our homelike environment, natural toys and our engagement in domestic, practical and artistic activities that the children can readily imitate such as baking, painting, gardening and handicrafts. Our curriculum is also child-led.

Child-Led Curriculum

Children are motivated by what inspires them. Once inspired, the children are blank slates begging to soak up any knowledge that comes their way. As The Treehouse wants to help nourish life long learners, the teachers tap into the students' inspirations. The students invite the teachers to use their teaching ability to excite them and continue to intrigue their interest. The Treehouse uses a wide variety of mediums for diverse learning styles. These mediums such as books, puzzles, science experiments, writing, art, songs, and dramatic play, give children the opportunity to broaden their understanding. Through careful observation, the teachers lead the curriculum fluidly ensuring an enriching environment as the children's interests evolve.

We have a "theme-based" or "child-led" curriculum. We listen to the students' interests and evolve our themes from this. Themes last about 1-2 months depending on the topic and continued interest.

Learning Through Art

Our art curriculum provides child-centered activities that are developmentally appropriate to inspire in them the desire to create for the rest of their lives.

- For very young children, making art is a sensory exploration activity
  - We encourage children to explore open-ended materials such as paint, crayons, finger paint, collage, printmaking, and clay.
- Children need time to practice and develop skills with materials.
  - By focusing on processes instead of products, we give children the time and space to control the materials and the mediums presented. Squeezing "flubber", dripping food coloring into water, or using hands, arms and feet to apply paint to paper don't always result in a piece to hang on the wall; however, in the process of creating, something beautiful has happened.
  - If adults can step out of the way, children will teach themselves. Our child-centered art helps children develop their cognitive, social and motor abilities.

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Learning Through Creation
We naturally ebb and flow throughout the seasons. Creation is always changing – it is birthing, growing, flourishing and then dying back just so it can live again. We create an environment that is earth-based so attention is constantly brought back to creation as a learning process. God has surrounded us with beauty and given us the responsibility of caring for his creation, including the earth, so we want to recognize and thank him for that precious gift.

We are out in the garden as much as possible where we learn from the changing elements. The children experience the joy of planting, harvesting, preserving, and dehydrating.

Our goal at The Treehouse in being an “earth-based” program also comes out in our Circle Time songs and Story Time themes as they change with the seasons. Such songs and themes help generate foundational language skills and help build a foundation for knowledge of what is happening in the earth we are a part of. The children’s verbal skills and oral retention is nurtured through the repetition of both our songs and oral storytelling on a daily basis

Learning Through Play
"If young children have been able to give up their whole beings to the world around them in their play, in later life they will be able to devote themselves with confidence and power to the service of the world."
-Rudolf Steiner

Their capacity for creative thinking is developed through imaginative play and healthy physical activity. We help the children be in relationship with the world by exposing them to the entire realm of nature—not only sand and water play, but also outside play on windy and rainy days. Much care is taken to create an environment that is beautiful and rhythmic so the children can learn how to be creative within their safe space. We have many natural, tactile toys that are open-ended to spur the imagination on to create many uses for each object. By nurturing young children’s thirst for discovery, it establishes a strong foundation for academic learning and a life-long interest in others and the world around them. The day is full of free-play where the children engage in creative play, making use of the wide variety of materials provided for them by their teachers. Children move fluently from individual to parallel to cooperative, small and large group play. Keenly aware of their environment, the entire class might one morning use the furniture to create vehicles like those outside the window. Another morning or afternoon the children might dress themselves in scarves and create a pirate ship out of blankets. Older children enjoy acting out the story or puppet play presented daily by the teachers. When this hour comes to an end, everyone helps return all the materials to their places, cleaning and straightening as they work.

Discipline Procedures
While many of these procedures are also applicable to the Acorn Class (6 weeks-23 months), they are mostly designed for the Saplings and Oaks (2-5). The Acorns are met with a teacher that recognizes any challenging behavior is the result of a need not being met and will then meet the need of the child.

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Discipline is always for the betterment of the child and never the convenience of the adult. These guidelines offer playful, loving and creative ways to hold appropriate boundaries with children so they can flourish knowing they are loved and safe.

- Gesture
  - Without calling/speaking, indicate with a kind gesture what you would like the child to do *(i.e. sit down, quiet, etc.)*

- Royal "we"
  - Speak in "we" rather than individualize the child. This helps to learn participation. *Example: "Now we are sitting down", and "We are getting on our shoes", and "We need the door closed".*

- Privileged "may"
  - When asking a child to do a task or deed, speak with truthfulness. Don't phrase requests as a question if you do not truly want to know yes or no. *Example: "You may close the door".*

- Pictorial language
  - Children live in pictures. When the teacher makes a request with creative language children often respond with delight and enjoyment. *Example: to encourage a child to help put books back on the shelf, the teacher might say, "Uh-oh, the volcano has erupted, quick lets put back the molten lava before our floor melts!"*

- Even objective tone
  - When our voice wavers and escalates to urgency, we lose ourselves (our consciousness) and the child loses respect for us. This is when power struggles occur. Discipline is for the benefit of the child and must be done with love and respect.

- Save "NO" for harmful situations
  - Otherwise, tell the children what they can do rather than what they cannot. Describe what you want to see the child doing. *Example: "Walking feet please", "You may use a calm, talking voice".*

- Positive redirection
  - What are the underlying needs of the child? Is there a more appropriate way for them to get that need met? *Example: If the child is knocking another child's block castle over, the teacher can create a place where things can be knocked over, and broken down.*

- Create healing relative to the deed
  - Have the child who hurt another help with the healing of the hurt child by: checking in with them, apologizing and/or showing a gentle healing hand. Apologies must be honest to help heal, therefore we do not force apologies. If the child is not ready to apologize, the teacher may say "Well, I am very sorry that you got hit" to validate the pain the other may be in.

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- Objectify the deed
  - Seeing the inherent good in each child, the teacher separates their behavior from who they are. This prevents the child from seeing him/herself as "bad".
    Example: I see those hands are knocking into things, let's give them something to squeeze".

