



UNITED, INC.

bringing potential to life



growing
potential

Hours of Operation

Monday through Friday
7 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.

Kids' Point

3223 N. Oliver Ave., K-96 & Oliver

(316) 260-HOPE(4673)
RainbowsUnited.org

Parent Handbook For Early Education Centers

Mission

Rainbows United, Inc. enhances the lives of children with special needs and their families by bringing together community resources and providing customized services.

Vision

Elevating the uniqueness of children and their families, bringing potential to life.

Dear Parent,

Welcome to Rainbows United!

This handbook is provided to you to answer questions about your child's center experience and how Rainbows operates. Please take a few minutes to read this booklet now, then keep it in a handy place should you have other questions in the future.

All of us at Rainbows would like to thank you for enrolling your child in our program and we look forward to working with you and your child this school year!

Jennifer Francois

Rainbows Early Education Center

Your child is a one-of-a kind, inquiring, observing, intelligent creation. We recognize that children are ready, even as infants, to seize every opportunity to learn and experience educational growth. With services through Rainbows' Kids' Point, your child will be part of a program dedicated to providing individualized instruction based upon evidence-based, developmentally appropriate practice.

Kids' Point services include progressive plans for all children regardless of their skill levels. The goal of Rainbows' services is to provide optimal educational opportunities for all children beginning at 24 months until your child's entrance into kindergarten.

Our programs are licensed by the Kansas Department of Health and Environment. We also participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Rainbows staff are mandated reporters for abuse, neglect and exploitation of children.

Often families ask some of the following questions:



When is Rainbows open?

HOURS OF OPERATION The center will be open 7 a.m. until 5:45 p.m. Monday through Friday, unless otherwise posted. Children's daily attendance hours will be determined by the family and Site Coordinator.

Children are to be signed in and out daily by a parent or guardian using ProCare. Parents are responsible for notifying the center by 9 a.m. if your child will not be attending or of any schedule changes for the day. The center is to be notified in advance of exceptions when another person is picking up your child. A picture ID of the person will be requested as verification as well as a signature signing your child out for the day.

HOLIDAYS The center will be closed on the following days:

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Day

Memorial Day

Independence Day

Labor Day

Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving

Christmas Day and the day before or after,

depending on the calendar

Inservice and Training Days (two in the fall and one in the spring)

Note: If a holiday falls on a weekend, it will be observed on either the preceding Friday or the following Monday. A school calendar will be provided with holidays noted.

It is the intention of the center to be open and provide child care services every weekday of the year, excluding the listed closed days. However, inclement weather, natural/national disaster or major building issue may disrupt service from time to time. The center will notify families of closure on the website (www.RainbowsUnited.org), through your email address and local media. Parents are still responsible for tuition payments for up to three business days of unexpected or un-scheduled closure each year.

Is there a charge for services?

ANNUAL ENROLLMENT FEE

An annual, non-refundable enrollment fee of \$50 per child is required. This fee is due upon enrollment and every August thereafter.

TUITION PAYMENT

Tuition is \$115 up to 4½ hours or \$185 for over 4½ hours with a maximum of 10½ hours per day. Tuition amount will be indicated on your pay agreement along with your child's weekly rate. Families will be notified a minimum of 30 days in advance of any changes in tuition or fees.

- Tuition is due regardless of your child's attendance, and payment is required one week in advance.
- Payment is accepted by personal check, money order, bank draft or credit card (Visa / MasterCard / Discover / American Express)

payable to Rainbows United.

- Payments can be made at the center or business office.
- Payment is due by the end of business on Monday of each week prior to your service week. Payments may be made weekly, biweekly, or monthly. Monthly payment is due on the 25th of the month prior to your service month.
- Full tuition is due during weeks when closures occur.
- A \$15 late fee will be charged for each late payment.
- A \$50 returned fee will be charged for any



returned bank drafts / checks, in addition to any applicable late fees. Accounts with more than one returned check will be required to pay by money order or credit card.

- Delinquent accounts will result in immediate suspension of child care services.
- A two week written notice is required if your child is

leaving the center. Your account will be charged two additional weeks if no notice is given.

Rainbows will provide a monthly statement of your payments and a year-end tax statement.

Third party billing: For those receiving supplemental child care funding (SRS, Youthville, others) and are also paying a family fee must pay the family share the first day of each month. Family fees are not covered by the third party are the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.

LATE FEES Late fees are charged to your account if your child is picked up after his or her



scheduled hours. The late fee charge will be determined by the check-out time posted on ProCare.

During regular business hours (7 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.): If your child is picked up after his or her normally scheduled hours, a \$1.00 late fee will be charged for every minute beyond the scheduled

time after the first 15 minutes. The late fee charge will be determined on the check-out time posted on ProCare and charged to your account.

After regular business hours (5:46 p.m. or later): If your child is picked up after 5:45 p.m., a late fee will be charged. The fee will be incurred at the rate of \$2.00 per minute beginning at 5:46 p.m. The late fee will be assessed as determined on the check-out time posted on ProCare and will be charged to your account. If a child is left in the center after 6:15 p.m., 911 will be called after exhausting all emergency phone numbers.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE Parent(s)/ guardian(s) are required to complete a payment agreement plan. Those who are eligible to receive supplemental funding must complete the approved applications and forms through the respective agencies (i.e. Early Head Start, Head Start, SRS, and Youthville). A formal, written agreement must be received from the agency providing financial assistance prior to your child's start date. Supplemental funding is accepted in lieu of all or part of tuition payments.

ENROLLMENT Completed enrollment forms, \$50 enrollment fee and one week of tuition payment is due at the time of enrollment.

What does my child need to bring to school?

All children need the following items every day at school. Be sure to mark each item with your child's name.

- A schoolbag or backpack.
- A complete set of **clothing**, including underwear, socks, shirt and pants. Most children are more comfortable changing into their own clothing when paint, mud, water or bathroom accidents occur. If your child occasionally experiences bathroom accidents, more than one pair of underwear, socks, and pants should be included. Please keep your child's extra clothing seasonal.
- **Diapers, pull-ups or underwear** (sending a box of diapers is recommended for those children still in diapers or pull-ups).
- **Adult-size old shirt** to serve as paint smock. If shirt has long sleeves, please cut them to allow for movement during painting and other messy art activities.
- Send **four (4) child-size toothbrushes** with soft bristles to be used throughout the year.
- **Four (4) boxes of Kleenex** at the start of the school year.
- **At least one disposable camera** for the classroom to document children's learning through photo displays, portfolios, and books.

Other items that might be needed include:

Medication should be given to your child at home whenever possible. However, when needed, both prescription and non-prescription medicine may be administered by the site nurse or designee. The parent/legal guardian and physician must sign the *Authorization to Administer Medication and Dietary Information* form and supply the original medicine bottle. See *Guidelines for Medication Administration* in enrollment packet.

Special formula or food that Rainbows does not provide. Be sure to send a copy of the doctor's prescription.

Weapons or items that can cause injury to children or adults should not be brought to the center. The items will be removed immediately and the staff will notify the parents. Rainbows administrative staff and the police department, depending on the severity of the situation, will also be notified. Threats of violence will be handled in a similar manner.

What does my child do at school?

Children are given the opportunity to learn new things using a variety of learning activities including: children's literature, indoor and outdoor play, art, music, movement, creative dramatics, math, science, and field trips to promote each child's unique learning style. Much of the learning occurs when the children are engaged in group activities. To help children learn actively by doing things for themselves, each classroom has a regular schedule for the daily activities.

How is my child learning? An introduction to the Project Approach to learning. (Taken from the book *Young Investigators* by Judy Helm and Lilian Katz)

What is the project approach? The project approach is a method of teaching in which an in-depth study of a particular topic is conducted by a child or a group of children. The topic is selected based upon children's interest where they do their own problem solving and investigation. Teachers assist and facilitate learning within the topic chosen, document the children's work and help children access various resources for that topic.