- Use healing stories
  - Oral stories will be told throughout the year that provide examples and models of how to treat one another with kindness and gentleness. These moral lessons told through stories sink deeply into the child's consciousness, and provide a way for them to check their behavior. *(If you ever have a specific behavior you wish us to address in story, please let us know. Our staff is very creative with applying real life situations into story.)*

- Learning Self Care
  - If a child is overwhelmed by a situation, we encourage them to take some moments to re-center themselves with a teacher or by themselves.
  - If a teacher sees that a child is having trouble in a situation they may say "Do you need a moment to take care of yourself in the cozy corner?" or "It looks like this is too much right now, you can take a moment to yourself or you can sit with me for a moment."
  - We encourage children to say what they need in a situation and advocate for their needs, and understand that we are allowed to step away from a situation to take care of ourselves when we are feeling very upset. Teaching these skills at a young age echoes into the rest of their lives, and has a very different effect than giving a child a "time out" because they are acting out. We believe all "misbehavior" is pointing to an unmet need.

Drop off and Pick up Procedures

- Drop Off Procedures
  - Clock your child into the correct classroom in the Brightwheel by scanning the QR code (through the app, not your phone camera) at your door or gate entrance.
  - Place their belongings in the appropriate places.
  - Make sure your child has been seen and greeted by a teacher.

- Pick Up Procedures
  - Clock your child out in Brightwheel by scanning the QR code (through the app, not your phone camera) at your door or gate entrance. DO NOT clock them out until you are there to receive them. I.e if you have children in separate classrooms, each child needs to be clocked out separately when you are physically in their individual class.
  - Make sure a teacher has greeted you and sees that you are picking up.

- Authorized Guardians/Approved Pick Ups
  - If you have another adult picking up your child, they need to be listed on your child's Brightwheel profile under "contacts".
  - Anytime a person is picking up your child outside of a normal routine, message your child's teachers through the Brightwheel app.
  - The first time a new person picks up your child, they will need to show their photo ID to a teacher for your child to be released.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

- Emergency Contacts
  - If we need to contact you during the day and you are unable to be reached, we will start contacting other adults on the contact list. If your child needs to be picked up early, they will also be considered a trusted adult to contact for pick up should you be unable to be reached.

Daily Rhythm

Our program strives to stimulate the children's bodies, souls and love for creation with a nurturing, homelike environment that engages all senses. We have a strong sense of community and are based on walking through the same daily rhythm to help build security, trust and continuity in the children's lives.

Outdoor Time
At Treehouse, Outdoor Learning is a large part of our curriculum and essential for supporting the health of the children; on a typical day the Saplings and Oaks are outside for a minimum of 4 hours. The Acorn class goes outside for stroller rides, moments of fresh air and outside freeplay in short segments, as it fits in with their individual and class rhythm. As the popular Scandinavian saying goes: "There is no bad weather, only bad clothes."

How to Dress in Layers for Cold Weather
When preparing to be outside for extended periods of time, we require this layering principle:

1. The Inner, thermal layer that keeps the body warm and dry from sweat.
   a. This would mean thermal layers against the skin, such as wool, silk, or polyblend undershirt, leggings, and socks. This would be worn daily inside and outside.
2. The middle layer that insulates the warmth under the outer layer.
   a. When going outside, fleece coats, fleece pants, extra wool or fleece socks, and wool hats would be worn.
3. The outer layer that keeps the weather (wind and rain) out and the warmth in.
   a. Water-resistance in this layer is key. Waterproof boots, waterproof rain suits, or a set of rain pants and rain jackets. WATERPROOF gloves are so important because the children need their warm, dry hands to explore nature.

Please see our Gear Requirements for Acorns and Saplings and Oaks.

Circle Time (Music and Movement for Saplings and Oaks)
In the morning we all come together for a special experience of playful singing, moving and celebrating the changing seasons. Music connects us on a unique level that quickly can lighten the mood and bring much joy and excitement to our program. With songs and movements about birdies building their nests, stepping over stepping stones, looking way up high in the apple trees and Little Jacky Frost pinching your nose, the children get to learn songs and verses about each changing season. Parents often come to us to ask what songs we have been singing so they can sing along with their children at home!

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Oral Story Time (Literacy for Saplings and Oaks)
Right before lunch we all gather around the table and the children sit quietly and listen to a story told, not read, by their teacher. The beauty of the spoken word sparks their ability to form images and thoughts about the words they hear. We use hand made figures for our stories out of silks, wool, wood and felt to create a special environment for the characters to exist in. Each story is told for a minimum of one week so the children fully experience it and come to expect it as part of the rhythm of their day. We find the children re-creating the story time scene during their free-play and re-telling their own variations of the story. This time is a special part of our program that helps expand the children's vocabulary, verbal retention and concentration.

Daily Rhythm for Saplings and Oaks Classroom (General example below. Rhythm will alter slightly due to weather and individual class needs)

- 8:30–9:00 am: Drop off and Free Play
  - Each day begins outside unless the weather is severe
- 9:00–10:00 am: Outdoor Classroom and Circle Time
- 10:15 am: Morning Snack and Bathroom Break
- 10:45–11:45 am: Activity Hour
  - Theme based activity or yoga, music, art, etc. This activity changes based on the interests and needs of the children in the group
- 12:00 pm: Puppet Show / Oral Story
- 12:15 pm: Lunch Time
- 12:30/45 pm: Afternoon Pick-Up / Reading Time and Bathroom Break
- 1:00–3:15 pm: Rest Time
  - Children wake up on their own time and play inside or outside as the others are waking
- 3:15 pm: Afternoon Snack
- 3:30 pm: Pick Up
- 3:45 pm: Afternoon Activity
  - Theme based activity or yoga, music, art, etc. This activity changes based on the interests and needs of the children in the group
- 4:30 pm: Pick Up

Daily Rhythm for Acorn Classroom
The rhythm for our infants and toddlers will evolve as the school year goes on and our little ones grow up! The infants (11 months and under) eat and sleep on demand and based on the specific stage they are in. The toddlers (12 months and older) will start to settle into a more consistent routine of only 1-2 naps a day and meals at set times. The teachers will work to meet each child's needs while working with the whole class on finding a rhythm that includes outside play, eating, sleeping and indoor playtime.

Birthday Celebrations at The Treehouse for Saplings and Oaks

At The Treehouse, we encourage families to join us in celebrating the birth of your child. Birthdays are important rituals to respect and acknowledge in a child's life. To help them express that transition, we include the following tradition in our school. The birthday child can bring their parents, or another loved one, to be a part of their special day. We typically have the celebration during morning circle time at 9:30 am. However, please let us know if another time would be more convenient for you!

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For our Lead Teacher to prepare, we ask that prior to the celebration you email the Lead Teacher a memorable experience for each year of your child's life through their current age, such as:

- At birth
- From birth to age 1
- From 1-2
- From 2-3
- From 3-4

As your child's birthday is approaching, you will receive an email from your Lead Teacher to confirm the date/time of your child's birthday celebration and a reminder to submit memorable experiences/stories. During celebration time we all gather together for a special Birthday Circle told by our Lead Teacher. Each birthday child will receive a hand-made gift from Treehouse. Later during snack time we will celebrate with just the children by singing Happy Birthday.

What to Bring as You Start School

Saplings and Oaks

Please label all your child's belongings to help keep our school tidy and prevent items from getting placed in the lost and found.

Please bring the following each day: see Gear Requirements for more details

- ❖ A freshly filled insulated water bottle (clearly labeled with child's first and last name)
- ❖ At least 2 sets of spare clothes for specific weather *(socks, pants, shorts, shirts, sweaters...)*
- ❖ If your child is potty training, you need at least 3-4 changes of underwear, pants and socks
- ❖ Rain Boots
- ❖ Raincoat and rain pants (everyday during the wet season, whether it's raining or not, the outdoor classroom is still wet!)
- ❖ Coat (according to weather)
- ❖ Hat (according to weather)
- ❖ Closed toed shoes are required
- ❖ Waterproof shoes are highly encouraged during the warmer times of the year!
- ❖ Waterproof Mittens or gloves *(during winter).* Please make sure they can be washed.
- ❖ If you nap with us, Treehouse will provide a sheet and mat. Please bring a blanket with their name labeled on it. You may also bring a pillow, and no more than one nap-time friend please.
- ❖ Emergency Kit *(see page 21 for a detailed list of what to include in the kit)*

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Acorns

Please bring the following each day

Our cubby area is on the smaller side and some hooks will be shared with children that have the opposite schedule as you. Please bring home your diaper bag each day and make sure it's ready for the following school day!

- 1 sleep sack (blankets are allowed for children 12 months and older)
  - These can stay at school and will be sent home once a week with your child's sheet to be washed.
- Any attachment item they need for sleeping or during the day. Please limit to one smaller item.
- 3 full changes of clothes
  - In the cold, wet months please dress your little one in layers, with a wool underlayer so their body temperature will remain regulated from outside to inside play. See Gear Requirements for more details.
- Hat (according to weather) We recommend the balaclava style for colder months.
- Burp cloths as needed (some babies need more than others - you know your baby!)
- Food for the whole day:
  - 2 labeled bottles and breastmilk or formula
  - Baby food (We have limited refrigerated space, so please bring refrigerated food daily but dry foods can stay at school)

Community Involvement

Ways to Support The Treehouse

If you shop at Fred Meyer, your shopping can help our school thrive. Make The Treehouse the beneficiary through Fred Meyer Rewards and your shopping will support our sweet non-profit school without costing you a dime!

Become a Donor!

Our aim is to provide affordable care for all in our community. Help us work towards this goal of providing holistic, outdoor education for all income levels. Donate to the school and have your name recognized on our
Donor Tree! Donor Page.

Volunteer Hours

There is a community requirement of volunteering 2 hours per family at The Treehouse for Acorn Classroom and 5 hours per family for the Sapling and Oak Classroom. If for any reason volunteering the required hours does not work for your family, you can opt out and pay $20.00 per hour not volunteered.

When you receive your Enrollment Contract for the school year you will have the opportunity to choose to volunteer the required hours or opt out of volunteering and pay the Volunteer Fee up front for the school year. If you choose to volunteer and do not fulfill the required hours then you will be billed at the end of the school year for the Volunteer Fee. If you chose to volunteer and only were able to fulfill some but not all of the required hours, then you will be billed $20.00 for each hour left unfulfilled. **Please note: if your child turns 2 midyear and graduates to our Sapling class, the volunteer requirement increases to 5 hours.*

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Opportunities to fulfill your parent volunteer hours will be offered throughout the school year. There are a wide variety of jobs that are available such as festival setup and takedown, special art prep, managing scholastic book orders, helping with fundraising events, and even coming in to the classroom to assist** with special projects and activities. Helping our school not only gives more time and resources for our teachers to expand on projects, but also shows the children how to care for a community.
Parents will be in charge of keeping track of their own hours on the volunteer spreadsheet, which can be found here. Please sign in upon arrival and out upon finishing your much appreciated work!

**If you are interested in being a classroom assistant, please email your child's Lead Teacher! Opportunities in the classroom could include: art assistance with special projects, assistance with nature walks, bringing in classroom enrichment activities and assisting with theme based projects.

Policies and Procedures

Dress Code and Media Mindfulness at School
The Treehouse strives to be a model of quality and beauty in the educational process and to bring an atmosphere of care and respect to everything that concerns the children at school. Physical warmth is vital to the healthy development of children. Children need to be dressed in layers for ease of movement and comfort. Their clothes should allow them to run, jump, raise arms above their heads, and bend over to touch their toes with complete freedom of movement and without embarrassment to themselves or others. To further these ideals we ask all parents and caregivers to direct their children to the appropriate standards of dress and behavior.

In order to create a suitable environment for learning, we surround the children with living images rather than movie or cartoon characters. We ask that children be sent to school in clothes that are free of commercial logos and characters so that the child's own being can shine, without the distractions and commercial consciousness such logos and characters are so apt to bring into the classroom. This also includes items such as: stuffed animals, blankets, water bottles and the like.

We ask that no outside toys come into The Treehouse. If a child needs a transitional item *(this mostly applies to the toddler students)* they may bring in one item; preferably a stuffed animal or blanket.