How is this different from other ways of learning?

The children study one topic for a long period of time (such as, two-three months). The topic is selected partly because the children were interested in it and it is meaningful to them and their lives. The children will go into great depth and often at a higher level of learning than many adults would expect for this. The teacher integrates content knowledge like math, reading, and science into the project. Project activities occur alongside other classroom activities (block building, stories, dramatic play, etc.).

How is the project planned? Topics can emerge from common interests in children or presented purposefully by the teacher based upon common occurrences or interests of the children. The children make many of their own project plans with the teacher's help. Plans usually include an on-site visit and/or interviews with experts. An expert is anyone who knows a great deal about the topic of study, such as a meteorologist in the study of clouds, weather, or storms.

How will children learn using this approach?

Children use a variety of resources to find answers to their project questions. These include traditional resources like books or hands-on activities. They also conduct in-depth investigations through on-site



visits. The children plan questions for interviews and have assigned tasks for trips or for interviewing experts. The children make field notes and draw or write while on the trip. They make plans for building structures and play environments that will help them sort out what they are learning about topic. The children do their own problem solving with the teacher structuring problems and assisting in finding

solutions and resources. Children will redraw and rewrite as their knowledge grows. They will record their learning through project books, posters, murals, artwork, graphs, charts, constructions, and journals.

How does the teacher know if the children are learning? The teacher collects children's work, observes what they do, and analyzes their work. The curriculum goals of the center are reviewed and documentation is planned to be sure that children are learning concepts and skills specified in the goals.

Is this the only way children learn? This is one approach among a variety of ways children learn. The project approach integrates much of the same knowledge and skills presented in more formal ways in the classroom. Projects have the added advantage of providing an opportunity for children to apply and use what they are learning as they solve problems and share what they know. It provides opportunities for developing group skills such as working with others and challenges children to think, which supports brain development.

How can others help with projects? It is important to realize that children have their own questions and are learning to use you and many resources to find answers. Take their questions seriously, and listen to what they have to say. Provide space and opportunities for them to draw or photograph what they are studying. Children learn best when many senses are involved so anything that they can touch, see up close, or hear is helpful. Things that can be borrowed for study in the classroom are valued and appreciated, especially parts of machines, tools, samples of products, and so forth. We hope that you follow up, view your child's documentation, and find out how children have processed what they have learned from projects.



Will my child learn to read and write? The early childhood years, zero to eight, are a critical time for the development of language and literacy. This time period is one in which typical children's development is individualized and can appear to be uneven. The makes a single approach or "magic formula" difficult to address every child's individual needs and learning style. A specific language and

literacy curriculum should not just be an isolated subject or taught only at certain times of the day. Language and literacy is most effective when it is part of a curriculum which addresses the whole child's development: social and emotional, creative, physical, and cognitive. There are times for direct teaching: one-on-one, in small groups, and large groups, but most importantly it occurs throughout the day during daily routines and during hands-on learning in all of the learning centers in the classroom and outside.

Can I visit my child's classroom?

Parents may visit their child's center any time. You do not need to call before coming unless another family member is coming with you or you want to meet with your child's teacher. For the safety and security of the children, please check in with the site receptionist when you arrive. The receptionist will ask you to sign in and out when you leave. A visitor badge will be given to you to wear during the visit. Please keep in mind many children in our centers have special needs. Please respect the classroom staff and children by observing and interaction, but not holding or carrying children.

When can I talk with my child's teacher?

Rainbows believes that parents and teachers should have good communication with each other. We encourage you to use a variety of ways to reach the teacher. Here are a few suggestions:

- We welcome **telephone calls** from parents. The teacher is in the classroom from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., so please call before or after these times. You can also leave a message with the receptionist and the teacher will return your call during a break.
- **Email** is another effective way of communicating with your teacher. This is convenient for both you and the teacher.
- Your child's **school bag** is used to send artwork your child has made or notes from the teacher. Please check your child's bag each day to see what new things have been sent home.