Media Mindfulness at Home
The growing evidence of the harmful effects of media on the growing child should cause a caring parent to think again about media use. It has been scientifically proven that media viewing shortens attention span and dulls sensory sensitivity.

Many teachers have come together to proclaim that students in the classroom who do not have media time at home are the students with the most capacity for imagination, they are the self-starters and the children in the class with the most initiative. While we do not ask parents to ban the use of all screens at home, we do ask for parents to have 'media mindfulness' and strive towards surrounding your child with many wholesome influences outside the media that will work in the life of your child. Be aware that, when your child is in front of a screen 1) They are not moving. 2) They are not creating their own mental pictures. 3) They are not engaged in lived experience. We know that children need to exercise all three of these capabilities if they are to enjoy a healthy physical, emotional, and spiritual life, both in childhood and later in adult life.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Throughout the years of our observation along with brain research, it has been proven that even the "mildest" violent themed shows such as superheroes, video games with any fighting or with a "bad guy" antagonist can cause harmful play in the classroom. If a teacher mentions that your child is bringing violent themes or extra aggression to school, we ask that you have your child abstain from such themes and alter their media intake. Children are unable to decipher between fact and fantasy at such a young age. So, not only does media affect how your child is experiencing the world, but it also affects what children are bringing into our school and how they are treating other students.

We believe that technology should be a tool, not a crutch. Would you give your 2 year old a sharp knife? Think about when your child is ready to handle the tool properly, without resulting in harmful effects! Give a child a tool, too early on in life, and it will replace the very skill it was intended to supplement.

Food

Parents provide snacks and lunch for their children. **Treehouse does not provide any food.** Please refer to our Treehouse Nutrition + Meal Guide when preparing your child's food for school.

***If your child has a food sensitivity or allergy, please make note in your child's Brightwheel account and notify the Office Manager via email.**

Storage and Handling Food

- All staff members have a current Food Handler's Card.
- Food preparation surfaces will be sanitized before and after food is prepared.
- The Treehouse has a refrigerator for lunches and snacks in the Acorn classroom and the Forest Garden for Saplings and Oaks.
- Meals and snacks will be served to the children by a teacher once they are seated at the table.

We also welcome any natural additions to our center pieces as this is a beautiful way to start your child's day at school! I.e. flowers, rocks, nuts, pinecones, etc.

Doors/Gates

Gates and doors are only for teachers and parents to open and close. Please help us keep this guideline consistent by not allowing your child to open gates and doors.

Tuition Deposit

The Treehouse requires a tuition deposit to be made upon enrollment/re-enrollment in the amount equal to your child's monthly tuition. Failure to pay this tuition deposit will forfeit your child's enrollment. The tuition deposit is held by The Treehouse throughout your child's entire enrollment. If your child re-enrolls the following school year then The Treehouse will roll that deposit over and adjust it according to your new monthly tuition amount: crediting your account if the amount decreases and billing your account if the amount increases. If your child's schedule changes throughout the school year, your tuition deposit will be adjusted at that time as well: either crediting or billing your account the difference so that the amount The Treehouse is holding in tuition deposit for your child, always reflects the amount you are paying in monthly tuition. The tuition deposit is *not* applied to your child's last month of enrollment, or your last tuition payment, in normal circumstances *(see Emergency Closure)*. When your child leaves The Treehouse, your tuition deposit will be returned to you as long as you have adhered to The Treehouse's Withdrawal Policy *(see below)*.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

If you have adhered to the Withdrawal Policy then the tuition deposit will be returned to you after your last tuition payment has been made and your child's last month of school has been completed. It can take 2-3 weeks for the tuition deposit to be mailed out after your child's last month of school has been completed. If there is a balance on your account at the time your tuition deposit is being returned, that amount will be deducted from your tuition deposit payment. If there is a credit on your account at the time your tuition deposit is being returned, that amount will be added to the tuition deposit payment.

Withdrawal, Reduction and Enrollment Policy

If you withdraw your child from the program or reduce your child's enrollment days or pick up times, The Treehouse requires notice to be submitted via email to the Office Manager 1 month prior to the date tuition is due for the month of school affected by the enrollment change. Failure to give a proper withdrawal notice will result in forfeit of your deposit. Failure to give a proper notice for reduction of time or days enrolled will result in being billed your original amount for one more month. Please see your Enrollment Contract for further details and examples regarding this policy.

Unsettled Child Policy

We have a general time frame of 30-45 minutes if a child is exhibiting separation anxiety, distress, or constantly crying and unable to be soothed. We will work to calm the child before calling parents to pick up, but will never allow a child to be unsettled in our care for too long. It is important for children to have positive experiences in our care over the first couple weeks so they can gain trust. Some children will offer up their trust more readily than others. If you have a feeling that your child will have separation anxiety, please tell us so we can make a plan for an integrated schedule the first weeks until they get settled.
It is important to note that ratios are very important to maintain and teachers need to be available for other children in care as well.

Families may be asked to work with the program for the first month of care without tuition adjustments if teachers and/or parents request a reduced schedule while a child is transitioning into our care due to being unsettled. **If your first month includes a school closure, we will only consider the student's first month of actual attendance.*

Emergency Closure

If the school closes **during** the school year due to an emergency closure, for any amount of time, then Material Fees and Registration Fees will remain nonrefundable and no paid tuition will be refunded. Families will be invoiced their regular tuition amount surrounding the closure. If a closure occurs for more than 10 school days then families will be given a choice to pay tuition in full out of pocket, or to apply a portion of their tuition deposit to the upcoming month(s) of tuition, through a contract addendum that will be provided at that time. In the event of an extended closure, lasting more than 1 month, a student's tuition deposit, up to the full amount, will be applied to cover the upcoming tuition if a family is unable to pay out of pocket. If the school closure lasts into the second month, we will no longer be invoicing families. If families are still able to pay and support our small business' fixed costs and attempt to keep staff on payroll, we will gladly accept tax deductible donations, which can be made through our paypal account, or we can invoice families for a donation so no funds are lost through fees. For families continuing with our program, or re-enrolling (*depending on the timing of the closure)* any applied tuition deposits will need to be repaid. We will work with families to find a payment plan that is sustainable for both them and the school.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

If diapers and wipes have not already been purchased to cover our school closure dates, we will credit your account for what you were billed for diapers and wipes, or we will waive the fees for the upcoming month.

Families that are experiencing a financial hardship and are unable to pay other fees in addition to applying their tuition deposit, will be given the opportunity to set up payment plans. We will also potentially offer "financial hardship forgiveness" based on grants and donations the school receives and our financial fund at that time.

Each closure will be handled specifically based on timing and duration, but The Treehouse will work its hardest to not dismiss anyone from our program due to inability to pay during school closures, so students have a school to attend once the closure is lifted and we reopen.

Please note: Monthly tuition provides 100% of our operating revenue and ensures our sustainability despite school closures due to fixed expenses such as payroll and operating costs. As long as we are able, The Treehouse will carry the staff's payroll during an emergency closure. Our goal will also be to provide distance learning to our families, as applicable, in order to support families now caring for their little ones at home full time.

Missed Days and Adding Days

Upon enrollment and signing of the Enrollment Contract you have reserved certain days of the week for your child and therefore your child will only be able to attend those days. Missed days will not be reimbursed in any way. If you would like to have your child attend a day that they are not scheduled for, please contact the Office Manager for approval. If there is space for your child to attend then your request will be approved and your child placed on the schedule for that day. Refer to your 26-27 Enrollment Contract for Add Day Fees.

Early Drop Off Request

Typical drop off time is 8:30-9am for all three classrooms. For an additional fee, you may schedule an early drop off at either 7:30, 7:45, 8 or 8:15 (Saplings & Oaks only). If you would like to request an early drop off, please contact our Office Manager as there are limited spots available.

Early drop offs may be requested as a permanent schedule change or on an as needed basis should space allow.

Extending Your Child's Pickup Time

You may request to extend your child's pickup time on any given day of attendance through our latest pickup time of 4:30pm.. All requests must be made to, and approved by, the Office Manager

Extra Fees

- If you pick up your child over 5 minutes late you will be billed the hourly rate for your child's classroom as tardiness greatly affects our rhythm of the day and teacher:child ratio.
- If you are 6 or more minutes late for a 4:30 pickup, you will be billed the hourly rate for your child's classroom for the 6 minutes plus an additional $1 for every minute thereafter as this is our last pickup time and any late pickups prohibit our teachers from closing the school on schedule.
- There will be a $20 Maintenance Fee each time your contract is changed after your original.
- There will be a $2 fee any time you fail to sign your child in or out on Brightwheel.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Tuition Payments

Tuition Payments are due on the 12th of the month prior. *For example: October's tuition is due by September 12th.*

- Around the first of each month you will receive an invoice via email *(please check your spam folder as the invoice comes from Quickbooks Intuit and your email server may view it as spam*).
- That email will include an attached invoice detailing the charges for payment due on the 12th of that month.
- In the body of that email there will be a link that you can click on to pay your invoice online.
    - We prefer you always pay online as we do not have a receptionist and our Office Manager works remotely. However, if you are having trouble utilizing the online payment link or are unable to pay with a credit or debit card please let our Office Manager know so that another arrangement can be made.

Immunizations

According to the state of Oregon, we need to have immunization records on file at enrollment. We pull these from Oregon's online database, ALERT IIS; if your child is not in the database we will ask you for a copy of their records. Every year, The Treehouse is required to submit an Annual Immunization Report to the Clackamas County Health Department. The first part of the report is submitted in January and then a final report submitted in late February. When completing the report, we will reach out to you if your child's vaccines or records are not up-to-date as we will then need you to take the required steps to bring them up-to-date or claim exemption. We will provide you with the necessary information and forms at that time.

Once the final report is submitted, we then send out the school's updated immunization information to parents via email, post it on our website and on site at school as well.

Acorn Naps

Naps will be offered to children based on their current napping schedule, as communicated by parents. See Acorn Guidelines provided to you upon enrollment for more information on Safe Sleep practices.

Resting/Napping Practice for Saplings and Oaks

If a child is not asleep after 45 minutes-1 hour (*depending on the child*), they will be allowed to get up and play quietly, or go outside. Napping is not required if the parent feels that it is not needed for their child. Children who are sleeping will be allowed to wake up naturally, unless otherwise advised by the parent. Children who are not awake by 3:00-3:30 (*depending on child's pickup time*) will be gently awakened.

Hand Washing Procedures

We have a policy of "Keep your home germs at home and school germs at school". This requires students to wash their hands once arriving at school before they begin play and before they go home.

Proper hand washing requires the use of soap, friction to create lather, and thorough rinsing. Children and adults shall wash their hands after using the toilet. Staff will wash hands before and after helping a child change their diaper. Hands will also be washed after wiping noses, assisting a child with toileting, changing a child's soiled clothes, and before and after snacks and meals.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Incident Reports
Any time a child is injured at school requiring first aid, an adhesive bandage or a good deal of TLC, and an Incident Report is completed in Brightwheel. A staff member will describe the injury, how it occurred and the assistance given.

If a child hurts another child they will also receive an Incident Report via Brightwheel so the parents are aware of their child's behavior. The child's name who caused the injury will not be revealed on the injured child's report.

These reports are also used to help teachers track recurring behavior with children. If we see a child injuring other students in a recurring fashion, we will speak with their parents. We will work with the parents and child on their behavior, but may have to dismiss the child from school depending on the severity and the child's response to the teachers' guidance *(see Dismissal Policy below)*.

Parent Conduct and Expectations
Here at The Treehouse, we work to create a safe and respectful environment for the children in our care, our staff members, and our families. Treehouse holds parents, caregivers, and legal guardians to the same standards of behavior and conduct to which we hold our staff members.