- Parents can be **classroom volunteers**. We appreciate your help at any time but especially when there are classroom parties and field trips. If you can help this way, please let the site coordinator know.
- Parents may request a **conference** with their child's teacher at any time during the year. The teacher will contact you to set up two formal conference times during the year. Please call to schedule an additional appointment to allow enough time to discuss all of your concerns.
- You will receive a **written progress report** twice during the school year. The teacher will write about the progress your child has made and may offer to meet with you to consider any changes or additions that may be needed.

What is Rainbows' discipline policy?

It is through a sound social-emotional foundation that children are prepared for growth in all areas of development. Children's experiences in working through everyday activities are the best learning experiences. Adults must be supportive in guiding children through these learning opportunities. Our staff recognize and accept each child's differences, unique personalities and temperaments. In addition, we believe parents are integral partners in the social-emotional development of their children. We believe in using a positive, nurturing approach in the least intrusive manner based on the developmental needs of individual children. These approaches are targeted to help develop positive social-emotional skills and prevent inappropriate behaviors.

Rainbows believes in using discipline strategies to help children learn new skills - not as punishment. On-going inappropriate behaviors will be discussed with parents. A plan for change in the child's behavior will be initiated by a team that includes the parents. Children will not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening; this includes actions such as spanking, verbal abuse or threats. Rainbows will not terminate a child from services due to challenging behavior.

What are the biting procedures?

Rainbows recognizes biting as unfortunate, but not unexpected when small children are in group care or are experiencing developmental challenges. We recognize how upsetting it is for parents. While we feel that biting is never the right thing for children to do, we understand that they bite for a variety of



reasons. Most of these reasons are not related to behavior problems. Therefore, we do not focus on punishment for biting, but on effective techniques that address the specific reason for the biting.

When biting occurs

- Care for the child who was bitten. We give immediate attention and first aid to the child who was bitten. The area is washed with soap and water. If the skin is broken, then the area is washed with soap and water and cleansed with hydrogen peroxide. Parents are notified by Bite Notice form or in person, depending on the severity of the bite. A copy of the bite notice is sent to both parents of the children involved in the incident. If the skin is broken, we recommend that the child be seen by a health care provider (see Bite Notice form). A copy is kept on record in the child's central file.
- Help the child who bites learn other, more appropriate behavior. Classroom staff work to keep children safe and to help the child who bites learn more appropriate behavior. When there is an episode of ongoing biting, we develop a plan of techniques and timelines to address it. We do not and will not use any response that harms a child or is known to be ineffective. We keep the name of the child who bit confidential. Excluding a child from the program is not an option.

- Examine our program environment to reduce the incidence of biting. Classroom staff will make an effort to provide a supportive environment, provide a consistent yet flexible schedule, provide a variety of sensory activities and materials and strive to interact with each child gently and empathetically.

What about field trips?

The children ride on Rainbows' buses to special places in Wichita several times during the school year. Information about the field trip and a permission note will be sent home several days before the trip. All children must have a note signed by their parent or guardian in order to go on the field trip. A child without a signed permission slip will stay at the center with other children and Rainbows staff. Parents and other adult family members are always welcome to join on these trips.

Who can pick up my child?

Rainbows wants all children to be safe. At enrollment, you filled out a form telling us who has your permission to pick up your child. If you need to change any information or a name on the form, please ask your site coordinator for a new form.



Rainbows will allow only the people on the form to take your child from the center or the bus.

In an emergency, if you need someone who is not on the form to pick up your

child, you must call the site and make prior arrangements. The person getting your child must show our staff a photo identification card. We will not allow anyone to take your child without your permission.

What if I am late in picking up my child?