We expect parents to:

- Adhere to Treehouse policies and procedures as outlined in this handbook.
- Clock your child in and out at your agreed upon contract timeframe.
- Complete enrollment forms and pay tuition and fees on time.
- Use non-violent communication when interacting with teaching or administrative staff.
  - Offensive or profane language, harassment, disruptive, bullying, or threatening behaviors, verbal abuse, or physical violence will not be tolerated.
  - If you find that you have been disrespectful or rude to a teacher, please own your actions and apologize and seek reconciliation. Teachers are asked to do the same.
- Use the appropriate method and time to express questions, comments, or concerns.
  - While we encourage parent-teacher communication, it is best to contact your Lead Teacher or the Office Manager via email or Brightwheel to schedule a time to discuss your concerns. Please be mindful that our teachers have other students in their care and pickup/dropoff is not an appropriate time to have lengthy discussions. We do not have conflicting conversations in front of any of our students, including your children.
  - Please voice any questions, comments, or concerns directly with staff members and avoid sharing them with other parents or publicly. As a small non-profit, we heavily rely on word-of-mouth and greatly appreciate the opportunity to resolve issues as they arise.

Student Dismissal
If a child enrolls at The Treehouse and begins to exhibit unsafe behavior or needs that The Treehouse is not staffed or trained to assist appropriately with, then The Treehouse will begin the conversation with the family on what steps need to be taken in order to have the child continue their enrollment at The Treehouse. This will include working with Every Child Belongs, where both of our goals are to support the student and avoid dismissal.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

The Treehouse may suggest a Behavioral Modification Plan to support and track the child's behavior and work with the family to ensure consistent communication, structures, and boundaries are in place for the child both at home and in school. If the child continues to exhibit unsafe behavior, or requires support from The Treehouse teachers that The Treehouse is not able to provide, then a conversation will begin with the family about potential dismissal or the family providing an appropriate aid/in-school therapist to assist the child while at school. In this case, resources in regards to obtaining such assistance will be provided to the family.

Obtaining an aid or in-school support may take a few months, so if the family wants to continue to have their child enrolled in the program during this time, the family will need to understand that in order for their child to do so while they wait to obtain the appropriate support, they may need to be "on call" to pick the child up early as needed, keep the child at home if they are unable to attend at all without support, or choose from another option that The Treehouse provides at that time.

If the family chooses to not continue at The Treehouse then they will need to adhere to the Withdrawal Policy and provide adequate notice. Some exceptions may be offered, depending on the situation.

If at any point a student exhibits behavior the staff cannot support, The Treehouse reserves the right to call parents for an early pick up and potentially dismissal from our program all together. All contractual policies will remain in place in the event of dismissal.

Snow Day/Inclement Weather Closure Policy
Inclement weather conditions may require school closure, late opening, canceled events, or reduced operations. Portland's weather forecasts and road conditions are constantly monitored to ensure the safety of students, faculty, and staff. The Treehouse will follow the North Clackamas School District closures for Snow Days and Inclement Weather. These days are unforeseen and therefore will not result in a credit to your account.

Healthy School Policy
We deeply value the health and wellbeing of our students and staff here at The Treehouse. When sick children are sent to school, illness quickly spreads throughout our students and inevitably, our teachers. While we work hard to maintain a pool of substitute teachers, widespread illness can lead to being short-staffed and classroom closures. Please be mindful of any symptoms of illness in your children and adhere to the following guidelines:

- If your child has any contagious illness, they are asked to be kept home until symptoms have subsided for 24hrs. **Parent/Legal Guardian Initials** _____
- If your child has consistent mucus (no matter what the color), a consistent cough or is too irritable or lethargic to engage in school, we ask that you keep your child home.
- If you wish to send your child to school with anything that looks contagious and does not require a level of care that would jeopardize the health and safety of other children (including putting us out of ratio by providing 1:1 care) including, but not limited to: undocumented rash, consistent mucus, a consistent cough, digestive issues, allergies, asthma, you must bring in a doctor's note stating they are not contagious. **Parent/Legal Guardian Initials** _____
- Cough/Shortness of Breath: If your child has a persistent cough with or without fever; serious sustained coughing; shortness of breath, or difficulty breathing; or complaints that prevent them

from active participation in usual school activities; or if they are requiring more care than the school staff can safely provide; then your child will need to be picked up.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

- If they have had symptoms of vomiting, fever *(100.4 or higher)* or skin rash, we ask that they be kept home for 24hrs after the last symptom presented itself, without any fever reducing medicine. **Parent/Legal Guardian Initials** _____
- Diarrhea: 2 or more watery/loose stools in a school day OR sudden onset of loose stools OR student unable to control bowel function when previously able. This is up to the teacher's discretion regarding the child's history of bowel movements, current class illnesses, severity of loose stool and if any other symptoms are present. Children may return 48 hours after diarrhea resolves. **Parent/Legal Guardian Initials** _____
- If a teacher recognizes any symptoms of infections such as, but not limited to: Pink Eye, Hand-Foot-and-Mouth disease, Rotavirus, Chickenpox, Strep Throat, undocumented rash, Impetigo, Flu or Head Lice, parents will be contacted immediately to come pick their child up. If parents cannot be contacted, we will move down your emergency contact list.
  - The Treehouse will be following the Oregon Health Authority's Communicable Disease Guidance for Schools when determining if a student needs to be excluded or restricted from attending school. **Parent/Legal Guardian Initials** _____
- **COVID:** We will follow COVID Community Guidelines Handout. Please check the live links in that document to get the most updated COVID information.

  Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____
- **Updating your child's Brightwheel profile:** It is imperative that our staff is aware of any diagnoses or ongoing medical conditions your child may have (including, but not limited to: asthma, allergies (including seasonal), chronic digestive issues, eczema) to help identify symptoms and determine when children need to be sent home for abnormal symptoms of contagious illness. Updates regarding medical conditions or diagnoses must be sent to the Office Manager via email. The Office Manager will then request additional required information: doctor's notes for asthma, allergies, and chronic digestive issues and photo documentation for how eczema presents. The Office Manager will update Brightwheel and all necessary staff.

  Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

If your child is ill or absent for any reason, please send a message to your class in Brightwheel.

Medications and Allergy Care Plans

If your child requires medications, dietary supplements, specific sunscreens (other than what is provided by Treehouse), lotions/creams, etc. to be administered at school, please notify our Office Manager via email. You will then receive a Medication Authorization Form to fill out via AdobeSign with instructions or be asked to fill out a physical copy at the school (for short-term medications).

It is then the parent's responsibility to bring this item in and directly hand it to a Teacher to be properly stored. These items are not allowed to remain in a child's backpack throughout the day for safety reasons; our teaching team will lock them in our Medication Storage.

For allergies that require treatment of any kind, please notify our Office Manager via email. You will then receive an Allergy Care Plan to fill out via AdobeSign along with a Medication Authorization Form, if applicable.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Acute Illness or Injury
If a child or staff becomes acutely ill, they will be separated from the other children and allowed to rest. Once settled in a separate area, vomit or other bodily fluids will be cleaned. The child's parent(s) will be contacted and asked to pick up the child as soon as possible. If the parent is not available, we will then move down the contacts listed on the child's Medical Information and Consent Form

If a child requires medical treatment, 911 will be called. If the injured or ill child requires transportation to a medical facility, an effort will be made to contact the parent before the child leaves The Treehouse. However, the health of the child is the primary concern. The child will be transferred to the nearest hospital, which in the case of The Treehouse is Kaiser Permanente at 10180 SE Sunnyside Rd, Clackamas, OR 97015. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, 911 dispatch will determine which hospital the paramedics will route the patient to. *If you would like to request that your child be transported to a specific hospital in a non-life threatening medical event, please email our Office and we will make a note in your Brightwheel account and on our Allergy/Medical Concern document.*

Parents will be notified of all injuries happening at school. They will be informed of any first aid administered to their child. A written log of injuries, including the description of injury location, will be maintained and stored in Brightwheel. *(See "Documentation" policy.)*

Sunscreen
The Treehouse applies natural, mineral-based sunscreen to students' exposed skin every two hours when they are outside and the UV index is 3 or higher per the World Health Organization Guidelines. The Treehouse provides this sunscreen; however, if you would like your child to use a specific brand, please notify the Office Manager via email and give a bottle (labeled with first and last name) to your Lead Teacher. This is to be stored at school.

The Treehouse does not use any insect repellent on students.

Emergency Plan
In case of an emergency, the following procedures will be enacted:

Fire
The children's emergency information will be brought along so parents can be contacted. Eight times a year we will practice an emergency evacuation plan. This will be designed to be fun for the children to help prevent panic in the case of an actual fire.

Earthquake
In the event of an earthquake, the children will be instructed to gather in the center of the classroom, crouched on their hands and knees with their heads tucked under their hands. If the earthquake occurs while the children are outdoors, everyone will remain outside. If there is severe damage to the facility, parents will be contacted and asked to pick up their children. The parent-compiled emergency packs are located in the outdoor storage shed in the silver bin, consisting of: emergency water packets, food bars, emergency blankets, flashlights, emergency radio/phone charger, and basic first aid supplies. Packs will include updated emergency contact information.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Earthquake Kits

Each Parent/guardian is required to bring in an earthquake kit for their child which is due on their first day.

For each child, please bring to school the following items in a gallon size ziplock bag

Saplings and Oaks

1. 1-2 boxed juices or bottles of water
2. 4-6 non-perishable food items, such as: small pop top cans of spaghetti, stew, tuna, etc.; Fruit rolls, fruit snacks, dried or freeze-dried fruit; Individual fruit cups or pudding cups; Small individual boxes of cereal; Individual applesauce cups; Small package of trail mix; Small package of beef or soy jerky; Small cheese or cracker pack; Individual squeeze packets (chicken, veggie, etc.); Granola bars, cereal bars, or protein bars.
3. Fork/spoon if needed
4. Small package of wet wipes, anti-bacterial wipes or gel
5. Box of band-aids
6. Small package of kleenex or handkerchief
7. Small book, toy, game, or other activity
8. A small lovie, family photo and/or note to comfort your child until you get there
9. Identification Card with current picture of your child, child's current height/weight, possible allergies or required medications* and phone numbers where parents/caregivers can be reached. Be sure to have these people on the "Authorized Release List" so they are approved to come and get them. This info should be at the school already, but it's best to have it handy in your child's pack. This can be laminated and attached to a lanyard for your child to wear during an emergency** Make an extra one for the bag/backpack they take with them everyday.

Acorns

1. Treehouse will gather bottles, breastmilk and formula for infants needing milk
2. Treehouse will gather diapers according to current sizes
3. If applicable please pack 4-6 non-perishable foods as listed in #2 above
4. A small lovie, or toy
5. Identification card as listed in #9 above
6. Anything else from the above list you wish to include

<u>Please do not include:</u>

1. Fresh fruit or other perishables
2. Glass containers
3. Crackers/chips/cookies that can get broken and smashed
4. Dehydrated food that requires water, or food that requires heat
5. Cans that require a can opener
6. Valuable items like cash, expensive gadgets/electronics, etc.

**If your child needs medication, you will need a form completed by your doctor. Bring the form and the medication (in the prescription bottle) along with proper instructions to the office for dispensing in case of emergency.*

***Don't have a laminator available? Take an index card and glue everything into place. Then take shiny, clear packing tape and gently cover both sides of the card making sure all surfaces are covered. Punch a hole and attach it to your lanyard or clip for infants.*

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Severe Weather

In the case of severe weather, such as lightning, snow storm, or poor air quality, the children will be kept indoors until the storm has passed. If the storm occurs during outside play time, the children will be instructed to calmly return back inside the school. Parents will be notified for early pickup or school cancellations if conditions reach unsafe levels.

Man-Caused Event

In the event of another person posing a threat to the safety of our staff and or students we will immediately call 911. A threat may be responded to by locking down the school and students going in or remaining inside. The type of emergency will determine where we go next. The staff member witnessing the event first will communicate to the rest of the staff with our emergency whistles to gather children behind a locked door, lock the windows and draw the curtains. Saplings and Oaks will go into the bathroom and lock the door. Acorns will remain in their room with blinds drawn, lights off. All exit doors in the school have intruder locking hardware.

Power Outages/No Re-Entry to the School

When a utility failure has occurred, the decision to close the school or delay its opening will be based on the following factors: The amount of natural light in the school; The temperature in the school; The ability and necessity of heating food and formula; The risk to the health and well-being of children and staff. In the event that we cannot remain in the Schoolhouse, we will walk up the parking lot to the church's main building. There we will either gather in the main sanctuary, or go into the lovely "children's wing", just up the stairs, where there are classrooms already set up. If weather permits and seems applicable, our outdoor classroom is always a wonderful sanctuary while waiting for parents to pick up.