If you cannot pick up your child at the scheduled time, please call the site and tell them what time you or another authorized person will be there.

Late fees are charged to your account if your child is picked up after his or her scheduled hours. The late fee charge will be determined by the check-out time posted on ProCare.

- During regular business hours (7 a.m. - 5:45 p.m.): If your child is picked up after his or her normally scheduled hours, a \$1.00 late fee will be charged for every minute beyond the scheduled time after the first 15 minutes. The late fee charge will be determined on the check-out time posted on ProCare and charged to your account.
- After regular business hours (5:46 p.m. or later): If your child is picked up after 5:45 p.m., a late fee will be charged. The fee will be incurred at the rate of \$2.00 per minute beginning at 5:46 p.m. The late fee will be assessed as determined on the check-out time posted on ProCare and will be charged to your account. If a child is left in the center after 6:15 p.m., 911 will be called after exhausting all emergency phone numbers.

What about absences?

Your child will learn more if he attends regularly. However, many children miss some days due to doctor appointments, illness and vacations. If your child is going to miss school, call the center each morning before 9 a.m. to let the teacher know not to expect your child that day.

How do we make our sites safe?

Safety is always a primary concern at Rainbows. We have many systems in place that you will be aware of and notice. This would include all doors being locked to the outside. The site has one specific door for all staff, parents and visitors to use. There is a bell button to push and the receptionist will then let you in. This door has a video monitor that allows the receptionist to see who is entering the building. All guests, visitors and Rainbows staff from other sites must sign in and out at the receptionist's desk. All staff and visitors will wear a Rainbows badge. If

you are there to observe or to help in your child's classroom or for any extended time at the site, we ask that you too sign in and out at the receptionist desk.

Kids' Point has a crisis plan with specific procedure for various situations. There will be monthly fire drills, monthly tornado drills from April to October and other safety drills. If an evacuation or disaster occurs, our first step will be to ensure the safety and security of the children. Rainbows staff will then begin to contact all parents to share appropriate information about picking up your child. A public announcement will also be made in order to communicate helpful information.

Because we believe in the safety and care of the children we serve, the staff of Rainbows are mandated reporters of suspected abuse, neglect and exploitation of children.

What will my child eat at school?

All children will be given nutritionally based meals and snacks according to the Child Care and Adult Care Food Program guidelines. Monthly menus are available for your review at the center.

For children receiving formula, Rainbows will provide Nutren Jr. brand formula for prescribed supplemental oral or gastrostomy feeding. Parents may bring or send their own formula, if they prefer another brand. Please work with the nurse and center coordinator when formula is fed to your child.

- NOTICE: There are recent studies indicating many people suffer from a peanut allergy. This can cause a serious medical emergency. As a result, Rainbows classrooms are nut free. This means we do not serve peanuts or peanut products for meals or snacks. Also peanut products are not used in craft activities for the children. Due to this, when parents are asked to provide treats for special celebrations, please remember to make them without peanuts and nuts.

What if my child is sick?

If your child is sick, do not send your child to school. Rainbows does not have a room available to care for sick children. We do not want other healthy children to become sick. Some of the illnesses that keep children from coming to school are:

- Severe sore throat, tonsillitis, or strep throat;
- Contagious skin rash with a fever;
- Cold or flu symptoms with a fever;
- Any fever over 100 degrees within the last 24 hours;
- Diarrhea or continual vomiting, or;
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye).

Although it is not an illness, children with head lice or nits may not come to school. It is important for a child with an illness to stay at home until fully recovered.

Please contact your school nurse or site coordinator for more details about any health concerns you might have for your child. If your child has been gone from school five (5) days or more because of an illness or has been hospitalized for any reason, your doctor must write a note saying your child is well enough to return to school. If your child gets sick at the center, Rainbows will call you and ask you to pick up your child immediately. If there is a critical medical emergency, Rainbows will call you and 911. If needed, EMS will transport the child to the hospital of your choice for further medical attention.





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