Potty Training Guidelines

There's no magic age at which children are ready to start learning how to use the toilet, it ranges between 18 months and 3+ years. The key is to listen to your individual child for signs of readiness and to allow those signs to tell you when they are ready and follow your child's lead. If you are ready, but your child is not; have patience. Potty training goes quicker and smoother when your child is prepared. Know that accidents will happen and that's normal! Your response to the accident will either hinder or help your child in the learning process. Eliminating shaming, blaming or noticed frustration will truly help your child remain confident, calm and excited about trying again. Children need to have three areas of readiness in place in order to accomplish this new skill. They need to be 1) Physiologically ready 2) Cognitively ready 3) Emotionally ready

Readiness Signs:

- Your child stays dry at least 2 hours at a time during the day or is dry after naps.
- Bowel movements become regular and predictable.
- Your child can walk to and from the bathroom, independently undress and wash their hands.
- Your child can get on and off the toilet themselves.
- Your child can follow simple instructions.
- They can communicate when they need to go.
- Your child seems uncomfortable with soiled diapers and wants to be changed.
- Hiding, having a specific spot for or announcing bodily functions.
- Your child asks to use the toilet or potty chair.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

- They are not scared or anxious to use the toilet or to flush
- Your child asks to wear "big-kid" underwear.

Major changes in the home may make toilet training more difficult. Sometimes it is a good idea to delay toilet training if: (1) your family has just moved or will move in the near future, (2) you are expecting a baby or you have recently had a new baby, or (3) there is a major illness, a recent death, or some other family crisis. However, if your child is learning how to use the toilet without problems, there is no need to stop because of these situations.

The Treehouse Potty Training Policy

Due to the beautiful and unique nature of our Forest Garden School, we have unique requirements for coming to school in underwear during the toilet learning process. Before starting your journey with potty training at The Treehouse please have a conversation with teachers before you take time to toilet learn at home - as teachers have to restructure days and think about how many other children are learning at the same time. Your lead teacher will go over the checklist below to determine if they are ready to come to school in underwear.

Teacher Checklist

- ☐ Your child can communicate to teachers when they need to use the toilet.
- ☐ They must be able to have bladder control and can remain dry for 1 hour at a time.
- ☐ If they need to go, they must be able to wait up to 15 minutes when asked.
- ☐ Your child can walk to and from the bathroom by themselves.
- ☐ Your child can fully and willingly undress themselves completely unassisted.
- ☐ Your child can climb onto the toilet completely unassisted.
- ☐ Your child can follow simple instructions and is willing to use the toilet.

Please do not send your child to school in underwear until

1. They have had at minimum 2 full days of success in underwear at home
    a. We encourage families to take advantage of school breaks: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring and Summer breaks are great times to toilet learn if you are not traveling. A weekend is not enough for most children, but you know your child best.
2. You speak with your Lead teacher a week in advance so that you make make a plan for when to begin
3. Your lead teacher has completed the checklist and given you the green light!

★ It is very important to use real vocabulary in regards to body parts (penis, vagina), and regarding toileting (poop, pee, urine, toilet, restroom). Using real vocabulary will help your child become an independent bathroom user, acknowledge their body parts and gain self assurance with this new endeavor!
★ It is also important to follow a consistent routine both at home and at school.
★ Once you and your Lead Teacher begin the process of potty training it is important to stick with your plan and not go back into diapers/pull ups. (Nighttime and nap diapers and pull ups are fine to continue)

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Teacher Responsibilities

- ★ Asking if the child has to go every hour.
    - They will be asked to hold it if they ask in between bathroom break times; for up to 15 minutes if we need additional support to remain in ratio.
- ★ Give the child encouragement and praise (“Well done!” Highfives) never physical rewards (stickers, candy...)
- ★ Bringing the child to the toilet during regularly scheduled bathroom breaks; before or after every meal.
- ★ Never shame, blame or show disapproval when your child has an accident or any action relating to toileting.
- ★ Never put a child on the toilet unless the child is willing to do so independently .
- ★ We do not use pull-ups. They do not help the learning process and often hinder potty training overall.
- ★ We do encourage the use of potty training underwear that have more absorption. The child can still feel the wetness of an accident, while it also increases the sanitation of accidents in a public setting by containing more.

Parent Responsibilities

We ask parents to do the above and the following:

- ★ Please do not send your child to school in underwear without following our policy. Once your child has shown the majority of the Readiness Signs, you have spoken to your Lead Teacher and they have completed the checklist, THEN you can send them to school in underwear on a date that you and your Lead Teacher determines.
- ★ Have your child wear loose fitted clothing they can easily manage independently.
- ★ Please have at least 3-4 different pairs of extra clothing in their cubby/backpack each day.
- ★ We do not use pull-ups. They do not help the learning process and often hinder potty training overall.
- ★ We do encourage the use of potty training underwear that have more absorption. The child can still feel the wetness of an accident, while it also increases the sanitation of accidents in a public setting by containing more.
- ★ We need to remain in ratio for morning drop off, so we may be unable to take a child immediately upon their arrival. So we ask that you have your child use the toilet before leaving the house. You are welcome to use The Treehouse bathroom if needed before drop off.

Continue the program at home; once you start potty training you are all done with diapers! Accidents will happen for a while, and that is okay and very normal. Wearing underwear actually gives them the physical awareness if they start to have an accident and is how they will learn to hold in their pee or bowel movement.

Parent/Legal Guardian Initials _____

Parent Resource Documents

- Welcome to The Treehouse: A Forest Garden School: overview of RIE, Waldorf and Forest School
    - The Essentials of Waldorf Early Childhood Education
    - What is Educaring (RIE)?
        - RIE Approach and Principles
        - https://rie.org
        - Janet Lansbury
    - Forest School Association
    - Positive Discipline
    - Non Violent Communication
    - Staff Code of Conduct

- Recommended Booklist
- Gentle Screen Time

- Gear Requirements for Acorns
- Acorn Class Guidelines

- Gear Requirements for Saplings and Oaks
- Daily Transition Songs

- Kindergarten at The Treehouse